

ment when her life is in danger. More than 20 years ago Dr. Allan Guttmacher, a leading American advocate of abortion on demand, declared, "Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through any pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal illness such as leukemia, or any other cancer, and, if so, abortion would be unlikely to prolong, much less save, life."

In the 1983 Borowski trial, Professor Liley stated that he was unaware of any medical complications or condition that would be regarded as absolute grounds for terminating a pregnancy. Allowing abortion for so-called therapeutic reasons is simply to allow them under false pretences. The overwhelming majority of induced abortions are not done for purely medical reasons. Statistics tell us that they are performed for social and economic reasons or because of pressure from parents or boyfriends or husbands. I have experienced such circumstances in my 35 years of medical practice. Unfortunately, one patient, who succumbed to the pressures from her relatives and her parents, later committed suicide. So the law must not allow such abuse of women. No one should allow such abuse of pregnant women, for either their health or their babies'.

One of the myths I wish to destroy today is that of "the mother versus the child." As I just mentioned, virtually all abortions performed in Canada since the change in the abortion law in 1969 have been performed for social or other reasons, and not for health reasons at all. There are some medical treatments that are necessary in an attempt to save the life of the mother and which will indirectly result in the death of her unborn child. For example, a pregnant woman who develops cancer of the uterus will be treated either surgically or with chemotherapy. The purpose of these medically recognized treatments is to remedy her cancer. They are necessary to save her life, but they invariably result in the death of her unborn child. Such treatments are recognized as good medicine, and they are consistent with the best moral view, which is that we must always do our best to save the lives of both the mother and the child. Such treatments have always been permitted under law, and Bill S-16 explicitly allows for such treatments.

The obligation of members of my own profession has always been to heal the sick. Pregnancy is a normal thing. It is not an abnormal condition. A woman who is pregnant is not thereby in a condition requiring a surgical procedure. Pregnancy is not a disease. Physicians should return to the age-old tradition of Hippocrates, who predated the Christian era by 400 years.

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The Hippocratic oath, which I also took upon graduation from medical school at the University of Toronto in 1951, required me and my classmates, my colleagues, to preserve human life, not to destroy it. It is scandalous that doctors have become licensed executioners in our society today. It means a betrayal of everything that they have stood for and sworn to uphold.

Furthermore, no gestational law is morally acceptable. Some people would consider abortion under 24 weeks, but,

[Senator Haidasz.]

even under the restrictions of the old section 251, 89 per cent of abortions in Canada were done in the first 12 weeks.

Some people argue that, if abortions were to be prohibited, women would simply go to illegal clinics. While some of them would do so, most would not. Instead, they would carry their baby to term. The pre-1969 statistics of illegal abortions and the deaths resulting from them were utterly fraudulent and were part of the pro-abortion campaign of propaganda and deception.

I believe that the law has a teaching function. To legalize acts of violence means that those who do the legalizing become participants in the crime. Moreover, truth is perverted. That is why legal, "frontstreet" abortions are considered worse than illegal, "backstreet" abortions.

Furthermore, the rejection of the right to kill the unborn is not the view of some religious sect, but is a defence of the dignity of the human person.

This battle has been fought for over 4,000 years, though never as intensely as today in Canada.

Abortion is the killing of a human being innocent of any crime. No human being or group of human beings has the right to kill another human being except in self-defence. This general principle finds expression in natural law, the Sacred Scriptures, the Christian and Moslem traditions, Mosaic law as well as in other religious traditions. Abortion is against the objective, moral order. It is not a Catholic or Christian issue. The Sumerians condemned abortion 4,000 years ago. So did Hammurabi in the 18th century B.C., and, as I mentioned earlier, the Greek physician, Hippocrates, in the year 400 B.C., who encased the condemnation in a medical oath—"Thou shalt not administer abortion-causing drugs or instruments." This oath entered the general stream of western civilization until it was, unfortunately, cast aside in many medical schools in the 1960s and 1970s with the coming of the permissive society.

Again, I state that human life begins at the moment of conception, that is, when the ovum is fertilized by a male sperm. In that moment a unique and separate individual exists and, as I mentioned earlier, contains a full genetic code which will determine its physical characteristics, even to the colour of its eyes. With modern technology, medical scientists have been able to confirm, at ever earlier stages, the various features of this human life. By 1983, for example, medical instruments had become so sophisticated that they could ascertain the independent production of blood by the fetus at 17 days. These instruments detected the heart beat at 24 days and registered brain waves at 35 days. Only a decade or so ago it was thought that the brains of pre-born babies did not become active until two-thirds of the way through pregnancy.

Honourable senators, these facts were mentioned, as I said earlier, by Sir William Liley, who testified at the Borowski trial in Regina in May 1983. It is useful to remind ourselves of that case. In other words, scientific evidence definitely confirms that life begins at conception. Now that this is clear, all