

Abortion

such as interruption of education or career, social embarrassment, sexual preference for a child, and so on. In fact, according to official statistics, 95 per cent of all abortions in the western world are performed on alleged psychiatric grounds. It would seem legitimate to ask how the psychiatrist arrived at the conclusion that having an unwanted child will result in complete psychiatric breakdown.

As a result of this, according to Statistics Canada there were 11,200 abortions in 1970, the first year of legalization. In 1985, the last year for which complete statistics are available, StatsCan reported that the number had risen to 60,956, an increase of over 260 per cent in 15 years. Even more startling is the fact that abortions outnumber live births in some Canadian cities, and there is an increasing number of women having multiple abortions. StatsCan reported that the repeat abortion rate in 1975, women who were having their second or subsequent abortion, was 8.6 per cent; 12.9 per cent in 1978; 18.9 per cent in 1983; and in 1985 it had reached 20.4 per cent.

It is apparent from these statistics that abortion is being used as a method of birth control. Abortion as a means of contraception is probably one of the most reprehensible acts that an individual can commit. In today's society there simply is no excuse for not being aware of the various methods of contraception available. Abortion cheapens the value of life. The ability to terminate a pregnancy with minimum discomfort gives individuals a lax attitude toward the sanctity of life. The greater ease with which abortion is conducted will serve to further desensitize the population into disregarding the value of human life. The more we do that, the more apt we are to inflict more injustices on our society.

Science has now given us the means by which we can tell if a baby is to be born defective, retarded, handicapped, and what sex it will be. Should these individuals be aborted? Do we have the right to play God? I want to read to you a newspaper report of an attempted abortion in 1981 as reported by the *Philadelphia Enquirer*:

A woman's scream broke the late night quiet and brought two young obstetrical nurses rushing to Room 4456 of the University of Nebraska Medical Centre.

The patient, admitted for an abortion, had been injected thirty hours earlier with a salt solution, which normally kills the fetus and causes the patient to deliver a mass of lifeless tissue, in a process similar to a miscarriage.

This time, though, something had gone wrong. When nurse Marilyn Wilson flicked on the lights and pulled back the covers, she found, instead of a still-born fetus she'd expected, a live two and one-half pound baby boy, crying and moving his arms and legs there on the bed.

Dismayed, the second nurse, Joanie Fuchs, gathered the squirming infant in loose bed covers, dashed down the corridor and called to the other nurses for help. She did not take the baby to an intensive care nursery, but deposited it instead on the stainless steel drainboard of a sink in the maternity unit's dirty utility room—a large closet where bedpans are emptied and dirty linens stored. Other nurses and a resident doctor gathered and gaped.

Finally, a head nurse telephoned the patient's physician, Doctor C. J. Labenz, at home, apparently waking him. "He told me to leave it where it was" the head nurse testified later, "just to watch it for a few minutes, that it would probably die in a few minutes".

This type of incident occurs more than 400 times a year, according to the Centre for Disease Control, and those are just the documented cases.

It is ironic that a criminal proven guilty has more protection under the law than the unborn. Just stop and think about it. The guilty criminal has more protection than an unborn human being today. The unborn are innocent, yet their fate is determined with very little or no consideration at all. Compare the consideration given the unborn to that given a criminal in our justice system and it becomes apparent that something is very wrong with our morality.

Once life has begun it has the right to reach its natural end. By destroying life to ensure one's economic and social success, the human race is losing its honour and dignity. A human race now reaching for the stars must not be allowed to regress to the level where life has only a relative value. The whole existence of mankind has been toward the protection of human life. It represents an ultimate value. Therefore, protection cannot be limited and no distinction can be made between unborn and born life.

During World War II we abhorred the holocaust of the born, and today we must abhor the holocaust of the unborn. Life is sacred in all its stages, thus any attempt to define or legislate the beginning of human life as occurring at some point other than at conception would not be based on either biological or moral fact, but on arbitrarily chosen terms which merely describe stages of the embryological development of the human organism.

Therefore, it must be realized that the personhood of the human being is an intrinsic quality derived from the very fact of his or her existence as a human being. It is not derived from man-made law. Personhood, since it is always present while the human being has life, and is a concomitant of human life, cannot be awarded to, diminished, or withdrawn from any human being by Parliament or any judicial action. As a result, I cannot vote for the government motion and I therefore present an amendment to the motion which will recognize life as the only value which is supreme, and the innocent will be protected from the point of conception onwards. Therefore, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Welland (Mr. Pietz): that all the words in the motion after the words "should prohibit the performance of an abortion," be deleted and the following substituted therefor: "While allowing those medical treatments which are necessary to prevent the death of the mother or to remedy a condition that, if left untreated, would cause the death of the mother."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member's amendment will be tabled as agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact and in this parliamentary debate, I am pro-life. In any case, how can anyone be against life? However, contrary to