

Criminal Code

Here is what Cardinal Wyszyński wrote about the life of a foetus:

[English]

October 5: Today my life began. My parents do not know it yet. I am as small as a seed of an apple, but it is I already. And I am to be a girl. I shall have blond hair and azure eyes. Just about everything is settled though. Even the fact that I shall love flowers.

October 19: I have grown a little, but I am still too small to do anything by myself. My mother does just about everything for me. And what is odd—she still doesn't even know that she is carrying me here under her heart, and that she is helping me already, that she is even feeding me with her own blood. She is so good.

Some say that I am not a real person yet, that only my mother exists. But I am a real person, just as a small crumb of bread is yet truly bread. My mother is. And I am.

October 23: My mouth is just beginning to open now. Just think in a year or so I shall be laughing, and later talking. I know that my first word shall be—mama.

October 28: My heart began to beat today all by itself. From now on it shall gently beat for the rest of my life. Without ever stopping to rest. And after many years it will tire. It will stop, and then I shall die.

November 2: I am growing a bit every day. My arms and legs are beginning to take shape. But I have to wait a long time yet before those little legs will raise me to my mother's arms, before those little arms will be able to gather flowers and embrace my father.

November 12: Tiny fingers are beginning to form on my hands. Funny how small they are, I shall be able to stroke my mother's hair with them. And I shall take her hair to my mouth and she will probably say: "Oh, nasty!"

November 20: It wasn't until today that the doctor told mom that I am living here under her heart. Oh, how happy she must be! Are you happy, mom?

November 25: My mom and dad are probably thinking about a name for me. But they don't even know that I am a little girl. They are probably saying Andy. But I want to be called Cathy. I am getting so big already.

December 10: My hair is growing. It is smooth and bright and shiny. I wonder what kind of hair mom has?

December 13: I am just about able to see. It is dark around me. When mom brings me into the world, it will be full of sunshine and flowers. I have never seen a flower, you know. But what I want more than anything is to see my mom. How do you look, mom?

December 24: I wonder if mom hears the whispering beat of my heart? Some children come into the world a little sick. And then the delicate hands of the doctor perform miracles to bring them to health. But my heart is strong and healthy. It beats so evenly—tup-tup, tup-tup... You'll have a healthy little daughter, mom!

December 28: Today my mother killed me.

[Mr. Rondeau.]

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it is precisely to prevent such atrocities that we ask that amendment No. 24 be adopted, because it says:

—that those means are employed before the period of implantation.

This is in order to prevent such murders by unscrupulous people who would be allowed by the act to do as they please without any consideration for life, or for the principles any sound society needs to perpetuate itself.

• (4:20 p.m.)

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, we have before us another important amendment to Bill C-150, which seeks to add the following words to clause 18:

—that those means are employed before the period of implantation.

I have not heard the remarks made by hon. members on this subject, but nevertheless I wish to make a few comments on the importance of considering human life as a whole, and more particularly at the time when it begins, according to scientific evidence.

It must be recognized that a certain period of time may elapse before the fertilized ovum is really implanted. That is the basis of the amendment that I find most logical. Even if impregnation takes place, if there is no environment propitious to the development of the embryo, of course there can be no human life. If necessary, one could boil down the question to some experiments made recently, when scientists succeeded in reproducing the phenomenon of fecundation in laboratories. Can the result of such experiments be considered as a real human being? I doubt it very much.

Therefore, in the days following fecundation, it may happen that implantation does not take place and I believe that in such a case it would only be fair to consider the possibility of adopting an amendment which would specify that before such methods are used, nobody can be accused of having performed an illegal abortion.

Mr. Speaker the matter now under study deserves our full attention. It is not a question of taking only religious beliefs into consideration. In fact, there are unfortunately too many members who believe that those who oppose abortion are only doing so on religious grounds, because if religious factors are one aspect of our argumentation, it remains that they are only secondary. What we are considering first and foremost is the scientific viewpoint.