

ABORTION AND POLITICS

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"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

There was an excellent letter to the editor in the Herald recently that I want to quote to you:

'Sir, In the article Abortion Gets the Far North Fighting, a politician once more runs for cover on the abortion issue.

'(The) Liberal member for Stafford, Queensland, although opposed to abortion, says he cannot impose his view on anyone else.

'He certainly may not impose his private whims or private morality, but abortion is neither of these. It's a question of civil rights - in this case the right of an individual to have its life protected. Would (the member) take the same view about murder or manslaughter?

'What on earth are people in politics for if they are not prepared to speak up for, or legislate on, matters of such fundamental importance as the lives of others?

'Every year in Australia thousands of unborn children are labelled "unwanted". That is an impertinent imposition on any individual - abortion goes a step further and takes away the very life of these "unwanted". Children have a right to be born wanted or not. Taking this right away is never a matter of private task.'

This logic is unbeatable. It is based on a major assumption - that life before birth is truly human life; but there can be no doubt that this is true. The whole process of a baby's development is continuous, ordered and irreversible sequence, at every stage of which a living human organism is undeniably present. Medical recognition of this fact

is reflected in the Declaration of Geneva which states that doctors "should maintain the utmost respect for human life, from the time of conception".

The arguments used to support access to abortion on demand are scandalously selfish. They appeal to all that is worst in us; the result is the destruction of thousands of innocent lives. If the process of development happened to occur outside the mother's body there would be an uproar at any proposal to destroy even some of these babies. Because the child is hidden in what ought to be a place of security, we say and do nothing. The treatment of chickens, rabbits and rats causes more debate than the treatment of humans. We ought certainly to be concerned about the maltreatment of animals - this too is a scandal. But abortion is an even worse misdeed.

I'll never forget a conversation I had once with a young married woman who had submitted to an abortion. She had not wanted it; she had been talked into it by her husband and her mother. Her mother wanted her to have the abortion because it would mean that she would have more time to work and so get sufficient money to get her household goods together - to buy a washing machine, to look into acquiring a house and so on. Her husband wanted her to have an abortion because he was studying and a baby would mean that he might have to stop for the time being.

The young woman agreed against her better judgement. She was not a Christian - she just believed that the life that had begun within her was a real life. Yet the very people who should have given her every support in her pregnancy - her mother and her husband, held out financial and material inducements to accept an abortion. She did, and she bitterly regretted it.

At least she still had a sensitive conscience. In our community there is every sign that conscience has been

seared and rendered inoperative on this issue. We no longer care. But be sure about this: God cares - he is the protector of the innocent and defenceless, and he will bring their oppressors to justice.

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