

Your Baby is a Human Being

If you are a pregnant mother, you have a little human being growing within your body. But when this fact was mentioned, an Illinois mother replied, *"I don't think it's human. It's too small."*

An important scientific gathering was convened in October 1967 in Washington D.C. to decide this question. Medical professionals, biological scientists and authorities in the fields of law, ethics and the social sciences gathered together to settle the matter. This was the First International Conference on Abortion. The first major question considered was this: "When does human life begin?" And this is an important question, for we all know that we should not kill human beings. *But when does an unborn child become a human being?* At conception when the two cells unite, at birth forty weeks later, or at some point between the two?

Here was the decision of this group (composed of biochemists, professors of obstetrics and gynecology, geneticists, etc.):

"The majority of our group could find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg, or at least the blastocyst stage [shortly after fertilization, when twinning might occur] and the birth of the infant at which point we could say that this was not a human life. The changes occurring between implantation, a six-weeks embryo, a six months fetus, a one week-old child, or a mature adult are merely stages of development and maturation."—First International Conference on Abortion, Washington B.C., October 1967.

These scientists decided by a vote of 19 to 1 (with a minority of 20% of whom were Catholics) that the unborn child is a human being, just as you and I are, from the moment of, or just following the moment of, conception when the two cells unite.

Here is some of the information that these distinguished scientists used in arriving at their decision:

Because of modern science, we know a great deal about fertilization and the early development of the child within the womb.

When the sperm and egg unite, a new human life begins. It did not exist before.

The sperm carried the genetic code of the father, and has no life or continuing function beyond that of one goal: to fertilize the egg.

The ovum contains the genetic code of the mother and part of her body. It is not a new life, and has no other function than to be fertilized.

If the fertilization (uniting of the two cells) does not take place, both cells will die.

The cells are from human beings, but are not human beings.

But when the 23 chromosomes from the sperm unite with the 23 chromosomes from the ovum, a new being comes into existence. It is a unique human being, for none like it ever existed before, and none quite like it will ever exist again. It is a real person, just as real as you and I. Genetically, it is totally different from the body of the father or the mother. Organically, it is independent, programmed from within, growing in an orderly manner, moving toward further maturity.

Although needing the protective environment of his mother's body, this living being is completely independent in its functions from the very beginning of his or her life, and at only ten days of age takes over complete physiologic control of certain functions within the mother's body. One example of this is that the unborn child stops his or her mother's menstrual periods.

Did you "come from" an infant? No, of course not. You were once an infant—that kept growing into an adult. The only difference is nutrition and time. Nothing else has been added. You are a continuum person. You began when the two cells united within your mother. Since then you grew until you reached adulthood. You are now more developed than when you were in your mother, but you were all there, back then.

The fertilized ovum is not the blueprint of the house; it is the house, though in miniature. All that is needed is time for it to grow. All the parts of the house are already there. Scientists now know that you were there, totally, at conception. All that was needed was nutrition and time. Normal growth would take care of the rest.

At the dawn of life that new being is completely intact and contains within himself or herself the totality of everything that he will ever be; a being moving forward in an orderly process of growth and maturation; a being destined to live within the mother for 8 1/2 months, and for sixty to ninety years thereafter.

Only for shelter and food is the unborn human dependent upon its mother. In every other way it is an entirely new, different, unique and independent being. But consider for a moment: the infant after it is born is equally dependent upon others for food and shelter. Can a five-year-old child take care of himself? No, he cannot. He is dependent upon others. But like the unborn human, he keeps growing as he is given care and food. Both are human beings. Both should receive equal protection from murder, under the laws of the land.

Someone will say, "But the fetus may die by itself; can it therefore be human?" Humans before birth can die, and so can humans after birth. In fact, all humans born into this world eventually die. That does not make them unhuman.

Another will say that the unborn cannot be human because he cannot breathe. By eleven to twelve weeks (3 months), he is breathing fluid steadily and continues to do so until birth. At birth, he will breathe air. He does not drown by breathing fluid within his mother, because he obtains his oxygen through an umbilical cord. But as soon as the fluid is removed, he will begin breathing air and thus obtain his oxygen through his mouth, at any time from 3 months and onward. "But," someone adds, "he does not have the breath of life." The breath of life is oxygen. He is receiving that from his mother until he later begins taking it through his mouth and nostrils. He has "the breath of life" within his body, just as you and I do.

"How early, then, can babies survive, if prematurely taken from their mothers?" Whether or not he survives outside of his mother, he is still a human being. But for your information, two babies have survived at 25 weeks, two at 24, one at 23, one at 22, two at 21, and one at 20 weeks. Babies born with a weight under 1,000 grams (2.2 lbs.) now survive 30-40% of the time with normal functions and minimal neurologic defect.

But someone else will say, "If he cannot survive by himself without help, then he cannot be a human being." Would you say that about your father when he is aged, declare him not to be a human being, and request an abortionist to kill him? I am sure you would not. His life is as precious as your unborn child should be to you.

The child is no different before birth than after, except that he has changed his method of feeding and obtaining oxygen. When an adult is sick and taken to the hospital, he may have to receive his food and oxygen through tubes as the unborn child did. But while he is in the hospital, he is still human.

There is more growth in the first part of life than in the last part of it. The human body has completed 90% of his or her growth at the time of birth. Only 10% occurs between birth and adulthood. None after that. We cannot say that growth is a sign of inhumanity, for then all those below the age of 18 to 20 would be inhuman.

Reverence for life was the belief of Albert Schweitzer. It should be the belief of every mother and every physician in our land. All life comes from God. He who would remove it will have to answer to God for what he has done.

Here is a statement from the Journal of the California State Medical Association:

"The reverence of each and every human has been a keystone of western medicine, and is the ethic which has caused physicians to try to preserve, protect, repair, prolong, and enhance every human life.

"Since the old ethic has not yet been fully displaced, it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing which continues to be socially abhorrent. The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception, and is continuous, whether intra— or extra—uterine [inside or outside the uterus], until death. The very considerable semantic

gymnastics which are required to rationalize abortion as anything but taking a human life would be ludicrous if they were not often put forth under socially impeccable auspices. It is suggested that this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge is necessary because, while a new ethic is being accepted, the old one has not yet been rejected. "—*Journal of the California State Medical Association, September, 1970.*

"But should the child be brought to birth if it is known that he has a birth defect?" If one does an abortion because the unborn is handicapped, why is he killing? Because this living human is not perfect enough? This is why Hitler killed millions in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. Because he thought that they were not perfect enough. Has our civilization come to the point where we kill the imperfect ones? "Oh," but you reply, "We wouldn't think of killing them after they are born!" Why wouldn't you? What is the difference? Killing children before they are born is just the first step. The conscience of the civilized world is gradually becoming hardened as legalized abortion continues year after year. The next step will be euthanasia, the killing of older people and the handicapped because they are unproductive or in our way. Abortion is prenatal euthanasia. Once a policy and an acceptance of euthanasia for a handicapped human life has been established at one stage in human life, then it will be easy to accept euthanasia at other stages of human life as well.

The American Medical Association is already suggesting the second step:

"Because of the present limits of such [prenatal] detection methods, most birth defects are not discovered until birth. If a child were not declared alive until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice. . . the doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so choose and save a lot of misery and suffering."—*American Medical Association, Children from the Laboratory, May, 1973.*

Other medical researchers have suggested 30 days after birth as the point at which euthanasia should be terminated, in order to insure the blotting out of all birth-defect babies. A prominent pro-abortionist, Joseph Fletcher, is urging that the I.Q. test be given to all people, and all those under a certain level be slain. There is covert talk by others that certain races and religious groups should be put out of the way.

"The situation of a newborn baby is very different to that of the same baby, even a few weeks later. . . At birth the body is only a potential human being and at that point it is surely the humane and sensible thing that the life of any baby with obvious severe defects, whether of body or brain, should be quietly snuffed out by the doctor or midwife. This should not be a decision referred to the family who are too emotionally involved."—*Barbara Smoker, Vice-Chairman, British Humanist Association, in "The Times," January 22, 1973.*

Ever since the discovery of conception (the uniting of the male and female cells) over 100 years ago and until about 10 years ago, it was taught that human life began at conception, that it should be protected, and that the only abortion that was ethical was a "therapeutic abortion." And it was recognized that the only kind of "therapeutic abortion"

was the kind that saved a mother's life. But times have changed. For the last decade, largely convinced that "women must have this right" to decide whether or not their offspring should die, most medical schools in America have been justifying abortion on the grounds that "the fetus is not yet human." And some have been instructing their medical students: "If anyone asks you, tell them it was a therapeutic abortion." And medical journals, in the past five years have provided a continuous flow of articles on women's rights, and how to remove the fetus in bits and pieces without injuring the mother. But new and often startling facts in Fetology, which confirm only too well the full humanity of the unborn, are ignored and omitted.

We have seen that the first step is to kill the unborn, the second to kill the aged. Other steps follow. But first, it is necessary to remove legal protection from the unborn, and later the aged, and then still others. Until January 22, 1973, unborn children in America had legal rights as did any other citizen of the country. One of these rights was that they could not be killed. Another was that they could inherit property. But in 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court decided that people have no right to life until birth. It declared that they are not "human beings" until the cord is cut.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these rights are life. .that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men. ."—Declaration of Independence.

"Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction that equal protection of the laws."—14th Amendment, Constitution of the United States of America.

"The child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth."—Declaration of the Rights of a Child, General Assembly of the United Nations, November 20, 1959.

An unborn baby is the property of the owner (mother) and she can have the baby killed at her request, or because of her social distress ("health"). This can be done at any time until birth.—U.S. Supreme Court, Roe v. Wade; Doe v. Bolton, 1973.

A husband has no right to protect the child he has fathered in his wife's womb. She can have it killed over his protest.—U.S. Supreme Court, Danforth v. Planned Parenthood; Bellotti v. Baird, 1976.

A minor girl has the legal right to get an abortion without her parent's consent.—Ibid.

Even though viable (living and sound) a child has no right to be delivered alive but can be killed by abortion if the abortionist wants to.—Colatti v. Franklin, 1979.

"When I returned home [from the abortion operation], I had very heavy bleeding and severe cramps for two days. I was so afraid that something was wrong that I called Planned Parenthood where I had the abortion. They said I was okay without suggesting an exam. At my after-school job at a dime store, I went into the restroom. It was then I found my baby on my sanitary pad. He had arms and legs with tiny hands and feet. I could make out his little nose and dark spots that I now know were his eyes. Even after 10 years, it's still hard for me to think about it."

"The doctor said 'a little fluid out, and some fluid injected; severe cramps, then the fetus is expelled.' That isn't what it was. I felt my girl thrash around for an hour and a half till she died a slow death. I had hard labor for over 12 hours and delivered my daughter myself. She was beautiful, but dead. 5 1/2 months old."

"No one ever told me I would live with this decision the rest of my life. It's been several years, but my grief continues."

-Letters quoted by Heritage House.