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Abortion: Part IV

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also failing to take advantage of the
of physicians around fairly large
cities because that is where the facil­
ities and the funds are. However, in
many instances, the sum of $100.00
a month would free one of these
physicians, who are driving taxicabs
in a South American city to make
ends meet, to go into an area which
lacks any kind of medical program
and ·
employed. Certainly, it sounds like
allow a nurse assistant also to be
one or two Guilds working together,
underwrite such
eral of them already have done this:
compared with the resources avail­
others. Yet, this effort is meager
been carrying the burden for the
majority of the Catholic medical
profession. These
by the pressure of work to try to
leagues, but when
delegate responsibility, many of the
collapse. The Catholic Medical Mis­
projects, which are so worthwhile,
organization has been making a val­
these, as has the Mission Doctors
Association of Los Angeles and
slowly, but surely, there will be
agency, however, does not exist at
the moment and it is difficult to say
when such would be available.

It should be increasingly clear as
we look about us that as doctors we
are not fulfilling our commitment to
the Christian life; we are not trying
to grow with and in our Catholic
Church with its up-dated outlook
and that an agonizing reappraisal
is in order. If Guilds are to have
reason for being, then as Catholic
physicians, we must have an impact
on everyone with whom we come in
contact. If your Guild is not as
active as you feel it should be, please
feel free to write your Regional
Director regarding the problem; if
there is not a Guild in your area,
then an associate membership
available that will bring you the
thought of the leadership of the
National Federation and keep you
informed of its efforts. Each one of
us, I feel can endeavor to answer
the question, “Does Christ have a
meaning in my life?” Perhaps, we
might read again the Apocalypse,
Chapters 20 and 21, for Christ says,
“I am the Alpha and the Omega,
beginning and the end, for of him
that thirsts, I will give of the foun­
tain of the water of life freely, he
who overcomes shall possess these
things and I will be his God and he
shall be my Son, but as for the
cowardly and unbelieving, etc., their
portion shall be in the pool that
burns with fire and brimstone which
is the second death.”

[DR. MASTERTON, a member of the
Northern Virginia Catholic Physicists
Guild is chairman of the Mission Com­
mittee of the National Federation and
Director of Region III.]

ABORTION
Part IV
RT. REV. MGR. PAUL V. HARRINGTON, J.C.L.

The efforts to achieve full legal
acceptance of abortion in countless
situations and circumstances con­
tinue to push on and advance on
the national and international scene:
in debates before Parliament and
State Legislatures, in forthright statements of public gov­
ernmental agencies, in ever-increas­
ing articles in popular magazines
and most recently in a full length

The year 1965 witnessed the
presentation before the Parliament
of Great Britain of the very first
abortion bill in that country’s his­
tory. There was much discussion,
debate and controversy but final
approval was given by the Parlia­
ment. However, the bill did not
become law because, before this
could be accomplished, the Parlia­
ment was dissolved prior to the gen­
eral elections held earlier this year.
The bill was reintroduced before the
present Parliament and has already
been overwhelmingly approved in
principle by the House of Commons.

The new bill would allow for an
abortion when:
1) There is severe injury to the
mother’s physical or mental
health;
2) there is substantial risk that the
child would be born with serious
physical or mental abnormalities;
3) there is severe overstrain on the
pregnant woman’s capacity as a
mother;
4) there is the status of being men­
tally defective, under the age of
sixteen or the victim of rape.

It has been well said: “All of
these grounds suffer from the same
viceous defect: the remedy for hav­
ing a child when you shouldn’t have
had a child is to kill the child”; and
“British doctors and parents will be
allowed to murder children who are
potentially healthy because they are
also potentially diseased. If it is all
right to kill a child who may be
abnormal, it is certainly all right to
kill a child who is abnormal. It is
not morals but horrible and senti­
mental esthetics that draws the line
at the first cry or at the entrance to
the womb.”

During the original debate, the
House of Lords passed, with a mar­
gin of twenty-four votes, a provision
that a woman’s inadequacy to be a
mother, be it physical or mental,
should be grounds for legal abortion.
Viscount Dilhorne objected saying:
“Surely, it cannot be right to destroy
a potential life because it is thought
that the woman will not be a good
mother. Surely, the right course is
not to terminate the pregnancy but
to remedy the inadequacy, and our
social services should remedy that.”
The Right Reverend Robert C. Mortimer, Anglican Bishop of Exeter, likewise dissented and remarked: "It seemed an extraordinary assumption of arrogance that he, any other members of the House, or any two doctors should determine whether a woman was not adequate to be a mother."

The House of Lords also confirmed another portion of the bill, introduced by Lord Silkin, which provides that any pregnant girl under the age of sixteen years should be entitled to an abortion operation.

During the debate in Parliament on the abortion bill, a committee of the Church of England, appointed by the Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility, reported on December 31, 1965, that there should be a broadening of the legal grounds for abortion and recommended "legal permission for abortion when a mother's life or well-being and, indirectly, that of her family are endangered by a pregnancy; and this situation, it says, could arise when the child was conceived as the result of rape or incest, or when there is a calculable risk that the child will be born defective or deformed."

The Parliament of the Church of England on February 21, 1966, gave less than full approval to this report and Father Canavan points out that probably even in 1968, when the next Lambeth Conference will be held, a majority of the Anglican Bishops will not be willing to adopt this report on abortion. However, the significant fact is that a wedge has been inserted inside the door of Anglican doctrine, and, in time, this Church will ultimately accept and endorse legalized abortion in much the same way as it finally yielded to the acceptance of contraception as a moral and licit means of avoiding pregnancy.

The Lambeth Conferences of 1920, 1930 and 1958 saw the gradual change in the Anglican Church from a total rejection of to a full endorsement of contraception. It would appear that the same Lambeth Conferences will be the vehicle for the gradual breakdown of the resistance to the acceptance of abortion. Historically, the Anglican Church has agreed on the traditional Christian view that all life, even the life of the unborn, was sacred and that any tampering with an unborn foetus was homicide. Yet, in 1935, the Lambeth Conference presented a slightly different doctrine by saying that Christians reject abortion in the strongest terms and permit it only "at the dictate of strict and undeniable medical necessity" and added, "the sacredness of life is in Christian eyes, an absolute which should not be violated."

Russell Shaw made the obvious observation, "If the sacredness of life is really an absolute, it is difficult to see how it can properly be violated, even in the name of 'strict and undeniable medical necessity.'" Whatever else may be said, the very fact that the Lambeth Conference of 1958 made provisions for even a small exception to the historically constant Christian doctrine against abortion makes it that much easier for future conferences to allow for greater liberty and more exceptions until, finally, abortion is given full acceptance and endorsement and will be accorded the respectability that the Conference has accorded to contraception since 1958.

Both thebill before Parliament and the report of the committee of the Anglican Church have been vigorously denounced by John Cardinal Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster and Catholic Primate of England and Wales. Writing in the February 1966 issue of Westminster Cathedral Chronicle, Cardinal Heenan stated: "Abortion is bound to feature largely in public discussions during the current year. Until recently the accepted view of Christians and, so far as I know, of all believers, has been that direct killing of the child-to-be is immoral. It is only because of what is called the liberalizing of the law against abortion that the Catholic attitude has begun to appear eccentric—as if abstaining from killing the fetus in the womb were a Catholic foible like abstaining from meat on Friday."

Referring to the report of the Committee of the Church of England, Cardinal Heenan observed: "It deliberately rejects what it recognizes to be the traditional Christian view that the killing of the fetus is a form of homicide."

Turning his attention directly to the bill before Parliament, Cardinal Heenan stated: "Once we take the control of the span of life out of God's hands we have no principles to guide us. It is equally hard to frame a bill for euthanasia because nobody can say when a patient has become too old or too ill to be allowed to remain alive. The beginning of life presents the same problem. If we desert God's law and invade His province we are at a loss where to set the limits. If it is justifiable to kill the fetus which may be born deformed because, for example, the pregnant mother has contracted German measles, it is hard to see why children who manage to be born deaf, blind or otherwise handicapped should not be immediately put to death."

More recently in an address to the World Congress of Catholic Nurses, held in Brighton, England, the eminent Archbishop of Westminster declared: "There has been a tremendous decline in the acceptance of the moral law. Who would have believed it possible even ten years ago that in England an abortion bill will go through almost unchallenged? How strange if only Catholics were to stand up for the sanctity of life in the womb? Because of a decline in faith there has been a widespread lack of proportion in viewing the sanctity of human life. People who will parade to defend the lives of murderers, people who will lead processions and demonstrate in thousands against those who defend themselves from aggression—these are the people who will destroy life in the womb and put to death those who are growing old and have contracted incurable disease. Make no mistake, once the abortion bill has gone through, the next move will be euthanasia—the destruction of the old."

February, 1967
Father Canavan comments on the report of the Committee of the Church of England thusly: "The Anglican report's significance lies in its substitution of a new moral standard for an old one. In place of the traditional principle that innocent human life is sacred and inviolable, it puts a moral balancing act, by which the fetus' right to live is weighed against the interests of the mother and her family. But once we accept the balancing act as morality of taking life, a further question arises: On this premise, how can we maintain that the infant who has just been born has an inviolable right to life that may not be weighed in the balance against anyone's interests?"

Much opposition has arisen in Great Britain to the Abortion Bill. Doctor Joseph Dignan, Secretary of the Catholic Physicians' Guild, has announced that the Guild has initiated a massive campaign to have the bill, legalizing abortion, modified and amended to exempt a doctor, on grounds of conscience, from participating in abortions. This appears necessary since patients do not have the privilege of choosing a private physician because of the National Health Service Program. Doctor Dignan has stated that, if the campaign to amend the bill fails, "we would still refuse to perform an abortion if asked. There is no question about it, a Catholic doctor would have nothing to do with abortion of any sort. This includes general practitioners and hospital staff."

Various lay groups are also active in opposing the abortion bill. The Catholic Link Society of Manchester, England, is distributing throughout Great Britain copies of a petition against the bill and asking as many people as possible to get as many signatures as possible. The signatures will be forwarded either to a local member of Parliament or to the Prime Minister. A group of Catholics in London has organized a national society known as the Committee in Defense of Innocent Life. This organization was founded to campaign against the current bill, to oppose abortion and to fight against the legalizing of euthanasia or the "mercy" killing of handicapped children. Thus far, a leaflet setting forth the objectives and purposes of the society, has been signed by 900,000 individuals and organizations and car stickers with the slogan "Keep the Unborn Unharmed" have been distributed. They plan to seek the united support of all members of Parliament, social workers and doctors who are known to be opposed to abortion and who will provide panels of speakers who will tour the country.

A further development finds Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists united in formulating their own petition of opposition and directed to the British government in which they describe abortion as "inhuman" and plead for the defense of the life of the "utterly defenseless child." It is a pity that all of this organized opposition has come only after the passage of the abortion bill has been assured. It behooves the interested parties and groups in the United States, who do not want to see innocent life exterminated or murder legalized, to organize and unite now before petitions are made to State Legislatures, so that effective opposition can be recorded from the very beginning. Let us profit and learn by the mistakes of others!

Assemblyman Percy E. Sutton of Manhattan has entered before the New York Assembly a measure, called the "Humane Abortion Act" and hearings were held by the Committee on Public Health. This bill was presented in order to liberalize the existing statute, which is eighty years old and which permits abortion only when the life of the mother is threatened and endangered. Similar bills to legalize more liberal abortion have been introduced in the past before the New York Legislature but none of these has ever been approved.

The Sutton bill provides for legal abortion when the continuance of the pregnancy would seriously affect the physical or mental health of the mother, when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, the facts must be proved, when there was definite threat or abuse of the life and welfare of a fetus. The prospective mother cannot be opposed to abortion and there will provide panels of speakers who will tour the country.

A further development finds Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists united in formulating their own petition of opposition and directed to the British government in which they describe abortion as "inhuman" and plead for the defense of the life of the "utterly defenseless child." It is a pity that all of this organized opposition has come only after the passage of the abortion bill has been assured. It behooves the interested parties and groups in the United States, who do not want to see innocent life exterminated or murder legalized, to organize and unite now before petitions are made to State Legislatures, so that effective opposition can be recorded from the very beginning. Let us profit and learn by the mistakes of others!

It would appear that the strict requirements of this bill should bring consolation to the citizen and a realization that the matter is being seriously considered and that all possible safeguards and protective measures are being invoked to prevent abuse. Yet, it is crystal clear that nothing is being achieved by these stringent stipulations and that the important question is being ignored: a board of hospital members cannot authorize the killing of an unborn child. Two doctors do not have the right or the prerogative to encourage or to order the murder of a fetus. The prospective mother, who should be the guardian and protector of the life within her, does not have the privilege of becoming its executioner. The District Attorney, who, by his office, has the responsibility to protect life and to proceed legally against others who threaten or abuse the life and welfare of citizens or who commit assault or murder, must not or cannot exploit his authority in order to justify homicide. No human legislation and no mere act of any Legislature can grant to an individual the right or prerogative of violating God's law and of allowing, justifying, ordering or even tolerating murder, homicide or killing of an innocent human being.

This is the central point and the only important consideration of the
entire discussion: human life is created by God and by Him alone and, therefore, only God has the right and the control over life — when it begins, how long it continues and when and under what circumstances it is terminated! No single individual, no group and not even society itself has any prerogatives or privileges concerning the termination of life.

The rights and prerogatives of God over life cannot be usurped by individuals or by groups; people cannot give unto themselves privileges concerning the conception and the termination of human life, which they do not have. This is precisely why Legislators and Parliament are out of order even to consider for approval bills that would authorize and legalize abortion under any circumstances. This is precisely why nothing of importance is achieved by having the validity of abortions verified by hospital committees, doctors, district attorneys; no one of them singly nor all of them corporately and collectively have any right or authority to sanction the killing of an innocent fetus for whatever human indication — medical, psychiatric, personal, socio-economic or otherwise. It is rash, presumptuous and daring for such to believe that they have the right or the power to contravene the Law of God and to assume unto themselves rights and prerogatives which belong only to God.

The abortion bill, pending before the New York Assembly, was returned to committee for further study.

Americans for Democratic Action, at its nineteenth annual Convention in Washington, D. C. this past Spring, took a position on abortion for the very first time at a national gathering. The delegates favored the recommendations of the American Law Institute that would allow abortions when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incestuous relations, when the continuation of the pregnancy would be injurious to the mental health of the mother or when there was danger of the child being born deformed.

The organization, however, went far beyond the recommendations of the American Law Institute and adopted a proposal, introduced by the Chairman of A D A in New Jersey, Irwin L. Solondz, which would permit an abortion for other reasons that were deemed sufficient by the expectant mother herself. This could include non-medical reasons. Here is prima facie evidence of the deterioration of the moral climate of at least a segment of our American populace. Here is the first indication of what could have been expected — carte blanche permission to murder the innocent unborn for any reason or for no reason.

Bentley Kasal, the Chairman of A D A in New York defended this very liberal position as "an absolute right of the individual."16

In the winter of 1966, a national meeting was held in San Francisco of the Society for Humane Abortion. The report indicates that five hundred well-dressed men and women attended. The meeting was marked by emotional appeals to stop viewing abortion as a criminal offense. Doctor J. Bryan Henrie, an osteopath from Oklahoma, and self-confessed abortionist, informed the delegates that he had performed five thousand abortions himself and called for complete abrogation of all laws prohibiting abortion. He stated that the only norm for determining the question of an abortion is the qualifications of the doctor, who would perform the operation and there should be no limitation on the person on whom it is to be performed by reason of her circumstances. The Society regards abortion as a surgical procedure rather than a criminal offense and considers that laws, relating to abortion, perpetuate the idea that abortion is wrong.

Education Minister Mohamed Carrim Chagla of India, told the sixth annual Convocation of the Academy of Medical Sciences at New Delhi that legalized abortion is the only solution to India's population problem as contraceptives would only touch the fringe of the problem. He declared "a woman must have the right to have an abortion. Doctors should be given the power to abort a child if a woman does not want to have one as against the present power to perform abortion only when the mother's life is in danger."17 This declaration, like so many others, is merely gratuitous and completely ignores the only true issue — Who is going to give the woman the right? Who is going to give the doctor the power? Human individuals, themselves the recipients of life from God, cannot bestow such rights and powers. Society — merely a collection of human individuals — cannot grant these prerogatives. Legislative assemblies are powerless to give such authorizations. The philosophical truism and axiom is very pertinent to this discussion — "you cannot give what you do not have".

It must be recalled that there is something more basic, more fundamental, more important than the mere indications which supposedly justify recourse to abortion under any and all circumstances and this something is the sacred, inviolable nature of human life: the right to be born, the right to life and a complete understanding of the fact that God alone has the prerogative to terminate a life.

In December, 1965, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago polled 1,484 people across the country as to their attitudes towards abortion. This number represented men and women; Catholics, Protestants and Jews and the results were reported on the basis of sex and religious affiliation. They were questioned about six different situations when abortion might be sought as a solution: when the mother's health is in danger; if the woman became pregnant as a result of rape; if there was a strong chance of serious defect in the baby; if the family cannot afford more children; if the woman is not married and does not wish to marry the man involved; if the woman is married but does not want any more children. From the
percentages reported, it was appar-
ent that, in all questions, those of
Jewish Faith favored abortion much
more than Catholics and Protestants
and, in some instances, up to 100%
both of the men and of the women;
that Protestants were the middle
and Catholics favored abortion
the least; that men proposed
abortion as a solution more than
women but in some questions that
there was not too much difference;
that, generally, the highest per-
centages were found when the ques-
tions referred to the
well-being of the mother and the
lower percentages were
when economics were involved or the con-
dition of the child.19

Recently, in the State of Vermont,
the Prevention Subcommittee of the
Governor's Committee on Mental
Retention suggested that abortion be
authorized where there appears to
be a risk of mental retardation of an
unborn child and that legal steriliza-
tion of the mentally
retarded might be advisable in some
cases.

Vermont Governor, Phillip Hoff,
referred in his book to the
"extreme reservations" about these proposals. Most
Reverend Robert F. Joyce, Bishop of
Burlington, blasted "the planned,
deliberate sacrifice of life so society
may not be bothered with those
who might be a burden" and said
the result would be that: "the State
would no longer be the servant of
man... he would be a slave of the
state" with his right to life based on
a "prejudgment of his usefulness."20

Much constructive research has
been conducted recently on the
amniotic fluid, which surrounds the
fetus and already predictions are
being made that the knowledge and
evidence can be used to indicate
when abortions might be performed.

In one area, Doctor Cecil B. Jacob-
sen, an obstetrician and geneticist at
George Washington University Hos-
ptal has announced that, by with-
drawling amniotic fluid by needle and
by mapping the chromosomes, a way
has been developed of detecting, as
early as the fifteenth week of preg-
nancy, the presence of severe inher-
ted defects such as mongolism.
With this procedure, he has been
able to assure two pregnant women
who had previously given birth to
deformed children, that they were
carrying normally developing babies.
On two other women, he found
grossly abnormal fetuses. In a recent
issue of Medical World News, Doc-
tor Jacobson announced that an
important result of the test is to
open new possibilities of abortion
for a mother facing the certainty of
producing a badly deformed child.
and stated: "I don't believe anyone is
going to stand up against abortion
for approved, determined genetic
defect... This is a good diagnostic
tool if we get the abortion laws
changed.21

The newspaper of the Archdiocese
of Washington, D.C. editorialized on
Doctor Jacobson's remarks thus:
"It is sad to contemplate that there
are those who can view this sugges-
tion as being a humanitarian
approach to life. If this recommen-
dation were to be carried out to its
logical extension, every individual
who suffered from debilitating
infirmities might eventually be
subjected to euthanasia. Equally
significant is the fact that Doctor
Jacobson's solution completely disre-
gards the inherent right of the
unborn infant, indicating that an
unborn infant simply has no unqual-
ified right to live. ... Finally and
most significant is the fact that
Doctor Jacobson permits man to
make a judgment that is reserved
to God.22

In another area, it was also dis-
covered that, by the withdrawal of
some amniotic fluid, the sex of an
unborn child could be pre-deter-
dined with complete accuracy. The
importance of this determination, as
far as abortion is concerned, is that:
"By knowing in advance whether a
fetus is male or female, the doctor
can determine the odds against the
child being defective when a parent
is known to carry a sex-linked dis-
ease. Hemophilia, for example, can
be inherited only by a boy. This
opens the possibility of therapeutic
abortion if the mother who is a
carrier of hemophilia has a male
fetus."23

Lawrence Lader, an outspoken
and active proponent of legislation of
abortion, has recently written a
book on the subject, obviously set-
ing forth the case for liberalization
of existing laws. Two of his state-
ments are worth noting: "Any
woman at any time should be able
to procure a legal abortion without
giving a reason" and, "An embryo
or fetus has no rights whatever
since it is only protoplasm and no
different from an appendix that a
woman may or may not choose
to have removed.24
In a recent meeting with physicians, population
experts and sociologists at Harvard
University, Lader announced very
sporadically: "Abortion is the inal-
vable right of all women" and the
right to abortion is "a fundamental
right of humanity and no law on
earth can deny it.25

It is interesting to note that the
right to abortion is now listed, along
with the rights to life, liberty and
the pursuit of happiness, as inal-
vable. The right to abortion and the
right to life are mutually exclusive
and contradictory. Thus apparently,
the right to abortion, at least in the
value scale and estimate of Law-
rence Lader, replaces the right to
life. The material in his book is
more emotional and hysterical than
factual and logical. As reasons jus-
tifying the legality of abortion, the
author refers with great humaneness
and concern to individual hardship
cases.

Lawrence Lader gathered his
information from interviews with ex-abortionists, abortion racketeers,
Protestant and Jewish physicians
and clergymen, who are known for
their advocacy of easy abortion,
hospital reports and limited statisti-
cal data.26

The new vehicle (just to show
that every possible means of mass
communications is being used to
"sell" abortion to the public) is the
novel. Lael Tucker Wertenbaker,
who previously wrote a very descrip-
tive account of her husband's sul-
cide, now attempts to incorporate the usual arguments and the justifying circumstances for abortion in the literary form of a novel. She does all of this through the main characters and their situations. The reasons and the situations very closely parallel the well-known positions of all the organizations and individuals who are working tremendously hard to liberalize the present laws on abortion and to replace them with directives that are more "humane and liberating." In the story, the plight of the young pregnant, unmarried girl who dies as a result of an illegal abortion becomes the obsession and driving force that prompts her father, a trained and respectable surgeon, to divide his time between the practice of orthodoxy medicine in the morning and the performance of illegal abortions in the afternoon. This latter fact provides the title for the book, The Afternoon Women. The main characters or patients provide the situations and reasons which justify the liberalization of existing abortion laws: a middle-aged widowed grandmother, who has become pregnant of a secret affair; the mother of four who just could not care for any additional children; a severely neurotic, single, career girl who has had three previous abortions.

In reviewing this book, Doris Grumbach states, "the remarkable thing about Mrs. Wertenbaker's book is the climate of sweetness and light with which she manages to surround this unsavory subject. Her case for legalized abortion is immersed in the atmosphere of 'John's Other Wife' and 'Ma Perkins' and there is an air of happy picnic days about the whole waiting period of the story. The whole case for abortion is argued in such a way that the novel is more a thesis than a story, and the characters only spokesmen for what Mrs. Wertenbaker feels strongly about."

All of the popular magazines have, in recent months, carried feature articles on the issue of abortion, e.g., October, 1966, issue of Glamour; October 8, 1966 issue of Saturday Evening Post. While prepared and written by different persons, they are all slanted in common: they all concentrate and oriented towards the liberalization of abortion laws and the absolute legalization of abortion; they all concentrate on the personal and the individual, to the exclusion of the universal and the absolute. They all present the hardship case that tug at the heart strings and clamor for humane and loving solutions that only abortions can provide; they all indict the Catholic Church as being out-of-step, prehistoric, ancient, conservative, obstinately in her refusal to abolish the cold, valid and impersonal principles of the past in favor of the personal and relevant solutions of the present that are based solely on individual preference and the exigencies and demands of the particular situation; they all are highly charged with emotional hysteria to the complete exclusion of reason and logic; they all are propaganda vehicles for the organizations and individuals that are fanatically attempting to make abortion respectable and acceptable to the masses.

The arguments, approach, emotional tone, vehicles of propagandizing are very reminiscent of the campaign to sell contraception of a generation ago. This campaign has only recently been completely successful with the adoption of liberal contraception laws by the last stronghold of opposition. The similarity between the previous campaign for contraception and the present campaign for abortion is so close that Father Canavan has entitled his most recent article History Repeats Itself.

The recent volume of Lawrence Lader on abortion is almost identical, in its purpose and message, to a volume prepared in 1928 by Margaret Sanger, entitled Motherhood In Bondage and whose avowed purpose was to make contraception respectable. This volume contained seventeen chapters—all of them presenting in heart-rending terms the intimate confessions of "enlightened mothers" who are "condemned to unwilling pregnancies." The author expressed birth control as "the surest instrument of the emancipation of enslaved womankind." Highly-charged, emotional and hysterical language is found in both volumes.

This writer has remembered verbatim for twenty years two particular passages from Margaret Sanger's introduction:

When I am confronted with arguments against Birth Control, arguments which seem to be so effective with learned theologians or indelible statistics, this dear old-fashioned chorus of suffering and pain begins to resound anew in my ears. How strange is it how emotionally and intellectually and how remote from the throbbing, bleeding humanity all of these prejudiced arguments sound, when one has been brought face to face with the reality of suffering.

There is pathos in those recitals of the young wife's effort to retain the romantic love of her husband, even though her youthful beauty has been immolated on the altar of enforced maternity and made a living sacrifice to the cruel gods of reproduction.

What cool, reasoned, factual logic!

The same vehicle of communication, the same approach, the same propaganda that gave us legalized contraception are being used, without any change in stress or emphasis, to bring respectability to abortion and no doubt will again be used in later years to legalize infanticide and euthanasia.

In commenting on the articles that have appeared in the popular magazines, in which the case for legalized abortion is presented, and in referring particularly to an article which appeared in the October 19, 1965 issue of Look magazine, entitled "The Growing Tragedy of Illegal Abortion," Father Canavan said: "It is a good example of a journalistic technique that can be used against anyone moral or legal principle. A writer describes a situation that is causing people to suffer; women with too many children . . . parents whose children are born badly deformed, children whose aged parents are dying in pain and ought to be put out of their misery, etc. He then points out the barbarity and mindlessness of laws that prevent people from taking the most realistic and effective means to relieve the suffering. The writer notes with regret that opposition to reform of
these laws comes from reactionary elements in the Catholic Church and that this is putting a strain on community relations, or, as we say today, on the ecumenical movement. The conclusion is clear: if the Church will join the 20th century and ally itself with progressive forces, we can all move forward to a more humane society."

Father Canavan also observes: "The Look article is also important as being symptomatic of a major shift in the value structure of our society... the morality of a particular action such as abortion. Modern society is secular and its public philosophy is becoming steadily more secularized. The only values that it recognizes are those that can be realized in this world. As a consequence, the greatest evil that it knows is earthly human suffering. For the modern secularized mind, suffering is never a cross to be borne; it is a problem to be solved, and no allegedly absolute moral principle may be permitted to stand in the way of a solution. ... Furthermore, the values that modern man wishes to foster and protect are principally interior ones that reside in human consciousness: happiness, freedom, authenticity, etc. Physical or material values, such as the integrity of the sexual act or the sanctity of physical human life, are sometimes an obstacle to realizing these 'personal' values. They, therefore, may be suppressed to the extent that they stand in the way. Out of this system of values has grown the notion that man has a right to total control over his reproductive system whether the control is exercised by interfering in the reproductive function through contraception, or by suppressing the function altogether through sterilization, or by eliminating the function's natural result through abortion."

It is strange that the popular magazines, which offer a forum to the proponents of legalized abortion for an in-depth and extensive presentation of their case, just never seem to feature an article by those who oppose the liberalization of existing laws whereby the falsity and speciousness of the propagandists of the former could be pointed out, challenged, rebutted and answered. Equal time just does not exist. Our opponents seem to have a monolithic control over the mass media of communication.

However, there is some consolation in the fact that there are instances in which an effort is being made to limit or restrict the further advance of abortion. There are some writings by responsible people which clearly demonstrate the evil of abortion and present valid arguments to counteract the propaganda of the proponents. The Police Security Chief in Stockholm, Sweden, recently pointed out that Swedish women who travel to Poland for abortions might be subject to blackmail and thus pose a serious problem for Sweden. Recently the Association of French-speaking Doctors of Canada submitted a brief to the Committee on Health and Welfare of the House of Commons wherein it was stated that intrauterine contraceptive devices not only cause abortion and their distribution should be halted. "Since abortion is essentially condemnable on moral and legal grounds... the distribution of intrauterine devices should be forbidden or at least postponed until the way they work has been explained precisely enough to exclude any possibility of abortion."

Rusell Shaw, has recently authored a booklet entitled Abortion and Public Policy. In this work, he sets forth the most common reasons that are used to justify abortion and critically evaluates the proposed statute on abortion, as suggested in the Modern Penal Code, presented by the American Law Institute, and concludes that the statute is unacceptable. Shaw points out in summary fashion what has been the impact and effect of easy abortion laws in Japan, Sweden and Hungary and demonstrates that the experience of these countries proves that with unlimited legal abortion, the numbers of illegal abortions increase by an equal or greater proportion than the increase of the legal abortions. This latter fact is certainly never mentioned or hinted at by the proponents of easy abortion; they carefully never discuss this aspect but try to stuff their advocates into a quasi-compliance and to make him think that, with legal abortion, all the horror and suffering of the executions in the dark rooms of private alleys will automatically disappear from view.

The author points to disturbances and distresses, physical, psychiatric and emotional, which many times result as inevitable side effects of abortion. He concludes by giving a summary history of the objection of Christianity to abortion from the first century up to the present time, based on the fact that abortion is murder and violates the right of God over life and violates the right of a conceptus to life.

Doctor Herbert Ratner, Public Health Director in Oak Park, Illinois, in the May, 1966, issue of Report magazine, characterizes the present drive for easier abortions as misguided humanitarianism and states that abortion "represents a somewhat barbaric throwback." He considers the suggestion, that abortion should be allowed in the case where the pregnancy resulted from rape and states that the claims of rape would be "astronomical." He asserts: "Usually when an unmarried girl comes into a doctor's office and says she is pregnant on the basis of rape and states that the claims of rape would be "astronomical." He asserts: "Usually when an unmarried girl comes into a doctor's office and says she is pregnant on the basis of rape and states that the claims of rape would be "astronomical."

In a recent discussion on the population problem, Doctor Duncan E. Reid, Chief of Staff at Boston Hospital for Women, declared: "Prenancy control through legalized abortion, which has vastly reduced recent birth rates in Japan, was distasteful to Judaic-Christian ethics and the death rate and other consequences of permissive abortion laws would not be acceptable in our society."

While Doctor Herbert I. Posin, Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Boston University Medical Center, does not oppose abortion on...


principle, he does strongly advise that the decisions for abortion should not be made by the medical profession but by small committees of responsible citizens. He points out: 

"Except in the rare case where serious mental illness is involved, the abortion question is mainly a human and social problem today and society should take responsibility for its own pity and tenderness."

In an address to the Catholic Physicians' Guild in San Francisco recently, Rev. Bernard Haring, C.S.Sp., stated that the criminal act itself is less harmful to society than the acknowledgment of the crime and the acceptance and tolerance of crime by society and the community. He added that the new full-fledged human being from the moment America decides that physicians have the right to kill on the probability that the birth of the child could provoke some future danger to the mother, how could the state bar convention in this country still say, 'we are promoting the dignity of man in the world?'." Father Haring concluded by stating: "If we cannot defend this most innocent of lives, then life is no longer worthwhile."

California has been in the news again recently concerning matters related to abortion. Two doctors in the San Francisco area, both obstetricians—Doctor Paul J. Shively and Doctor Seymour Smith—performed illegal operations on two women, who had been stricken with German measles, and the operations were performed in hospitals and with the full knowledge and consent of the institutions' abortion committees. Charges have been filed against these two doctors and they are in danger of having their licenses to practice medicine revoked and of facing criminal prosecution. It has been remarked: "Never before in the history of the United States is it more necessary to have a law that will deal with illegal abortions performed each year (1,200,000) and the number of women who die as a result of these procedures (circa 10,000)." Doctor Hellegers states: "I doubt that any first-year student in an epidemiology course could get past the first semester if he attempted to draw conclusions about the United States from a sample such as this."

Commenting on the figures, usually given by the proponents for legalized abortion, as to the number of illegal abortions performed each year, Doctor Hellegers replies: "You can't prove abortion is a public health problem unless you know exactly how much is needed and unwarranted and unsterile surroundings of the illegal market. They speak of what a calamity and a catastrophe it is: how much needless and unwarranted suffering and death; how broader laws would remedy this criminal situation. Doctor Hellegers replies: "Of this figure one can say, unequivocally and without fear of contradiction, that it is absurd." This certainly implies that our adversaries have been grossly misrepresenting and oversimplifying the figures, which represent the only basis upon which they cry for remedial legislation.

An editorial writer properly comments: "The conclusion seems to be that we are being asked to liberalize the abortion laws in order to solve a problem of illegal abortion whose dimensions we simply do not know."

...At the present time, in parts of the state of California, the licenses of several physicians are in jeopardy for this type of offense and this bill will justify them and open the door widely for a general practice of taking innocent human life. This life has equal rights to that of the born child. Who will profit the taking of the life of an infant because it may not be wanted? Has our American way of thinking become so dehumanized?"

In March of 1966, Dr. Andre E. Hellegers of Johns Hopkins University Medical School lectured at Georgetown University on abortion law. He declared: "I suspect, as we all suspect, that the proposed changes in the law have little to do with what is medically necessary, but are designed to deal with a rather major social and public health problem of illegal abortion."

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The problem of homosexuality has both religious and medical facets. It is widespread and refractory to current methods of treatment. It is of concern to the confessor, to the psychiatrist, and to the public at large. It reaches into colleges, seminaries, and the armed forces. The priest confronted by a penitent with this problem has no satisfactory guidelines for giving advice, and no place to turn for assistance. The psychiatrist discourages patients with this problem for fear of building up a clientele of a particular type, which might reflect adversely on his practice. Lack of information and lack of interest have thus conspired to lose these patients by default. The Guild of St. Luke, by virtue of its integrating function, professional interest, and Catholic background, could do much to improve the situation.

Among the more promising methods of treatment is a group-therapy arrangement, with a format somewhat akin to that of Alcoholics Anonymous. Conducted under Catholic auspices, perhaps in a hospital setting, with patients, priests, psychiatrists, and other interested individuals in attendance, and under the aegis of the Guild, much could be done and much could be learned. Such a clinic or meeting might well become a prototype for others elsewhere. It would improve the outlook for "cure" of the Catholic patient, since both psychiatric and moral aspects could be covered, something that neither priest nor psychiatrist can do alone.

The Guild, if it considers the project worthy of its attention, could undertake to establish a pilot program, with interested parties invited.

"CASEMENT": A PROPOSAL TO THE GUILD OF ST. LUKE OF CENTRAL CITY

EUGENE G. LAFORER, M.D.

The Guild is a unique organization — at least in potency — but failure to recognize its real purposes, or to implement them, has brought it to what must be frankly characterized as a moribund state. In a pluralistic society many sincere Catholic physicians question whether, indeed, a gynocratic organization of physicians united only by the common bond of a particular religion serves any useful purpose. In fact, they believe that bearing quiet witness to Catholicism in their professional and civic activities, without formal membership in a Guild, is much to be preferred. But actually the reasons for existence of a Guild today, though changed, are more compelling than those adduced in the past, when Catholic physicians felt the need to unite almost for reasons of self-preservation. To remain viable, the Guild must assume responsibility in areas where its unique structure and membership can be employed to best avail. As an example of an appropriate area, the concept of "Casement" is suggested.

DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE LINACRE QUARTERLY HAS INCREASED IN QUANTITY AND, WE HOPE YOU WILL AGREE, IN QUALITY. WITH THIS HAVE COME ADDED EXPENSES FOR PRODUCTION. TO CONTINUE TO SUPPLY THE JOURNAL TO OUR READERS, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION VOTED TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATE TO $400. BILLING WILL REFLECT THIS CHANGE, EFFECTIVE AS OF DECEMBER 5, 1966. WE ARE SORRY THIS IS NECESSARY BUT THE REALITY OF MOUNTING COSTS IS NOT ABSORBED IN THE FORMER $2.00 RATE.

LINACRE QUARTERLY

FEBRUARY, 1967