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Letter from New Zealand

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Letter From New Zealand

The past year has seen the continuation of the dramatic recovery in the economic situation, following on devaluation. Exports have increased by 59%, the Stock Exchange index is at a record peak, and overseas funds have reached a record incidence of 13% of all births. This shameful figure has at least the teenagers keep up with the rest of the world in the matter of drugs, drink, long hair, gate crashing, and generally giving their parents hell.

The fall in the birth rate has been arrested at 22.60 per 1,000. Illegitimate newcomers have reached a record incidence of 13% of all births. This shameful figure has at least the teenagers keep up with the rest of the world in the matter of drugs, drink, long hair, gate crashing, and generally giving their parents hell.

The recent recession temporarily increased the "brain drain" to Australia, Canada and the U.S.A., even leading for a while to a small loss of population for the first time in 150 years. As an underpopulated country we could not afford this trend.

The universal health insurance scheme has up to date been only a general practitioner service, subsidising the doctor's fee to the extent of 60%. The government assists the patient by the sum of $4.40 for most specialties, and $6.30 for one-curing ones such as medicine, neurology and psychiatry.

Maternity fees for general practitioners have been increased from $30 to about $70 for complete services. Specialists cannot charge the patient an additional $50.

Your correspondent has helped to aud the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child to combat the threat of we legalised abortion legislation, which during this year has been passed in Singapore and Australia. The President is Prof. A. Liley, who introduced to the world the intrauterine transfusion of the Rh type baby. Most church leaders, Christia n and Jewish, have agreed to being Fonsi Members. We expect an interest in this trend in New Zealand.

We have also organized a natural family planning service based on ovulation techniques. There is a great demand for this information from people of all faiths who have become disillusioned with current hormonal and IUCD methods.

To help the doctors, whose work should be solely educative, we have recruited nurses and interested lay people to follow up patients and convince the of the beneficial fruits of this way of life.

In the year following the enactment of the Catholic community has cooled down and reverted to ancient virtues. There was a spontaneous protest march on the Archbishop by a group of pro-life doctors and nurses. They also organized a "Swiss guard" to protect them. There were speeches, banners and boooing. It was stimulating while it lasted.

H.P. Dumb 122 Remuera Auckland

Letter From Canada...

Bill C150 is an omnibus bill relaxing requirements for divorce, permitting homosexual acts between consenting adults and having down criteria and procedure for performing legalized abortion and sexual sterilization in certified hospitals as well as other changes in the Canadian Criminal Code. This bill was introduced by the Minister of Justice John Turner (a Catholic) under the Liberal Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau. A free vote was not permitted — all members of the party being obliged to vote for the government bill. No amendments were successful. Now waiting passage by the Senate, it is about to become law in Canada.

I wish to discuss only the consequences of this change in law, relating to abortion and sterilization and its effect on Catholic hospitals in Canada.

The current constitutions of Canadian Catholic hospitals have incorporated into the moral code of the Code of Ethics of the C.M.A. (Canadian Medical Association) and the moral code of the Catholic Hospital Association shall govern the professional conduct of its staff and that where there is conflict, the Code shall take preference. This moral Code was written in booklet form around 1943 and adopted by The Catholic Canadian Hospital Association. Currently, it is supposed to be the process of revision. No changes have yet been published.

For some reason, administrators of some Catholic Hospitals seem no longer secure in enforcing this Moral Code, even though it remains in their constitution. It would appear to me that because governments are paying the hospital bills of patients and not medically indicated. I feel no conflict of patient interest by never carrying out these procedures and I practice Obstetrics and Gynecology. I also feel that Catholics have no monopoly on good ethics. Most Christian doctors do in fact respect life from conception to death. They therefore would agree to the moral code which I follow.

The following is a simplified code which I think should be acceptable to any hospital staff. It is neither Catholic nor Christian, but follows from a belief in a Supreme Creator, the dignity of man and the belief in a hereafter. This belief, I feel, is shared by most doctors.

THE MORAL CODE

This moral code of this hospital is based on the following beliefs:

1. That human life, from conception to death, has a dignity as a creature of God, with an eternal soul and life hereafter.

Perhaps it is difficult to enforce and, perhaps, as administrators only, there is no longer the power to control and enforce. If this is so; why Catholic hospitals? This new law in Canada empowers Hospital Boards of Administration to set up sterilization and abortion committees, who will review submissions and pass judgement on them, according to standards set by the law. There is no requirement that hospitals set up such boards, although an amendment to specify this not allowed by the government.

Current practice reveals that there is a tremendous variation in the frequency of sterilization and abortion in various hospitals and various localities. When further studied, it reveals that one or two individuals become largely responsible for this variation. But in all hospitals, where it is current practice to allow liberal sterilization and abortion, the number of such procedures doubles every six months.

I would like to remove myself from any implied pressure of the law, to carry on procedures which I feel are morally right and not medically indicated, I feel no conflict of patient interest by never carrying out these procedures and I practice Obstetrics and Gynecology. I also feel that Catholics have no monopoly on good ethics. Most Christian doctors do in fact respect life from conception to death. They therefore would agree to the moral code which I follow.

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