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## ABORTION

### A brief history of abortion

In 1861, the Offences Against the Person Act made it illegal to supply or use any “poison or other noxious thing” or to use “any instrument or other means” to cause a woman to miscarry. It outlawed abortion by either the woman or any other person such as a doctor, nurse, midwife or pharmacist.

In 1938, Dr. Alec Bourne performed an abortion on a 14-year-old girl who claimed to have been raped by soldiers. He gave himself up to the police, was charged with performing an illegal abortion, put on trial and acquitted on the grounds that the girl would have become ‘a mental wreck’ if she had not had the abortion. As a result of the Bourne case, more and more abortions began to be practised in Britain in cases where the woman’s physical or mental health was thought to be in danger, a loophole in the law that was interpreted increasingly loosely. Dr Bourne became so concerned about the results of his action that he became a founder member of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children.

In 1966, David Steel MP introduced the bill into parliament that became the 1967 Abortion Act. Supporters of the Abortion Act claimed then that it was ‘not the intention of the promoters of the bill to leave a wide open door for abortion on request’ although this is precisely what has happened. The Abortion Act allowed abortion with the signature of two doctors, on the grounds that:

- a) continuing the pregnancy would involve a greater risk to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or her family than if the baby was born
- b) there was a risk that the child would be disabled

Though no specific time limit was introduced by the Act, it referred to the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929 which said that no unborn child could be killed who was ‘capable of being born alive’. This was taken to be 28 weeks gestation.

In 1990, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act liberalised the abortion law even further, allowing disabled babies to be aborted up until birth. Since then, doctors have cited disabilities such as spina bifida and cleft palate as ‘serious abnormalities’ deserving late-term abortion.

## Methods of abortion

All of the following abortion techniques are carried out under the 1967 Abortion Act except for abortifacient drugs and devices, which are legally viewed as contraceptives.

### ABORTIFACIENT DRUGS/DEVICES

The morning after pill is misleadingly marketed as 'emergency contraception'. It is 50 times as strong as some forms of the mini pill and while it can act as a contraceptive by suppressing ovulation, it also works by making the lining of the womb hostile to the newly-conceived embryo, causing an early abortion. Other drugs and devices such as the IUD (the coil) and the mini pill are called contraceptives but can act in the same way as the morning after pill.

### RU-486 or MIFEPRISTONE

This is the fastest growing abortion technique in the UK. This abortion pill blocks the effects of the hormone progesterone that is needed to maintain the lining of the uterus. This causes the lining of the uterus to become detached along with the unborn child and is usually used with another drug, a prostaglandin, which helps to dilate or open the cervix (the entrance to the womb) and expel the foetus as in a miscarriage.

### VACUUM ASPIRATION

This is the most common abortion technique in Britain and is used in pregnancies up to 14 weeks. The cervix is dilated and a tube connected to a suction pump is inserted into the womb. The fluid around the baby is sucked out. Then the baby is torn apart by the force of the pump and sucked into a jar to ensure that the abortion is complete.

### DILATION AND CURETTAGE (D&C)

The cervix is dilated and an instrument called a curette used to scrape the developing child out of the womb. As with vacuum aspiration, all foetal parts must be removed to prevent medical complications developing. D&C which used to be the most commonly used abortion procedure is now not listed as a separate abortion procedure and is listed alongside D&E

### DILATION AND EVACUATION (D&E)

This procedure is used later in pregnancy (usually after 20 weeks) when the baby's skeleton and nervous system are well developed. After dilation, forceps are inserted to crush the body and remove it, piece by piece, from the womb.

### PROSTAGLANDINS

The use of prostaglandins is the most common form of late abortion in the UK. Prostaglandins are hormone-like substances administered to the pregnant woman through an intravenous drip or directly into the womb. Between 12 and 24 hours later, contractions occur, causing the premature birth of the baby. To make sure that the baby is not born alive, abortion doctors may poison the baby by injecting potassium chloride into the baby's heart or urea or salt solution into the amniotic sac.

### HYSTERECTOMY AND HYSTEROTOMY

Hysterotomies are very rarely performed nowadays. The procedure is similar to a Caesarean section and the baby is removed, intact and often alive. Abortion by hysterectomy is also very rare and involves the removal of the womb along with the unborn child.

## The Abortion case examined

### *'Safe, legal' abortion vs. Back Street Abortion*

Legal abortion does not necessarily mean safe abortion. See *Abortion and the physical health of the pregnant woman*.

Abortion is not an inevitable part of life as abortion supporters like to suggest, nor is it a solution to any social or moral problem. Abortion is a sign that society is failing women by providing inadequate resources and support to women in crisis pregnancies. The early feminists were against abortion: what they said was: **“when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is a sign that, by education or circumstances, she has been greatly wronged.”** This is the line that present day pro-life feminists promote. Serrin Foster of Feminists for Life describes abortion as **“a symptom of, not a solution to, the continuing struggles women face in the workplace, at home and in society.”**<sup>ii</sup>

Pro-abortion campaigners have always claimed that legal abortion is necessary to stop thousands of dangerous back-street abortions going on and many women dying as a result. This argument, accompanied by alarming statistics, has been used all over the world to persuade politicians to change the law on abortion but there is little evidence to suggest that backstreet abortion is the massive problem some campaigners claim it to be. For example:

- ❖ Dr Bernard Nathanson, joint founder of NARAL in the US (National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws) admitted when he changed his mind about abortion that the drive to legalise abortion was based on lies. He said: “We aroused enough sympathy to sell our program of permissive abortion by fabricating the number of illegal abortions done annually in the US. The actual figure was approaching 100,000 but the figure we gave to the media repeatedly was 1,000,000. Repeating the big lie often enough convinces the public. **The number of women dying from illegal abortions was around 200-250 annually. The figure we constantly fed to the media was 10,000.**”<sup>iii</sup>
- ❖ In Portugal in 1982, it was claimed that 2000 women were dying from illegal abortion every year. However, only 2099 women of childbearing age had died from **all** causes, according to the then most recent available statistics. Either Portuguese women never die of illness or accident, or the 2000-a-year figure was false.<sup>iv</sup>
- ❖ Dr Malcolm Potts, a pro-abortion campaigner and the former director of the international abortion provider International Planned Parenthood Federation, wrote: “Those who want the law to be liberalized will stress the hazards of illegal abortion and claim that hundreds, or thousands, or women die unnecessarily each year, when the actual number is far lower.”<sup>v</sup>

Legal abortion does not stop backstreet abortion. Between 1968 and 1988, there have been 986 recorded abortions performed illegally and 293 prosecutions in the UK. So much for ‘controlling’ illegal abortion.<sup>vi</sup>

The fact that abortion happens is not a reason for making it legal. Murder, rape and domestic violence occur on a daily basis and cannot be entirely prevented, but no one suggests legalising these crimes or allowing them to take place in a hygienic environment.

### *A Woman's Right to Choose?*

- We all have the freedom to make decisions about our lives, but with freedom comes responsibility. Every society restricts choices that harm others. A drunk person does not have the right to drive a car. The right of other road-users to safety is considered more important than a person's right to drive home after a few drinks. Similarly, the choice to commit child abuse is always wrong.
- Every woman has the right to make decisions about her own body, but mother and baby are always two separate people, with different genetic codes, nervous systems, fingerprints and even bloodstreams. The baby is still dependent on the mother long after being born but no one claims that the baby is part of the mother's body for that reason.
- Portraying abortion as a woman's right hides the fact that women are often pressurised into abortion for financial, social or personal reasons. A study in 1989 found that only 30% of abortion decisions are made by the pregnant women themselves. In 33% of cases, the woman's partner made the decision, doctors in 20% of cases, friends in 10% and parents in 7% of cases.<sup>vii</sup> More pregnant women now suffer domestic violence than pregnancy complications: a study in March 2003 found that 17% of pregnant women had been the victims of domestic violence and 3.4% had been violently attacked during their current pregnancy.<sup>viii</sup> When society loses its respect for the unborn, it follows that it also loses its respect for pregnant women. Women also bear the brunt of the abortion aftermath. 80% of relationships break up after an abortion.<sup>ix</sup>

### *Every Child A Wanted Child*

This slogan sounds compassionate, but what it really means is 'every unwanted child a dead child'.

- ❖ Abortion has done nothing to end child abuse. In the UK and USA, recorded cases of child abuse have increased substantially since abortion was legalised. Northern Ireland, which is not covered by the 1967 Abortion Act, has the lowest incidence of infant death in the UK.<sup>x</sup>
- ❖ Most abused children were originally 'wanted'. In a landmark study of 674 physically abused children, 91% of the children had been wanted and planned for.<sup>xi</sup> A study carried out shortly before abortion was legalised in the US found that "most women who were most regretful of the pregnancy now claim they would have the child again if given the opportunity [whereas] one of every six mothers who were initially pleased with pregnancy would choose not to have the child again."<sup>xii</sup>
- ❖ Most children are not particularly 'wanted' when they start crying at two in the morning. Nobody seriously suggests that it is acceptable to kill a child when they stop being appealing.
- ❖ Abortion is the ultimate form of child abuse, giving parents the right to kill their unborn children if they are not exactly what they want e.g. if they are a girl rather than a boy, if they have a disability or come at an inconvenient time.

**The problem of child abuse should be solved by eliminating abuse not children.**

### *Abortion to save the mother's life*

- ◆ Between 1967 and 1990, only 151 abortions have been carried out to save the mother's life, a figure amounting to 0.004% of all abortions.<sup>xiii</sup>
- ◆ In 1992, A group of Ireland's top gynaecologists wrote: "We affirm that there are no medical circumstances justifying direct abortion, that is, no circumstances in which the life of a mother may only be saved by directly terminating the life of her unborn child."<sup>xiv</sup> When Dublin's National Maternity Hospital (where 10% of all births in Ireland occurred) investigated the 21 deaths of pregnant women there between 1970-1979, they found that not a single one of those deaths could have been avoided by abortion.<sup>xv</sup> Incidentally, Ireland, a country where the unborn child is constitutionally protected, has the lowest maternal death rate in the world. The UK, where abortion is available practically on demand, has over five times Ireland's maternal death rate.<sup>xvi</sup>
- ◆ Developments in medicine mean that the 'abortion to save the mother's life' argument is becoming harder and harder to justify. It is now possible for women with heart defects to carry a baby to term with expert help and life-threatening conditions such as cancer can often be treated without harming the unborn child. Women facing difficult pregnancies have a right to the best available medical support.
- ◆ Direct abortion is the **deliberate** killing of an unborn child. Treatment to save the life of the mother that results in the death of the child *as an expected but not intended side effect* is not a direct abortion, e.g. in the case of an ectopic pregnancy. In this situation, the baby begins to develop in the woman's fallopian tube and has to be removed or the tube will rupture and cause the death of the woman. This involves the unavoidable death of the unborn baby but the aim of the operation is to save the mother not to kill the baby.

### *Abortion and poverty/social exclusion*

- No woman should be driven to abort her baby through poverty or social exclusion. Abortion simply allows society to get away with ignoring the problems facing women in crisis pregnancies. The compassionate response is to allow women, whatever their background, the resources necessary to bring up their children.
- Abortion discriminates against the poor. Margaret Sanger, the founder of International Planned Parenthood, the world's largest abortion provider, argued in 1922 that "all our problems are the result of overbreeding among the working classes."<sup>xvii</sup> Planned Parenthood has argued that abortion is "cost-effective" because "for every \$1.00 spent by government to pay for abortions for poor women, about \$4.00 is saved in public medical and welfare expenditures incurred as a result of an unintended birth."<sup>xviii</sup> It is in the interests of governments to pay for abortion rather than providing housing and maintenance for women and children in need.
- In the UK, mothers in need can ask for state benefits and housing.
- The law requires fathers to contribute to the maintenance of the child. If a man fathers a child he cannot simply run away.
- Pro-life charities such as Good Counsel and LIFE offer housing and support to women in crisis pregnancies. SPUC will always respond to requests for help from pregnant women: there is no need for women to face a crisis pregnancy alone.
- Women in actual danger can request police protection and safe housing

There are humane solutions to poverty and social exclusion. SPUC works to create a climate of tolerance and respect for life rather than promoting abortion as an easy way out.

### Abortion after rape

- Pregnancy as a result of rape is extremely rare. A woman is only fertile for 3-7 days during her cycle and the extreme physical and psychological trauma of being raped makes it difficult for fertilisation or implantation to occur.
- Pregnancies as a result of rape therefore only account for a tiny proportion of the hundreds of abortions carried out in Britain every day.
- Abortion is not a 'solution' to rape. The experience cannot be undone and should be responded to with compassion and support. For many rape victims who find themselves pregnant, the biggest trauma is not being pregnant but the memory of being raped.<sup>xix</sup>
- Abortion is itself a violent and invasive procedure. It should be remembered that many women who are traumatised by abortion describe a sense of having been violated.
- It is old-fashioned and socially unacceptable to judge a child by his/her father's actions or to punish a child for the crime of the father. A child may be conceived as the result of rape but cannot be held responsible. Pam Stenzel and Julie Makimaa were two such children.

"My biological father is a rapist. But I am still a human being and I still have value. My life isn't worth any less than yours because of the way I was conceived. And I did not deserve the death penalty because of the crime of my father." Pam Stenzel Straight talk from Pam Stenzel (1998) Vision Video Inc. PO Box 540, Worcester, Pennsylvania, 19490, USA

"It doesn't matter how I began. What matters is who I will become." Julie Makimaa  
<http://www.afterabortion.org/rape.html>

- Abortion providers are not primarily interested in abortion for rape victims but use them as a smokescreen to cover up their real intentions. They want abortion to be available to anyone, regardless of the circumstances. The use of rape victims is exploitative and trivialises the terrible damage done to women by rape. What makes rape a terrible crime is not the *potential* for a woman to become pregnant but the *reality* that she has been subjected to a violent and humiliating attack.

"I, having lived through rape, and also having raised a child 'conceived in rape,' feel personally assaulted and insulted every time I hear that abortion should be legal because of rape and incest. I feel that we're being used by pro-abortionists to further the abortion issue, even though we've not been asked to tell our side." Kathleen DeZeeuw <http://www.afterabortion.org/rape.html>

Lisa was 16 when she was raped on her way home from school. When she found out she was pregnant she was devastated, but said: "I had to have the baby. He was just as much a victim as I was and I wasn't going to make him suffer." However, when the baby was born, she rejected him to start with because he resembled her attacker. "I couldn't look at him. I didn't want to hold him. I told them to take him away." Eventually, she came to love him and says: "It never ceases to amaze me that something so precious and wonderful came from something so terrible. He's my beautiful boy and I wouldn't change him for the world." The Sun newspaper, 21 January 2004

*Abortion and disability or eugenic abortion*

- ❑ A person with a disability has the right to life along with every other member of society: aborting a baby because he or she has, or even *might* have, a disability, is the ultimate form of discrimination. In Britain, it is legally permitted to abort a baby on grounds of disability up to birth.
- ❑ It is generally assumed that parents will opt for an abortion if pre-natal screening reveals a disability and they are often put under pressure to do so.
- ❑ 9 out of 10 unborn babies diagnosed with spina bifida are aborted.<sup>xx</sup> A similar proportion of Down's Syndrome babies are aborted.<sup>xxi</sup>
- ❑ Encouraging abortion on grounds of disability encourages negative stereotypes about people with disabilities. In an article published on a pro-abortion website, Anne Furedi, a leading abortion advocate, argued that 'to deny this woman's choice is to condemn her to carry to term and give birth to a child that she may dread and wish dead.'<sup>xxii</sup> Why should a woman 'dread' having a disabled child as though he or she was a monster? There is nothing disgusting about having a disability. What is disgusting is society's inability to give people with disabilities the respect and value that is their right.
- ❑ Many people argue in favour of aborting disabled babies on the grounds that they are 'better off dead'. How does anyone know this? How can anyone - doctor, parent or member of government - be arrogant enough to decide whether a person should or should not live? Even when babies are born so disabled that they can only live for a short amount of time, they have the right to live out their natural lifespan, however long or short it is.
  
- ❑ Some claim that abortion 'prevents' disability but all it does is kill those who happen to have a disability. No doctor would claim to be curing cancer by killing cancer patients.

In May 2003, the International Down Syndrome Screening Conference was held in London. A group of people with Down's Syndrome had asked if they could speak at the conference but were not allowed to. They turned up anyway and one of them, Anya Souza, was finally allowed to say something about her own condition. She said:

"I can't get rid of my Down's Syndrome, but you can't get rid of my happiness. You can't get rid of the happiness I give others either. It's doctors like you that want to test pregnant women and stop people like me being born. Together with my family and friends I have fought to prevent my separation from normal society. I have fought for my rights... I may have Down's Syndrome but I am a person first."

## RELIGIOUS VIEWS ON ABORTION

### Early Christian Tradition

Judeo-Christian tradition going back thousands of years has always valued human life, including unborn human life. The Bible repeatedly refers to children before birth as simply very small/young children. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus and John the Baptist 'greet' one another whilst they are still in the wombs of their mothers. Luke 1:41 "It happened, when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." Psalm 139 describes the development of the unborn baby: "For you created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body."

One of the earliest Christian writings, the Didache or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles states: "You shall not kill the child in the womb or murder a new-born infant."

### The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church opposes abortion because it believes that life is sacred and inviolable. In 1995, Pope John Paul II wrote an encyclical letter called *Evangelium Vitae* (the Gospel of Life) in which he spoke of "the sacred value of human life from its very beginning" and of the struggle between the Culture of Life and the Culture of Death.

### The Orthodox Churches

Generally, the Orthodox Churches forbid abortion as going against the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. The Russian Orthodox Church condemned abortion in its document *The Church and the Nation* published in 2000.

### Protestant Denominations

Many Protestant and Evangelical Christians are against abortion. In Northern Ireland, Catholics and Protestants have united against abortion. However, some denominations are more pro-abortion.

The Church of England states that the unborn child is alive and created by God. The 1993 General Synod stated that "the number of abortions carried out since the passage of the Abortion Act 1967 is unacceptably high." However, the Church of England also believes that abortion is sometimes morally acceptable such as when a baby is suffering from a serious disability.<sup>xxiii</sup>

### Islam

Islam teaches that life begins at conception and is created by God. The unborn child has certain rights such as the right to care, protection and life. Abortion on any grounds is forbidden in the Islamic holy book Al'Quran. "Do not kill or take a human life which God has declared to be sacred." (Chapter 6,verse 151)

### Judaism

The Torah or Jewish law forbids the taking of innocent life and stresses that human beings are made in the image of God. Maimonides, a twelfth century interpreter of Jewish law declared: "A descendent of Noah who kills any human being, even a foetus in its mother's womb, is to

be put to death.” The only exception was if the mother’s life was in danger. However, even though traditional Judaism condemns abortion, there has been considerable argument within the Jewish community since the 1960s about whether or not abortion is permissible.

### Buddhism

In Buddhism there is no central authority on ethical matters but the Dalai Lama has spoken in favour of abortion under certain circumstances. In 1993 he said: “Of course, abortion, from a Buddhist viewpoint, is an act of killing and is negative, generally speaking. But it depends on the circumstances. If the unborn child will be retarded or if the birth will create serious problems for the parent, these are cases where there can be an exception.”<sup>xxiv</sup>

### Hinduism

Hindu scriptures refer to abortion as *garha-batta* (womb killing) and the *Atharva Veda* describes abortionists as the greatest of sinners. Gandhi, perhaps the most respected Hindu of the twentieth century, said: “It seems to me clear as daylight that abortion would be a crime.”

### Atheists and agnostics for life

Many atheists and agnostics view abortion as a violation of human rights and hold pro-life opinions for this reason. As one pro-life atheist who once had an abortion herself commented: “for the atheist who believes that when you die, your life is over... there will be no comforting of this being by a heavenly father, angels or relatives after a torturous death; there will be no mere re-incarnational transfer. Thousands of times each day unique, never-to-be-again, individual beings have their one and only chance at life terminated.”

Or, as Doris Gordon, founder of Libertarians for Life, expresses it: “the purpose of abortion is not merely pregnancy termination; its purpose is to kill, to take the life of prenatal human offspring. Under justice, however, there is no such thing as a right to kill innocent people – no exceptions.” Atheists can be passionately against injustice, violence, murder, the death penalty and war. They can therefore, just as logically, oppose abortion.

## THE EFFECTS OF ABORTION ON WOMEN

If abortion were as simple and straightforward as having a tooth extracted, there would be no such thing as pre- or post-abortion counselling. There would be no such thing as British Victims of Abortion. Post Abortion helplines would not receive tens of thousands of calls for help every year. Post Abortion Trauma would not be a recognised medical condition. If abortion were simply the removal of an unwanted “product”, films showing abortion would not be censored as “offensive”, campaigners would not be arrested for showing the public photographs of abortion. If abortion providers really thought that abortion was acceptable, they would not use misleading language like ‘the contents of the uterus’ and ‘the products of conception’ to describe what is medically known as a human life.

Abortion advocates speak of abortion as being ‘safe’, but the whole purpose of abortion is to destroy a human life – only 50% of patients who enter an abortion clinic come out alive. As a representative from BPAS explained during a debate at the Cambridge University Forum in October 2001: “there is no happy ending for a foetus in an abortion. We kill it. That’s our job.”

No medical or surgical procedure is 100% safe. Abortion carries certain physical and psychological risks to the wellbeing of the mother that are rarely talked about for fear of tarnishing the clean image of abortion.

One of the grounds for abortion is ‘that the termination is necessary to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.’ However, very few people ask what impact abortion has on the physical or mental health of a woman.

*Abortion and ‘the physical health of the pregnant woman.’*

**“In medical practice, there are few surgical procedures given so little attention and so underrated in its potential hazards as abortion,”** Dr Warren Hern, abortion doctor.<sup>xxv</sup>

- In the US there were 34 recorded abortion deaths in 1989 alone.<sup>xxvi</sup>
- 159 women in England and Wales died as a result of legal abortion between 1968 and 1985.<sup>xxvii</sup>
- Between 10% and 40% of women in the UK who request abortion carry the STI chlamydia, (often without realising it) and the number is on the increase. During the abortion, the infection is carried into the womb via the abortionist’s instruments and can cause pelvic inflammatory disease. The possible complications caused by this condition include infertility, chronic pelvic pain, menstrual disturbance and ectopic pregnancy.<sup>xxviii</sup>
- There is widespread disagreement about the possible link between abortion and breast cancer, but many studies suggest that women who have abortions are at greater risk of breast cancer, particularly those who abort very young. In 2001, the medical journalist Dr Thomas Stuttaford wrote: “breast cancer is diagnosed in 33,000 women in the UK each year; of these, an unusually high proportion had an abortion before eventually starting a family. **Such women are up to four times more likely to develop breast cancer.**”<sup>xxix</sup>
- The risk of ectopic pregnancy may increase up to 30% after a first abortion and 160% after 2 or more.<sup>xxx</sup> The risk of miscarriage and premature birth may also increase after an abortion.

Norma McCorvey, otherwise known as Jane Roe of **Roe versus Wade**, the court case that legalised abortion in the US, tried to have the case re-opened 30 years later. She presented evidence from over **1000** women who had been hurt by abortion but the judge dismissed the case without even considering the 5,437 pages of evidence.

- Although most abortions are carried out on grounds of danger to the mother's mental health, representatives of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Drs Oates and Kumar stated that in their expert opinion there was no psychiatric justification for abortion.<sup>xxxii</sup>
- Teenagers who have abortions are 10 times more likely to commit suicide than average.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Women who abort are 6 times more likely to commit suicide.
- 70% claim that they would not go through another abortion<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- 40% of women suffer increased anxiety levels up to 5 years after an abortion.<sup>xxxiv</sup>
- Half a million women in the US are thought to be affected by Post Abortion Trauma, a form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Symptoms include:
  - Depression/suicidal thoughts
  - Guilt
  - Grief
  - Broken relationships
  - Drug/alcohol abuse
  - Self-harm
  - Panic attacks
  - Disturbed sleep

Abortion providers and campaigners sometimes speak of abortion as a 'difficult' and even a 'distressing' experience but one that a mature and responsible woman will be prepared to go through under certain circumstances. If the abortion experience is so difficult for women, why should women be encouraged to go through it at all when there are clear alternatives?

Pro-lifers are often blamed for making women feel guilty or traumatised about abortion because they expose the truth about abortion through arguments or photographic evidence. But pro-lifers did not create the reality of abortion. Women hurt by abortion turn to the pro-life movement often because there is no one else prepared to listen. Some abortion supporters go as far as to ridicule such women, claiming "**you choose to be that way, because you are weak and vain, and you think your pain is important**"<sup>xxxv</sup> whilst the establishment simply ignores the damage caused by abortion.

"Society today denies women who have had abortions the 'permission' to grieve." Margaret Cuthill, Co-ordinator, British Victims of Abortion

## POPULATION CONTROL, POLITICAL CONTROL

### The Myth of Overpopulation

There are just over 6 billion people in the world today. Problems are not caused by the number of people but by the actions of people. Poverty and hunger are caused by war, political instability, corruption and the greed of the privileged few, not by overpopulation. Did you know that:

- ✓ If farmers used the best available agricultural methods, enough food could be produced to provide 35.1 billion people with a US style diet, six times the current world population.<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- ✓ The world has sufficient resources to provide an adequate diet as well as fibre, rubber and beverages for 40 billion people.<sup>xxxvii</sup>
- ✓ Only 11% of the world's land surface is currently used for agricultural crops. In 1993, the World Bank stated that the world's land and water use for agriculture could more than double.<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- ✓ There is not a single country in Europe with positive population growth. This means that Europe's population is getting older and that there will not be enough young people around to support the older generation when they retire.

### The Promotion of Abortion in developing countries

Abortion does not solve the problem of poverty. It deprives a developing country of its workforce. In countries with a strong tradition of extended family, it robs the elderly of the support provided by large families. Western governments pour millions of dollars into funding abortion and other 'reproductive health' programs, claiming that there are 'huge unmet needs' for them, whilst the concerns of the local populations go unheard:

- In a study carried out in Ghana in 2001, participants were more concerned about programmes to prevent diseases such as malaria and measles and the provision of clean water than the provision of abortion. Ironically, the only form of birth control that was repeatedly asked for was Natural Family Planning, the only system that is not enthusiastically funded by western governments. For more information about the study, go to:  
<http://www.pop.org/main.cfm?id=125&r1=2.00&r2=2.00&r3=.08&r4=.00&level=3&eid=142>
- When the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) launched a comprehensive population control programme during the war in Kosovo, it was discovered that the refugees were not interested in population control.<sup>xxxix</sup> However, population control provision for refugees was given priority over shipments of urgently needed health supplies.<sup>xl</sup>
- Population control programmes are sometimes imposed upon countries as part of an aid package. An Albanian Ministry of Health official, dealing with Kosovar refugees, was quoted in early 1999 as saying: "we have accepted international aid on condition of reducing births."<sup>xli</sup>

Women in developing countries should be provided with the means to care and provide for their children rather than being told how many children they should or should not have. Aid agencies should be funding aid without strings attached. Western governments and funding bodies have no right to impose their agendas and value systems upon developing countries.

### Political Control

It is in the interests of western governments to keep the populations of developing countries down. As far back as 1974, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, suggested in a memorandum<sup>xlii</sup> that it was necessary for US strategic, economic and military interests to limit the growing population of developing countries. He proposed a plan to reduce average family size worldwide to 2 children per couple and to ensure that UN institutions adopted the policy as a condition of US aid so that the US would not appear to be directly involved.

### Forced Abortion in China

In spite of claims to the contrary, forced abortion is well documented in China and is even enshrined in Chinese law. In spite of banning female infanticide and legally protecting women who bear female children, the law refers to occasions ‘when a wife terminates gestation as required by the family planning programme’. Chinese law also affirms a woman’s right to bear children... ‘in accordance with relevant regulations of the State’ which permit a woman to give birth to one child and possibly two if the first is a girl.<sup>xliii</sup> Does this sound like reproductive freedom?

When the Population Research Institute investigated allegations of forced abortion in China, they spoke to numerous women who had been forced into abortions by family planning officials and who had tried to resist. The study found that many who refused to have an abortion were heavily fined, had their homes destroyed, faced arrest or saw their relatives arrested because they had broken the one-child law.

The 2003 US Congress report on human rights in China noted: “Violence against women (including imposition of a birth limitation policy coercive in nature that resulted in instances of forced abortion and forced sterilization), prostitution, and discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, and minorities continued to be problems.”<sup>xliiv</sup>

When Sven Burmester, The UNFPA representative in Beijing was quoted in a national UK newspaper as saying: "For all the bad press, China has achieved the impossible. The country has solved its population problem" he did not point out that the ‘bad press’ he was referring to included reports of babies being drowned in paddy fields by family planning officials or of pregnant women forced into hiding. Nor was any mention made of the evidence given by Gao Xiaoduan, a former family planning official, who told a US congressional committee in 1998 that heavily pregnant women were often forced to have abortions. Most recently, a woman was reported to have died while trying to escape from officials who were attempting to sterilise her.<sup>xlv</sup>

The UNFPA and International Planned Parenthood (IPPF) have been involved with China’s one-child policy since 1979, supported by UK and US government funding. The Chinese Family Planning Association is affiliated to IPPF and IPPF has not only praised China’s family planning policies but admitted (without apology) that the China Family Planning Association has done the authorities’ dirty work for them: “Volunteers sometimes collect the occasional fine when a couple breaks the birthplan rules.”<sup>xlvi</sup> So, every now and then, IPPF’s affiliate has economically crippled a family in the name of population control.

The UNFPA claims to have played no part in China’s coercive abortion policies but abuses go on in regions where the UNFPA is known to operate and in one region, the UNFPA shared desk space with the Chinese family planning officials. Is it likely that the UNFPA does not know what is going on in organisations it works so closely with?

It is hypocritical to allow women to be deprived of their freedom to have children under the banner of ‘reproductive choice’.

## Sex Selective Abortion: Eliminating women in the name of women's rights

Abortion is constantly being portrayed as something that liberates women, but the worst form of discrimination caused by abortion is against women. In some countries, aborting babies because they happen to be girls has become such a problem that there are far too few women, creating catastrophic social problems.

### India

In India today, so many baby girls are being aborted that the male/female ratio has gone down to 793 females to every 1000 males in some northern regions. In parts of Punjab and Haryana it is as low as 600 females for every 1000 males. There are villages where girls have not been born for years, meaning that India is 'missing' some 40 million girls. Five million unborn baby girls are thought to be aborted in India every year, even though sex selection abortion is technically illegal.

As a result, India is suffering from what one journalist described as "the spectre of a society with a huge population of sexually frustrated bachelors preying on women because, after decades of female foeticide, there are not enough to go around."<sup>xlvii</sup> With a growing number of men unable to find a wife, abuses against women are growing, including wife-sharing, violence and rape. Dr B S Dahiya, a government official warned: "Violence against women is rising. We'll have more unnatural practices, such as brothers sharing a wife. In a few years, no woman will be safe. There will be abductions and rapes, even of minors." In some places it would seem, abortion is creating societies in which women are increasingly unsafe, not just in the womb but at all stages of their lives.

### China

China is suffering from a similar problem, with ultrasound machines being used to identify baby girls who are then aborted. As a result, male-populated "bachelor villages" are growing up as millions of men find themselves unable to marry. In spite of a government ban on sex selective abortion in 1995, boys outnumber girls by 140 to 100 in some regions and China has 41 million more males than females.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Abuses are becoming more widespread, such as baby trafficking. In July 2004, a Chinese court convicted 52 people of baby smuggling after police raided a bus and found 28 babies hidden in travel bags, one of whom had died of cold. The babies sold by the smuggling ring were mostly girls. As a result of the one-child policy, couples who want a boy often sell baby girls who are then bought by other couples as future brides for sons. As the BBC reported: "All over China there are poor villages full of boys who have little chance of ever finding a wife."<sup>xlix</sup>

In August 2003, the director of a psychiatric hospital was arrested for allegedly drugging and selling female patients as brides to men desperate to find a wife. The report in The Guardian explained: "China has 70 million bachelors unable to find wives."<sup>1</sup>

## THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT

### The Work of the Pro-Life Movement

- Campaigning

SPUC, along with other pro-life campaigning organisations, works through parliament to prevent anti-life laws being passed and to campaign for the passing of laws that protect human life at all stages of development. The SPUC division No Less Human campaigns against eugenic abortion and promotes the equal status, worth and rights of disabled people, most importantly the right to life.

- Education work

SPUC produces literature and trains speakers to raise awareness about the humanity of the unborn child in schools, parliament, hospitals, places of worship and the media.

- Welfare

SPUC will always try to help any woman facing a crisis pregnancy to find adequate housing, financial and emotional support. SPUC's sister organisation British Victims of Abortion offers support to women who have been hurt by abortion. Charities such as LIFE are the biggest non-governmental providers of housing for pregnant women in need. Pro-life groups in the UK provide safe housing, counselling services, post-abortion support and fund hospices for sick children, through the generosity of thousands of volunteers and fund-raisers around the country.

### Myths about the movement

- Pro-lifers are against women

The first feminists were pro-life. A large section of the pro-life movement's support base in the UK is made up of women and many of the most committed pro-life activists are women. The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, the oldest pro-life group in the world, was run for over 30 years by a woman.

- Pro-lifers are against science

Pro-life arguments against abortion are based on the scientific fact of the unborn child's humanity. SPUC, like other pro-life organisations, supports ethical scientific research which does not harm or degrade human life. There are many scientists, doctors and gynaecologists who hold the pro-life position and there are even pro-life groups run specifically for members of the scientific and medical communities.

- Pro-lifers are violent extremists

The isolated incidents of abortion clinics being attacked are not carried out by mainstream pro-life groups and are not representative of the pro-life movement. Every civil rights movement has an extremist fringe. Some suffragettes were prepared to use violence in the name of votes for women, a minority of activists in South Africa and North America resorted to terrorism in the fight for racial equality. This does not mean that the movements themselves were not peaceful or that their beliefs were wrong.

## QUIZ

1) WHEN DOES THE HEART START TO BEAT?

- a) 20 weeks after fertilisation
- b) At birth
- c) At about the same time the baby starts moving around
- d) From between 17-23 days

2) HOW MANY ABORTIONS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN THE UK SINCE 1967?

- a) 400,000
- b) 3 million
- c) over 6 million
- d) just under a million

3) HOW EARLY CAN A BABY REMEMBER SOUNDS?

- a) About eighteen months after birth
- b) 20 weeks after fertilisation
- c) 10 weeks after fertilisation
- d) One month after birth

4) WHAT ARE THE MAIN GROUNDS GIVEN FOR ABORTION IN THE UK?

- a) Rape
- b) Abuse
- c) Social reasons
- d) Financial reasons

5) HOW MANY CELLS DOES A BABY HAVE AT BIRTH?

- a) Unknown
- b) Approximately one million
- c) Just under 20 million
- d) About 2,000,000,000,000 cells

6) WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF CONTRACEPTION CAN CAUSE AN EARLY ABORTION?

- a) Condom
- b) Morning after pill
- c) IUD
- d) Mini-pill

7) AT WHAT STAGE CAN A BABY DREAM?

- a) Six months after birth
- b) One month before birth
- c) Eighteen months after birth
- d) 20 weeks or 5 months after fertilisation

8) UP TO WHAT STAGE CAN A BABY WITH A DISABILITY BE ABORTED?

- a) Any time up to birth
- b) Up to 24 weeks after fertilisation
- c) Up to 12 weeks after fertilisation
- d) Not at all

9) WHAT DOES THE WORD 'FOETUS' MEAN?

- a) unborn offspring
- b) collection of cells
- c) pregnancy
- d) product

10) WHICH COUNTRY HAS A 'ONE CHILD POLICY'?

- a) India
- b) China
- c) Ghana
- d) The Netherlands

11) WHEN IS THE EARLIEST THAT A BABY CAN SURVIVE OUTSIDE THE WOMB?

- a) When the heart starts beating
- b) 15 weeks after fertilisation
- c) 22 weeks after fertilisation
- d) Only after nine months gestation

12) NAME TWO GROUPS WITHIN SPUC

- a) No Less Human
- b) SPUC International division
- c) SPUC Evangelicals
- d) SPUC Life League

13) WHEN DOES THE BABY FIRST RESPOND TO TOUCH?

- a) 12 weeks after fertilisation
- b) 8 weeks after fertilisation
- c) 6 weeks after fertilisation
- d) 17 weeks after fertilisation

14) WHICH OF THESE RELIGIOUS DOCUMENTS CONDEMN ABORTION?

- a) The Didache
- b) Evangelium Vitae
- c) Church and the Nation
- d) The Atharva Veda

15) WHAT IS THE NAME GIVEN TO A HUMAN BEING AT ITS EARLIEST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT?

- a) Foetus
- b) Zygote
- c) blastocyst
- d) infant

16) APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE THERE IN THE WORLD TODAY?

- a) 23 billion
- b) 11 billion
- c) 6 billion
- d) 3 billion

17) WHEN DOES THE BABY START TO MOVE AROUND ENERGETICALLY?

- a) six months after birth
- b) one week after birth

- c) at approximately thirty weeks after fertilisation
- d) as early as 9 weeks after fertilisation

18) WHICH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE POSITIVE POPULATION GROWTH?

- a) All of them
- b) None of them
- c) France and Germany
- d) UK, Sweden and Spain

19) WHEN IS THE COLOUR OF THE BABY'S EYES DETERMINED?

- a) at fertilisation
- b) after implantation
- c) the colour may change up to a year after birth
- d) by week 11

20) WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE COURT CASE THAT LEGALISED ABORTION IN THE USA?

- a) McCorvey versus Bolton
- b) IPPF versus US
- c) Kissenger versus Nixon
- d) Roe versus Wade

21) AT WHAT STAGE ARE ALL ORGANS (EXCEPT LUNGS) PRESENT?

- a) 30 weeks after fertilisation
- b) 22 weeks after fertilisation
- c) 15 weeks after fertilisation
- d) 6 weeks after fertilisation

22) AT WHAT STAGE CAN A BABY CRY?

- a) Immediately after birth
- b) Up to five hours after birth
- c) 30 weeks after fertilisation
- d) 17 weeks after fertilisation

#### ANSWERS

- 1) d
- 2) c
- 3) b
- 4) c
- 5) d
- 6) All of them except a
- 7) d
- 8) a
- 9) a
- 10) b
- 11) c. This is the average but there are some babies who have survived even earlier.
- 12) a and c
- 13) c
- 14) All of them do
- 15) b
- 16) c
- 17) d

18) b

19) a. The colour of the eyes does often change after birth but eye colour is determined at fertilisation along with the rest of the genetic make up.

20) d

21) d

22) d

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<sup>i</sup> *Revolution* 9 April 1868, 215-6

<sup>ii</sup> The Thirty Years War: Dem candidates need to learn that to be against abortion is not to be against feminism, Norah Vincent, *Jewish World Review* January 23, 2003

<sup>iii</sup> Bernard Nathanson, Confessions of an Ex-Abortinist. See <http://www.aboutabortions.com/Confess.html>

<sup>iv</sup> The Abortion Threat to Northern Ireland Intensified, p. 11.

<sup>v</sup> Abortion (CUP, 1977) p. 529

<sup>vi</sup> House of Commons *Hansard*, col. 276, 17 January 1990

<sup>vii</sup> Franco et al. (1989) Cited in *Psychological Aspects of Abortion: an Update*, Dr David Kingsley MB, ChB, MRCPsych, Dept. of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of Liverpool. p. 7.

<sup>viii</sup> Reuters, 6 March 2003

<sup>ix</sup> Ney, (2000) Dr David Kingsley, op. cit.

<sup>x</sup> *World Health Statistics Annual 1996*, Geneva: World Health Organisation, 1998, B-635 – B-647

<sup>xi</sup> Study by Dr. Edward Lenoski, professor of paediatrics and emergency medicine at the University of Southern California School of Medicine, *Heartbeat*, vol. 3, no. 4, Dec. 1980.

<sup>xii</sup> P. Cameron et al. "How Much do Mothers Love Their Children," *Rocky Mt. Psychological Assn. May 12, 1972*

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<sup>xiv</sup> John Bonner, Eamon O'Dwyer, David Jenkins, Kieran O'Driscoll, Julia Vaughan, 'Statement by Obstetricians', *The Irish Times* 1 April 1992

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<sup>xvi</sup> World Health Organisation Statistics: maternal deaths, three-year average <http://www.euro.who.int/document/E79876.pdf>

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<sup>xix</sup> Mahkorn and Dolan, *Sexual Assault and Pregnancy New Perspectives on Human Abortion* 1981.

<sup>xx</sup> BBC News Online *Surgery Hope for Unborn babies* 10 July 2003

<sup>xxi</sup> Trends in prenatal screening for, and diagnosis of, Down's Syndrome: England and Wales, 1989-97 by David Mutton et al *British Medical Journal*, 3 October 1998

<sup>xxii</sup> Ann Furedi *How We Can – And Should – Explore Ethical Concerns About Abortion While Remaining Committed to Women's Needs*. Hard Choices, Autumn 1999.

<sup>xxiii</sup> <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/view/index.html>

<sup>xxiv</sup> Quoted by Clive Erricker in *Buddhism*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1995 (page 119)

<sup>xxv</sup> *Abortion Practice*, 1990. P. 101. Cited in A Way of Life p. 91

<sup>xxvi</sup> From the annual abortion statistics produced by the Abortion Surveillance Unit of the Centers for Disease Control.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Written parliamentary answer, *Hansard*, 27 November 1986

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- <sup>xli</sup> *ibid.*
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