

ABORTION: A QUESTION WORTH PONDERING --by Mark P. McElreath

Recently Dr. Alfred L. Kennan, director of the Midwest Medical Center, discussed with me his position concerning the conflicting scientific, moral and ethical arguments about abortion.

This Sunday on WHA-TV, Channel 21, at 6:30, Dr. Kennan will be on Pete Finney's public affairs presentation, "Abortion: A Life Worth Living." The second and third programs of the three-part series will be at 9 p.m. Jan. 17th and 24th.

Dr. Kennan, who performs approximately 125 abortions per week, has spent nearly \$25,000 in legal fees since he opened his clinic in Madison almost two years ago. He operates under a temporary restraining order stopping further criminal prosecution until the Constitutionality of the Wisconsin anti-abortion law is determined.

Presently the Wisconsin Supreme Court is considering the jurisdiction of the Dane county circuit court to hear a civil action suit brought by the state against Dr. Kennan.

Acknowledging that "the state has a fantastic right to protect its citizens from illegal and unethical practices by doctors," Dr. Kennan told me:

"Medical doctors are not above the law. I think the state should definitely regulate the abortion practice."

"For example, they should require that no abortion clinic be more than a few minutes from a fully equipped hospital, that each clinic have emergency equipment, recovery rooms, and an adequately trained staff."

Dr. Fred E. Mecklenburg has testified in the state's case against Milwaukee abortionist Dr. Duane Larkin that life begins "within two hours after the egg and sperm unite."

Dr. Mecklenburg contends the egg and sperm quickly generate a unique genetic code, and that "all that remains for this individual to be born to what we recognize as a human baby is simply a matter of time and nutrition."

Dr. Kennan disagrees. He argues that the fetus inside the mother is not capable of independent life until around the 25th week of development:

"To say that a unique genetic code is the beginning of life is similar to arguing that a blueprint is the same as the finished, constructed building."

Dianne H. Giovannini of the Wisconsin Division of Health has speculated that because the profile of the woman now seeking an abortion--white, middleclass, younger than 25--"is almost a direct parallel of the woman who previously released her child for adoption." There will be an imbalance in the supply and demand of "most preferred" babies for adoption.

Social work Prof. Alfred Kadushin of the University of Wisconsin-Madison reacted to this speculation by stating: "Abortion is only one reason there are fewer 'most preferred' babies for adoption; another reason is that more and more unmarried women are keeping their children."

"There are still a sizable number of other types of children who can be adopted by those seriously interested in adopting a child," Kadushin said.

Dr. Kennan commented that he could imagine having an abortion, but he could not imagine giving away a baby for adoption.

"If ever a woman will run screaming into the night, it will be after she has given a baby up for adoption--not after she has had a abortion."

Dr. Kennan recently gave \$20,000 to the UW-Madison School of Social Work to support teaching and research aimed at "lessening the frequency of unwanted pregnancy in our society." The bulk of the grant supports the work of Prof. Bruce C. Bashore, current lay minister of Prairie Society.

WHAT ABOUT A MID-WINTER RETREAT?????

If you would like another mid-winter retreat at the Mt. Horeb resort, now is the time to voice your opinion. Sauna...swimming...fine food. Give Lilo Koehl a call--233-7383--if you are interested. A convenient date for all will be scheduled.

THERE'S A CHURCH SCHOOL MID-WINTER BREAK

This Sunday (and last Sunday, for that matter) the church school is having a mid-winter break...and you are invited. Betty French, artist and maker of pottery, is demonstrating her art. All ages are invited to participate. Come downstairs, get your clay, instructions, mold, glaze and fire away. Join the church school folks on their mid-winter break.

HOW ABOUT A NIGHT OF SLIDES IN NEW GLARUS??

Would you like to see the canoe trip, back packing and other outdoor slides of Bob Elkins, who lives near one of Wisconsin's finest little towns--New Glarus, one-half hour south of Madison? Come to the January 26th meeting of the Show and Tell Camera club. Meeting at Paula and Bob Elkins home 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 26th. Directions: As you approach New Glarus on Route 69, take highway W (as in whistle) to the left (as in thataway) at the top of the hill. Or better yet, be car-free and call Theron Cladwell--255-0608--or, call Ruth Claden--233-5717--for a ride. Everybody is welcomed.

PLAY READING JANUARY 27th

The next meeting of the playreading group will be at 8 p.m. Jan. 27th, at the home of Jack and Mono Birong, 599 Glen Drive.

DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

Night classes for the University of Wisconsin-Extension course, "Developing an Understanding of the Black Experience," taught by Bettye I. Latimer, begin Tuesday, Jan. 16th from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. "It is hoped that the course will enlarge one's awareness of the historical significance of the black man and will promote an understanding of the changes necessary to eliminate the tensions underlying black-white relationships," Ms. Latimer said. Cost: \$12.50. Eight class meetings, all at the Wisconsin Center. If interested, call UW-Extension: 262-3980.

CIRCLE DINNERS WILL BE RESTARTED SOON

For those who planned to switch midyear in their circle dinner groups, the change-over will take place in February. Anyone interested in joining a circle dinner for the remainder of the year, now is the time...Give Lilo Koehl a call--233-7383.

PRAIRIE SOCIETY MEETS EVERY SUNDAY MORNING AT THE PORTAL FOSTER CENTER

1806 West Lawn Ave.

LAY MINISTER: Bruce Bashore, 251-5628

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