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## A DEEPER LOOK

# What Abortionists Fear Most

There are a few things you should know about Congressional hearings held on Capitol Hill. The first is, they are thoroughly political circuses, with only a thinly veiled pretense of being fair. And second, even with the Congress in the iron grip of the liberals, the unexpected still happens.

The House Judiciary Subcommittee hearing on the Freedom of Choice Act of 1990, on March 15, was meant to be a romp for pro-abortionists. Congressional pro-choicers could hardly wait to douse the issue in more rhetoric and confusion. But their strong-arm tactics to censor the facts worked against them.

All systems were go as the hearing began. The subcommittee scheduled a panel of pro-abortion witnesses first. Four abortionists and abortees described the impediments society still places in the paths of persons trying to kill their children. The usual extreme cases were trotted out—women with severely handicapped fetuses, poor women risking self abortions. Reporters in the audience were already framing the story in their minds (headline: "Witnesses ask Congress for protection from anti-abortion militancy").

Next came the pro-life witnesses. The first was Sheri Richard, an ultrasound technician, with a nine-minute videotape showing the very obviously mobile, very-much-alive in-utero antics of a human infant at only four weeks' gestation. As she began to introduce the tape, sub-

committee chairman Don Edwards (D-Calif.), a fervent supporter of abortion, told her that the committee had decided not to accept filmed or videotaped materials.

Obviously taking the witness for an idiot, he added that if she would distribute copies, the subcommittee members would be glad to view the tape in their offices (far from the view of the attendant press, by the way).

Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc.) entered the fray, pointing out that the subcommittee had not voted on anything even remotely resembling a policy against videotapes: Sensenbrenner repeatedly demanded to know when the subcommittee had made this decision, suggesting that it may have been when there were no Republicans in the room. Finally, Edwards stammered that the subcommittee could vote on this subject anytime—quite a change from his original story.

Sensenbrenner forthrightly accused Edwards of censoring the witness. Edwards countered with naked power, asking the subcommittee's Democratic majority to rule against the videotaped testimony. Sensenbrenner stormed from the room, calling the whole affair a "charade." But his point was thoroughly made.

On the whole, the hearing was a victory. Edwards had hoped it would spark a new pro-abortion onslaught, but as a media event, it got as much coverage as if it had been about oil depletion allowances. The chair-

man's neo-Stalinism, and the Sensenbrenner-Edwards exchange, apparently made the whole thing too hot to handle for the guardians of the public's right to know. The *Washington Post*—which defines the world for most Washingtonians—carried not a word about it. Likewise the other major newspapers. Several reporters left right after the pro-abortion speakers. Not only did they miss the gagging incident, they had never even intended to get both sides.

At the Senate-side hearing on the same bill, Miss Richard was allowed to show the tape, but Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio) enforced a rigid five-minute rule against the tape's nine-minute duration. Miss Richard's explanations were repeatedly interrupted by an abortionist at the witness table, who called the videotaped child "an oblongate parasite."

Aside from being a useful civics lesson, pro-life citizens may glean something more substantive from these events. Anytime we pierce the veil of invisibility—to show the humanness of the fetus—we will be vehemently opposed by pro-choice advocates. They know full well that their entire case rests on the supposition that the fetus isn't what it is: human. □

*Gary L. Bauer*

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**Q** ■ **What about quality of life? Isn't abortion the most loving act that can be performed for a handicapped fetus?**

"If it's loving to kill a handicapped child the moment before he's born, why isn't it okay to kill him after he's born?"

—Gregg Cunningham.

"If your answer to social problems that require compassion and love is to endorse murder then we're living on two different planets. You don't cure a patient by killing him unless you're a quack. You don't respond to tragedy by encouraging an even bigger tragedy."

—Susan Carpenter McMillan.

**Q** ■ **Aren't you really just interfering with a woman's right to privacy?**

"I can swing my arm anywhere I want to, up to the point where it connects with your chin. Then it stops being solely the right of one person. In the case of abortion, there are really two people's interest involved. The woman no more has the right to commit abortion than she has the right to drive drunk."

—State Rep. Penny Pullen.

**Q** ■ **You're just imposing your values on society, aren't you?**

"Each of us imposes our values on society every day. New York Gov. Mario Cuomo says 'I'm personally opposed to abortion, but I don't want to impose my religious beliefs on anyone.' And then, when the New York legislature tries to legalize capital punishment—which he also opposes—he vetoes the bill. In both cases he's imposing his values on society. We all do."

—Susan Carpenter McMillan.

**Q** ■ **You cite moral and religious reasons, but isn't it true that the Bible doesn't really address abortion?**

"Destruction of the embryo in the mother's womb is a violation of the right to live that God has bestowed upon this nascent life...and that is nothing but murder."

—theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

—Jeremiah 1:5 (NIV).

"Abraham became the father of Isaac and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah...Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, 'Why is this happening to me?' So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.'"

—Genesis 25: 19-23 (NIV).

"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. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

—Psalm 139: 13-16 (NIV).

**Q** ■ **Don't a majority of Americans favor reproductive choice?**

"The polls show that if you ask Americans 'Do you think a woman should have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion?' you get 67 percent saying yes. But if you ask those same Americans 'Do you think that unborn children should have legal protection under the law?' you get about the same percentage saying yes. So, what you must ask is what choice are we really talking about. And the choice is this: taking a life that can never again be restored, or serving the life-style needs of women."

—Gary Bauer, Family Research Council.

"The abortion 'debate' is much less an exchange of ideas and a quest for truth than it is an exercise in protecting your own turf. Pro-abortion supporters stake out their area of self-interest: women's rights as opposed to the rights of a child. Then they selectively screen out facts and arguments that threaten their area of self-interest. Then they define the terms in a way that protects their self-interest: 'choice,' 'reproductive freedom,' 'fetus'—rather than baby, etc."

—Gregg Cunningham.

**Q** ■ **But we must have abortion to control over-population, correct?**

"Killing people is always an effective way of controlling population. The question is, is that the way we want to be most effective? Civilized people don't control the population by killing people."

—Gregg Cunningham.

"One reason for the tremendously high number of abortions is that women use abortion as form of birth control. Abortionists have created a disincentive to responsible birth control. There have always been unplanned pregnancies. But the present ease with which women can obtain abortions directly encourages irresponsibility in handling their sexuality. And that, in turn, gives rise to an increasing number of unplanned pregnancies. And those pregnancies feed into an increasing abortion rate."

—Gregg Cunningham.

**Q** ■ **What about the lawmakers changing their minds on abortion? Aren't they telling us something we should be listening to?**

"I don't think we ever lose a legislator or congressman because he's thought carefully and deeply and suddenly changed his mind on the fundamental issue of when life begins. I think he's read Harris polls and believes that public opinion has shifted. That he might lose in November. I've never run into an average American that has switched from being pro-life to being pro-abortion."

—Gary Bauer. □

by Pete Winn

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