
To expose the deceits and outright lies and ruthless stratagems of the pro-abortion advocates is the clear purpose of this revealing and challenging volume in French by Michael Schooyans, a priest-professor of political philosophy in the University of Louvain. His ten years of experience lecturing in the Catholic University of São Paulo in Brazil add a Third World perspective to this most relevant of today's numerous moral problems.

S. sees legalizing abortion as the tip of the iceberg with political power being joined with medical-scientific expertise in a dangerous, well funded alliance, that could revolutionize our very notions of the person and of society. It is a world-wide movement and shows no sign of weakening, no loss of zeal or fervor to convert the world to legalize abortion.

A NEW LEGAL (IMMORAL) RIGHT FOR WOMEN

Instead of seeing abortion as a denial of the right to life of a helpless fetus, the pro-abortion people present it as a new right given to women — the right to dispose of their bodies in any way they please even if it means disposing of the human life they carry in their wombs. And the medical profession often stands by, ready and willing to assist. The freedom of women must be total and absolute. All penal sanctions must be removed from the aborting mother with the result that all protection is removed from the fetus. This is turning back the clock, restricting the right to life, denying
its universality, giving back to the State the hard-won rights of the ages, from the English Magna Carta in 1215 to the 1948 United Nations’ Declaration of Human Rights.

S. denounces this juridical positivism whereby the legislator strips away a basic human and inalienable right honored down through the ages. For S. this is the beginning of a perverse process which changes the democratic nature of the State and leads to a totalitarian mutation. It should be seen as an exceptionally profound qualitative modification of our concept of human rights. The person becomes a “citizen” fearfully dependent on the legislator for subsequent limitations of his basic rights. Euthanasia could be next, to eliminate the useless, the handicapped, the burdensome, those of the wrong race, color or political persuasion. Alarming as this seems, S. reminds us that it happened already in our lifetime in Hitler’s Germany.

HOW DID SUCH A CHANGE COME ABOUT?
THE NECESSARY STRATEGY

Such a profound change in Christian morality could not come about easily. S. exposes the necessary strategy. Initial resistance must be expected, even shock, so there must be a well organized propaganda movement. The mass media must be used and manipulated. Disinformation and even lies are employed shamelessly and relentlessly. The classical example of the falsification of statistics in the U.S. campaign is cited by S., recalling the revelations of Dr. Bernard N. Nathanson after he turned against the whole abortion movement. Dr. Nathanson in his 1979 book Aborting America candidly admitted that he “knew the figures were totally false . . . but in the ‘morality’ of our revolution it was a useful figure” (p. 193). Not only did they deliberately lie about the number of deaths from illegal, “back alley” abortions, but also about the number of Americans favoring abortion. It was stated that 60% approved of abortion when actually 99.5% opposed it. Similar falsifications were circulated in France.

DISCREDITING THE ANTI-ABORTION MOVEMENT

The strategy included classifying all opponents of abortion as
passé, conservative, reactionary, opposed to freedom. To this was added ridicule. The will of the "majority" was considered absolute. Law was reduced to sociology.

A new terminology was concocted to obscure the true issues. A clever misuse of words was combined with euphemisms, metaphors, paraphrases, avoiding the old, "discredited" vocabulary. This was essential to win support for an all-out attack on traditional morality. The word abortion was not used. Pregnancy interruption, inducing a delayed menstruation, "menstrual extraction," "post-ovarian contraception," a chemical that works "before a technically defined pregnancy" has occurred, were intended to eliminate any need to speak of abortion. S. might have added the newest term, the "pre-embryo."

**MOTIVATION TO ACCEPT ABORTION**

Carefully tailored to each country the motivation is chameleon. In New Delhi in 1972 at the International Congress of Family Planning, it was "decreed" that having the right to contraception brings with it the right to abortion which must be legalized. Besides being a "right" it is presented as a matter of eugenics, but most often it becomes a means of liberating women. In the Third World countries, abortion is presented as an economic or social necessity in the face of the spectre of a worldwide population explosion, ignoring the actual decline in population in more and more countries of the West and Japan where aging populations and labor shortages are already serious economic problems.

**THE COMMERCIAL ASPECT: ABORTION IS BIG BUSINESS**

Abortion has become a very profitable enterprise. S. notes that it is almost impossible to count the number of organizations that finance the worldwide anti-natalist campaign. "Population organizations worldwide now number in the hundreds" (p. 139). Funding comes from private foundations and from government agencies. Competition is keen for the many millions of dollars available. The pharmaceutical companies and research laboratories depend heavily on grants as they search for the ever elusive, perfect contraceptive and/or abortifacient.
THE NEW IDEOLOGY: DEMOGRAPHIC SECURITY

For S. the contemporary ideology of demographic security is the most totalitarian and reactionary of all. The evil is called the good. The violation of the moral law is not justified but simply denied. Moral judgment is not the concern of the individual but of society, which decides what is most desirable, what ought to be. It is an ideology manipulated and controlled for the profit of the wealthy minority.

The medical profession is asked to practice medicine for the good of the social body, no longer for the individual patient. Ridding themselves of "pre-scientific taboos" is the first step to adjusting to this new ideology. The doctor who was traditionally identified with the prevention of death now is to become the artisan of death in abortion. S. notes that the new ultrasound technique graphically portrays the role of the abortionist doctor as he diligently, anti-septically dismembers a helpless, living, squirming fetus. And all of this in a very detached, professional manner. Killing a living fetus or destroying cancerous tissue seems to be all the same for such doctors. Dr. Nathanson's video recording "The Silent Scream," showing an actual abortion revealed through ultrasound, caused a furor among the pro-abortionists in the U.S. That side of abortion must be passed over according to their strategy. The suffering of the fetus must never be mentioned. It offends modern sensibilities. Abortion must be portrayed as a painless, almost pleasant experience. The sight of the bloody pieces of a fetus would shock and alienate people. Therefore suppress and deny the reality.

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION (TEST TUBE BABIES) REVEALS A SHOCKING ANOMALY

When discussing the right of the mother to choose abortion, the law becomes indifferent to the fetal right to life. The distress of the mother and the possible but most rare danger of death through an illegal "back alley" abortion is repeated and exaggerated over and over again, while the very real death of the fetus is passed over in silence. Suddenly, with the development of in vitro fertilization
(test tube babies) the law was concerned with the life of the fertilized ovum in the laboratory, in the petri dish. The many legal discussions in the western world to protect the test tube life from abusive experimentation only highlighted the ridiculous contradictions in the law legalizing abortion. As S. notes, protecting the fertilized ovum from such abuses while allowing abortion "makes the embryo more secure in the laboratory in the test tube than in the womb of the mother" (p. 50).

A NEW CIVIL RELIGION

S. sees social demands overriding all other transcendental notions. Only science can give us the answers to the ultimate questions as the abortionists see it. Society is declared transcendent: a new religion is born, a new political atheism (p. 173). Utility is the only criterion for permitting a human being to be born. Since permanent utility cannot always be guaranteed, insecurity becomes intrinsic to our lives.

The infant killed in the womb is not considered as a sacrifice. That would give it a religious meaning. Rather, the infant is executed without the guilt being expelled from society since a totally secular society must be totally desacralized. A revolt against God is justified by seeing suffering and death as absolute nonsense. The new religion is one of the hidden perils of the abortion movement, an invisible part of the iceberg.

ABORTION AND THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

For the Women's Liberation Movement, abortion is usually presented as a great step towards emancipation. Women become masters of their bodies, of their wombs only when abortion is made legal and easily available, reliable with no dangerous side-effects or complications. The right of the mother to kill the life in her womb must be made absolute, subject to no other authority. No one is allowed to defend the fetus. The one concern is women's emancipation.
THE CONSCIENCE CLAUSE: A SOP TO MORALITY

Abortionists claim that they respect the conscientious objections of medical personnel who do not wish to participate in abortion whether in medical schools or in post-graduate programs. But this respect is only on paper. In practice objectors will be discriminated against and pressured to drop out of the course. As S. points out, their career is in jeopardy.

ETHICS COMMITTEES AND ABORTION

Ethics committees should be the guardians of morality in medical institutions, but they often adapt their ethics to custom, judging the morally right to be what society wishes it to be. S. cites the case of a doctor who refused to be on an ethics committee precisely for that reason. As a striking clear example of the moral fallacy in such an approach, S. cites the example of South Africa where apartheid has kept millions of blacks powerless for decades because it was customary.

A CONSPIRACY THEORY

Not all will agree with S. when he sees a conspiracy behind the spread of abortion, a new impersonal imperialism, anonymous, with no one in charge, proceeding not from a state but from a class, the rich. "Millionaires of the world unite" (p. 161). Population growth in the Third World must be checked for the sake of demographic security. S. sees Nelson Rockefeller as one of the first spokesmen for this new conspiracy after his visit to South America, as U.S. Vice President in 1969 (p. 158).

Knowing how prone we are to see an anti-Catholic conspiracy, or a Jewish conspiracy, or a Masonic conspiracy, it seems prudent to question this theory of S. But we should be alert to the signs of the time that threaten our basic Christian values, especially respect for life in the womb.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: THE FINAL CHAPTER

The final chapter of S. is devoted to the basic questions concern-
ing the morality of abortion. The most common and oft cited arguments favoring abortion are noted and refuted clearly and succinctly in 33 questions and answers. A lecturer would find this chapter especially rewarding.

The volume is enriched with an extensive bibliography, a listing of the latest Catholic documents, Papal, curial and episcopal, an index of proper names, a thematic index, and a table of contents. These and the excellent printing make it an attractive and very useful volume on this very important subject.

BAPTISM OF THE ABORTED FETUS

The Catholic Church in the 1983 Code of Canon Law reaffirmed its immemorial teaching regarding the obligation to baptize an aborted fetus. Canon 871 reads: “If aborted fetuses are alive, they are to be baptized if this is possible.” The commentators agree that if there is a doubt about the fetus being alive, for the purpose of baptism the fetus gets the benefit of the doubt, and should be baptized conditionally.

Since most planned abortions take place in the third month there is no doubt about the status of such a fetus. It is definitely a person, animated by an immortal, rational soul, a subject for baptism. All current, respectable philosophical and/or theological discussions about the time when the fertilized ovum becomes a person agree on the third week. From the moment of fertilization the unborn is going through a continued process of development. This involves a gradual narrowing of options, restrictions, gastrulation, rejection of and neutralizing of potentials, until the beginning of the third week when individualization has occurred. This is in harmony with the oldest Catholic teaching which postulated a period of development before the fertilized ovum was capable of being animated by a rational, immortal soul.¹

The immoral logic of the pro-abortionists will force them to attack the very notion of baptism of the aborted fetus. Having stripped the fetus of personhood they must deny the right to baptism.

By insisting in Canon Law on the right of the aborted fetus to be baptized and the obligation in charity of all concerned to administer the sacrament, the Church reinforces its strong affirmation of fetal personhood, and the supernatural dignity of the unborn. All the sophisms and euphemisms of the pro-abortionists are negated and rejected.

The post-Vatican II liturgical norms (1979) state that all lay persons and especially parents, midwives, physicians or surgeons should be aware of their responsibilities in such emergencies, belonging as they do to the priestly people of God. This could be a test of one’s faith in our modern secular society.

REFLECTIONS ON ABORTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The 1987 Constitution should have settled the matter once and for all with its “equal protection” clause. Article II, Section 12 spells it out in the clearest possible language. “It (the State) shall equally protect the life of the mother and of the unborn from conception.” There is no ambiguity, no room to cavil about implantation, personhood, animation, quickening, etc.

In an age when nearly every nation has legalized abortion, the Philippine Constitution forbids all attacks on the unborn. This is the only legal position worthy of a predominantly Christian nation which desires to promote respect for all human rights.

ACTUAL ILLEGAL ABORTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Unfortunately, in spite of this most laudatory provision of the Constitution, abortion seems to be very much a part of the Philippine scene. A 1984 report based on statistics from three public hospitals in Manila claimed that “1 of 4 pregnancies in Metro Manila end in abortion.”² In a 1987 address in Manila before the Department of Health and the World Health Organization, Dr. Martin de la Rosa estimated the annual number of abortions to be as high as 762,000.³ A later study in 1990 estimated as many as 750,000 abortions every year.⁴ One obstetrician admitted having

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performed 2000 abortions between 1981 and 1986.\textsuperscript{5}

It must be noted that these are estimates, extrapolations from the number of women admitted to hospitals with infections, bleeding and other complications from induced abortions. When abortions are illegal there will be no reliable records to consult and hospitals usually do not keep accurate records of admissions related to incomplete abortions. A previous (1982) report by an American Benedictine priest, Paul Marx of Human Life International, had estimated one million illegal abortions a year under the Marcos regime’s population control program.

Whatever the accuracy of the individual estimates, it would seem that there are large numbers of illegal abortions annually. The open advertising of help for treating “menstrual delay” and “menstrual extraction,” euphemisms for abortion, are found in many public places in Metro Manila especially near the large student centers, the “university belt.” The Pro-Life Philippines, a Catholic organization of the Archdiocese of Manila, is very much concerned about the abortion situation, and rightly so. The fronts for abortion advertise daily in leading Manila papers.

\textbf{PENAL CODE}

The Revised Penal Code of the Philippines in Articles 257-259 outlaws abortion and imposes severe penalties on the act in all its forms.\textsuperscript{6} Even this does not act as a deterrent, perhaps because of the nature of the crime. The true victim, the fetus, is silently eliminated, and there is no one to accuse the perpetrators of the crime, the mother and/or doctor/midwife.

Who has the abortions? Both single and married women. The single usually to avoid the shame of being discovered, and the married because of their poverty, because they felt that they already had too many children. At least in the provinces the “hilots,” or traditional birth attendants, top the list of abortion practitioners, followed by midwives, and self-induced abortion.\textsuperscript{7}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{6} \textit{The Philippine Star}, 25 Sept. 1990; Atty. Jose C. Sison.
\item \textsuperscript{7} \textit{Philippine Daily Express}, 28 April 1984.
\end{itemize}
A NON-INVASIVE ABORTION PILL: RU 486

Developed in France in 1980, the pill prevents the fertilized egg from implanting properly in the womb or later encourages the womb to slough it off. No danger of a punctured womb, no infection due to dirty instruments, it allows for abortion earlier than any existing method. It works by causing a "chemical miscarriage," the embryo being expelled in the equivalent of heavy menstrual bleeding. 8

It could fail to abort. The result would be a deformed fetus. Then there is recourse to a conventional abortion technique. The fetus does not have a chance. It has no rights. It must be destroyed because that is what the "mother" wants.

In 1990, 45,000 Frenchwomen took the pill. The producers are anxious to distribute it worldwide. However, there has already been considerable protest from pro-life advocates both here and abroad. In the U.S., the Washington-based National Right-to-Life Committee threatened a boycott of all products by the producer, the pharmaceutical firm of Roussel-Uclaf and its majority owner, the German chemical giant Hoescht, which does $6 billion a year business in the U.S. Labelling RU 486 "the Death Pill," the protesters noted that Hoescht had also made the poison gas used at the infamous Auschwitz prison camp, recalling all the horrors of the Holocaust of World War II. In the face of such negative publicity the drug was withdrawn from the market. But the French Minister of Health declared that the drug became the "moral property of women" from the moment it was given government approval. Hoescht was threatened with the loss of its patent unless it resumed distribution and the pill was again made available. Bad laws beget more bad laws. The government declared a pill designed only to kill the fetus as the "moral property of women"!

RU 486 AS PRO-ABORTIONISTS SEE IT

The pro-abortionists say that this new pill is for those women who are mature and take their responsibility with their eyes open. It makes abortion a strictly private affair. Women will feel more in

control and have the feeling that they are participating more in the process. Nothing is said about their guilt feelings, the most dangerous side-effect of all, one they can share with no practitioner, doctor or staff member in this new approach.

A VIDEO TAPE FOR "DO IT YOURSELF" ABORTIONS

The leading American feminist movements have produced a film which is called "No Going Back," which teaches women how to abort themselves or procure a "menstrual extraction" as they prefer to call it, lest anyone be alarmed. The U.S. "National Women's Health Network" which claims to promote women's health is advertising and promoting the film. Women's health seems to demand the death of the fetus! No doubt that videotape will find its way to the Philippines, if it is not already here. The zeal of the pro-abortion feminists will certainly manage to bring it here. They would never allow equal time or effort for the presentation of Dr. Nathanson's shocking film, "The Silent Scream," showing the brutal destruction of a fetus as seen through ultrasound.

WOMEN DYING DUE TO ILLEGAL ABORTIONS

As a proof that this argument never goes away no matter how often it is disproved, the November 4, 1990 keynote speaker, Dr. Sylvia Estrada-Claudio, cited it at the Sixth International Women and Health Meeting held in Manila in attacking the Catholic Church's stand on contraception. According to Dr. Estrada-Claudio, "large numbers of these women die because of unsafe abortions."9

It is an example of the "Big Lie." If you keep on repeating it, people begin to believe it. The Communists used it for 70 years until their empire built on terror and deception came tumbling down in ruins. There is no evidence given, no "killing fields," no "mass graves" are ever unearthed. But the lie goes on.

ABORTED WOMEN SPEAK OUT

In 1987 David C. Reardon published a book telling the stories

of women who had undergone an abortion, *Aborted Women: Silent No Longer*. Their confused motives, their lack of understanding, their physical sufferings, their psychological sufferings before, during and after the abortion — all are brought out poignantly in the women’s own words.

Abortion is supposed to be the result of their free choice but many of the women were told “they had no choice” because of their situation. Most say they would never go through it again. They were left alone with a terrible sense of guilt which was completely ignored by the abortion practitioners. The trauma recurs for many when they see newly born babies of their relatives or friends or on the anniversary of the abortion. This fits in with the custom of Japanese women atoning for abortions by setting up statues on the grounds of non-Christian monasteries to express their sorrow. Such sentiments cannot be “blamed” on any Christian influence. It has to be the voice of humanity, the voice of conscience crying out against such a destruction of human life.

**CONCLUSION**

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Many forces are determined to legalize abortion all over the world. The Philippines is no exception. We must always be on our guard against those who cannot accept the “equal protection” clause of the Constitution. In opposing them, we will be fighting for a most basic human right and in so doing we will be defending all human rights.