



THE 8TH AMENDMENT

IRELAND'S LIFE EQUALITY AMENDMENT

prolife
campaign

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ABORTION INDUSTRY UNCOVERED

Recently released video footage in the US shows top Planned Parenthood doctors discussing how they perform abortions to harvest human organs for sale from the babies whose lives they are ending.

The first video shows Dr Deborah Nucatola, Director of Medical Services at Planned Parenthood, munching on her salad and sipping wine as she tells undercover investigators how they kill the babies in ways that won't damage the organs for harvesting and sale.

Dr Nucatola says: "We've been very good at getting heart, lung, liver... so I'm not gonna crush that part, I'm gonna basically crush below, I'm gonna crush above, and I'm gonna see if I can get it all intact."

And the price tag? "You know, I would throw a number out, probably anywhere from \$30 to \$100 per specimen," she alarmingly states.

The revelations have caused revulsion and dismay in the US. For the first time in a generation the abortion lobby has been put firmly on the defensive.

Dr Nucatola is no rogue doctor. She is director of medical services for the world's largest abortion provider.

And she is far from alone. The second video shows Dr Mary Gatter, President of Planned Parenthood's Medical Directors' Council, haggling over the prices for aborted babies' organs and discussing "less crunchy" ways of doing the abortions to ensure more organs are intact, joking that she wants a Lamborghini.

The videos are windows into the soul of the abortion industry. What is most chilling is the sociopathic ethos of it, the absolute absence of any empathy or respect for the equal humanity of the babies they are dismembering and killing.

BETRAYAL OF WOMEN

The videos also highlight Planned Parenthood's total betrayal of women. They are forever telling women considering abortion that it's not a baby, just "a clump of cells." But when negotiating the sale of body parts for harvesting, all of a sudden, they talk about "intact hearts, livers and lungs."

The ghoulish and inhumane horror of what has come to light has only been tolerated because politicians and the media have colluded in giving cover to the abortion industry for years – they look firmly the other way, lest they should bolster the pro-life movement.

The Planned Parenthood scandal lays bare this massive abdication of political and journalistic responsibility. It also provides the most dramatic and compelling motive for us here in Ireland to resist the abortion lobby's drive to dismantle the 8th Amendment (Ireland's Life Equality Amendment).

“Campaigners for repeal of the 8th Amendment claim they only want to widen access to abortion in ‘very limited circumstances.’ What's the problem with that?”

Every abortion on demand regime began as “restrictive”, but once the door to legalised abortion was unlocked it was only a matter of ridiculing the restrictions until the grounds for abortion were widened.

Abortion advocates know that the vast majority of Irish people think that abortion on demand is abhorrent. So in order to get what they want, they must chip away at the legal protection for the unborn, building a campaign around calls for abortion in situations like where an unborn child has a potentially life-limiting condition. Heavily funded by international abortion organisations, they have used the same strategy across the world.

Usually referendums add protection to human rights. Pro-choice campaigners, however, want a referendum to take one away - the last remaining protection for the unborn child which the 8th Amendment provides.

“Putting legal protection for the unborn into the Constitution was a big mistake. Do you not at least accept that?”

The standard pro-choice line at present is to blame the 8th Amendment whenever abortion is in the news. Abortion advocates accuse pro-life people of burying their heads in the sand but they themselves won't even discuss what legalised abortion actually involves.

In pro-life circles, there are numerous stories of mothers and parents who contemplated abortion, only to change their minds at the last minute. Many say it's thanks to the 8th Amendment that their children are alive. Having to travel to England meant a few extra days planning and gave them time to think things through a bit more.

Why aren't these stories being heard in the present debate? Where is the acknowledgement of the reality that there are most likely tens of thousands of Irish citizens alive today thanks, in one way or another, to the protection the 8th Amendment offered them while they were in the womb?

It's much easier to accuse supporters of the 8th Amendment of being “sectarian”, “misogynistic” and “fundamentalist”, as some commentators did recently, than to engage in meaningful debate.

“Some believe that repeal or dilution of the 8th Amendment would bring ‘an end to the debate’ – that we would have dealt with the abortion question ‘once and for all’?”

Removing constitutional protection from unborn babies would result in massive and ongoing pressure being put on the Oireachtas to pass wider and wider abortion legislation. Only when unborn children have less legal protection than listed buildings or domestic pets would some abortion campaigners be satisfied.

¹ Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990 to 2010, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and The World Bank. Estimates, (2012) http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2012/789241503631_eng.pdf

² Savita inquest: The coroner's nine recommendations endorsed by the jury, (April 2013); HSE Report, (June 2013); The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Report, (October 2013)

³ In July 2013, news emerged that a woman from Ireland died in the back of a London taxi immediately after an abortion at a Marie Stopes Clinic in Ealing, London.

⁴ Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health, Perinatal Mortality 2005: England, Wales and Northern Ireland. CEMACH: LONDON; 2007

“But maybe women's lives would be saved if the 8th Amendment was repealed?”

That's a ridiculous claim. The repeal of the unborn child's right to life has nothing to do with saving women's lives. Ireland, without abortion, was one of the safest countries in the world in which to give birth.¹ Official reports into the Savita tragedy confirm that her death was due to medical mismanagement and not the illegality of abortion.² Whatever new abortion laws are proposed would be based squarely on which category of child it is permissible to abort.

“The UN and Amnesty Ireland have raised concerns about the 8th Amendment. How do you respond to that?”

It is very disappointing to see certain UN Committees and groups like Amnesty Ireland joining the clamour for more abortion here. They never seem to tire of finger-wagging at Ireland's abortion laws, but cannot muster the moral courage to highlight or condemn the ghastly abuses of human rights in the abortion industry – whether it be the death of a woman from Ireland following a botched abortion in London, or the leaving of babies born alive after failed abortions to die alone in hospital corners instead of being given proper medical care.^{3,4}

“What about abortion in the case of rape?”

The landmark Roe v Wade decision, which legalised abortion in the United States, shows how abortion advocates use highly emotive cases like rape to open the door to wide-ranging abortion. It's happening in Ireland at present with the campaign to dismantle the 8th Amendment.

Norma Mc Corvey (Jane Roe from Roe v. Wade) admits she was exploited by pro-abortion campaigners and then quickly abandoned once they successfully used her case to get abortion legalised. She now campaigns publicly against abortion.

Rape is a vicious crime. When a woman becomes pregnant as a result of rape it is an immensely difficult and agonising situation for her and tests our true compassion and solidarity as a society. Abortion is often the easy solution for everybody except the woman and her unborn child. The fact that it involves the taking of an innocent unborn life and exposes the woman to emotional hurt and possible long-term psychological harm is constantly overlooked by pro-choice campaigners.

WE'RE ALL WANTED BY SOMEONE

Ryan Bomberger is a human rights campaigner based in the US. He was born following rape and publicly thanked his birth mum for giving him life. Ryan has movingly said: "We're all wanted by someone."

Heather Gemmen faced a horrendous situation when she became pregnant after rape. In her book *Startling Beauty* she tells how relieved she is that she gave birth to her daughter Rachael: "So much of my anguish was in deciding what to do with the pregnancy. Now I know that going through with it brings healing." Her daughter Rachael, she says, "is the epitome of joy."

Every pregnancy following rape is a Ryan or a Rachael. Their stories and others like them deserve to be heard in the abortion debate. Each child conceived in rape is one of us, smaller and hidden from view like every unborn child, but equally a person. The child is absolutely innocent of their father's crime. They are not a part of their mother's body, or responsible for their father's character.

MS C'S ABORTION WRITTEN OUT OF THE PICTURE

The woman at the centre of the high profile C case was taken to England for an abortion as a minor. Her case surrounding abortion and rape was the subject of weeks of headline news before the State was granted leave to take her abroad. Soon after the abortion, it emerged that she deeply regretted going through with it. Overnight, the light of media scrutiny was switched off and Ms C was forgotten. The public's only memory of this case would be the outrage engendered in media circles making sure that the abortion took place. And that's how many in the media would like people to remember it.

"Why not devise an abortion law that just caters for difficult situations like rape?"

Ethical concerns apart, any legislation for abortion in the case of rape would be unworkable. How would an alleged rape victim prove that her pregnancy is a result of rape? A criminal trial could take years and, if convicted, the penalty for the rapist would be much less severe than abortion, which ends the life of an innocent unborn child. Those pushing for abortion in the case of rape know that the law would be absurd in practice. The truth is campaigners the world over have used the same tactic to get wide-ranging abortion.

⁵ Monika Jaquier, Report about the birth and life of babies with anencephaly' (2006), www.anencephalie-info.org/e/report.php. M Jaquier, A Klein, E Bolthausen, 'Spontaneous pregnancy outcome after prenatal diagnosis of anencephaly' (2006) 113(8) British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology 951-953.

"How could you possibly deny a parent the right to abort their child diagnosed with a condition 'incompatible with life'?"

The debate about abortion where an unborn baby has a life-shortening condition is not a medical one. It is about how we look out for one another as a society. Anyone can have a disability, a handicap or a terminal illness and it can come in old age, middle age, in childhood or even before we are born. In each of these challenging situations we have to look after one another in a way that respects the dignity of every human life.

A disturbing insensitivity has crept into this debate. Unborn babies with life-limiting conditions are variously described as "lives not worth living", "incompatible with life", "abnormal", "unviable" and even "corpses". There is a dehumanising, eugenic streak to these descriptions.

A recent Oireachtas speech described unborn babies with terminal illnesses as "simply a piece of flesh with no sensation, capacity for sensation or any form of feeling." Families who have been personally through this experience regard such comments as ignorant, hurtful and deeply disrespectful of their child. These parents also speak of their distress at pressure from doctors to abort such children. When politicians or doctors propose abortion for babies like this, they are making a negative judgement on the value of those babies' lives. No one would dream of saying the law should not protect the right to life of, say, a three year old with a disability. Why then is it deemed acceptable to campaign for abortion where an unborn child has a potentially life-shortening condition?

"The chances of babies surviving after birth with conditions like these are very slight. Isn't that correct?"

The term "fatal foetal abnormality" is grossly misleading. It is meant to indicate how a number of conditions (e.g. anencephaly, Trisomy 13 and Trisomy 18) are necessarily fatal for children either in utero or almost immediately after birth. The reality is different. Doctors have no way of knowing how long a child diagnosed with one of these conditions will live. They could live for months and even years after birth. Studies have reported over 70% live births of children conceived with anencephaly, with roughly a third of these babies living for at least two days.⁵ Almost one in ten children born with one of the Trisomy conditions live for a year or longer, in rare cases even into adulthood.⁶ They have been reported to show awareness of people around them, to react to sound, and to learn and remember.

⁶ Zoler, Mitchel L. (2003) "Trisomy 13 survival can exceed 1 year", OB/GYN News.

“We don’t have the resources in Ireland to deal with these kinds of situations. Surely, that’s another argument for abortion?”

In Ireland today there are parents who have returned home after aborting their child with a terminal illness only to learn for the first time about the existence of perinatal hospice care as an alternative to abortion. It is tragic and unacceptable that this is happening. The primary reason is the sustained media focus on abortion in these situations.

Instead of pressuring parents to go down the road of abortion, health care professionals should be given additional resources to provide high quality palliative care and facilitate families in sharing those precious moments with their baby for whatever length of time he or she lives.

STORIES WE NEVER GET TO HEAR

Gianna Jessen was born alive following a failed abortion, leaving her with cerebral palsy. Today, she campaigns for legislation that protects human life. If abortion is about women's rights, then what about Gianna's?

Melissa Ohden was also born alive after a failed abortion. Instead of receiving specialised care she was tossed in with discarded medical waste. A nurse heard her crying and intervened to save her life. Today Melissa has a Master's Degree in Social Science and is a care worker. We know that many babies continue to be born alive after failed abortions and are left to die just like Gianna and Melissa. How on earth can pro-choice advocates justify this?

In 2007, artist Emma Beck committed suicide, leaving a note saying: "I should never have had an abortion. I see now I would have been a good mum. I told everyone I didn't want to do it, even at the hospital. I was frightened, now it is too late." Heart-breaking tragedies like this never get the coverage they should get.

Dr Anthony Levatino is a former abortionist. He speaks candidly about the horror of his time in the abortion industry, like many other practitioners who could no longer stomach what they were doing. Why the total media black-out in highlighting important stories like this?

There is no end of stories like the ones above showing the dark side of abortion. But they very rarely if ever get reported. We shouldn't be afraid to call journalists out for acting as cheerleaders to the abortion movement. Thankfully more and more people are starting to take a stand against media bias on the issue.

“All things considered, there is ‘broad middle ground’ support for repeal of the 8th Amendment. Surely, you can’t deny this?”

The politicians and journalists campaigning for the dismantling of the 8th Amendment are already positioning themselves as representing the “broad middle ground” of public opinion.⁷ They never miss an opportunity to package their proposals as “restrictive” and something that only the “two extremes” on either side of the abortion debate would oppose.

An identical tactic worked for them when abortion was first introduced so it’s no surprise that abortion campaigners are employing it again.

The Government’s abortion legislation in 2013 was sold to the public as a very restrictive measure even though it provides for two like-minded psychiatrists to sign away the life of an unborn baby, safe in the knowledge that they don’t have to produce any medical evidence to justify the abortion.⁸ This misguided legislation is directly responsible for the unborn lives lost through abortion in this country since its enactment.

The sign of a truly civilised society

What we need is an honest debate on abortion and its impact on the lives of women and unborn babies, not another round of pretend Oireachtas hearings with a pre-arranged outcome designed to soften up public opinion for more wide-ranging abortion.

Each human being regardless of age, gender, disability, race, status in society, possesses a profound, inherent, equal and irreplaceable value and dignity.

Abortion advocates want the unborn child to be an exception to this rule. To do this they resort to the ploy of denying the humanity of the unborn. The sign of a truly civilised society, however, is one that welcomes everyone in life and protects everyone in its laws.

Our current abortion law, which ignores medical evidence and presents abortion as a treatment for suicidal feelings is unjust enough. The abortion legislation of 2013 ought to be repealed. The 8th Amendment, however, which provides the last remaining Constitutional protection for the unborn, should be retained and robustly defended.

⁷ Amárach Research, showing that 60% of the public oppose abortion where it is shown that abortion is not a treatment for suicidal feelings, (July 2013)

⁸ David M. Fergusson, L. John Horwood and Joseph M. Boden, ‘Abortion and mental health disorders: evidence from a 30-year longitudinal study,’ *British Journal of Psychiatry* (2008), 193, pp. 444-451.

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