

General Synod Archives



Abortion

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official2128>

Date: 1988 May

Source: National Executive Council. Minutes

Record Type: Resolution #65-05-88

Mover: Ven D.J. Woeller

Seconder: Dean B. Stavert

Prologue:

In response to a request from the House of Bishops (February 1988), the Primate reported he had invited Mrs. P. Creighton, Mrs. D. Marshall and Dr. J. Reed to form a Task Force to prepare a contemporary statement regarding abortion.

It was agreed that we, as Christians, must work towards the creation of a society in which every human being is welcome and recognized that we must both work for change of legislation which affects social programming.

Chancellor David Wright stated that difficulties outside the Criminal Code fall within the jurisdiction of the provinces and the federal government can enter the field only through the Criminal Code, but can control processes through funding.

Text: That this National Executive Council:

1. express its heartfelt thanks to the members of the Task Force on Abortion;
2. endorses the report of the Task Force;
3. refers the report to the Primate for appropriate action. CARRIED #65-05-88

Notes: It was agreed that the Primate should send the report to appropriate people in the life of the church and the country.

The Primate, on behalf of the NEC, expressed thanks to Mrs. Creighton, Mrs. Marshall and Dr. Reed for their report.

Subjects: Abortion - Canada

Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada

Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada



[Abortion]

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official5124>

Date: 1972 November 10

Source: Anglican News Service

Record Type: Press Release

Text: Toronto hospitals are performing abortions "without restriction," according to a prominent official of the Anglican Church of Canada. Rev. Arthur Brown, rector of a large Toronto parish and a member of the National Executive Council of General Synod made the charge in

National Executive Council of General Synod made the charge in connection with deliberations on a forthcoming report by a Task Force on Human Life.

The report is not expected to be completed until the end of 1973 and Father Brown said he and other pastors are impatiently awaiting it for guidance on new and complex moral situations.

He told bishops and other delegates from across Canada to the executive council that "all kinds of girls are going through our hospitals in metropolitan Toronto being aborted of pregnancies." His information, he said, comes from nurses and other hospital staff.

Father Brown claimed that staffs in some Toronto hospitals are aborting without restriction "under the guise of it being good for the total health of the mother."

Five years ago, he said, one Toronto hospital listed 28 abortions. Last year, the number was over 300, "ten times as many, or more."

He said "doctors are compromised by the destruction of human life" in this abortion situation. On becoming doctors, he said, they swear an oath to preserve life but due to the present situation "they are placed in a major compromised situation."

Father Brown said nursing staffs are upset over having to clean up after induced miscarriages and they come to him for guidance.

Archbishop E.W. Scott, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada expressed deep sympathy towards the position described by Father Brown but said the task force's report will take another year due to the complexities of the issues involved.

"It's becoming obvious that people are feeling a need for help in making decisions in these areas," Archbishop Scott said.

"Each case has to be evaluated in terms of the health of the mother and the possible health of the child, and not only on the question of the sanctity of life but also in the area of the quality of life."

Archbishop Scott emphasized that hospital boards deciding abortion cases should include persons representing moral issues as well as medical issues.

Besides abortion, the task force is studying the whole concept of when life begins and ends in relation to euthanasia, transplants, biological engineering and the vast implications of discoveries in biochemistry. Archbishop Scott said the study has become increasingly complex as it delves into the legal, medical, moral and social aspects of life. The task force is composed of lawyers, doctors, research scientists, housewives, social workers, theologians and others. It is also consulting with similarly concerned groups in the United States, Britain and other parts of the world.

A progress report will be presented to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada at its biennial meeting next May in Regina.

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Subjects: Abortion - Canada
Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Anglican Church of Canada. Task Force on Human Life
Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Medical ethics - Canada
Chaplains, Hospital - Anglican Church of Canada
Brown, Arthur D. (Arthur Durrant), 1926-2011



Anglican Church Seeks Third Option in Abortion Debate: Neither Woman nor Foetus Should be Victim, Report Says

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official1843>

Date: 1988 May 13
Source: Anglican News Service
Record Type: Press Release
Text: For immediate release

Mississauga, May 13, 1988 -- The Anglican Church will today [EDITOR: Friday] attempt to define a third choice in the debate on therapeutic abortion.

A task force report to be delivered to the church's national executive council meeting here this afternoon, says: "Too often the abortion debate is couched in terms of a woman's right over her own body as against a foetus's right to life." It suggests the issue may be addressed from a new perspective in which neither the mother nor the foetus is required to serve as "victim."

"Christians hold a spectrum of personal views about the morality of abortion, from utter rejection of it to conviction that it is a personal ethical matter for a woman."

Either approach, the report suggests, is one-sided: either it ignores the cry of the unborn while trying to raise the status of women; or it remains indifferent to the plight of women while trying to protect the unborn.

The task force was convened in March to consider the Anglican Church's stance on abortion in light of the Supreme Court's decision in the Morgentaler case. That decision declared the provisions of the Criminal Code dealing with abortions to be unconstitutional. The church had previously expressed its support for the law.

The 15-page report recommends that the church continue to oppose unregulated access to abortion. The church, it says, sees abortion as "always a tragedy fraught with moral ambiguity...To resort to abortion lightly or casually is to degrade our humanity, to deny the responsibility and responsiveness of human nature."

SEEKING "TRUE" CHOICE

The report spends its greatest energy addressing the circumstances in which women "choose" abortion. In many cases, it says, the choice is hollow: When women choose to abort, it is frequently in coercive, lonely and grief-stricken circumstances where they feel completely unable to bear their child. Often the biggest problem facing the woman is her lack of a real social and economic support system. Many women who choose not to bear their children, then, make their decision out of alienation and

hopelessness.

"For us as Christians, such despair cannot be left as the motive force... True choice must involve alternatives to despair."

The report says new legislation to regulate abortion should "establish procedures to make abortion available equitably across the country as a therapeutic measure for women whose pregnancies endanger their life or their physical or mental health." It says counselling should be required.

The report rejects the concept of legislating easy access to early abortion and more restricted access later in the term (after 12 weeks for example): "Abortion is always the taking of a human life and, in our view, should never be done except for serious therapeutic reasons. Any such line is arbitrary and seems to argue that the value of the foetus and the seriousness of abortion in the early stages will be discounted."

ABORTION OR POVERTY TOO OFTEN ONLY CHOICE

Noting that many women have a choice of aborting a foetus or bearing a child to live in poverty, the report urges an extensive program of social action to reduce conditions which make the choice of abortion more likely. It stresses the need for:

- * more affordable housing;
- * pay equity for women;
- * a guaranteed annual income, and other financial measures "to secure the dignity -- indeed the survival -- of mothers and children;"
- * universally accessible, publicly funded child care;
- * an intensified national program to collect child support payments from delinquent fathers;
- * better educational programs about sexuality, including contraception, in the schools;
- * and other measures.

The council, which has been meeting since Wednesday, concludes late this afternoon.

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For further information contact: Doug Tindal, Director of Communications, Anglican Church of Canada, (416) 924-9192 ext 286, (416) 335-8349 residence

Subjects:

Abortion - Canada
Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Sexual ethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Women - Canada
Birth control - Canada
Birth control - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Contraception - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Poor women - Canada
Poverty - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada



Long Range Planning Committee Report [Abortion]

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official1124>

Date: 1980 June

Source: General Synod. Minutes

Record Type: Act 89

Mover: Miss W. Ainsworth

Seconder: Mrs. E. Rankin

Text: That this General Synod encourage each diocese to be responsible for sending copies of resolutions passed at General Synod regarding abortion and programs of education on this topic once they are developed, to the various secular agencies involved in counselling of families and young women facing issues of abortion. CARRIED ACT 89

Subjects: Abortion - Canada
Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada



Report of the House of Bishops

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official2088>

Date: 1988 November 16-18

Source: National Executive Council. Minutes

Record Type: Resolution 49-11-88

Mover: Most Rev. W.H. Jones

Seconder: Rt. Rev. H.J.P. Allan

Prologue: The Primate, as President of the House, presented the report and outlined the recommendations.

Text: That this National Executive Council authorize the Primate to take the necessary steps as soon as possible to have the Report on Abortion, following minor revisions, printed in an appropriate form and made available to the church and the Canadian public. CARRIED #49-11-88

Subjects: Abortion - Canada
Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada



Task Force on Human Life - Report on Abortion

<http://archives.anglican.ca/en/permalink/official4422>

Date: 1973 November 7-9
Source: National Executive Council Minutes
Record Type: Resolution
Mover: Brown
Seconder: Peers
Prologue: Dean Nock, in introducing the report of the Task Force on Human Life on Abortion, noted General Synod, 1971, Resolution which called for the establishment of the Task Force, and General Synod, 1973, Resolution requesting the Task Force to produce a report for November NEC on Abortion.

The Primate introduced those members of the Task Force present: Rev. P. Chidwick - Chairman, Rev. P. Gibson, Miss Betty C. Graham, Mr. H. Allan Leal, Mr. S.E. Kingstone, Dr. C.R. Feilding, Dr. David McCallion, Mrs. Phyllis Creighton, Dr. Eugene Fairweather.

Mr. Chidwick, in his introductory remarks, noted that the Task Force will address itself in the future to such pertinent areas of concern as transplantation, cloning, euthanasia, artificial insemination by donor, and stated that the Task Force would be pleased to submit further Papers to the NEC.

Mrs. Phyllis Creighton, in speaking to the Report on behalf of the Task Force, noted three major areas to which the Task Force had given consideration; the Law, the Church's role, and the Community.

Following a period of discussion and dialogue with members of the Task Force the following action was taken.

Text: That this National Executive Council receive the Report on Abortion of the Task Force on Human Life with appreciation to the members of the Task Force for their efforts, insights and recommendations;

That we endorse those recommendations and express the hope that the Task Force will continue its work within the original terms of reference;

And that we commend the Report to the Church, the Government and the Community for study, and that it be referred to the Program Committee to publish and implement the Report in close cooperation with the Task Force on Human Life. CARRIED

Notes: In closing, the Primate thanked the members of the Task Force for their presence, and for their generous gifts of interdisciplinary expertise represented in the Report on Abortion. Archbishop Scott paid special tribute to Mrs. Phyllis Creighton who edited and compiled the Report, and presented Mrs. Creighton with a floral token of appreciation on behalf of the members of the National Executive Council.

Subjects: Abortion - Canada
Abortion - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Bioethics - Religious aspects - Anglican Church of Canada
Creighton, Phyllis (Phyllis Joyce Manning)