

THE "MIDDLE GROUND" DECEPTION

BY Wanda Franz, Ph.D.

Paul Greenberg, the distinguished speaker at the closing banquet of the NRL Convention in Nashville, gave us the expression "slick Willie" to describe Bill Clinton.

As a candidate, "slick Willie," in 1992, declared ever so sincerely that "abortion should be safe, legal, and rare." It sounded so sensible; but it was, in fact, misleading, dishonest, and nonsensical.

Today's re-emergence of the slogan (and its variants) that "abortion should be safe, legal, and rare" did not, of course, arise by spontaneous combustion. No, there is pleading and bleating for a "middle ground" on abortion, because it sounds like the perfect double talk that "progressive" Democratic candidates would need for the elections in 2006 and 2008: be for "values" and "choice"—at the same time. For good measure, the newly moderate and, supposedly, "values"-concerned pro-choicer adds that the number of abortions needs to be reduced, because abortions are bad. Of course, we are never told why abortions are bad.

Let's apply Bill Clinton's dictum that "abortion should be safe, legal, and rare" to other human actions, say, embezzlement. Make embezzlement safe and legal, and see how rare it becomes. Obviously, "safe, legal, and rare" is complete and dangerous nonsense. And Bill Clinton knew it, but I'm sure he loved the phrase.

Worse, in the case of abortion, a whole new industry has developed that depends on the legality of abortion. This industry wants abortion never to be rare. Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest operator of abortion clinics, makes a lot less money when abortion becomes rare.

After his election, Bill Clinton did what NARAL and Planned Parenthood wanted him to do: On his first day in office, he made abortion less rare by rescinding the pro-life executive orders of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. And he made abortion less safe by pushing for the release of RU486 in this country. Later, he tried to make abortion "more" legal (by federal law instead of judicial fiat) with Hillary Clinton's plan of making abortion a routine procedure in federally mandated health care.

Today, the pro-abortionists hope to use Bill Clinton's slogan in various forms to fool the public once again. Your job is to reveal the deceptive nature and illogic of this slogan in your letters to editors and in conversations with your fellow citizens.

Aside from exposing the absurd notion that illegal acts miraculously become "rare" upon making them "safe and legal," you must challenge the whole notion of a "middle ground" on abortion. The idea has a superficial appeal because the words "middle ground" or "compromise" sound so reasonable. In politics, for example, opposing groups of politicians might have different ideas about the levels of taxation. Either side can most likely offer social, economic, and even moral arguments in favor of its position. A compromise somewhere in the middle could satisfy both sides as adequate, because the two positions are more or less equally defensible.

There is, however, no comparable moral equivalence in the case of the political ploy for a middle ground on abortion. On the one hand, there is the intrinsic, "unalienable" right to life of an innocent fellow human being—an attribute that is permanently "endowed by the Creator" and independent of the preferences and conveniences of someone else. On the other hand are the preferences and conveniences of the mother or her partner or a welfare bureaucrat—which may very well change over time. Where is the middle ground? Who else would surrender his fundamental right to life to the preferences and conveniences of another person? Since there is no moral equivalence between the two opposing positions, quests for a middle ground are fruitless. Agreeing to a search for a middle ground on abortion means accepting the horrendous premise that allowing the child to live is morally the same as killing him because it suits someone else's purposes.

The brazen demand for the moral equivalence implied in the proposal for "middle ground" carries with it the threat of moral blackmail: if you pro-lifers don't agree to a compromise on abortion, you have the resulting abortions on your conscience. Be resolute in rejecting this notion. Remind those who argue this way that the primary responsibility for the welfare of a child lies with the parents. Besides, pro-lifers offer help to pregnant women through thousands of crisis pregnancy centers. This is in complete contrast to those who propose "solving the problem" with a killing.

Beyond rejecting the ploy of a "middle ground" on abortion, your job is to show what a calamity legalized abortion is. Let us remind our opponents why abortions are bad.

In my last column, the legal calamity was summarized this way: "In Roe and Doe, the Court dealt us two devastating blows: one to the individual human being—there is no unalienable right to life; and one to the whole republic—an oligarchy, the Court's unelected majority, now makes the law of the land."

On top of that is the societal cost of the legalization of abortion. Over 45 million unborn children have been aborted since 1973. There are millions and millions of victimized mothers and their families. And the soul and character of the whole people have been corroded: Innocence no longer protects an unborn child from being willfully killed. A child with a disability who escapes the "preventive" abortion is in danger of suffering a "retroactive" abortion. The physically and mentally damaged may be denied food and water, because "they wouldn't want to live like that"—when, in fact, it is someone else who wouldn't want to live with them like that. Physician-assisted suicide is legal in Oregon, and there is a lobby for euthanasia. There is a well-orchestrated campaign to allow the killing of embryos for their stem cells "to advance scientific knowledge" and find a cure for this or that. And, of course, in spite of the pernicious slogan "every child, a wanted child," child abuse is worse than ever. Human life has become cheap. Indeed, in accepting abortion we not only declare the unborn child to be worthless, we render the same judgment about ourselves.