

## Unborn have rights

After reading the article (Abortion: pro-choice combats pro-life, ODE, 10-179), I was struck by the approach that is taken in discussing this subject of abortion. The issues which are invariably dealt with are those issues dealing with such questions as: What has the greatest degree of psychological effect on the mother — abortion or adoption? Or, which is more harmful physically to the mother: to give birth or to abort? Lastly, we always ask, because of her unique relationship with the fetus, should not the mother have the right to terminate the pregnancy if she so desires?

I do not wish to down-play these questions, for they are important, but I do see that there is one glaring omission involved in this argument: that we have not stopped to consider the unborn child and whether it desires to live. Do we discount its voice, by the mere fact that it is too small, or because its place of residence is not its own? Would that not be discrimination?

Why then do we not also look at the recipient of the surgeon's knife, to discern whether there lies in "it" the will to survive?

Some would debate that we cannot ask because the fetus cannot answer, that it is just a lifeless blob of tissue. To answer this I would like to quote a statement made by Dr. Richard Selzer, in an article for the January 1976 issue of Esquire. The doctor's statement comes right after witnessing his first abortion: "I know, we cannot feed the numbers. There is no more room. I know, I know. It is the woman's right to refuse the risk, to decline the pain of childbirth. And an unwanted child is a very great burden. I know."

"And yet... there is the flick of that needle. I saw it. I saw... I felt — in that room, a space away, life prodded, life fending off. I saw life... swept by flood, blackening then out."

What Dr. Selzer saw was a totally defenseless human being, struggling to live, in the face of death. Is this not the same instinctual desire we all have, to survive, to live?

Long before my son was born I heard his heartbeat and felt him kick and move. How can we say that we have a right to

rationalize away his life. It is too burdensome, too hard — he isn't wanted. We have no more right to do this than did the Nazi psychiatric doctors have the right to choose which of their patients lives were "worth living," and which were not. Think about it. Are these choices we make really different? Life belongs to the individual, and if we don't hold that concept sacred, then we are all in danger of losing our own.

**Terry King**  
Senior, Management

## Nuke cost alarming

How can anyone believe that nuclear power is going to be good for our economy?

Nuclear power lowers our standard of living by costing us more (maybe double) than a program of energy efficiency. Americans use energy inefficiently (wastefully) in agriculture, industry, transport, and buildings because it used to be cheap; but in Western Europe, where energy has been more costly, far less of it is wasted. In fact, West Germans and Swedes achieve a standard of living equal to ours with only 50 percent to 60 percent as much energy consumption per capita.

To achieve energy efficiency, we will have to spend money changing equipment and buildings. Although it will cost plenty, it will cost far less money than getting the same amount of energy from additional nuclear or fossil plants.

With programs for energy efficiency, the U.S. could almost double its energy supply and its economy without any expansion of the nuclear power program or conventional power plants.

Fortunately, our Representative in Congress, Jim Weaver, is on our side, trying to stop the building of additional nuclear plants — plants which will lower our standard of living compared with the far less costly alternative of energy efficiency. His position on this issue is going to save each of us money for the next 30 years and help remove the immoral act of leaving our grandchildren a legacy of deadly radioactive waste which we are now casually producing without any need.

**Joseph Del Giorgio**  
International Economics

## Free press vs. bias

Much coverage has recently been given to the establishment of a new press law in Iran. Naturally, the media reacts loud and long to any sort of curtailment of its activities, seeking refuge behind the skirts of the "public's right to know." Omitted in any media coverage of the "freedom of the press" issue, though, is the issue of the "responsibility of the press."

It is the responsibility of the press to present facts to the people — facts that are well researched, documented and presented in as unbiased a fashion as possible. The awesome proportions of this responsibility are realized when it is recognized that, due to the enormity of facts at a publication's disposal, a great deal of editing must occur, and in the words of one of television's best known commentators, "The news is what I say it is."

A twist of phrase, an implication, an omission — there are so many devices available to a reporter to convey — not a fact — but a slant, a bias. Publications are, after all, known as "liberal" or "radical" or "conservative," implying a steady, sought-after bias.

Responsible reporting? Freedom of the press? The two can be, but so frequently are not, compatible. When responsibility is abdicated and freedom is abused, then steps must be taken — in the public interest. The people do indeed have the right to know, and they have the right to know the truth.

Iran is a typical case in point of press bias and distortion. During the regime of the Shah, the reporting of Western media was a simple reflection of United States policy in Iran. The U.S. government dealt heavily with Iran in armaments and exports, and Iran's strategic importance to the West was crucial. The government therefore viewed the Shah's regime favorably (practicality before ideals) and the media accordingly depicted the Iranian ruler as an enlightened, benevolent leader. Repression, torture, brutality, massacres — to the media they simply do not exist. Meanwhile, back at the Tehran Intercontinental Hotel, reporters took it easy and fed each other "news" stories.

The situation is no more open and no more honest than it was then. Coverage

of the Iranian revolution was little more than a direct mimicking of the State Departments' evaluation. First, the Shah received press backing, then Bakhtiar. Next the Soviet "threat" was utilized — all direct reflections of U.S. policy.

The aftermath of the revolution has been similarly distorted by the media, so much so that Iranians travelling from Iran to the U.S. are frequently bewildered by the Iran depicted in the media.

The attitude of Iranians toward the western press has become one of increasing anger and hostility as they see blatant attempts by the press to introduce factions and rifts between Iranians, and as they read accounts of "news" which they recognize as showing a total disregard for truth.

Counter-revolutionary activity cannot be ignored, either. Secret services and police agencies are notorious for their infiltration of the press, using both the medium and personnel itself to effect counter-revolution.

The Iranian revolution is far from complete. The goal of those who fought to oust the Shah's regime is to preserve the revolution and to build a new Iran. The goal is not to gain favorable coverage from international media, nor will the revolution allow itself to be destroyed by those whose sole interest is counter-revolutionary.

The new press law is a revolutionary measure introduced at the time of revolution to protect revolution. If the press cannot or will not accept the responsibility of ethical reporting itself, then this responsibility must be imposed upon it from without. The press has, in the past, demonstrated only abuse of the freedom it was granted in Iran. Now it must prove to Iranians both its intentions and its ability to carry them out.

**H. Tavazoie**  
Senior, Philosophy

## ex-GI lists abuses

I received a General Discharge from the USMC in 1978. The reason for this was that I received about 20 minor military infractions (called bookings) in the fall of 1976 and early winter of 1977. The Marine Corps took me off the job as an electric trouble shooter aboard the T-6a Intruder jet attack aircraft and placed me away from the main body of troops, where they proceeded to write me up on various charges such as Destruction of Government Property. These charges came about because I was on paint detail in my barracks when I had to take a man's rack away from the wall. I broke the military fold in his blanket. Incredible?

No, not really! I was heavily active in student activism across the U.S., specifically the Equal Rights Amendment.

Right now I'm working through the ACLU here in Eugene, as well as Senator Hatfield's office, to get at the records but. So far 20 letters have brought no result since my discharge in 1978.

Incredible again? Not really! When the full story comes out I believe it will involve a few people here in Eugene who lied during a security clearance FBI check.

This is the basis of a book I'm writing on the subject of student activism and the Jean Seeburg effect. I'll keep you abreast of things as they present themselves to me.

**Thomas M. Condon**

## letters policy

Letters must be typewritten, using 65 character margins, and should be triple spaced. Letters must be signed, the author's field of study (or faculty status) noted and should include address and phone number when possible.

## theirs

