

LET'S STOP THE RHETORIC ABOUT ABORTION
Steven J. Cole, Pastor, Flagstaff Christian Fellowship
Arizona Daily Sun, January 19, 1996

President Clinton has voiced his opinion that abortions should be "safe, legal, and rare." I hope the American public can see this for what it is: Rhetoric. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines rhetoric as "insincere or grandiloquent language." In case "grandiloquent" is not a familiar word, it means that which is marked by "lofty or pompous eloquence: BOMBAST." And, "bombast" is "pretentious inflated speech or writing." You get the idea--we're listening to a president who mouths misleading cliches, expecting the unthinking public to nod in agreement.

But I trust that *you* are not unthinking! Think with me about what is being said. First, to say that abortions are *legal* is, sad to say, true. This week marks the 23rd anniversary of the infamous *Roe v. Wade*, arguably the worst Supreme Court decision in history alongside the Dred Scott decision which declared blacks non-persons under the Constitution. But *legal* does not equal *moral*!

Mr. Clinton wants abortions to be *safe*. That's nice! Safe for whom? They certainly are *not* safe for the baby, who is killed or maimed for life (if the procedure fails and he lives, which sometimes happens). To say that they can be safe for the woman is debatable, since studies show many serious long-term physical risks from abortions, not to mention serious emotional effects. One study of the emotional effects on the woman showed that 65 percent had experienced suicidal thoughts after they aborted their babies, and 31 percent attempted suicide. Those aren't safe odds!

And, the President wants abortions to be *rare*, which presumably means less than the current 1.5 million a year (well over 30 million since *Roe v. Wade*). That's a staggering pile of little bodies, deprived of the chance to live, in most cases simply because it was inconvenient to have the baby!

"But, wait a minute!" you say. "The President says that abortions *should be* legal, safe, and rare, not that they *are*! It's a goal to work toward, not a reality." But this, too, is pure rhetoric in the worst sense of the

word ("insincere, pretentious speech").

If he really wants abortions to be rare, then let's push for legislation to eliminate all abortions performed for convenience, or for sexual preference (ironically for the women's movement, many females are aborted because male babies are more desired). If we restricted abortions to cases of rape, incest, serious deformities, or to save the life of the mother, 97-99 percent of the abortions currently performed would cease immediately. While I would argue that it is just as immoral to kill a baby conceived through rape or incest or to kill a deformed baby as it is to kill a baby who was conceived against the wishes of the parents, I would agree to legislation limiting abortions to the above-stated causes because it would immediately save well over a million babies each year. If the President's words are not just rhetoric, let's get on with such legislation!

Most people mistakenly think that *Roe v. Wade* restricts second and third trimester abortions. This is simply not true. Approximately eight percent of abortions are done on second and third trimester babies (that's over 100,000 per year), and according to *Roe v. Wade* a woman can legally obtain an abortion for any reason whatsoever right up to the point of birth.

But let's not make the mistake of thinking that first trimester babies are somehow less than human. The fact is, these babies are no different than you or I except that they haven't lived quite as long as we have. They have a beating heart at 24 days, brainwaves at 43 days, and a complete skeleton and reflexes by 6 weeks. Time and nurture is all they need to be happy little kids playing at the park. Even Jesus started out on this earth as a first trimester baby! I'm glad He wasn't aborted!

Last year, Susan Smith drowned her two toddlers by strapping them in their car seats and aiming her driver-less car into a lake. Political cartoonist John Deering drew a cartoon showing her car being hauled out of the lake, complete with a South Carolina license plate, a Baby-on-Board sign in the back window, and a Pro-Choice sticker on the rear bumper. There was no caption; there didn't need to be. His point was clear: If it is wrong for a mother to choose to kill her toddlers, why is it *not* wrong to kill them a few months before?

A Planned Parenthood newsletter earlier this year ran an article titled, "Help Stop the Violence and Defend the Right to Choose." The violence referred to was not killing babies, but killing abortion doctors. I'm against killing abortion doctors, but I'm also against Planned Parenthood which *kills babies!* Pro-choice means the choice to kill children who just aren't as old as other children. The right to choose to kill your children should not be legal because it is not moral. Let's drop the rhetoric.