

# Valley Viewpoints

## Legalized abortion has become American holocaust

Since Jan. 20, 1973, when the United States Supreme Court handed down the Roe vs. Wade decision that recognized a constitutional right to abortion, more than 20 million "preborn children" have perished in this country. How many Einsteins, Beethovens, or Shakespeares have we allowed to be eradicated simply because their conceptions occurred at an inconvenient time for the mother, or for some similar reason?

National polls have shown that the vast majority of Americans believe in the God revealed in the Judeo-Christian scriptures, yet considerably fewer seem to embrace the biblical principle that God is the giver of life, that human life begins at conception, and no one has the right to terminate that life. In the New International version of the Bible, in Psalm 139:13, King David speaks of God: "You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." And in Psalm 127:3 he says, "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him." The Scriptures clearly indicate that life and children are gifts from God--gifts to be nourished and cherished, not terminated. The Bible also teaches that God creates each human life with a special purpose. We have

squandered many special blessings that He had chosen to send our way.

It is time for our nation, and we as individuals, to accept responsibility for our actions, to think about consequences before we act. Society needs to abandon the myth of the sexual revolution--"if it feels good, do it."

Americas need to return to the biblical teaching that sex should be reserved for marriage where it can find its most beautiful expression. And even in marriage, there needs to be responsible behavior. Too often abortion has become an alternate form of birth control. Rather than prevent an unplanned or untimely pregnancy through responsible use of contraceptives or abstinence, many think, "Well, if I get caught, I can always have an abortion."

Millions have discovered that the procedure is not a simple solution. Hundreds of women have died as a result of mistakes in "legally" operated clinics, and others have experienced irreparable damage to their reproductive organs and will never be able to have the children they might have wanted when "it was the right time." Children who have survived the abortion procedure are going through life maimed as a result of the methods employed.

There is also a costly psychological toll for many others who have chosen this "simple solution." How many women are incapacitated by depression over what they have done? How many women live in fear that others will learn of what they have done and reject them? How many family members or friends later regret the counsel and encouragement they had given a woman considering abortion as an option? How many mourn the child or grandchild that almost was, but now will never be?

Much of what is wrong in our society today can be traced to the lack of respect for human life. If we allow the helpless and preborn to be slaughtered behind closed doors, why are we so surprised at violence in our streets? Why are we shocked when children carry guns to school and kill one another?

It's time to teach our children about God again--that He is the creator and sustainer of life. That He has a purpose for each life and values it greatly. Jesus said, "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. . . your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost." (Matthew 18:10,14)

### Optimism of the '80s must yield to realism

During the growth years of the 1980s, the mood of the county and of business was one of optimism about the future. Tax breaks fueled rapid expansion. However, the tax breaks have been whittled away by ever-increasing desire for additional money to finance ever-increasing largess on the part of government.

As the 1980s gave way to the 1990s, reality began to set in with the business

community. They realized that they had been overoptimistic about the continuation of rapid growth and started to downsize and analyze all of their elements of free spending left over from the "champagne days" of business.

Part of what all local and county government officials are having to cope with now is the downside of our tax base of business analyzing their tax assessments. We are all railing at having to do with less base even if we believe privately that there is justification for the request.

*The county budget has become like a garage or basement that desperately needs to be cleaned out.*

Now that we are having to grant assessment reductions, we are all in the position of having to decide if all expenses are really acceptable in the 1990s, even if in the 1980s they seemed reasonable. Especially on the county level, the budget decisions will not be easy due to the number of decisions to be made as well as the number of people who need to agree in order to accomplish those cuts. The county budget has become like a garage or basement that desperately needs to be cleaned out. Just like that basement, there are many things that a lot of people don't love but they weren't sure if they hated it enough to throw it completely away. Now, to many people our "budget cleaning" looks like too big of a job, so they don't want to start.

When I have a job like that that I have to face, I have found that sometimes it is easier if the obvious "junk" is thrown away first so that you can face the rest of the job. An item of obvious junk in the budget is the county care for other than the highway and sheriff's department. Vehicles for commuting use of employees has been becoming a dinosaur in the business world for a number of years. It's time the county acknowledged that it is the end of an era.

This change should come now, rather than waiting until the next budget. We should be realizing this savings in 1995. The vehicles should be sold and we would not only receive that revenue, but we would also realize the savings from not having the expenses for those vehicles for the rest of the year. Any noncommuting driving that employees are doing for the county could be reimbursed on a per-mile basis.

Sincerely,  
Claudia Smart  
Volney Councilwoman

### Conservative group insensitive to the poor

August 8, while listening to the local National Public Radio station, I heard a speech by a top official in Change New

York, the "conservative, anti-tax" group that helped put George Pataki into office. In the commentary, Change NY asserted that if one adds up all the benefits or handouts that people on welfare receive free from the government, welfare recipients have an income of over \$40,000 a year. The theme of his statement was that collecting welfare is now more lucrative than working and such perverse incentives must be eliminated.

I think Change New York and Mr. Pataki enjoy spreading lies about poor people. There are at least five lies or myths that are perpetuated. These are: that poor people like collecting welfare; poor people do not want to work; poor people would rather collect welfare than work; poor people could easily find work if they wanted to; and the supposedly available jobs actually pay a salary and fringe benefits that people can afford to live on.

In the last 20 years, the U.S. has become a nation in which people of all races and education have increasingly found it difficult to obtain good-paying jobs. For most Americans, real wages (adjusted for inflation) have declined since the 1970s. The U.S. economy simply does not provide sufficient high-wage jobs for even the highly motivated and educated, let alone the stereotypical "lazy welfare dead-beats." I know many, many people who are vastly underemployed. Such people are all around us.

Change New York attacks the poor because it has no solution to the jobs crises in the United States. Change NY wants the middle and working classes to despise the unemployed and the poor. Where and what are the Republican programs for job training and job creation so poor people can get onto payrolls? Change New York says welfare should not pay more than work. But why is the organization so hostile to increasing the minimum wage? Increasing the minimum wage by two or three dollars an hour would help many of the poor (including those on payrolls) to escape poverty.

A possible partial solution to the job shortage is for government to employ people whom the private sector has no use for. There is a vast amount of work that needs to be done, such as repairing or replacing much of the nation's public infrastructure and public and private housing.

Putting poor people to work doing meaningful work will cost lots of money; more importantly, it will pay enormous dividends to the nation as the long-term jobless rebuild and acquire ownership of the housing they live in, learn new marketable trades and skills, and acquire a real stake in the system. A well-designed and funded public jobs program will save money in the long run because it would help eliminate the root causes of crime, drug addiction, welfare dependency, and hopelessness that are wrecking this nation.

Thomas Ellis  
Albany

### Cemetery benefit huge success

A big "thank you" to all who attended the Benefit Breakfast held by the Masons Sunday, Jan. 15.

We apologize to those who were turned away and those who were slow in being served. We were pleasantly overwhelmed by your response. We hope to have another break fast and that you will give us another chance to serve you.

Thank you to all those who contributed to our success. The 50/50 winner was Judy Bonani.

Thank you  
Mt. Adnah Cemetery Association

### Skating rink 'heros and bums'

For the past few weeks, until Tuesday, I was delighted with our city government. Instead of discovering ways to spend our tax dollars, they had entered into a contract to save our city of Fulton more than \$60,000 per year in operational cost on the ice rink. More than that, the new tenant agreed to provide the maintenance and started by spending more than \$72,000 on improvements.

What a deal! These people running our city started acting like business managers. I even dreamed of a tax reduction--more than \$130,000 the first year. Businesses, seniors, and working families who are all just making it certainly should not have to subsidize the ice skating rink any longer, when 70 percent of the users are from outside of the city.

The motel operators and many retailers expected a large increase in sales, with Donald Kirnan's ability to promote professionally this Fulton facility, encouraging more use that brings families to town following their favorite teams.

Two of our aldermen were opposed to the contract and voted that way, and in our democracy they have that right. (They lost). Our city attorney, one of the finest legal minds in central New York, approved the contract, the state of New York reviewed the contract, and the paper was signed.

Do you remember the side-lawn ball games as a kid? If you didn't let the kid win who owned the bat and ball, he took them home. Well, these two lads who lost the vote did just that. They hired attorney Sal Lanza, in the official capacity as alderman, and initiated an injunction and closed the rink.

Now perhaps instead of all these great things happening, we are just going to get another bill--court costs and attorneys' fees for both sides: ours, the taxpayers' side, and theirs, the people who represent us in city government.

Bruce Phelps  
Fulton

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