

ABORTION

News Release

19th February 2018

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Secular Republic supports the repeal of the eighth Amendment of the Constitution. It also supports the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee concerning legislation which would be introduced subsequently to allow for abortion in certain circumstances, in particular that giving a woman the right to have an abortion if she so chooses during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. Among other things, it would probably be impossible to establish during the life of a pregnancy whether or not a woman has been raped or was the subject of incest, if she so alleges.

That is not to say that in other instances, apart from health considerations, where a woman has an abortion, there is no moral question to answer. However, that issue is between her and her conscience and is not properly a matter for the State to deal with.

In legally recognising the right of a woman to choose whether or not to have an abortion during the 12-week period in question, it should be realised that pregnancy involves one life form living of another. If a woman decides that she does not wish, for whatever reason, to sustain an embryo in her womb that is her right and a matter of her bodily integrity.

Terms such as unborn and killing or murder in this context are tendentious of a particular moral and usually religious philosophy. What is entailed in the case of abortion is the termination of the existence of an embryo, not the killing of a human being.

If there are those who are opposed to abortion in some or all circumstances, they are free to advocate that position. But it is wrong for them to seek to use the State's apparatus to enforce their views. In a secular republic, there is no place for the employment of the constitution or statute to uphold a particular moral philosophy in regard to the foetus.

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