

When Is a Baby a Baby?

Vicki Gunn

Executive Director, CHP Canada

We have been asked what legislative changes we would make to protect the life of the unborn when our first Member of Parliament is elected. There are several possible approaches. One avenue would be to defund all abortions. Another would be to redraft an anti-coercion bill, similar to MP Rod Bruinooge's Bill (Roxanne's Law). Or we could propose legislation mandating fully-informed consent and the viewing of an ultrasound. We could increase our support for expectant mothers. We could make it easier and less expensive to adopt. Or we could bring a motion before Parliament recognizing the personhood of the pre-born infant and properly defining the pre-born child as a human being. Or all of the above.

Our current criminal code attempts to define the moment when a child becomes a human being. It is a definition that appears to be designed to deny personhood to the pre-born child.

Section 223 of our Criminal Code¹ reads:

223 (1) A child becomes a human being within the meaning of this Act when it has completely proceeded, in a living state, from the body of its mother, whether or not

- (a) it has breathed;
- (b) it has an independent circulation; or
- (c) the navel string is severed.

This arbitrary definition comes well short of modern medical knowledge and fails the test of logic entirely. Today, we can watch the ultrasounds and we quickly recognize that this is a human being. Prior generations could possibly be forgiven for not recognizing the development of a child but we have all the tools available to ensure that we can watch the full child develop.

CHP Leader, Rod Taylor, says: "A human being exists from the moment of conception. At every stage of development, once the sperm and egg have united and the DNA of both parents have joined to form a new unique individual, the pre-born child is a human being."

Our Criminal Code has not kept up with modern knowledge. A baby can survive outside its mother's body after only 22 weeks into the gestational period. If birth takes place at 22 weeks, it is a human baby that is born. At 40 weeks it is a human a baby that is born. Should the child die prematurely at only 4 weeks, the mother will still grieve the loss of her baby. She knows that the child is a human being even if the Criminal Code does not recognize it.

When one causes death to a child who is born alive, the Code goes on to say:

(2) A person commits homicide when he causes injury to a child before or during its birth as a result of which the child dies after becoming a human being.

It's time for Canadian Law to recognize what we all inherently know: that at conception a child is a human being. It has its own unique DNA, different from its mother's. In due time, it will be born as a human being and it will live out its life as a human being. At no point will it change to another species or change from being another species.

CHP Canada is committed to the protection of human life at all stages. We would introduce legislation to change Section 223 of the Criminal Code of Canada along these lines: 1) "A human being (a human child) exists from the moment of conception." 2) "A person commits homicide when he intentionally causes injury to a human child as a result of which the child dies."

If you agree that the pre-born child is a human being, join the Christian Heritage Party today!² Help us protect innocent human life from conception.

Footnotes

¹ laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-46/FullText.html

² www.chp.ca/get-involved/