

Write Your Legislators

To All Our Readers:

The next few days may be crucial to New York's abortion law. There seems to be a strong possibility that new legislation will be considered in Albany this week.

We urge our readers to write now to their state assemblymen and senators, to express their opinions on the right to life.

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British Catholics Face 'Mercy Killing Battle'

By JOHN A. GREAVES
(NC News Service)

London — The defeat of the mercy-killing bill in Parliament in late March is only the beginning, not the end, of the drive to legalize euthanasia.

Norman St. John Stevas, Catholic politician and journalist who led a campaign against the Voluntary Euthanasia Bill, said: "This is only the first of many battles, not the end of the war. The threat to reverence for human life will continue and the strength of all those who value human life as a God-given gift needs to be mobilized against it."

This was one reason why St. John Stevas, now the Catholic spokesman on many moral issues in and out of Parliament, helped found the Human Rights Society. The society, as its name implies is based on the Human Rights Charter of the United Nations and seeks to promote discussion not only of the arguments against euthanasia but a wider dialogue on the whole question of the right of life.

St. John Stevas, while opposing Pope Paul's encyclical on birth control, *Humanae Vitae*, led an unsuccessful campaign in Parliament and public against the recent legislation permitting abortion on demand in Britain.

Both he and *The Catholic Herald*, London weekly, have regretted the lack of official religious support given to the new Human Rights Society. Both John Cardinal Heenan of Westminster and Archbishop Michael

Ramsay of Canterbury, the Anglican Primate, have so far hedged at sponsoring the movement.

The English and Welsh bishops have also made no general statement on the euthanasia issue at a critical time.

The campaign for legalized mercy-killing is led by the Euthanasia Society here, though all the various powerful known and unknown influences operating through the mass media in favor of what Cardinal Heenan calls "permissive morality" can whip up a considerable middle class campaign in its favor.

The opposition to the present bill, introduced by Lord Raglan in the Lords, was surprisingly strong. Generally the press, the medical profession and public commentators attacked it with horror, forecasting terrible possibilities once the principle of such legislation, however restricted in this bill, had been accepted.

Lord Raglan claimed that public opinion was generally disposed toward such a change in the law, but member after member of the Lords rose up to reject his claim and attack his bill. Voiced opposition was much stronger in the debate than the actual vote.

St. John Stevas, at his press conference, warned that legal recognition of voluntary euthanasia would be followed by pressure to extend its scope to deformed persons, imbeciles and eventually to the old and anyone who could be shown to constitute a burden of society.

Cardinal Heenan:

Words Used to Disguise Reality

Following is the text of a letter written by England's John Cardinal Heenan and printed in the London Times the same day that country's euthanasia bill was defeated in the House of Lords.

"Oh, Liberty, what crimes are committed in your name." (Quote from Mme. Roland Guillotine at the time of the French Revolution.)

I suggest that many crimes are still committed for much the same reason. It is true that we talk less of liberty than of liberalism or progress. Laws to sanction what was formerly a crime are described as liberalizing laws. We have become so fascinated by words that they are increasingly used to disguise rather than to disclose reality. The poor have become the underprivileged, and the starving, the undernourished. Immorality we call permissive morality. Cripples and mental defectives are merely handicapped."

If abortion had been described as the destruction of life in the womb—killing of the unborn child is perhaps too emotive an expression—fewer might regard it as a stage in the progress of civilization, especially now that in practice we have abortion on demand. If we are to make euthanasia legal, we ought to drop the gentle Greek and use plain English.

The secretary of the euthanasia society would not then have written of doctors providing a service to their patients by "giving them euthanasia." He would have said bluntly that in the proposed voluntary euthanasia bill, doctors are empowered to kill on demand the patients they cannot cure."

Israel to Restore 'Shekel' as Currency

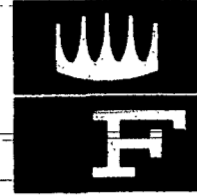
Jerusalem — (RNS) — The ancient Biblical term, "shekel" will replace the present name of "liq" or pound and many other currency according to a decision of the Finance Committee of the Knesset (Parliament). The change will become effective in two years.

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By FR. R. A. Special C Vatican City — consultations with tion" is the desc participant of the tw Vatican spokesman by a delegation r tional Council of United States. —

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