

COMMITTEES:
JUDICIARY
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 18, 1982

Mr. Morris B. Abram, Chairman
President's Commission for the Study
of Ethical Problems in Medicine and
Biomedical and Behavioral Research
Suite 555
2000 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Abram:

Your letter of May 11, 1982 is appreciated. I enclose for your file a copy of my letter to the President (with nine other signatories) for your file.

I had not seen the Moody Monthly of May, 1982 to which you refer, but I did read the staff background paper for the hearing January 9, 1982 and it is this document that aroused my concern.

In re-reading it, frankly, I find much emphasis given to the "quality of life ethic" as advocated by Doctors Duff and Campbell (their views are well known), and Professor Joseph Fletcher and his "humanhood profile," and not enough given to the views of those who espouse the importance of all human life, handicapped or not.

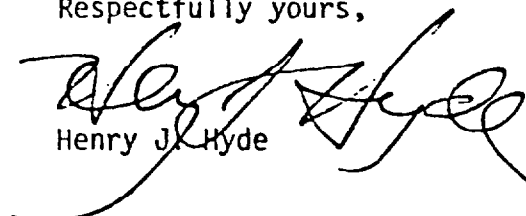
I repeat, the phrase "even if one believes that an individual infant is a human person and that the moral protections and duties usually associated with personhood attach to such an infant ..." is a startling one. I should think at least the fact of birth would entitle one to be considered a member of the human family.

The death-by-starvation of Baby Boy Doe in a Bloomington (Indiana) Hospital last month has created renewed interest in the growing possibility that those humans some doctor or presidential commission deems not worthy to live will be actively or passively "disposed of."

I am asking the Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, to supply a paper to your Commission which will provide a more human and less utilitarian view of the problem of eugenic infanticide, and also am enclosing the column written by George Will (WASHINGTON POST, April 22, 1982) to which I fully subscribe.

Thank you for your attention to this issue -- the issue of the value to be accorded to a fellow human being by society.

Respectfully yours,



Henry J. Hyde

HJH:fw

cc: Honorable Richard S. Schweiker
✓ Dr. C. Everett Koop
Carl A. Anderson, Esquire