

Mr. Speaker, today was a very important day. Today, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision upholding the Federal law protecting unborn children from partial-birth abortion.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to first remind ourselves again of why we were really all put here. Thomas Jefferson said, ``The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is indeed why we are all here. The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says, ``No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the belief that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to this core foundational belief on our part that every life, from the smallest child to the elderly widow, from the strongest and bravest soldiers on our front lines, to the weakest and most frail in our society, every human soul is of infinite worth and entitled by God to pursue liberty, prosperity and happiness.

But, Mr. Speaker, for 34 years, Roe v. Wade has been a desecration of that bedrock foundation upon which America stands, and Roe v. Wade sets itself apart from all of the other egregious decisions made by our courts in that its result is 45 million dead American children.

Mr. Speaker, that is 15,000 times the number of lives that were lost to terrorism on September 11; and the land of the free and the home of the brave now stands awash in the blood of 45 million of its own children. And it will never cease to totally astound me how we, as Americans, fail to grasp the enormous and terrifying threat to our Nation's survival economically, militarily, morally and spiritually that this tragedy represents.

We have made it illegal to throw away polystyrene diapers, while it remains for the last 34 years legal to throw away babies. How can we be so blind to such a cataclysmic, soul-crushing tragedy?

G.K. Chesterton said once that ``Men can always be blind to a thing as long as it is big enough." And, Mr. Speaker, at this very moment, this cataclysmic heartbreak continues.

Arthur Cohen, who is perhaps the world's leading scholar on the European Holocaust, used a Latin term to describe abortion in America. He called it ``mysterium tremendum," which means an utter mystery to the rational human mind, a mystery that carries with it not only the aspect of vastness, but the resonance of complete terror, something so unutterably diabolical as to be literally unknowable to us.

Mr. Speaker, following the invasion of Germany into Poland in 1939, a Jewish man named Yitzhak Katzenelson was trapped by the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto. He was later transported to the Auschwitz concentration camp, where he and his son were brutally murdered.

Before his death, he buried under a tree a song that encapsulated the entire Nazi regime in one verse. He stated that, "The first to perish were the children. From these a new dawn might have arisen." What a profound lesson for the rest of the world to hearken unto. A new dawn might have arisen from those children that perished in the Holocaust.

No matter the rhetoric, Mr. Speaker, we must not ever be so blind to the fact that each time an abortion takes place, a nameless little baby dies a lonely death; a mother is never quite the same, whether she realizes it or not; and all of the gifts that that child might have brought to humanity are lost forever.

It is often said, Mr. Speaker, that a society is measured by how it treats those in the dawn of life, those in the shadows of life, and those in the twilight of life. Because unborn children are hidden both in the dawn and in the shadows of life, we kill thousands of them every day in America, using sometimes methods like partial-birth abortion that cause so much agonizing pain that the child that is being killed, if they were an animal, it would be illegal under Federal law to do it the way we do it.

If we, as a human family in America, cannot find enough humanity within ourselves to change that, if this human rights atrocity of dismembering our own children alive is truly who we are, then the "invincible ignorance" Henry Hyde spoke of in this Chamber so long ago will indeed finally prevail, the patriots' dream will be lost, and those lying out in Arlington National Cemetery will have died in vain and twilight will have fallen upon us all.

Mr. Speaker, that day may come in America indeed. But, sir, that day has not come yet. It is not this day, because today, Mr. Speaker, the world changed. Today the United States Supreme Court upheld a law protecting unborn children from the barbaric, nightmarish procedure of partial-birth abortion. And with this ruling comes a brilliant, piercing ray of hope, because even though this ruling only upholds a law that protects a small number of late-term babies from this horrifying procedure called partial-birth abortion, it represents the day that America changed direction and turned her heart toward home.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this decision is part of a growing awareness on the part of all Americans of the simple truth that abortion takes the life of a child, and the United States of America is bigger than abortion on demand. We are beginning to look within ourselves and we are beginning to understand that the foundation of this Nation is within our own hearts.

Our Nation is beginning to understand that whether it is flying airplanes into buildings or blowing up buildings in Oklahoma City, or whether it is raping and pillaging in

Bosnia, or whether it is violence in our streets or kidnapping little girls in broad daylight or murdering innocent unborn children, all of these have one inescapable common denominator, and that is the lack of respect for innocent human life.

Americans are beginning to understand and realize that the reason crime is so rampant in this country is because we have taught our young people that it is all right to kill helpless unborn children. Should we then wonder why they kill each other on the school playground?

Americans are beginning to understand that the same mentality that allows a father to forsake his unborn child to an abortionist also allows him to forsake his born children to the welfare state.

Americans are beginning to understand that the abortion mentality is destroying families all over this country, and that if this epidemic of family disintegration continues, that we in this family will bankrupt this Nation in trying to deal with the results.

Americans are also trying to understand that there are better ways to help young mothers than killing their children for them.

And Americans are beginning to understand that if we, as a society, do not find or possess the courage and the will to protect innocent unborn children, that, in the final analysis, we may never find the will or the courage or the commitment to protect any kind of liberty for anyone of any kind.

Mr. Speaker, the pro-life movement often compares the Roe v. Wade decision with the Dred Scott decision that upheld slavery in this Nation. I would remind each one of us that enslaving fellow human beings was once a practice that was perpetuated throughout the world for thousands of years. But when slavery came to America it finally stopped. We had a conscience on that day that changed the world.

Mr. Speaker, that part of our history should give us great hope, because even though we face challenges today, when we look back on how America has somehow come through each one of them, I believe that by the grace of God, America will one day lead all nations to restore protection to unborn children throughout the world.

Hope is a powerful thing, Mr. Speaker. One of the most powerful messages of hope I ever saw in my life was captured in a picture I saw a few years ago, and I cite the commentary that accompanied it. It should be the picture of the year, or perhaps the picture of the decade. But it won't be because unless you obtained a copy through the Internet or the paper it was published in, you probably never saw it. Somehow the media missed it.

The picture is that of a 21-week unborn child by the name of Samuel Alexander Armas who is being operated on by a surgeon by the name of Dr. Joseph Bruner. The baby was diagnosed with spina bifida and would not have survived if removed from his mother's

womb. But little Samuel's mother, Julie Armas, is an obstetrics nurse in Atlanta. She knew of Dr. Bruner's remarkable surgical skills. Practicing at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, he performs these special operations while the baby is still in the womb.

During the procedure, the doctor removes the uterus via C-section and he makes a small incision to operate on the child. As Dr. Bruner completed the surgery on Samuel Armas, this amazing little baby reached out with his tiny but fully developed hand through the incision and firmly grasped the surgeon's finger. Dr. Bruner was reported as saying that when this little baby grasped his finger, that it was the most emotional moment of his life, and that for an instant during the procedure, he was completely frozen, totally immobile.

The photograph captures this amazing event with perfect clarity. The editors titled the picture "Hand of Hope." They said this tiny little hand seemed to emerge to grasp the finger of Dr. Joseph Bruner as if thanking him for the gift of life that he was receiving. Little Samuel's mother said they wept for days when they saw the picture. She said, "The photo reminds us that pregnancy isn't about a disability or an illness; it's about a little person." The operation was 100 percent successful and Samuel was born in perfect health.

Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill said once that Americans always do the right thing after they have exhausted every other possibility. And today, for the first time since the evil disgrace of *Roe v. Wade*, we have restored the legal protection of a very small number of those little children who are already partially born and only moments away from taking their first breath. It beggars human imagination that such basic compassion and humanity was ever debatable in the first place.

But now, today, the tiny hand of hope reaches out a little closer to us than it ever has in the past and only asks for mercy, and I hope and pray that all of us will hear that little voice in our own hearts.