

TED KENNEDY ON ABORTION: 34 YEARS AGO TODAY

Long-time Catholic League member Tom Dennelly wrote to Senator Edward Kennedy in 1971 expressing his views on abortion (this was a year-and-a-half before *Roe v. Wade*). In a letter dated August 3, 1971, Senator Kennedy replied; excerpts appear below. :

“While the deep concern of a woman bearing an unwanted child merits consideration and sympathy, it is my personal feeling that the legalization of abortion on demand is not in accordance with the value which our civilization places on human life. Wanted or unwanted, I believe that human life, even at its earliest stages, has certain rights which must be recognized—the right to be born, the right to love, the right to grow old.

“On the question of the individual’s freedom of choice there are easily available birth control methods and information which women may employ to prevent or postpone pregnancy. But once life has begun, no matter at what stage of growth, it is my belief that termination should not be decided merely by desire.

“When history looks back to this era it should recognize this generation as one which cared about human beings enough to halt the practice of war, to provide a decent living for every family, and to fulfill its responsibility to its children from the very moment of conception.”

Catholic League president William Donohue opined as follows:

“The same Ted Kennedy who once championed the rights of the unborn now champions the right of a doctor to jam a scissor into the skull of an infant who is 80-percent born. Sadly for him, history will look back at this era and recognize that he

didn't care enough about human beings to take responsibility for children from the very moment of conception."