Date: 9:00 p.m.,
December 11, 1980

OTTAWA RAPE CRISIS CENTRE ATTACKS "RIGHT TO LIFE"

Ottawa...The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre today blasted an anti-abortion group's proposals earlier this week that Canada's constitution should deny access to abortion to women, even to victims of rape or incest.

"These people are the real nut fringe", said spokesperson Cindy Moriarty. She pointed to a 1978 lifer publication which states that rape "acts as a psychological 'birth control'" because victims are too traumatized too ovulate. "Believe in that and you believe in the Easter Bunny," said Moriarty, noting that statistically, at least 5% of rape victims do become pregnant as a result of rape.

The Centre's position is that sexual assault is one way women are denied control over their own bodies; compulsory pregnancy is another. Rape crisis centres are working to eliminate all forms of coercion that are used to restrict women's freedom.

"On abortion", said Moriarty, "our position is firmly pro-choice. I cannot imagine the heartlessness of people who want to extend the already lengthy suffering and trauma of a rape victim by forcing her to bear and raise an unwanted child as well."

Moriarty stressed that the Rape Crisis Centre is not 'pro-abortion'. "We neither advocate, impose nor propose abortion in our counselling. Abortion is an option the victim may choose to investigate or she may not. We feel that all women should be free to choose either way without coercion from any quarter."

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In response to your request to participate personally in the process of constitutional renewal, I herewith make the following recommendations:

Firstly, since there are contradictions in the law concerning the unborn's status, let the Charter of Human Rights to be incorporated in our new constitution clarify the personhood of the unborn child.

Secondly, include in the Charter of Human Rights the most fundamental human right on which all other rights depend, the right to live. Unless the new Canadian constitution specifically refers to that fundamental human right, it will not be complete or acceptable and the other human rights, if spelled out therein, will be meaningless.

Yours sincerely,

Mary B. Bruder

Joint Clerks
Special Joint Committee on the
Constitution of Canada
Postal Box 1044
South Block
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A OA7

Dear Committee Members:

In response to your invitation to participate in the process of constitutional renewal by offering suggestions for improving that statement of principles, our Association, representing over five thousand members and supporters in the Region of Waterloo, submits the enclosed statement.

Yours sincerely,

Mary B. Bruder
(President)

Enc.
cc: The Right Hon.
Pierre Elliott Trudeau,
The Hon. J. Jean Chrétien, MP,
The Hon. W. G. Davis, Q.C.
At present, there are contradictions in the law concerning the unborn's status. Therefore, the Charter of Human Rights to be incorporated in our new constitution must clarify the personhood of the unborn child.

The draft of the Charter of Human Rights does contain some basic human rights, but no mention is made of the most fundamental human right on which all other rights depend, which is obviously the right to live. No new Canadian constitution is complete nor acceptable without specific reference to that fundamental human right, especially if it does spell out other human rights.

Respectfully submitted by:

THE RIGHT TO LIFE ASSOCIATION OF KITCHENER-WATERLOO AND AREA INC.

Mary B. Bruder

November 20, 1980

Mary B. Bruder
(President)