

Representative Lawrence Hogan . . .

Right To Life Amendment Introduced In Congress

By WILLIAM H. MARSHNER

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Representative Lawrence J. Hogan (R., Md.) introduced on January 30th a resolution calling for a right-to-life and anti-euthanasia amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Reacting quickly to the recent Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion throughout the Country, Representative Hogan said that he had rushed to formulate and introduce his resolution while public sentiment was high, not waiting to secure co-sponsors. Nevertheless, a crisis of conscience preceded his move, Hogan said.

"My first reaction to the Court's ruling was one of despair and disappointment," said the Prince George's County representative. "And I had very serious thoughts at that point of resigning from Congress.

"My reaction was that I did not want to be a part of a government which abandoned all respect for human life. But after counseling with friends, who shared my feelings, I decided the preferable route would be to stay here and do whatever I can to remedy the

disastrous decision of the Supreme Court."

The following is the text of the proposed joint resolution:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution only if ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by Congress:

ARTICLE

Section 1: Neither the United States nor any State shall deprive any human being, from the moment of conception, of life without due process of law; nor

deny to any human being, from the moment of conception, within its jurisdiction, the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2: Neither the United States nor any State shall deprive any human being of life on account of age, illness, or incapacity.

Section 3: Congress and the several States shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

In a prepared speech delivered to the House of Representatives, Hogan commented:

"I address this distinguished body today still badly shaken following the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22nd legalizing abortion in the early months of pregnancy.

"I have been an outspoken foe of abortion because I cannot accept that any American could believe that it can be right — that it can be legal — to end one human life for

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the personal convenience of another human being.

"I must stand up and protest this gross disregard for human life which is now the official law of the United States of America. I have lived forty-four years, and I have always deeply loved my Country. This is the first time in all those years that I have been in deep

despair over the future of my Country.

"I am speaking today for those who cannot speak. I am speaking on behalf of our unborn children. Those who are concerned with equality of rights should not forget a group who are now in more need of constitutional protection than any other in our society.

"The fundamental right of life itself is being neglected and denied to many potential members of our society. To remedy this grave situation, I am introducing a

constitutional amendment that will insure that the unborn, the aged, the ill, and the incapacitated have a right to life that is every bit as valid as that guaranteed all of us under the Fourteenth Amendment.

"The necessity for this amendment is now clearly evident. It is the only effective recourse the Court has left open to those of us who value every human being's right to life."

Before going to the House floor, however, Representative Hogan gave a dramatic and emotion-filled press conference in the Rayburn Building. Speaking without notes, the Congressman several times compared the American abortion scene today to the practices of Nazi Germany. He denounced the Supreme Court as "morally bankrupt" and urged Americans by their support of this amendment to show that they are not in the same sorry state.

Hogan saw the chances of gaining two-thirds support of Congress and three-fourths of the States as slim but real, especially if the White House can be persuaded to support the proposed amendment. He said he did not believe that anything could be accomplished by a bill to limit the Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction (though some experts have urged such a measure as constitutionally sound and requiring only a majority vote of Congress). Hogan predicted that the High Court would simply ignore any act of Congress it found disagreeable.

When asked what he would do if all efforts to overturn the abortion ruling should fail, Hogan replied that then it might be time to "shop for another country to live in."