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Morgentaler: A controversy across Canada

Generally, most Morgentaler visits are accompanied by some form of protest from pro-life groups. At the University of Calgary, pro-life and pro-choice demonstrators shouted abuse at each other all through the speech.

Queen's University was more subdued. Nothing more violent than a few hisses occurred. This did not justify the presence of over 50 security personnel present at this event.

At the University of Western Ontario, churches from all over London mounted a large protest. One Anglican Bishop, however, said that he was not able to join the protestors because the position of the Anglican Church is not black and white. He said there are times when therapeutic abortion is the right action.

Other pro-life demonstrators at Western, numbering 2000, marched in a constant circle around campus.

Security at the various events was very tight. Morgentaler was seen to leave buildings from back exits, escorted by police at all times. The University of Calgary's 'Gauntlet' reports there were two separate assaults against Morgentaler during his visit in January.

Protests occurred at Queen's and Western, over the lack of pro-life speakers to challenge Morgentaler. The 'Queen's Journal' quotes one political science student as saying: "It is shocking... there is no one there from the other side."

Nevertheless, the reception at Queen's was later dubbed 'Morgentalermania', as 2000 anxious people lined up for the 950 tickets available. Morgentaler spoke to 2400 at Western, and 2000 at the University of Waterloo.

Some of the fiercest emotions were aroused from Morgentaler's criticisms of pro-life groups. 'Imprint', University of Waterloo student newspaper, quotes Morgentaler as saying "What we see on the other side is really the lying propaganda; a group using falsehoods, half-truths... I think this hysteria was whipped up mostly by the fact that the anti-abortion people are using this kind of rhetoric."

The 'Queen's Journal' quotes: "The pro-life movement is totalitarian and its arguments are absurd." Also in the 'Queen's Journal', Morgentaler called God "the greatest abortionist," for the fact that four out of five pregnancies end naturally in miscarriage.

The 'Queen's Journal' reports Morgentaler said, "Not only are the pro-lifers trying to deny freedom of religion and conscience, but they are obstructing the realization of full equality for women."

Pro-choice supporters in Calgary said they were in support of Morgentaler because it is a woman's decision on whether or not to terminate her pregnancy. Another opinion was that birth control is not 100 percent effective, therefore there should be an alternative to an unwanted child.

The 'Queen's Journal' quotes Morgentaler as saying, "that full human life begins at conception and that abortion is thus murder — is patently absurd. At the moment of conception you are dealing with the union of the sperm and the ovum which creates one cell... it is as if someone claimed that one brick is already a house and should be treated with the same respect."

It is obvious that Morgentaler's presence elicits strong and emotional responses from both pro-choice and pro-life supporters, and brings the abortion issue to the forefront of many students' minds as it is a sensitive and emotional issue.

One can only speculate as to what, if any, the reaction to Morgentaler's lectures will be at UNB.

Imprint
The Student Newspaper of the University of Waterloo
Vol. 7, No. 87
Morgentaler: a medical outlaw

Queen's Journal
Serving the Queen's Community since 1873
Lower Ceiling:
Monday, January 28,
noon-1 p.m.

Queen's University Kingston Ontario

Morgentaler faces church protesters

AMS bumbles party politics game
Student officials tried to fill PC club with allies, but lost money, votes

Morgentaler speech plans shock many

Book shop to remove porn

Protesters crowd street as Morgentaler speaks

Physician slams abortion laws

Morgentaler fire fails to ignite crowd

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