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Man at center of Canada's abortion battle dies

Isabella R. Moyer | May. 31, 2013 NCR Today

Dr. Henry Morgentaler has died [1] at the age of 90.

Morgentaler was the most recognized face at the center of the abortion battle in Canada. His public crusade for abortion rights began in 1967, when he urged a House of Commons committee to legalize abortion. In 1969, he opened his first abortion clinic in Montreal. In the following years, he continued opening clinics around the country, defying the law at the time. On Jan. 28, 1988, the Supreme Court struck down Canada's abortion law as unconstitutional.

During his life, Morgentaler was hailed as a hero and martyr by abortion advocates and vilified as a monster and murderer by pro-life supporters. His death has reignited the division [2] that still exists in our country.

Bob Rae, Liberal Member of Parliament, tweeted [3]: "Henry Morgentaler was a remarkable man -- courageous, single-minded, and determined to ensure a woman's right to choose without shame or fear."

The University of Ottawa's Students For Life, a pro-life group, tweeted [4]: "It's strange to see so many 'RIP #Morgentaler' tweets. The man's life work had nothing to do with peace."

Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper vowed not to reopen the abortion debate in parliament. The prime minister?s office declined to make a comment on Morgentaler?s death.

The Canadian Catholic bishops did not remain silent. They issued this simple yet profoundly pro-life statement [5]:

> Recognizing that they have lost a loved one, I wish to express to Dr. Henry Morgentaler's family the condolences of the Catholic Bishops of Canada.
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> Every human life is sacred and deserves our care and protection.
>
> As Catholics, we mourn the loss of each life, in particular of those who die in the womb, and pray to God to be merciful to all who die. May Our Lord help us all to find the best ways to aid those who are suffering and in need.
>
> **+ Richard Smith**
> Archbishop of Edmonton
> President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
> May 30, 2013

Source URL (retrieved on *09/16/2014 - 11:10*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/man-center-canadas-abortion-battle-dies

Links:

[1] http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/05/29/obit-morgentaler.html
[2] http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/05/29/morgentaler-death-reax.html
[3] http://twitter.com/bobraeMP/status/339819595210829824
[4] http://twitter.com/uOStudents4Life/status/339795930977013760
[5] http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/media-room/statements-a-letters/3626-statement-by-the-president-of-the-canadian-conference-of-catholic-bishops-on-the-death-of-dr-henry-morgentaler