

May 7, 1973

there but this is a little bit of a departure from what you might be consider, the regular parliamentary routine but we really didn't know how else to handle it. Senator Goodrich.

SENATOR GOODRICH: Mr. President, just so that we'll make a slight determination of whether we understand it or not, I'll try to give you my opinion of it and if I'm wrong, anybody can correct me, but the committee amendments, as they were adopted, are now the bill so consequently, the bill, the committee amendments, or what is now the bill, since it became the bill, are open to amendment. Now, we are discussing Senator Stahmer's amendment and I'm sorry, Senator Stahmer, I'm going to have to oppose your amendment. For example, in Senator Stahmer's amendment, Section 3, subsection 7, it's the definition of viability and it says, viab--viable shall mean that stage of development when the fetus is capable of meaningful life. Meaningful life is the part I object violently to. For example, this lets the doctor make a determination of whether or not at that point of time he can determine, is there going to be meaningful life? I don't think even a doctor can make that decision at that time and I feel that that is a fatal defect in the Stahmer amendment so consequently, Senator Stahmer, I'm sorry, but I have to oppose your amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Stahmer, do you care to respond?

SENATOR STAHMER: As a point of explanation. Number 1, I respect Senator Goodrich whom I consider friend and, but I would only point out in essence, these are not my words. The meaningful life phrase is contained in the U.S. Supreme Court decision. It is not necessarily the words I would have chosen perhaps or the doctors of Nebraska would have chosen perhaps, but it is the wording that the U.S. Supreme court did agree to use so I, I respect 100% your opinion sir, but the point is, do, in essence, you want to turn your back on what the Supreme Court said and I would point out that the Attorney General's opinion that Senator DeCamp has given to us on our desks today, has pointed out that the State of Connecticut has tried to petition the U.S. Supreme Court on a matter very similar to the Rhode Island bill and they were turned down by the court so in essence, here again we're talking about what the Supreme Court said. Does that explain the "meaningful life" phrase?

PRESIDENT: Senator Goodrich.

SENATOR GOODRICH: May I respond? Alright. Now, in my interpretation of your amendments are that you got together with the Medical Association and this is what they came up with. Now are we correct at that point?

SENATOR STAHMER: Absolutely incorrect. I didn't get together with anyone. The doctors drafted what they thought would be medically proper and legal and it is their amendments. I

(End of Belt #10)