

Lawrence Korb thinks taxpayers should be forced to pay the cost of killing the unborn children of military members who claim to have conceived pregnancies pursuant to rape ("U.S. military's abortion policy is out of date," *Times*, June 30, 2011).

In America, when an innocent woman is raped and conceives an equally innocent child, we reflexively kill the baby. In many Middle Eastern and East Asian cultures, they reflexively kill the raped woman. The euphemistic term for these murders is "honor killings." How are we less barbaric than these savage "honor killers?"

The February 3, 2011 edition of the Bangladeshi newspaper *The Daily Star*, ran a story headlined "Raped girl whipped to death:" It says "Fourteen-year-old Hena, daughter of farmer Darbesh Kha of Chamta village in Naria upazila, was raped by her cousin Mahbub, 40, Sunday night." And when her cousin finished brutalizing her, the government took over where he left off. "They sentenced the rapist to 200 lashes with Tk 50,000 fine and 100 lashes to the victim." In Bangladesh, they kill the woman. In America, we kill the baby. "The punishment for the rapist, Mahbub, was reduced from 200 to 100 lashes. But Hena could not escape punishment and lost her consciousness after 60 to 70 whippings. Her relatives took her to Naria Upazila Health Complex where she finally lost her battle for life Monday night."

Time magazine, January 18, 1999, featured a horrifying article on rape in Jordan, entitled "The Price of Honor." It says: "Sirhan, a 35-year-old murderer, is cheerful and relaxed and happy to tell his story. He's especially proud to describe the efficiency with which he shot his young sister Suzanne in the head four times last March. 'She came to the house at 8:15' he relates, 'and by 8:20 she was dead.'" Her offense? "Three days before, the 16-year-old girl had reported to police that she had been raped. 'She committed a mistake, even if it was against her will,' says Sirhan. 'Anyway, it's better to have one person die than to have the whole family die from shame.' His is not a logic rare in the Arab world."

In parts of the Third World, a woman who is raped is viewed as unclean and a source of shame. Because no one is thereafter likely to "want" her, she will become a burden to her family. In the First World, we self-righteously condemn these crude, utilitarian arguments when applied to raped women but then, without a trace of ironic awareness, apply them to the innocent babies who are

the rapists' second victims. A more enlightened perspective might conclude that neither the mother nor her baby are "unclean" and that both have intrinsic value, apart from their "wantedness" -- or lack thereof.

Will killing a baby conceived in rape somehow "un-rape" its mother? Will the baby's death miraculously heal the mother's injuries? Will killing this innocent child cause her to forget the horror of her assault? Or will all the guilt and pain and injury of the rape simply be compounded by the guilt and pain and injury of the abortion? This baby is as defenseless in the hands of an abortionist as its mother was in the hands of her attacker (or attackers). Shouldn't we shelter both?

Mr. Korb's op-ed toils down the well-worn polemical path first trod by attorney Sarah Weddington, who won her landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision by exploiting plaintiff Norma McCorvey's emotional but cynical plea to end a pregnancy whose origins Ms. McCorvey had falsely (by later admission) attributed to rape. He says he wants taxpayers to be forced to fund abortions of any pregnancy alleged to be "rape-related" but the real outrage is that military doctors and nurses can already be compelled to perform elective abortions when the mother claims "rape" and agrees to reimburse the government for perverting the services of military hospitals which are commissioned to heal instead of kill. And killing babies never heals. This is not a compassionate policy for either patient, mother or child, both of whom are entitled to the highest standard of care.

Abortion is not "healthcare." It is a vicious act of violence which kills a baby. Anyone who doubts the humanity of the baby or the inhumanity of abortion should spend a minute or two watching the prenatal development and abortion videos posted at www.abortionNO.org. If abortion rights advocates aren't intellectually honest enough to face the incontestable facts with their own eyes, they forfeit any fairly claimed right to argue that elective abortion is "therapeutic."

Mr. Korb's hidden agenda involves using the military to incrementally de-stigmatize abortion, starting with the most sympathetic fact situations and gradually liberalizing government funding restrictions to finance terminations in far less compelling circumstances. He wants to normalize abortion in much the same way gay marriage signals societal approval which civil unions could never confer. He seeks to discredit the government's ban on abortion funding for pregnancies of alleged victims of rape by arguing that it is motivated "by ideology and abortion politics" It is he, however, who is being "political" when he denounces these "... antiquated and ideological restrictions related to women's reproductive healthcare"

He then asserts explicitly that rape is underreported by orders of magnitude and implicitly that virtually no allegations can be reasonably disputed. We somehow doubt that would support a common sense requirement that eligibility for abortion funding be predicated on a well-advertised predicate that the sexual assault which is claimed to have given rise to the problematic pregnancy at least have been reported to some relevant law enforcement agency within one month of the alleged incident?

As usual, Mr. Korb begins his liberal screed with a head-fake reference to his service in the Reagan Administration, apparently to make his reliably "progressive" policy pronouncements seem at least subtly more Reaganesque. Also as usual, the press plays along with this charade and intimates that there is some sort of ironic, "man bites dog" gig going on here.

But make no mistake: Mr. Korb is no more a "Reagan Republican" than his boss John Podesta, who took over the far-left Center For American Progress after heading Barack Obama's presidential transition team and serving as Bill Clinton's chief of staff. Mr. Korb sees the U.S. military more as a vehicle for social engineering than bulwark of national security. He wants to expand abortion rights for military women and allow gays to serve openly.

On the fighting front, however, he supports the deficit commission's call to strip one trillion dollars from the Pentagon budget over the next decade. He also insists that Barack Obama be empowered to unilaterally reduce the U.S. nuclear stockpile below New START levels and amend U.S. nuclear targeting strategy without congressional approval. It would therefore seem somewhat redundant for Mr. Korb to demand that America "act with greater humility in international affairs." If he gets his way, even a sickly Hugo Chavez will be able to humble our military.

Lawrence Korb's apostasy is the best evidence that The Susan B. Anthony List would be well advised to add the Department of Defense to its roster of agencies which Pro-life Leadership Pledge signers promise keep free of pro-abortion, senior, political appointees.



Gregg Cunningham
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