

The following email was sent to me in response to Fr. Richard McBrien's contention [see October 2008(7)] that the lives of the unborn would be safer under Democratic leadership.

Way to go, McBrien! What an incredible collection of mistruths, half truths and outright lies prompting me to quote the following: "The truth is the truth even if no one believes it. A lie is still a lie even if everyone believes it." I don't have the time or the inclination to disprove all of McBrien's errors, so let me point out the most blatant and most oft quoted lie (I have heard and seen this lie so many times, that y'all "must" believe it to be true.)

McBrien's quote: It is a matter of fact, not opinion, that abortions increased under President Ronald Reagan and peaked during both Bush Administrations. "In contrast," Father Reese points out, "during the Clinton Administration the number of abortions fell significantly...," because legislation, which Republicans have generally opposed, dealt with abortion's underlying causes.

(Just a thought: shouldn't McBrien & Reese leave the sociology to Andrew "every white person is racist" Greeley? <http://www.suntimes.com/news/greeley/index.html>)

So, McBrien states that "it is a matter of fact..." but whose facts are they?

Not the CDC's <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5609a1.htm> which states that abortions peaked in 1974 and have declined steadily since then except for a statistically insignificant increase in 2002.

Not the Alan Guttmacher Institute (a distasteful organization at best) http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html that indicates that abortion numbers peaked in '80 or '81 and have declined steadily since then. (They use different raw data; NPR in an in depth report on abortion indicates that AGI collects more data than the CDC - <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/35792.php>)

Not even a search in Google ("abortion statistics in US") turns up anything that remotely supports McBrien's claim. Of course, statistics can always be manipulated to show whatever you want and some individual states do show an increase and some a decrease; however, this is generally attributed to various abortion restriction laws (that Obama would be happy to overturn) and not to "evil Republican administrations". One fact that CANNOT be disputed: more than 45 million babies have been aborted in the U.S. since 1973. So, if you are inclined, drop McBrien a line and ask him for the facts that support his spurious claim. (And by the way, rather than relying on someone else's information that you would reject as partisan - I did all of the above research myself. Kudos to me!!)

Sooooo, if you are still reading this, I have a poker analogy for you: I will "see" your McBrien and "raise" you a Robert P. George.

The George article is printed in its entirety at:

http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/viewarticle.php?selectedarticle=2008.10.14_George_Robert_Obama's%20Abortion%20Extremism_.xml

Grateful to MM for her contribution to the discussion.

What her comments do indicate is that neither a Democratic nor a Republican administration has much impact on the number of abortions performed in the United States. There are evidently other factors that Fr. Andrew Greeley must uncover to clarify this issue.

Please refer back to the September 2008(3) conversation for some questions to ponder before you vote tomorrow (today).