

side or outside the womb.

Ironically, some physicians and researchers feel that as progress is made in fetal research, especially in the fast growing areas of neonatal intensive care, the gestational age of the fetus able to grow or live outside the womb of its natural mother may become younger and younger. If this happens, it could possibly impose greater future limitations on abortions.

In an attempt to deal with fetal research issues, a special eleven member committee created by the National Research Act of 1974 will develop guidelines in the carrying out of biomedical and behavioral research on human subjects. Until this Commission issues its report in April, 1975, the law forbids the Department of Health Education and Welfare from conducting or supporting any research on a living human fetus except for the purpose of preserving its life. (See *Medicolegal News*, January, 1975)

Future Implications of the Edelin Case

Needless to say, the current reaction to the Edelin manslaughter conviction has had far reaching consequences, and will continue to serve as a catalyst in making the general and professional public more aware of the complex

issues and unanswered questions concerning abortion.

Perhaps one of the few areas of middle ground in the abortion debate is the need expressed by each side for greater social support services and better adoptive and health facilities to deal with the mothers and children both before and after birth. Many pro-life or anti-abortion advocates are widely criticized for not placing sufficient emphasis on this important aspect of the problem. In the wake of the Edelin indictment, a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives attempted to address this need by filing legislation which would require that a mother desiring an abortion be adequately informed by a physician and psychologist of all rights, aids, facilities, programs, opportunities for adoption or other information or laws available to encourage her to allow the child to be born.

Other Massachusetts legislation filed in the midst of the Edelin controversy would require physicians who are performing abortions to use the method least harmful and injurious to the unborn child. Another House bill would seek to give children certain rights from the moment of conception.

In spite of the many legislative attempts to resolve the dilemma, one fear that both the medical community and

judiciary share is the growing and complex intertwining of the law and medicine. Some observers feel that the flood of judicial decisions, regulations and ordinances will have a deleterious effect on the proper dispensation of health care. In other words, as New York Times columnist Harry Schwartz describes it, medicine may be literally strangled by the law.

Although it will be years before the appellate procedures are exhausted in the Edelin case, the following months may provide the opportunity to once again re-examine the many crucial issues effecting the lives of unborn children and the welfare of unfortunate women who are caught in the squeeze of a dilemma that shows no signs of loosening its grip on society's conscience.

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**NOTICE
TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
LAW & MEDICINE**

The annual business meeting of the American Society of Law & Medicine will be held Monday evening, June 9, 1975, at 8:30 P.M. at the Statler Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.:

- (1) To elect the Council members for 1975-76, and
- (2) To transact any other business presented.

A meeting of the Council of the American Society of Law & Medicine will be held Monday evening, June 9, 1975, immediately following the annual meeting of the Society at the Statler Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.:

- (1) to elect the Officers of the Society for 1975-76, and
- (2) To transact any other business presented.

The Nominating Committee of the American Society of Law & Medicine solicits suggestions for nominees of Council Members and Officers from the membership. Send all recommendations to the Nominating Committee, the American Society of Law & Medicine, 454 Brookline Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215. Copies of the slate of Council members and officers will be available at the First National Conference on the Medicolegal Implications of Emergency Medical Care, June 8-10, 1975 in Washington, D.C.

**NEWS FROM
OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

MEETINGS and PROGRAMS

Annual Meeting American Society for Pharmacy Law, San Francisco, California, April 20-25, 1975. For information write to American Society for Pharmacy Law, P.O. Box 113, Wallingford, Pennsylvania 19086.

Impact of Federal Regulation on the Health Care Delivery System, A Colloquium, University of Toledo Law Center, Toledo, Ohio, May 1-3, 1975. For information write to Public Information Office, The University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio 43306.

Operation Update, the National League for Nursing 1975 Convention, The Rivergate, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 18-21, 1975. For information write to National League for Nursing, 10 Columbus Circle, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Annual Convention, International Association Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions, Hotel Hilton, Salt Lake City, Utah, September 7-12, 1975. For information write to Stephen M. Hadley, Commissioner, Industrial Commission, 350 E. 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.

The Seventh International Meeting of Forensic Sciences, the University of Zurich, Switzerland, September 8-12, 1975. For information write to International Medical Meetings, 303 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.