

Post that she would "never, never, never, never mean to say such a thing." That's five "nevers," but they don't trump a tape.

Why is Mrs. Michelman at such pains? I thought the "pro-choice" position was something like "No one wants to have an abortion," but because there is such epidemic rape and incest about abortion-on-demand must remain legal throughout the nine months of pregnancy. Apparently, the mainstream "pro-choice" view has moved. It has moved so far that a leader of the movement feels she must deny having said that abortion is "a bad thing."

This illuminates an older argument — the old tussle over labels. If it is the NARAL position that abortion is not a bad thing, is it correct to call them "pro-choice," as they prefer? Aren't they really saying, in effect, that they are pro-abortion?

The other event that touched on abortion last week was Mother Teresa's speech to the leaders of government, including the president and first lady, at the annual National Prayer Breakfast. Her words on charity and love and "giving until it hurts" were humbling and inspiring to hear. But her words on abortion were, surprisingly, pointed and powerful and deserve to be quoted at length:

"By abortion, the mother does not learn to love but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion."

"The child is God's gift to the family. Each child is created in the special image and likeness of God for greater things, to love and be loved."

"I will tell you something beautiful. We are fighting abortion by adoption — by care of the mother and adoption of her baby. We have saved thousands of lives. We have sent word to the clinics, to the hospitals and police stations: 'Please, don't destroy the child. We will take the child.' So we always have someone to tell the mothers in trouble: 'Come, we will take care of you, we will get a home for your child.'"

"Please don't kill the child. I want the child. Please give me the child. I am willing to accept any child, who would be aborted and to give that child to a married couple who will love the child and be loved by the child. From our children's home in Calcutta alone, we have saved over 3,000 children from abortion. These children have brought such love and joy to their adopting parents and have grown up so full of love and joy."

"If we remember that God loves us, and that we can love others as He loves us, then America can become a sign of peace for the world. From here, a sign of care for the weakest of the weak — the unborn child — must go out to the world. If you become a burning light of justice and peace in the world, then really you will be true to what the founders of this country stood for. God bless you."

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Two women, worlds apart

First, let's agree on one thing: Mother Teresa is not a Republican. She's probably not even a conservative.

That much having been said, her presence in Washington, D.C., last week provided a jarring juxtaposition of philosophies and values between the sublime and the, well, let me describe the two events:

The first event was the retraction, by prominent "pro-choice" advocate Kate Michelman, of a statement she made to a newspaper. The statement? "We think abortion is a bad thing. No woman wants to have an abortion." Mrs. Michelman said this, on tape, to a reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer. A few days later, according to The Washington Post, the National Abortion Rights Action League issued a denial reading in part "Michelman has never said and would never say that abortion is a bad thing."

After that, things got sticky for Mrs. Michelman, as they usually do in matters of denials and tape recorders. Mrs. Michelman told The Washington

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