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Media Release

Morgentaler's Private Letter to Trudeau: Blackmail and Disregard for Patient Confidentiality

The confidential letter unearthed in the Trudeau Archives by UBC history professor George Egerton, and reported on in the current issue of Macleans, puts a different face on Henry Morgentaler than the public is used to seeing. Far from a contender for the Order of Canada, the letter Morgentaler wrote to Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau reeks of blackmail and disregard for patient confidentiality.

In the April 28, 1973 letter to Trudeau, Morgentaler wrote:

Do I have to convince you really of the hypocrisy of the present laws? Do you know that in my clinic, I have helped wives, daughters, mistresses and relatives of members of the Federal and Provincial Cabinet, including some relatives of yours?

Do you know that Dr. Leon Trudeau, a cousin of yours, has been referring cases to me? Do you know that Quebec ministers who officially came out against abortion, have had relatives treated in my clinic and helped there? Do you know that a relative of [Quebec health minister] Claude Castonguay (who refused to recognize my clinic as requested by me) has had an abortion in my clinic just the day before I was raided?

Commenting on the letter, Jim Hughes National President of Campaign Life Coalition said: "I remember Morgentaler used to taunt us during pickets that he had aborted the mistresses of Ontario cabinet ministers and judges so there was no way we were going to get anywhere with our opposition." Hughes added, "So maybe now the public has a better understanding of what we've been up against the last forty years."

Mary Ellen Douglas, National Organizer for CLC said, "How can Morgentaler call himself someone who works for women's rights when he was not even courteous enough to preserve the right to confidentiality of the patients he saw. He used them as political tools to further his agenda."

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Fighting for Truth and Justice
Campaign Life Coalition is a National Pro-Life Organization
representing over 100,000 families across Canada