

resolve conflict. I think all of us who have had children and have at any time experienced areas of conflict can relate to that. It is very difficult sometimes to communicate with our children on an equal footing. Experts who had extensive clinical experience counseling families in knowledge of the patterns of family communication testified that while family relationships generally benefit from voluntary and open communication, the effect of compelling communication is unpredictable and frequently disastrous. Neither accidental nor coerced communication of personal information is based upon trust or the voluntary desire to share or to know, which are the hallmarks of productive communication patterns in a normal family. When trust is lacking, or when parents will be unable or unwilling to react supportively to the news of a daughter's pregnancy and proposed abortion, the minor's decision not to go to her parents may be the most mature response. Under these circumstances,...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...shielding parents from this information is most likely to preserve and protect existing family relationships. Often the revelation of a secret such as an adolescent pregnancy can result in acute shock waves within the family system. One prominent research and clinician has noted that sometimes secrets are better kept. While sharing secret feelings may be useful, revealing a secret can be destructive. Decisions in this area require clinical sensitivity and empathy rather than rules. In some, a decision not to reveal the fact of a pregnancy or abortion is often best for many reasons including averting trauma, stress, and the development of otherwise avoidable negative emotional consequences following an abortion, preventing a breakdown in the family relationship or a rupture or polarization of the marital relationship, avoiding the need for psychiatric treatment, and escaping interfamilial violence. For examp...

PRESIDENT: Time.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Morrissey, please, followed by Senator Labedz.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Mr. President, and members.