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Life — Not Only for “the Perfect, the Privileged, and the Planned”

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One of America’s most brilliant voices on behalf of the unborn is now silent. Dr. Mildred Jefferson, the first black woman to graduate from the Harvard Medical School, died on October 15 at her home in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

When the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision was handed down by the Supreme Court in 1973, Dr. Jefferson was stunned and outraged. She saw the decision not only as a direct assault upon the unborn, but also upon the ethics of her cherished profession. She later told the U.S. Congress that the decision “gave my profession an almost unlimited license to kill.”

Throughout her long life, Dr. Jefferson remained a stalwart defender of the unborn, and she was a sworn enemy of the Culture of Death. A surgeon, she dedicated her life to preserving and extending the lives of others. She was bracingly honest about what abortion meant for the medical profession:



“With the obstetrician and mother becoming the worst enemy of the child and the pediatrician becoming the assassin for the family,” Dr. Jefferson told Congress, “the state must be enabled to protect the life of the child, born and unborn.”

She once summarized her sense of urgency with these words: “I am at once a physician, a citizen and a woman, and I am not willing to stand aside and allow this concept of expendable human lives to turn this great land of ours into just another exclusive reservation where only the perfect, the privileged and the planned have the right to live.”

Rarely do we encounter such moral clarity matched to such personal courage.

Dennis Hevesi, “[Mildred Jefferson, 84, Anti-Abortion Activist, Is Dead](#),” *The New York Times*, Monday, October 18, 2010.

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