

PROLIFE FACTS

Right to Life is dismayed that Parliament has granted personhood status to the Whanganui river while continuing to deny personhood status to unborn children in New Zealand. It is completely illogical that the personhood of all actual human beings in New Zealand, including those developing in utero, is not recognised by the law but a river can be given legal status as a person. How did this farcical situation come about? Section 159 of the Crimes Act states that an unborn child does not become a human being until it is born. This “born alive” rule was challenged in the High Court in *Right to Life v Abortion Supervisory Committee* in 2008. Justice Miller stated in his judgment that: “The rule according human rights only at birth is founded on convenience rather than medical or moral grounds.” He also said that: “A legal right to life would be incongruous in such a law, for it would treat the unborn child as a separate legal person, possessing a status fundamentally incompatible with induced abortion, far from modifying the born alive rule (Section 159 of the Crimes Act 1961), the abortion law rests on it.” The continued denial of the personhood of a subset of actual human persons in New Zealand makes it possible for around 35 unborn persons to be denied their right to life each day, while the Whanganui river has been provided with two advocates who will ensure its rights are protected.

For more information pro-life issues, go to: www.righttolife.org.nz.

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