Written submission from Dr Nicandro Porcelli (ANI0286)

Regards the formal Inquiry by The United Kingdom Women and Equalities Select Committee into abortion law in Northern Ireland and whether it should be reformed. I write as a resident and voter and a member of the general public in Northern Ireland. I wish to note that the law against abortion here was defended last in 2016 and argue it should be maintained. I opposed interference. I believe you are acting undemocratically and outside your mandate.

Your committee should know my surname - as it is famous. My mother was Jean Porcelli.

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldjudgmt/jd030619/macdon-4.htm

"To affect a person’s dignity on the grounds of sex will, as with other forms of sexual harassment, cause a detriment to that person. Thus, proof of sexual harassment, of whatever form, will satisfy the criterion. Because the conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is itself gender-specific, there is no necessity to look for a male comparator. Indeed it would be no defence to a complaint of sexual harassment that a person of the other sex would have been similarly so treated: see Porcelli v Strathclyde Regional Council [1986] ICR 564."

I wish to put my mother’s good name once more on the Parliamentary record; as I know she would have wished to distance anything in the name of women’s equality forever from actions that take away the Irish men and women’s rights. My mother Jean Porcelli died a year ago (11th December 2018) was conceived and born in Scotland in the 1930s. Despite the Italian name, my maternal family hails from Northern Ireland. My family fleeing from a discriminatory environment – originally Gilhooly-MacGill - our family like many in the twenties and thirties were thrown on the street by sectarian supremacists in Ulster – we as many in Northern Ireland will never forget that the laws and policing were crafted to suit foreign and particular interests.

My mother on her deathbed resented the fact that fighting for equality seemed to have become a professional, legalistic, bureaucratic and arguably doctrinaire fight: one that sees abortion and by extension population control as a good thing. She was no Malthusian. She and I discussed her fight against the authorities (not me) up to her death. She alone fought her employer at first years before the EOC got involved. She started alone her fight for equality and not a parliamentary committee. She believed in the individual and the person as the starting point of all rights. I do too. This committee does not seem to by proposing this interference and the destruction of personhood in Ireland.

We agreed the extension of rights to the womb and life of the human being conceived in it. Our family suffered from the effects of liberal UK abortion laws and we lost grandchildren, nephews and nieces.

My mother and I noted and agreed that women are selectively killed in the womb in all countries - but not in Ireland proudly. Abortion does access facilitates this and the Home Secretary. Evidence is in the missing millions of women across the world. Being killed in the womb is the prime discrimination against a human being. There are other solutions and pregnancy is not a malady. We agreed protection of life has primacy in all just law.

Natural Law, as you well know, when morality is breached, will always clash with state laws. My mother’s case was about her and other’s “personhood” in the workplace. She had the right to protection from the law. Respondeat Superior. The weakest in human society are human beings in the womb yet this committee is planning on taking Irish men and women’s rights away by force from London. Hiding behind the UN and the EU laws is not going to cover for the foreign interference in the rights of Irish persons. Whatever happened to the principle of Subsidiarity!
The UN Charter and the EU Rights legislation are to be forced undemocratically and they are anti-women as the majority of women in Northern Ireland are against abortion.

My mother an educated and determined woman knew killing baby girls in the womb unthinkingly does not help women one iota and any laws forced on Norther Ireland will cause havoc. Is this right?

I therefore call on the UK House of Commons, Women’s Equality Committee to be honest and courageous and respect the people of Northern Ireland. I urge you in my mother’s good name for the record not to be “doctrinaire” in these matters. She would have been horrified at the thought that Irish men and women were once more having their rights stolen by those that arrogantly claim to know better than them in the Mother of Parliaments in Westminster.

I urge you to forget this and to use any power to focus instead on getting Stormont up and running again by engaging Sinn Fein and the DUP in negotiations and by upholding the UK’s part in the Belfast Agreement instead of undermining it.

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