

Testimony by Andrew Dionne before SC Senate Judiciary Subcommittee | April 10, 2014

Thank you, Senators. My name is Andrew Dionne. I am the pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Spartanburg.

Today it would be hard to imagine a ruling more controversial than *Roe v. Wade*, but some might single out the *Dred Scott* ruling of 1857 for that honor.

What were the Court's judgments in the *Dred Scott* case? And let me read from that judgment...

A free negro of the African race, whose ancestors were brought to this country and sold as slaves, is not a "citizen" within the meaning of the Constitution of the United States.

When the Constitution was adopted, they were not regarded in any of the States as members of the community which constituted the State, and were not numbered among its "people or citizens." Consequently, the special rights and immunities guaranteed to citizens do not apply to them.

I'm still reading from *Dred Scott*...

The language of the Declaration of Independence is equally conclusive: ...

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among them is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

This is still *Dred Scott*...

The general words above quoted would seem to embrace the whole human family.. But it is too clear for dispute, that the enslaved African race were not intended to be included, and formed no part of the people who framed and adopted this declaration...

Now let us stop and compare the declaration of the U.S. Supreme Court concerning the personhood of men and women of African descent in their 1857 *Dred Scott* decision to that of unborn children following the Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision—one hundred and sixty some years later. Think of this as someone might argue this on the street...

- Although a slave/fetus has a heart and a brain, and is human from the biological perspective, a slave/fetus just is not a legal person under the Constitution. The Supreme Court made this perfectly clear in the *Dred Scott/Roe v. Wade* decision.

Another argument...

- A man/woman has the right to do whatever he/she pleases with his/her personal property, the slave/fetus.
- Both the social and economic burdens which will result from prohibiting slavery/abortion will be unfairly concentrated upon a single group: slaveholders/pregnant women.

And remember, these are arguments that I do not agree with.

[Asked to wrap up by Chairman Campsen]

Now, move in the opposite direction of the argument, we see that the analogy works in that direction, also:

- The question of whether slavery/abortion should be tolerated is not a matter of personal or religious belief; it is a question of protecting the civil rights of millions of innocent human beings who are not in a position to protect themselves.

And,...

- The humanity of slaves/fetuses cannot be denied simply because they look different from us...

[Asked to conclude by Chairman Campsen]

Thank you, sir. I would ask you to vote in support of S.457.