

Editorial

Frozen embryos: To live or to die?

Mario and Elsa Rios wanted to have a baby. They had tried and failed. So they went to the Queen Victoria Medical Center in Melbourne, Australia, where doctors were using "vitro fertilization" to create life. Eggs were removed from Mrs. Rios and fertilized with sperm

from an unidentified donor. Fertilized eggs then were reimplanted on two occasions, but Mrs. Rios did not become pregnant.

years of research and experimentation, seems a tragic waste. Women in the United States, Australia, Japan and other countries have requested that they have the embryos implanted in them.



Last year the Rioses died in a plane crash in Chile. They did not leave any instructions about what to do with the frozen embryos that belonged to them.

There has been speculation that the embryos might be able to claim the estate of the Rioses, about \$1 million.

The question of what to do with the embryos caused a stir in the papers. A committee considering the legal and ethical problems of vitro fertilization was asked to consider the Rioses' embryos' case.

It seems the committee took the easy way out. If the embryos are destroyed, the question of claim or adoption will not have to be answered.

The Associated Press ran a story about the decision of the committee Tuesday. The committee recommended that the embryos be destroyed unless public opinion is against it.

The embryos could not have been created without the help of doctors, and a lot of women would be glad to adopt them — without or with the inheritance. It somehow seems sacrilegious to toy with life by creating it, then destroying it.

The committee, made up of scientists, theologians, philosophers and legal experts, decided that the embryos had no life and no rights. That may be true.

Australian officials had said in June they would act on the recommendation of the committee. Fortunately they have not. They are allowing a three-month period for debate before acting.

But the Rioses went to a lot of trouble and expense for the right to bring new life into the world — and the doctors at Victoria Medical Center began life. To them, those embryos were potential human beings.

The embryos might not survive even if they were implanted in another woman, but if there are people willing to raise the fragile embryos as their own, it would be asinine to destroy them.

To destroy the embryos, which are the culmination of years and

Controversy over tax disclosures a waste of time

One recipe recently submitted for a Democratic "cookbook" was for "Chocolate Meese":

"Take a Cabinet full of bad eggs, \$15,000 worth of stock (source undisclosed, of course — probably fowl), and a generous pinch of greed. Combine ingredients in a heavily mortgaged house in California and shake until money falls out of the

accuracy. A typical Meese crime against civic hygiene was a failure to list on one form a \$15,000 loan listed on another form. Such sums are petty cash in the Ferraro household, where family members lent her 1978 campaign more than \$100,000. That was illegal, but I say charity begins at home and, besides, Democrats candidly champion "family values."

should contribute their fair share." And people like Ferraro are not bashful about judging what is fair.

fitness for national leadership? Precious little.

Second-tier partnerships, butterfly spreads — welcome to the wonderful world of tax laws which reward, and hence produce, persons nimble at the art of tax avoidance. Mondale is a big boy, and a former member of the Senate Finance committee. He should know that a real-estate operator is apt to have tax returns that are, er, creative — thanks in part to laws written by the finance committee.

Voyeurism can cloak itself in the respectability, such as it is, of journalism.

It is marvelous to see Republicans try to keep straight faces while saying they are lathered up about Ferraro's disclosure forms because they are worried about conflicts of interest. Regarding her husband's tax forms, it is wonderful to hear conservatives, who are not known for despising legal reductions of tax liabilities, wonder if her husband overdid it. If he did, he had a little help from a friend — Ronald Reagan, who in 1981 enlarged tax breaks affecting real-estate transactions.



George Will

trees. Quickly fold in six cream puff government jobs and transfer to Washington pressure cooker."

The author? Geraldine Ferraro. Compared with her disclosure forms, Meese's are of encyclopedic detail and

The disclosure and campaign financing rules she has broken — most of them enacted by people of her bent — are silly. They invade privacy, unreasonably restrict the free political use of personal resources, and institutionalize the innuendo that public officials are unsleepingly eager to bend public policy for private gain. But there they are — rules. And Ferraro, more eager to be seen these days as a prosecutor than a liberal, loves rules.

In his acceptance speech, Mondale said: "To the corporations and freeloaders who play the loopholes or pay no taxes, my message is: Your free ride is over." Oops. Well, if Ferraro's husband's tax returns cramp the Mondale-Ferraro rhetorical style, good. People who rely on populist demagoguery deserve to be embarrassed. But what has all this to do with Ferraro's

It is time for a freeze. Republicans and democrats should negotiate a mutual and verifiable freeze on the production and deployment of sanctimony and hypocrisy.

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Kerry says businessmen must have education, money

Gov. Bob Kerrey never forgets his roots. Businessmen large and small must have quaked in their boots as first Commonwealth Savings Co., then State Security Savings toppled.

Not to mention the everyday reminders: farm sales, foreclosings, national chains swallowing local businessmen. Discouraging pictures to folks wishing to expand or start new businesses in Lincoln.



Mona Koppelman

Kerrey, part owner of Grandmother's Skillet restaurants in Lincoln and Omaha, has a personal interest in the course of such events — as well as concern for fellow Nebraskans.

"The key to getting individuals the opportunity to operate their own businesses is making certain there is affordable financing," Kerrey said in an interview last week. "Right now I have severe doubts about how far we've gone to achieve affordable financing."

Kerrey said he is particularly concerned for the small and medium-sized businesses like the restaurants he owns.

"It's a lot easier for us to finance now that we've got a

track record, cash flow and cash in the bank," Kerrey said.

Was it tough when he started out, back in 1972? "Oh, God," Kerrey said, smiling ruefully and shaking his head. "Five short-term loans, pulling in \$400 a month salary . . . The only reason we survived was because we had a bookkeeper who could stretch payables from 30 days to 180 days. A wizard with numbers."

Numbers are the name of the game for small businessmen just starting out. Each loan transaction is evaluated on its own merit, a Lincoln loan officer said, but the numbers are what count.

The loan officer said he looks for four main things on each small business loan application:

- Past financial history, if the loan is made to an existing business. Loan officers look at trends, month to month and season by season, to examine cash flow problems.

- Collateral, both business and personal. Equipment, buildings and land are primary sources of collateral in existing businesses.

New businesses must often base collateral on proposal holdings: anything from homes, to cars to savings bonds.

"If folks don't want to personally guarantee their loan, that puts up a red flag to us immediately," the loan officer said.

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