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June 2, 2009: Who is Responsible for the Murder of Dr. George Tiller?

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Title: Who is Responsible for the Murder of Dr. George Tiller?

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6/2/2009--Are the pro-life activists who called Dr. Tiller a mass-murderer responsible for his death? This is an old question. It was the same question raised in the 1960's when some anti-war activists turned to violence to oppose U.S. policies in Vietnam. Was the anti-war movement and its rhetoric to blame for the violence and death? As a member of the anti-war movement at the time, I remember thinking that US policy was responsible for the protests and violence, not the anti-war movement. Now, as someone who is pro-life, I cannot say that Roe v. Wade is responsible for this violence and the other acts of violence against doctors and medical personnel. For without that judicial decision, America would still have permissive abortion laws. They would simply have been passed democratically. Yet, I don't see how a person who believes that life begins at conception can avoid calling a doctor performing abortions a murderer, or something similar. So, no, I don't think pro-life rhetoric is responsible for this criminal act. On the other hand, there is a fringe element in the pro-life movement that winks at code words for violence. There is a grievous fault there that I keep waiting for other pro-life persons to denounce. What about the nonviolent civil disobedience that the pro-life movement practices constantly? Does this set a precedent for law violation that includes acts of murder? That I totally reject. It would be like blaming sit-ins in the civil rights movement for the riots that later rent American cities. Nonviolent civil disobedience is an honorable and public act of conscience. It is the opposite from gunning down a doctor.