Deaf Rescuer Convicted In VA

by Susan Alder

Robert Vizzini was one of 28 defendants on trial in Roanoke, Virginia on Monday, April 16, 1990. Mr. Vizzini and the others were charged with criminal trespass during a demonstration at the Roanoke Medical Center for Women on February 28, 1990. Mr. Vizzini and one other defendant are deaf.

Alice Ekirch, the prosecuting attorney, went to great lengths to show that the authorities did give Mr. Vizzini proper notification of the warnings issued to the hearing defendants and that Mr. Vizzini did understand the warnings and consequences of his actions.

At his defense, Mr.. Vizzini called the other deaf witness who testified that he was with Mr. Vizzini and that the interpreters had not been present until after Mr. Vizzini was arrested.

Mr. Vizzini insisted after his conviction that he did not receive the proper warnings until after he was arrested. he says, "After I was arrested, I could not leave. I had no choice."

Robert Vizzini with wife, Sharon, and 2-day-old, Naomi Joy.

Mr. Vizzini and his wife are expecting their second child in May. They lost their first child to an abortion 10 years ago. Of that, Mr. Vizzini says, "No one stopped us or spoke to us about the life of a baby in the womb. I am just sad people are still hiding this truth and I wanted to help others."

Mr. Vizzini is expected to appeal the court's conviction. ■

Rescuers Arrested At Ohio Abortion Clinic

Reprinted from The Columbus Dispatch, March 18, 1990

Columbus, OH—A protest yesterday resulted in the arrest of 128 anti-abortion advocates as they blocked the entrance to the Founder's Women's Health Center at 700 E. Broad St.

Other anti-abortion activists moved from the door of Capital Care Women's Center at 3040 N. High St. and were not arrested, said Lt. William Mattei of the Columbus Division of Police.

The E. Broad Street arrests for disorderly conduct began at 7:30 a.m. and continued for about three hours, Mattei said. he was in charge of the 100 officers called out for the protest,which brought anti-abortion activists from across Ohio and a few from out of state.

Officers remained at the clinic until the protesters left at noon. Mattei said the large contingent of officers had been called out because protests had been expected at two other clinics.

Mattei said there was no violence at either clinic, despite the presence of abortion rights activists at both locations.

At Capital Care, "We read them the warnings and they cleared the door at that time," Mattei said.

By 9:30 p.m., about half of the 62 protesters taken to the Franklin County Jail had posted bail, Lt. Ken Boyd of the sheriff's department.

"It looks like everybody left will be here until Monday," when arraignments are scheduled, Boyd said.

> ***"The attitude of Operation Rescue is not to be punitive toward the police officers," she said. "Our intent is not to be arrested, but if we have to risk arrest, it is something we are willing to accept."***

Boyd said no additional deputies were required to handle the crush of protesters. "They aren't making things difficult," he said.

Bond for Ohio residents was set at $200. They had to pay $41 to get out of jail, said Tom McFerin, deputy clerk at Franklin County Municipal Court.

One man was charged with resisting arrest, and his bond was set at $600. One out-of-state protester had bond set at $500.

McFerin said two clerks were sent to the Columbus police station at 120 W. Gay St., where the arrested protesters were taken first, "to speed things up."

Those not taken to the jail were given summonses and released, McFerin said.

Mary Anne Mosack, spokesman for the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue, said no one group was in charge of yesterday's protests. Nor did the day have any particular significance.

"What's significant is that children are killed in this abortion mill," she said, standing in the parking lot behind the Founder's Women's Health Center.

She said about 400 people marched in front of the health center. She emphasized they had kept the peace.

"The attitude of Operation Rescue is not to be punitive toward the police officers," she said. "Our intent is not to be arrested, but if we have to risk arrest, it is something we are willing to accept." ■

Editor's Note: One baby was confirmed saved.

The Tale Of Two Rulings

by Paul deParrie

May had its share of setbacks for the pro-life movement—especially for the rescue groups. There were two U.S. Supreme Court actions that involved the rescue communities in New York and Atlanta.

Naturally, the press did an abysmal job of covering the two disparate events. There were several reasons for the poor reports—first, is the media's aversion to explaining anything complicated unless it can be capsulized in a sound bite and, second, many of the press "gatekeepers" are determined to make it appear that the pro-aborts are "winning" on every front.

In early May, the headlines told us that the high court had ruled that Atlanta could restrict abortion protests in a zone extending 50 feet from each local abortuary. Articles explained that such protests—according to 5 of the 9 Justices—did not have First Amendment free speech protection.

As usual, this was nowhere near the truth. The constitutionality of a 50 foot zone prohibiting all pro-life activity (including prayer) is indeed being challenged in the courts—but the matter has not yet reached the Georgia Supreme Court, much less, the U.S. Supreme Court. What did reach the U.S. court was a request by certain pro-life activists that the city of Atlanta be enjoined or prohibited from enforcing the 50 foot censorship zone while the issue was being heard by the various courts.

In this ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court decided to allow Atlanta to continue enforcement—despite the fact that the constitutionality of the zone was in question. This is very different from the media reports—and much less of a defeat than they would have led one to believe.

The second ruling was not a ruling at all. It involved a New York judicial order against blocking clinic entrances (the judge may not be aware of this, but there is an actual law—made by the legislature and everything—that already prohibits this). This order did not—as in Atlanta—prohibit sidewalk counseling, picketing, prayer, leafleting, and other activities. Lower courts had ruled the injunction to be constitutional on several issues—and there are yet several other issues still awaiting lower court rulings.

But, as is often the case, the media reported the surface appearance that the Supreme Court had ruled thus and thus. Had the high court actually ruled on this injunction, the decision would have been carved in concrete (man-made stone). What actually happened is that the U.S. court simply let the lower court ruling stand—without comment.

This is not a Supreme Court ruling. It leaves room for those same issues—and those that have yet to be ruled on—to come before them again.

Again, while it is a real defeat, it is not so significant as the reports make it. For pro-life activists, it is important that it be kept in mind how distorted media reports can be—whether intentional or unintentional—and not allow such reports to dampen our obedience to God. And even more important, we must remember that it is not for victory that we act, but for obedience to God. ■

Chicagoans Save Babies

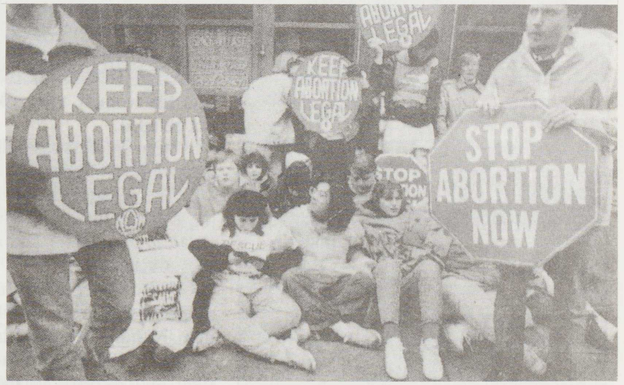
by Denny Cadieux

Chicago, May 11, 1990—It was a rainy, windy day in the city of Chicago. At 5:00 a.m. pro-lifers were finalizing their plans on where they would be rescuing and then joined the others who had gathered for a time of prayer.

At 7:00 a.m. the caravan of cars and buses pulled away from the home base and headed downtown to the targeted clinic. Upon arrival, the rescuers secured the front and back doors as the picketers, prayer warriors and sidewalk counselors began to sing and march out in front of the clinic.

When the police arrived in unmarked cars, they shut down the alley and the street to public traffic. The pro-aborts lined up on the opposite side of the street, about fifty of them. The troops were singing and praying that babies would be saved that day from the abortionist's knife. The rain was coming down in earnest.

A large police wagon pulled into place in front of the clinic, but there was no attempt to arrest anyone. We got a call over the walkie-talkie that there was activity at the back door in the alley. Nobody could get back there because the police had both ends of the alley blocked off with unmarked cars and they refused to let anyone see what they were up to.



Rescuers and pro-aborts in front of Clark St. PP Clinic.

Twenty-six rescuers were pulled away from the door and carried to the police vans. One man was pulled away by his hair while three other officers stood by and watched. Another man was dragged by his groin and a pastor with a broken leg was beaten on his good leg with a night stick by another police officer. We couldn't get video cameras or people to record this brutality because of the position of the door and the way the police vehicles kept everything blocked from public sight.

After the police had cleared the back door at 10:00 a.m. the staff started smuggling girls into the clinic by taking them through a restaurant into the alley and through the back door of the clinic. The police then approached the rescuers in front of the clinic, warning them to move or they would be arrested. As the rescuers moved from the door to join the picketers the police seized tow pastors and arrested them.

The leaders had a van pulled up around the corner and the rescuers that were in with

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