walked up to a patrol car and satisfied herself that the man with the gun was in custody.

And there are those who saw him as he went from being a free man to becoming property for the Escambia County Jail to warehouse until his trial date. According to more than one witness, he turned himself in by tapping a police officer on the shoulder claiming, "Get an ambulance! I just shot a man, and he's laying behind the building."

Last, there is the female guard who was present during a visit Griffin had with his wife on the day following his arrest. Normally this is a priveleged husband-wife communication, but the defense has waived that right in order to remove the threat of a death penalty sentence.

According to officer Fuqua, assigned to the Escambia County Jail, Griffin stated that "He didn't do it for notoriety; and he didn't do it to get any public kind of response or recognition."

Murray probes a little deeper into the conversation that she overheard, and she responds that Michael Griffin told his wife, "I killed him because of my beliefs and convictions, and if I spend the rest of my life in jail it will be worth it to save one baby."

The Prosecution Rests.

Griffin's defense has suddenly undergone a change. The judge will allow one defense (*he didn't do it*) or another (*he was brainwashed and acted in the heat of passion*), but he will not allow for both. Kerrigan and Eddins have no choice but to select one defense over the other.

In a move that is a betrayal of Michael Griffin and the months he spent trying to put abortion on trial in America, they resolve to continue pursuing the idea that their client has been framed. No heat-of-passion; no need to show the jury the graphic and compelling videos of babies found in pieces, mixed with the refuse of a dumpster. If he didn't do it, the videos mean nothing, though Kerrigan will try to argue that they caused Michael Griffin to confess to something he didn't do.

Meanwhile, Griffin continues to sit in the courtroom looking as though he has been drugged. At the very least his mind has shut out much of what is going on. To believe that you can simply tell a jury what you have done and demonstrate to them why you have done it turns out, over the months, to have been a very niave idea. His defenses have been denied. He has been forced into accepting legal representation that hangs like a heavy millstone around his neck. And he is only barely able now to hold back tears as one defense witness after another fails to undo the damage wrought by a strong state case.

Friday, five days into the actual trial, the defense calls on a pro-life leader by the name of John Burt. He is the man who we are told had amazing Svengali-like power over Griffin.

John Burt who runs a home for women in crisis.

It is John Burt who organized a funeral for two Pensacola babies taken from a garbage can. Michael Griffin and one hundred fifty others turned out for the services. Kerrigan attempts to define the activity as bizarre and macabre.

We took these little babies out, then we placed them in little caskets and were gonna' give them a decent burial instead of lettin' them be throwed away in the garbage like they do in most of these places," Burt tells the jury. "They're ground up in a garbage disposal," he finishes in answer to Kerrigan's persistent suggestion that the "fetuses" were only props used to inflame Griffin into going after an abortionist.

It was Burt who played the video tape of a Texas baby's funeral for Michael. And while the tape is referred to in an oblique way, the jury is never allowed to see the body of Baby David; seven months old gestationally, head torn violently from his shoulders in the effort to remove him from his mother who just didn't want him.

Under our justice system the David Gunn form of abortion-violence is gratefully tolerated while Michael Griffin is painted as a cold-blooded killer.

Burt handles himself well on the stand. While Kerrigan tries to suggest that he is a man who is "living off of" the abortion conflict, the witness remains cool. Burt leans back in a slow southern style and drawls out answers to his questions, while Kerrigan turns red-faced under a crop of bushy white hair and brows. In the end it is clear: Burt is a red herring that Kerrigan has crafted to try and create doubt in the minds of the jurors.

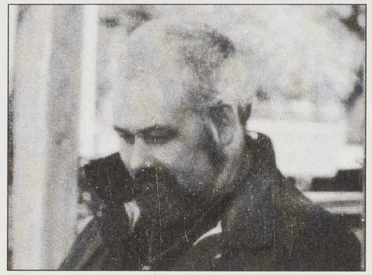
Donny Gratton is the star of the show and the final witness before Griffin's defense team is ready to call it quits. He is a big man: gray hair, dark eyes framed with thick, dark lashes, and a dark beard. During opening statements Kerrigan suggested that this was in fact the trigger-man who put an end to David Gunn's three state circuit-riding abortion career.

Kerrigan suggests that Burt and Gratton have made a secret and unholy alliance with the county prosecutor's office. The state, he contends, is relying heavily on the assistance of these two men to make a case against Griffin when in fact it is Gratton who ought to be on trial.

Gratton's eyes pause and look hard at Kerrigan. He ceases to blink for only a moment, but his face never loses a look of calm control. "If a person's innocent it's hard to prove him guilty," he says. It seems apparent that Gratton is not a man who has anything to hide, and his testimony is only adding to the weight of evidence against Kerrigan's client.

"I saw Michael Griffin confess that he killed Doctor Gunn," he tells the crowded courtroom and jury. His description of Griffin walking past him at the abortuary and over to the police is as simple and clear as it was just after the shooting (see *Life Advocate*, May '93).

The Defense Rests.



Donny Gratton who overheard Griffin say he had shot Gunn.

The verdict is in. As jurors are brought into the courtroom to render judgement, a hush falls over those in attendance. They have been out for little over two and one half hours; not a good indication.

By unanimous vote Michael Griffin has been declared guilty of murder in the first degree. One juror, a woman, is crying as she is polled for her vote.

Perhaps she is the one who stated during *voire dire* (the question/answer part of the jury selection process) that she stood in a Life Chain demonstration just the year before. Perhaps she is crying because she has only now been convinced that *abortion [doesn't] kill real children*. Her vote reflects the kind of mediocrity in the "pro-life" movement that has spawned a nationwide debate over the "use of force."

With three shots fired from a borrowed gun, Michael Griffin appears to have challenged the pro-life movement to allow the unborn the same standard of defense that is given the born or to retreat and be buried along with the graying corpse of a man who used to kill babies.

Michael Griffin's defense team announces almost immediately that they will appeal his sentence to "spend [his] natural life in prison with a minimum of twenty-five years" before he can be considered for parole. ■

Chained together, rescuers block the gate at the Memphis Area Medical Center abortuary

Second Memphis rescue successful

By Marcello Donato

Memphis, TN—On January 29th, the abortion mill, Memphis Area Medical Center for Women, was once again a target for five rescuers and around 30 prayer supporters. This time, the rescuers commissioned the use of a tire to block the main gate. Two rescuers sat with the tire on their legs while the other three locked their necks to the tire.

When the first worker arrived at around 8:15 he found the locks to the other two gates mysteriously stuck. The worker left, presumably to call for help. After about thirty minutes of workers and patients driving by with no one making an attempt to open the gate, the rescuers assumed they were going to close and were ready to declare victory. However, at 8:49 the maitenance man for the clinic pulled up. Perhaps learning from the last rescue, he used a heavy-duty cutter from the back of his truck to cut through the chains around the gates.

At around 9:00 A.M. the clinic owner pulled up in her Mustang and began ranting about "the R.I.C.O. law". She recognized some of the same rescuers who participated in the first rescue and incorrectly asserted that she "had them in court already." The police arrived and were baffled by the system of locks. The mill owner filled in the Police on the finer points of the R.I.C.O. law which neither she nor they knew anything about. In an unexpected move, the police asked for all the prayer support's I.D.'s.

When one Christian said that he wanted the record to show that demanding his I.D. was a violation of his rights, the ranking officer said, "We're gonna violate your rights with some R.I.C.O." Two were placed in temporary custody for refusing to show identification and the rest of the prayer support was forced to move across the street.

During this time no doctors or patients arrived and the gate to the usual parking lot was still closed. At about 10:00 A.M. it was obvious that the mill was closed for the day and the rescuers agreed to unlock if the juvenile and the female were not charged. The police agreed and the three males were arrested and released later that night.

They were charged with disorderly conduct and in the words of the ranking officer, "We'll be lookin' to see if they violated any Federal laws."

The mill was closed for the rest of the day and no babies were murdered there. ■