Father Dom Gerard Calvet occupies abortion mill

Grenoble, FRANCE — For the first time in Europe a leader of the Catholic Church, holding the rank of bishop, participated in a rescue. He joined nine others in the rescue. The prelate risks the jail sentences planned for "hindering or attempting to hinder an abortion" by the provision of the law passed under the former socialist government—and not repealed by the present conservative French government—the so-called "Neiertz" Act.

The Grenoble abortion mill is officially named "Woman Medical and Social Center"and performs officially 1,400 abortions a year.

"It was logical for a Catholic dignitary to take action and to join on the field the Rescuers who have been rescuing innocent, unborn babies for five years in France," said one local pro-life leader

One year ago, Cardinal Albert DeCoutray publicly justified the rescue when witnessing in favor of Mrs. Clair Fontana at the Bordeaux Criminal Court.

The pastoral grounds for Dom Gerard Calvet's intervention are the Pope's repeated calls—especially the one issued in Denver, Texas, on August 15, 1993, during the world youth meeting: Woe unto you if you do not succeed in defending human life.

Dom Gerard Calvet, abbot of Le Barroux monastery, spent the night from the 24th to the 25th of October in jail along with the nine other rescuers. Then they were brought the day after at 4 p.m. before the Grenoble Criminal Court, where it was decided to judge them on November 29. Dom Gerard and his companions were seen with handcuffs on the plaintiffs' bench.

Two days after the Grenoble Rescue, the Roanne hospital abortion mill as well as the Macon hospital abortion mill were occupied by the rescuers.

Father Paul Cocard, of the St. John Community, took part in the Macon Rescue, locked with five other Rescuers. ■

TV Euthanaisia

Euthanasia now TV entertainment in Holland

Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS — The one-hour documentary, "Death Upon Request," chronicled the story of Cees van Wendel de Joode, a 63-year-old Amsterdam man confined to a wheelchair by the degenerative muscle disorder, known formally as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Dutch television viewers and his weary wife watched his doctor comply with the man's death request in the first televised mercy killing.

The sequences broadcast took van Wendel de Joode from required counseling sessions with doctors in late 1993 through his birthday night, March 4, when he died by lethal injections administered by his personal physician, Wilfred van Oijen.

Van Wendel de Joode's speech had deteriorated so much because of the disease that he had to communicate by pointing at an alphabet board on his lap.

"Let's not put this off," were his last words to Van Oijen.

Van Oijen will not be charged, the Dutch justice ministry said on October 21.

A ministry spokesman said the public prosecutor had decided there were no grounds for charges because Wilfred van Oijen had acted according to the legal guidelines on euthanasia.

"It was completely in line with the guidelines," the spokesman said.

The documentary "Death on Request," showed Van Oijen putting his patient Cees van Wendel de Joode to sleep and then giving him a fatal injection.

Euthanasia is formally illegal in the Netherlands but a law passed late last year laid down guidelines for doctors to perform mercy killings at a patient's request.

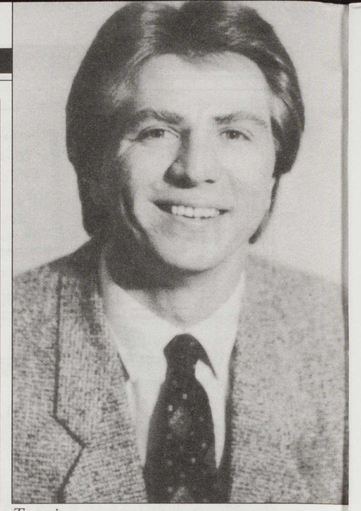
Van Oijen was asked if euthanasia was not at odds with the biblical commandment that forbids killing.

"Killing is the worst thing imaginable. But it is quite different for me as a doctor to help a patient not to suffer any longer than he wants," he replied.

The program drew angry reactions in advance from physicians who oppose euthanasia.

"I think it's horrible that this (euthanasia) is being brought into the family living room so that everyone can see," said Dr. Karel Gunning of the anti-euthanasia Dutch Doctors' Union.

"It shocks you to the bones to see the way people talk about doctors killing as if it is a normal thing to do," he said.■



Tucci

Operation Rescue fines rejected by appeals court; sent back for review

Washington, D.C. — A federal appeals court panel directed a district judge to consider reducing $182,610 in fines against Operation Rescue and three of the anti-abortion group's leaders.

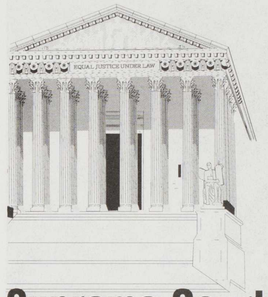
The ruling let stand fines totaling $41,600 against Keith Tucci of Summersville, South Carolina, the organization's director, and $1,010 to compensate an abortion clinic for damages.

But it ordered U.S. District Judge Louis Oberdorfer to reconsider other fines.

Operation Rescue and its officers were fined in March 1993 for violating an injunction forbidding them to block abortion clinics in 1989, 1992 and 1993. The group has attempted to keep women from going into abortuaries in the District of Columbia, nearby Virginia and Maryland at least since 1988.

Operation Rescue had appealed Oberdorfer's decision on the grounds that it violated free speech rights, that by forcing the anti-abortionists to pay fines to the clinics they would be supporting practices they found objectionable, and that the fines were punishment and not designed to compensate the clinics for damages.

"It is not too late to correct course," the appeals court said. "The precise correction required in this case is a matter appropriately left to the district court in the first instance."■



Supreme Court turns back New Jersey 300-foot injunction zone

Washington, D.C. — The Supreme Court has set aside a ruling that barred anti-abortion pickets from getting within 300 feet of the home of a doctor who performs abortions.

The Justices, in a brief order, told the New Jersey Supreme Court to restudy the anti-abortion demonstrators' contention that the 300-foot buffer zone is a violation of free-speech rights.

The nation's highest court last June ruled that judges have the power to bar even peaceful demonstrators from getting too close to abortion clinics. But that ruling in a Florida case found that a 300-foot buffer zone was too large.

This order said the state supreme court should restudy the New Jersey controversy in light of the June ruling.

In 1988, the justices ruled that picketing aimed specifically at someone's home may be banned, but that protesters must be allowed to march through residential neighborhoods.

Anti-abortion activist Michael Lawson helped organize a peaceful demonstration January 20, 1991, in the Westfield, New Jersey, neighborhood of abortionist Elrick Murray. Nearly 60 demonstrators participated.

Murray, who performs abortions at various clinics in northern New Jersey, sued Lawson and others the next month, seeking to block such demonstrations.

Before a state trial judge barred picketing or other demonstrations within 300 feet of Murray's home, a Woodbridge clinic where Murray performed abortions had been burned to the ground and a clinic in Howell where he worked had received a bomb threat.

Murray also had been convicted of simple assault for taking a swing at Lawson during a demonstration that passed by Murray's home.

The New Jersey Supreme Court upheld the injunction creating the 300-foot buffer zone.

"Residential privacy represents a sufficient public-policy interest to justify injunctive restrictions," the state court ruled last April.

In the appeal, lawyers for Michael Lawson and fellow anti-abortion demonstrator David Crist said the state court was wrong.

"Courts cannot create speech-free zones in residential neighborhoods. . . . (Murray's) privacy interests are limited to the borders of their own property and . . . are not a valid excuse for restricting their neighbors' access to the marketplace of ideas," the appeal said.■

New abortion method used in spite of legal prohibition; no response from U.S. Justice Department

New York, NY — While the so-called French abortion pill, RU-486, remains illegal in the United States, a New York gynecologist is illegally using a combination of drugs that act in much the same way to induce abortions.

The procedure, currently being tested for the Food and Drug Administration under the auspices of a San Francisco hospital, is available from New York abortionist Richard Hausknecht, a longtime crusader for abortion, for $500, and uses two drugs already on the market but approved for different purposes.

Hausknecht said he has used the drugs to perform more than 100 nonsurgical abortions.

He said he is providing the treatment "to show the medical community that there is a safe, simple, effective, legal technique of terminating pregnancies that is private and inexpensive."

"This technique can be performed in a local doctor's office or even by a nurse practitioner," Hausknecht told *The New York Times.*

Hausknecht has been criticized by medical researchers for using the method in private practice before its safety and effectiveness were determined in clinical trials, which are now under way.

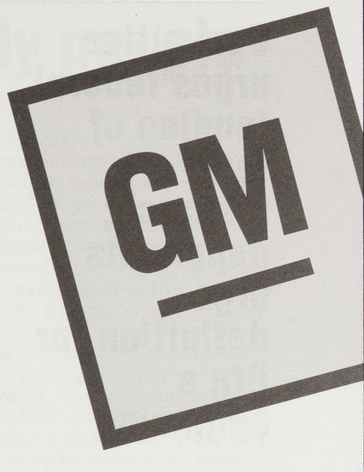
"What he's doing is unethical, using humans as guinea pigs for an unproven treatment," said Dr. Mitchell D. Creinin, an assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Creinin has been conducting clinical tests on the drugs.

The U.S. Justice Department has not acted on the information.

The combination of drugs works similar to RU-486, the French abortion pill, by inducing a miscarriage in two stages. The woman, who must be no more than eight weeks pregnant, first receives an injection of methotrexate, which inhibits tissue growth. It has been used for decades to treat cancer tumors, arthritis, ectopic pregnancies and other ailments.

Four days later, tablets of misoprostol, which has been used in pregnant women to hasten labor, are inserted into the vagina. The woman goes home and usually expels the child within three days.

Hausknecht said of the 126 illegal abortions he has performed with the drugs, 121 were successful. In the other cases surgery was needed to complete the abortion. ■



GM fires employee for pro-life button

Toledo, OH — A General Motors employee, John Stasa of Swanton, has filed a $50.5 million dollar federal lawsuit against the automaker, claiming the company infringed on his religious beliefs by refusing to allow him to wear a badge displaying the mangled head of an aborted baby.

The suit accuses GM of infringing on his religious freedom by denying him the right to express his opposition to abortion as a devout Roman Catholic.

The badge, produced by Human Life International, features a color photograph of the head of an aborted baby, with the caption, "Freedom of Choice???"

In the lawsuit, Stasa claimed he wore the badge to work nearly every day for about five years before his Toledo Powertrain Plant supervisor ordered him to remove it in April.

Stasa, a 17-year employee at the transmission assembly plant, said he was suspended from work twice — once for several hours and once for three days — for refusing to remove the badge.

John France, Stasa's lawyer, said his client is being singled out for disciplinary action, although other workers wear clothing, hats and badges with statements or political slogans, including some with obscene words. ■