Rescue Outreach targets London

Media coverage surprisingly positive

Britain — The connection between the eugenics movement and International Planned Parenthood was the subject of front page stories in London's newspapers during the week of March 29. It was also featured on ten TV and radio programs, in addition to regular TV news broadcasts.

To help with this project, called Eugenics Watch, an international team of over 50 pro-lifers assembled in London with Kathie O'Keefe of Rescue Outreach and Fr. James Morrow of Rescue Britain. Twenty-four pro-lifers from the United States included the retired bishop of Raleigh, North Carolina, Most Rev. George Lynch. Norway sent its pro-life leader, Rev. Ludvig Nessa. The Irish contribution of nine pro-lifers was headed by Michael O'Connor. Also joining the group were Marijo Zivcovic from Croatia, four Russian pro-lifers headed by Dr. Igor Guzov, and two Puerto Rican pro-lifers.

Intense media attention was generated by the arrest of Rescue America's Don Treshman as he was leaving a television interview (see *Life Advocate*, May 1993). Although the immigration authorities knew his pro-life views, they waited until he aired them on TV, possibly with the intention of suppressing his free speech activity. The charge, however, was that his "presence was not conducive to public order." His attorney arranged a *habeus corpus* hearing at the High Court in London shortly thereafter. The judge refused to grant the writ, but ordered the normal appeal procedures to be followed. The immigration authorities agreed to release him on payment of $3,000 bail.

On March 31, the pro-lifers went to International Planned Parenthood headquarters in Regents Park. Before they arrived, the radical, violent pro-abortion socialist workers staged a planned demonstration at the site, resulting in the arrest of 19 of them. These arrests were later shown on TV and in newspapers, edited so as to link the aura of violence with the peaceful pro-lifers.

Irish pro-life leader, Michael O'Connor, was arrested while standing on the sidewalk, being interviewed by reporters. He was taken to the Paddington police station, ten blocks away. Pro-lifers followed but before they crossed the street to the station, two pro-abort socialist workers ran out of the Green Man pub and physically attacked, without provocation, Dr. Greg Gardner, one of the pro-life delegation. Two constables came across the street and chased them away.

At the police station, the pro-life group stood outside the door quietly praying. They were attacked by a dozen pro-abort socialist workers who circled them, shouting and cursing them, using obscene language. A pro-lifer's appeal to police inside the station for protection went unheeded. One constable standing a few feet from the pro-aborts refused a direct appeal for help. He indicated that he was afraid of them. Fifteen minutes later, a half-dozen constables came out and herded the pro-aborts away. They then escorted the pro-lifers to a nearby subway stop.

Leaving London and the Home Secretary to weather the effects of "Hurricane Treshman," the international team of pro-lifers decided to reschedule the planned rescue for the city of Birmingham, in place of one in London.

After a morning spent picketing the abortion mill in Kent, just outside London, during which a child was saved through sidewalk counseling, the group drove 100 miles to Birmingham.

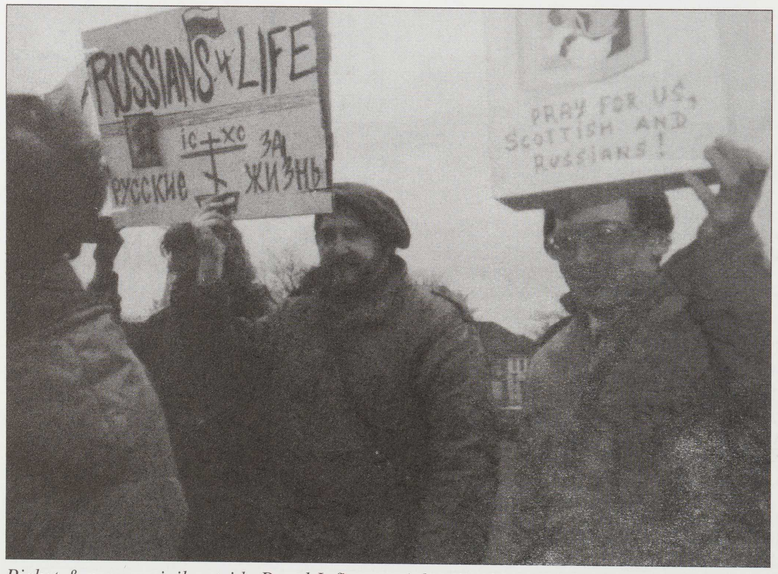
Arriving at Calthorpe Clinic, one of England's oldest abortion mills, at 7 a.m. the next day, the rescuers headed straight for the clinic doors, past the waiting prayer supporters and the gaggle of socialist workers. The eight Americans went to a side door, the rest to the front vestibule between the inner and outer doors. Police arrived in a few minutes and told incoming clients and staff to come back in a half-hour. An hour later, the police started to haul the rescuers away from the doors, four or five of them picking up a rescuer and carrying him down to the sidewalk. Once there, the police took no further action, except to station a line of officers across the driveway entrance to prevent the rescuers from rushing the door again. The only choice left to rescuers was to attempt to block vehicles from entering the clinic parking lot. Police told the rescuers to leave the driveway, but they refused and were dragged off to waiting vans.

Taken to the local police station, the rescuers refused to identify themselves and were duly locked in cells. Four additional rescuers, including Fr. Morrow, were brought in for blocking the driveway. Finally, about 7 p.m., Fr. Morrow was brought out and told the rescuers it was agreeable to give their names. Upon doing so, they were immediately released without charge.

This was the first rescue ever witnessed by the four Russians. Afterwards, one of them said to one of those arrested, "You are my hero!'

Major British newspapers carried extensive coverage of the week. About 50% of it was favorable. The Sunday *London Times*, Scotland Edition, carried a front-page article that Kathie O'Keefe said "could have appeared in any pro-life publication." ■

Father James Morrow of Rescue Britain giving a radio interview outside the headquarters building of International Planned Parenthood, located in Regent's Park on property owned by the Royal Family.



Picket & prayer vigil outside Royal Infirmary (abortion hospital), Aberdeen, Scotland. Shown are Russian pro-life leaders Sergey Marcus (holding "Russians 4 Life" sign) and Dr. Igor Gusov (holding "Pray for us, Scottish and Russians" sign).

Rescue outreach targets London
(continued below)

German Parliament tackles abortion

Bonn, Germany — Germany will tackle one of the toughest problems left over from unification in 1990 when parliament holds a final debate on the Constitutional Court rules on abortion reform.

A relaxation of the abortion law has also provoked an angry ethical debate inside and outside parliament.

On May 28, the Constitutional Court announced its decision on an appeal by the Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats against a reform of the law, which would lift most restrictions on abortion in the first three months of pregnancy.

The court ruled that while abortions were illegal "the state was not obliged to punish women who have abortions."

The ruling allows the German government to avoid paying for abortions through its health care system. Abortions, as before, will be allowed in the first three months, but must be done following consultations with the pregnant mother regarding medical, social, and legal issues.

The law was originally passed last June when liberals deserted Kohl's coalition and voted with the SPD.

Unity had left Germany's abortion laws with a glaring anomaly. The old Communist policy of abortion on demand up to the third month of pregnancy is still the rule in the east, while women in the west face strict limits on abortions.

Leftists and women's rights groups predict angry protests because the Court rejected the new abortion law.

German liberals said on Monday there could be a revival in back-street abortions because the Supreme Court threw out the reform law that merged Bonn's restrictive rules with the abortion-on-demand still valid in eastern Germany.

"Women...may go back to knitting needles and caustic lye," said Ute Wuerfel, a Free Democrat (FDP) deputy who led the reform fight in parliament last year, alluding to improvised abortion methods.

"We will have to set aside beds in every local hospital for the victims of botched abortions," she whined on German radio.

Following an emotional debate on one of the last major issues left unresolved after Germany's hasty reunification in 1990, parliament voted last June to merge the two different abortion laws by lifting most restrictions on the operation.

The FDP and pro-abortion Christian Democrats deserted Kohl in the vote to joint the opposition backing the reform.

But Kohl's CDU party challenged the law in court, saying it violated a constitutional guarantee to protect life, and the judges issued a restraining order that left Germany with two different abortion laws until this final ruling.

Christian Democratic Union's Juergen Ruttgers welcomed the decision, saying, "This is a good day for life." ■

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