Operation Rescue Chicago led by Pastors

by Orin Cooper

O.R. Chicago visited Westmont, Illinois Concord West Abortuary at 7:25 a.m. Friday, January 18.

The police had been alerted and the abortuary parking lot resembled the local police station parking lot. Two off-duty police officers were keeping the sidewalk prayers under close watch as they guarded the front door with their van parked a few feet from the front door. They were totally surprised as two groups of rescuers quickly approached the front door from two sides. Nearly half of the rescuers were through the door before the police could secure and lock the door. With 13 rescuers in position, blocking outside doors, the officers turned their attention to the rescuers inside who had placed their bodies in strategic positions. This caused a tremendous furor among the mill staff.

The rescue marshals were four pastors who have responded to God's call to rescue those being dragged to their death. God responded to our prayers by allowing rescuers to see a mother and father turn away and leave.

All 22 rescuers were removed by 9 a.m. They were released on a signature I bond. Jury trial date is February 19, 1991.

The killing area was covered in prayer by 25 prayer supporters and counselors who remained on the scene until approximately 1 p.m., offering assistance to women in crisis.

There were no deathscorts at the scene. ■

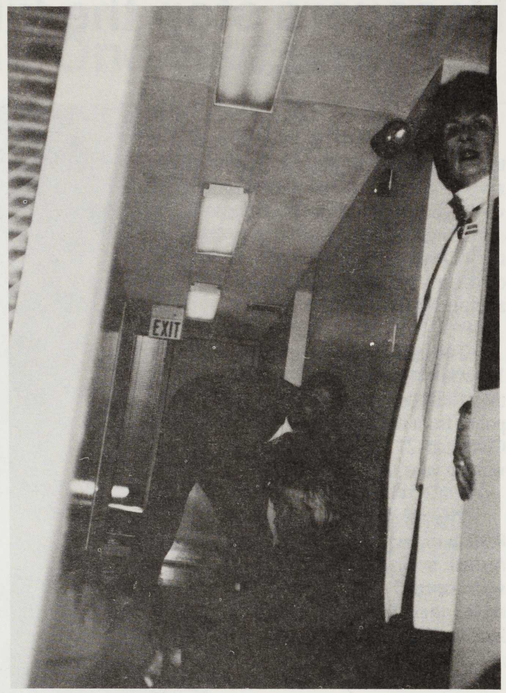

Photo of clinic hallway with rescuers and abortion staff. (Photo: Orin Cooper)

Catholics contest charges for disrupting inaugural service

John Szabo, 81, rises from his knees and gestures anxiously toward pro-abortion Governor-elect Pete Wilson, as his daughter Theresa was dragged away and suffered head and brain injuries when she was dropped on the back of her head on the floor of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, in Sacramento, CA, by Wilson's police agents. Almost immediately, Szabo was also assaulted, injured, and dragged away. The photo was taken Sunday morning, January 6, 1991, in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament (built in 1889 and for a time known as the largest Cathedral west of the Mississippi) in Sacramento, California.(Photo: Anti-Desecration League)

UPI Wire Story

Sacramento, CA—A group of Roman Catholics arrested for disrupting Gov. Pete Wilson's inaugural church service to protest his pro-choice stand on abortion demanded jury trials January 6 and called for the bishop's removal.

The Catholics, angry that they were arrested in a Roman Catholic cathedral, said the event they disrupted was not a religious service, but a political event that shouldn't have been held in the church.

"The governor and his group disturbed the cathedral. What we were doing was religious," said Al Rhomberg, one of those arrested at the Wilson Inaugural Ecumenical Service January 6.

"It's kind of an absurdity that we have come to this, in my opinion," Rhomberg said.

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Death of 13-year-old brings $1.2 million award

Reprinted from the Abortion Injury Report, February, 1991

New York, NY—The family of a 13-year-old girl who died after a failed abortion has received a $1.2 million jury award, the largest wrongful death abortion payment in state history.

A Manhattan jury made its decision in the case of Dawn Ravenell, who died in January 1985 after the abortion at the Eastern Women's Center in Manhattan.

The girl's parents, who are both Pentecostal, did not know their daughter was pregnant until they received word she was in a coma on January 24, 1985, said the girl's mother, Ruth Ravenell.

According to court records, Ravenell was 21 weeks pregnant when she went to the clinic to have an abortion.

Five minutes into the procedure, Ravenell came out of a general anesthesia and began vomiting and choking, court papers said. The doctor and nurse inserted a breathing tube and moved her to a recovery room, where she began choking again, papers said.

She then suffered a massive heart attack before the medical personnel checked on her again, according to the records. She was already in a coma when the ambulance arrived. She died three weks later at Roosevelt Hospital, never regaining consciousness. ■

A recent rescue in New Zealand.

Catholics Contest Charges

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Catholics organized as the Anti-Desecration League complained in a letter to Pope John Paul II that Bishop Francis Quinn "gave the use of the cathedral to abortion politicians" and then stood by as Catholics "who stood up for life" were arrested.

The letter was circulated for Catholics to sign and mail to the Vatican. Quinn didn't appear to be upset and said it was their right to express their opinions.

State police arrested 11 people inside the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament after a commotion erupted at the front of the church while a gospel choir was singing.

A group in the front pews, not far from Wilson and his family, began praying loudly so their voices could be heard above the choir.

They were booked into the Sacramento County jail on charges of disrupting a religious service, a misdemeanor that carries a maximum penalty of a $1,000 fine and six months in jail —double for those with prior convictions.

But they have vowed to fight the charges, arguing they should not have been arrested inside the church for praying, loudly or not.

Theresa Reali, 40, a housewife, said state police dropped her on her head and roughly dragged her out of the cathedral, where she was handcuffed. Reali said she partially lost consciousness during the arrest and has suffered pain and dizziness since.

The woman said she didn't raise her voice during the service, but was arrested when she went to assist her 81-year-old father, who also was arrested.

Quinn said he was dismayed at the arrests and has sought to have the charges dismissed.

But they have vowed to fight the charges, arguing they should not have been arrested inside the church...

"They are good and prayerful people," he said of the protesters. "I think they have the right to be heard. But I guess they didn't have a civil right" (to disturb the service).

Quinn said the ecumenical service, which involved clergy from Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Buddhist denominations, was held in the cathedral because of its large size and closeness to the state Capitol.

The bishop said it was better strategy to try and persuade Wilson to change his mind on abortion than to shun him.

"We're probably going to continue to deal with governors and presidents with whom we radically disagree," Quinn said.

Seven pleaded not guilty before Municipal Court Judge Kenneth Peterson and were scheduled to stand trial separately during the first two weeks of March. Each was granted permission to act as his own lawyer at their trials.

Three others, including Joseph Scheidler, president of the Pro-Life Action League of Chicago, have hired lawyers and their cases will proceed separately.

Scheidler, 63, said in a telephone interview he was arrested after he called out at the end of the inaugural service for prayers that Wilson would change his stand on abortion, and then unfurled a banner proclaiming "sacrilege."

Deputy District Attorney Stan Kubochi offered to reduce the charges against 10 of the protesters to disturbing the peace, which can be handled as a minor infraction, rather than a criminal charge on their records.

The penalty for an infraction can be as little as three hours of community service and a $23.50 fine.

The state may drop charges altogether against one man, Patrick McKay, who said he wasn't part of the protesting group, but had merely showed up for the regular Sunday mass, which had been canceled, when police grabbed him and hauled him off to the paddy wagon.

"He was just an innocent bystander," said Rhomberg, backing McKay's claim. ■