

On the Pro-Life Front

Catholic Hospitals Warned of Litigation

Denver [RNS] — Catholic hospital officials have been told to be prepared for litigation against them because of the Jan. 22 liberal abortion ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Several speakers at the Catholic Health Assembly here sounded a warning that Catholic hospitals must remain steadfast in their refusal to participate in abortion, which is condemned by

Church teaching.

Sister Mary Maurita, executive vice-president of the Catholic Hospital Association (CHA), which sponsored the meeting, told delegates that "life itself is under attack" because of the Court's abortion ruling.

She said CHA has made a moral and financial commitment to assist any member health facility

in the process of defense and appeal to the Supreme Court if necessary.

She said the long-range goal of CHA, working with U.S. Catholic bishops, is to seek a constitutional amendment reversing the Court ruling.

"The crusade is ongoing," she said. "Someone will always be challenging the rights of the

Catholic hospital to stand for life and against abortion, sterilization and euthanasia. But the cause of our faith is so worth the effort that we can say we are willing to die in the cause of fighting for the sanctity of life."

Auxiliary Bishop William E. McManus of Chicago said Catholic hospitals should refuse to betray their religious traditions regardless of government and

community pressures.

"Far worse things could happen to a Catholic hospital than to be closed for taking a courageous stand on the serious and complex moral questions now confronting most hospitals," he said.

More than 1,200 executives of the 885 Catholic hospitals and nursing homes in the U.S. attended the sessions.

Lutherans Oppose Abortion on Demand

Waterloo, Ont. [RNS] — A vote against abortion on demand, but in favor of Criminal Code revision to permit counseling on the operation, was recorded here at the annual meeting of the Eastern

Canada Synod of the Lutheran Church in America.

The 200 delegates approved a recommendation by a synod study group that federal and provincial governments should

finance counselling centers where abortions are procured.

They said they could not condone abortion as a desirable means of birth control because

denying a fetus the right to life goes against Christian principles. But Christians should not simply refrain from killing, delegates added; rather they should help others to live life more fully.

"In addition to recognizing the sacredness of life, factors such as age, health, emotional stability, marital and financial status of the woman and her own needs must be considered," the synod said.

1,500 Attend Right-to-Life Meeting

Detroit [RNS] — A Boston physician told some 1,500 members of right-to-life groups from the U.S., Canada and Australia meeting here that "abortion is a perversion of love" which is attempting to replace "the sanctity of life ethic" with what she called "the new nihilism."

The first of several speakers calling for a Constitutional amendment to overcome the Jan. 22 U.S. Supreme Court ruling sanctioning abortion, Dr. Mildred Jefferson said the Court's decision is arbitrary because it is not based on sound medical judgment or practice, or scientific fact.

She termed it "sad indeed" that so much time and effort must be expended to help others realize that "if we desert the unborn... we will have no grounds for objection when the elderly, the chronically ill, the deformed, the retarded and the politically unacceptable come under attack.

The business sessions of the meeting were conducted by Wayne County (Michigan) Judge James L. Ryan of Detroit. Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.), co-sponsor with Sen. James Buckley (R-N.Y.) of a pro-life amendment resolution in the Senate, was the banquet speaker.

In her keynote address, Dr. Jefferson warned that many

physicians today have accepted the position of "social engineer" similar to the German physicians of the 1930s who acted to remove "social burdens."

"To combat this mentality," she said, the right-to-life movement should be named 'the right-to-life battle,' and since the Supreme Court decision has brought forth cries of anguish, now there should arise a battle cry to defend the sanctity of life."

"What is happening," she observed, "is that the sanctity of life ethic is being replaced with the quality of life ethic," which she described as the "new nihilism."

Pointing out that advocates of abortion have charged that opposition comes only from Roman Catholics, Dr. Jefferson said: "My fellow Protestants must speak loudly to get recognition in this fight, and if my fellow Protestants want to see fewer Catholics in this fight, all they have to do is stand up."

She declared that the pro-life movement is not a "little pressure group," because every person alive "has a stake in this fight. Any elected official who does not understand what's involved does not deserve a vote of electorate."

In one of several resolutions passed during the gathering, the

country's physicians were asked to repudiate in their professional organizations the Jan. 22 U.S. Supreme Court decision on abortion.

Participants came from 46 states, Canada and Australia, representing scores of pro-life organizations on the local levels.

In another resolution, the delegates commended members of both houses of Congress who have supported resolutions calling for human life amendments to the U.S. Constitution. They also urged legislators on the national and state levels to influence other legislators to support such amendments.

Sen. Hatfield discussing the problems of the pro-life effort across the country and conditions which have led to abortion as a "solution" to current social ills, said much of the situation is characterized by "false thinking."

He said the "false thinking that rights are conferred on citizens by the state can be dispelled by reading the Declaration of Independence."

"These rights," he observed, "are not rights conferred on man by the state. It is not for the state to decide what persons shall not have the right to live. These rights are ordained by the Creator. That is why they are universal."

"Our country was founded on

Golden Heads Right-to-Life

Detroit, Mich. — Edward J. Golden of Troy was elected president of the National Right to Life Committee at the fourth annual Right to Life Convention here.

The election was announced at the conclusion of the three-day national meeting which hosted over 1,500 Right to Life members and directors from 41 states and the District of Columbia.

National Right to Life was reorganized at the same meeting under the District of Columbia Laws and has opened an office in Washington to serve as headquarters for the Right to Life movement across the country.

Golden, who founded the New York State Right to Life Com-

mittee in 1967 and is currently Chairman of that group, led the New York State contingent of 85 to the Detroit, Michigan, Convention.

Golden resides with his wife Catherine and six children in the town of Brunswick, Mrs. Golden is vice president of the Board of Education for the enlarged city school district of Troy.

Elected to the Executive Committee were Judy Fink, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Albert Fortman, M.D., Bismarck, N.D.; Robert Greene, Covington, Ky.; Gloria Klein, Westland, Mich.; Marjory Mecklenburg, Minneapolis, Minn.; Michael Taylor, Mt. Rainier, Md.; John Wilke, M.D., Cincinnati, Ohio; Joseph P.

the principle that human rights — the most fundamental of which is the right to life itself — are not given by government, but endowed by God," he added.

Another speaker, Dr. David W. Louisell, Boalt Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, said that the Jan. 22 Supreme Court decision was a "reversal of the Judeo-Christian ethic of more than 2,000 years," and he declared that it is time for the American people to "stand up to the court, as to any other branch of government, when it makes a serious error."

Another law professor, Dr. Victor Rosenblum of Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., said the high court ruling on abortion is "a constitutional aberration, and the need to correct it impels us to move forward for a return to the correct view of the Constitution."

A third legal expert, Dr. John T. Noonan, professor of law and

chairman of religious studies at the University of California, Berkeley, said that no legislature in the country, federal or state, would have passed legislation doing what the court has done.

He called upon the pro-life forces of the nation to set themselves a deadline of 1976, so that "in that great anniversary year, the terrible blot on the court will be expunged."

"Let us look on it not as a deadline," he corrected, "but as a lifeline."

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