

Pro-Life Marchers To Continue Fight For Life Amendment

By Cindy Wooden
 Washington (NC) -- The pro-life movement will not compromise in its call for a human life amendment outlawing abortion, said Nellie Gray, president of March for Life, but the pro-life legislative agenda also includes defeating the Equal Rights Amendment.

"The Equal Rights Amendment means abortion," said Miss Gray at the 11th annual march, which brought thousands of pro-lifers to Washington Jan. 23.

"If the ERA passes the only decision on abortion left to be made is how the job will be done," said Rep. Barbara Vucanovich (R-Nev.) before the marchers walked from the Ellipse near the White House to the Supreme Court and Capitol buildings. She was one of four U.S. representatives who spoke at rally preceding the demonstration.

National Park Service police estimated that 50,000 people gathered at the Ellipse for the march commemorating the Jan. 22, 1973 Supreme Court decision which struck down state laws against abortion. District of Columbia police estimated the crowd at 30,000 and Capitol police estimated 25,000-30,000. The Capitol police estimated 26,000 people participated in last year's march.

"We thought we put down the ERA" years ago, Miss Gray said, "but it is rearing its ugly head again. We do not want it."

The American public "unfortunately has been sold on the ERA as an amendment simply to give equal pay for equal work," she said, but the amendment "destroys basic family unity" and sanctions abortion.

"The Equal Rights Amendment as written will overturn the Hyde Amendment," said Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.), referring to legislation which prohibits the federal funding of abortions.

Sensenbrenner was sponsor of a proposed addition to the ERA which would have stated that a right to an abortion is not guaranteed under by the amendment. The ERA without the clause was defeated by the House before the holiday recess.

Mrs. Vucanovich called the ERA "the most dangerous threat to the unborn" and said she would "never accept the ERA without abortion neutral language."

Reps. Vin Weber (R-Minn.) and Michael DeWine

Federation Schedules Luncheon

The Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs is sponsoring a community luncheon honoring its founder, Susan B. Anthony, on the anniversary of her 164th birthday, at noon on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the Rochester Plaza Hotel.

Guest speaker will be Ann Johnston, executive alderwoman from Toronto.

Tickets are \$8 per person, and reservations should be made by calling 663-3688 or 865-2413.

D.C. Marchers Buoyed by Wave From President

Washington (NC) -- With a wave from President Reagan, thousands of right-to-life activists marched on the Capitol and the Supreme Court Jan. 23 in the 11th annual "March for Life."

A man believed to be Reagan waved from the south balcony of the White House after pro-life leaders persuaded Reagan during a meeting earlier in the day to greet the marchers.

The marchers had assembled on the Ellipse, between the executive mansion and the Washington Monument, to begin the annual march to Capitol Hill.

"It's taken me three years to get this done for us," said Nellie J. Gray, leader of the annual march, who in previous years has asked Reagan to speak to the crowd.

She said she understood that security reasons prevented the president from addressing the group before it began marching.

The march marking the Jan. 22, 1973, decision of the Supreme Court legalizing abortion was held a day late this year so marchers could lobby their senators and representatives while Congress was in session.

Miss Gray said the meeting with Reagan was not just a picture-taking session like it had been in the previous three years.

"We pressed our message hard. We came in to do business at the White House," she said.

At an earlier press conference, leaders of the National Right to Life Committee said they backed a second term for Reagan because of his support for the unborn.

The group also said it would work to defeat six senators in the fall elections: Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.), David Pryor (D-Ark.), Charles Percy (R-Ill.), Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.), William Cohen (R-Maine) and Carl Levin (D-Mich.).

(R-Ohio) also told the marchers that they opposed the ERA and saw it as a threat to the pro-life movement.

Miss Gray introduced Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) to the crowd calling him the "greatest friend the babies and you and I have in the Senate." Helms said he had "received many threats" because of his pro-life stands and that some have said his dedication to the anti-abortion legislation will mean he will lose his Senate seat in the 1984 elections.

The senator said that the price of not voting for "the most innocent, the most helpless" is too high "and I will not pay it."

By legalizing abortion, he said, "society has opened the flood gates to destruction."

Miss Gray thanked President Reagan for "listening earnestly" to the concerns of pro-lifers after the president waved to the marchers from the south balcony of the White House. The marchers cheered and some shouted "Four more years."

Not all the marchers were pleased with the attention given to Reagan and Helms, however. "I feel very uncomfortable waving to the president," said Patrick O'Neill, a marcher with Pro-lifers for Survival of Greenville, N.C. His group opposes Reagan's nuclear policies.

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It is "very dangerous" to address only "a single life

issue. All life is precious; all life is innocent," O'Neill said. "The policies of the Reagan administration have not been pro-life."

While the president is anti-abortion, he said, administration policies in Central America, on the arms race and on social spending "have not been pro-life."

"The bishops' pastoral on war and peace clearly calls us to be consistent on life issues," O'Neill said. With the exception of abortion, Helms "has been anti-life on every other issue," he added.

Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), author of the Hyde Amendment, told the marchers, "you are loving a lot of little people who can never love you back" by participating in the march and working to stop abortion.

The representative also called on pro-lifers to work for the rights of handicapped infants. The recent "Baby Doe" decisions limiting medical care of handicapped newborns led him to say, "God help you if you are not planned, privileged and perfect."

Robert Dornan, a former Republican representative from California, used the march to announce his intentions to regain his House seat and to pay tribute to the late Rep. Clement Zablocki (D-Wis.), who participated in past marches.

"Today he is with God," Dornan said of Zablocki. "He knows every innocent child who has died...he knows every agony this country has suffered...he knows what the future will hold if we don't end this Herodian slaughter and go back to the faith of our fathers."

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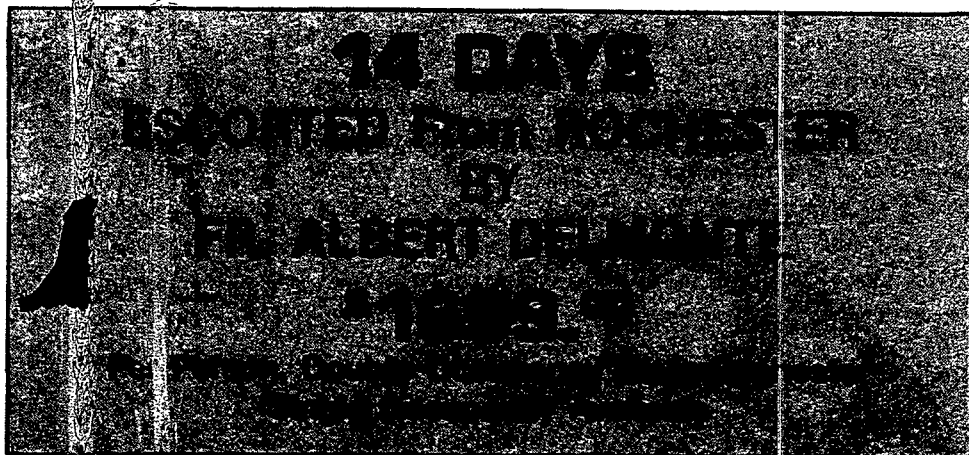


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