

# COURIER-JOURNAL

Newspaper of the Diocese of Rochester

Thursday, October 24, 1985

20 Pages

35 Cents



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

## Don't Grow Food, Grow Money

Elliott Fintushel of the Mime Workshop portrays the character Pantalone in "Don't Grow Food, Grow Money," in Midtown Mall on Monday, Oct. 14. The mime presentation was

part of Rochester's Hunger Awareness Week. For story and more pictures on the week's events, see Page 8.

## Civil rights and abortion don't mix, speakers say

By Karen M. Franz

The familiar arguments presented by pro-life groups are many and convincing to those who believe in the sanctity of human life. But at Saturday's New York State Right to Life Convention just outside of Rochester, two unusually paired speakers — a conservative Congressman and a feminist — raised points that may someday win over those who have consistently supported a woman's "right" to abort her child.

For the two speakers pointed out that instead of extending women's rights, as pro-abortion forces have long claimed, the "freedom" permitted by the 1973 Supreme Court in Roe vs. Wade has in many cases inhibited civil rights for women and minorities.



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal  
John Wagner's 11-month-old daughter mirrors the image of the fetal child on the bag her father is holding.

"As the ranking minority member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, what (I find) is most disturbing is that the right to abortion is being characterized in the context of sex discrimination," U.S. Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. said in his keynote address. "In other words, if you are opposed to abortion, you are guilty of sex discrimination."

Ironically, Rep. Sensenbrenner said, "attempts by Congress or the other branches of the federal government to fight discrimination based on race, color, creed and national origin are thwarted because almost all the major civil rights organizations have equated abortion with sex discrimination."

"For the most part," he continued, "major civil rights organizations have allowed themselves to be used by the pro-abortionists to further an agenda which, in my opinion, is separate and distinct from the civil rights agenda. In the area of sex discrimination, women's groups have allowed abortion rights to stymie further progress in enacting laws and policies meant to eradicate discriminatory practices that exist against women today."

As an example, he cited the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment to reach ratification because of questions about its potential to affect abortion rights. He said that during the last Congress, his subcommittee heard testimony from dozens of witnesses pleading or Congress to send to the states another Equal Rights Amendment. "Not once did a pro-ERA witness bring up the issue of abortion, and when asked, in almost every instance, pro-ERA witnesses emphatically denied any link between the ERA and abortion," the Wisconsin congressman said. "It would not, we were told, overturn the decision in Harris vs. McRae, in which the Supreme Court, by a razor-thin margin ... upheld the Hyde Amendment which prohibits federal funds from paying for abortions ... However, because of a fear that an

abortion-neutral amendment that I proposed to the federal ERA would pass, the ERA was considered under a procedure allowing no amendments. It failed to pass by a six-vote margin, with both Democrats and Republicans standing firm in their support for the right to life."

Another example he cited was a proposal for unisex insurance, which would prohibit sex from being a criterion for insurance rates. "When it was shown that health insurance plans under a unisex insurance statute would have to provide abortion coverage, a hue and cry was raised," Sensenbrenner said. "The bill never reached the floor after amendments were adopted in committee to make the unisex law abortion-neutral. Why? Because it lost the support of the pro-abortion forces that control both the women's movement and the civil rights movement."

Yet another example: a bill called H.R. 700, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985. Congress had been told that such legislation is necessary to allow the government to adequately enforce the civil rights statutes that combat race, sex, handicap and age discrimination, he said. But the legislation could have three additional effects: to expand abortion rights, forcing religious institutions such as colleges, universities and hospitals to provide abortion or abortion-related services in their health plans; to render inoperative state laws that prevent public funds from being used for abortions; and to require non-religious institutions to provide abortions or abortion-related services.

"At issue here," Sensenbrenner said, "is an inconsistent federal policy. On one hand, the Hyde Amendment prevents federal funds from being used to pay for abortions. However, under current Title IX regulations (of the Education Amendments of 1972), which are expanded by H.R. 700, an educational institution that accepts students on guaranteed federal loans must use its own

funds to provide abortion or abortion-related services in its health plans or facilities." Thus, he said, such Catholic educational institutions as Notre Dame and Georgetown University Hospital could be required to pay for abortion services for their students out of their own funds.

Therefore, Sensenbrenner and another congressman drafted an amendment that would ensure that the bill could have no effect on abortion rights. The amendment, Sensenbrenner said, has the strong support of the National Right to Life Committee and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and will receive a majority of votes in the House of Representatives — if it ever reaches the floor. "The civil rights organizations

continued on Page 10

### Inside this week

#### Church accessibility

Ministry to the Disabled releases its report on the Monroe County church's accessibility to the handicapped — Page 5.

#### Behind the walls

Take a look at Church ministries being exercised with inmates at Auburn and Elmira state correctional facilities — Pages 6, 7.

#### Safe haven

As courts begin to determine the legalities of offering sanctuary to persons fleeing oppression, we look at local sanctuary efforts — Page 9.

#### Kearney takes Aquinas

Heavily favored to win, the Little Irish succumbed to the Kearney Kings in a muddy gridiron pairing on Saturday, Oct. 19 — Page 15.

Remember to set your clocks back one hour Saturday night.