

Peace sit-in aims to sway politicians

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Fourteen protesters — including a Catholic priest and a McQuaid Jesuit High School student — were arrested Friday, Jan. 11, and charged with third-degree criminal trespass following an anti-war sit-in at the local offices of U.S. Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato and Congressman Frank Horton.

Among the 14 demonstrators arrested were Richard Staropoli, a senior at McQuaid, and Father Robert T. Werth, pastor of St. Bridget's Parish, Rochester. Father Werth is a member of the Faith and Resistance Community, a Catholic pro-life and anti-war group.

Rochester police arrested the demonstrators late in the afternoon of Jan. 11 after they refused to leave voluntarily from the two offices, which are located on the third floor of the Federal Building, 100 State St.

The demonstrators were hoping to persuade Republicans D'Amato and Horton to vote against a resolution authorizing President George Bush to use force against Iraqi forces if they did not withdraw from Kuwait by the United Nations' Jan. 15 deadline.

The protesters were part of a contingent of about 50 people who met for prayer at noon at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 Fitzhugh St., before marching to the Federal Building. Once the group had made its way into the building's front lobby, members held hands and prayed before taking elevators up to the third floor.

As the group prayed, a Chili resident taunted them for opposing U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf region.

"Why don't you guys ever agree with our policy?" shouted Gary Hunneyman, who said he was in the building to obtain tax forms.

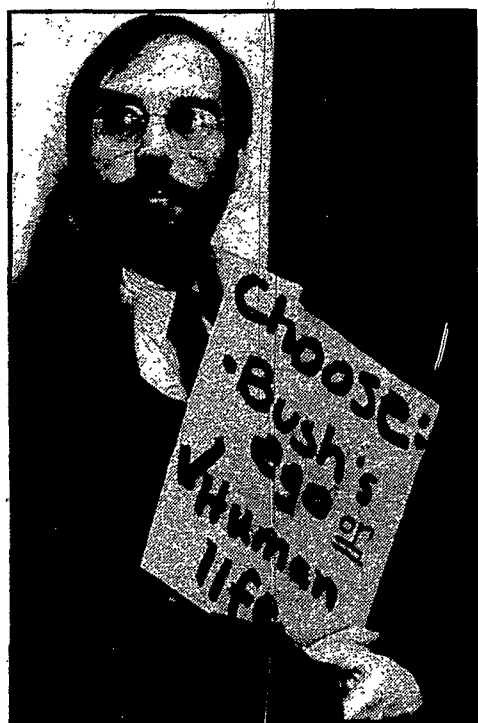
Hunneyman explained his challenge to protesters by saying: "The point is, we have to support the troops over there. I don't want another Vietnam where the troops come back and people spit on them."

Before leaving the Federal Building, Hunneyman said polls showed that the majority of U.S. citizens supported President Bush's stance. He then referred to the demonstrators as "a bunch of liberal pukes."

One of the demonstrators, Michelle



Protesters sit on the floor of Congressman Frank Horton's local offices Jan. 11. The hand at the right of the frame is that of a police officer attempting to usher out the press.



Father Paul English, CSB, lends "hall-support" to protesters inside the offices of Sen. Alfonse M. D'Amato.

Moore of Rochester, countered that Hunneyman's statements were "ridiculous," adding "he's carrying on about how wonderful America is, and then he's getting upset when people exercise their First Amendment rights."

After taking elevators to the third floor, the demonstrators split up. A handful made its way into each office before the rest of the protesters were shut out by staff persons. Eventually, several police arrived



Rochester police prepare to begin the arrest procedure.

after being called by the offices' employees.

Carol Crossed, a member of Faith and Resistance and a veteran of several anti-abortion "rescue missions" at Rochester-area doctors' offices, sat with six others in Horton's office. She eventually spoke with Horton by phone from Washington, where he was participating in congressional debate on the resolution.

Crossed said Horton, a Republican congressman who represents the 29th District, told her that he was planning to vote in support of the president. D'Amato did not

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Activists anticipate large crowd at annual march

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Thousands of pro-life activists — including many from the Diocese of Rochester — are expected in Washington, D.C., Jan. 22 for the March for Life marking the 18th anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

Local organizers disagree, however, about the potential effect on march turnout of the ongoing conflict in the Persian Gulf and the possibility that the United States may be at war by the march date.

As part of the reaction to the chance of war, peace rallies have been scheduled in Washington Jan. 19 and 26. Those rallies might force some people to choose on which life issue to focus their efforts, pro-life organizers acknowledged.

"A lot of our people are pro-peace as well as pro-life," noted Donald Peters, who is coordinating buses at St. Mary's, Waterloo, for the trip to Washington for the March for Life. "(The peace rallies) will cut the numbers. There's only so much time people can commit."

On the other hand, Bob Dorsheid, who is helping to coordinate buses in Rochester, does not believe the peace rallies will adversely affect the numbers of people attending the March for Life.

"My sense is it won't affect the number of people at the march," Dorsheid said. "I think it's different people."

According to the U.S. Park Service, last year's March for Life attracted approximately 75,000 participants.

Turnout for last year's March for Life also was affected by a one-time pro-life rally held in Washington April 28.

Parishioners of Webster's St. Rita's Parish, for example, opted last year to attend the April rally rather than the January march, noted Father John Reif, pastor. This year, he said, the parish will send a bus to the march.

In addition to groups traveling to the march from St. Mary's and St. Rita's, buses also will depart from St. Joseph's in Penfield, St. Margaret Mary in Apalachin, St. Jude's in Rochester, St. John of Rochester, and St. Thomas the Apostle in Rochester, Dorsheid reported. Buses will also

be going from Watkins Glen and Horseheads.

The theme of the 1991 march is "No Waffling on the 'Life Principles.'" March organizers said those principles state, in part, that, "The life of each human being shall be preserved and protected from the biological beginning throughout the natural continuum of the human being's life by all available ordinary means and reasonable efforts."

This theme takes into account the full range of life issues — from abortion to euthanasia — noted Sharon Pearte, who is helping to coordinate the buses leaving from Horseheads.

"Abortion is not just a separate issue," observed Pearte, a parishioner at St. Mary's, Elmira. "If you start picking and choosing who can live and who can die, you fall into euthanasia."

"People do not yet make the connection between abortion and euthanasia," Pearte added.

The debate over euthanasia was heightened in particular by the Dec. 26

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