

Cardinal Glemp's visit generates controversy

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Crowds and controversy surrounded the opening days of an 18-day, 14-city U.S. visit by Warsaw's Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the primate of Poland.

The 61-year-old cardinal's tour of U.S. Polish Catholic communities originally had been scheduled for September, 1989. He was forced to postpone the trip because of tensions over a Carmelite convent at the Auschwitz death camp and over statements the cardinal made in August, 1989. Those comments were regarded widely as anti-Semitic.

Cardinal Glemp confronted the Catholic-Jewish controversy at the start of his visit, meeting in Washington Sept. 20 with 12 U.S. Jewish leaders.

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith boycotted the meeting, and New York Rabbi Avraham Weiss and a small group of followers picketed it.

Before the trip began, Seymour D. Reich resigned as head of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consulta-

tion, protesting the committee's inability to agree on whether Jewish leaders should meet with the cardinal. Reich said they should not meet with him until he repudiated the offensive 1989 comments.

But the Jewish leaders who met with the cardinal called their hour-long session the beginning of a new relationship between Jews and Polish Catholics.

In a statement to the group, Cardinal Glemp said he sincerely regretted earlier statements that "caused pain to the Jewish community." The statement later was made public.

He said he had learned "through dialogue" that his comments "were in many aspects based on mistaken information," and he recognized that they were "seen as fostering stereotypes of Jews and Judaism."

At a press conference Cardinal Glemp said he plans to leave behind the "attitudes and negative stereotypes of the past and go forward."

In a joint statement, the Jewish participants called the meeting "a forthright, open and, we believe, constructive conversation."



AP/Wide World Photos
Cardinal Jozef Glemp (second from left), Catholic primate of Poland, talks Sept. 20 with New York City Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum (right), in Washington, D.C. Archbishops Adam Maida of Detroit (left) and William Keeler of Baltimore (second from right) look on.

They said that in addition to acknowledging mistakes and expressing regret for them, Cardinal Glemp "acknowledged the need to engage in serious joint studies that would prevent the repetition of stereotypes and increase positive understanding of Jews and Judaism."

Cardinal Glemp began his series of visits to Polish-American communities Sept. 21 in the Diocese of Brooklyn, with a Mass at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Brooklyn's

Greenpoint neighborhood. Hundreds of members of St. Stanislaus and neighboring parishes packed the church. Those who could not get in waited outside and greeted his arrival with thunderous applause.

Among other scheduled stops on Cardinal Glemp's tour were Albany and Buffalo, N.Y.; Boston; Pittsburgh; Cleveland; Gary, Ind.; Chicago; Scranton, Pa.; Philadelphia; and Metuchen and Newark, N.J.

Prelate blasts proposed changes in state abortion law

By Joseph Nowlan
Catholic News Service

BOSTON — Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston criticized as "devastating" revisions to the state's abortion laws that have been proposed by Massachusetts Gov. William Weld.

If passed, Cardinal Law said at a Sept. 19 press conference, Massachusetts would become the "commonwealth of death for the innocent."

Weld has proposed lowering to 16 the age at which parental consent would not be required for abortion; permitting abortions for girls under 16 with the consent of only one parent; establishing criminal penalties for blocking access to abortion clinics; and allowing health insurance for public employees to cover the cost of abortions.

Cardinal Law said the proposals could be interpreted to allow abortion in the ninth month of pregnancy. "The burden of proof is elsewhere" in terms of finding a differ-

ent interpretation, he said. Weld's office has said the proposed changes could not be read as allowing abortion in the ninth month.

Another change proposed by Weld called for the repeal of a statute proclaiming October as Pro-Life Month.

"We'll celebrate it anyway," Cardinal Law said. "I hope that doesn't make us illegal."

The abortion law proposals, coupled with a suggested \$20 million cut in general

welfare, made the cardinal feel "very uneasy at the moment" about Weld's job performance.

The governor's initiatives will go to the Massachusetts Legislature to be debated in committee and eventually voted on by the full House and Senate.

The bishops who head Massachusetts' four Catholic dioceses signed a statement saying Weld's proposed changes show "a cynical disregard for women in difficult pregnancies and the children they bear."

Complaints of misleading advertising leveled at counseling centers

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Crisis-pregnancy centers that counsel and support pregnant women were attacked Sept. 20 during a hearing of a House subcommittee reviewing complaints about misleading advertising.

Groups opposed to abortion attacked the proceedings as a "kangaroo court," saying their requests to testify in support of the crisis pregnancy centers were ignored because of a pro-abortion agenda.

During the hearing, Rep. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., chairman of the Small Business Subcommittee on Regulation, Business

Opportunities and Energy, assailed what he called "bogus" clinics.

"In many cases the consumer can't tell the difference between the legitimate medical provider and the deceptive bogus clinic run by an anti-abortion zealot," Wyden said.

He called on publishers of telephone directories to more tightly control advertisements, saying "directory listings too often allow the zealots to cloak themselves in the mantle of health-care providers."

Outside the hearing, representatives of two national groups of pregnancy-counseling centers and of several other groups that oppose abortion said Wyden's goal in the hearings had little to do with

advertising.

"The fact is abortion-alternatives agencies — crisis pregnancy centers — lose a lot of money for the abortion industry," said Wendy E. Stone, spokeswoman for Americans United for Life. Stone made the comments during a press conference preceding the hearing.

The hearing focused on emotional testimony about women who felt they had been victimized when they went into counseling centers expecting to obtain abortions. Among the witnesses were state attorneys from New York, Texas and California who have been investigating claims about misleading advertising.

Also testifying was Mark Salo, executive

director of Planned Parenthood of California's San Diego/Riverside counties. Salo presented congressmen with an inch-thick compilation of phone-book advertisements and depositions from women who claimed to have been misled.

Generally, the complaints reported by state prosecutors and included in Salo's document were from women who said they called pregnancy centers to make arrangements for abortions, but were not informed that the centers did not offer the procedure.

When the women went to the centers — sometimes advertised as clinics — they were given pregnancy tests and left to watch graphic films about abortion. The women said they were not told that the centers' purpose was to talk women out of having abortions, and that some counselors called them "murderer" and pressed them to carry their pregnancies to term.

At the earlier press conference, a spokeswoman for the Christian Action Council said the 425 crisis-pregnancy centers with which it is affiliated are required to always tell the truth and never mislead clients.

"All training materials, workshops, and educational materials provided to crisis-pregnancy centers' staff reflect the Christian Action Council's mandate for straightforward, honest conversations and dealings with clients and with the public," said Harriet R. T. Lewis, vice president of crisis pregnancy center ministries for the Christian Action Council.

Joan Coleman, regional consultant for Birthright, another group of pregnancy-counseling centers, said volunteers at its 500 centers offer pregnancy testing, counseling and help with affordable medical care, financial aid and arranging adoptions.

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