JOCESAN NEWS Pro-life feminist urges lobbying U.N.

By Kathleen Schwar Copy editor/Staff writer

Women should realize the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing Sept. 4-15, will have an impact on them for years to come, according to Ellen Lukas, a lobbyist at the conference. And pro-life feminists could have more say in such conferences, she stressed.

Lukas spoke to the Feminists for Life of America national board meeting Nov. 10 at the Depot restaurant in Pittsford.

She went to Beijing on behalf of the Family Research Council, the World Organization for the Family, and the International Catholic · Organizations Center. A former Newsweek correspondent to the United Nations, she also had worked in public relations and ran a human rights campaign for the United Nations.

"She was really helpful in teaching us," Suzanne Schnittman, president of Feminists for Life of Western New York, said later. Schnittman also is the diocesan consistent life ethic coordinator. "One of the most effective things we learned from her was the need to train (for upcoming conferences)."

In a telephone interview from her New York office prior to the conference, Lukas criticized the Beijing Declaration, which summarized the conference.

"It didn't support family as much as it should have," she said.

The declaration did speak firmly against violence against women and for equal rights to political and economic empowerment, she noted.

However, she added, "It imposes sort of a Western model more for women who want to be free of their families, and whose principal interests are in econom-



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Ellen Lukas speaks to members of Feminists for Life of America at the Depot restaurant, 41 N. Main St., Pittsford, Nov. 10. Lukas lobbied at the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing Sept. 4-15.

ic empowerment or in the political area."

Press accounts described the document as seeming to focus on liberating women from discrimination and poverty by freeing them from child-bearing and family-related responsibilities, rather than by increasing educational and economic opportunities.

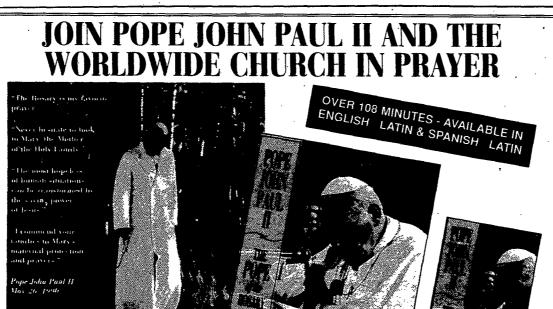
The language of such documents, although not automatically legally binding, influences countries, Lukas said. One potential source of that influence is a newly created women's advisory council of delegates back from the Beijing conference. The council was established by President and Mrs. Clinton.

And, Lukas said, "Five, 20 years from now, parts of (the Beijing Declaration) could be incorporated into a treaty. That's where a treaty starts, with a statement of principles."

The U.S. Congress might join such a U.N. treaty, or treaties, regarding women, she said.

Pro-life women should better attempt to influence the United Nations, Lukas urged, which hears more from large, wellorganized pro-choice feminist groups. She suggested that groups such as Feminists for Life sign up as non-governmental organizations to attend the next conference, the U.N. Conference on Human Settlements, in June in Istanbul, or participate in more long-term ways.

"Politics is fun,"she said. "It's satisfying putting through things you wanted."



Obituary Helen Lynch, 52; principal

CATHOLIC COURIER DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER. N.Y.

By Rob Cullivan Staff writer.

Next spring, students and staff members at Good Shepherd School in Henrietta will plant a memorial tree in the school's playground, completed in December 1994. Then they will say a prayer for their late principal, Helen Lynch. "I worked very closely with her in this endeavor," said Linda Bernent, a member of the school's parent advisory committee, in a statement. "The planning, purchasing and installing of our modest playground. would not have occurred without her support and enthusiasm." An associate member of the Sisters of Mercy, Lynch, 52, died of cancer Oct. 31 at her Brighton home: She had overseen Good Shepherd School since 1984. More Shepherd School since 1984 More than 400 people attended ber funer-al Mass at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Brighton Nov. 5, according to her friendis Helen Marie Cullen, who was named the school's principal follow-ing Lynch's death, remembered her predecessor as a benevolent spirit. "She was a super administration very kind to the parents and students and very supportive of her staff," Cullen recalled. Cullen added that the school will hold a memorial service for Lynch 7. p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29, in Good Shepherd's chapel. A native of Syracuse, Lynch moved to Rochester when she was 21 and joined the Mercy Sisters as a vowed religious, a state she left in 1991. She attended Nazareth College where she earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in education. She was also certified in school administration and supervi-

sion by the University of Rochester. Lynch spent 29 years in the Diocese of Rochester as a school teacher and administrator. She was survived by her sisters Irene (Robert) VanNess, Patricia (Joseph)

Zalewski, and her brother, Andrew Lynch; and several nieces and nephews.

Interment took place blov, 4 at St.

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