

# WORLD & NATION

## Partial-birth foes vow continued fight

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The effort to end partial-birth abortions is not dead, church and pro-life leaders agreed after the U.S. Senate failed to override President Clinton's veto of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.

As Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Philadelphia and other religious leaders prayed in the Senate gallery Sept. 26, the Senate voted 57-41 to override the veto. That was nine votes short of the two-thirds majority needed.

"Contrary to what pro-abortion forces may believe, we are not discouraged or disheartened by what happened today," said Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life, in a Sept. 26 statement.

"It is not a black day for the pro-life movement," he added. "Indeed it is a day of victory. For we have never been as galvanized, as unified, and as energized as we are at this moment."

A week before the Senate vote, the House of Representatives had voted to override the veto, 285-137.

The legislation vetoed by Clinton in

April would have banned a procedure used in late-term abortions in which the unborn child is partially delivered before surgical scissors are stabbed into the base of the infant's head. The child's brain is then removed by suction, allowing for easier delivery of the rest of the body.

"No nation, no civilization that abandons its moral foundations by legally destroying its own children through such a barbaric procedure can possibly survive," Cardinal Bevilacqua said after the vote.

The cardinal and other Catholics joined Protestant and Jewish leaders in a prayer breakfast on Capitol Hill before the Senate vote.

He and seven other U.S. cardinals had been part of an unprecedented campaign to override the Clinton veto. The effort included an interfaith prayer rally Sept. 12 on the steps of the U.S. Capitol and a post-card campaign to Congress.

Four senators did change their position on the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act since the Senate first approved the legislation last December on a 54-44 margin.

Democratic Sens. Sam Nunn of Georgia and Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont and Republican Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsyl-

vania all had voted against the legislation in December but voted to override the veto Sept. 26. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., had not voted in December but supported the veto override Sept. 26.

In addition, Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., had opposed the legislation in December but said he now backed the veto override. He was not able to vote because he was hospitalized.

When it became clear that there were not enough votes to override the veto, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott of Mississippi changed his "yes" vote to "no" so that he would be able, under Senate rules, to bring the issue to a vote again before adjournment.

Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, pledged that the bishops would "intensify our educational efforts until there is no one left in this nation who does not know what a partial-birth abortion is and why it ought never to be allowed in any humane society."

Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington noted in a statement that the three House members and two senators who represent parts of Maryland in his archdiocese had voted against the override.

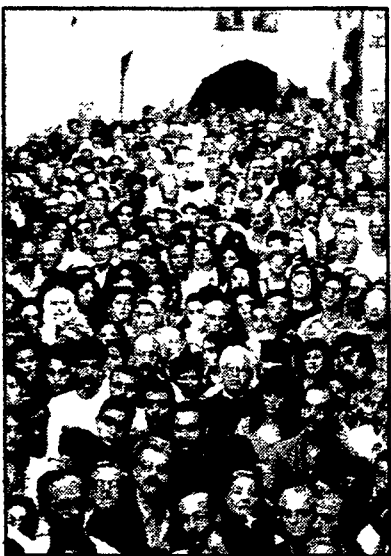
"They ignored clear evidence from the medical community that this brutal procedure has no medical purpose whatsoever. They also ignored the will of hundreds of thousands of their constituents," Cardinal Hickey said. "Thoughtful citizens should keep this in mind as they ponder their choices on election day."

Bishop James T. McHugh of Camden, N.J., said he hoped the 1996 effort against partial-birth abortions will result in "a new commitment to upholding respect for human life from conception to natural death throughout our society."

"I also hope it will breathe new dedication and new energy into the pro-life movement and all those who worked so hard to achieve an override of President Clinton's tragic action that results in the death of so many children who were only moments from birth."

Rep. Charles T. Canady, the Florida Republican who was chief sponsor of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, said he would reintroduce the legislation next year in the 105th Congress.

"With the groundwork that has been laid, I am hopeful that we will be able to pass this legislation next year and put a stop to the atrocity of partial-birth abortion once and for all," he said.



Reuters/CNS

**PEACE GATHERING** — Hundreds of Palestinians and Christians stand in Jerusalem's Old City Sept. 29, near the exit door of the controversial tunnel that passes from a Jewish holy site to the Moslem quarter of the Old City. The demonstration was peaceful, calling for an end to clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces.

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at a Catholic mission site

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