

The Non Violent Civil Disobedience Phase of the Abortion Abolition Movement

The first action of nonviolent civil disobedience directed against legalized abortion has not been clearly documented, but at least by 1985 a small number of people opposed to legalized abortion had begun to utilize the some of the sit in tactics of the American Civil Rights Movement in an attempt to impede access to abortion facilities and deter people from killing God's children. Those isolated small groups began to organize so that by November of 1987 over 200 people were arrested at the Cherry Hill Women's Center in Cherry Hill, New Jersey in what was then called the "largest rescue mission for unborn children."

That action was organized by Operation Rescue, a pro-life group based in Binghamton, New York. Randall Terry was the founder of that group. From 1988 until nonviolent civil disobedience activities ceased in 1995, Mr. Terry was acknowledged by both those within and without the pro-life movement as the leader and the primary organizing agent of the non violent civil disobedience phase of the pro-life movement.

Today Randall Terry's Web site explains Operation Rescue like this: "Did you know that the 'Operation Rescue' movement is the largest peaceful civil disobedience movement in American history? By comparison, the "Civil Rights Movement" accounted for approx. 7,000 arrests from 1958 to 1968. The "Rescue Movement" accounted for over 70,000 arrests from 1987 to 1994. This is an astounding fact, and a vital part of our American heritage of peaceful protest and activism."

In 1988 the message was different. A press release issued at the time of the Cherry Hill action quoted Gary Leber, Operation Rescue's Assistant Director, who explained why such actions were occurring. He said, "...The Cherry Hill protest was the first in a series of national rescues. We prefer to use the term 'rescue,'" Leber said, "instead of 'sit-in'

because we view it as biblical obedience over civil disobedience. We aren't here to break a law but to obey God...Our rule of thumb in selecting a clinic is to go where the lives of unborn children are threatened... Operation Rescue wants to encourage more than letter writing or marching...If mothers see that Christians are willing to risk arrest for their child," he said, "they begin to see the value of their baby's life."

The Cherry Hill rescue began a series of rescues in cities across the USA.

New York City: 1988. Over 1,500 pro-life protesters from 22 different states travelled to New York City in early May of 1988, successfully closing down three major medical centers during the day of the highly publicized "rescue." About 1,300 of the protesters were arrested, including Catholic

Bishop Austin Vaughn, 15 Catholic priests, four nuns, two rabbis, and Mark Bavaro, an All-Pro tight end for the New York Giants.

Philadelphia: 1988. 844 protesters were arrested. Lowell Patterson, communications director for Operation Rescue said the Philadelphia rescue was more successful than the rescues



held in New Jersey and New York. "Over 50 clergy came to be trained in how to conduct a rescue in their city," he said. This is part of Operation Rescue's twofold objective, which is to first, "stir the nation against abortion," and secondly "to train others to implement rescues in their hometowns," Patterson added.

Randall Terry was interviewed about that time. He explained why he organized Operation Rescue, "I realized that we were losing the war. The pro-life movement is losing. Unless the Church repents and rises up to do rescues, which is the fruit of repentance, we will never win...In the spring and summer of 1986, during prayer and introspection, I began looking at American history and realized that we were losing the war. I began to get a sense of what God wanted to do... The Lord got a hold of my heart and showed me that I had a responsibility to do something to protect the mothers and children from the holocaust. I wasn't influenced by any books or films. But at a prayer meeting God spoke to me, and all I

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knew was that I was supposed do something." In 1988, Randall Terry was optimistic about Operation Rescue, "Within the last 14 days the most prominent voices in evangelical Christianity have stepped forward in support of us. Dr. James Dobson, Dr. James Kennedy, Dr. Jerry Falwell and "The 700 Club" have stepped forward in support."

Atlanta: 1988. A contemporary reporter filed this story: "Atlanta became the center of the nation's media attention in early October as television viewers watched pro-life rescuers being kicked, punched, hit and dragged to arrest for protesting abortion at the city's major abortion clinics in early October...To discourage the massive protests, police donned riot gear, carried billy clubs, and erected a steel barricade to prevent demonstrators from the entrances of the clinics. Police were instructed by Maj. K.E. Burnette in heavy-handed tactics such as twisting arms and the use of pressure points. Several police officers, though, strayed beyond the official boundaries of "compliance holds," and were kicking, punching, and hitting rescuers with their billy clubs. One priest had his clerical clothes torn off and his collar stuffed in his mouth."

Rescues occurred in many cities by the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989: Boston, Brookline, Hartford, Los Angeles, and so on.

Lansing: 1989. "A group of blacks in Lansing, Michigan, conducted the first all-black pro-life rescue in February. Ten blacks were arrested for sitting in the packed waiting room of Womancare Clinic while chained together with kryptonite locks."

Wichita: 1991. Perhaps the most intense and certainly the most prolonged event in the nonviolent civil disobedience phase occurred in Wichita, Kansas. One reporter described the rally that came at the end of a week when Wichita, Kansas had become the center of the pro-life resistance. "One of the largest pro-life rallies in history was taking place...By the time Pat Robertson spoke, about 30,000 people had crowded into the stadium, sitting in the stands and in the grassy end zones areas..." The writer, John Collins, concluded his report, "As the rally came to a close, it was clear that the people of Wichita will work together to make Wichita the first major abortion-free-city in America..."

By 1993, Randall Terry was out as the leader of Operation Rescue. Keith Tucci, his replacement, attempted to continue with projects like "The Cities of Refuge." Actions occurred in cities like Jackson, Ms., Melbourne, Fl., Cleveland, Philadelphia, San Jose, Los Angeles. Operation Rescue declared Victory for "The Cities of Refuge." But one pro-life publication summed up 1993 this way: "On the 20th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision, President Bill Clinton signed five executive orders making the killing of babies easier than ever before and giving freedom for medical experimentation on living pre-born babies. This action has daunted all but a few in the pro-life movement." One pro-life writer described President Clinton's actions this way: "In one stroke of the pen, our nation's president gave the abortion industry five hundred million dollars and legalized medical experimentation on live fetuses."

But it was the passage of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1994 (FACE) that put an end to the "Operation Rescue" phase of nonviolent civil disobedience to legalized abortion.

United States Code, Title 18, Section 248. Freedom of access to clinic entrances

(a) Prohibited Activities. - Whoever -

(1) by force or threat of force or by physical obstruction, intentionally injures, intimidates or interferes with or attempts to injure, intimidate or interfere with any person because that person is or has been, or in order to intimidate such person or any other person or any class of persons from, obtaining or providing reproductive health services;

(b) Penalties. - Whoever violates this section shall - (1) in the case of a first offense, be fined in accordance with this title, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both; and (2) in the case of a second or subsequent offense after a prior conviction under this section, be fined in accordance with this title, or imprisoned not more than 3 years, or both;

Before too long, the federal government along with Planned Parenthood and the rest of the abortion industry crowed, "[FACE]...has served a pivotal role...to protect patients and health care providers against threats of force and physical obstruction of reproductive health facilities."

In obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, the pro-life movement counted the cost. From about 1994 onward, most "rescues" ended that obstructed access to abortion facilities. "Rescues" today come about not because people obstruct access to clinic entrances but because an expectant mother is persuaded not kill the unborn baby.

The harbinger of this change can be traced back to the time in 1993 when Keith Tucci, then head of Operation Rescue, explained that Operation Rescue had not actually been concerned about abolishing legalized abortion at all. In answer to the question, "Is Operation Rescue taking a different turn now, in training people not only to do rescues, but to influence every aspect of society?" Keith Tucci answered, "It's not different from anything we've done before. We've just never taken the time to do the training. Our whole involvement has been to impact the culture. Our thinking has always been that abortion is just a symptom of a much greater problem. We've got to change the cultural power bases of our nation."

The conclusion of the "Operation Rescue" story can be seen in an article written in 2003 entitled "Randall Terry Makes a Comeback" by John W. Whitehead published on Feb 10, 2003 in the Rutherford Institute's on-line magazine called OldSpeak. In that article Mr. Terry announced he is returning to public action with the avowed goal of leading Christians pro-lifers again as he once led the "pro-life rescue" movement and he announced a "new" strategy. "My goal," Randall Terry told John Whitehead, "is to find 20- to 25-year-old kids and help them think in terms of biblical Christianity and Christian history. I want to see those people leading the country so that 20 years from now Roe v. Wade will be on the ash heap of history."

In other words, the point of the Randall Terry interview was this: After three decades of Roe v. Wade, we are now to prepare for at least two more decades of butchered dead babies according to the "strategy" Randall Terry is going to teach to the "kids".

And there you have a clear summary of the "rescue" phase of the nonviolent civil disobedience movement. It began under the leadership of a man called by God to use the tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience

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to abolish legalized abortion in the USA. It ended with that same man totally abandoning the civil disobedience tactics he said God called him to utilize.

Remember the earlier interview where Randall Terry explained how he was in a prayer meeting and he heard God call him to the leadership of Operation Rescue. The public record contains not one account of Randall Terry explaining when and why God changed His mind about Randall Terry's original calling.

It is no wonder then that Randall Terry has now been embraced by the leaders of the pro life movement because Mr. Terry literally became one of them when he surrendered in the FACE of the power of the federal government.

Randall Terry proves that many of the pro life leaders have literally given up, surrendered, on the idea that legalized abortion will be abolished in our lifetime. To see what I am talking about, look at the change that has occurred in him since he became a pro life leader. In 1988, Mr. Terry explained why he organized Operation Rescue, "I realized that we were losing the war. The pro-life movement is losing. Unless the Church repents and rises up to do rescues, which is the fruit of repentance, we will never win...In the spring and summer of 1986, during prayer and introspection, I began looking at American history and realized that we were losing the war. I began to get a sense of what God wanted to do... The Lord got a hold of my heart and showed me that I had a responsibility to do something to protect the mothers and children from the holocaust. I wasn't influenced by any books or films. But at a prayer meeting God spoke to me, and all I knew was that I was supposed do something."

So Randall Terry was led by God to organize thousands of people across the country to engage in non violent civil disobedience designed to obstruct people's access to abortion "clinics". The purpose was clearly to obstruct access to those "clinics" so people would have more time to change their mind about killing their--and God's--unborn children.

That was in 1988. The conclusion of the Operation Rescue story can be seen in an article entitled "Randall Terry Makes a Comeback" by John W. Whitehead published on Feb 10, 2003 in the Rutherford Institutes on-line magazine called OldSpeak. In that article Mr. Terry announced he is returning to public action with the avowed goal of leading Christians pro-lifers again as he once led the "pro-life rescue" movement and he announced a "new" strategy. "My goal," Randall Terry told John Whitehead, "is to find 20- to 25-year-old kids and help them think in terms of biblical Christianity and Christian history. I want to see those people leading the country so that 20 years from now Roe v.

Wade will be on the ash heap of history."

In other words, the point of the Randall Terry interview was this: After three decades of Roe v. Wade, we are now to prepare for at least two more decades according to the "strategy" Randall Terry is going to teach to the "kids".

And there you have a clear metaphor for the "rescue" phase of the nonviolent civil disobedience movement. It began under the leadership of a man who said he was called by God to use the tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience to abolish legalized abortion in the USA. It ended with that same man totally abandoning the tactics he said God called him to utilize.

When confronted with the cost that continuing Operation Rescue tactics would require, Terry and most of his followers proved they had the capacity to treat the unborn babies being slaughtered as an abstraction in exactly the way the rest of the pro life movement had always treated them.

Now are you beginning to see why this issue of The Abortion Abolitionist is called The Surrender Issue? Truly, unless something new is brought to the battle against legalized abortion, we might as well admit it that the pro life movement has surrendered.

It is The Creator's Rights party that is carrying out the vision for change using non violent civil disobedience that God once gave to Randall Terry. If you ever thought you were part of an action of God when you worked with Randall Terry, you must now decide whether to continue to follow the road God once called you to or you must join with Randall Terry in surrender. Did God call you to spend yourself in non violently resisting the desecration of God's children? Then The Creator's Rights Party is the logical and necessary fulfillment of your calling. End

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Party
Is Waiting For Your Call
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Court majority is nowhere near being replaced by a majority willing to overturn Roe v. Wade.

It is a fact of political life that the only way the Supreme Court majority "might" change is if people opposed to legalized abortion were appointed to the Court. That means a President of the United States of America has to appoint people who will be willing to take legislation or a lawsuit and use it as a basis for rendering an opinion that outlaws abortion. The only President in sight, President George W. Bush, who might have the opportunity to appoint people who would nullify the bogus "right" has already said that he does not think "the American people" are willing to have that "right" overturned. Just as his Republican daddy appointed an abortion supporter to the Court that maintained the status quo, so too the son will do the same should his time come to make an appointment. Anyone who thinks differently is simply not listening to what the President is saying.

The signs of tactical and strategic bankruptcy are everywhere we look in the pro life leadership.

Flip Benham has started out on a "Walk Across America." Carrying a donkey, a white horse, and an aborted baby, the "ministry team" will walk across America, Benham says, "...as a living parable carrying a prophetic message to America." His press release states, "This marks our most ambitious effort, our greatest adventure, and most arduous task in service to our Lord Jesus Christ and the unborn made in His image." The press release continues, "When words fail, as they

have in the abortion wars, God speaks through parables...Every step of this 3000 mile journey, which will take 6 to 7 months, carries a prophetic word of warning to America. The killing of God's babies in the womb must cease or we will face the increased judgment of a Holy God upon our sin-soaked and blood-stained land."

It is a sad and certain sign of the bankruptcy of the pro life movement when the only "strategy" being offered by the pro life leaders are "strategies" that contain not one sentence that begins to explain a plan showing how we can force this nation to abolish legalized abortion in our lifetime.

The only good thing that can be said about the self-deceiving and/or hopeless "solutions" banded about by pro life leaders like Gregg Cunningham and Flip Benham and Norma McCorvey and the pro life politicians in North Dakota is they at least don't act like they've surrendered the idea of abolishing legalized abortion.

SUCH TACTICAL FAILURES LEAD INEVITABLY EITHER TO SURRENDER OR EXTREME ACTION

Effective surrender is the option many pro life leaders and organizations have employed since the first day they stood up and lobbied to become pro life leaders.

Think about whether or not God called you to non violently disobey the desecration that has overtaken and presently rules this nation. If so, then you have a work to do in The Creator's Rights Party.