NUMBER: _____

STATE OF ILLINOIS
HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Public Participation Form

Facility or Project Name: The Hope Clinic for Women LTD, Granite City

Project Number: #25-043

I. IDENTIFICATION

Name (*Please Print*) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact Phone Number written testimony items

_____

Contact E-Mail Address

_____

II. REPRESENTATION

(*This section is to be filled if the witness is appearing on behalf of any group, organization or other entity.*)

Entity, Organization, etc. represented in this appearance (i.e., ABC Concerned Citizens for Health Care)

_____

_____

_____

_____

III. POSITION (*Circle appropriate position)*

SUPPORT OPPOSE NEUTRAL

This form must be returned to John Kniery **at john.kniery@illinois.gov or 217-785-4111 (fax) or 525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor; Springfield, Illinois 62761** at least 24 hours prior to the HFSRB meeting.

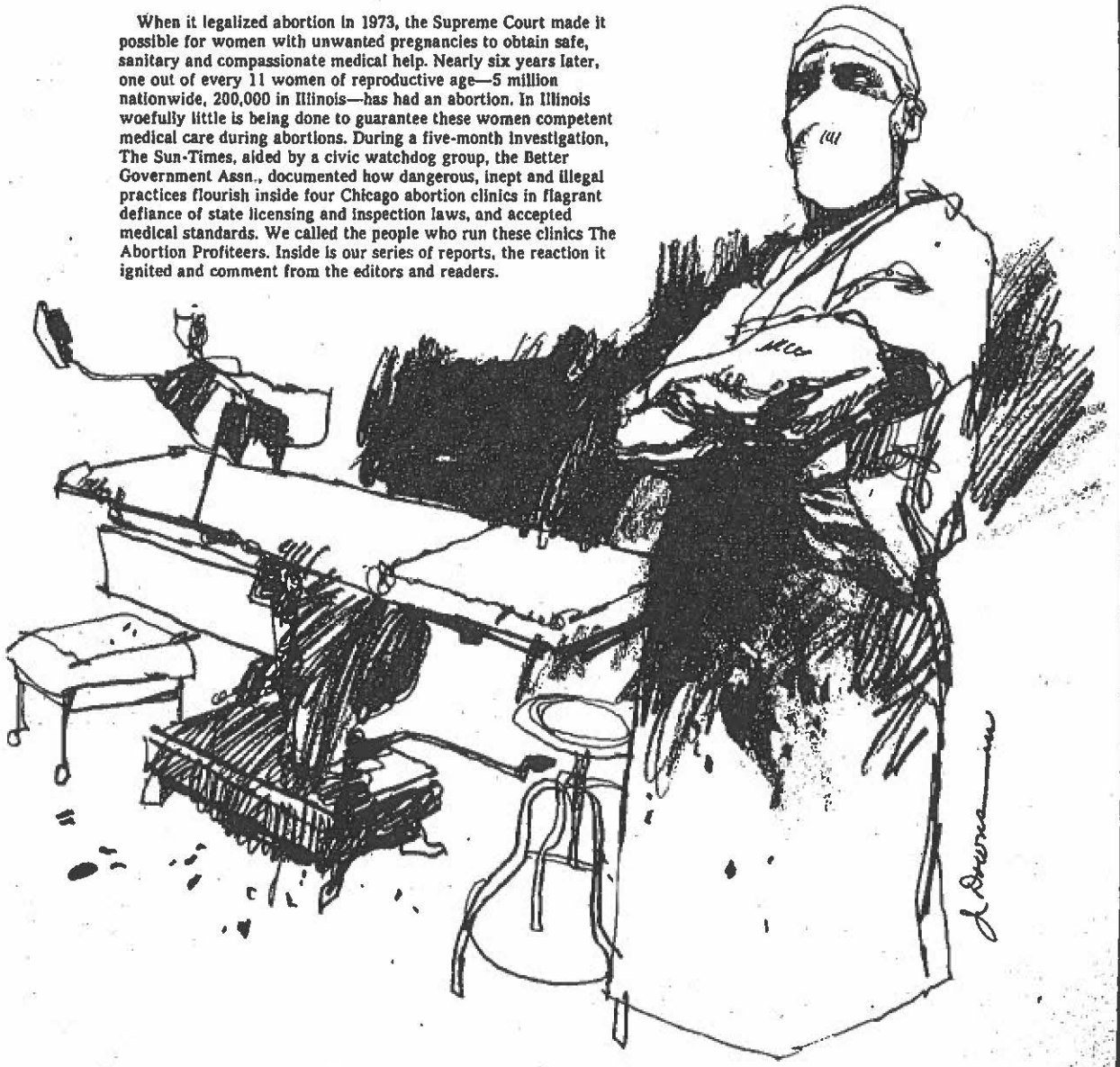
Please note that anyone who does not pre-register in accordance with the HFSRB Public Participation Guidelines will not have an opportunity to speak at a Board meeting.

CHICAGO
Sun-Times
1978 by Field Enterprises, Inc.

Special reprint
Twenty-Five Cents

The Abortion Profiteers

When it legalized abortion in 1973, the Supreme Court made it possible for women with unwanted pregnancies to obtain safe, sanitary and compassionate medical help. Nearly six years later, one out of every 11 women of reproductive age—5 million nationwide, 200,000 in Illinois—has had an abortion. In Illinois woefully little is being done to guarantee these women competent medical care during abortions. During a five-month investigation, The Sun-Times, aided by a civic watchdog group, the Better Government Assn., documented how dangerous, inept and illegal practices flourish inside four Chicago abortion clinics in flagrant defiance of state licensing and inspection laws, and accepted medical standards. We called the people who run these clinics The Abortion Profiteers. Inside is our series of reports, the reaction it ignited and comment from the editors and readers.



Bloody defiance to shah edict; 9 killed

Iran's oil workers refuse to end strike

Cloudy
Windy and warmer with rain likely. High in the 50s. Page 95.

CHICAGO Sun-Times

Monday, November 13, 1978

★★★★★ Final

15¢ city and suburbs; 25¢ elsewhere

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Meet the Profiteers

KENNETH YELLIN
Told by court to stop playing doctor.

DR. ARNOLD BICKHAM
"I'm the most notorious physician in this city."

CLIFFORD JOSEFIK
He sells: trucks, condos, land—and abortions.

JOHN SEPLAK
Mortician-school dropout brings clinic back to life.

DR. REGALADO S. FLORENDO
Accused by state of massive Medicaid rip-off.

Men who profit from women's pain

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

Meet the biggest profiteers of Chicago's multimillion-dollar abortion business. One used to sell cars. Another sold cassets. Two sold "welfare" medicine. They ll jumped on the bandwagon to make a dilling, selling abortions on the Magnifi:ent Mile.

During a five-month investigation of Chicago's legalized abortion trade. The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. dentified the men who run the four Michigan Av. abortion mills. And, work:g undercover, we watched how they do :.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'They pay high rents for fancy addresses, but cut corners on patient care. They stay in business by staying a step ahead of the law.'

They pay high rents for fancy addresses, but cut corners on patient care. They ignore laws, but slip through cracks in the system with savvy defenses. They stay in the business by staying a step ahead of the law.

For the profiteers, abortion is big business. It's where big bucks are made.

In the days to come, this newspaper will expose the dangerous and sometimes illegal medical practices uncovered in clinics owned or operated by these men—men who make their profits from women's pains:

• Dr. Arnold Bickham, by his own admission the "most notorious physician in this city." He operates three clinics in two states—at the moment, all without state licenses. He apparently subsidizes his Water Tower Reproductive clinic payroll by defrauding the federal government of job-training funds.

• Kenneth Yellin, who switched from selling luxury cars to selling economy abortions when abortions were legalized in 1973. In 1974, a court ordered him to stop pretending he was a doctor.

• Clifford Josefik, Yellin's fast-talking partner at Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan. What the people want, Josefik sells—pollution control, condominiums, land, trucks and abortions.

• Dr. Regalado S. Florendo, a former South Side "welfare specialist" now prospering on Michigan Av. He runs one of the busiest clinics in the city. While state investigators probe charges of fraud

Turn to Page 6

Second in a series

State will hit abortion clinics

Thompson to name task force to fight abuses; Page 10

JULIA ROCKLER

JULIANNE FELKNER

MINDY TROSSMAN

MICHELLE YOUNG

Better Government Assn. investigators, working undercover in abortion clinics and counseling services, provided eyewitness accounts

About the series

By 1978, abortion—although still engulfed by controversy and under legislative attack—was a big business in Illinois. Most of the business—60,000 operations in 1977—belonged to small, profit-oriented clinics set up solely to perform abortions. Some offered "lunch-hour" abortions and promoted "discount days."

The clinics had stepped into a void created by the reluctance of most hospitals to provide inexpensive abortions on a large scale. After hearing an alarming number of complaints, The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. set out to determine whether in filling the void, the clinics stayed within the bounds of state regulations and accepted medical practices.

Our purpose was not to re-examine the morality of abortion—we favor legalization—but to determine whether women were receiving the safe, competent care the Supreme Court had determined was their legal right.

We found that in a startling number of cases, they were not.

Working undercover in six clinics, we witnessed in four of them haphazard, unsterile and illegal medical procedures and conditions. We unmasked incompetent and unqualified doctors who performed abortions without anesthetic. We discovered that sometimes it didn't matter whether women were pregnant, they were sold abortions anyway. We unraveled the cozy relationship between some clinics and various abortion "counseling" services.

Our revelations—packaged as a series we called The Abortion Profiteers—prompted an immediate response on several fronts. Within two weeks, two clinics were closed, a doctor's license was revoked, a county criminal investigation was launched and a governor's task force was appointed to re-evaluate the state's regulation and licensing of abortion clinics and counselors.

This special reprint presents all our findings, and includes accounts of the reaction which make us hopeful of genuine reform and regulation.

—THE EDITORS

PAMELA ZEKMAN

PAMELA WARRICK

About the authors

Over a five-month period, Sun-Times reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick interviewed scores of patients, doctors, state and federal officials and abortion experts for The Abortion Profiteers series. In addition, they co-ordinated the undercover efforts of four Better Government Assn. investigators (above) who obtained jobs in abortion clinics and abortion counseling services to get otherwise unavailable insights into their operations.

Zekman and Warrick are both experienced investigative reporters with many professional honors and awards.

Zekman, a native Chicagoan and 1965 graduate of the University of California, as shared in two Pulitzer Prizes. With her Sun-Times reporters, she has produced major series on abuses in a retarded children's home, the currency exchange industry and the baby-selling racket.

Before beginning work on The Abortion Profiteers, Zekman headed a Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation into private and public corruption in Chicago that received worldwide attention. In that series, "The Mirage," The Sun-Times and BGA owned a neighborhood tavern to document shakedowns by city officials and tax-skimming by businessmen.

Before joining The Sun-Times in March, 1978, Warrick, a 1969 graduate of Lake Forest College, investigated local corruption for Newsday in Long Island. One series on a county-owned airport resulted in the indictment of the airport commissioner.

After joining The Sun-Times, Warrick worked undercover as a substitute teacher in Chicago public schools. Her resulting series, "Undercover Teacher," described in dramatic detail the problems confronting urban educators.

About the reprint

The Abortion Profiteers series is reprinted here much as it was originally presented in The Sun-Times during November and December, 1978. In addition, as much as possible, reaction stories and editorials are placed in the context of the series. Sun-Times copy editors May Goldberg, Harry Schaudt and Charles Swening and Sun-Timesman Gene Mustain edited the series. Mustain edited and designed the reprint.

Life on the abortion assembly line: Grim

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Look, no matter how you put it, we're in the business of selling abortions.'

Continued from Page 3

but to sell abortions with sophisticated pitches and deceptive promises.

WHILE WOMEN SEEKING abortions still can find competent and compassionate medical care at a number of Chicago's 13 clinics, investigators working undercover in four Michigan Av. clinics have exposed a grim—and sometimes grisly—side to the legal abortion trade.

In the days to come, this newspaper will document how women are deceived, maimed, crippled and even killed by abortion profiteers.

Reporters and researchers worked in six clinics where more than half of the 60,000 abortions in Illinois clinics were performed last year, according to state records and BGA estimates. In four of those clinics, women's reproductive systems—indeed, their very lives—are endangered every day.

Those four clinics, according to the BGA estimate, account for more than one out of every three abortions performed last year in the state. The four are:

- Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan.
- Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan.
- Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan.
- Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan.

We also looked inside abortion referral services and a laboratory that does work for two of the four Michigan Av. clinics.

• • •

According to the nation's most reliable record-keeping agencies, at least 8 million women in the United States have obtained legal abortions since 1973. That is 1 out of every 11 women of reproductive age in the country.

In that time, more than 200,000 women have had abortions in Illinois, state health officials say. Because of the high cost of hospital care, the moral controversy surrounding abortion and the 1973 state law prohibiting doctors from performing abortions in their offices, state records show that more than 80 per cent of Illinois' abortions last year were performed in clinics.

The clinics are licensed and inspected by the Illinois Department of Public Health. But, our investigation showed, the state's regulation of these clinics is so slipshod that at least two clinics have been permitted to operate without valid licenses.

The health department allowed a third clinic to open even while another state agency was amassing evidence that the clinic owner had charged the Illinois Department of Public Aid for "abortions" on women who were not pregnant.

Copyright, 1975, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Perry C. Riddle

WOMEN SEEKING abortions can still find competent care, but many are deceived and crippled by abortion profiteers and their lack of concern for patient care and comfort. At Biogenetics, Ltd., where above photograph was taken, a trembling 14-year-old girl was hustled from the recovery room so the clinic could close. When an undercover BGA investigator searched for a place for her to lie down, the investigator was told: "Don't put her in bed. They've all been made up. . . and you can't mess them up again."

Bring on the reforms—an editorial on Page 10.

Although the department can quote statistics on the age, race and marital status of every woman who has received an abortion since 1973, it does not even know how many have died from their abortions.

But from federal sources, court suits and our own investigation, we learned that at least 12 women apparently have died following abortions in Illinois clinics—two of them after abortions in clinics we investigated.

Most of the state's clinics are in Chicago, and their clientele, according to state statistics, is as diverse as the city.

Some of those seeking abortions are children—as young as 10 years old. Others are grandmothers. But most are in their early 20s, single and seeking their first abortion.

Some are affluent. Others are poor. Some pay the $150 to $250 abortion fee in cash. Others use bank credit cards and some, on welfare, pay with their Medicaid cards.

WHATEVER THEIR reasons—health, money, career—they all want medically safe abortions. And many don't know where to turn.

Some eventually turn to newspaper ads—the ones that ran in bold type at the back of the classified sections of this newspaper and others. (See accompanying note to readers on this page.)

Although there are dozens of phone numbers listed for abortion information and referrals, most of them ring at the same few places. In this newspaper alone, the Water Tower clinic ran nine different ads a day, with nine different numbers and nine different names.

At clinics such as Water Tower, the telephone is the most valuable single tool of the abortion trade.

At the Chicago Loop Medicinic, which ran three ads under three different names, an administrator told women answering phones: "We have to corral the patients. . . . Our fiscal year ends in September, so go the extra mile."

'He didn't wait five minutes. He started right in. I was screaming, and squirming all over the table. I asked him to stop until the anesthetic took effect. . . .'

FOR THEIR EXTRA efforts, clinic workers get $5 cash bonuses for each abortion they sell over the phone.

Other ads promoted hot lines and referral services that steer patients only to clinics that give them a cut of the abortion fee.

At a referral service that operates three hot lines, undercover BGA investigator Julia Rockler was admonished for not selling hard enough while working as an employe there.

"Look," said hot-line operator Valerie McCullough, "no matter how you put it, we're in the business of selling abortions. . . . Use a positive approach. It's not, 'Do you want a termination, but when?' "

To make sure their telephone sales force is positive enough, McCullough and her twin sister, Victoria Sanders, who runs a competing hot line, pay commissions. They sell abortions like other hucksters sell food freezer plans or slick magazines.

• • •

Saturday is the busiest day of the week at the Michigan Av. abortion clinics.

Patients may wait hours in crowded waiting rooms just to get to the reception desk to pay their fees, before sitting down again to wait for consent papers and other forms.

The patient may be greeted by a clinic "counselor." Under state regulations, clinics are required to counsel abortion patients. Some clinics take time with patients to probe their motives, fears and misgivings.

But some of the Michigan Av. clinics make a mockery of their mandate. At least one offers no counseling at all. Others make feeble attempts at counseling groups of 10 or more in three minutes or less.

AT THE BIOGENETICS clinic, BGA investigator Michelle Young was ordered by her supervisor to stop counseling a distraught patient and get back to the reception desk.

"We don't have time for [counseling]," the supervisor said. "We're much too busy."

When staff members do have time to talk to patients, they are under orders not to say anything to scare the women away.

"Don't tell them it hurts," our undercover counselor was told. "Don't answer too many questions because the patient gets too nervous, and the next thing you know they'll be out the door."

• • •

Are they pregnant?

In the mills on the Magnificent Mile, women may never know. Only a careful internal examination by a doctor and carefully controlled laboratory tests on samples of the woman's urine can confirm pregnancy.

But some doctors begin abortions without telling patients whether they are pregnant. And at the Water Tower clinic, employes who tell patients the results of their pregnancy tests risk losing their jobs.

When tests are inconclusive at quality clinics, patients are asked to come back later for more tests. But at Water Tower and Biogenetics, employes may withhold pregnancy-test results and sell the confused women a procedure to extract the menstrual blood—or worse, an unnecessary "abortion"—"just to be safe."

LAB TECHNICIANS in some clinics complain that they have so many tests to per-

Turn to Page 5

A note to our readers

A five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. has disclosed fraud and other abuses in some referral agencies and clinics providing abortion services in Chicago.

These findings are documented in the accompanying stories and others to follow. The Sun-Times series also will report on clinics and hospitals where safe and compassionate medical care for women is available.

But this newspaper has decided that it cannot determine safe and sanitary conditions at all the abortion counseling services and clinics which advertised in our classified pages. Thus we are ceasing publication of such advertisements at this time.

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.

grisly and greedy

Continued from Page 4

form, they can't wait the two minutes it takes to obtain results.

At Biogenetics, our investigator saw the clinic thrown into chaos when doctors discovered they'd already performed at least two abortions on women who were not pregnant.

They blamed their "mistakes" on the lab technician, who attributed *his* errors to the crush of patients and "one helluva hangover."

• • •

Before any surgical procedure—including abortion—a patient's vital signs should be measured. Breathing rates, heartbeat, blood pressure and body temperature are measured to help a doctor decide if the patient can tolerate an abortion or other operation.

But on the abortion assembly lines, the workers invent the vital signs. Measuring them takes too much time. BGA investigator Julianne Felkner learned that during her first day as a nurse's aide at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center. "Do I take pulse and respiration?" she asked.

"No," said the nurse. "That's not necessary. Just put whatever you feel like [on the patient chart]." But keep it in a normal range—"68 to 88 for pulse. . . anywhere between 16 and 20 for respiration."

After surgery, vital signs are even more crucial. A high temperature could mean infection. A weak heartbeat could mean shock. At the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, patients' temperatures weren't taken for weeks because the batteries in the recovery-room thermometers were dead. But even after the batteries were replaced, temperatures still were not taken for two days.

• • •

Sterile conditions also are important. They're not easy to maintain when doctors are shuttling 80 women in and out of as few as two procedure rooms a day.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'The doctors race each other. Especially on Saturdays, they compete to see who can get the most patients done.'

In one clinic, the procedure rooms were cleaned between operations by wiping up the blood with wet Kleenex.

On some days in the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, there isn't even time for that. Investigator Felkner reported:

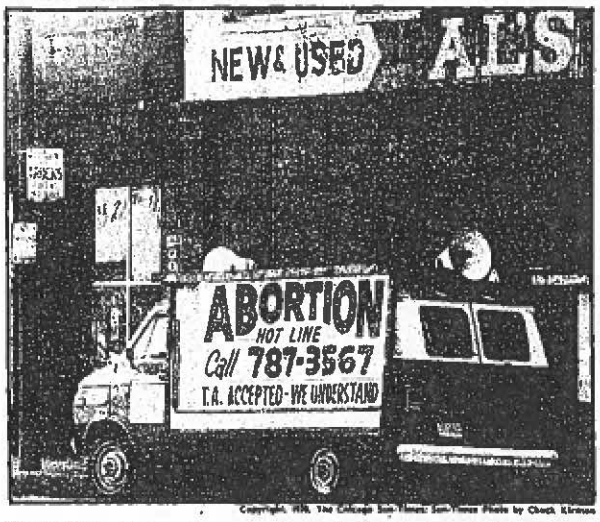
"I tried to get the blood off the floor from the first girl. While I was bent over trying to wipe it up, the next girl was brought in. There was still this bloody towel on the table. I hoped she wouldn't see it. . . ."

Even the doctors don't have time to clean up themselves in some clinics. Investigator Mindy Trossman watched Dr. Arnold Bickham go from one abortion to the next at his Water Tower clinic without washing his hands or donning sterile gloves.

• • •

According to experts, a safe and relatively pain-free abortion should take about 15 minutes from the time the doctor meets the patient to the time the doctor completes the procedure. It is not a complicated operation and need not cause great pain. Some doctors and patients have described the discomfort as nothing greater than a cramping sensation.

Complications may occur even in abortions performed by the best physicians, taking the greatest care—but that is rare, medical experts say.



Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Chuck Kirman

BORROWING a technique often employed by merchants to hawk special deals or discount goods, an abortion referral agency uses a sound truck to hype abortions. Such commercialization and other blatantly deceptive practices were widespread in referral agencies investigated by The Sun-Times and the BGA.

A doctor properly begins with a manual examination of the woman's uterus to determine how long she has been pregnant. Using an instrument resembling a shoe horn, the physician opens the vagina for a clear view of the cervix—the mouth of the womb.

The doctor grasps the cervix with a pair of tongs and administers at least one pain-killing injection to the mouth of the womb before beginning the actual abortion.

As the area grows numb, the doctor gently inserts a series of rods, each slightly wider than the one before, to stretch the mouth of the womb slowly open. Then the doctor uses a vacuum-suction machine to remove the inner tissues of the womb—including the tiny fetus.

Finally, the doctor carefully scrapes remaining tissue from the uterine walls. Any uncollected tissue could cause infection. If the doctor is not careful, the womb may be punctured, causing serious damage to it and other organs.

Turn to Page 6

Jury subpenas records of abortion clinic

By Karen Koshner
and Pamela Zekman

A Cook County grand jury has subpenaed the records of at least one abortion clinic in reaction to findings of fraud and medical abuse uncovered by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. during a five-month investigation, it was learned.

State's Atty. Bernard Carey declined to comment on the action, noting that, "The matter is before a grand jury."

Meanwhile, Dr. Patricia Nolan, deputy director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, officially denied published reports in another newspaper of an agency "crackdown" on abortion clinics.

She said she will be following the Sun-Times and BGA disclosures closely to determine if the findings indicate additional legislation and regulation are needed.

CAREY HAS ASSIGNED at least two assistant state's attorneys working under the supervision of Thomas Burnham, chief of special prosecutions, to follow up on disclosures that women have been victimized by dangerous medical practices and fraud in abortion clinics and referral agencies.

As part of Carey's investigation the grand jury has subpenaed the medical records of dozens of patients at one of the biggest clinics operating on Michigan Av. The clinic is one of four where Sun-Times reporters and BGA investigators worked undercover as medical assistants, nurses' aides and counselors.

Dr. Nolan said the department has "begun discussing revising" state standards for abortion clinics, pointing out that the agency may have underestimated what it takes to run a well-functioning clinic" when the regulations were first written in 1973 after abortions became legal.

"They are minimum standards and we are finding that some clinics are meeting the minimal standards but aren't functioning properly," Dr. Nolan said.

THE STATE LICENSES and regulates the state's 24 abortion clinics, of which 13 are in Chicago.

Dr. Nolan had told other newspapers inquiring about the abortion situation in Illinois that the state has revoked the license of one clinic, Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, as part of its routine enforcement program.

The Sun-Times investigation will show that the clinic is continuing to operate without a license.

The Water Tower license was revoked Sept. 25, but the state failed to make any public announcement of the action and the clinic owner, Dr. Arnold Bickham, continued to schedule and perform abortions, unaffected by the revocation.

DR. BICKHAM HAD NOT responded to the department action within the 15 days allowed and his license was considered revoked.

The license was revoked because Dr. Bickham has barred inspectors from the clinic, challenging their authority to regulate his operation.

When asked by a Sun-Times reporter on Friday whether it wouldn't be appropriate to inform the public of the clinic's status, Dr. Nolan said, "As a general rule by the time we revoke a license there has been a lot of publicity about the facility. In this case there hasn't been any publicity so that might not have been a bad idea."

Dr. Nolan said the department had not sent an inspector to the clinic since the revocation to determine if it is still operating. If such evidence was found, she said, it would have to be turned over to the state's attorney's office or the Illinois Department of Registration and Education.

SHE SAID SOME of the questions raised by The Sun-Times during an interview last month had sparked consideration of changes in department regulations and policies.

"Some of the things which you delved into I had not even considered," Dr. Nolan said Saturday. For example, she said, the department could make better use of the statistics it gathers on post-abortion complications which must be reported by clinics under state law.

During the interview last month, Dr. Nolan had conceded that the information is only used for statistical purposes and was not passed on to inspectors as a barometer to show which clinics may be experiencing problems and need further investigation.

The investigation showed that the department does not even know officially of any abortion-related deaths from patients treated at clinics. The Sun-Times and BGA discovered there may have been as many as 12 deaths following abortions since 1973 in Illinois clinics.

OTHER REVISIONS the department is considering, she said, are:

- More specific requirements for medical personnel and counselors. The Sun-Times-BGA investigation has found untrained and unqualified personnel giving injections, fabricating vital signs and performing medical tasks.
- Easing up on some unnecessarily detailed requirements for physical facilities while toughening up others. For example, the standards are not strict enough concerning recovery room accommodations. The Sun-Times-BGA investigation found some clinics with high volume have such small recovery rooms that patients, still in pain, are forced to leave within 15 minutes to make room for the next patient.
- Requiring all clinics to perform microscopic examinations of tissue removed from an abortion to assure that the procedure was successful. Present law requires only that the tissue be sent to a pathologist and permits clinics to get by with the less expensive analyses with the naked eye. Medical experts said such tests are totally inadequate and can endanger patients.

IT WAS ALSO learned that the Chicago Board of Health, which lost its authority to regulate clinics in a court battle several years ago, has referred a complaint to the state's attorney's office concerning an attempted illegal abortion performed at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan.

That clinic, owned by Dr. Regalado Florendo, is one of those investigated by The Sun-Times and BGA. Dr. Donald Dye, director of maternal and infant care for the city health department, said the clinic doctors attempted to perform an abortion on a teenager who was 26 to 28 weeks pregnant.

State law prohibits clinics from performing abortions on women more than 12 weeks pregnant.

Dr. Dye said the incident was reported to the city health department by a hospital where the girl was rushed following the attempted abortion. Her baby was born prematurely Oct. 2.

Abortion peril greater before legalization

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick
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THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'They died from Lysol douches, coat-hanger punctures, or catheters that rotted in their wombs.'

They found Sarah Hamilton in a shallow grave at the edge of a Wisconsin meadow.

They found Cathy Martin in a shabby little building behind a convent on the North Side.

Both were 18 years old when they died. For them, and thousands like them, legalized abortion came too late.

Although the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision has not stopped women from dying from abortions, legalization has been credited with reducing the number of abortion-related deaths by 40 per cent.

"While *legally* induced abortions should be performed as safely as possible, it is crucial we understand [that] *illegal* abortion is even more hazardous," said Dr. Willard Cates Jr., abortion surveillance chief of the National Center for Disease Control.

• • •

Sarah disappeared from her parents' Forest Park home around Christmas, 1970. Cook County sheriff's police believe she died a short time later—the victim of a syndicate of abortionists who learned the trade while in prison.

"There were professional stickup guys," said one detective, "full-time crooks and thieves who decided abortions were more lucrative than holdups." It was "one of your classier operations," he added. The men wore dark suits and carried black bags. They hired a "nurse" to distinguish patients from police plants.

They hopped from hotel to hotel and charged whatever the market would bear. In one 10-month stretch, they made $200,000. They covered their trail by giving blood coagulants to hemorrhaging women. But they stopped the bleeding only long enough to put distance between the "doctors" and their dying patients.

Sarah apparently died too soon. So they took her to Wisconsin and buried her.

Cathy died more slowly. She had enough time before dying to make a statement to police about what happened to her in the broken-down duplex behind the North Side convent.

"The man told me not to scream because there were some nuns living next door," the dying girl told a detective. With Cathy's last words, a coroner's jury returned an indictment of murder against her abortionist—a 55-year-old foreign-educated doctor who had flunked three exams for a license to practice medicine in Illinois.

• • •

Before abortion was legalized, about a million criminal abortions were being performed nationally each year—50,000 of them in Cook County alone, according to estimates of David B. Selig, then an assistant state's attorney.

Probably precious few of those abortions were done by physicians. Some were attempted by the women themselves. Others were performed "by neighbors, relatives, midwives, anyone they could find," said Dr. Abraham Lash, whose business it was then to save some of the victims.

"They'd use darning needles or pieces of wood that expanded with water. . . ," Lash said. "Invariably, infection would follow. They'd come in bleeding—pleading, 'Don't let me die.' And you'd feel so helpless."

As director of Cook County Hospital's Department of Gynecology from 1964 to 1972, Lash saw so many victims of botched abortions that he and two colleagues published a professional paper about their experiences.

Of the abortion deaths documented by the doctors at County Hospital, more than half were women under 25. And many were teen-agers. Some who might have been saved were not because they were afraid to tell doctors what happened, afraid they would go to jail for having an illegal abortion.

They died from Lysol douches, coat-hanger punctures or catheters that rotted in their wombs. Doctors in County Hospital removed all kinds of articles from the vaginas, the uteri and the abdominal cavities of patients: twigs, buttonhooks, bobby pins, hoses.

"It would take five hours to recount all the frightful and frightening conditions that I have encountered in the last 20 years on this service," Dr. Augusta Webster wrote in his summary of the Cook County Hospital report.

But, he added, "We have been speaking only of deaths. We cannot begin to estimate the disability, suffering and unhappiness that plague many of those who survive."

• • •

Pauline Bart is a survivor.

She was 19 and, married only a month, a novice at birth control. She sold her wedding gifts to pay $500 for an illegal abortion that nearly cost her her life.

Now 48, Bart holds a doctorate in sociology and a position in the University of Illinois School of Psychiatry. Because of her own experience, and the extensive research she has done since, Bart's perspective on the issue of legalized abortion spans three decades.

And recriminalization of abortion, she said, is not the way to end the abuses in the legal abortion trade today.

Legal or not, she said, abortion cannot be stopped, adding:

"It can only be driven underground. That may cost women more. It may cost them their lives, but you can't stop women from having them any more than you can stop them from breathing in and breathing out."

SARAH HAMILTON (inset) was killed at Christmastime in 1970 by abortionists who learned their back-alley technique while in prison. Then they dumped her body in a shallow grave in Wisconsin. (AP Photos)

Life on abortion assembly line: grisly, greedy

ontinued from Page 5

AT THE MICHIGAN AV. abortion mills, ictors do all this in just two to five mines. And, if his own records are to be beved, Dr. Ming K. Hah at the Chicago Loop ediclinic is quick enough to perform two ortions at the same time.

In staff meetings at the Loop Mediclinic, ployees complain that they can't keep up th the doctors' frenzied pace. "The doctors e each other," said a former Mediclinic se. "Especially on Saturdays, they come to see who can get the most patients te."

Doctors there, and in at least two other ics, are paid by the abortion. They reduce r patients to a row of pencil marks on r surgical suits. At the end of the day, count the pencil marks to find out what re owed.

their haste, some doctors miss tissue should have come out.

ictors' haste also may account for their re to wait the few minutes it takes for hetics to take effect. But since it can ally take longer to perform an abortion woman screaming and squirming in one medical expert has suggested doc who don't wait for the patients to grow are simply sadistic.

LEAST ONE doctor working in a chiav. clinics has been known to give no hetic at all. "The pain was unbearable," said one patient. "I don't think he gave me an anesthetic. It happened so fast."

Women who scream are told to shut up. Others thrash around and are held down by aides. Even when they ask for additional pain-relievers, some doctors don't wait.

A 21-year-old secretary paid Biogenetics an extra $50 for an injection of the tranquilizer Valium as well as an anesthetic. "They gave me the shot just seconds before the doctor appeared," she recalled. "He didn't wait five seconds. He started right in. I was screaming, and squirming all over the table. I asked him to stop until the anesthetic took effect. It was killing me. I continued to scream."

'I asked him to stop until the anesthetic took effect. It was killing me. I continued to scream.'

The Valium and anesthetic finally took effect. . . in the recovery room.

• • •

The recovery room in some of the Michigan Av. clinics is the place where women recover fast. They have to. After 15 minutes, they are told to get out.

Medical experts consulted by The Sun-Times and BGA say a patient should rest at least 30 to 60 minutes after an abortion. But on the assembly line, there's no time for such "luxuries."

A 25-year-old rape victim waited from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for her abortion at the Chicago Loop Mediclinic. When she finally saw the doctor, it was for just four minutes—the time he took to perform the abortion.

"I was very weak and woozy in the recovery room," she recalled. "I was lying there about 15 minutes when the lady said, 'You aren't going to get any better sitting there sulking. Get up and get dressed.'

"I couldn't stand. I had to lie down on the dressing room floor for another half-hour." Six weeks later, her private physician told her she was still pregnant.

At Biogenetics, a 14-year-old, who had been pushed out of the recovery room so the clinic could close, slumped on the floor of the waiting room. BGA investigator Young searched frantically for a place where the girl could lie down. "Don't put her in a bed," Young was told. "They've all been made up [for the next day] and you can't mess them up again."

• • •

Postoperative care, say the experts, is absolutely essential to safeguard against serious infection and other life-threatening complications that may follow abortions.

Money, say some Chicago abortionists, is essential first.

At the Water Tower clinic, Dr. Bickham demanded $25 from a woman who came to him to complete the abortion he had performed on her daughter.

The girl had received a $110 abortion on Wednesday—Bickham's bargain day, when he drops the price $15. But dead tissue apparently had been left inside her during the discount abortion.

The girl was only 17. She sat doubled over in a straight-backed chair, sobbing. Bickham told his receptionist he would not treat the girl for less than $25 cash. But the mother didn't have the cash, so she stood by the door to the operating rooms for five hours, pleading with anyone who came out, "Please. Is the doctor busy? I must talk to him."

Finally Bickham came out. "He wanted to know what he could do for me," said the mother. "I asked him to help my daughter. She's in pain."

"Do you have $25?" he asked the mother. She asked if he would take a check or send her a bill later. He wouldn't.

Bickham told the mother and daughter to get out or he would call the police. They refused to leave. Bickham placed the call and waited only long enough for police to escort the mother and daughter away.

Then he closed the clinic for the day.

NEXT: Meet the people who profit from women's pains.

Abortion-mill bosses cut corners on care

Continued from Page 7

made against him for work at his old South Side clinic, his new Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, apparently finds more ways to rip off Medicaid.

• John Seplak, a would-be mortician who turned a dying clinic into a healthy, profitable one. He runs the Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan, for its absentee owners, boosting volume by buying patients from doctors and referral agents with illegal kickbacks.

• • •

The U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion was just a few months old when Dr. Arnold Bickham signed on to work at the Friendship Medical Center, 850 W. 103d St., under the late Dr. T. R. M. Howard—the flashy promoter of the city's first "lunch-hour abortions."

Bickham worked part-time for Howard, who gave him a $45,000 contract to perform 2,600 abortions that first year. Howard also gave Bickham his first lessons in how to fight City Hall and win.

At least two deaths and an alarming number of serious complications followed Friendship abortions. The Chicago Board of Health tried to close down the clinic. But Howard resisted, taking an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. He won.

The court struck down the city's attempt to regulate clinics as unconstitutional. Howard made millions.

BY 1974, FRIENDSHIP was guaranteeing Bickham $80,000 a year plus a $24 bonus for each abortion he performed. In that year alone, Medicaid paid a record $792,266 billed in Bickham's name—more than to any other doctor in the nation, according to the U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Department.

Before he left Friendship in 1975, another $519,819 was billed in Bickham's name—more than for any other doctor in Illinois.

In 1976, Howard died and Bickham served a brief tour as medical director at the Biogenetics clinic. During that time, a state investigative panel charged Biogenetics with Medicaid fraud.

In July, 1976, Bickham left to start his own string of abortion clinics. Today, at age 41 and still dueling authorities over public aid payments, he owns three clinics—one in Indianapolis and two in Chicago.

Like his mentor, Howard, Bickham challenges the laws that don't suit him. He is now battling health officials in both Indiana and Illinois over their powers to monitor his clinics.

Bickham operates his flagship clinic, the Water Tower Reproductive Center, out of a posh suite at 840 N. Michigan, where his rent for an entire floor reportedly exceeds $10,000 a month.

His furnishings are as fashionable and his business as brisk as at the marbled Water Tower shopping mall across the street.

"I'm the most notorious physician in this city," Bickham told undercover BGA investigator Mindy Trossman, shortly after he hired her at Water Tower. The reference was to what he considered unfair publicity about his Medicaid payments in the last few years. Last year, they totaled $270,440.

"If I told you I made a million dollars last year," Bickham said, "you'd think that was pretty good. But that doesn't include expenses and overhead."

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'We have to sell abortions. We have to use all of the tactics we can because, just like my other business, we have competition.'

BICKHAM'S COMPETITORS are bewildered by his ability to offer the lowest-priced abortion in town—$125 three days a week, $110 every Wednesday.

But Bickham's overhead, Trossman discovered, may be illegally subsidized by tax dollars. And his cost-cutting methods can cost his patients adequate care.

Shortly after she was hired as a counselor, Trossman learned that many of the clinic employes apparently had been instructed by Bickham to lie on applications for federal job-training funds, provided under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). At least one employe who balked at Bickham's orders was fired.

Bickham has had two contracts with the Chicago Alliance of Business Manpower Services (CABMS) to provide on-the-job training for the unemployed. Since April, 1977, he has received $24,000 from the program, funded by CETA.

The contracts were approved despite ongoing investigations of Bickham's performance in another federally funded program—Medicaid.

"Manpower pays half our salaries, so we're told to lie on the applications to say we make more than we really do," another Bickham worker told Trossman.

The woman was among at least nine present or former Bickham workers who were subpenaed to testify before a federal grand jury convened during an ongoing FBI investigation of possible fraud at Bickham's clinic.

EMPLOYES TOLD Trossman they testified that Bickham told them to lie to the Manpower interviewers about:

• How much money they were paid and what duties they performed at the clinic, apparently to help Bickham get even more than the 50 per cent reimbursement employers are allowed for trainees' salaries under the program.

• Their addresses, since some of Bickham's "trainees" who lived in the suburbs could not qualify for the program without Chicago addresses.

• Their unemployment record, since an employer legally may be reimbursed only for the salaries of "trainees" who have never worked for the employer before and who have been out of work for at least two weeks before applying.

In July, with his Water Tower clinic thriving, Bickham expanded his abortion business. Without waiting for his state license applications to be approved, he reopened the defunct Friendship clinic under the name of Summit Medical Center, and he opened a new clinic in Indianapolis.

Indiana public health officials have refused to approve Bickham's license application because of numerous violations at the Indianapolis clinic—among them, a shortage of hand-washing facilities, the absence of scrub sinks and improper storage of drugs.

'We're giving out too many cookies. Cookies cost money. . . no more than three cookies each, and only one cup of pop.'

The Indianapolis clinic continues to sell abortions as state health officials there wait for Bickham to answer the charges against him or correct the violations listed in a three-page notice issued Aug. 11.

IN A CURIOUS interpretation of the Illinois licensing mandate, state public health officials here have said that as long as Bickham's license application is on file, he is free to operate.

Two years ago, when Bickham's Water Tower license was pending, state public health officials were less tolerant. They took Bickham to court and in December, 1976, the court ordered him to close the clinic until it was licensed. His license was later approved, but by December, 1977, he was in trouble again. State health officials threatened to revoke Water Tower's license because Bickham refused to admit their inspectors for routine inspections of the clinic.

Bickham then negotiated an agreement with the state under which public health officials promised not to inspect unless Bickham was present at the clinic. The agreement, a state licensing official conceded, effectively did away with the surprise inspections used for other clinics.

Even that was a temporary truce. State inspectors found that whenever they tried to inspect Water Tower, they were told Bickham was not there. And Bickham's employes diligently enforced their boss' orders to keep inspectors out.

On Sept. 25, state officials finally tired of being barred from Water Tower and quietly revoked Bickham's license.

Undaunted, Bickham continues to sell hundreds of abortions a week at Water Tower and Summit. And his Indianapolis trade is just beginning. . . .

• • •

Kenneth Yellin is not a doctor, though he used to play at being one.

In 1974 he was indicted for impersonating a physician, performing illegal abortions, reckless conduct and theft by deception, for telling women they were pregnant when they weren't.

He also was accused of battery for squeezing a woman's breasts during one of the many "examinations" he performed as "Dr. York."

A Circuit Court judge dismissed a criminal abortion-charge against Yellin and his medical director, ruling prosecutors had not proved that the woman was beyond her 12th week of pregnancy when the abortion was performed, a spokesman for the state's attorney's office said. The law prohibits abortions in clinics on women beyond their 12th week.

Because that was the strongest case, the state's attorney's office dismissed most of the other indictments, the spokesman said, and Yellin was only convicted on one charge: operating a clinic, then called Women's Medical Facility, without a license. For that he paid a $500 fine.

His medical director, now dead, was found guilty of one theft charge.

BUT YELLIN WAS less successful in a civil suit brought by the state's attorney's office, which incorporated many of the same charges.

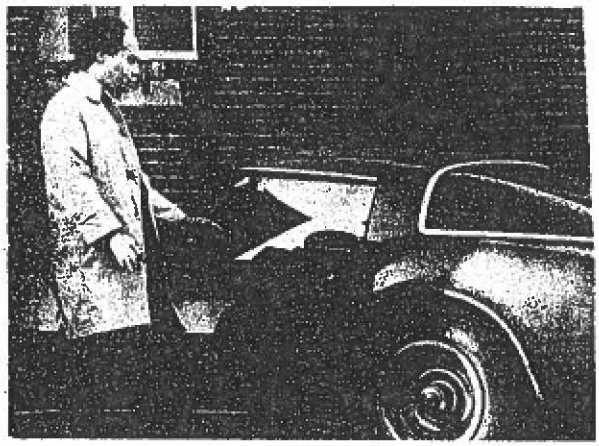
In March, 1974, a Circuit Court ordered the clinic closed until it was licensed and ordered Yellin to quit charading as a doctor.

By June, the clinic had been approved by the state and reopened. The name was soon changed to Biogenetics Ltd., and a new partner was brought in.

Clifford Joselik, a 42-year-old Oak Brook entrepreneur, claims publicly to be the sole owner of Biogenetics. But a BGA investigator posing as a prospective clinic buyer was told otherwise.

When investigator Lee Norrgard inquired about buying into their business, it was Yel-

Turn to Page 9



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$792,266 in Medicaid billings for this abortion clinic doctor—the highest total in the nation

In 1974, Medicaid paid a record $792,266 billed in the name of Dr. Arnold Bickham, photographed getting into his Corvette sports car outside his South Side home. Now owner of the Water Tower Reproductive Center, Bickham apparently is defrauding the federal government by telling employes to lie on applications for job-training funds that are used to subsidize salaries. Despite having his clinic license revoked Sept. 25 after forbidding employes to permit state officials to make unannounced inspections, Bickham continues to operate.

A note to our readers

A five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. has disclosed fraud and other abuses in some referral agencies and clinics providing abortion services in Chicago.

These findings are documented in the accompanying stories and others to follow. The Sun-Times series also will report on clinics and hospitals where safe and compassionate medical care for women is available.

But this newspaper has decided that it cannot determine safe and sanitary conditions at all the abortion counseling services and clinics which advertised in our classified pages. Thus we are ceasing publication of such advertisements at this time.

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

• Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.

• Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0188.

Staying a step ahead of the law

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'To keep from going broke,' recalled one former owner, 'the clinic went into the abortion business.'

Continued from Page 8

lin who dominated the meeting. Yellin said he and Josefik were partners and talked of their mutual success in the abortion business and "our other enterprises."

"We make money," Yellin told Norrgard, "because we closely follow every phase of the operation."

And they follow it down to the last crumb.

"We're giving out too many cookies," Yellin told a worker in the recovery room. "Cookies cost money. . . . no more than three cookies each," he said, "and only one cup of pop."

The worker, BGA investigator Michelle Young, did a double take. Her patients were weak and hungry. They had been told to fast 24 hours before their abortions.

Young also learned that, apparently because of his troubles as "Dr. York," Yellin's presence in the clinic is often masked.

YELLIN, 46, WHO lives at 505 N. Lake Shore Dr., spends a lot of his time trading luxury cars and weekending in Las Vegas. But on the days he spends working in the clinic, his name is rarely spoken. When he is paged at the clinic, it is by the name "Jay."

And at the staff meetings, it is Josefik who runs the show. At one meeting called to boost productivity, Josefik reminded his staff of the clinic's priorities.

"We have to sell abortions," he said. "We have to use all of the tactics we can because, just like my other business, we have competition. Now, we have to go by the rules, but rules have to be broken if we are gonna get things done."

During a recent interview, Josefik maintained that he is the sole owner of Biogenetics. He said that under the terms of their sales agreement, Yellin is in the clinic to review the books and to make some administrative decisions pending final payment on the purchase of the clinic.

'I'm going to stay on this street till I'm 90 years old. The tougher it gets, the longer I'll stay. They've tried to knock us out before, and I'm still here. They'll try again, and I'll still be here. And when I'm in my casket, then I won't be here.'

Josefik's foray into the medical world is 'strictly a business venture." But he has ound his abortion clinic tougher to run than is other enterprises, which include a trucking firm, a pollution control business and eal estate sales.

IN 1976, THE Illinois Legislative Advisory ommittee on Public Aid charged Biogenetics with several Medicaid abuses, including emanding cash from public aid patients for hom the clinic also billed public aid. The cusations prompted an audit and investigaon by the Illinois Department of Public Aid, ich is still are under way. Investigators say they already have found some intriguing billing practices.

For example, some patients reportedly have told investigators they were operated on by a black physician. But the bills for their abortions were submitted in the name of a Cook County Hospital resident who is white.

Despite all the investigations and media attention, Josefik says he plans to be in the abortion business for a long time:

"I'm going to stay on this street till I'm 90 years old. The tougher it gets, the longer I'll stay. They've tried to knock us out before and I'm still here. They'll try again, and I'll still be here. And when I'm in my casket, then I won't be here."

• • •

It was a grand idea on a grand scale. The group of businessmen and doctors planned a network of clinics serving the Chicago area, all offering quality medical care at reasonable group rates.

But by 1975, the plan had collapsed and the only outpatient surgical center downtown—the Chicago Loop Medicinic at 316 N. Michigan—was starving for patients and "six figures in debt."

"To keep from going broke," recalled one former owner, the clinic went into the abortion business.

Enter John Seplak, a mortician school dropout with a few years of experience as an administrator of abortion clinics.

Seplak was hired as "the professional manager" of what was about to become strictly an abortion clinic.

The Loop Medicinic merged with a competing abortion clinic up the street—the Illinois Reproductive Center. At the time, Illinois Reproductive's facilities were so inadequate that the Illinois Department of Public Health was threatening to close the clinic.

The neighboring Loop Medicinic had adequate facilities but lacked experienced staff to run a successful abortion business.

UNDER TERMS OF the merger, the Loop Medicinic was to perform abortions and the Illinois Reproductive group was to provide the staff, the know-how, and the patients—guaranteeing 600 abortions per month, for $90,000 worth of business.

With Seplak at the helm, said one former owner, the Loop Medicinic turned its first profit in 1976.

The Loop Medicinic has since severed its ties with Illinois Reproductive, although it now has office space at Bickham's Water Tower clinic. But Seplak is still there, boosting patient volume by paying doctors and referral agents $45 to $80 kickbacks for every patient they send him.

Seplak, who lives in Palatine and captains his own cabin cruiser, manages the clinic for the group of stockholders who originally invested in the clinic.

Many of the stockholders said they have sold their interest in the clinic to two of their original co-investors, Dr. Robert H. Murphy, an opthalmologist, and Terrell J. Isselhard, an attorney. Murphy and Isselhard began buying up stock in February, and now hold controlling interest in the clinic. But they leave day-to-day operations to Seplak.

To keep business booming, Seplak pays his employes $5 cash bonuses for every abortion they sell over the phones.

BUT THAT ISN'T the only way he motivates his staff.

One day, BGA investigator Julia Rockler suggested sending an anxious woman seeking a pregnancy test to another clinic. After all, Rockler reasoned, the Loop Medicinic was closed that day.

"You refer them anyplace else," Seplak warned Rockler, "and I'll cut your tits off!"

In staff meetings, Rockler saw Seplak ignore employes' concerns that patient care was suffering in the clinic's race for profits. But Seplak was careful to remind his staff in one meeting not to interrupt one of the "slower" doctors with phone calls from patients.

Doctors taking phone calls on clinic time, said Seplak, "hits me in the pocketbook—and that's where it hurts, in the pocketbook."

• • •

It has been more than two years since The Chicago Daily News exposed what appeared to be massive welfare rip-offs by a South Side Medicaid mill owned mainly by Dr. Regalado S. Florendo.

The Illinois Department of Public Aid still is investigating how, in 1975, the Hilltop Medical Center at 1321 W. 87th got more than $1 million in state Medicaid money—more than half of which was reportedly billed for unnecessary or nonexistent services, including abortions on women who were not pregnant.

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Sun-Times Photo by Jerry Tarkoff

The selling of abortions

"We have to sell abortions," Clifford Josefik, who claims to be sole owner of Biogenetics Ltd., told employes at a staff meeting. "We have to use all of the tactics we can because, just like my other business, we have competition. Now, we have to go by the rules, but rules have to be broken if we are gonna get things done."

At a staff meeting, John Seplak, administrator of Chicago Loop Medicinic, told employes not to interrupt "slower" doctors with phone calls from patients. Doctors taking phone calls on clinic time, he said, "hits me in the pocketbook—and that's where it hurts, in the pocketbook." Seplak pays employes $5 cash bonuses for each abortion sold by telephone.

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times
Sun-Times Photo by Perry C. Riddle

The doctors' duty—an editorial on Page 10.

Medicaid payments were temporarily stopped in 1976 to everyone connected with the Hilltop clinic, but were restored after a court ruled in another case that the department lacked authority to suspend providers from the program.

New legislation was passed giving Public Aid that power. In June of this year, state officials told Florendo they planned to suspend him again from the Medicaid program for charges stemming from the Hilltop scandal.

But by July, Florendo already had received $171,158 from Medicaid. Though his Hilltop partner was banned from Medicaid, Florendo has contested the Hilltop charges in hearings with Public Aid.

WHILE FIGHTING the state on that front, Florendo moved his abortion business from the Hilltop clinic and got a new state license to operate an abortion clinic at 30 S. Michigan.

'But Seplak is still there, boosting patient volume by paying doctors and referral agents $45 to $80 kickbacks for every patient they send him.'

There, at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, our investigators found new abuses of the Medicaid program.

Before he became a clinic owner himself, Florendo worked at Biogenetics. The 36-year-old physician, educated in the Philippines, spends his off-duty hours at his sprawling Palos Park estate or in his fashionable Harbor Point condominium.

Together with his wife, he spends more time managing his new clinic than he does performing abortions or screening his doctors.

AMONG THE PART-TIME physicians on Florendo's staff are Dr. Norberto Agustin and Dr. Ming K. Hah.

Agustin was banned from the Medicaid program in April, 1977, for improper record keeping and billing Public Aid for too many laboratory tests on welfare patients.

But Florendo's clinic still gets reimbursed for Agustin's welfare abortions by billing Medicaid in another doctor's name.

NEXT:

State to act on abortion clinics

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

Gov. Thompson announced Sunday that he will form a special task force of four state agencies to crack down on abuses in abortion clinics exposed in The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation of dangerous medical care in four facilities.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Reaction

Thompson acted after he read the first installment of The Abortion Profiteers series in the Sunday Sun-Times. The governor telephoned the newspaper to announce his intended crackdown.

Thompson said the task force also will look into whether new legislation or regulations are necessary to ensure that safe abortions are available at walk-in clinics.

"I have vetoed bills that would drive women underground [for illegal abortions] again and I have to be sure that what we have above ground is operating right," Thompson said. "We either need better enforcement of our present laws and regulations or our present laws and regulations are inadequate."

Meanwhile, Dr. Clifton L. Reeder, president of the Chicago Medical Society, announced that he will appoint a committee of doctors to investigate conditions at abortion clinics. He said he saw no great urgency in the problem.

THOMPSON SAID he will meet with the heads of the Department of Public Health, which licenses clinics, the Department of Registration and Education, which licenses doctors and nurses, and representatives of the Law Enforcement and Public Aid departments to discuss what action should be taken.

He said he also will appoint to the task force a representative from his office, Thomas Berkshire, to act as a liaison.

"I want each department on this task force to tell me what we need and what role each of them can play to end the kind of abuses you have exposed," Thompson said.

During a five-month investigation, The Sun-Times and the BGA worked undercover in six abortion clinics, four of which were found to be assembly-line operations where profits come ahead of patient care.

Investigators found unsterile conditions and haphazard clinic care, incompetent and unqualified doctors who performed abortions in a fraction of the time experts say is safe—sometimes without waiting for pain-killing anesthetics to take effect—and sometimes on women who weren't pregnant. They saw clinics that failed to order critical postoperative pathology reports and dangerously shoddy record keeping by aides who falsified records of patients' vital signs.

THOMPSON SAID that if necessary, the task force could have legislation introduced this month to give the public health department more power to curb abuses uncovered.

"Driving women back underground to the illegal abortionists would be worse than what we have. Requiring all abortions be performed in hospitals would be unnecessary and too expensive. If present laws and regulations are not good enough to protect patients, then what we will do is draw up new ones fast," the governor said.

Thompson said he would consider adding more IDPH inspectors if additional staff was necessary.

IDPH now has six nurses to inspect 24 state abortion clinics and about 130 hospitals not regulated by the Chicago Board of Health.

'We either need better enforcement of our present laws and regulations or our present laws and regulations are inadequate.' —Gov. James Thompson

Dr. Patricia Nolan, IDPH deputy director, said the department has "begun discussing revising" state standards for abortion clinics, pointing out that the agency "may have underestimated what it takes to run a well-functioning clinic" when the regulations were first written in 1973 after abortions became legal.

"They are minimum standards and we are finding that some clinics are meeting the minimal standards but aren't functioning properly," Dr. Nolan said.

IN ANOTHER development, the director of the Illinois Department of Registration and Education said the agency will "investigate fully" all allegations of dangerous medical practices exposed in The Sun-Times and BGA investigation of abortion clinics.

"If what you are writing about is true, it is an unacceptable standard of medical care," said Joan G. Anderson, director of the agency that licenses doctors and nurses. "Much of what I read [in the first story of the series] falls within what I would call, to put mildly, unacceptable medical care."

Meanwhile, a Cook County grand jury has subpenaed the records of at least one abortion clinic in reaction to findings uncovered in the investigation.

State's Atty. Bernard Carey declined to comment on the action, noting, "The matter is before a grand jury."

Carey has assigned at least two assistant state's attorneys working under the supervision of Thomas Burnham, chief of special prosecutions, to follow up on disclosures that women have been victimized by dangerous medical practices and fraud in abortion clinics and referral agencies.

AS PART OF Carey's investigation, the grand jury has subpenaed the medical records of dozens of patients at one of the biggest clinics operating on Michigan Av. The clinic is one of six where Sun-Times reporters and BGA investigators worked undercover as medical assistants, nurses' aides and counselors.

Anderson said she also was concerned about the findings that nonlicensed personnel are performing duties—such as giving injections and examinations and writing prescriptions—that should be done by licensed practitioners and nurses.

Dr. Reeder said he will appoint a committee of five doctors plus himself and Dr. Lawrence Hirsch, president-elect of the Chicago Medical Society, to look into the question of possible medical abuse in abortion clinics.

Dr. Reeder said he had not yet read the first installments of The Sun-Times series. But he said he thought the matter was "blown out of all proportion to reality.

"We don't know until we investigate what the hell is going on. Abortions have been going on for hundreds of thousands of years. Women have been dying from abortions as long as they've been going on. There's a certain amount of risk in it," said Dr. Reeder.

Sun-Times
Sunday, November 12, 1978

Editorial

Bring on the reforms

Clinics perform more than 80 per cent of all legal abortions in Illinois. Beginning today, The Sun-Times will detail the results of investigations into the unsuspected horrors in four such clinics along glittering Michigan Av.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Our purpose is to shed light on the blight of their victims, to inform and spur reform. If government officials do their jobs, practices more suitable to torture chambers than to medical clinics will be halted—or the clinics will be put out of business. But officials must promptly get to work.

Reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick and Better Government Assn. investigators have produced eye-opening stories. Most people assumed that the legalization of abortion in 1973 did away with the worst abuses by taking a medical procedure out of the back rooms and into clean, supervised, competently run facilities where it belongs. The public hardly could have suspected the needless tragedies that befall sometimes-desperate, often-frightened women in the hands of some clinic operators and their colleagues to whom profit is everything.

The public trusted health agencies.

The trusted law-enforcement agencies.

The trusted medical agencies.

But for the clinics spotlighted in our series, the public's trust was misplaced.

Sun-Times and BGA investigators worked for five months to give Chicagoans the true story about those clinics. At Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., at Biogenetics Ltd. at Chicago Loop Mediclinic and at the Michigan Av. Medical Center, they found women writhing in agony as fast-buck seekers ignored sound medical procedures. They found women maimed. They found women exploited. They found instances in which women had died after abortions.

And they found public health officials who didn't know—or didn't do—anything about conditions so outrageous that abortion surgery was even performed on women who weren't pregnant.

These carefully researched reports do not suggest that all abortions are unsafe. Stories will describe standards women should expect at responsible facilities—which do exist. But inherent in each report is a demand for corrective actions against the four Michigan Av. abortion mills—and others that are likely to be found if officials only look.

Though the corrective steps will vary, there are obvious places to begin:

- Because the Illinois Department of Public Health has neglected its own regulations, unlicensed, unsanitary clinics have operated. Public Health should enforce those rules.
- Public Health should routinely check the clinic personnel's professional credentials.
- Random inspections should be made, including checks to ensure that vital lab tests are performed and performed accurately.
- Inspection reports should be made public.
- The Illinois Department of Public Aid should closely monitor medical facilities that treat persons eligible for public aid.
- Officials should work more closely among themselves: In one case, Public Health granted a license to a doctor for a new clinic while Public Aid was amassing evidence that he "aborted" non-pregnant women.

As the series continues, we'll urge other actions. But officials dare not delay enforcing rules already on the books to protect women from unscrupulous abortionists. To delay is to ensure more tragedy.

Sun-Times
Monday, November 13, 1978

Editorial

The doctors' duty

Most people trust their doctors.

But such trust is dangerous at four Michigan Av. abortion clinics, as reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick, along with Better Government Assn. investigators, found.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

There, patients often blindly entrust themselves to men and women for whom the dollar is more important than medical ethics, medical knowledge or even normal human respect for other people. The results include surgical brutality and sometimes death.

The Sun-Times stories expose the greed and exploitation that harms so many women. State and city health officials should halt the horrors at the four clinics. Said one BGA investigator, the five-month study "found virtually no problem that couldn't be corrected by enforcing health and licensing regulations."

We listed some ways Sunday for the Department of Public Health to enforce state rules. But abortion-mill brutalities uncovered by Zekman, Warrick and the BGA do more than violate state regulations and laws—vital as those laws are.

They also throw a challenge at the medical profession itself, for whom public trust is essential if it is to operate without more stringent controls.

Doctors have specific legal duties concerning abortion clinics. For instance, the law says each clinic must have a consulting committee of physicians to review clinic procedures. If those committees do exist, why were such intolerable conditions tolerated?

The public deserves explanations.

The Illinois Department of Registration and Education can revoke or suspend licenses of doctors for abuses like those described in the series, among other causes. It should. But doctors clearly should police their profession more carefully.

The so-called physicians at the four clinics aren't the only ones responsible for the abuses now being reported on our news pages. Other doctors who knew or suspected malpractice when bleeding, bruised women turned up at their offices—some of the women still pregnant despite a clinic "abortion"—remained silent.

Some doctors, unwilling to do abortions, refer women to clinics they know little or nothing about, although they could identify safe clinics for their patients. Some dollar-hungry hospital residents and physicians lacking experience in women's medicine even performed abortions at the four clinics.

The trail is bloody—literally—but it's there for all to see, and to correct.

Unveil $60 million library pla

New 10- to 12-story building in Cultural Center comp

Cooler
Partly sunny with a high around 50. Details on Page 93.
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CHICAGO Sun-Times
Tuesday, November 14, 1978

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The abortion lottery

Women take chances with 'tryout' doctors

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

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When a woman goes to an abortion clinic, she entrusts her body to strangers—doctors she knows nothing about, doctors she has never met.

On Michigan Av., women entrust their bodies to doctors who may be mere mechanics on the abortion assembly line.

They may be moonlighting residents, general practitioners with little or no training in women's medicine, or even unlicensed physicians. While slick clinic brochures promise only board-certified obstetrician-gynecologists, few have earned even that accreditation.

These doctors rarely tell patients their names. To many, patients are not people. They are profits.

During the five months The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigated the city's abortion business, we heard from many of these doctors' victims—women who were awakened nights after their abortions by chills and fever, uncontrolled bleeding and painfully debilitating cramps.

Some had dead tissue left inside them. Others had massive infections, perforated bowels, or punctured uteri. Some ultimately underwent complete hysterectomies—the removal of all reproductive organs.

Former patients have filed lawsuits against doctors in all four of the Michigan Av. abortion mills where dangerous medical practices were uncovered during the investigation. But many women still suffer quietly, afraid to even admit they've had abortions, let alone press public charges against the doctors who performed them.

At least two women who received Magnificent Mile abortions are dead.

• • •

At Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, doctors new to the abortion business—often mere residents from Cook County Hospital looking for extra income—are "tried out" on patients by clinic director Dr. Carlos Baldoceda.

Baldoceda, 33, who was educated in South America, was promoted to medical director of Biogenetics this summer. Though he is licensed to practice medicine, even he has not received board certification for his specialty, gynecology.

Those who audition well for Baldoceda practice their techniques by operating solo on unsuspecting patients.

But a 28-year-old nursing student who received an abortion from one of Biogenetics' tryouts this fall said it was clear to her that "the doctor had no idea what he was doing. I was just a guinea pig."

HER ABORTION was part of Cook County Hospital resident Jovenel DuBois' on-the-job training. "The director of the clinic was telling this guy, 'You're supposed to do that, you're supposed to do this. No, that's not the right instrument,' " she said.

"It must have been his first abortion," the patient concluded after DuBois' performance. At 36, the French-schooled DuBois is a third-year resident at the hospital.

"He was picking up the wrong things, dropping the instruments," said DuBois' nervous patient. "I wonder what would happen if he made a mistake. What would happen to the woman?"

Several weeks later, DuBois' "guinea pig" patient was still suffering cramps, passing blood clots and complaining of terrible pain.

"THAT'S TERRIBLE," said Dr. John Fultz, medical co-ordinator for the Illinois Department of Registration, when asked about the practice of residents auditioning on patients.

"That's just like opening an office and deciding you're going to do surgery and then starting to do it. If you miss, you learn that"

Turn to Page 1

Act for more inspections

Thompson gives order; Page 14

Third in a series

'These doctors rarely tell patients their names.'

Carter calls Egypt, Israel 'stubborn'

Both nations recall top negotiators

Abortion as a game of chance

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Some had dead tissue left inside them. Others had massive infections, perforated bowels, or punctured wombs.'

Continued from Page 11

not the way to do it. It's an outrageous way to operate."

• • •

Dr. David Aberman, 31, is a Guadalajara (Mexico) medical school grad. While completing his fourth-year residency at County Hospital, Aberman regularly performs abortions at Biogenetics.

He bragged to undercover investigator Michelle Young that the clinic pays him $15 for every abortion he performs on a cash customer and $20 for every public aid recipient. At those rates, a doctor moonlighting once a week can net as much as $30,000 a year, he said.

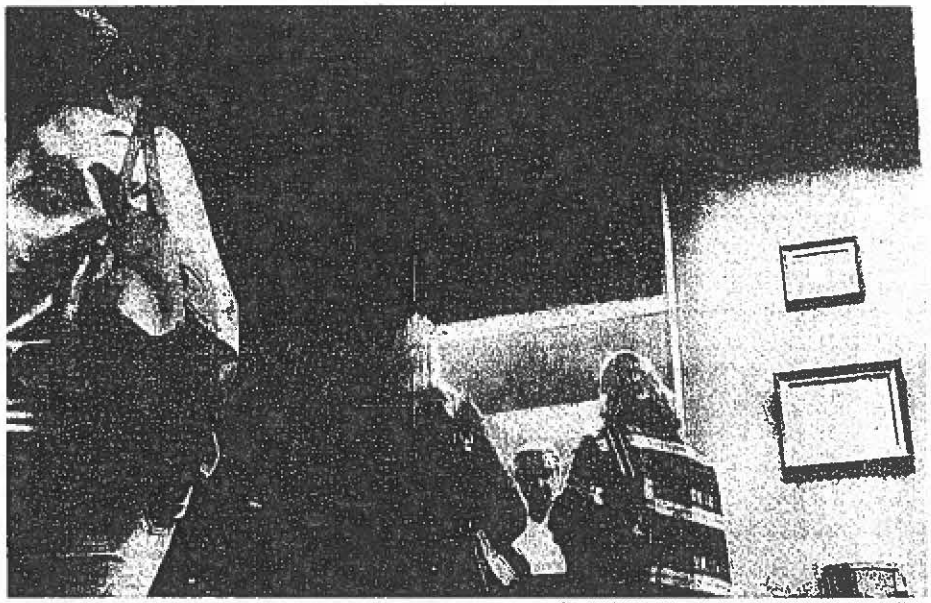
Last year the Illinois Department of Public Aid paid $128,809 for bills submitted in Aberman's name, mostly for abortions at Biogenetics. "This is a good way to make a lot of money easily," Aberman told Young. "But there's a lot of worry if you goof up."

ONE OF ABERMAN'S patients told The Sun-Times how he apparently "goofed" on her.

"He didn't say a thing to me when he walked in to do the abortion, except, 'What do we have here? Ah, too much weight.'

"He gave me no anesthesia, not even a local. I had tears running down my cheeks. And then, right in the middle of performing the abortion, he yelled to the nurse, 'This lady is not pregnant!' "

While abortions on non-pregnant women are not rare at some of the Michigan Av. clinics we investigated, they should be.



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Clinic falsely promises only 'board-certified obstetrician-gynecologists'

At Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, new patients are handed slick brochures boasting that only "board-certified" doctors are on its staff. In fact, the clinic—which Clifford Josefik (facing camera) publicly claims to own—has none, according to the records of two medical associations. Instead, unsuspecting patients are given abortions by "rookie" doctors and general practitioners with little experience in women's medicine. Several lawsuits against these doctors from Biogenetics and three other Michigan Av. clinics are pending.

Medical experts say that where lab tests are accurate and doctors are experienced, unnecessary abortions almost never occur.

Residents like DuBois and Aberman are permitted to moonlight under a contract Cook County Hospital officials signed with their staff last year.

BUT DR. UWE FREESE, head of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Cook County Hospital, is not happy with the arrangement, or with residents performing abortions at privately owned clinics.

"I strongly discourage it, but I have no legal means to stop it," Freese said. "I do not sanction this in any way and I think it is deplorable that these residents are being exploited in this way."

He added, "I think that abortions ought to be done by experienced physicians who are at least board eligible."

• • •

'He was picking up the wrong things, dropping the instruments,' said the nervous patient.

When Aberman's boss, Baldoceda, is not busy auditioning young residents on frightened patients, he occupies himself in other ways.

Investigator Young watched Baldoceda operate on a patient while he was getting a sensual massage from the nurse assisting him.

The patient was lying on her back, legs spread, undergoing an internal examination by Baldoceda, when Young and the nurse entered the room.

"Fancy seeing you here," Baldoceda said to the nurse.

Baldoceda had begun suctioning the patient's uterus when, Young said, "The nurse walked around behind the doctor and began playing with his surgical cap. She moved the cap around, put her hands beneath it and curled clumps of his hair around her fingers.

"She was teasing him, flirting with him," said Young, "and in the middle of the operation, she began rubbing his shoulders. He was laughing. The patient was moaning."

YOUNG RECALLS seeing the stern-faced Baldoceda laugh only one other time. It was after a noon-hour champagne birthday party for one of the clinic nurses. All three clinic doctors had at least one glass of the bubbly that day, but Baldoceda had more than a few.

According to Dr. Warren Pearse of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, "the dangers to patients are obvious" from doctors who have been drinking two to four glasses of champagne. "You have to be alert in surgery," Pearse said. "There is no such thing as minor surgery. In abortions, your touch must be sensitive."

Baldoceda and Aberman went on to perform more abortions after the celebration. As one patient stumbled out of a procedure room and fainted, Baldoceda began to laugh.

"He stood a few feet away, leaning against a pillar, laughing and acting giddy as the aides struggled to get the woman up," Young said.

• • •

But what patients remember most about the doctors at Biogenetics is not their sense of humor. It is the cold, mechanical manner of their method and the steady clip at which they move from patient to patient.

A woman who had an abortion one early August morning recalls lying on the operating table waiting for her doctor—30-year-old Dr. Pankaj Thaker—to get to her. "I could swear that there was only one doctor and he just went down the line giving abortions," said the woman.

"I started crying because I could hear that little [suction] machine going on and going off. He just kept getting closer and closer. I heard his gloves pop off in the next room and then he came to me.

"He didn't say a word. He came in and did it and walked out in three minutes. Then he started down the hall again. . . ."

ANOTHER BIOGENETICS patient said she

Turn to Page 13

Clinic 'coach' holds 'tryouts'

Dr. Carlos Baldoceda, 33, educated in South America, is medical director of Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, although he has not received board certification for his specialty, gynecology. As medical director, Baldoceda assigns doctors who may have little or no related experience to perform abortions. One fourth-year resident at Cook County Hospital, a graduate of a medical school in Guadalajara, Mexico, bragged to an undercover investigator that the clinic pays him $15 for every abortion performed on a cash customer, $20 for a public aid patient—or as much as $30,000 a year. Baldoceda, when not conducting abortion auditions, takes the field himself—at least once in his street clothes and once after drinking champagne at a clinic party. Another time, he was giving an internal examination while receiving a massage from a nurse. "Fancy seeing you here," Baldoceda, laughing, told the nurse.

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License revoked, but clinic operates

One of the questions posed by The Abortion Profiteers series is how Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, has managed to stay open despite the revocation of the clinic's license on Sept. 25.

When the Department of Public Health revoked the license of the clinic owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham, it assumed the action would mean no more abortions would be performed. But the department did not send an inspector to check and the clinic is still operating.

The department also did not know Bickham had obtained a temporary restraining order on Oct. 23 against the health department's revocation.

On Nov. 3, U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley extended the order until Nov. 24.

And Monday, Bickham filed suit in Circuit Court to have his license restored.

Patient recalls: 'I was just a guinea pig'

Continued from Page 12

waited five hours to see a doctor. She got Baldoceda. "He just took five minutes. He was very rude and did the abortion so fast, there was no time for the anesthetic to work," the woman recalled. "That's why I think he left that afterbirth inside me."

More than a week later she was still bleeding heavily and suffering from severe cramps. Baldoceda had to rescrape her uterus to remove the tissue he left behind.

• • •

Undercover investigators at both Biogenetics and the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, also saw doctors performing abortions with precious little attention to their own cleanliness, or to their patients' health.

At Biogenetics, Young observed Baldoceda stop short, halfway out the clinic, to come back to do "just one more" abortion.

It was a busy day and the waiting room was still crowded with patients when Baldoceda changed his mind about going home.

He did not, however, change his clothes. "He just took off his coat and walked into a procedure room and started the abortion," Young said. "He didn't bother to take off his street clothes and put on his surgical scrubs."

AT WATER TOWER Reproductive, investigator Mindy Trossman watched clinic owner Dr. Arnold Bickham, 41, leave on at least two occasions, with women still convalescing in the recovery room.

Bickham's departure on those days left the clinic without a physician. Had any of the women in recovery suffered serious complications, Bickham's early departure could have been fatal.

Trossman also saw Bickham rush a patient out of the clinic before her abortion was finished.

Although other doctors later found the woman had suffered a punctured vagina, Bickham sent her home bleeding, saying he would not do an abortion on her because she was 16 weeks pregnant. (By law, clinics may perform abortions on women only up to 12 weeks pregnant.)

Trossman saw the patient minutes after she was ordered off the operating table. She was sitting in a waiting-room chair, moaning and clutching her stomach.

A note to our readers

A five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. has disclosed fraud and other abuses in some referral agencies and clinics providing abortion services in Chicago.

These findings are documented in the accompanying stories and others to follow. The Sun-Times series also will report on clinics and hospitals where safe and compassionate medical care for women is available.

But this newspaper has decided that it cannot determine safe and sanitary conditions at all the abortion counseling services and clinics that advertised in our classified pages. Thus we are ceasing publication of such advertisements at this time.

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'He gave me no anesthesia, not even a local. I had tears running down my cheeks. And then, he yelled, "This lady is not pregnant!"

LATER, IN AN interview from her hospital bed, the patient, 19-year-old Anna Guinn of Hammond, Ind., gave this account of what happened:

Guinn said she was being examined by one of Bickham's doctors, Pawan K. Rattan, when she heard the suction machine go on. "Without giving me any anesthetic, he started up the machine," said Guinn. "I started screaming because it was so painful."

"The doctor said, 'Lean your head back and shut your mouth!' Then, all of a sudden," said Guinn, "he stopped.

"He took the [instruments] out of me and said, 'Stay in this position.' Another doctor [Bickham] came in, stuck his hand up me and said, 'Too far along.'

"What the hell are you talking about?" yelled Guinn. "It's already half done!"

"Ma'am, we didn't even touch you," said Bickham. "All you had was a pelvic exam."

Guinn said she asked Bickham to call an ambulance for her. "By this time, the cramps were unbearable. The whole examining table was covered with blood," she said.

'He just took five minutes. He was very rude and did the abortion so fast, there was no time for the anesthetic to work. That's why I think he left that afterbirth inside me.'

But Bickham, according to Guinn, ignored her request. "He said, 'You don't need an ambulance. . . . Get up and get dressed.' "

EVEN WHEN Guinn's mother asked Bickham about what happened in the operating room, Bickham would say only that Anna was too pregnant to get an abortion at his clinic. The mother said he never once hinted that her daughter might need emergency treatment.

So Guinn was driven back to Hammond. But by early evening, she looked so pale and was in such pain that a friend took her to a hospital. That night, she underwent emergency surgery at Michael Reese Hospital to repair what doctors there diagnosed as a vaginal perforation and an incomplete abortion.

Although Bickham had thrown Guinn out of the clinic because, as he noted on her chart, she was "16 weeks pregnant," doctors at Reese determined Guinn was only six to eight weeks pregnant.

Bickham is one of the few board-certified doctors practicing in Michigan Av. abortion clinics. When he is in the clinic, he often rushes from patient to patient. Sometimes he rushes from abortion to abortion without washing his hands between patients or donning sterile gloves.

"That is a terribly dangerous way to spread infection from one patient to another," said Fultz, when asked about methods such as Bickham's. "It is impossible [during an abortion] for his hands never to touch the patient."

• • •

The Biogenetics clinic boasts a staff of "all board-certified physicians" in its brochure. According to records of two medical associations, it has none.

But Biogenetics does have a woman not licensed to practice medicine who calls herself "doctor."

Our investigator fielded a call from an angry patient complaining about the "Dr." Shastla Khan—the "woman doctor" who gave her a $20 postoperative exam. "She said I was fine," the patient complained, "but my own physician said I had all sorts of complications. I had missed tissue."

While "Dr." Khan's duties generally are limited to performing postoperative exams and dispensing contraceptives, she also inserts intrauterine devices and prescribes drugs using another doctor's name. The clinic apparently bills Public Aid for her services to welfare patients under other doctors' names, according to some bills seen by investigators.

On at least one occasion, Khan had to ask our undercover aide for advice on what sort of contraceptive to give a woman experiencing complications from birth control pills.

But the clinic gives Khan pads full of forms presigned by "Dr. P. Thaker" so she can write prescriptions for birth control pills and other medications.

"That's a dangerous and unprofessional practice," said Fultz, whose agency licenses doctors. Fultz said the Medical Practices Act forbids a physician, in this case Thaker, to lend his name to another person unlicensed to treat a patient.

• • •

Doctors signing patient charts for other doctors is also dangerous, unprofessional and illegal, medical experts say.

At the Water Tower Reproductive Center, patient charts are, almost without exception, signed by one doctor—Bickham, the clinic owner. While Bickham does his share of abortions at the busy clinic, other doctors perform many procedures there as well.

According to Fultz, doctors signing records for other doctors is "specifically prohibited in the Medical Practices Act."

At the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, Dr. Norberto Agustin also takes unprofessional liberties with patient charts.

Rushing between abortions, Agustin occasionally doesn't even have time to wait for anesthetics to take effect, much less do his record keeping.

Agustin, 41, went to medical school in Manila. He is a general practitioner who at one time did abortions for $15 each at Biogenetics.

AT MICHIGAN AVENUE Medical Center, an undercover investigator working as a nurse's aide pointed out to Agustin that he had failed to note on a patient's chart any details of the abortion he'd performed hours before.

Agustin sat down and called up the figures from "memory"—including the size of the uterine cavity and amount of tissue removed.

On two other occasions, investigator Julianne Felkner saw Agustin write on patient charts that he had removed about 200 cc. of tissue and blood, when, in fact, he had removed three times that much.

'Rushing between abortions, Agustin occasionally doesn't even have time to wait for anesthetics to take effect, much less do his record keeping.'

But, according to Medicaid officials, Agustin's problems with record keeping are not limited to his abortion practice.

Before suspending Agustin from the Medicaid program last year, state authorities found he had ordered as many as 21 different lab tests for patients whose charts included no diagnosis or evidence of any physical examination. Public Aid investigators charged Agustin altered the records after their initial review in an attempt to correct the deficiencies.

NEXT: The aftermath of Dr. Hak.

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Aborting an abortion

Anna Guinn, 19, of Hammond, Ind., underwent emergency surgery for a perforated vagina, diagnosed by doctors at Michael Reese Hospital as resulting from an incomplete abortion. Earlier in the day, she had been sent home, bleeding and suffering cramps, from Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, where Dr. Arnold Bickham told her she was too pregnant—16 weeks—for an abortion. (State law permits clinics to perform abortions only up to 12 weeks.) Bickham made his assessment after having already started the abortion, she said. However, Bickham told Guinn, "Ma'am, we didn't even touch you. All you had was a pelvic exam." Doctors at Michael Reese later determined she was six to eight weeks pregnant.

Dr. Ming Kow Hah: physician of pain

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

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THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'All Hah's patients are in pain because he doesn't take the time to give them (pain-killing) injections.'

Fourth in a series

The patient was squirming on the operating table and screaming. In her pain, she clenched the hand of the nurse's aide. Her fingernails dug into the aide's wrist.

"You know you wouldn't have all these problems if you had your tubes tied," the doctor said evenly. "Anything, anything," his patient cried.

Dr. Ming Kow Hah, who has already lost his medical license in one state and faces revocation in Illinois, may give the fastest abortions in Chicago. According to a five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., Hah also may give the most painful abortions in the city.

While many women feel discomfort during abortions, the procedure does not have to be excruciating. Thanks to the use of local anesthetics, it rarely is.

But the Hah abortion observed by BGA investigator Julianne Falkner at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center was agonizing because Hah performed the procedure *without anesthetics.*

He wasted no time, however, in signing up his screaming patient for a tubal ligation, a procedure in which the Fallopian tubes are closed off, preventing future

Turn to Page 15

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DR. MING KOW HAH may perform the fastest—and most painful—abortions in Chicago, according to former patients and undercover investigators. Hah, whose license was revoked in Michigan and who faces revocation in Illinois, often performs abortions without anesthetic. According to one Michigan Avenue clinic's records, he also has performed two abortions simultaneously.

Thompson orders clinic check step-up

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

Gov. Thompson ordered state inspections of abortion clinics stepped up in his first meeting with his task force Monday.

Thompson also asked state Atty. Gen. William J. Scott for his co-operation in the investigation. Scott assigned two assistant attorney generals to expedite pending lawsuits against at least two physicians mentioned in The Sun-Times Abortion Profiteers series.

The governor met in Springfield with Tyrone C. Fahner, director of the Law Enforcement Department; Arthur F. Quern, director of the Public Aid Department; Joan G. Anderson, director of the Public Health Department, Dr. Patricia Nolan, Public Health Department deputy director, and Thomas Berkshire, the governor's liaison.

David Gilbert, Thompson's press secretary, said the agencies will determine how many inspectors are available and how many would be needed to conduct more inspections.

Gilbert said Thompson has requested that members of the task force report to him Tuesday morning with an update.

DURING A FIVE-MONTH investigation, the Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. worked undercover in six abortion clinics, four of which were found to be assembly-line operations where profits come ahead of patient care.

Meanwhile, the state controller's office is withholding about $100,000 in Medicaid funds to three doctors named in the series because of possible billing irregularities, according to William Schaub, the state's assistant controller.

SCHAUB SAID THAT the three, Dr. Arthur Bickham, Dr. Ming K. Hah and Dr. Ulrich G. Klopfer, were among the top recipients of Medicaid funds during the last three years. Bickham is the owner of the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan. Hah and Klopfer both perform abortions regularly at Chicago Loop Medical Clinic, 316 N. Michigan. Hah also works at Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan.

BETTER GOVERNMENT ASSN. officials (l. to r.) David L. Protess, research co-ordinator; J. Terrence Brunner, executive director, and Barbara Klein, attorney, hold a press conference Monday on the abortion clinic investigation by the BGA and The Sun-Times at the BGA headquarters. Brunner said that the investigation of Michigan Av. abortion clinics revealed that abortions are "carelessly, callously and even fraudulently" performed. (Sun-Times Photo by Jim Klepitsch)

Since 1976, Hah has been paid $776,636. Bickham, who was once the highest Medicaid provider in the nation, according to his billings, has been paid $748,650 and Klopfer has been paid $465,175.

A fourth physician named in the series, Dr. Regalado Florendo, owner of the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, has been paid $524,342 during the last three years while he battles the Illinois Department of Public Aid's efforts to terminate him from the Medicaid program, according to the statistics.

SCHAUB SAID THAT although there is not enough evidence to warrant suspending the other three doctors from the Medicaid program at this point, "there are scattered instances of things that we think aren't proper, either in the preparation of a voucher or with billing procedures."

In another development, the Chicago Alliance of Business Manpower Services, which administers federal job-training funds, is withholding more than $14,000 from Bickham because of "invoicing problems" that include incomplete billing and overbilling, said Richard DiBona, executive director.

The Sun-Times disclosed Monday that a federal grand jury has heard testimony from several current and former Water Tower clinic employes who said that Bickham instructed them to lie on applications for the Manpower program, funded under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA).

Under that program, businesses can get reimbursed for up to half the salaries paid to train and employ people who had been jobless for at least two weeks.

DiBona said that under a 1977 contract, Bickham was paid $10,444 for four positions. He has received no money under his 1978 contract because of "improper invoicing problems." He said Bickham failed to list all the employes hired under the contract and that there were "some problems with mathematics" in the number of hours and salaries for which he sought reimbursement.

Meanwhile, J. Terrence Brunner, executive director of the BGA, said that the state Public Health Department and the medical profession have "failed flagrantly to enforce their own rules" and the failure has resulted in the serious medical abuse disclosed in The Abortion Profiteers.

BRUNNER APPLAUDED Gov. Thompson's announcement Sunday that the state would crack down on abuses in abortion clinics and was meeting Monday morning with a task force composed of representatives of four state agencies.

In a press conference at the BGA offices, 230 N. Michigan, Brunner recommended that:

- Existing state regulations that ensure the abortion procedure is performed under conditions of maximum safety should be strictly enforced.
- Abortion clinics should be routinely inspected by a team of certified specialists.
- Professional credentials of clinic personnel should be routinely checked, state inspectors should randomly check to ensure that required lab tests are performed accurately, and state inspection reports should be filed periodically and made available for public inspection.
- The Illinois Department of Registration and Education should institute license revocation proceedings against the physicians who engage in the abuses described in the investigation.
- The medical profession should re-examine its system of peer review and develop more effective means to monitor the delivery of abortion services.

BRUNNER SAID THAT although each clinic is required by law to form a consulting committee composed of doctors to review the clinic's procedures, the committees have obviously not been doing the job adequately.

Dr. Eric Oldberg, president of the Chicago Board of Health, blamed a large part of the problem on a U.S. Supreme Court decision that took away the board's power to regulate abortion clinics.

Abortion without anesthetic: 'sadistic'

'It's painful, real painful. I know he never gave me anesthetic.'

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Continued from Page 14

pregnancies.

"Go get a pad and pencil to take down her name," Hah ordered our investigator in the middle of the abortion. "We can schedule [her sterilization] for Sunday."

AS HAH MOVED quickly that day from abortion to abortion, "You could hear the patients screaming," our undercover aide said. "All Hah's patients are in pain because he doesn't take time to give them the [pain-killing] injections," our aide was told by another employe.

After their abortions, our aide discovered, "Nearly all Hah's patients vomit from the pain."

Performing an abortion without any anesthetic is "a sadistic approach to medicine," said Dr. David Zbaraz, a gynecologist who performs abortions at Michael Reese Hospital.

Hah practices at two Chicago clinics: the Michigan Avenue Medical Center at 30 S. Michigan and the Chicago Loop Mediclinic at 316 N. Michigan. In interviews, Hah's patients all recounted stories of excruciating abortions.

DILATING A CERVIX in preparation for an abortion is a careful and gradual procedure in the city's good abortion clinics. The muscular opening to the womb is slowly stretched with a series of progressively larger rods to accommodate the suction device used to empty the womb.

But Hah, according to some of his former patients, "just jabs the rod in," as one put it, and turns on the suction machine.

Hah, 43, is a 1964 graduate of the Taiwan University College of Medicine, and, though he is not a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist, he is a veteran of the legal abortion trade.

At the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, Hah's patients apparently are more likely to get anesthetics. But Hah may not wait for them to take effect.

Doctors "should wait a few minutes until the anesthetic becomes effective," said Dr. Abraham Lash, former director of obstetrics and gynecology at Cook County Hospital. "Otherwise, it is just cruelty to the patient for the doctor to go ahead."

SHIRLEY JEAN FISHER will testify to that. During her abortion at the Loop clinic, she said, she suffered "incredible pain" because Hah didn't wait for her anesthetic to work.

Fisher, 29, knew what Lidocaine felt like because she'd had it before. "I'd get this tingling sensation in my hand when it started to work," she said.

But after giving her a Lidocaine injection, Fisher said, Hah "just started right in—one, wo, three. I was sobbing. It was three minutes or less from the time I was led into the oom, put on the table, given the anesthetic, iven the abortion and out of the room."

Fisher's anesthetic finally took effect—in the recovery room.

Another Hah patient who asked Hah for an anesthetic is convinced she never got it. "I asked the doctor, 'Am I going to get an anesthetic?' He said, 'Sure, sure.' That's all he says is, 'Sure, sure, be quiet.'

"Then he starts doing it real quick," said the 26-year-old mother of three. "It's painful, real painful. I know he never gave me no anesthetic. I know what it feels like to have your womb dead like that."

• • •

In Michigan, before Hah lost his license to practice there, he performed an abortion on a woman who still lives with the pain.

The woman is Rosa Naperstek Taft. Before the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision, Taft, an attorney, was at the forefront of the fight for legalized abortion.

Just a month after abortion was legalized, Taft, who was then 28, discovered she was pregnant.

The night before her abortion, she gathered with some friends who had dangerous illegal abortions in the past. "We all rejoiced that night about how I would be able to get a safe, legal one."

The next day, Taft went to the Planned Family Center in Detroit and paid $150 for an abortion by "a Dr. Lee."

But Dr. Lee was, in reality, Dr. Hah. As a result of Hah's abortion, Taft said, "I almost died."

THE ABORTION ITSELF, Taft recalled, was "exceptionally painful. It hurt so bad and I was screaming so loud, they stuck a tampon in my mouth."

Within a week, Taft said, complications set in, but Hah misdiagnosed them. Taft finally signed herself into a hospital where Hah did not practice and spent eight months there, three months in intensive care.

According to the lawsuit she filed against Hah and the clinic where he was then working, doctors had to remove all her reproductive organs. Because of the infection from the botched abortion, Taft's physicians also had to remove her spleen, her colon and perform a tracheotomy after she developed breathing problems. Taft's physicians said she also suffered permanent damage to her heart, lungs and kidneys.

"It took a year before I could go back to work," Taft said. "I had to learn to talk again, walk again. Every part of my body had been infected." The suit was settled out of court for $600,000.

BUT TODAY, Taft said, "I don't have a normal body. My abdomen looks like a sky map of the Grand Canyon. All my internal organs are taxed. I don't have a spleen. My voice is totally changed, and I have a lot of psychological scars that will be with me forever."

But, Taft added, "I'm lucky to have lived. . . .The problem isn't whether abortions should be legal or not. We need to have free and safe abortions available to women as a right. The problem is to get people out of abortions who are in it for profits only."

• • •

Taft was still in an intensive-care unit when Hah opened his own abortion clinic in a Detroit suburb.

But just 16 months after it opened, Hah's new clinic was closed down by health officials for "jeopardizing the health and safety" of patients.

During a series of inspections of Hah's Associated Medical Clinic in Livonia, health officials found:

- Instruments that were "dirty and worn to the point that the stainless-steel finish had deteriorated and the instruments were beginning to rust."
- Recovery room beds made with dirty linens.
- "Supposedly sterile instruments" encrusted with "dried matter."
- Instruments being "sterilized" with Tide detergent and surgical equipment, including the suction machine, being "cleansed" with plain water.

But the state's closure of Hah's clinic did not put him out of the abortion business. He still was performing abortions at the Planned Family Center in Detroit.

And Hah had begun working in yet another clinic on Chicago's South Side.

• • •

It was not Hah's abortion business but his curious gynecological practice that cost Hah his Michigan medical license.

Many of his patients were male. And, police said, most of them were going to Hah for drugs.

Hah gave out 384 prescriptions in four months for the rarely used and dangerous addictive drug Dilaudid, the Michigan attorney general's office said.

The drug, medical experts testified Hah's license revocation hearing in Michigan, is typically prescribed only for terminal cancer patients. But, the hearing officer ruled, Hah prescribed the drug "as a remedy for pain no more severe than headaches."

Police said Hah usually got $50 for each 24-capsule prescription. Some of Hah's patients, police charged, turned around and sold the capsules on the street for $10 to $15 apiece.

Hah's license to practice medicine in Michigan was revoked on Dec. 3, 1975. By then he already had begun working, at least part-time, in Chicago.

BASED ON MICHIGAN'S action against him, Illinois initiated proceedings against Hah in September, 1976, and on Nov. 29 1976, revoked his license.

'In three minutes, I was led into the room, put on the table, given the anesthetic and given the abortion.'

Almost two years have passed, but Hah has managed to maintain his practice almost without interruption.

Within 10 days of the revocation order, Hah filed a complaint in Circuit Court challenging Illinois' right to take away his license based on his activities in Michigan. The state was enjoined from revoking his license pending a ruling on that complaint.

On Feb. 4, 1977, a Circuit Court judge upheld the order revoking Hah's license. Again, Hah appealed. The case was before the Illinois Appellate Court for a full 21 months before the court upheld the revocation Nov. 3.

On Monday, Hah took the first steps toward appealing the appellate court decision. And on Tuesday, the state moved to prevent Hah from practicing during the appeal process.

But during previous appeals, Hah continued to perform abortions at the Chicago Loop Mediclinic and the Michigan Avenue Medical Center. Last year, Medicaid paid him $217,500 for his services to public aid patients. And by July of this year, Hah had already billed Medicaid for more than $200,000 worth of work.

At both Chicago clinics, Hah gets paid by the abortion. Those who've watched him work think that's why Hah races—for the money.

At the Loop Mediclinic, Hah's contests

Turn to Page 16

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Drawing by John Downe

Doctors race each other in abortion derby

At the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, according to a former clinic nurse, Dr. Ming K. Hah and another physician, Ulrich Klopfer, compete to see who can perform the most abortions. "When Hah is here," another nurse said, "Klopfer really zips. Hah marks the patients on his leg, and if Klopfer sees that Hah's got a legful, he goes like wildfire to catch up."

Note to readers

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.

Abortion speed, traps—an editorial Page 17.

Parenthood group hails abortion quiz

The Chicago area Planned Parenthood Assn. applauded Tuesday The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation of abortion clinics, calling it "a service to the community."

Marcena Love, chairman of the organization's board of directions, said "A woman faced with an unplanned pregnancy who is considering the alternative of abortion may feel alone, confused and frightened. She needs to know where to turn for reliable information. She also needs to know that the government will protect her right to high-quality care."

Love also said Planned Parenthood "enthusiastically supports" Thompson's intended crackdown on the medical abuses uncovered in the series.

"The answer to substandard practices is adequate inspection, evaluation and enforcement, not recriminalization," Love added.

Planned Parenthood provides, among other services, counseling on adoption, abortion and contraception.

IN 1973, Rosa Naperstek Taft, a Detroit attorney, was given an abortion by "a Dr. Lee"—in reality, Dr. Ming Kow Hah. Within a week, complications set in, requiring eight months of hospitalization. According to a lawsuit against Hah, settled out of court in her favor for $600,000, the abortion caused her to lose all her reproductive organs, spleen and colon. "I don't have a normal body," she said. (AP Photo)

She meets Dr. Hah, loses spleen, colon

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'The abortion was exceptionally painful. It hurt so bad and I was screaming so loud they stuck a tampon in my mouth.'

Continued from Page 15

with another clinic doctor, Ulrich Klopfer, are a continual source of conversation.

"They compete to see who can get the most patients done," said a former Loop clinic nurse. "They'll ask each other, 'How many have you done?', or they'll ask the staff how many the other guy has done. . . . Klopfer would be having a cup of coffee and be on his last sip when he'd jump up and say, 'I'd better get going or Hah will have the whole recovery room full.' "

Hah keeps track of the number of abortions he has done by penciling marks on the pant leg of his surgical scrub suit. At the end of the day, he tallies his marks and totals how much he's owed.

"When Hah is here," a Loop clinic nurse said at a staff meeting, "Klopfer really zips. Hah marks the patients on his leg, and if Klopfer sees that Hah's got a legful, he goes like wildfire to catch up."

BUT HAH'S PACE, BGA investigator Julia Rockler discovered, is hard to beat. While half a dozen medical experts consulted by The Sun-Times agreed that doctors should schedule their abortions a minumum of 15 minutes apart, Hah can easily average six to eight abortions an hour on busy days.

In fact, if Hah's own surgical records can be believed, Hah can do two abortions at a time. On Aug. 12, 1978, for example, Loop clinic records showed Hah performed two abortions—beginning to end—at 4:10 p.m. And on Aug. 16, he did it again, completing two at 2:20 p.m.

But in his haste, Hah's record keeping can get mixed up.

In at least one case, our investigator discovered that Hah was in such a hurry that he filled out a form for one abortion before it took place. In fact, this particular abortion—which, Hah wrote on the patient record, went "well"— never took place at all.

In another case, Rockler discovered a blank record for a patient who had undergone a Hah abortion three days before. Hah was asked to fill out the form—right down to the dimensions of the patient's uterus—from memory.

QUITE A FEAT for a doctor who rarely knows his patients' names. Dr. Antonio Scommegna, who teaches at the University of Chicago and performs abortions at Michael Reese Hospital, says a doctor who spends only two to three minutes on each abortion "can't even say hello to the patient."

The abortion itself "can be done in as short a time as five minutes, no shorter," Scommegna said. "The anesthetic takes at least two or three minutes to take effect."

Additional time is needed, he said, for the doctor to talk to the patient, "so she doesn't feel threatened by the doctor. You have to examine her first, then explain the procedure to her and assess whether she is going to be co-operative. There should be a bond between the patient and the doctor. Psychologically it is important. The patient needs to trust the doctor.

"We don't schedule more than one [abortion] every 15 minutes. We are not an assembly line."

Scommegna and almost a dozen other medical experts consulted during the investigation said they would never attempt more than 15 to 20 abortions in a day for fear that the monotony of the procedure and the resulting fatigue would endanger patient safety.

But Hah continued to perform abortions at a pace that frightened even his assistants—20, 30, 40 a day.

And between his patients' screams, our BGA investigator heard one Hah aide lament, "He's going to have to kill a patient before he learns."

NEXT: The people who staff the mills.

State inspects abortion clinics

By Karen Koshner

State inspectors paid surprise visits Tuesday to five clinics named in the Sun-Times' series on abortion abuses, but they were denied entrance to one clinic and refused access to patient records at another.

The inspectors were turned away at the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham, and inspectors were told by aides at another clinic Bickham owns, the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, that they could not see any records.

At one clinic, police were called as a Sun-Times photographer took pictures of state officials inspecting the facility.

THE INSPECTIONS were ordered by Gov. Thompson, who said, "These inspections will continue until I am personally satisfied that the safety of the patients is not in jeopardy.

"First of all, we want to show them [the clinics] that we are not indifferent to the way they are running these clinics. Second, we want to gather what evidence we could to confirm what The Sun-Times found so we can revoke licenses of clinics and doctors if necessary."

The two-person inspection teams from the Department of Public Health and the Department of Registration and Education gained entry to Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan; Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, and Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan.

One state official said the inspectors found some "problems" that could justify immediate action in at least one clinic, but declined to amplify until he met with the governor.

BESIDES STATE inspectors, two FBI agents were seen leaving Biogenetics, but refused to explain their visit.

At a press conference at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Thompson said he ordered the inspection teams to "stay all day" to talk to clinic staffs and patients and to inspect records.

Thompson repeated that he has asked state Atty. Gen. William J. Scott to expedite pending lawsuits against at least two p. cians mentioned in the Sun-Times' Abo. Profiteers series.

He also has instructed Department of lic Aid officials to "step up" reviewing c

Turn to Pag

License all counselors, Daley asks

By G. Robert Hillman
Sun-Times Bureau

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Sen. Richard M. Da ley (D-Chicago) said Tuesday he will tr again to tighten the regulation of abortio clinics by requiring that all their counselor be licensed by the state.

The senator, son of the late Chicago may or and chairman of one of the Senate's two judiciary committees, introduced counselor licensing legislation last year but was forcec to hold it in his own committee, largely because of strong opposition from the Illinois Planned Parenthood Council.

Daley said he will reintroduce the legislation when a new General Assembly convenes in January.

Meanwhile, he appointed Sen. Leroy W. Lemke (D-Chicago) chairman of a five-member judiciary subcommittee to hold public hearings on the issue.

"THESE COUNSELORS are salesmen," Daley declared in an interview, referring to a five-month Sun-Times and Better Govern-

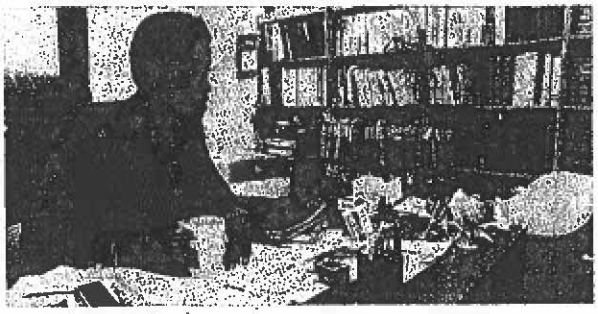
Turn to Page 17

Sun-Times Photo by Richard Dera

SURPRISE VISITS by state inspectors to several Michigan Av. abortion clinics led to a scuffle at Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, a clinic under investigation by state officials. Sun-Times reporter Lynn Sweet (right) and photographer Perry C. Riddle were inside the clinic when an unidentified Biogenetics employe restrained Riddle, grabbed his camera and called police to report that an armed robbery was in progress. Riddle and Sweet were taken into custody, but not charged, by officers shown questioning them in front of the clinic at 520 N. Michigan.

Sen. Daley's legislative plea:

License all abortion-clinic counselor



Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Richard Dark

VICTORIA SANDERS, operator of one of the most successful—and deceptive—abortion-referral services in Chicago, would be licensed by the state under Sen. Daley plan.

Continued from Page 16

ment Assn. investigation of abortion clinics in Chicago. "They say anything to get abortions. . . . It's ridiculous."

Daley's measure would amend Illinois' abortion law to require all counseling—before and after an abortion—be done by persons licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Service.

Margaret Fenley, public-affairs co-ordinator for the Illinois Planned Parenthood Council, said her organization would oppose Daley's bill again in order to avoid requiring licensing of Planned Parenthood counselors, who do not work in abortion clinics but do provide outside abortion counseling.

"The reason we oppose it is because we have what we feel is an excellent counseling program regulated by our own internal regulations," Fenley said. "If that bill passes and we suddenly are facing licensing and fees, it would have a devastating effect on our Downstate volunteer counseling progr

Fenley said it is Planned Parenthood' sition that the state should license and late professionals, such as psychologists social workers, but should steer clear of cific topic areas, such as abortion couns

In the Senate, Don Wooten (D-Roc land), who authored the state's current a tion regulations, said he believes that kinds of abortion abuses uncovered by Sun-Times could best be cured with be enforcement rather than with new law

"I don't agree with abortion. I don't th it should be done," he said. "But as lon the Supreme Court says it's legal, it sho be regulated. . . . And somebody is not forcing the law. That is clear. . . . There's reason you can't revoke doctors' licenses shut these places down. . . . There is enot in the law to regulate abortions, if the (I nois) Department of Public Health will p enforce it."

In the House, Eugenia S. Chapman (D-/ lington Heights), chairman of the Human F sources Committee, agreed. And, she sa she planned to have Dr. Paul Q. Peters the state's public health director, and othe appear before her committee next month explain why enforcement of abortion law appeared so lax.

Also, in the House Tuesday, Rep. W Timothy Simms (R-Rockford) introduced resolution directing the Illinois Legislativ Investigating Commission to conduct an in quiry into the abortion business.

DALEY'S LICENSING measure is the only legislation still alive in the General Assembly aimed at tightening abortion regulations.

There are, however, other abortion issues before the Legislature, including a measure—vetoed by Gov. Thompson—to prohibit state employes from paying for abortions through their state health insurance and a Senate resolution urging Congress to call a constitutional convention to consider a right-to-life amendment.

State aides rebuffed at 2 clinics

Continued from Page 16

of physicians who are still providing services to Medicaid recipients while the physicians face possible termination from the program.

ONE OF THE DOCTORS named in the Sun-Times' series has challenged his suspension from the program as a result of findings in an investigation that began in 1976. A second doctor named in the series is also challenging Public Aid's claims that he overbilled the state for services.

After the two clinic inspections failed Tuesday, U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley told the state's lawyers that inspectors are legally entitled to enter the Water Tower clinic and review its records. Crowley's statements were in response to the state's request for clarification of an earlier order, which expires Nov. 24, allowing Bickham to continue operating pending appeal of his license revocation.

The state also filed suit in Circuit Court requesting that inspectors be allowed into Summit, which has no operating license. State officials have said that the clinic has never been inspected because of a staff shortage that has backed up inspections for six months.

Although some of those same officials said the Summit clinic was operating, they said they had no way of knowing whether abortions were being performed there. But, according to a clinic employe, Summit has been regularly performing abortions. The employe said 10 procedures were scheduled Monday while the state inspectors were waiting, in vain, to inspect the clinic.

AT BIOGENETICS, a clinic employe grabbed the camera of Sun-Times photographer Perry Riddle after the employe became enraged because Riddle was taking pictures of the visit by two state inspectors.

Police were summoned on a report from the clinic that an armed robbery was in progress.

Riddle and Sun-Times reporter Lynn Sweet were detained and searched for weapons by police as they left the building.

Meanwhile, Riddle's film was exposed by the clinic employe.

Ultimately, his camera was returned and no charges were filed.

Sun-Times
Wednesday, November 15, 1978

Editorial

Abortion speed, traps

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Gov. Thompson and some state agencies are moving with laudable speed to attack abuses that victimize women at four Chicago abortion clinics. Without slowing their efforts, they should beware the traps being set by abortion foes.

For example, two pending proposals seek to deny a choice on abortion. That's no way to curb the mistreatment of women uncovered by Sun-Times reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick and Better Government Assn. investigators. You increase mistreatment by helping revive back-room abortion butcher shops, which is what such proposals do.

Ald. Edward M. Burke (14th) has sought to amend the City Code with provisions similar to an Akron (Ohio) abortion ordinance that is being challenged in court. Part of Burke's aim, as we read it, goes beyond health and safety issues. It is to frighten women out of having abortions—through excessive, highly emotional and misleading warnings, followed by a plea for the woman to deliver a baby and put it up for adoption.

In the General Assembly, which reconvened Tuesday, Sen. LeRoy W. Lemke (D-Chicago) spearheads what may become an anti-abortion blitz for a constitutional convention to ban legal abortions. Thirteen states have approved that idea; approval by 35 is needed.

Other attacks on the right of a choice on abortions are being readied, too.

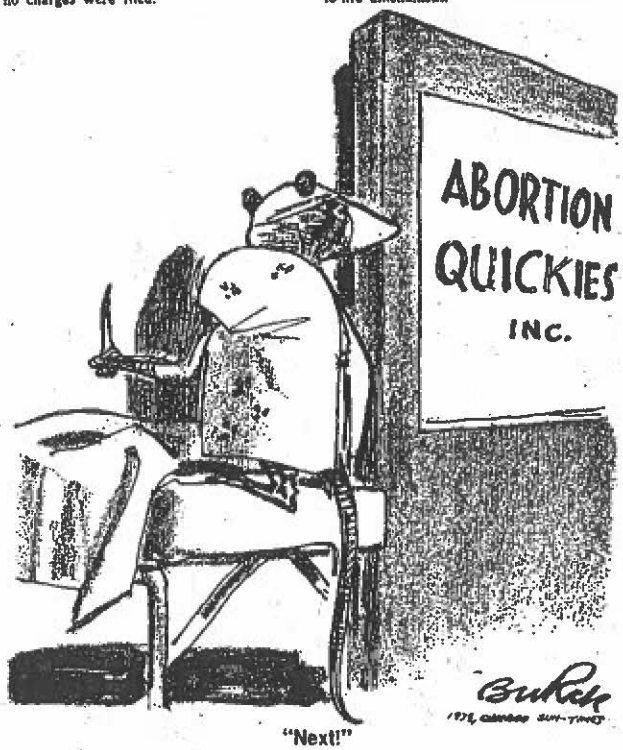
Thompson deserves credit for quickly promising a special task force to crack down on abortion abuses and for considering more Illinois Department of Public Health inspectors, but he should be wary about new legislation lest it overstep legitimate bounds.

Existing rules might need some modification and strengthening. They surely need to be enforced. But enforcement has lagged. After the state revoked one Michigan Av. abortion mill's license, IDPH didn't press to have the clinic shut down. It continued to operate. Nor was the public told of the clinic's status. One IDPH offical now says informing the public "might not have been a bad idea."

Medical groups have been lax, too, as the abuses show. No wonder. Consider, for instance, the attitudes of Chicago Medical Society president Dr. Clifton L. Reeder. Even as he promised to name a committee to investigate abortion clinic conditions, Reeder said he saw no great urgency in the problem.

He's wrong.

Zekman, Warrick and the BGA found existing legal, and ethical, codes violated. Safe clinics don't fear enforcement. And solid enforcement can rescue women from abortion abuses without the potential dangers of hasty legislation.



"Next!"

Nurse to aide: 'Fake that pulse!'

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

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We were hired off the street as aides, medical assistants and counselors.

Without checking our references or credentials, four of Chicago's abortion clinics gave us jobs we were unqualified to hold and tasks we were untrained to perform.

The clinics asked us to do everything but perform the abortions. They wanted us to remove IVs, administer injections, give psychological counseling and assist in surgery.

Sun-Times reporter Michelle Stevens was forced to quit her job, and abandon the investigation of a fifth clinic, when she was ordered to draw blood from patients and refused.

Although other investigators also refused tasks they were untrained for, we discovered that, in some cases, we were more qualified to work in abortion clinics than those we worked beside.

In our months of working undercover in four Michigan Av. abortion mills, investigators found aides routinely inventing vital signs, lab technicians mixing up crucial tests and counselors selling abortions to confused and frightened women.

• • •

While record keeping by doctors in bad clinics may be illegal and inept, the record keeping by some of their staffs is dangerously inventive.

At two of Chicago's Michigan Av. abortion mills, such vital signs as pulse, temperature and blood pressure often are not measured—they're made up.

Patients' conditions before and after their abortions are recorded with pat phrases memorized by nurses and aides.

Dr. David Zbaraz of Michael Reese Hospital, and many other gynecologists who perform abortions, said he, for one, would not perform an abortion without the patient's vital signs.

But, he added, "Ask me if I think there are some abortion mills that don't take vital

Turn to Page 19

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Such vital signs as pulse, temperature and blood pressure often are not measured—they're made up.'

Fifth in a series

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Perry C. Riddle

INVESTIGATOR Julianne Falkner, working undercover at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, was told to "make up" patients' vital signs.

Doctor loses court tests on 2 clinics

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

Dr. Arnold Bickham, who is challenging the state's authority to regulate his abortion business, lost two court battles Wednesday.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

In one, a Circuit Court judge temporarily prohibited abortions at Bickham's South Side medical clinic.

Judge Francis T. Delaney issued the temporary restraining order prohibiting Bickham, or any other doctor, from performing abortions at his Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, which has been operating without a license.

MEANWHILE, U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley refused Bickham's request to continue a restraining order that had prevented the Illinois Department of Public Health from enforcing state regulations at his second clinic, Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan.

Assistant Atty. Gen. Terry Troy said this allows the state to move against the Water Tower clinic, which has not been inspected by the health department since November, 1977.

These actions followed disclosures by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. of Bickham's success in avoiding state regulations at both clinics while dangerous medical practices routinely occur at the Water Tower facility.

The Circuit Court order is effective until Nov. 27, when attorneys for the state will return to court to ask for a permanent injunction or until the clinic's attorneys can persuade a federal court judge to overturn the action.

DURING SURPRISE inspections Tuesday of the clinics named in the Sun-Times' Abortion Profiteers series, inspectors were denied admittance to Summit, which has had an application pending with the health department since July. Although it had not yet been inspected for final approval, the clinic was accepting appointments for abortions and, according to at least one employe, has been routinely performing them.

The state revoked Water Tower Reproductive's license on Sept. 25 because Bickham had refused to admit inspectors since November, 1977.

Troy said the state went to court seeking an order permitting inspectors to enter the clinic, but during the hearings the clinic's lawyers said inspectors would be admitted.

Troy said the his office did not act sooner because the state suspected that abortions were being performed at Summit, but inspectors were not allowed inside to find out. He said his office discovered evidence Tuesday that confirmed the state's suspicions.

He submitted an affidavit signed by BGA investigator Mindy Trossman. Working undercover at the Water Tower clinic, Trossman said a doctor there told her he also performed abortions at Summit.

THE CLINIC'S attorneys did not challenge the state's contention that Summit is performing abortions.

Arguing for the clinic, Aldus Mitchell said a federal court order that prevented the state from enforcing state regulations at the Water Tower clinic also would apply to Summit because the two were "alter egos" of Bickham.

Mitchell maintained that the federal court order permitted Bickham to continue to practice medicine—including performing abortions—at the clinic while the other court cases are being decided. Troy replied that allowing Summit to continue performing abortions would be "a ridiculous result" of the federal court order.

"According to that logic, Bickham could perform abortions in the middle of Michigan Av.," Troy said.

Delaney said that as long as Bickham could perform abortions at the Water Tower clinic, his rights were not being denied.

Meanwhile, state investigators are trying to find out if abortion clinics named in the Sun-Times' series have failed to report complications from abortions, as required by law.

That is among the possible approaches a government task force is considering as it attempts to crack down on abuses being disclosed in the series on the Abortion Profiteers.

UNDER STATE LAW, abortion clinics must report instances of infection, hemorrhaging, perforations and other complications listed on a state form they send to the Department of Public Health.

During an investigation of dangerous medical practices in four Michigan Av. abortion clinics, undercover reporters and investigators found that at two of the clinics, the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, and Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, the state forms were filled out before the abortions even took place.

Employes automatically checked off "no complications" even though an alarming number of patients phoned or revisited the clinics with complaints of serious complications. Some of them required hospitalization for treatment of infections, incomplete abortions, lacerations and punctures of the womb.

At Water Tower Reproductive Center staffers filled out the state forms reporting "no complications" after abortions, but without even looking at the patients' files.

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Jim Knoblock

DR. ARNOLD BICKHAM, owner of Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, leaves federal court building Wednesday after a U.S. District Court judge refused to continue a restraining order that had prohibited the Illinois Department of Public Health from inspecting his clinic.

FBI can keep Accardo's cash

Judge rules on $275,000 seized in raid

Windy
Cold, with occasional rain; high in 40s. Details on Page 75.
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CHICAGO Sun-Times
Friday, November 17, 1978 20

★★★★: Tur Fina

15¢ city and suburbs; 25¢ elsewhe

Probe Michigan Av. abortion clinic death

CORONER'S VERDICT

STATE OF INDIANA } ss
COUNTY OF LAKE }

I, DR. ALBERT T. WILLARDO, Coroner of said County, on the 8th day of March
19 78, at Crown Point County of Lake, State of Indiana, hold an
inquest (X) or inquiry ( ) to inquire into the manner of death of Sherry Fary
who was found at 5434 Hohman Avenue Hammond, Indiana

VERDICT: An inquest into the death of Sherry Emry, 5434 Hohman Avenue, Hammond, Indiana revealed that she was certified dead at 8:05 p.m. by Lake County Deputy Coroner David Ruzich. Investigation by Deputy Ruzich revealed that the deceased had under gone an abortion at the Water Tower Reproductive Clinic in Chicago, Illinois on December 28, 1977. The decedent was released to her residence.

finding of the inquest herein is that the death of Sherry Emry resulted from the incomplete abortion performed by unknown parties at the above-mentioned abortion clinic in Chicago, Illinois. The findings of this inquest have been forwarded to the Cook County criminal authorities, for examination of possible criminal liability on behalf of the abortion clinic.

CAUSE OF DEATH: Accidental - incomplete abortion causing spontaneous rupture of the corneal portion of the uterus.

JOHN R. KNORTS
Attorney
Lake County Coroner's Office

REPORT by coroner of Lake County, Indiana, in the death of Sherry Emry.

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

The Cook County state's attorney's office has reopened its investigation of the abortion-related death of a Hammond woman because of information provided by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn.

The woman, 28-year-old Sherry Emry died Jan. 2 after undergoing an abortion at the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan. First Assistant State's Atty. Barry Gross said, "Based on information we received from you about the practices at that clinic, we are pursuing the [Emry] case."

In another development, The Sun-Times learned that James T. Walker, a lawyer representing Emry's estate, will go into U.S. District Court in Hammond Friday to file a $5 million medical malpractice suit against Water Tower Reproductive. The suit will charge that the abortion was performed in a "grossly negligent and utterly unskillful manner."

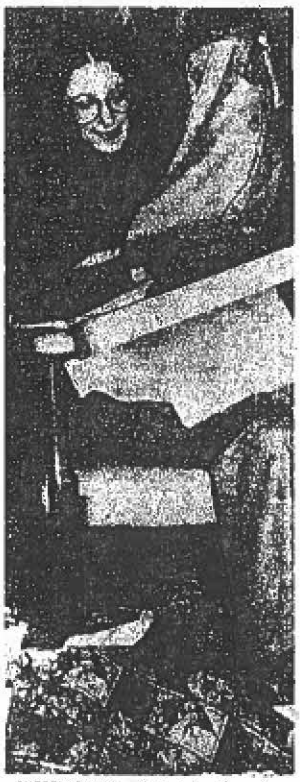
AN INDIANA CORONER blamed an incomplete abortion at Water Tower Reproductive late last year for Emry's death. The clinic is one of four Michigan Av. abortion mills named in The Sun-Times' series on abortion profiteers.

Although the coroner repeatedly asked State's Atty. Bernard Carey for help in investigating Emry's death, he claimed his requests were ignored.

Gross said, however, that another assistant state's attorney, Charles Hartman, had reviewed the coroner's complaint and decided there was no basis for criminal action against the clinic.

Only after The Sun-Times and the BGA in-

Turn to Page 27



SHERRY EMRY in photo taken three days before fatal abortion on Dec. 28, 1977. She died five days after the operation.

The sisterly swindlers

Pair runs abortion hot lines for cold cash; Page 21

Soft voices, hard sells—twin swindles

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Having a baby is a $410,000 question,' a hot line caller was told. 'Do you have that kind of money to raise a kid?'

Sixth in a series

VICTORIA SANDERS

Making up to $5,000 per week on abortion referrals.

VALERIE McCULLOUGH

According to her testing methods, even men can be pregnant.

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times Photos by Richard Sarb

They are identical twins with identical cons.

They bill themselves as "counselors." But their business is sales, and they use every trick in the book to peddle abortions to confused and frightened women.

Victoria Sanders and Valerie McCullough operate competing abortion referral services out of fancy suites and between them advertise half a dozen "abortion hot lines" in four states.

From balconies at rock concerts, they drop balloons emblazoned with "the number to call." They hand out "hot line" matchbooks at ball parks and flea markets. One twin even pays a "Dr. Cadillac" to promote "Abortion Hot Line" from his soundtruck.

According to a five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn., the twins are among the most successful—and most deceptive—referral agents in the Chicago abortion business today.

Working undercover as "counselors" for the twins, our investigators documented how, with bait-and-switch and sleight-of-hand, the flamboyant sisters swindle women who come to them for help.

ACCORDING TO OUR investigations, the twins:

- Pay commissions for every abortion their "counselors" sell.
- Charge women $45 to $150 for as little as five minutes of information freely available elsewhere.
- Give misleading information, including telling women more than 12 weeks pregnant that they must go out of state for abortions.
- Oversee such haphazard pregnancy tests that even male urine can show positive signs of pregnancy.

• • •

"Hello," purrs the soft, sultry voice. "How may I help you?"

It could be any one of many phone calls from women seeking information about abortions or one of the "free" pregnancy tests offered in hot-line ads.

The calls come in on different lines, from women responding to different ads, some of them deceptively official in name. Both women use the name Cook County in their ads to lend their services an air of governmental respectability.

But the phone is always answered with the same quiet offer of assistance.

What those who call the hot lines don't know is that behind the soft voice are "counselors" hired off the street, women schooled more in sales than in the subtleties of abortion counseling—counselors who must sell to be paid.

BGA investigator Julia Rockler was hired as a counselor for McCullough's hot line. Investigator Mindy Trossman was hired as a counselor for Sanders' hot line.

TO EARN HER BASE pay of $110 a week, Trossman had to sign up at least eight women a week who went through with abortions. Rockler had to sign up 12 to earn her $124 weekly pay.

For each extra first-trimester (up to 12 weeks pregnant) abortion her counselors sell, McCullough pays a $10 bonus. At Sanders' hot line, counselors get a $2 bonus for every additional abortion sold.

But there are more incentives for hot-line counselors to sell. At both hot lines, for example, "long cases" (the more costly abortions for women more than 12 weeks pregnant) are worth $5 for the first one sold, $10 for the second and $15 for the third sold in the same week.

Second-trimester abortions can be legally performed in hospitals, and 10 Chicago-area hospitals do them. But the twins never tell patients that.

They prefer to send them to a dilapidated Detroit hospital where abortions may be cheaper but conditions are so bad that health authorities are trying to close it down.

In her first week, however, Trossman found she wasn't selling enough abortions to even earn her base pay.

"You've got to get your patients to come in," Sanders told our investigator. "The other counselor had a very good week. There's no reason why you can't make $200 a week if you try."

ROCKLER WASN'T doing much better at the McCullough hot line.

"We are in the business of *selling* abortions," McCullough scolded. "When you are talking to these people, it's important to use the positive approach. It's not 'Do you want a termination?' but 'When do you want a termination?' Put the question to them as a sure sale. Limit their choices."

Another former hot-line counselor said McCullough wanted her to change her telephone voice. "She wanted me to sound sugary and spicy because she said we had to sound inviting. Our phone work was t most important. She wanted us to get the in there, no matter what, because on they're in, she figures she's got them sold

Hot-line customers usually hear from t soft, saccharine voice again, after their abo tions. But that's not because the hot line concerned about the patient's health. It's b cause the hot-line employe has to be sure th patient went through with the abortion earn her commission.

MANY OF THE callers to the twins' ho lines also are given the impression—inten tionally so—that the number they've reache is a real abortion clinic or maybe a hospital

Even Trossman on her first day at the ho line was told by Sanders, "We are a fully l censed hospital. We can perform any type o outpatient surgery you can think of: abor tions, vasectomies, face-lifts, vagina reconstructions."

Not a few hot-line customers are shocke to find out that the hot line is really no mor than a hot line. "When I walked in, I wa really surprised," said a woman who ha been snared by one of Sanders' "Chicag Women's Center" ads. "I expected to se people in white gowns and nurses. I though it was going to be a clinic."

• • •

Most hot-line customers get their firs look at the "hot-line hospital" when they ar rive for their "free" pregnancy tests.

Besides the fact that the tests are rarely free, hot-line pregnancy tests are notoriously unreliable. Even the clinics to whom the hot lines sell patients redo the tests when the patients arrive for their abortions.

One woman who had a positive pregnancy test at the Sanders' clinic found out two weeks later she was not pregnant at all.

"It makes me wonder," she said, "whether this 'hot line' just tells everybody they're pregnant to get their money."

We wondered the same thing when the hot lines diagnosed three out of four samples of male urine as "positively pregnant."

According to the twins' method of determining pregnancy, Sun-Times reporter Michael Flannery is pregnant, BGA investigator David Protess is pregnant, and so is Sun-Times reporter Michelle Stevens' husband.

TROSSMAN ONCE saw Sanders play Russian roulette with five women waiting to find out if they were pregnant.

The office was crowded and Sanders was

Turn to Page 22

'Get rich quick'

Name of their game the same

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

Victoria Sanders, 35, the older twin by a few minutes, has a bewildering array of aliases and a covey of corporate names.

By age 26, she was one of the first black women stockbrokers on La Salle Street—and a media darling who told anyone who would listen about her plans to "make a million dollars before I'm 30 years old."

Even the New York Times wrote "that if Victoria Sanders doesn't prosper, it won't be for lack of trying."

By age 27, she had convinced a Chicago financial columnist that her income was probably "the highest of any black woman in the country outside the entertainment field."

SHE SHOWED HORSES, raced sports cars, and traveled to exotic lands to barter crude oil during the energy crisis. Between racetracks and airports, and tiring of "making rich people richer," she teamed up with her twin to open an abortion hot line in 1976.

While still boasting of the socialites who want to share their millions with her and the rich doctors who are going to help her build her own abortion clinic, Sanders filed for bankruptcy in May of this year.

From her suite at One IBM Plaza, she still runs 10 corporations, using a host of different aliases. For her First Women's Corporation, for example, a company she formed to promote women in business, Sanders is the elegant "Juliana J. Romanoff." For her abortion hot line, she is "your friend Pat"—or Pat Cain, a version of her former married name.

VALERIE, ON THE other hand, is still learning. Most of the time she is simply Valerie McCullough, the former pharmacist who got into the abortion hot-line business with her sister two years ago and recently left to start her own competing hot line, which operates out of her Outer Drive East condominium or her office at 27 E. Monroe.

While in business together, the sisters' referral service was one of several abortion operations named in a 1976 Sun-Times series on baby selling.

The sisters apparently started their counseling service without much research. The Sun-Times received many complaints about their service from women who said the twins sent them to places that did not perform abortions.

At the trial of a chiropractor convicted for performing an illegal abortion, McCullough testified she had referred a 16-year-old there, unaware the "doctor" could not legally perform abortions.

The girl McCullough referred suffered a perforated uterus and was so badly damaged by the abortion, she had to undergo a total hysterectomy.

Since Valerie split with her sister, she has learned the ropes quickly. Like Victoria, she is careful about where she sends her customers. Now the twins only refer women to doctors and clinics who pay them kickbacks or who allow them to take fees for referring cash patients.

In her hot-line office, Valerie surrounds herself with "get-rich-quick" books and writes herself memos on how to succeed in business without really lying.

"My sister will tell people anything," says Victoria. According to those who've worked for the twins, both of them will.

Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Hot line credo: Get patient money first

Continued from Page 21

angry about the time her staff was taking on urine tests. It takes at least two minutes for the tests to show definite results, but Sanders decided not to wait.

She took one look at five urine samples and, without knowing which sample belonged to which woman, Sanders strode into the reception room and pronounced the still unconfirmed results.

"There are five tests," she told the anxious women, "and all but one are positive. So you're pregnant, you're pregnant, and you're pregnant. . . ."

"How do you keep them straight?" asked one of the "pregnant" women, herself a lab technician. Sanders assured her she had. Even so, Trossman later discovered that at least two of those five women were not pregnant after all.

ON OTHER OCCASIONS, Trossman watched Sanders send customers to abortion clinics even before the pregnancy tests had been run. "I knew they all were positive," Sanders told Trossman later.

Even on those rare occasions when hot-line pregnancy tests do turn up negative, the customers don't get away easily.

When Sanders told an investigator that her sample of male urine had "somehow" turned up negative, the investigator got a call back from Sanders' hot line advising her to come back for a more reliable, and more expensive, pregnancy test, a test for which Sanders pockets $10.

• • •

Note to readers

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'She spent about five minutes with me, maybe not even that long. But $150 for five minutes?'

At the twins' hot lines, counselors are paid for selling. And that's what women who call the hot lines get: a sales pitch.

"Counseling?" said a former hot-line worker. "There was none. What we were doing there is selling abortions. We got no training except in what not to say. How not to use words like 'fetus' or 'kill' that might scare the customers away. Don't mention complications."

Within minutes of being hired at McCullough's hot line, Rockler was told to start "counseling." When she asked for help in explaining the abortion procedure to a patient, she was told to sum it up like this:

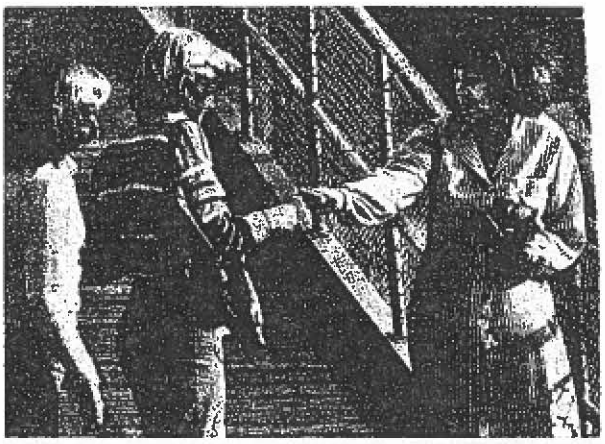
"A tube about the size of a pencil is inserted into the uterus and the vacuum aspirator is turned on and removes all the liquid. There is no scraping or cutting. Now do you have any questions?"

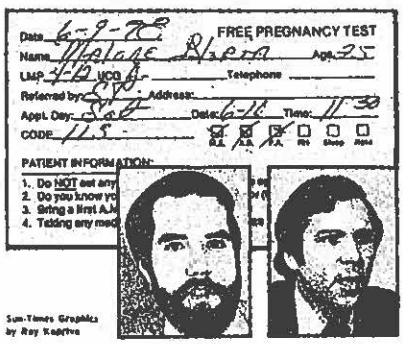
If there were questions, counselors were left to their own devices to answer them. "But McCullough's policy," said a former worker, "was to tell people as little as possible."

AT BOTH HOT LINES, women intentionally are told what will sell them on abortion. When patients complained of the cost of abortions at the Sanders hot line, Trossman heard counselors remind callers of the cost of not having an abortion.

"Having a baby is a $410,000 question," a hot line caller was told. "Do you have that kind of money to raise a kid?"

When another frightened woman asked Sanders what pain she might expect from her abortion, Sanders lied. "It's nothing, hon. Look at me. I just had one yesterday!"





Sun-Times Graphics by Roy Kaptive

PROMOTION information for abortion hot lines (woman above is distributing materials for Victoria Sanders of Soldier Field) often promises free pregnancy tests. But the results can be questionable, if not—as in the case of "Gloria Malone"—impossible. Sun-Times reporter Michael Flannery's urine sample was tested under the name of Gloria Malone at Valerie McCullough's abortion referral service Beside UCG, the name of the test the hot line circled "positive" on Flannery-Malone's result card In another test, the Better Government Assn.'s David Protess also was found to be in a family way

Neither of the hot lines tells their callers that even women in their second trimester of pregnancy can get abortions in Chicago hospitals. Instead, they sell them a $475 to $575 abortion at Plymouth General Hospital in Detroit, now fighting the Michigan Department of Health to stay in business.

One woman who knew abortions were available at Cook County Hospital and asked to go there was quickly dissuaded by Sanders.

"Hon," Sanders said, "Cook County experiments. They take 210 girls a week, but they only do abortions on 7 of them. If you want to take the chance of those odds, that's

Turn to Page 23

2 abortion referral firms are subpenaed

By Pamela Zekman and Karen Koshner

Illinois Atty. Gen. William J. Scott issued subpenas Thursday for the records of two abortion referral services in an investigation of possible consumer fraud.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

Meanwhile, a Circuit Court judge paved the way for the closing of the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham.

Scott announced his move within hours of he Sun-Times disclosure that the referral ervices are routinely swindling women by iving them little or no counseling in addion to haphazard pregnancy tests.

MORE THAN SIX MONTHS ago, the Le al Assistance Foundation contacted Scott's fice with at least three complaints from omen who gave hot lines $75 to $275 to ake medical arrangements for second-tri-ester abortions, which can legally be performed only in hospitals. In all three cases, the women were directed to doctors who knew nothing of the arrangements and refused to perform the procedure.

The women never received refunds and wound up having babies.

Victoria Lynn Sanders and Valerie McCullough, the two hot-line operators, were ordered to appear before Scott with their records. Also named in a subpena was Pat Cain, which is an alias for Sanders.

Circuit Court Judge Joseph M. Wosik granted a procedural motion, filed by the attorney general's office, reviving a 2-year old case that seeks to close the Water Tower clinic because its license was revoked.

THIS NEW ACTION cleared the way for the state to shut down the clinic as early as Friday.

During the hearing, Judge Wosik chastised the assistant attorney general for not acting sooner to close the clinic.

"What you should say to me, if you were candid, is that because of the newspapers your office finally woke up," said Wosik.

In other developments resulting from The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation that uncovered medical abuses and dangerous medical practices in four abortion clinics:

- Gov. Thompson appointed Dan K. Webb, a former U.S. attorney, as a special assistant in the Illinois Department of Registration and Education to co-ordinate an interagency task force investigating abortion clinic operations.

Webb was assigned to look into the quality of medical care and cases of Medicaid fraud, with an emphasis on the operations of abortion clinics and physicians named in the series.

- During a meeting of the task force in Springfield, the Department of Public Aid said it would reopen several cases involving Medicaid fraud.

Public Aid also will be looking for evidence of doctors signing vouchers for surgery performed by other physicians, as disclosed in the series.

- The Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, also owned by Bickham, was served with a temporary restraining order banning abortions for 10 days. The clinic, which had been operating without a license, Thursday again refused to admit inspectors from the Department of Public Health.

- The state filed suit against Summit, asking the clinic to show cause why it should not be held in contempt of court for blocking the inspectors. A lawyer for the clinic said Wednesday that inspectors would be admitted.

- Representatives of six women's groups commended The Sun-Times abortion series, but expressed concern that the reports of medical abuses in Chicago clinics would add fuel to the arguments of the anti-abortion movement.

The groups demanded that Thompson appoint members of the Health Evaluation and Referral Service, which does abortion clinic referrals, to his new task force. They also recommended the expansion of publicly funded abortions, birth control centers, pre- and post-natal services, and both child-care and health-care facilities.

- Ald. Edward M. Burke (14th) said he will renew his drive for strict regulation of abortion clinics as soon as he senses "some kind of show of public support."

Burke has introduced an ordinance that would require that clinics inform prospective abortion clients of agencies ready to help her through a pregnancy and in placement of a child for adoption and tell her "that it is the policy of the City of Chicago to encourage the woman to carry her unborn child to term."

State revives 2-year-old case

Water Tower clinic closed

By Karen Koshner and Sarah Snyder

The Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, an abortion clinic that has been operating without a license, apparently shut down Friday, according to the state attorney general's office.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

Meanwhile, Dr. Ming K. Hah, who has already lost his medical license in Michigan, is expected to have his Illinois license revoked on Monday.

Terry Troy, assistant attorney general, said he believes that the Water Tower clinic has closed in fear of violating an order Thursday by Circuit Court Judge Joseph M. Wosik that revived a two-year-old case to close the clinic.

State inspectors from the Departments of Registration and Education and Public Health stood vigil at the door of the clinic to ensure that no patients entered.

Although the Water Tower center, owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham, has battled the state for almost two years over the issue of the Department of Public Health's right to regulate abortion clinics, the Water Tower clinic apparently stopped performing abortions on its own accord.

Bickham's other Chicago abortion clinic, the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, was prohibited from performing abortions Wednesday after a U.S. District Court judge refused to extend a temporary restraining order that had prevented the state from closing the clinic because it did not have a license.

Troy also said the state will appear in Circuit Court on Monday to ask that Hah's medical license be revoked after a 21-month battle. Although Hah has lost each of the court decisions during that time, the state has been enjoined from revoking his license during the appeal process.

The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. uncovered dangerous medical care during a five-month investigation of four Chicago abortion clinics, including the Water Tower center.

Meanwhile, state Rep. Eugenia S. Chapman (D-Arlington Heights) said she will introduce on Nov. 27 several pieces of legislation designed to help the public health department to enforce existing regulations concerning abortion clinics.

The bills would:

- Increase the minimum number of public health department inspections from one to four a year.
- Create an annual licensing fee of $150 to offset the cost of regulation.
- Prohibit Public Aid payments to unlicensed clinics.
- Require financial and ownership disclosure of all clinics.
- Mandate that clinic and personnel licenses be posted as well as notices of suspensions.
- Remove the veto authority of a state board that must approve all rule changes proposed by the public health department. (The committee has been virtually inactive for the last two years because Gov. Thompson has not filled vacancies created by the changing of administrations.)
- Increase the penalties for violating the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Act, which regulates abortion clinics.

Chapman, chairman of the House Human Resources Committee, has also asked state Rep. Michael S. Holewinski (D-Chicago), head of the Health Care subcommittee, to hold public hearings to find out why the medical abuses documented in The Sun-Times Abortion Profiteers series were allowed to happen.

The hearings will be held on Dec. 4 at the State of Illinois Building, 160 N. La Salle, and on Dec. 5 in Springfield.

Chapman said the heads of the appropriate state agencies would be invited to testify as well as former patients and other persons who have information about abortion clinics. She added that she hoped "reputable" clinics would appear to explain "the right way to do it."

Other public hearings arranged by a state Senate subcommittee on abortion will be held Nov. 20 at the State of Illinois Building. The subcommittee, headed by state Sen. LeRoy Lemke (D-Chicago), was created to investigate profiteering by abortion clinics.

In another action, the estate of Sherry Emry, a Hammond woman who died Jan. 2, five days after she had an abortion at the Water Tower clinic, filed a $3 million medical malpractice suit against the clinic in U.S. District Court in Hammond.

The suit, filed by attorney James T. Walker, charges that the abortion was performed "in such a grossly negligent and utterly unskillful manner that the decedent's pregnancy was not in fact terminated."

Also on Friday, the Chicago Medical Society named a special committee to look into how the medical community can curb medical abuses in abortion clinics.

Appointed to serve on the committee were Dr. John P. Harrod Jr., chairman of the obstetrics/gynecology department at South Chicago Community Hospital; Dr. Antonio Scommegna, chairman of the obstetrics/gynecology department at Michael Reese Hospital; Dr. Robert A. Dolehide, a pulmonary disease specialist; Dr. James Bryant, a pathologist at Edgewater Hospital, and Barbara A. Van Winkle, a second-year medical student.

The president of the medical society, Dr. Clifton L. Reeder, and Dr. Lawrence L. Hirsch, president-elect, will serve as ex-officio members.

Meanwhile, the president of the National Abortion Federation said her group is doing its best to set up a system to certify and monitor abortion clinics so women can be assured of safe, competent service.

PRAISING Sun-Times stories on abortion clinic abuses, Judith Widdicombe, president of the National Abortion Federation, says her group will help women distinguish between good and bad practices in the abortion field. (Sun-Times Photo by Jim Frost)

At a press conference at the Marriot Hotel, Judith Widdicombe said a booklet called "How to Choose a Clinic," which lists questions women should get answers to before choosing a clinic, will be widely distributed.

"We just want the safest possible conditions for the consumer," Widdicombe said.

At another press conference, in the headquarters of Friends for Life Inc., executive director Joseph M. Scheidler said that by running the phone number of Planned Parenthood in its abortion abuse exposes, The Sun-Times ignored information supplied by the pro-life group about dangerous procedures at clinics recommended by Planned Parenthood.

Scheidler lauded The Sun-Times for discontinuing the ads for abortion referral clinics, but explained that for pro-life groups "The only good abortion clinic is a closed abortion clinic."

Valerie and Victoria—'teletwins' of abortion

Continued from Page 22

up to you. But most of our patients come from Cook County."

• • •

Help from the hot lines comes at a high price.

While they do their best to hide it, McCullough and Sanders charge anywhere from $40 to $150 for information and referrals.

One afternoon, Sanders, in floor-length red gauze, swept out of her office and twirled round-and round the room. She was glowing. She had just gotten word from the Chicago Loop Mediclinic that they already had done abortions on 83 of her referrals. And it was still only Friday.

Sanders was ecstatic. By Saturday, she would have 113 abortions credited to her from the Loop clinic. At $45 to $60 per patient, that added up to well over $5,000 for a single week's worth of referrals.

IN NEW YORK, profit-making referral services were banned the first year after abortions were legalized there because too many of them operated the way the twins do.

Just weeks after abortion was legalized in Illinois, New York health authorities were warning of the profiteering referral agents "ready to leap into" the Chicago abortion trade.

In its decision banning referral agencies like the twins' from New York, a court explained its actions with these words:

"The law, which sought to emancipate women from servitude as unwilling breeders, did not intend to deliver them as helpless victims of commercial operators for the exploitation of their misery."

In Chicago, Planned Parenthood and the Health Evaluation Referral Service (HERS) offer free abortion information and free referrals to clinics whose quality they constantly monitor.

McCullough and Sanders charge for that service but don't monitor clinics for quality. They only refer patients to the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, 316 N. Michigan; the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, or two other small clinics with which they have financial arrangements.

BUT THE WOMEN who call the twins' hot lines don't know that. And most of them don't even know they are paying counseling fees.

For cash patients, the twins' tactic is to quote an "abortion price" that includes their own $60 fee. They give the balance back to the patient in a sealed envelope. Unaware any of her money has been removed, the patient presents the envelope to the clinic as payment for her abortion.

One patient said she learned she had paid a counseling fee only when she was being readied for her abortion. The nurse at Chicago Loop Mediclinic asked if she'd come from the hot line, and shook her head when she learned the patient had.

"At the hot line, they charge you $60 for sending you over here," the patient was told, "and our number is right there in the newspaper next to theirs."

"I think that's a real rip-off. It's deceptive," said the patient.

WITH SECOND-TRIMESTER abortions, hot-line counselors are instructed to do nothing for the customer until they get her money.

"The first step," McCullough told our investigator, "is to get their money. Tell them they need to put down a $100 deposit. I don't want to fool around if these girls aren't serious."

Women who don't have the money are sent to see Charles J. Parelli, owner of the West Suburban Loan Company, 507 S. Oak Park, Oak Park, who will give them loans at 30 per cent interest—the highest rate allowed in Illinois.

Women who change their minds about their abortions learn later that what they paid as an "abortion deposit" is in reality a counseling fee. And, of course, the twins' counseling fees are non-refundable.

• • •

Few hot-line customers who talked to The Sun-Times were happy customers. But the twins don't care. They're still making money.

And as McCullough said after a call from one irate customer, "Sure she's angry. But they get over it. They have to; they're still pregnant."

That, of course, is the secret of the twins' success. Their customers, said one former employe, "are all in such a predicament they aren't going to argue about the price. She takes their money, but basically, gives them nothing for it."

More than one hot-line customer complained about the high-priced "counseling" they received. For one out-of-town referral, McCullough took a $150 "deposit" and then refused to refund it when the patient changed her mind.

"She spent about five minutes with me," said the woman, "maybe not even that long. But $150 for five minutes? That's ridiculous!"

Two women who tangled with the twins last year complained to every consumer group and law enforcement agency they could think of, but got no relief.

In fact, for her efforts, one of the women got arrested.

IT ALL STARTED when the women discovered the hot line was going to keep $65 as a referral fee. They reasoned that was "crazy" since the clinic the hot line referred them to had refused to take them.

The hot line receptionist called a security guard. The women called the police. But when the police arrived, a hot-line receptionist charged one of the women with stealing money from the twins' hot line.

In fact, the woman had been victimized by the hot line. But nobody at the hot line got arrested. The woman did, on charges of theft.

NEXT: The deadly practice of cutting corners.

Stereo Fever
48 pages on newest sounds and systems
A special section

Holiday feast
Thanksgiving issue full of food, facts
Parade

Norman Rockwell
His personality an paintings; a series
ChicagoStyle

CHICAGO Sunday Sun-Times

★★★☆ Fin

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November 19, 1978

12 dead after abortions in state's walk-in clinics

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick
Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

At least 12 women have died following legal abortions in Illinois walk-in abortion clinics.

Although state health officials knew of not a single clinic death just a week ago, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. have learned of a dozen women who suffered fatal infections or bled to death after undergoing abortion procedures in state-regulated clinics:

• Evelyn Dudley, 38, of Benton Harbor, Mich. She died of a hemorrhage on March 16, 1973, after an abortion at the now-defunct Friendship Medical Center, 850 W. 103rd St.

• Julia Rogers, 20, of Gary, Ind. She died March 28, 1973, also from a hemorrhage, a week after her Friendship abortion.

• Dorothy Muzarow, a registered nurse who, federal sources say, apparently underwent two incomplete abortions at the Women's Aid clinic in Lincolnwood. She died of a hemorrhage on Aug. 23, 1974.

• Linda Fondeen, who died Jan. 20, 1974, of a massive internal infection after an abortion at Pre-Birth Inc. The clinic has since gone out of business.

• Dorothy Brown, who bled to death on Aug. 16, 1974, after an abortion at the Friendship clinic.

• Another woman, known to federal health authorities only as Ms. Floyd, who died March 28, 1975, three days after her abortion at the Associated Concern clinic. The clinic was closed down July 1 of that year by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Twelve women suffered fatal infections or bled to death after undergoing abortion procedures in state-regulated clinics.'

• Sandra Lynn Chmiel, a 35-year-old mother of four from the suburbs, who died of massive bleeding from a punctured uterus on June 3, 1975, just hours after her abortion at Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan. According to testimony at a coroner's inquest, Chmiel was over 12 weeks pregnant when a Biogenetics doctor agreed to perform her abortion for $600. The clinic has insisted its doctor only "repaired" the damage the woman did by trying to abort herself, but the clinic settled the case for $75,000 a few weeks ago.

• Another woman identified by federal sources died in 1975 of a blood clot five days after an abortion in a Springfield clinic. Federal health officers believe the death was "probably not preventable."

• Yet another woman known to federal authorities died of

Turn to Page 25

SANDRA LYNN CHMIEL, 35-year-old mother of four, died of massive bleeding June 3, 1975, after her abortion at Biogenetics Ltd. She is shown with two of her children.

An adoptee who beat the system
Becky Bright's search for her roots.

If the bomb fell on the Loop. . .
Imagine the worst happened here.

More city inspectors face charges
100 U.S. indictments are expected.

BOWL LINEUP:
Details in Sports

Penn St.
Alabama/Georgia
Sugar

Oklahoma
Nebraska
Orange

Notre Dame
Houston
Cotton

Mom has abortion, and another child

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

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Many women survive the consequences of inaccurate laboratory reports. In Agnes Glasper's case, the fetus survived as well.

That, in itself, nearly killed both mother and baby.

Glasper had an abortion at a now-defunct Chicago clinic on Nov. 28, 1975. A laboratory reported the abortion was successful. Seven and a half months later, Glasper gave birth.

In what is believed to be the first "wrongful birth" case ever filed in this state, Glasper is seeking $100,000 from the clinic, the laboratory and the doctor who performed her "abortion."

Glasper, 30, already had two children and was studying to be a nurse when she found out she was pregnant. It was all she could do to feed two children and herself on the $260 check she got each month from the Illinois Department of Public Aid.

To understate the situation, hers was an unwanted pregnancy. "I felt awful about being pregnant again. I didn't want any more kids and I could not financially handle another," said Glasper.

'I was so depressed. I thought about killing the baby—in fact, I almost did.'

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

SHE WENT TO the Illinois Reproductive Health Center at 209 N. Michigan for an abortion. She and about 75 other women had abortions there that day.

She didn't care about waiting seven hours for her abortion and she didn't care that there was no recovery room, only a straight-back chair to sit in after the abortion.

"I just felt happy that it was over with," she said. "I was so relieved. I did not want another child."

The tissue removed from her womb was sent to the now-defunct General Medical Laboratories Ltd. for analysis. A report signed by a lab pathologist said "products of conception" were found in Glasper's aborted tissue, indicating the abortion apparently was successful.

But that report, claims Glasper's attorney, Merwin Auslander, was based on "carelessly and negligently performed" pathological tests.

WHEN SHE STILL had not menstruated two months after the abortion, Glasper went to her family doctor to find out why. He told her she was still pregnant—by then, about four months pregnant.

That was much "too pregnant" for another clinic abortion, and all the hospitals she called for help turned her down. She didn't have the money to fly to New York for an abortion.

"I couldn't believe this was really happening. I don't think I believed it until I started showing. . . . For the next five months, I thought I was carrying a deformed baby."

The doctor, Glasper assumed, surely must have damaged the baby during the attempted abortion. "I couldn't sleep at night. I thought a lot about killing myself."

On July 10, 1976, Glasper gave birth to a healthy, six-pound girl. She named her Tiffany.

GLASPER THOUGHT seriously about abandoning the baby at the hospital, but, afraid it might be neglected, she took the infant home.

"I was so depressed," Glasper said, "I thought about killing the baby—in fact, I almost did.

"The baby cried a lot and one night, very late, she was crying again and I found myself standing over her crib holding a pillow over her head. I was standing there, I don't know how long, when I came to my senses." By then, Glasper was a very sick woman. Tiffany's birth had made her psychotic, Glasper's psychiatrist said. She suffered delusions. Her mind created crazy explanations for how this child had survived an abortion.

"I thought the baby had come from the devil, that is was evil. One time it was raining out real hard. I got scared. I got it in my head somehow that if I sprinkled her with rain water it might. . . like purify her. I carried her out in the rain in my nightclothes and I got some water and sprinkled it on the baby."

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Kevin Horan

IT TOOK time and intense psychiatric care, but Agnes Glasper has learned to love her daughter, Tiffany, a daughter she thought she had aborted during a visit to a now-defunct abortion clinic in 1975. She is suing the operators of the clinic—in what is believed to be the first "wrongful birth" case in Illinois.

NOW, THANKS TO intensive psychiat care, Glasper no longer has those feeli about her baby. Now, she says, "I l her. . . my doctor helped me do that."

But for her and her child's suffering, A lander is seeking $100,000 from the ope tors of the clinic and laboratory who caus Tiffany's "wrongful birth."

Auslander says he is treading on new leg ground in this case. Never before, he sa has a suit been filed in Illinois chargi "wrongful birth." But Auslander took t case, he said, because "a lot of damage h been done to this woman."

12 die after abortions at walk-in clinics

Continued from Page 24

a rare inflamation of the heart in 1975, three days after an abortion at a Champaign clinic.

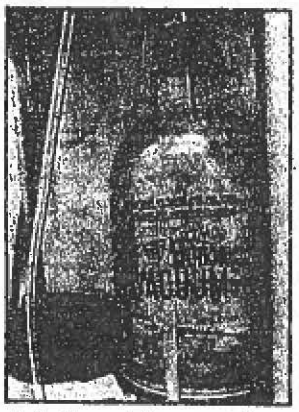
• Diane Smith, whose death Sept. 11, 1976, is still under investigation by federal officials. She apparently told doctors at the hospital where she died she had just undergone an abortion at a Chicago area clinic.

• A woman state public health authorities are still trying to identify who died in 1977 of a perforated uterus following an abortion in a Granite City (Ill.) clinic.

In addition to these, is the death of Sherry Emry. She died Jan. 2, 1978, of a ruptured ectopic pregnancy which, an Indiana coroner ruled, resulted from an incomplete abortion at the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan.

AS A RESULT OF INFORMATION turned over to the Cook County state's attorney office by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn., State's Atty. Bernard Carey has reopened the investigation of Emry's death. And members of her family have filed a $5 million lawsuit against the Water Tower clinic for medical malpractice.

The Water Tower clinic is owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham, named in The Sun-Times as one of the city's biggest abortion profiteers. He was working at the Friendship clinic when at least three Friendship patients died.



AT LEAST one Michigan Avenue abortion mill, Water Tower Reproductive Center, doesn't empty after each patient's abortion bottles containing aborted tissue, meaning there can be no accurate laboratory test to determine whether the fetus was removed.

It is not known whether Bickham, who sells the cheapest abortions in Chicago, personally performed Emry's abortion.

But, had it not been for the corners he cuts in health care at his clinic, Sherry Emry might be alive today.

A five-month investigation of the city's abortion trade by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. discovered women may pay dearly for Bickham's discounts.

AT HIS WATER TOWER Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, our undercover investigator documented how Bickham saves money on laboratory fees by tossing the tissue out when the law says it must be sent to pathologists for analysis.

That economy alone could be saving Bickham as much as $50,000 a year.

It may have cost Sherry Emry her life.

Working inside the Water Tower clinic seven months after Emry's death, BGA investigator Mindy Trossman did not see any aborted tissue sent to pathologists.

If pathologists find no fetal parts, or other signs of pregnancy in the tissue sample, the doctor must conclude one of three things:

• The patient was not pregnant in the first place, and has undergone an unnecessary operation.

• The abortion was incomplete and fetal parts are beginning to rot in the patient womb.

• The patient is suffering a life-threatenir ectopic pregnancy.

An ectopic pregnancy, which occurs wh the embryo emplants itself in the Fallopia tubes instead of the womb, can be fatal undetected. As the embryo grows, it burs the tube and fills the woman's abdomin area with blood.

Victims of such abnormal pregnancies c quickly bleed to death.

* * *

Our investigator got her first hint th there were no pathological reports bein done for patients of the Water Tower clin when, working as a medical assistant, sh was told by her supervisor to empty opera ing-room bottles full of "products of conce tion" from several patients.

The supervisor explained:

"If we had to empty the bottles after eac patient, we'd only be able to do 20 [abo tions] a day."

AS IT IS, THE CLINIC does two to thr times that many abortions in a day. Tros man saw one aide wrap up a mass of blood

Seventh in a series

Turn to Page 2

12 die after legal abortions at walk-in clinics

Continued from Page 25

aborted tissue and throw it in the trash can.

"Bickham wants us to take the bottles to the washroom to dump it, but you get too busy to do that," said the aide. "I just throw it in the garbage."

The aide later was reprimanded by the supervisor. "It starts to smell if you leave it in the garbage in the sterilization room," she said. "Throw it down the toilet.

"Bickham says we pay $10,000 a month rent here so the toilets should be able to handle it. If they get clogged, the building should take care of it."

• • •

It was to Bickham's Water Tower clinic that Sherry Emry went for her abortion.

According to Lake County (Indiana) Coroner Albert Willardo Jr., Emry died of a ruptured ectopic pregnancy resulting from her incomplete abortion at the Water Tower clinic.

The story of her death was pieced together by The Sun-Times and BGA and the findings were turned over to Cook County State's Attorney Bernard Carey's office. As a result of the information, Carey opened an investigation into Emry's death.

She was only 26 years old when she died.

A strong individual, said the coroner, the way she endured the pain of those last days.

She always was a strong person, said her mother. And independent. She ran her own business—a leather-crafts shop in Hammond, Ind.

Separated from her husband, Sherry was making it alone. For the first time in five years, her business was in the black. Her divorce was nearly final; 1978 would be *her* year.

But in the last weeks of 1977, Sherry found out she was pregnant.

She thought she knew what she had to do. Abortion, she confided to a friend, was her only option.

She picked up a copy of the Chicago Reader and scanned the ads. It didn't take long for her to settle on an abortion clinic. Water Tower Reproductive—it had one of the biggest ads on the page.

With the Water Tower name and the Michigan Av. address, it sounded classy. Certainly, it would be safe. Still, she was scared.

On the morning of Dec. 28, Sherry Emry went to the Water Tower clinic and had what seemed to be a routine abortion—at least, it was what doctors would call "uneventful."

She was back at a friend's Chicago apartment in time to catch the noon news.

Three days later, the pain started. The clinic had given her its standard sheet of instructions for postoperative care. Yes, it said, expect some cramps.

It's OK, she told her friends. Just cramps; maybe a touch of flu. It was New Year's Eve but she went to bed early.

By Jan. 2, Sherry couldn't get out of bed. Friends took turns sitting with her, trying to persuade her to see a doctor. No, she said, it was probably just flu. She'd feel better.

But she slept fitfully. Sweating one minute, shivering the next. Her knees ached, her stomach ached, every part of her hurt. And she was so pale—deathly pale, one might say.

On that second day of 1978, Sherry died, probably during the afternoon because when they found Sherry in her bed after dark, the body was already cold and stiff.

• • •

Sherry Emry's life, was in the words of the Indiana coroner, "salvageable." She *should* still be alive today, he says.

But because of an incomplete abortion at the Water Tower clinic, ruled Willardo, she is dead.

Had Emry's doctor at the Water Tower clinic carefully examined her and had he received a reliable lab report on the tissue removed during her abortion, "the chance is very slim" that Emry's ectopic condition would have been missed, said Willardo.

To find out how a healthy woman like Sherry Emry could die of an ectopic pregnancy just days after seeing a doctor, the Indiana coroner subpenaed the clinic's records on Emry.

Bickham ignored the subpenas and is now fighting new subpenas for those and other patient records issued by the Cook County state's attorney.

What the Indiana coroner wants to know is whether Bickham's clinic discovered Emry's life-threatening condition, and if not, why not.

"That's all I ever wanted," said Emry's mother, Cleo Higgason. "I just can't believe all these things I have been reading in The Sun-Times can go on and on and no one knows about it.

"Why didn't they know before? Why did I have to lose a daughter?"

• • •

According to our investigations, the Chicago Loop Mediclinic at 316 N. Michigan and the Biogenetics Ltd. clinic at 520 N. Michigan usually don't trash tissue samples from their abortions.

But we found that the Loop Mediclinic handles specimens so carelessly that the reports it gets back may be meaningless.

And neither the Mediclinic nor Biogenetics can be depended upon to share the findings of pathological reports with its patients, even when the reports may call for emergency medical attention.

In addition, the laboratory the clinics use—La Salle Scientific Laboratories Ltd., 914 W. Diversey—may be issuing dangerously unreliable reports, according to expert pathologists consulted during our investigation.

WHILE WORKING undercover filing pathology reports at the Loop Mediclinic, BGA investigator Julia Rockler discovered two La Salle laboratory reports with opposite findings for the same Mediclinic abortion patient:

One says fetal parts were found in the tissue sample, indicating that the patient was definitely pregnant. The other says no signs of pregnancy were detected: the patient was either not pregnant or the doctor left the fetus inside.

Daniel Millman, owner of La Salle Laboratories, said if clinics don't properly label the containers as products of the same abortion, the lab may mistakenly issue two reports:

Sherry Emry's life, the coroner said, was 'salvageable.' She should be alive today.

THREE DAYS before undergoing an incomplete abortion at the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., Sherry Emry was at home in Hammond opening Christmas presents. Five days after the operation, she died, according to the Lake County (Ind.) coroner, of a ruptured ectopic pregnancy. Her mother, Cleo Higgason, asked: "Why didn't they know before? Why did I have to lose a daughter?"

And those reports could give opposite results because container may have all the evidence of pregnancy whil other may contain only blood.

But, according to the clinic file on the public aid pa with the conflicting reports, tissue from *her* abortion even got to the lab. Scrawled at the bottom of the fi "Specimen accidentally thrown away by Linda."

Any number of La Salle laboratory reports on Medi and Biogenetics patients claimed pathologists had ident with the naked eye conclusive signs of pregnancy.

"A microscopic exam is essential," said Dr. Paul B. Sza Chicago's dean of pathology and director of Cook Co Hospital's pathology division. "Even with a microscop happens over and over again that we cannot see [the signs of pregnancy]."

Dr. Willard Cates Jr., who oversees abortion surveilla for the National Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, lieves pathological reports are so important that no cl should allow a patient to leave the premises without c

"You can't let a woman walk out of an abortion cl without an immediate review of the specimen," Cates s

Without that lab analysis, he said, "You can't be cert that the woman was pregnant, or that you got all the fe remains, or whether she had an ectopic pregnancy."

In a survey of almost 200 patients at the Mediclinic, B investigator Rockler found that, with few exceptions, put aid patients got microscopic exams. Cash patients did n

The laboratory bills Medicaid separately for tests on w fare patients. Millman said Illinois Department of Public A requires microscopic exams.

Last year, La Salle billed Medicaid for $735,000 worth work. By July of this year, the laboratory already had bill Medicaid another $597,000. That makes La Salle one of th top three laboratories on the state's Medicaid payment lis

THE LAB'S USE of preprinted reports also disturbs Szanto, who inspects hospitals for the College of America Pathology. On such forms, the findings of tissue analysis ar preprinted and blanks are left only for pathologists to fill i dimensions of blood clots removed.

But Rockler found dozens of La Salle reports on which pathologist, Dr. Arnold Mass, had not even filled in th blanks.

Millman said Mass had only substituted for a vacationing pathologist and had not followed lab policy.

"That's our fault," Millman conceded after reviewing some of the reports. "The work [analysis] was definitely done, it just wasn't done as professionally as it should have been."

Millman said the lab does accurate tests and does not issue phony reports.

THAT IS disputed by James Trainor, former head of the Illinois Department of Public Aid. After leaving his state office Trainor accepted an offer to become a director of La Salle Labs, but lasted only four days because he felt the lab was not operating properly.

• • •

But even on occasions when clinics do get "reasonable results" from the lab, doctors at both Biogenetics and the Loop Mediclinic may ignore them.

In July, for instance, the Loop Mediclinic received a report from the laboratory indicating an abortion on a 25-year-old rape victim was either incomplete or unnecessary.

The pathologist reported finding no signs of pregnancy in the tissue removed during the abortion but the patient said the clinic never told her this.

In August, "my own doctor told me I was still pregnant. He said I was three months pregnant. I couldn't believe it," the woman said. "He told me to go back to the clinic that did the abortion."

She returned to the Loop Mediclinic, where she said the doctor who had performed her abortion told her that the pathology report indicated that the first abortion was complete.

But a copy of the pathology report seen by our investigator showed the doctor had not removed the products of conception. But the clinic doctor went on to explain to his confused patient that once in a while "we get a missed abortion."

"The doctor said I was the one in a thousand," the patient recalled.

• • •

Our medical experts said they would not tolerate such delays. A pathological report that shows no evidence of pregnancy must be treated as a medical emergency, our experts say. The patient must be tracked down.

As Dr. Wendy Recant, director of surgical pathology at Michael Reese, put it: "This patient must be watched because in all likelihood she has an ectopic pregnancy.

"It would be the grossest kind of malpractice to miss one ectopic pregnancy and one woman went home and bled to death. . . ."

Sherry Emry did.

NEXT: Padding profits with tax dollars.

A note to our readers

Reliable abortion counseling should be obtainable from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

Abortion mills in huge kickback scheme

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

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Chicago's abortion profiteers are padding their profits with Medicaid funds illegally obtained through kickbacks and fraudulent billing schemes.

During a five-month investigation of some abortion clinics and referral agencies, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. have documented massive abuse of the Medicaid program and flagrant violations of federal law.

In the last week, we have exposed some of the dangerous medical practices in clinics on the Magnificent Mile.

Working undercover in clinics and referral services, we also found apparently illegal fiscal practices and watched how:

- A doctor banned from the Medicaid program still collects for welfare abortions.
- One clinic uses illegal kickbacks to buy public aid patients from doctors and referral services in several states.
- Medicaid is billed more for services to welfare recipients than cash customers pay for the same services.

'Although the patient already had paid [cash] for all the services she requested, the clinic was charging Medicaid another $150 for her abortion.

- An abortion referral agent encourages women to commit Medicaid fraud and coaches them on not getting caught.

LAST YEAR, the Illinois Department of Public Aid paid out more than $3.1 million in state and federal Medicaid funds for 21,683 Illinois abortions, or about one-third of all abortions performed in the state in 1977.

Much of the money went to Chicago abortion clinics, where most of the state's abortions are performed.

The ongoing court battles over the constitutionality of using federal funds to pay for welfare abortions stopped Medicaid from paying for thousands of abortions in the last months of 1977 and first month of 1978. But by July of this year, a Public Aid spokesman said, Illinois had authorized $751,072 worth of payments for 5,161 Medicaid abortions.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'If the clinic has to come up with [a kickback] for each patient, they have to cut back somewhere else to cover the cost.'

Don't let fraud beget fraud—an editorial on Page 31.

BGA investigators working undercover as "counselors" for Chicago's twin referral agents—Victoria Sanders and Valerie McCullough—were sent more than once to collect envelopes from the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, 316 N. Michigan.

They didn't know it at the time, but our counselors were couriers of illegal kickbacks from the clinic to the twins.

Federal law prohibits any person from giving or receiving kickbacks for Medicaid services. Those convicted of breaking that law face fines of up to $25,000 and prison terms of up to five years.

There is no specific law in Illinois barring kickbacks for patients who pay cash for their abortions. But the philosophy behind the federal prohibition, a state Medicaid investigator told us, is to protect all patients from exploitation.

Kickbacks give doctors and referral agents an incentive to provide patients, the state attorney said, whether patients need the clinic's services or not. And, he said, "If the clinic has to come up with money for each patient they get, then they have to cut back somewhere else to cover the costs. Frequently, it means cutting care."

IN APPARENT violation of federal law, Loop Mediclinic pays the twins kickbacks of $45 to $60 for every public-aid patient who buys an abortion.

Working undercover in the twins' hot lines, we documented how, in one week, Sanders got more than $1,500 in kickbacks for sending 37 public-aid patients to the Loop Mediclinic. During another week, McCullough apparently collected more than $1,000 for 21 public-aid patients.

Although the twins bill the clinic for "counseling services," we have shown in previous stories how their brief encounters with clients consist of little more than sales pitches, false pregnancy tests and deceptive promises.

THE CHICAGO Loop Mediclinic, 316 N. Michigan, run by John Sepiak (left), pays $45 to $75 illegal kickbacks for public aid patients to at least six abortion referral agents. The Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, owned by Dr. Regalado S. Florenda, bills Medicaid for work performed by a physician who was booted out of the Medicaid program two years ago.

The primary Chicago clinic the twins refer patients to is the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, 316 N. Michigan, where administrator John Sepiak pays kickbacks to the twins and other referral agents and doctors.

Sepiak took control of the clinic's day-to-day operations in 1976. At that time, the clinic was an outpatient surgical center, six figures in debt and starving for patients.

"To keep from going broke," recalled one of the clinic's original investors, the Loop facility went into the abortion business. And with Sepiak's help, the clinic prospered.

AND OUR INVESTIGATION show how. From receipts we saw while workl undercover in the Loop Mediclinic, we d covered that Sepiak pays kickbacks for pu lic aid patients from at least these refern agents:

- Victoria Sanders' hot lines at One IB Plaza.
- Valerie McCullough's hot lines at 400 Randolph and 27 E. Monroe.
- American Family Planning at 149 Lew Havertown, Pa., which fields calls from Ci cago women on a toll-free hot line.
- American Women's Center at 6770 N. Li coln, Lincolnwood.
- Associated Physicians at 2516 W. 63d.
- Family Counseling Service at 4747 \ Peterson.

WORKING UNDERCOVER in the Lo Mediclinic, BGA investigator Julia Rocki saw a schedule of "referral fees" taped to wall in the accounting office.

According to the schedule, a public-aid p tient who undergoes a $165 abortion worth a $50 kickback to whomever referr her.

A public-aid patient who undergoes t more expensive, $195 abortion with gene anesthesia is worth a $60 kickback.

A Medicaid patient who does not through with an abortion but has t cheaper menstrual extraction is worth a $ kickback.

Rockler saw receipts for Loop Mediclin kickbacks totaling more than $400 for tv weeks' worth of public-aid referrals fro the American Women's Center.

LATER, WHEN WE called the center a asked for the owner, a man who would n give his name refused to answer questio about fees the center gets from clinics f referring public-aid patients.

When asked if the center took money f any of its referrals, the man said, "Y

Turn to Page 2

After Sun-Times disclosure

Reopen abortion death probe

Continued from Page 20

formed Carey's aides of the Emry case last week did Carey's office subpena Emry's medical file, as well as other records from Water Tower Reproductive.

ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTY. Thomas Burnham said lawyers for Water Tower Reproductive owner Dr. Arnold Bickham have filed a motion to quash the subpenas. The motion is to be heard Tuesday in Criminal Court.

Emry, who owned a leather-crafts shop in Hammond, died Jan. 2, 1978—just five days after undergoing an abortion at Water Tower Reproductive.

In March, Lake County (Indiana) Coroner Albert Willardo Jr. ruled Emry had died of a ruptured fallopian tube "resulting from [an] incomplete abortion" at Water Tower Reproductive."

EMRY SUFFERED an ectopic pregnancy, in which the embryo is implanted in the woman's fallopian tubes instead of her womb. As the embryo grows, it bursts the tube and fills the woman's abdominal area with blood.

Because an ectopic pregnancy almost always can be detected by a careful physical examination, Willardo said, Emry "should still be alive today." He thinks Bickham or other physicians at Water Tower Reproductive should have discovered the abnormal pregnancy.

To find out why Sherry Emry died, Willardo, whose investigative authority stops at the state line, turned to Illinois lawmen.

On March 21, Willardo wrote to Carey advising him of Emry's death. "Several important questions need to be answered pertaining to this case," Willardo told Carey.

THE CORONER SAID he asked Carey to help him determine what steps Chicago abortion clinics take to prevent deaths such as Emry's.

But Willardo's letter went unanswered. On March 31, Willardo wrote Carey again, posing the same questions. And again, Willardo says, he received no response.

On April 21, Willardo wrote yet another letter to Carey reminding him of the previous letters and noting, "To date, I have not received an answer. . . . I would appreciate your response and co-operation at your earliest convenience."

By July 17, Willardo said, he still had not heard from Carey's office. "It will shortly be four months since we first requested your investigation of this matter," Willardo wrote Carey in July, "and to date, [we] have not received a reply of any sort."

IN THE INTERIM, Willardo had issued his own subpenas for Bickham's records on the Emry case. But Bickham ignored those subpenas and Willardo had no power to enforce them out-of-state.

Bickham, named in this newspaper as one of the city's biggest abortion profiteers, owns three abortion clinics in two states. In addition to Water Tower Reproductive, the 41-year-old South Side physician owns the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, and an abortion clinic in Indianapolis. He has operated all three clinics without state licenses.

In the last week, The Sun-Times has documented how Bickham offers the cheapest abortions in town but cuts corners on patient care to do so.

Hot line 'advice:' Cheat the taxpayer

Continued from Page 27

wouldn't do anything for nothing, would you? We need to make a living too."

A spokesman for Associated Physicians said patients are referred to only one abortion clinic: the Chicago Loop Medicilinic.

"If they're not doing the job," he said, "I go down there and give them hell. I even go down and scrub once in a while to check it out."

The spokesman denied that Associated Physicians gets any kickbacks from the clinic, claiming the group's fees are paid by patients and cover examinations and pregnancy tests.

EVEN SO, WE SAW receipts from April to September of this year showing Loop Medicilinic had paid kickbacks of up to $75 to Associated Physicians for patient referrals, including a $45 kickback for a public-aid patient.

But when asked about this, the spokesman said, "No way! We do charge patients for our services," he said, "[but] there is no financial hanky-panky."

At American Family Planning in Havertown, Pa., a man who would identify himself only as "Alan, a spokesman," denied that the group has ever taken money for referring patients to the Chicago Loop Medicilinic.

But we saw receipts totaling almost $800 for Loop Medicilinic payments to American Family Planning for just 10 days' worth of patient referrals including public-aid recipients.

At the Family Counseling Service, a man who identified himself as the administrator, Mike Cole, denied that the service takes referral fees for public-aid patients. However, Loop records indicate the clinic paid kickbacks to the counseling service.

• • •

In addition to the Loop Medicilinic, our investigators documented apparent federal offenses at Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, and La Salle Scientific Laboratories Ltd., 914 W. Diversey.

Both give cash customers bargains the government doesn't get.

The laboratory, which does work for at least five abortion clinics, sells postabortion pathology reports to some customers for less than $4 each, according to records shown to The Sun-Times by the lab owner. But the owner, Daniel Millman, said La Salle charges Medicaid $8 for each of the same reports.

Millman justified the practice as good business. "Business is business," he said, "and the way you bring in business is to give good prices."

Last year the La Salle lab billed Public Aid for $735,000 worth of work and was paid $606,000. In the 11 months of this year, it has been paid $605,000, making it the second highest paid laboratory on the state's Medicaid payment list.

AS FOR WATER TOWER Reproductive, owner Dr. Arnold Bickham offers the cheapest abortions in town—but not to the government.

He charges cash patients $125 an abortion three days a week and $110 every Wednesday, Bickham's Bargain Day. But Bickham bills the government $200 for each abortion. While Medicaid never pays *more* than $150 for an abortion on a public-aid patient, it could pay *less*.

And at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, the government may be billed for services already charged to the patient.

Working undercover there, investigator Julianne Felkner overheard patients being told that Medicaid would not pay for their abortions if they got general, instead of the cheaper local, anesthetics.

While it is true that Medicaid will not pay the additional cost of a general anesthetic, Medicaid does pay for the abortion.

IN MANY OTHER clinics, public-aid patients who want general anesthetics pay the extra $50 or $75 out of their own pockets.

But at least one patient at the Michigan Avenue Medical Center paid for the whole thing out of her own pocket—$175 for the abortion and anesthetic. Later, Felkner found a bill addressed to Public Aid for this same patient. Although the patient already had paid for all the services she requested, the clinic was charging Medicaid another $150 for her abortion.

And after all that, the patient told us, the general anesthetic didn't help much.

"I thought I would be put out cold," she said. "And the anesthesiologist said, 'Yeah, you're not going to feel a thing.' But I felt *everything*. I was moaning and I was crying. I pulled my leg down off the stirrup, it hurt so bad."

• • •

The Michigan Avenue Medical Center is owned by Dr. Regalado S. Florendo. It has been more than two years since The Chicago Daily News exposed what appeared to be massive welfare ripoffs at Florendo's South Side Medicaid mill, the Hilltop Medical Center, 1321 W. 87th.

After public-aid officials investigated Florendo's part in the million-dollar Hilltop scandal, they uncovered evidence of billing irregularities including bills for abortions on women who were not pregnant. Last June, they told Florendo they planned to suspend him from the Medicaid program.

Florendo, who already has received more than $170,000 from Medicaid this year, contested the state's charges in hearings completed this month.

BUT IT SEEMS THAT while Florendo fights public-aid authorities on that front, he was licensed by the Illinois Department of Public Health to open his new clinic and is devising new ways to defraud the system.

While working undercover at Florendo's Michigan Avenue Medical Center, we discovered that the clinic apparently bills Medicaid for work performed by a physician who was kicked off the Medicaid program two years ago.

Dr. Norberto Agustin was barred from Medicaid in early 1976 for "not providing adequate care to public-aid patients," according to state documents. The charges against Agustin arose from a state review of his "welfare practice" at the Kenwood Medical Center, 954 E. 43d.

The reviewing officer found that Agustin was ordering dozens of laboratory tests and drugs for patients who, according to his records, may not have been physically examined.

AFTER THE PUBLIC-AID investigation began, Agustin was caught altering his records to indicate he had diagnosed the patients' ailments after all. The state cited as an "ominous example" a patient file that in March indicated "no angina." By the second review in July, the notation had been changed to "angina."

Based on such findings, a state Medicaid committee decided that Agustin "was definitely engaged in poor medical practice," and suspended him from the Medicaid program.

After he was dropped from the program, Agustin made an illegal $5,000 contribution to then-Gov. Dan Walker's 1976 primary campaign. The donation was part of the $85,000 in contributions made through the Asian American Alliance, an organization whose principal fund-raiser also received favored treatment on large contracts from the Walker administration.

Agustin illegally made the donation in another person's name, but was not prosecuted because he co-operated in a state's attorney's investigation of the alliance that resulted in the conviction of a man who solicited the contributions.

But at Florendo's abortion clinic, records are doctored to allow Agustin to continue seeing Medicaid patients.

WHILE WORKING undercover in the clinic, investigator Felkner saw dozens of medical reports indicating that Agustin was operating on public-aid patients.

Although Medicaid bills are not public record once they reach the Public Aid office in Springfield, Felkner saw a bill on a desk in Michigan Avenue Medical Center that substituted Dr. Ming K. Hah's name for that of the real operating physician—Agustin.

Felkner also saw Agustin performing abortions and routine examinations on Medicaid patients.

An attorney who prosecutes Medicaid offenders said Agustin's continued work on public-aid patients and the use of another doctor's name on bills for that work could lead to indictments against Agustin for conspiracy and against the other doctor for fraud.

• • •

The government only pays for abortions on public-aid recipients with valid Medicaid cards. But some of Chicago's abortion profiteers don't care that the Medicaid cards patients present aren't their own. As one profiteer put it, "We still get paid."

While working undercover at Valerie McCullough's abortion hot line, investigator Rockler heard McCullough advise women to borrow Medicaid cards from friends or relatives. And Rockler watched McCullough coach clients on how to cheat Medicaid and not get caught.

McCULLOUGH HELD the borrowed Medicaid card in front of her and quizzed the woman planning to use it about her alias.

When the girl made a blunder, McCullough said: "You won't think this is so funny next week when you still haven't taken care of your pregnancy. You've got to know it cold."

For fees of up to $75, McCullough not only coaches fraud, but also sends women using borrowed Medicaid cards to a private photo studio at 162 N. State for new photos for "their" Medicaid identification cards.

Rockler once took a call from a woman who wanted to use a friend's Medicaid card to pay for an abortion. Rockler asked McCullough what to tell the caller.

"Don't tell her anything on the phone," warned McCullough. "It might be someone from Public Aid calling. Tell her to come in and we'll work something out."

LATER, WHEN Rockler was working undercover at the Chicago Loop Medicilinic, she caught a few women using borrowed Medicaid cards. She called this to the attention of clinic administrator John Sepiak.

"It's not our problem," he said. "There's no way we can play detective."

"So we're just supposed to send them through?" Rockler asked.

"Yep, somebody is sending them over. They're going to get *their* tit in the ringer."

NEXT: The Detroit connection.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Rockler watched McCullough coach clients on how to cheat Medicaid and not get caught.'

Eighth in a series

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Jim Pres

A SOUND TRUCK, one of many methods employed by abortion referral agent Victoria Sanders to advertise her services, cruises around the Soldier Field parking lot during a Bears game. Sanders' sister, Valerie McCullough, advises women to borrow Medicaid cards from friends or relatives. She then collects a kickback from the clinic to whom she has referred such women.

'The anesthesiologist said, "Yeah, you're not going to feel a thing." But I felt everything. I was moaning and I was crying. I pulled my leg down off the stirrup, it hurt so bad.'

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

Infamous doctor is Detroit connection

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'She was sick, real sick. And this dog, this dog was sniffing her, roaming around, licking blood off the floor.'

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

The young man looked into the operating room where his fiancee lay bleeding. He saw a scantily clad nurse working on her. He saw a dog sniffing her.

"She was lying there on the table with her feet up in the stirrups," he said. "She was sick, real sick. And this dog, this dog was sniffing her, roaming around, licking the blood off the floor. . . ."

The young man was horrified. He stared but did not speak. He was afraid his fiancée was dying. He waited until the doctor had stopped the bleeding. The young man could control his rage no longer.

"Doctor!" he blurted. "Doctor, is it standard procedure to have a dog in a room where surgery is done?"

"The dog," snarled the doctor, "is probably cleaner than you."

• • •

It happened in the Rucker Memorial Medical Center, the little brick building in Detroit where at least two Chicago referral agencies send women more than 12 weeks pregnant for cheap, fast abortions. The center is owned by Dr. Joseph W. Rucker, who performs abortions there with his wife—and on at least one occasion, his dog—assisting him. During a five-month investigation of the Chicago abortion business by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., we heard from a number of women who were sent to Rucker's clinic by these referral agencies—women with tales as ghastly as that of the Joliet couple who saw the dog in the operating room.

And thanks to the American Women's Center at 6770 N. Lincoln, Lincolnwood, and the Family Counseling abortion service at 4747 W. Peterson, Rucker's out-of-town abortion trade has continued for the last four years.

'In the middle of the abortion, Rucker began to swear. He said part of the (fetal) skull was stuck. I felt like I had been jabbed with a knife.'

IN LAWSUITS BY former patients, the 58-year-old Rucker has been charged with such grisly acts as leaving fetal heads behind during abortions, slicing the insides of wombs and tearing a piece of scalp from a fetus that was later born alive.

But for fees of $50 to $100, the two referral agencies have continued to send Chicago-area women to Rucker despite his alarming record as an abortionist:

• In early 1974, Rucker was enjoined by a federal court from practicing medicine in Texas without a state license. He was flying to Texas on weekends to do abortions in a clinic state health authorities described as "unbelievably unsanitary."

• Later in 1974, a Rucker abortion clinic in Detroit was exposed by the Detroit Free Press as one of the city's "unsafe and unregulated abortion mills."

• In 1975, one of Rucker's clinic employes, an ex-convict known as "Dr. Mike," was indicted for practicing medicine without a license. At the trial, Rucker testified on "Mike's" behalf and the charges were dismissed.

• In 1976, Rucker was charged by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulation with using unsafe abortion techniques on four women who all developed serious complications.

• In 1977, Rucker was indicted for performing an abortion in his Detroit clinic on a 14-year-old girl more than six months pregnant. The case was dismissed twice because of technical defects in the wording of the indictment, according to the prosecutor.

• • •

Since 1976, when Rucker first was charged with violating the Medical Practices Act, the Michigan attorney general's office has been investigating and accumulating complaints against the doctor.

There have been repeated delays and continuances requested by both sides in the proceedings. The span of complaints against Rucker now stretches over four years and covers his treatment of seven women, including two from Illinois, between January, 1973, and February, 1977.

ALL BUT TWO of the women suffered incomplete abortions at Rucker's hands, the state charged. Two of them had perforated uteri, and one suffered a lacerated cervix.

Rucker, a graduate of the University of Michigan Medical School, also is charged with failing to have qualified personnel administer general anesthesia, monitor patients' conditions and provide abortion counseling and with permitting unlicensed medical personnel to perform abortions and internal examinations.

Since this fall, Rucker has been in Detroit courts trying to stall hearings on the complaints.

While the nature of his relationship with the two referral agencies here is unclear, Rucker was, as recently as 1976, a director of the American Women's Center. It was named in a 1976 Sun-Times series on baby-selling, which revealed the operator of the referral service, Leonard Nelson, was sending women who did not want abortions to a baby-buying New York lawyer. Last year, in a 300-page indictment, that lawyer was charged with "selling" more than 20 babies.

AS RECENTLY AS LAST May, two schoolteachers had a run-in with Nelson at the American Women's Center.

According to one of them, who was helping her pregnant friend, the pair was sent first to a medical clinic across the hall from Nelson's center. They paid $50 for that referral, although the clinic doctor decided she was more than 12 weeks pregnant and refused to do the abortion. They returned to Nelson, who charged them another $50 for a referral to Rucker's Detroit clinic.

The friend quoted Nelson as assuring them that Rucker was "a wonderful man and a real good doctor. who has done a lot of these [late abortions]. You'll have no trouble." Then, the woman said, Nelson started talking about Detroit and its proximity to Windsor, in Canada. "He told us we really should see Windsor," the woman said. " 'It's so close by and so beautiful.' It sounded like a tourism office for Windsor. . . . Here's a girl scared to death about what's happening to her, and Nelson is talking about sight-seeing in Windsor."

• • •

Both American Women's Center and Family Counseling heavily advertise their "abortion information" services in Chicago newspapers. And, because of a slight difference in the abortion laws of Michigan and Illinois, these services are able to sell women with "borderline" pregnancies a quick trip to Rucker. Illinois law requires all abortions on women more than 12 weeks pregnant to be performed in hospitals. In Michigan, women up to 14 weeks pregnant can get abortions in clinics.

At least 10 Chicago area hospitals perform the later, second-trimester abortions. But women who call one of the referral agencies we investigated are not told that. And even those who know they can get abortions in hospitals here might not want to wait the time it takes to get a hospital appointment or pay the kind of fees hospitals demand.

WHILE HOSPITALS MAY charge as much $800 to $1,500 for these second-trimester abortions, "counselors" at American Women's Center and Family Counseling can offer women bargain rates of $150 to $350 for abortions at Rucker's Detroit clinic.

A spokesman for American Women's Center refused to comment on whether he sends patients to Rucker. At Family Counseling, a man who identified himself as "admin tor Mike Cole" denied ever knowingly ing sent any woman more than 14 w pregnant to Rucker for an abortion.

Cole also contended that his service stopped referrals to Rucker a few m ago "because we got bad reports about I Although the investigation of Rucker's tion clinic has been widely publicized sir began two years ago, Cole said he onl cently had learned of the 1976 cha against Rucker by the Michigan Me Practices Board.

But when BGA investigator Barbara I posed as a would-be customer at Fa Counseling, "Ed Cole, social worker," her the names of two clinics to go to— was Rucker's.

KLEIN ASKED COLE why he wante send her to Michigan for a second-trime abortion. "These places [includ Rucker's]," said Cole, "are the places are the cheapest and easiest to get I That's what people who come in here s to want."

What the referral services don't tell w en about are the dangers involved in hav a second-trimester abortion in a clinic stead of a hospital. The inside of the wc in women more than 12 weeks pregnan "as soft as butter" and very easily torn the suction and scraping tools used for m clinic abortions, our experts say.

For second-trimester abortions, hospit rarely use the clinic method of suction-a curettage. Instead they inject a saline so tion through the abdomen, into the uter The fetus is later expelled by contractions the womb brought on by the salty injecti

• • •

Rucker's abortions can pose a spec threat to women not only because he d them in a clinic but also because he u

'The woman on the phone to me there are hospitals in Chicag that do abortions, but she said tl hospitals are booked up and would have to go to Detroit.'

typical first-trimester clinic methods for t more risky second-trimester abortions.

Many of the woman in the complaint file by the Michigan attorney general's offic suffered serious complications from abortio techniques that many experts consider to dangerous for second-trimester pregnancies And, although Rucker has denied performin abortions on women more than 15 week pregnant, many of the women who claim t have suffered serious injury at his hand were diagnosed as far more than 14 week pregnant.

THE CASE OF RUCKER'S 14-year-old pa tient may be one of the most poignant. Sh was 14, but still only in sixth grade, whe her mother took her in January, 1977, t Rucker's clinic. According to attorneys wh prosecuted the case, Rucker already had be gun his usual suctioning of the womb whe the girl began to hemorrhage.

Rucker stopped the abortion and sent hi young patient by car to a nearby hospita where another doctor decided she was nc 14 weeks, but a full seven months, pregnant Because she was so far along, the girl wa released from the hospital a few days later Within two days, however, she was bac again—this time in labor.

On Feb. 1, 1977, Rucker's patient gav birth to a baby girl—apparently normal ex cept the infant was missing a piece of scal about the size of a 50-cent piece.

A woman from Elgin, who still has a sui pending against Rucker, was 20 years ol and couldn't afford a baby when she wa sent to Rucker for an abortion.

The woman told The Sun-Times that sh was drawn to the Family Counseling servic by a newspaper ad. When she learned sh

Turn to Page 3

IN LAWSUITS by former patients, Dr. Joseph W. Rucker, 58, has been charged with such acts as leaving fetal heads behind during abortions, slicing the insides of wombs and tearing a piece of scalp from a fetus that was later born alive. For fees of $50 to $100, however, two Chicago-area abortion referral agencies still refer woman to his clinic, some for the more complicated second-trimester abortion, which is not allowed in Illinois except at hospitals. Even for the second-trimester operation, Rucker uses typical first-trimester methods—once on a 14-year-old patient who was later found to be seven months pregnant after Rucker aborted her abortion. The young patient eventually gave birth to an apparently normal infant—except for a hole in its scalp.

Ninth in a series

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

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• Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.

• The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

He gets Chicago's 'borderline cases'

Continued from Page 29

was 20 to 22 weeks pregnant, she was told by the service she "would have to go out of town for an abortion." For a $75 fee, a "counselor" at the service told her she could get an abortion for $250 from a Detroit doctor "who does these borderline cases."

"The counseling service never suggested a Chicago hospital," the woman said. "Had I known, I would have gone to a hospital. I *thought* I was going to a real medical center." When she arrived in Detroit, she found Rucker's medical center was just a doctor's office, and she discovered the abortion was going to cost $325. She had to borrow the extra $75.

SHE RECALLED HER first meeting with Rucker: "He walked into the examining room, put his hand on my stomach and said '15 weeks' and that was it."

In the middle of the abortion, Rucker began to swear, the woman recalled, adding, "He said part of the [fetal] skull was stuck. I felt like I had been jabbed with a knife.

"When I woke up in the hospital, this other doctor told me he had repaired the hole [in her womb] and he said he had tied my tubes. He said Dr. Rucker had told him that I wanted [to be sterilized]. I had never said any such thing. I wanted to have children eventually.

"Then this doctor told me he had also taken my appendix out. I called Dr. Rucker from the hospital to complain. He told me I was fortunate because I got all this done and got my money back, too. He said I should be happy! "

Chicago's twin hot-line agents, Valerie McCullough and Victoria Sanders, also refer women to Detroit—to broken-down Plymouth General Hospital, now operating under a provisional license after state inspectors found numerous code violations.

The hot lines charge patients $100 to be referred to Plymouth General for $375 second-trimester abortions. But some patients complained to undercover BGA investigators that they were not told they could obtain second-trimester abortions at Illinois hospitals as well.

• • •

THIS SUMMER, a 27-year-old Joliet secretary called a toll-free number in a Kankakee newspaper advertising referrals for women with "problem pregnancies." The voice at the end of the toll-free line sent her to 4747 W. Peterson, the address of Family Counseling. The voice told her to take $75 with her for the people at that address to set up an out-of-town abortion.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Then the doctor comes in. He's not even wearing a white coat. Just a shirt and jeans. I thought they were trying to kill me.'

"The woman on the phone told me there are hospitals in Chicago that do abortions," recalled the secretary, "but she said the hospitals are booked up and I would have to go to Detroit."

At the Family Counseling office, she said, she talked to a man who called Detroit and set up an appointment for her with Rucker. "He really didn't explain the procedure," the woman said. "He just said don't eat before it. He talked to me for less than half an hour. There was no counseling. I asked him what the $75 was for. He said it was the fee for their time."

HER FIANCE AND a friend accompanied her to Detroit. Her appointment was for 10:30 a.m., but Rucker didn't arrive until 5 p.m. In the interim, she was examined by another doctor who told her she was "about 18 weeks pregnant. They had told me I was only 14 weeks in Chicago."

"I told them I didn't want an abortion if I was 18 weeks pregnant," she said. The doctor told her Rucker would double-check when he arrived.

But when Rucker arrived, the secretary and her fiance were not relieved. "The doctor's eyes were swollen, with big circles around them," said the fiance. "And he had these fingernails that were a half-inch long!"

She was sent to a procedure room, and Rucker walked in without a word and began to examine her, and she recalled, "He was so rough. He made me so scared I could hardly talk. He didn't say 'you are 14 weeks' or 'you are 18 weeks—do you want an abortion?' He didn't say anything. He just told his aide, 'Knock 'em down.' "

WHEN SHE AWOKE, she was in a recovery room and bleeding heavily. She said, "It was coming out like water. . . . My boy friend came in and they moved me back into the procedure room and onto the table.

DR. JOSEPH W. RUCKER'S clinic in Detroit, where abortion referral agents send Chicago's "borderline" cases. (AP Photo)

"This lady comes in. She's wearing a halter top and shorts, and she starts sticking me in the arm, trying to get some blood."

The fiance and the friend identified the scantily clad nurse as Rucker's wife, Serena. "Then the doctor comes in," the patient recalled. "He's not even wearing a white coat. Just a shirt and jeans. I thought they were trying to kill me. Then I hear my fiance say something about this dog running around."

When her fiance complained about the dog, Rucker told him: "That dog lives here. This is my house, and that is my dog. That dog can go anywhere in this clinic that he damn well pleases. The dog is probably cleaner than you."

"I don't think so," murmured the fiance.

ALTHOUGH BOTH the Joliet couple and their friend have signed affidavits supporting what they saw and heard that day in Rucker's clinic, Rucker and his wife have denied a dog ever entered the operating room.

"This is such bullshit," screamed M. Rucker, when a reporter asked her husband about the dog incident. "This happens to a medical clinic, not an animal shelter!"

Rucker said, "I have a medical degree, and [a dog] is not something you would find in a medical clinic. Anyone would have to be a fool to have a dog in the operating room. That [charge] is a low blow."

But when asked if he owned a dog, Rucker replied, "I don't think that's your goddamn business. We don't have anything in this clinic [but] people. Some of the people that come from Chicago I refer to as dogs."

"Why do you say that?" asked the reporter.

"If you saw them," said Rucker, "you'd know what I mean."

NEXT: Abortion operations on nonpregnant women.

Plymouth a health lemon in Motor City

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

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Women sent to Detroit for second-trimester abortions don't all end up at the Rucker clinic. They may end up at a broken-down hospital operating under a provisional state license.

Chicago's twin hot-line agents—Valerie McCullough and Victoria Sanders—steer women more than 12 weeks pregnant to Plymouth General Hospital.

The aging hospital was given a provisional operating license in September, 1977, after promising state officials it would correct its structural deficiencies. But by July, Michigan public health inspectors still found code violations at the hospital.

They found food was not being stored at temperatures required to prevent bacterial growth; they found improper ventilation and inadequate storage—specifically, they found 50 fetuses stored on the floor of the hospital morgue. Inspectors also cited the hospital for not having sinks in patient rooms and using small electric heaters to warm patient bathrooms. The hospital is still fighting for its license and the twins are still sending patients there.

THE McCULLOUGH and Sanders hot lines charge patients $100 to be referred to Plymouth General for $375 second-trimester abortions.

But they generally take their "counseling fees" by sleight of hand. Undercover investigator Julia Rockler got a first-hand look at how a McCullough hot-line worker did it.

"The girl was told she needed $475 for the abortion in Detroit. Actually, the fee is only $375, with $100 tacked on for the hot line. The girl handed the hot-line worker $475 in signed travelers checks," Rockler said.

"The hot-line worker took the checks from the patient, casually slipping one $100 check out and putting it into her portfolio. Then she took the rest of the money and slipped it into a sealed envelope with the appointment card and asked the girl to sign a receipt showing she had received her money [for the abortion] back.

"As usual," Rockler reported, "the patient didn't look at the receipt, which shows she only got $375 back in the envelope. Of course, no one points it out to her or tells her the $100 she's unknowingly paid the hot line is *not refundable.*"

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'All they told me was that I would get an injection. She didn't explain it would be directly into your stomach. I was horrified.'

A 34-YEAR-OLD GARY woman who was sent to Detroit this summer and found out about the referral fee, complained the hot line was a ripoff and the hospital "a sleazy place." She said she had to share a hospital room with five other girls and, because of a broken toilet, had to share a bathroom with 14 other patients for a part of her Plymouth stay.

Another hot-line customer said Sanders not only failed to tell her she could get a second-trimester abortion in a Chicago hospital but also put her on a bus to Detroit with the wrong amount of money.

"When I got to Plymouth Hospital," the woman said, "they told me I didn't have an appointment after all. *And,* they told me, I was $100 short! I was so embarrassed and upset. Here the hospital already had this tube in my arm for the abortion, and they discover I'm short money.

"I guess the hospital people felt sorry for me because they did the abortion and agreed to bill me. I didn't even have cab money to get back to the bus station after the operation. . . . If I'd only known, I would have gone to a Chicago hospital, but the hot line told me Detroit was the closest place I could go."

ANOTHER THING the hot lines don't tell their Detroit customers is what to expect at Plymouth. Unlike the clinics, which do suction-and-scraping abortions, the hospital uses the saline method of abortion—a surgical procedure in which a salty solution is injected through the abdomen into the womb to induce expulsion of the fetus.

"I really wasn't prepared for that," said one patient. "All they told me at the hot line was that I would get an injection. She didn't explain it would be directly in your stomach. I was horrified. [Sanders] told me, 'Don't worry, it's nothing.' Well, believe me, it's really something!"

Sun-Times
Monday, November 20, 1978

Editorial

Don't let fraud beget fraud

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

You don't need 20-20 vision to see the need to crack down on fraud by some abortion referral and counseling services. Ripoffs of women seeking abortions, reported by this newspaper, are so flagrant they smack you in the face. But watch closely lest proposed "reforms" deny women a choice on abortions.

Sun-Times reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick and the Better Government Assn., in a five-month examination of abuses at four Michigan Av. abortion clinics, turned up a referral-counseling service that sold abortions, charged up to $150 for information available free elsewhere, engaged in fee-splitting and even callously advised abortions for nonpregnant women.

That has led to understandable cries for tougher action to stop the outrages, and some legal tools may need to be honed. But sharp tools do exist, including these:

- Criminal law provisions against deception and making false statements.
- Classic anti-fraud torts in civil law.
- The Medical Practices Act, which forbids such things as false records and solicitation of patronage.

The Sun-Times and BGA found so-called counselors violating both the letter and the spirit of such safeguards. Yet, fully enforced, existing measures seem able to curb most hard-sell abortion practices.

There is no doubting the need for better enforcement. Safe abortion clinics and reliable referral and counseling services needn't fear laws aimed at fast-buck abortion operators who endanger women's health and lives through shoddy, painful malpractices.

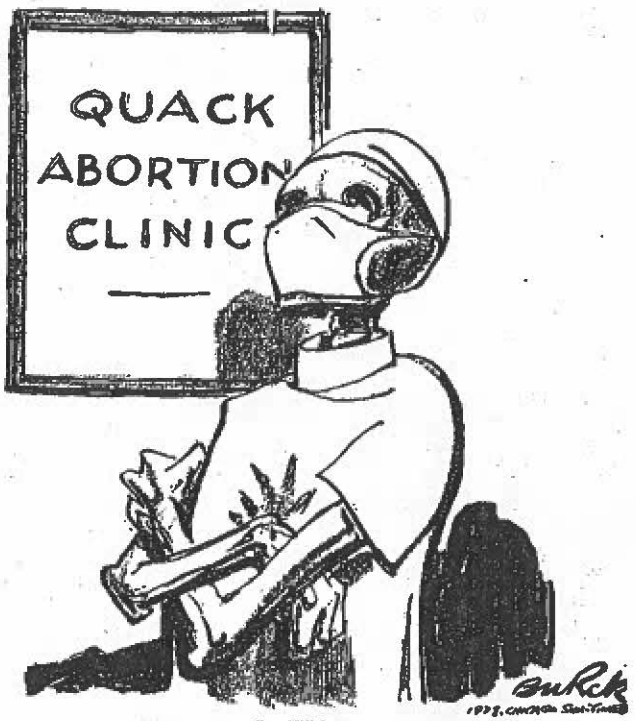
There is also no doubting that many of those calling for legislation care less about protecting women from abortion profiteers than about imposing their own anti-abortion opinions on the rest of society.

That's openly the aim of legislators seeking a constitutional convention to ban abortions nationwide. Others, whatever the intention, risk closing down trustworthy clinics and counselors with vague proposals.

Illinois rules might need to be more specific on, say, the size of clinic recovery rooms, but legislation being revived in the General Assembly by Sen. Richard M. Daley (D-Chicago) to require that all counselors be licensed by the state worries reliable groups like Planned Parenthood. The reasonable-sounding idea could hurt groups that use volunteer—but trained—counselors. High license fees could wipe out some agencies.

Gov. Thompson, to his credit, has ordered stepped-up inspections of clinics. That's one sound way to force violators to comply with present rules.

In another important move, Thompson set up an investigative task force to look into the matter of abuses in some clinics. Its findings could be the basis of any appropriate legislative action. If it fails to provide needed guidance, some counselor frauds could spur other frauds—"reforms" that deny a choice on legal abortions.



Dr. Killdare

Court takes Dr. Ming Kow Hah license

By Karen Koshner and Dolores McCahill

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

After almost two years of delays, a Circuit Court judge Monday revoked the Illinois medical license of Dr. Ming Kow Hah, a Michigan Avenue abortionist who transferred operations to Chicago after his license was revoked in Michigan.

In a two-minute hearing, Judge Arthur L. Dunne lifted the stay he issued two years ago, which had prevented Illinois from revoking the license.

The attorney general's office had asked that the stay be lifted after the Appellate Court ruled it never should have been issued in the first place.

DR. HAH, 43, a 1964 graduate of the Taiwan University College of Medicine, was profiled last Wednesday in The Sun-Times as Chicago's "physician of pain," whose patients gasp in agony during 2- to 3-minute abortions performed before anesthetics take effect.

In one abortion he didn't give any anesthetic at all.

Since Hah came to Illinois, Medicaid records show, a total of $776,636 has been paid in his name to clinics that use his services.

He worked most recently at two clinics exposed in The Sun-Times' Abortion Profiteers series: The Michigan Av. Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, and the Chicago Loop Mediclinic, 320 N. Michigan.

Hah's license was revoked in Michigan on Dec. 3, 1975, on the basis of complaints that he gave out 384 prescriptions in four months for a rarely used and dangerously addictive drug called Dilaudid, according to the Michigan attorney general's office.

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BEFORE losing his license in Illinois, Dr. Ming Kow Hah, shown here walking along Michigan Avenue, had his license revoked in Michigan.

As of Monday, Assistant Illinois Atty. Gen. Rick White said, Hah no longer can practice medicine in Illinois. "If he does, it should be brought to our attention, because he will be in contempt of the court order, and we will take appropriate action," White said.

ON ANOTHER FRONT, U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley Monday declined to order the reopening of Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan. The clinic was ordered shut Thursday by Circuit Court Judge Joseph M. Wosik because it had been operating without a valid license.

Judge Crowley told Water Tower operator Dr. Arnold Bickham he would abstain from issuing any federal order because of pending litigation in state courts on the constitutional right of the Illinois Department of Public Health to inspect and regulate abortion clinics.

"If I had my personal druthers," Crowley said, "I'd like to hear this case. It's a fascinating case."

Water Tower's license was revoked after Bickham refused to let state inspectors into his clinic.

MEANWHILE, LOIS J. LIPTON, a staff attorney from the Illinois division of the American Civil Liberties Union, told the Illinois Senate's special subcommittee on abortion that the "disarray" in the current law has encouraged unethical practitioners to "take advantage" of women seeking abortions while causing other physicians to hesitate before performing necessary ones.

Lipton told the subcommittee, chaired by Sen. LeRoy W. Lemke (D-Chicago), "Public-health agencies and enforcement agencies can barely keep track of what regulations can lawfully be enforced."

The subcommittee's hearing was sparked by The Sun-Times' series, which has exposed hazardous medical abuses in some area abortion clinics.

Dr. Patricia Nolan, Public Health Department associate director, testified that six registered nurses conduct all inspections of abortion procedures at the state's 22 ambulatory-abortion clinics and 265 hospitals. Walk-in clinics normally received one inspection each year, she said.

NOLAN SAID SHE has urged inspections be increased to four or six times a year but said her department would need more money to conduct them.

Cynthia Little, executive director of the National Abortion Rights League of Illinois, told the subcommittee, "I am shocked to see that four of the five members of the subcommittee are well-known opponents of abortion, as well as sex education and the extension of contraceptive information and supplies."

State Sen. Richard Guidice (D-Chicago) replied, "Our voting records on the issue of abortion have nothing to do with what we are discussing today. The [U.S.] Supreme Court has decided [that abortions should be legal], and we will live with that."

Pregnant or not, women given abortion

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'[Bickham] doesn't ever want the patients to find out pregnancy-test results. He does [abortions on] everybody.'

Tenth in a series

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

Nine out of 10 times, a simple urine test accurately diagnoses pregnancy. And, unless there is other proof of pregnancy, medical experts say, women with negative tests are not candidates for abortions.

But working undercover at the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, BGA investigator Mindy Trossman counted 81 abortion procedures performed on women with negative pregnancy tests. That was 12 per cent of all the women who received abortions during the two months Trossman worked there.

"Those numbers are very incriminating," said Dr. Louis Keith, professor of gynecology at Northwestern University Medical School and a practicing physician. "If that was my clinic and I had 81 women come in with negative pregnancy tests, then 81 women would have gone home."

AT BIOGENETICS LTD., 520 N. Michigan, we also found that women with negative urine tests were sold abortion procedures.

During a five-month investigation of Chicago's abortion business by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., we witnessed some of these painfully needless abortions and saw the aftermath. Women innocently underwent abortions they didn't need and, as a result, suffered massive infections, bruises, wrenching cramps, severe bleeding.

Not only does Water Tower Reproductive owner Dr. Arnold Bickham pay scant attention to pregnancy tests *before* abortions, but he also seems uninterested in finding out if the women he sold abortions needed them.

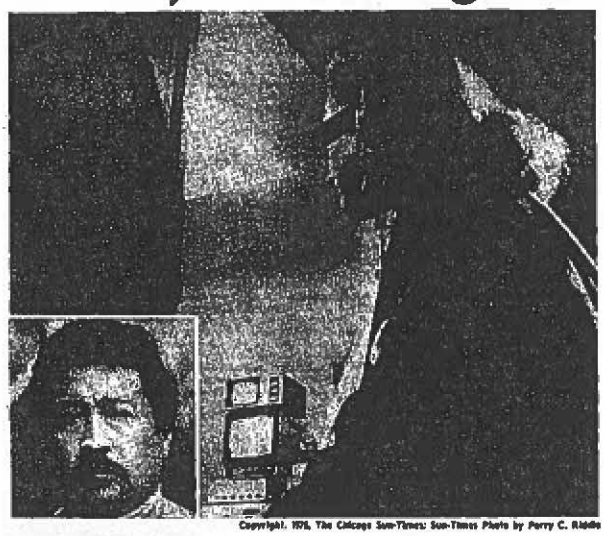
As disclosed Sunday in this newspaper, Bickham's clinic does not send the tissue removed during abortions to a laboratory for analysis. Instead, it may be flushed down a toilet. Such analysis is needed to determine whether the patient who underwent the abortion was pregnant, and if she was, whether the abortion was complete.

"But you know," a clinic worker whispered to Trossman, "Dr. Bickham does abortions on women who *aren't* pregnant. Once they get back there [to the examining rooms]," confided another, "he'll do them. He doesn't ever want the patients to find out the results of their test. . . .You'll find out soon that he does [abortions on] everybody."

So it seemed.

TROSSMAN WATCHED once as Bickham turned what was supposed to be a simple examination into a fast abortion on a woman with no apparent signs of pregnancy.

Trossman looked at the patient's chart and saw that a test of her urine showed she was not pregnant.



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AT BIOGENETICS LTD., 520 N. Michigan, patients may be sold painful menstrual extractions by medical director Dr. Carlos Baldoceda (inset, above) instead of abortions when their pregnancy tests turn up negative. Pathological reports on five women from one day's operations at Biogenetics revealed none was pregnant. At Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham (left), BGA undercover investigator Mindy Trossman found that 81—or 12 per cent—of the abortions during the two months she worked there were performed on women whose pregnancy tests were negative.

"Am I pregnant?" the patient asked.

Bickham ignored her question. "Let me examine you," he said. After a brief examination, Bickham turned on the suction machine and started the abortion.

Only then did he answer. "Yes," said Bickham, "definitely pregnant. Definitely pregnant. . . .But not any more."

Many doctors wouldn't think of beginning an abortion on a woman who didn't know whether she was pregnant. "The most important thing," one doctor said, "is the question of whether the procedure is necessary. The patient must know her test results."

We interviewed four other Water Tower Reproductive patients, like the woman Trossman accompanied through the surprise abortion, who were never told if they were pregnant before doctors began emptying their wombs.

"I wanted to be tested first to make sure," one patient said. "But they never told me the results of the test. I figured if I was let in to see the doctor, I must have been pregnant. If they would have told me it was too early to tell [which in her case, it was], I would not have gone through with it."

ANOTHER PATIENT, who had a negative test but never knew it, said: "If the pregnancy test had been negative, naturally I would not have had the abortion."

"How do we know if we are pregnant or not if the doctors don't tell us?" asked the fourth patient. "How do we know if they aren't just doing this for the *money*?"

• • •

Some of Bickham's workers try to save patients from needless abortions. But one counselor who sent away a patient with a negative pregnancy test suffered for her effort. "Word filtered back that a negative patient was told to go home," Trossman recalled. "And the staff gave the counselor the cold shoulder for the rest of the day."

A few days later, that counselor was asked by five of her patients whether they were pregnant. She found that three of them had negative tests.

"I don't know what to do," she told Trossman. "I already sent one home before. How can I send three home now?"

• • •

At both Water Tower Reproductive and Biogenetics, apparently non-pregnant women often are also sold a menstrual extraction. Except for the fact that it costs less, a menstrual extraction is essentially the same as an early abortion but is not as thorough or as effective in ending pregnancy.

And because such extractions usually are done on women whose periods are only a week or two late, the embryo is so tiny that it may be missed by the suction device. But the risks and discomfort of suctioning menstrual blood from the womb are as great as with an abortion, the experts say.

MOST WOMEN WHO undergo extractions aren't pregnant in the first place. Unless patients are carefully screened, as many as 80 per cent of the women who undergo the extractions do so needlessly, said Dr. Antonio Scommegna, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Chicago.

"Usually," he said, "you are doing a procedure that is not necessary. Studies have shown that you may be charting 80 per cent of these women for a procedure that they don't need."

Many doctors consulted by The Sun-Times said they would not even consider performing a menstrual extraction on a woman with a negative pregnancy test. Yet, at the Water Tower and Biogenetics clinics, it's the women with negative tests who are most often sold the extractions.

At Biogenetics, medical director Dr. Carlos Baldoceda may simply substitute a menstrual extraction for an abortion when the patient's pregnancy test turns up negative.

"Since the test was negative, the doctor said there would be a menstrual extraction instead of an abortion," a Baldoceda patient recalled. Within a week, she had "these terrible pains. They were so bad I couldn't walk. I got scared and went to a hosp The doctor there said I had a severe infec and sent me back to the clinic that had d this to me." The patient still doesn't kno she really was pregnant.

ANOTHER PATIENT with a nega pregnancy test said a nurse tried to save from the procedure.

"The nurse in the room suggested the get a blood test to make sure that I v pregnant and to wait another week, bu the patient said, "the doctor hushed her He said, 'No, let's get this over with now A pathological report on matter remo from her womb indicated the patient had been pregnant.

On one day, Biogenetics doctors p formed at least five operations on wom who apparently didn't need them. Patholo cal reports on the tissue removed from thi women's wombs that day indicated none them was pregnant.

• • •

At Biogenetics, investigator Miche Young discovered women may not even able to rely on their laboratory test resul let alone their doctors.

One morning, she heard the lab technicia who runs pregnancy tests complain of hangover. "I was at a gas of a party la night," he told Young. "I was drinking wit and smoking dope and didn't have a chan to eat. I've never felt so bad in my life.

The mistakes he made in his stupor mac at least two patients feel even worse.

THERE WAS A GREAT commotion ou side the recovery room. Young went to in vestigate. "He [the lab technician] is screw ing up all the pregnancy tests," a counselo said. "They are all turning out positive."

Young looked into the recovery room an was surprised to see Dr. David Aberma bending over a patient still groggy from he operation. Such attention was unusual fo most patients, but this woman was a frien of Aberman's boss, Clifford Josefik.

"I'm sorry," the doctor said. "It could hap pen to anyone."

"How could you do something like this?" the patient murmured. "I thought I was for tunate having Cliff as a friend so I could ge this taken care of. Now I find out I didn't need anything taken care of."

"Well," said Aberman, who is still com pleting his residency at Cook County Hospi tal, "your pregnancy test was positive, and I didn't know that you weren't pregnant."

THE MEDICAL EXPERTS we consulted said such "mistakes" should not happen to experienced doctors. "There is no excuse for abortions being performed on women who are not pregnant if pelvic exams and preg nancy tests are done," said Dr. David Zbaraz, who works in Michael Reese Hospi tal's pregnancy termination unit.

"Doctors should not be doing [unneces sary abortions]." Zbaraz said. "If the test is negative, a good doctor will tell the patient to come back in two weeks and see if she's really pregnant or not."

Josefik denied that the clinic does abor tions on women who are not pregnant.

But Josefik's friend wasn't the only wom an who had an abortion by "mistake" at Bio genetics that day.

ANOTHER PATIENT, a 30-year-old moth er and psychology student, also got an apol ogy after her abortion.

"I thought Biogenetics would be good," the woman said. "But they told me they had found a mistake. I had an abortion and I was not pregnant!

"The abortion was very painful. I had tears running down my cheeks. All of thi and he says that he is sorry.

"If I was younger, this would've left a ter rible emotional scar. It could ruin a woman's future relationships. It could damage her fo the rest of her life. But what can a woma do when she's on the [operating] table?"

NEXT: Greed before counseling.

Readers' reaction to The Abortion Profiteers—Page 48.

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

Counseling the patient: Buy this abortio

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Your pocketbook gives you the incentive to do what you can to sell abortions.'

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

Not all women who go to abortion clinics are sure they want abortions. Some arrive confused and frightened, not at all sure they want to be there.

Some have been dragged into clinics by relatives; others pressured into abortion by husbands or boy friends. A few don't even understand how they got pregnant, let alone how doctors will make them "unpregnant."

Illinois lawmakers recognized this when they incorporated counseling into the list of services abortion clinics must provide.

DURING A five-month investigation of the Chicago abortion business, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. discovered that in some Michigan Av. abortion mills, women who are hired to counsel don't—they're paid to sell.

"Counseling is bull - - - -," a clinic administrator told BGA investigator Julia Rockler.

The administrator, John Sepiak, had just hired Rockler as a counselor at his Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan. But he put her to work as a filing clerk.

"This is 1978, not 1973," said Sepiak. "Back in those days, the purpose of counseling was to assure [women] that they were in a reputable place and everything would be all right. We don't need it now."

But according to our investigation, which revealed dangerous medical practices in four Michigan Av. clinics, women may need counseling now as much as ever.

• • •

If clinic owners such as Sepiak train counselors at all, they train them best at turning patients into profits. At the Loop Medicinic, for example, all members of the staff, including Rockler, were paid $5 bonuses for every abortion they sold over the telephone.

"You're told to do everything you can to have the patients come in," Rockler said. "Your pocketbook gives you the incentive to do what you can to sell abortions."

If such incentives don't violate the letter of the law prohibiting coercion of patients, said a state health official, they violate the spirit of it. But ambiguities in Illinois' abortion-counseling statutes have left it to the conscience of clinic operators to give patients thoughtful, unbiased counseling.

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MICHELLE YOUNG, BGA investigator working undercover at Biogenetics Ltd., learned she was many things to many people while working on the clinic's abortion hot line. Depending on which number the caller happened to dial, she was Biogenetics, Women's Ltd. or Abortion Hotline. The clinic advertised under a variety of names to lure women to the same decision—obtain their abortion at Biogenetics.

Eleventh in a series

AT CLINICS WITH a conscience, counselors discuss alternatives to abortion, offer referrals to adoption agencies and turn away women they decide are "not ready" for abortions. At least one Chicago clinic even demands a 24-hour "think-it-over" interval between the counseling and an abortion.

In some Michigan Av. abortion clinics, conscience is clouded by greed.

One August morning, Rockler was cornered by an assistant administrator at the Loop Medicinic and told to spend more time on the telephones. "We have to corral the patients," the woman told her. "We really have to sit on the phones back there and make appointments. Our fiscal year ends in September and we have to boost the figures. So go the extra mile."

Once the patients were in, Rockler had orders not to let them out. If, for example, a patient scheduled for a general anesthetic had already eaten and couldn't be put to sleep that day, Rockler was instructed not to reschedule the patient or turn her away. "We'll try to do them under a local [anesthetic] the same day," Rockler's supervisor said.

• • •

For months, the Chicago Loop Medicinic had no staff counselor. Although Rockler was hired as one, she was called upon only once in nine weeks to counsel a patient. In that case, Rockler discovered the patient was on a methadone maintenance program and was terrified of having an abortion. Rockler asked her boss, Sepiak, if she could accompany the patient through the abortion. Sepiak said flatly, "We do not hold hands here."

LATER A MEDICAL assistant at the clinic complained to Rockler about the lack of counseling. Some employes, she said, were telling patients the abortion wouldn't hurt and that a nurse would hold their hands.

"I've got scars on the back of my hand from the patients that scratched me when I turned away," the aide said. "They ask me, 'How come you're not holding my hand?' "I told one of them, 'Look, you're 27 years old, you've got five kids and you don't need me to hold your hand.' "

The lack of counseling takes its toll on some Loop Medicinic patients. A woman who received no counseling tried to get some basic information from a nurse outside the operating room. She complained to Rockler and Sepiak about what happened:

"Can I ask you something?" she said to the nurse. "How long is the abortion going to take?"

"Look," the nurse replied. "This isn't a zoo and you're not supposed to be wandering around. Just go and sit down!"

"I only asked you a question," said the patient. "You don't have to treat me like an animal."

The nurse looked at her coldly. "You can get dressed," she said. "Your abortion is canceled."

• • •

To entice women to get an abortion, many Michigan Av. clinics use elegant brochures to cover up their assembly line methods. Pamphlets for Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, for example, promise a lot for "the woman with a problem pregnancy:"

From admission to recovery, patient ease and comfort are first considerations. She is encouraged to ask questions, share feelings or misgivings.

On her first day as a counselor at Biogenetics, BGA investigator Michelle Young was trained to counsel by her supervisor. These were her instructions:

- Don't tell patient the abortion will hurt.
- Don't discuss procedure or the instruments to be used in any detail.
- Don't answer too many questions.
- Don't try to talk about birth control.

"We don't want to tell them it hurts," the supervisor told Young, "and we don't want to tell them too much. Because if we do, the patients get too nervous and afraid, and next thing you know, they will be out the door."

ONE PATIENT RECALLED asking repeatedly, "How do you do the abortion?"

"They just told me that it would not be long and not to worry about it. I asked them how they did it, but they never wou swer me," said the patient.

Biogenetics is owned and operated t businessmen, Clifford Joseflk and K Yellin. For them, abortion is a busin

"As horrible as this may sound," J told a staff gathering, "we are in the ness of abortions. Our only contact wit public is through our phones. We have swer them properly. We have to sell tions over these phones. Now, we don't to do anything unethical here, but we to use all the tactics we can because like my other businesses, we competition."

To compete, Biogenetics advertises and, through its brochures, sells patient services the clinic rarely delivers. For e: ple, pamphlets offer prospective patients vate counseling. But investigator Y found she was counseling groups of 10 t patients at a time—many of whom were prepared for abortions.

A typical counseling group at the clini cluded women like these:

- A 16-year-old married girl who di want babies while she was still in l school but said she never thought about b control. She was given a stack of forms sign, which she did without reading th and lined up for her abortion.
- An 18-year-old who wanted an abort because her father, mother and boy fri wanted her to have one. But did she want abortion? She didn't really know.
- A middle-aged woman who tried to fill forms between bouts of morning sickne She held up the progress of the group w her frequent trips to the bathroom. She ev missed most of the meager explanation the procedure.
- A 20-year-old woman who responded Young's counseling with a blank stare. Fina ly, Young asked if she understood what w happening. "Yes," the woman finally sai "I'm very nervous." "Do you read?" Your asked. "A little bit," the patient said as s signed the forms.
- A gangly 14-year-old who did not know why her aunt brought her to the clinic Young asked the aunt to read the forms an help the girl fill out the right sections.

In the middle of her counseling, Youn was paged to the postoperative lounge t deal with the crush of patients.

One patient, who said she underwent horribly painful abortion at Biogenetics, re called she had many questions to ask he counselor. "But I was afraid to ask then with all those people around. Maybe it wa best I didn't know anyway."

Another Biogenetics patient told The Sun Times she might not have gone through wit her abortion had someone taken the time t counsel her.

"I wasn't counseled at all," she said. "Th nurse just took my name down and filled ou the application. She gave a quick explanatio of the procedure, but that's not counseling. wasn't sure I wanted an abortion. I reall wanted to talk to somebody about it."

WHEN YOUNG TRIED to give individua counseling to patients, she was reprimanded

One day she took time to talk privately with a distressed patient, a 38-year-ol mother of seven. The woman, already grandmother, had never had an abortion. Sh was scared for herself, and nervous abou the 4-year-old she had to leave unattended a home to come to the clinic.

Young pulled her out of the group an into an empty lounge. She asked Young, "I abortion safe?"

Most counselors at Biogenetics are no trained to discuss the dangers of abortion o answer other questions that frequently aris about birth control or sterilization. Bu Young, who had been properly trained as

Turn to Page 31

Abortion counselor's job: sell, sell, sell

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UNDERCOVER BGA investigator Julia Rockler, hired to work as an abortion counselor at the Chicago Loop Medi-clinic, was called upon only once in nine weeks to counsel a patient. Even with that patient, who was on a methadone maintenance program and terrified, Rockler was told she could not accompany her through the abortion. "We don't hold hands here," the administrator said.

Continued from Page 33

counselor at another Chicago clinic, was prepared to discuss her patient's fears.

Their dialog had just begun when Young's supervisor burst into the room.

"Michelle," she scolded. "We are really busy. There are some ladies waiting for you in registration."

"I'm sorry," said Young. "But this lady seems very upset. I wanted to speak with her alone."

"We don't have time for that," Young was told. "We're much too busy."

AT THE MICHIGAN Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, investigator Julianne Felkner found the same group counseling techniques.

She was taking the medical history of one patient who had completed "counseling," when the patient burst into tears. Felkner asked her if she was sure she wanted the abortion. Sobbing, the young woman said, "I think so."

Felkner was quickly reprimanded by a supervisor. "Don't ever ask them if they're sure, because they wouldn't be here if they didn't want it. We aren't supposed to ask them if they're sure."

Birth-control counseling is stressed at many clinics make sure patients don't come back with another unwant pregnancy. But at some of the Michigan Av. abortion mil such counseling is rare and many patients do come bac

According to a recent study by the Population Council New York, repeat abortions nationwide have doubled three years. In Illinois, of every 1,000 women of childbearir age in 1974, 14 who had abortions resorted to them agai Last year, the number zoomed to 22.7.

ABORTIONS WOULD NOT be necessary if couples pra ticed sound birth-control methods. But they won't get an help on that count from two of the Michigan Av. abortio mills.

At Biogenetics, a nurse told Young, "We aren't in the bus: ness of birth control. Our function is to perform abortions This is a business and we have to run it like a business if w want to make a profit. Just give them some pamphlets [o contraception] or something because you are going to be rea busy making appointments."

At the Chicago Loop Medi-clinic, investigator Rockler was told by the clinic administrator not to "waste time" on birth-control counseling. But Rockler found scores of women from age 16 to 48, who had been back for second abortions at the clinic this year. She found records indicating that at least four more women had received three abortions at the clinic during the first eight months of this year.

Even so, Seplak told her, "They [patients] don't want to hear about it, so they won't pay attention anyway." Birth-control information, he added, "just goes in one ear and out the other."

NEXT: Tenderness, patience and helpful advice: How the good clinics work.

Hot line deceptions sell most abortions

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

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It was Michelle Young's first day of telephone training at the Biogenetics abortion clinic. The phone rang. Young, a BGA investigator, answered.

"Biogenetics," she said.

"No, no, no," her instructor said. "Never, never answer Biogenetics."

"Why?" Young asked. "This is Biogenetics."

As far as the phones are concerned, Biogenetics is many things. It is Women's Ltd., Abortion Hotline *and* the Biogenetics center.

Depending on what the caller wants, it may be a referral service, a guidance center or an abortion clinic. But all the phones ring in the same place, the reception room of the clinic at 520 N. Michigan, where all the lines are answered by clinic workers.

During a five-month investigation, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. found that some abortion profiteers advertise under a number of deceptive names to entice women into their Michigan Avenue clinics.

In those clinics, telephone sales techniques are monitored more carefully than a doctor's operating techniques. New counselors or nursing assistants learn quickly that the telephone is the clinic's most important instrument.

WITH THE PROFUSION of names the clinic uses to lure customers, answering phones without giving the game away takes some training. That's why clinic counselors like Young are instructed to answer all calls with the same ambiguous, "May I help you?"

But after that, the only thing Young was trained to do was how to sell Biogenetics abortions:

The caller wants to know where to get an abortion?

Answer: "We have gotten good feedback from a place called Biogenetics."

The caller wants another recommendation?

Answer: "We're only recommending Biogenetics at this time. Would you like an appointment?"

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'The phones sell our abortions. That's what we're here for. We have to keep our good sales people on the phone.'

AT THE MICHIGAN Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, investigator Julianne Felkner got phone training from the clinic owner himself, Dr. Regalado S. Florendo.

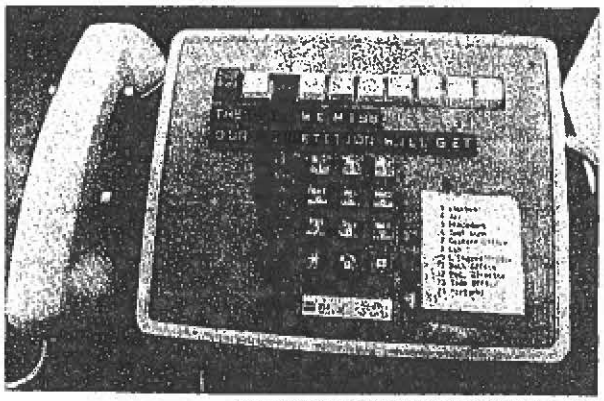
The phones are a bit more complicated there. There are at least four numbers advertised under different names. One number is advertised as that of Family Guidance; another as Abortion Directline; another as Hilltop Center, and yet another as the Michigan Avenue Medical Center.

Two of the lines, Felkner was told, are to be answered with the phrase, "Health services." The others are to be answered with "Medical center."

If a woman calls the Hilltop Center number and asks for an abortion, Florendo told Felkner, "Either say we are a division of Hilltop or pretend you are Hilltop and tell them we perform all our abortions at the Michigan Av. [Medical Center] address."

FELKNER ASKED WHAT to do if a caller recognized her voice from one of the other lines and saw through the masquerade.

"Act as though this is a totally different referral service," said Florendo. If the caller asks for another recommendation, the doctor added, "Tell them we are a counseling service and we are referring *all* our patients to Michigan Avenue Medical Center.



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BIOGENETICS LTD. employes are reminded every time they answer the phone that if they don't sell patients abortions, someone else will.

"The phones are the most important thing. If there's a patient waiting, give them a smile, but take the call first because *that's* where our money comes from."

• • •

Neither Felkner nor Young received training in how to deal with the many calls they took from people who were not seeking abortions but calling for birth-control advice or other medical information.

Felkner got one call from a woman wondering if it was possible to get pregnant while standing up."

Both got calls with questions ranging from how to spot venereal disease to where to go for legal help.

YOUNG TOOK ONE call on her hot-line number from a woman calling to complain about receiving "a botched abortion" at Biogenetics. Unaware that the hot line was Biogenetics, she wanted to warn the hot line not to refer other women to the clinic.

Young spent three weeks answering the phones at Biogenetics. She sat in front of a seven-line console with a note attached to keep her on her toes: "The call we miss, our competitors get."

Young didn't want to sell Biogenetics abortions, but when she asked for a job away from the telephones, she was told by a nurse, "The phones sell our abortions. That's what we're here for. We have to keep our good sales people on the phone."

One early July night, Young took a hot-line call from a woman looking for a good abortion clinic. As instructed, she said: "We get good feedback from Biogenetics."

The caller thanked Young for the information and said she'd call Biogenetics right away. In the time it takes to dial seven numbers, the Biogenetics line rang. Young answered with the same "May I help you?"

It was the woman she'd just talked to on the other line. "I'd like to make an appointment at Biogenetics," she said.

YOUNG KNEW the answer to her next question but, as instructed, asked it anyway: "And who referred you to us?"

"The hot line did," said the caller.

Occasionally, callers did recognize Young's voice, especially women who were "shopping" for abortions by calling every ad in the paper.

"Is this the hot line?" asked one alert shopper.

"Yes," said Young.

"Is this the abortion clinic?"

"Yes," said Young.

"Haven't I talked to you before?"

"Yes," said Young.

Found: safe, compassionate care

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick
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THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Twelfth in a series

The patients weren't screaming and the staff wasn't scowling. In the operating room, nurses wiped patients' brows and held their hands. The recovery room looked like a slumber party.

That's how it can be in abortion clinics. And in three Chicago clinics, that's what investigators found.

The clinics' names may not sound familiar. They don't promote themselves much. They all find advertising as "distasteful" as buying patients with kickbacks and selling abortions or any other procedure to women who don't need them.

During a five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn., reporters and researchers worked undercover in six of the city's 13 clinics. In four of those clinics—the Michigan Av. abortion mills—we have documented how women's lives are endangered by people who care more for profits than patients.

But working undercover in two other clinics, and working in co-operation with a third, we found that abortion doesn't have to be an assembly-line operation. We found that in clinics like these, women may find safe and compassionate medical care:

- Midwest Population Center, 100 E. Ohio.
- Park Medical Center, 2814 W. Peterson.
- Concord Medical Center Inc., 17 W. Grand.

• • •

BGA investigator Michelle Young, who witnessed poor medical care and deceptive counseling at Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, also worked undercover at the Midwest Population Center. Her experiences at both clinics made for some striking comparisons.

On her first day as counselor at Biogenetics, Young was instructed not to tell the patient the abortion would hurt, not to discuss the procedure in any detail and not to waste time talking about birth control.

"We don't want to tell them it hurts and we don't want to tell them too much," Young's supervisor told her, "because the patients get too nervous and afraid and will be out the door."

At the Midwest Population Center, Young's supervisor urged her to show some patients to the door. "Don't ever hesitate to turn someone away, because some people just aren't ready for the procedure," said Young's supervisor. "If they really want it, they'll be back."

But, the supervisor added, "We don't want repeaters here." Young was told to stress the importance of birth control to her patients.

THE PHILOSOPHY at the Midwest center, Young was told, is that a woman who wants an abortion should be able to have one. But abortion must not be used as a method of birth control.

While Young had to counsel patients in big groups at Biogenetics, and was scolded for trying to counsel them individually, she and other counselors at Midwest had the luxury of at least 20 minutes alone with each patient.

And at the Midwest clinic, counselors may accompany their patients through the abortions. Young followed one of her patients into the operating room. There, she found not the cold, quick and often excruciating treatment women may get at Biogenetics, but a doctor who talked gently to the patient throughout the operation.

Unlike some of the doctors on the abortion assembly lines, doctors at Midwest apparently take time to open the mouth of the uterus slowly and wait for anesthetics to take effect before the actual abortion begins.

THE DOCTOR YOUNG observed spent several minutes talking to the patient, and nearly 10 minutes on the physical procedure that some Biogenetics doctors do in three minutes.

"The [Midwest] doctor explained each step as he went along," Young said. "He warned the patient when it was going to hurt, how it would feel, how long the pain would last. And all the while, the nurse held the patient's hand or stroked her hair."

At one Michigan Av. abortion mill, we saw a doctor rush from abortion to abortion without washing his hands or donning sterile gloves. At another clinic, we saw a doctor perform abortions in street clothes without scrubbing.

But at the Midwest clinic, sterile conditions are diligently guarded. When a nurse accidentally touched the doctor's hand during an abortion, Young saw the doctor rush from the room, scrub his hands and put on new sterile gloves before proceeding.

AT ONE CLINIC where we worked undercover, the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, sterile conditions were so haphazardly maintained that operating rooms were only casually cleaned between some abortions and bloody sheets were not changed on recovery room beds.

Because there is no rush at Midwest—the clinic only does 15 abortions a day—there was no hurry to speed patients in and out of the recovery room, Young said.

In the Midwest recovery room, Young saw patients resting at least an hour. "The atmosphere was quite relaxed. Patients chat among themselves and everyone seemed to be in a good mood."

At Biogenetics, where as many as 90 patients may get abortions in a single day, the recovery room was crowded and women often were crying. There, patients are pushed out of the recovery room after 15 minutes. After that, Young found, the beds are needed for the next group.

During the month Young worked at the Midwest center, she said, "I never once heard a patient cry out in pain. At Biogenetics, I heard it all the time."

• • •

The Concord Medical Center may be the busiest abortion clinic in Chicago. Yet, unlike some of their Michigan Av. competitors, Concord's owners do not advertise and do not pay doctors or referral agents for sending them patients.

Some Concord patients come from Planned Parenthood or the Health Evaluation Referral Service (HERS), two of the city's most respected referral agencies. Neither of them charge for their referrals, but send women only to clinics whose operations they know and monitor. Other Concord patients are sent by private physicians. Still others walk in off the street.

What women find inside are friendly receptionists, thoughtful counselors and a qualified medical staff.

THE CONCORD CLINIC performs more than 150 abortions a week. And while even the staff occasionally objects to the volume, the quality of care is apparently not diminished by the numbers of patients.

Dr. Nader Bozorgi, part-owner and medical director of the clinic, said he tries to limit the number of abortions he and his doctors perform each day. He tries to ensure none of his doctors does more than 15 abortions a day. "If we do more than that, doctors get tired," he said, "and we risk mistakes."

"I'm responsible for all Concord patients," Bozorgi added. "I make sure that every one of my doctors knows what he is doing."

The Concord staff also makes sure the patient knows what *she* is doing before she consents to an abortion. She is not given an abortion on the same day she finds out she is pregnant. She must think about what she's doing at least overnight.

As Sun-Times reporter Kay Rutherford

Turn to Page 37

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PARK MEDICAL CENTER, owned by Eileen Adams, co-operated with The Sun-Times and the BGA in the abortion-mill investigation by allowing us to observe first-hand how a proper clinic should be operated.

"The atmosphere was quite relaxed. Patients chat among themselves and everyone seemed to be in a good mood. I never once heard a patient cry out in pain.'

How to choose abortion clinic

What do you need to know about a clinic before making an appointment for an abortion?

In a booklet called, "How to Choose an Abortion Facility," the National Abortion Federation, 110 E. 59th St., New York, suggests a laundry list of questions a woman may want to ask before selecting a clinic.

Some of the most important questions include:

- What pregnancy tests are done?
- Does the clinic give Rhogam injections, if a patient has RH-negative blood, to prevent problems with future pregnancies?
- What are the qualifications of counselors? Does the clinic offer individual or group counseling?
- Who is the doctor? What are his qualifications? How much experience has he had performing abortions?
- Can you get local or general anesthetic?
- Is the recovery room equipped with beds, cots, or reclining chairs? How long can you stay in the recovery room?
- Is there a 24-hour phone number you can call in case of emergencies?
- How much does the abortion cost, and what are the added costs for Rhogam, general anesthetic or other pain-killers?.
- Does the facility provide birth control counseling and services?

Whenever possible it is suggested prospective patients talk with other women who have had an abortion there to get their impression of the facility.

People who care and people who help

They charge nothing for independent abortion-clinic recommendations; Page 37

The politics of abortion—a big business

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Like all anti-abortion groups, the church's chief goal is a human life amendment outlawing abortion for all times in all circumstances.'

By Ellen Warren
Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON—The nationwide battle over abortion has become a giant business.

Organizations on both sides of the controversial question spend millions of dollars and incalculable hours to elect candidates, defeat others, influence legislation and stir the national conscience with their points of view.

It is a battle that promises to get bigger, more sophisticated—and more expensive—as fledgling groups as well as the entrenched veterans become more adept at fund-raising and hardball politics in forums ranging from city councils to the Congress of the United States.

From Massachusetts to Oregon and at many points in between the battle lines have been drawn and, in the words of one of the more strident abortion foes, a zealot named Nellie Gray, "We're fighting a war!"

PUTTING ASIDE THE HIGH emotions and moral controversy in the question of abortion—a question on which both sides say there is little room for compromise—this is the story of the politics of abortion today in America.

It is a warm fall evening in Washington, 1978, and Nellie Gray is at work in the crowded space that formerly was a basement apartment in the pink brick town house she owns near Capitol Hill. A retired civil service employe and ex- Army corporal, she cranks away at the duplicating machine next to an old mahogany dining room table that serves as work space.

It is a critical time for her as she prepares final mailings for the sixth annual "March for Life," an annual show of force she conceived and leads down Pennsylvania Av. in Washington every Jan. 22—the anniversary of the historic 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

Last year, more than 100,000 anti-abortion troops streamed down the wide boulevard of the nation's capital, then fanned out through House and Senate office buildings delivering thousands of California-grown long-stemmed red roses to legislators, a symbol of their pro-life cause.

ON THE FOURTH FLOOR of a bank building a few blocks from the White House, in a warren of bright and crowded offices, the women of the National Abortions Rights Action League are now beginning to assess the outcome of the 95th Congress and its effects on the country's abortion posture.

"Our successes?" said chief lobbyist, Carol Werner. "This year, zip."

Never before, she asserted, has Congress chipped away at the Supreme Court decision as it did this year, curbing federal spending for abortions not only for poor women through a near total cutoff of Medicaid abortion funds, but for Peace Corps volunteers, and U.S. military personnel and their dependants as well.

Werner's job is to try to prevent this type of legislation by lobbying legislators, especially in the House where, unlike the Senate, anti-abortion congressmen are a clear majority.

SHE TELLS THE STORY of a high-ranking Illinois congressman who told her that, though he votes anti-abortion, he supports the pro-choice position of the rights league.

"I agree with you totally. My wife agrees with you," he told Werner. "But, there are more Roman Catholic churches in my district than any other district in Illinois. I don't want to spend the rest of my political career going around trying to justify my position to every Holy Name Society in my district."

"I understand," said Werner. "The problem is that we understand. We're at the point where we cannot afford to understand any longer."

Abortion certainly is not only a Roman Catholic issue. But, it remains true that the church is staunchly opposed to abortion and spends large sums at local, state and national levels to fight abortion and its proponents.

Like all anti-abortion groups, the church's chief goal is to obtain passage of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a human life amendment, that would outlaw abortion for all times in all circumstances.

WILLIAM J. COX, a 31-year-old Notre Dame graduate, heads the Catholic anti-abortion effort as executive director of the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, the lay lobbying arm of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The lobbying group is almost entirely funded by contributions from dioceses and archdioceses across the country for a total budget of about $300,000 a year.

(In its four-year history, the Chicago Archdiocese has contributed about $65,000 to the group, Cox says. In 1977 and 1978 to date, the amount totals $15,000).

"We haven't gotten everything we want," said Cox, assessing the group's successes in the latest congressional session. But, "It appears that we've been able to cut the public-funded abortion from 300,000 a year to 2,800."

There are four major thrusts of the anti-abortion battle: elections at all levels; cutoffs of state and federal funds for abortions; state legislative calls for a national constitutional convention, and congressional efforts to pass a human life amendment.

Although many professional pollsters insist that candidates' stands on abortion will not win or lose the election for them, the intensity and visibility of proponents on both sides have made most politicians take the issue seriously.

WITHIN THE PAST YEAR or so, both sides, hampered by federal laws that prohibited them from attempting to influence elections and sensing the growing importance of the ballot box if they are to prevail, have set up national political action committees to channel money to sympathetic candidates for the U.S. House and Senate.

In the first test of their clout, in the 1978 elections, both the rights league committee on the pro-choice side (which spent about $75,000, the majority going to 57 U.S. House and Senate candidates in 25 states) and the anti-abortion Life Political Action Committee ($20,000 to 23 candidates in 16 states) are claiming victories.

The most talked about win on either side this year is the defeat, with a major assist from the anti-abortion groups, of liberal Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa). Pro-lifers also take credit for the primary defeat of another liberal Senate aspirant, Democratic Rep. Donald M. Fraser, who was knocked out of the race in an upset in Minnesota. In both races, hundreds of thousands of brochures, some paid for by the Life Political Action Committee, were distributed—sometimes outside churches on Sunday morning—outlining Fraser and Clark's pro-choice views.

Anti-abortion forces also cheered the defeat of Republican Edward W. Brooke in Massachusetts, the Senate's eloquent pro-choice spokesman. The over-all defeat of five liberal senators early this month and the general centrist movement of the Congress also may lead to more restrictive federal abortion legislation in the future.

IN ADDITION to the small sums they distributed, both national action committees can get on phones with anti-abortion or pro-choice groups in every state and bring out volunteers to work for or against the candidates they target.

There also is a growing awareness that the abortion fight may be won not in Washington but at the grass-roots level.

"Fifty-six, 57 per cent of the people who finally get to Congress come from the state legislatures," said Joe Barrett, a politically savvy Maryland suburbanite who is vice chairman and political director of Washington-based Life committee, which spent more than $100,000 this year working only for statehouse candidates.

Increasing the number of statehouse pro-lifers, Barrett points out, will eventually increase the number of anti-abortion congressmen. Furthermore, state legislators, can and do influence national abortion policy. For example, 13 state legislatures (Illinois is not among them) have called for a constitutional convention to consider adding a human life amendment to the Constitution. Twenty-one more states are needed.

Most anti-abortion groups concede that if such an amendment is eventually enacted it will not be by way of the constitutional convention route. But they see these statehouse calls for a convention as one more way to pressure the U.S. Congress to vote out an amendment. As of last January there had been 55 separate efforts in the U.S. House and Senate to enact the amendment, but all remained stalled in subcommittees headed by pro-choice Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) and Rep. Don Edwards (D-Calif.). Edwards and Bayh rank high on the anti-abortion groups' political hit list.

FOR THE PRO-CHOICE people, Illinois Republican Rep. Henry J. Hyde is one of the chief foes. It is his name that is attached to the first successful congressional effort to weaken the 1973 Supreme Court abortion decision, and the expression "Hyde Amendment" has become the shorthand reference for most of the recent anti-abortion legislation passed by Congress.

In 1976, Hyde was successful—much to his own surprise—in attaching an amendment to the Labor-Health, Education and Welfare Department budgets that prohibits use of any federal Medicaid money for abortions "except where the life of the mother

Turn to Page 38

Controversy still rages

Although the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973, the controversy still rages, with both sides pouring money into political action groups which aim to either preserve or overthrow the court's decision. Both pro-choice and anti-abortion groups claim morally uncompromising positions, symbolized in public protests by such placards at left. (UPI, Sun-Times Photos)

Thirteenth in a series

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 53 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

People who care, people who help

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick
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THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Abortion is a heavy enough thing to go through without having to go through it in a bad clinic.'

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Kevin Horan

HERS VOLUNTEER Jong Pedersen consults files to aid caller.

It began on a campus in 1973, the summer after the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion. Two women enrolled in a health-care seminar undertook a study of Chicago's new legal abortion business.

By the time they completed their academic survey, one of the women said, "We discovered we knew more about these places than the health agencies."

The two women, Ann Wright and Miriam Desmond, decided to share the information they'd gathered and continue monitoring the city's abortion clinics. They founded the Health Evaluation and Referral Service (HERS) and began one of the city's first nonprofit abortion referral agencies.

HERS, ALONG WITH the Chicago Planned Parenthood Assn., are two places where women can turn for help with unwanted pregnancies, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. found. Since the Sun-Times has been carrying their telephone numbers with this series, both groups have reported dramatic increases in calls.

Neither charges for referrals or counseling. Both offer recommendations of clinics based on their own careful inspections of abortion clinics and on the information collected from women who have been patients at these clinics.

HERS members describe their operation as a "nonprofit health consumer group." Without any government support, the service survives on donations and monthly pledges. HERS pays $30 a month rent to share space in a homey flat at 2757 N. Seminary. The group has only one full-time staffer, and boasts dozens of volunteers who help answer telephones and refer callers.

AND DESPITE ITS grass-roots approach to abortion surveillance, HERS investigates and rates clinics with professional diligence. Their exposure of the Women's Medical Facility several years ago led to closure of the clinic, which since has reopened as Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan.

Discoveries by HERS also led to the indictment of clinic owner Kenneth Yellin on three counts of criminal abortion and for practicing medicine without a license. Although Yellin was not convicted on the criminal charges, he agreed to a court order to quit charading as "Dr. York" and stop examining unsuspecting women.

"The health authorities are so scattered in the state and city," said Wright, "that no one agency seems to have enough clout to get to the clinics that are doing things illegal or unethical. I think the only people who have done things to close [such clinics] down are HERS and the newspapers."

ONCE A YEAR, HERS members evaluate Chicago's abortion clinics. They inspect the clinics, interview the administrator and medical director and try to sit in on counseling sessions and watch abortions.

But because clinics are likely, said Wright, "to put their best foot forward during our inspections, the HERS review teams also rely heavily on what patients tell them about clinics. Only after this research does HERS publish its annual evaluation sheet rating clinics as recommended, acceptable or not recommended.

The sheet tells prospective patients the cost of abortions at the various clinics, the services available and whether the clinic advertises under different names and numbers. It also gives women a sampling of what patients have said about the clinics.

HERS does not recommend clinics that deny them admittance—such as Chicago Loop Mediclinic, 316 N. Michigan, and Water Tower Reproductive Center, 820 N. Michigan.

HERS does not recommend Biogenetics either because of Yellin's ongoing association with the facility and complaints from patients there, including one describing her treatment at the clinic as "a dehumanizing, traumatic experience."

HERS makes about 2,000 referrals a year and asks all its callers to let it know about their experiences at the clinic.

"Women are in a vulnerable position when they are trying to decide which clinic to go to," said one HERS worker. "Abortion is a heavy enough thing to go through without having to go through it in a bad clinic," said another.

• • •

Planned Parenthood also inspects and evaluates Chicago's abortion clinics. But unlike HERS, they only evaluate the clinics that ask them to.

Last year, the agency, at 55 E. Jackson, fielded more than 8,500 pregnancy-related inquiries—more than a third of them from women asking advice on where to go for safe abortions.

Although Planned Parenthood members do not inspect clinics that do not request their endorsement, officers of the agency said they have given negative evaluations to some clinics that invited them in. Such clinics are excluded from the referral list. In addition to abortion referrals, Planned Parenthood also offers referrals to adoption agencies and live-in facilities to women who decide against abortion.

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT of Public Health, which regulates abortion clinics, sends inspectors to Chicago clinics about once a year. The inspectors are all nurses and normally visit the clinics alone.

Planned Parenthood sends professional teams of inspectors to clinics that invite them. Each team includes a licensed obstetrician-gynecologist, a registered nurse, a Planned Parenthood administrator, a certified social worker and a trained counselor. The first visit is by appointment. But the second is a surprise visit every six months.

"We found the ideal way to evaluate a clinic is to follow women through from one phase to the next. This way you get to see the way a woman feels thoughout the entire process," said Anita Jones, Planned Parenthood's pregnancy counseling co-ordinator.

The state inspectors look at clinic records to evaluate patient care. But "looking at records is not as meaningful as measuring important things—like feelings," Jones said. And like HERS, Planned Parenthood referrals are heavily weighted by the reactions of patients to the clinics. The agency asks every woman they refer to a clinic to complete a two-page report on her experiences.

One woman who ignored Planned Parenthood's recommendations and went to the Chicago Loop Mediclinic for an abortion returned to the agency to warn other women: Her abortion at the clinic was so painful, she said, that she planned to undergo "sterilization" to avoid ever repeating the experience.

Clinics promote patients before profits

Continued from Page 35

discovered while working undercover as a Concord counselor-in-training, patient counseling can be so intensive it may drive patients away.

Rutherford saw the clinic bring in a Polish interpreter for one patient who was eager to sign abortion forms she did not understand. She also watched counselors probe women's motives for seeking abortions and quiz them on their answers.

ONE DAY, Rutherford overheard parts of a two-hour counseling session with a 17-year-old who had agreed to an abortion only because her mother had threatened to throw her out if she had the baby.

"I think abortion is murder," the girl told her counselor. "But what can I do?"

Had the girl been in one of the Michigan Av. mills, she probably would have been sold an abortion anyway. At Concord, she was sold on childbirth. The counselor gave the girl the names of several facilities where unwed mothers can live until their babies are born and referred her for further counseling on adoption.

Another teen-ager who, the counselor discovered, had been pressured into having an abortion by her boy friend and relatives also was referred to adoption agencies, as well as to the Illinois Department of Public Aid for financial assistance during her pregnancy.

Rutherford also saw several women turned away because their "pregnancies" were too early to be confirmed by physicians. At some of the Michigan Av. clinics, such women are sold menstrual extractions—early abortions that cost less but which studies show often are unnecessary. At Concord, such procedures are not done.

SOME COUNSELORS complained to Rutherford that they felt rushed by the volume of patients. But, said Rutherford, "They still manage to take whatever time's needed with their patients."

"We want to be sure our patients have really thought it out," said Concord's administrator, Sherry Walker. "[Abortion] is an irreversible decision. We don't want them to make that kind of decision with their backs against the wall."

According to Bozorgi, counseling is as important to the patient's medical well-being as it is to her emotional health. "I will refuse to do an abortion on a woman who has not been counseled," he said. Unless he knows his patient has been counseled, he added, he cannot "proceed with confidence."

Rutherford watched counselors explain every aspect of the abortion in careful detail—including the instruments to be used and the feelings to expect. Patients were warned about everything from the "cold and sticky antiseptic" before the abortion to the mental depression that may follow days later.

NURSES WEAR stethoscopes around their necks and seem to measure patients' vital signs religiously, Rutherford said. After their abortions, patients in the recovery room are carefully monitored by nurses and nurses' aides.

But with women snacking and sometimes laughing among themselves while they rest, the atmosphere of the recovery room on some days seems more social than medical.

Even so, Rutherford said, doctors do visit the recovery room to check on their patients' progress. And, according to a recent paper published by Bozorgi in a professional medical journal, most patients progress well. The doctor reported that his patient records showed a lower-than-average incidence of post-abortion complications.

• • •

The Park Medical Center is a newcomer to Chicago's abortion business. In the year it has been open, it has kept a low profile and, its owners believe, has suffered financially as a result.

Far from the fancy addresses of the abortion mills we investigated on the Magnificent Mile, Park Medical Center operates a small and unpretentious clinic on the city's Northwest Side.

Although the Park clinic performs relatively few abortions—no more than 15 a day—our survey five months ago of the city's abortion trade showed Park Medical

Turn to Page 38

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

Strength of anti-abortion groups is growing

Continued from Page 36

would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term."

Late in 1977, and again in 1979, a Senate-House compromise on the existing Hyde language resulted in a prohibition on federal spending for Medicaid abortion except when the mother's life is endangered or "for the victims of rape or incest, where such rape or incest has been reported promptly to a law enforcement agency or public health service" and in those instances where "severe and long-lasting physical health damage to the mother would result if the pregnancy were carried to term when so determined by two physicians." That is the law today.

The District of Columbia and six states (Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Michigan, North Carolina and Washington), in reaction to the Hyde amendment, agree now to pick up the entire tab for all Medicaid abortions. Previously, federal and state governments shared the cost of those abortions on a complex formula which resulted in a state paying 10 to 50 per cent of the cost.

All other states—including Illinois which is under a court order to do so—fund certain Medicaid abortions under certain circumstances. Illinois and eight other states, for example, pay for the full cost of Medicaid abortions deemed by a doctor to be medically necessary.

STATISTICS GATHERED by HEW and analyzed by Planned Parenthood's research arm, the Alan Guttmacher Institute, show that Medicaid abortions have declined by 06.8 to 99.2 per cent in 22 states with restrictive laws similar to the 1976 or 1977 Hyde amendments.

This offers considerable encouragement to anti-abortion groups such as the National Right to Life Committee based in Washington, the largest non-secular anti-abortion group, which claims 11 million members and an annual budget of about $500,000. That is slightly less than the $824,486 in receipts tallied by the pro-choice rights league in the first nine months of this year. League membership has increased more than eight fold in the past year, from under 9,000 dues-paying members to 50,000.

The growth of the opposition worries both sides, including the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, a group of 27 religious organizations (including Catholics for a Free Choice) of 13 denominations, based in Washington. "Things are going to get worse before they get better," said Patricia A. Gavett, national director of the coalition, which spends about $250,000 a year lobbying, education and grass-roots organizing.

In addition to congressional action this year in revising the Hyde amendment affecting Medicaid abortions, Congress adopted those same Hyde standards for the Defense Department budget, thereby limiting abortion funds for military women and military dependants. There were 26,000 of these abortions in the last fiscal year.

Other measures to restrict abortions approved by Congress this year include the Pregnancy Disability Bill requiring private employers to include coverage of pregnancy and related conditions in their health insurance plans but not requiring them to include abortion coverage.

FINALLY, THERE WAS a threat to vote the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights out of business unless congressmen approved an amendment that prohibits the commission from studying or gathering facts about U.S. abortion policy. They approved the restriction.

"I feel lousy," concluded Gavett of the Religious Coalition, a project of the United Methodist Church. "I don't think we've had any national successes."

Gavett's remarks came, however, before pro-choice proponents chalked up one victory this election season when voters in Oregon rejected a ballot proposition—the first time the question has ever been on a state ballot—which would have cut off state funds "for abortions . . . or programs or services that promote abortion."

Undaunted by the Oregon defeat, Judie Brown, director of public relations for the National Right to Life Committee, cites the Illinois pro-life network as one example of why the anti-abortion position will prevail and Congress will pass a human-life amendment—by 1981, she predicts.

The Illinois Federation for Right to Life, affiliated with the national, includes 162 anti-abortion groups in that state alone.

"We've got what it takes," said Brown, "and we're going to win."

NEXT: Inside an anti-abortion group.

Nationwide struggle

Chicago activists on both sides of the abortion issue have set up picket lines from the Holy Name Cathedral (left) in Chicago to Washington (below), where anti-abortionists gather annually in an emotional demonstration (above) against the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. (AP, Sun-Times Photos)

Clinic policies: proper tests, no kickbacks

Continued from Page 37

enjoyed a reputation as a facility that cared more for patients than profits.

It was out of their concern over the abortion assembly lines in other parts of the city—a concern they had publicly expressed—that Park Medical owners opened their own clinic in 1977.

As novices to the abortion trade ourselves, we asked them to co-operate with us in our investigation of clinics. Although we did not work undercover in the Park Medical Center, reporters and researchers spent many hours there observing its operation.

With permission from Park Medical's patients, we sat in on counseling sessions, watched nurses and doctors scrub before abortions and scrubbed ourselves to observe how abortions were performed. We watched not-so-routine abortions. We watched nurses hold patients' hands, wipe their brows and soothe their nerves.

ABORTIONS WE SAW lasted 15 to 20 minutes. Usually, they were relatively painless procedures. The doctor worked deliberately and spoke softly to the patient, often repeating her name. Afterward, we saw women being helped into their recovery-room beds, where smiling nurses measured their blood pressure and fetched them punch and cookies.

Unlike other clinics, where women appeared ashen and weak after their abortions, the women at Park Medical seemed to recover quickly, the color returning to their cheeks within a quarter of an hour.

We looked at the pathology reports returned to the clinic on the tissue removed from Park Medical patients' wombs. The reports are back in the doctor's hands within 48 hours. Patients are called immediately when reports show no conception material was found. Such reports are treated as medical emergencies—which, experts say, they may well be, particularly in cases of ectopic (outside of the uterus) or tubal pregnancies.

When the clinic first opened, it used a laboratory that, a doctor and part-owner believed, was issuing improbable reports.

The doctor was certain he had removed all the tissue from the uterus in a number of cases where the lab insisted he had not. The patients were called back to the clinic and re-examined. In every case, the examination showed their abortions were complete; the laboratory reports were not.

"That was it for the lab," said owner Eileen Adams. "We fired them."

ADAMS ALSO TOLD us how they were offered patients in exchange for kickbacks when she and her partner first opened Park Medical.

"One guy called us and said they'd provide 'counseling' if we'd provide the cash," recalled one of Park's owners. "They told us we were naive if we thought we could run a clinic and make money without paying kickbacks."

" 'Lady,' the guy said to Adams, " 'there's no way to make money in this business unless you pay. You'll go broke in six months if you don't.' "

Well, Adams said, the clinic nearly did go broke.

"Business was very slow at first," she said. "Then the good referral agencies—Planned Parenthood and HERS—came out to look us over. A doctor came out and looked and liked us. Now we get referrals from 75 doctors—not a one has ever asked for a kickback in return. They send patients here because they know they'll get good care."

Inside story of city's pro-life movement

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'The idea is (for us) to make them more upset. Ask them how they feel when they know they are taking a human life.'

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times

They were standing in the middle of a coffee-splattered hallway outside "the abortion chamber."

They were Christians, they said, and they had come to the abortion clinic this gray Saturday morning to "stop the killing."

They marched around the clinic, swinging their rosaries, screeching Hail Marys and howling the Lord's Prayer.

Among them was Sun-Times reporter Pamela Warrick—the only marcher without rosary beads. Armed with a pseudonym and a prayerbook, she joined Chicago's pro-life movement to get an inside look at the hard-core opposition to legalized abortion.

AFTER SEVERAL weeks as a volunteer at the Illinois Right-To-Life headquarters and a weekend showing gory movies on the group's traveling Life-Mobile, Warrick was referred to the office of Joseph M. Scheidler—considered one of the most radical and powerful U.S. anti-abortion leaders.

Her first contact with Scheidler's Friends for Life was through the Shield of Roses—a Catholic prayer group that stages Saturday morning vigils outside abortion clinics.

One Saturday in September, Warrick joined the group outside the Michigan Avenue Medical Center at 30 S. Michigan. Before the vigil, a Shield of Roses officer warned her what to expect.

He said: "We like to call them prayer vigils instead of pickets, [though] I guess most people would call it a picket. We carry signs and that sort of thing.

"This [picketing] is rough. It takes a lot of strength. You're under a lot of pressure to stop these girls . . . .You can tell which ones are going into the clinic for abortions. Mostly, they're teen-agers, and they *look guilty*.

"Sometimes, they'll go ahead with the abortion no matter what you say. It's wrenching . . . ."

OUT ON THE prayer picket line, Warrick found it was wrenching indeed—but more for the women entering the clinic than for the protesters trying to stop them. The demonstrators endured cold stares, catcalls and passers-by who screamed, "Who's going to support the babies? You?!"

But clinic patients endured worse.

Two Shield of Roses "street counselors," as they call themselves, cornered a young woman and her boy friend near the clinic entrance. The counselors quickly brought the boy friend around to their way of thinking. The young woman, who said she would have to quit high school to support the baby alone, was not so easily persuaded.

"You have a responsibility to that little baby," the pro-life pair told the woman. "Do you want to live with the baby's blood on your conscience the rest of your life?"

They showed her grisly color pictures of what they said was a "baby" dismembered by an abortionist. And they showed her equally ghoulish photos of mangled babies who survived abortions.

Finally, after nearly an hour of grilling, the woman pushed the anti-abortion people away from her. "I ain't havin' no baby," she said and rushed into the clinic. Her boy friend stayed to chat a few minutes and then abandoned his girl friend, leaving her to find her own way home after the abortion.

* * *

Many of the anti-abortion street counselors got their training from Scheidler. His Friends for Life organization operates out of a plush suite of offices at 180 N. Michigan, ostensibly to "assist the media with stories on the life and death issues of abortion and mercy killing."

But the group does far more than advise the media.

"Yes, ma'am," Scheidler told Warrick when she appeared on his doorstep. "This is where the action is."

OVER THE NEXT month, Warrick would see plenty of pro-life action with Scheidler's band of followers: demonstrations, invasions of abortion clinics and anti-abortion strategy sessions that sent volunteers armed with spray paint out to vandalize.

Warrick's pro-life training began with a lecture from Scheidler.

When women go to abortion clinics, he said, most of them are very upset. "The idea is [for us] to make them more upset," he said. "Ask them how they feel when they know they are taking a human life. Remind them of how the women who've had abortions live the rest of their life with that ghost from their womb."

Abortion, he told Warrick, "is no different than taking a bunch of 3-year-olds, cutting all their little heads off and throwing them in the trash . . . ."

Warrick was soon chosen to join what Scheidler called his "Red Alert"—a group of carefully selected "activists" who would do more than stuff envelopes and picket.

During her first meeting with the "Red Alert," Warrick saw how Scheidler persuades his followers to "do God's will."

It was Sept. 16. The Red Alert gathered around the table in Scheidler's office.

"You all know why we're here?" Scheidler asked.

The followers nodded solemnly. They were there to plan the most ambitious assault yet on Chicago's abortion clinics.

"OUR PURPOSE," said Scheidler, "is to save lives. We will use the Truth Team approach. . . we need at least two teams of two persons each in each clinic. At a given time, one of you will stand up in the clinic and make your statement . . . .

"You will say this is a sit-in to save lives and you will not obey the clinic officers. . . .If they lock the doors or bar your exit, tell them you will file kidnap charges. If they touch you, it's assault. Make *them* afraid of you!

"Our purpose is three-fold. Education, which we'll do by counseling the people in the clinics waiting for abortions. Disruption—we will probably stop everybody from doing their jobs. And publicity. This is going to get attention. We'll call the papers and the television crews as soon as you're inside the clinics."

But, Scheidler added, "This is not an official Friends for Life activity. The board does not want any liability. This is the PEACE organization. We're only meeting here at Friends for Life because it's convenient."

PEACE stands for People Expressing A Concern for Everyone. Although PEACE has been credited by the national media with invading and vandalizing abortion clinics throughout the country, there is no such organization. It is only an alias.

AS SCHEIDLER explained to a newcomer, "PEACE is purposefully set up for this [sit-in] sort of thing. No one can contact anyone in the organization because there is no board of directors."

Scheidler also issued another disclaimer that day: "I have to state something right now," he told his activists. "We are not conspiring here to break the law. We are conspiring to save lives.

"What we want is a very well organized sit-in from within. We're not looking for arrests this time. We've had our arrests." But, he added, "If anyone gets arrested, great!"

One of the followers interrupted. "I have a moral question," she said. "To get into the clinic in the first place, I'll have to make an appointment *for* an abortion. That would be lying."

"You don't have to lie to do this. You have to deceive," said Scheidler. But the woman with the conscience was not satisfied.

Scheidler got up from the table and went into the next office where the Rev. Charles Fiore, a Jesuit priest who works full-time for Friends for Life, had been sitting behind a closed door.

A FEW MINUTES later, Father Fiore walked into what the group now was calling "the war room" and gave this advice to the troubled woman:

"Jesuits," said the priest, "are very good on moral reservations. I do not like to lie. I don't want to and I won't, but whenever I need to . . . *prevaricate*, I will. . . .

"Like if I don't want to use the name I am

Turn to Page 40

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times: Sun-Times Photo by Richard Dora

Sun-Times reporter Pamela Warrick (second from right), who infiltrated Chicago's anti-abortion movement for a close-up look at its tactics, joined Friends for Life members when they staged a demonstration at the Midwest Population Center, 100 E. Ohio, last September. The protest fizzled when the abortion foes showed up as two large groups and were quickly locked out of the clinic. Loudly chanting anti-abortion slogans to overcome the clinic's Muzak, the protesters were led away without incident by Chicago police.

Last in a series

Clinic owner Dr. Arnold Bickham loses battles in three courts—Page 41.

Note to readers

Safe and compassionate abortion care is obtainable in the Chicago area. Reliable abortion counseling should be sought from family physicians. Other organizations that are prepared to respond to women's health questions are:

- Planned Parenthood Assn., 55 E. Jackson, 322-4240.
- Health Evaluation Referral Service, 2757 N. Seminary, 248-0166.
- The Women's Switchboard of the Midwest Women's Center, 800-972-5404.

'If anyone gets arrested—great!'

Continued from Page 39

generally known by . . . my mother's maiden name is Walker. One of my [priestly] names is Paul, so I am Paul Walker. *That* is not lying," said Father Flore.

"Go ahead," he told the woman, "make your appointment."

"Then you can go to . . . confession!" giggled another follower.

• • •

With the clinic invasions on the drawing board, Scheidler went on to the next order of Red Alert business: defacing placards on the CTA.

Scheidler flicked a bit of dried black paint from under his fingernails. "This is from our little crusade last night," he said.

He explained how he and another Friend for Life had vandalized posters put up by abortion clinics and referral services at CTA elevated platforms.

BUT THE TASK, Scheidler said, was too great "for just the two of us. There are so many of these ads. We need your help."

Scheidler said he already had prepared a press release denouncing the CTA for reneging on a 3-year-old agreement not to post the abortion clinics' ads, unless pro-life groups were allowed to post anti-abortion placards.

"This may be a big news story," said Scheidler. "If they send photographers out to get pictures of the ads, I don't want them to find any intact. We have to work fast."

At the end of the meeting, Scheidler handed out cans of spray paint and maps of the CTA L routes—copied by Father Flore.

Before the Red Alert left on its CTA mission, Scheidler issued this warning:

"If you're caught, you're on your own. If anyone asks, tell them you're an irate citizen or something . . . do not implicate anyone else, or say you got this stuff from Friends for Life."

Father Flore apologized: "I know it sounds cold, but we have to do this because we would lose our federal tax exemption if we engage in any political activities."

• • •

Defacing CTA signs is but one of the pro-life pranks pulled by Scheidler and his band of followers. Some of her Friends for Life colleagues said they let Warrick in on a few of the other tricks they use to discredit and harass their "enemies."

A few followers bragged about calling abortion clinics and referral services and making fake appointments to disrupt patient schedules. Other times, they said, they call clinics and hang up. "We can tie up their phones all night if we try," said one Lifer.

ONE WOMAN said her favorite trick was calling abortion clinics and blowing a whistle into the phone receiver. "Drives 'em nuts," she tittered.

Members of Scheidler's group also bragged about posting signs around the city offering free beer to anyone who called a certain phone number. The number, of course, was one that rang at abortion clinics. A Scheidler confidante told how he and Scheidler sent "some really grisly, gory postcards" of aborted fetuses to the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court after their landmark decision legalizing abortion.

The message on the back of each card began "Dear Daddy," he said, and closed with, "See you in Hell."

• • •

In March of this year, a dozen of Scheidler's followers, under the banner of the PEACE group, were arrested following a sit-in at a Chicago abortion clinic.

On Sept. 6, all were found guilty of criminal trespassing, and given a one-year conditional discharge. The group is appealing.

SCHEIDLER CALLS those who were arrested at the March sit-in "my 12 apostles." And most of them, it seems, were not deterred by their brush with the law.

Several of the "apostles" were among those who gathered at the Friends for Life offices one late September weekend to make final plans for invading four Chicago abortion clinics.

The plans were carefully prepared. One woman visited one of the target clinics the week before the invasion to, as she put it, "case the joint and get a feel for the physical layout of the place." There was also a full rehearsal of the sit-in two nights before the attack.

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Richard Sark

PAMELA WARRICK (third from right), posing as a member of Friends for Life, joins group members in a demonstration organized under name of a nonexistent group.

DESPITE SUCH pains, however, the the well-planned take-over of the Midwest Population Center at 100 E. Ohio was a bust.

Although the police didn't arrest anyone, the dozen demonstrators—Warrick, among them—also didn't stop many, if any, abortions that day.

It was a gray and rainy Saturday when Warrick arrived at the clinic. She was chosen to be the first one in. "You're very brave," the other demonstrators told her.

She handed the clinic a urine sample and sat back to wait, not for the results of the pregnancy test she requested, but for the other demonstrators to arrive. The take-over was to begin at precisely 9:28 a.m. But at 9:48, Warrick was still waiting.

Finally, the others arrived, but in two suspiciously large groups. The Midwest clinic receptionist caught on quickly.

"I think we've got a sit-in here," she yelled to other clinic workers.

No sooner had the demonstrators locked arms in a hallway outside what they decided was the "abortion chamber," than the clinic staff had locked the doors behind them.

FOR THE NEXT 10 minutes, the demonstrators chanted, "All we are say-ying is give life a chance." A clinic staffer came into the hallway, now splattered with coffee carried in by one of the demonstrators.

"Who made this mess?" he asked.

"Mess, mess?" the demonstrators screeched. "It's your mess. You're killing babies. You're a mess."

One excitable young man, new to Frie for Life, positioned himself directly in fr of the clinic worker and began yelling.

The clinic worker pushed the young m away. "That's battery," blurted the you man. "You hit me!"

"And I'll hit you again if you continue block my way," said the clinic staffer.

About 20 minutes into the demonstrati the police arrived. By then, the clinic st had effectively masked the protesters' pr ence from patients by locking the group in the hallway. And they had effectiv drowned out the marchers' voices by turni the clinic sound system up to full volum

But as the Muzak got louder, so did t marchers. They screamed their Hail Mary They shouted the Lord's Prayer.

FINALLY, the three police officers w responded to the clinic's alarm gently i formed the sit-in leader that if the group d not leave, the clinic would file trespassin charges.

"You *are* trespassing," one officer sai "But you may go outside if you want ar picket there as long as you want. Just don touch anyone or block the entrance."

As the police escorted the demonstrator into the elevator, one of the clinic physician stood, arms folded, in the hall.

As the elevator doors closed, the sit-in leader yelled at the doctor, "We'll be back We will be back."

For 'babies who've died'—his mission

By Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick

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"You can try for 50 years to do it the nice, polite way, or you can do it next week the nasty way . . ."—Joseph M. Scheidler

To his foes, he is a bearded, steely eyed zealot. To his followers, he is the champion of innocents, a demigod of mercy.

Joseph M. Scheidler. Age 51. Father of six. Notre Dame University graduate. One-time journalist. Full-time pro-lifer.

JOSEPH M. SCHEIDLER

He runs the national Friends for Life out of a plush suite at 180 N. Michigan. At a massive wooden desk, flanked by wreaths of plastic roses in memory of "the babies who've died," Scheidler holds court five, sometimes seven days a week.

Many of his followers hang on his every word, and more often than not, do his will with no questions asked. (When questions do arise, they sometimes are referred to Scheidler's right-hand-man, the Rev. Charles Flore—the priest always ready with a pardon for pro-life activists.)

A visitor is shown into Scheidler's office by a Friends for Life worker. "I don't think even President Carter has anything this nice," said the worker, who later joked about "our work for Scheidler and the Lord—I'm not sure which comes first."

Scheidler hasn't always enjoyed such unquestioning support or such comfortable surroundings.

After a stint as a reporter at the South Bend (Ind.) Tribune, Scheidler worked as a public information officer for Chicago's Department of Human Resources.

When the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973, Scheidler left the government to take what he claimed was a $7,000 pay cut to become executive director of the Illinois Right to Life Committee.

Scheidler personally supports capital punishment: "That's not killing innocent, helpless victims. Those people are criminals."

But he is fiercely anti-abortion: "I don't want to tell my children I did nothing during the slaughter of the innocents."

No one could argue that Scheidler has done nothing in his career as a pro-lifer.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'Many of his followers hang on his every word, and more often than not, do his will with no questions asked.'

But some bitter members of the state Right-To-Life group think he may have done too much. At the very least, some of them say, Scheidler spent too much. He was fired by the organization early this year, and, in May, helped found Friends for Life, billed as the first national pro-life, media education organization.

Working undercover in the state Right-To-Life office at 327 S. LaSalle, Sun-Times reporter Pamela Warrick watched those Scheidler left behind struggle to unscramble long-neglected accounting records. And she heard state committee workers complain of living hand-to-mouth since Scheidler's departure.

"Well, shall we pay the rent this month or the installment on the Life-Mobile?" one state committee worker asked the volunteer bookkeeper.

Since Scheidler left, the committee's pai membership has, according to its staf dropped from 20,000 to about 5,000.

And while the committee had more tha $96,000 in assets when Scheidler took ove in 1973, the balance had plunged to onl $38,000 by the time Scheidler left the com mittee five years later, according to annua reports filed with the Illinois Attorney Ge eral's Office.

But Scheidler is proud of his record at th state committee. From his Friends for Li office, Scheidler boasted to Warrick, " worked hard to buy that Life-Mobile [a tra eling pro-life film studio] . . . I raised th money to buy it without the board's permi sion. I did everything without the board permission. That's why they fired me."

Scheidler has little patience with mor moderate pro-life groups. As he put it to hi small band of activists, "You can try for 5 years to do it the nice, polite way, or yo can do it next week the nasty way . . . .

"I've seen the people come and go in thi movement. Some are still against abortion but they're not out there on the line. OK. Bu if you say you're going to be out there o the front, in the trenches, you'd better do i Or get out!"

Abortion agencies' records subpenaed

By Pamela Zekman and Lynn Sweet

A federal grand jury has subpenaed records of one abortion clinic and two referral services that have allegedly exchanged illegal kickbacks for public-aid patients.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Reaction

The kickback scheme was uncovered during a five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. into dangerous medical practices and fraud by some abortion clinics and referral agencies.

The subpenas were issued more than one week ago to the Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan, and to the competing abortion hot lines run by twin sisters, Victoria Lynn Sanders and Valerie McCullough.

THIS WEEK SANDERS and McCullough also received subpenas from the Illinois Attorney General's office concerning consumer-fraud violations.

While working under cover, investigators discovered that the Loop clinic pays the twins and at least six other referral agencies kickbacks of $45 to $60 for every public-aid patient who buys an abortion.

Federal law prohibits any person from giving or receiving kickbacks for Medicaid service. Those convicted of breaking that law face fines of up to $25,000 and prison terms of up to five years.

MEANWHILE, J. TERRENCE Brunner, BGA executive director, said the state will pay more than $1 million in Medicaid funds this year to doctors suspended from the Medicaid program, to doctors who overcharge and to clinics who exchange kickbacks for public-aid patients.

"It is clear," Brunner said, "that Illinois taxpayers are publicly subsidizing fraud and the worst kind of physical abuses in the Michigan Av. abortion clinics."

Brunner said the public aid department paid $3.1 million last year for abortions performed in Illinois clinics and hospitals.

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE at the BGA offices, 230 N. Michigan, Brunner criticized the Illinois Department of Public Health for not conducting adequate inspections of abortion clinics.

"Public health (officials) sat on their rear ends," he said.

While stopping short of calling for the resignation of top public health officials, Brunner said Gov. Thompson should "get people in there who can get things done. Sure, it's a tough job. But women's lives and health are in danger every day."

Brunner added that he was disappointed in the response of the medical community, which "hasn't done a doggone thing" to discipline doctors mentioned in The Sun-Times series.

BRUNNER recommended that:

- Thompson appoint an official to collect and disseminate information on abortion services. And, the public health department should consider giving grants to nonprofit agencies who distribute information on abortion services.
- Operators of abortion clinics and referral agencies who engage in fraudulent practices should be prosecuted.
- Referral agencies should not be allowed to operate on a for-profit basis.

Brunner, who has supervised dozens of investigations during the last several years, said he has never seen an investigation spark such strong reaction as this one.

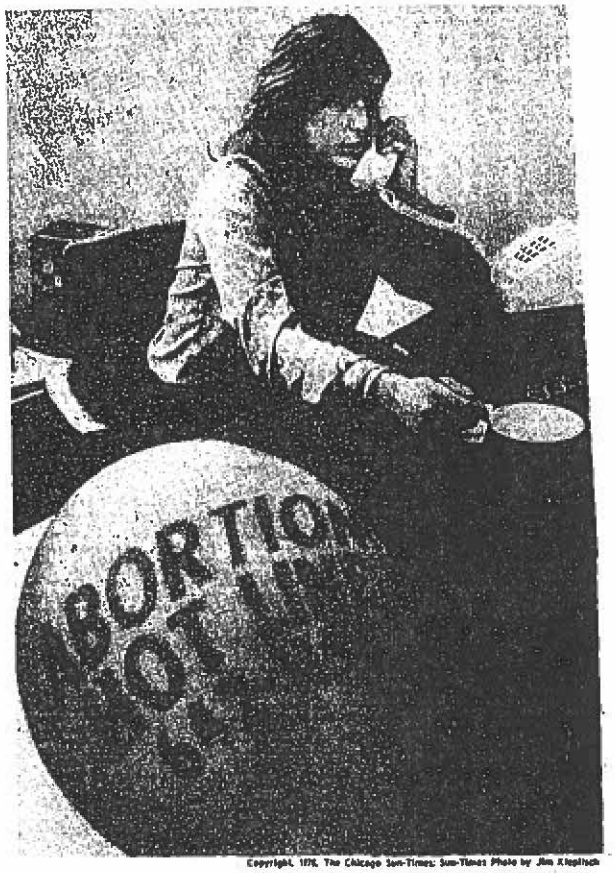
IN ANOTHER development, a proposed ordinance calling for the restrictions on abortions was called unconstitutional at a debate sponsored by the City Club of Chicago.

"Women are duped into having abortions," said Marvin J. Weinberger, president of Citizens for Informed Consent, representing the anti-abortion side. Weinberger led a successful campaign for adoption of a similar restrictive ordinance in Akron, Ohio.

'It is clear that Illinois taxpayers are publicly subsidizing fraud and the worst kind of physical abuses in the Michigan Av. abortion clinics.'

Calling the proposed ordinance, sponsored by Ald. Edward M. Burke (14th), a "truth-in-abortion act," Weinberger, a law student, said a woman's choice "is only free if it is informed."

Lois J. Lipton, a staff attorney for the Illinois division of the American Civil Liberties Union, responded by calling Burke's proposal unconstitutional. "This city and every other government body in the U.S is forbidden to interfere with women's lives."



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BGA UNDERCOVER investigator Julia Rockler, hired as a counselor at Valerie McCullough's hot line, was told to use "a positive approach" in talking to callers. "It's not 'Do you want a termination?' but 'When do you want a termination?' "

WEINBERGER, COMMENTING on Sun-Times reports that 12 women died from abortions in Illinois between 1973 and 1978, looked at Lipton and charged, "It's your fault 12 women died. We are practical idealists. We are out to change the law. You're arguing law and I'm arguing justice."

Lipton replied, "Twelve deaths are less than when women had to seek a back-alley abortion."

The ordinance would require a woman to certify in writing that she has read information about alternatives to abortion, and it would call for the approval of the woman's husband, or if she was a minor, her parents. Also, a woman considering an abortion would have to view photographs of an aborted fetus.

Clinic owner Bickham loses in 3 courts

By Karen Koshner and Lillian Williams

Dr. Arnold Bickham, owner of two unlicensed abortion clinics in Illinois, Monday lost battles in three courts.

In separate actions:

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Reaction

- U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley reaffirmed his decision to let the Circuit Court hear a case on the constitutionality of state laws governing abortion clinics. He also dismissed part of a suit Bickham filed two years ago challenging the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Health to inspect and regulate his clinic, Water Tower Reproductive Center, Ltd., 840 N. Michigan.
- Circuit Court Judge Richard L. Curry refused to grant the Water Tower clinic an injunction to allow it to reopen while the Circuit Court reviews the state's decision to revoke its license.
- Chief Judge of the Criminal Court Richard J. Fitzgerald ordered the Water Tower clinic to turn over records on Sherry Emry, who died after an incomplete abortion at the center, to the Cook County grand jury. Fitzgerald also ordered the clinic to surrender documents on about 30 other patients.

A second count in the suit before Crowley that accuses the state of racial discimination against Bickham is still pending.

THE WATER TOWER CLINIC was closed two years ago because it did not have a license to operate. The clinic later obtained a license, but it was revoked on Oct. 11 because public health inspectors said Bickham had barred them from his clinic since November, 1977. The clinic continued to operate without a license until Nov. 13 when, following Sun-Times disclosures that Bickham was performing abortions despite the revocation, it was ordered closed by a Circuit Court judge.

Also during the hearing before Curry, an administrator at the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103rd, which Bickham also owns, said that Dr. Steven Mallinga, who performed abortions at Summit and Water Tower, was fired by Bickham last Friday.

Better Government Assn. investigator Mindy Trossman testified that Mallinga had noted on the chart of one patient that she was 14 weeks pregnant. When it was called to his attention, Mallinga changed the figure to 12.

IN CRIMINAL COURT, Fitzgerald ruled that Water Tower will have to turn over the records in the case of Emry because the Cook County state's attorney has a waiver from the dead woman's estate which gives up the doctor-patient relationship.

In another courtroom, Circuit Court Judge Francis T. Delaney extended a temporary restraining order until Dec. 7 to prohibit the Summit clinic from performing abortions. Summit was ordered closed Nov. 15 by Delaney because it did not have a license to perform abortions.

In another development, Tanya Kroetz filed a suit in Circuit Court seeking $20,000 for a "negligently, carelessly and improperly performed" abortion on July 8 at Biogenetics, Ltd., 520 N. Michigan.

On another front, the Illinois Department of Registration and Education is setting up a hot line to receive complaints about abortion clinics, Gov. Thompson announced.

People with abortion-clinic complaints can call 312/341-9822, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. A toll-free number is expected to be available within a week, a state spokesman said.

Specific complaints will be investigated by state employes as part of a crackdown ordered by Thompson following Sun-Times and BGA disclosures of dangerous medical care in four Michigan Av. clinics.

Doctor hits state for abortion clinic abuses

By Charles N. Wheeler III
and G. Robert Hillman
Sun-Times Bureau

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—The chairman of the Illinois State Medical Society Tuesday blamed the state for poor conditions in abortion clinics.

Testifying before a special Senate subcommittee examining some of the abortion abuses uncovered recently by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., Dr. Robert Hartman, chairman of the medical society's board of directors, urged the state Departments of Public Health and of Registration and Education to better enforce the laws regulating abortion clinics and doctors.

"We have witnessed a travesty," Hartman said, refering to the abuses. "There has been a failure of all the mechanisms designed to protect the public."

Hartman argued that his society should not be blamed.

"There is a myth that the medical society, or the profession, is in some way responsible for allowing this situation to exist," he said. "But I must point out that the Illinois State Medical Society is a voluntary association of members of the medical profession. It is not a licensing agency, nor is it a police force."

Policing the profession, he said, lies with the Department of Registration and Education, which licenses and disciplines doctors.

"THE REMEDY, it seems to us," he testified, "is not in more legislation and more regulations, but more careful attention to the preparation of (disciplinary) cases for court, more strict adherence to and the enforcement of our present safeguard standards, and speedy hearings and decisions regarding possible improprieties or violations."

Hartman was one of about dozen witnesses who showed up here to testify before the subcommittee, chaired by Sen. LeRoy W. Lemke (D-Chicago). Three of the others were Dr. Paul Q. Peterson, director of public health; Joan G. Anderson, director of registration and education, and Arthur F. Quern, director of public aid. Most of the rest represented various anti-abortion organizations.

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JULIANNE FELKNER, BGA investigator who worked undercover in the Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, peers into the clinic's recovery room, where patients are handed a lollipop (from jar in foreground) to aid the process.

Lemke, himself an outspoken opponent of abortion, was named to chair the special Senate subcommittee by Sen. Richard M. Daley (D-Chicago), the chairman of one of the Senate's two judiciary committees.

Ostensibly, Lemke's panel was formed to hear testimony on a bill sponsored by Daley to require abortion counselors to be licensed by the state. However, Lemke has used the opportunity as a platform for right-to-life groups.

NEARLY A DOZEN civil rights and women's organizations boycotted Tuesday's hearing here because, they charged, Lemke was being unfair.

"We believe that the subcommittee's true purpose is completely eliminate the availability of safe, medical abortions," the groups said in a prepared statement, noting that five of the six senators on the subcommittee are outspoken foes of abortion.

Before the subcommittee met here Tuesday, Lemke calle for a vote in the Senate a resolution he is sponsoring tha calls for a federal constitutional convention to amend th Constitution to ban abortions. The resolution fell two votes short of the 36 needed for adoption, but Lemke used a parliamentary maneuver to keep it alive for another vote.

In the House on Tuesday, Rep. Eugenia S. Chapman (D-Arlington Heights) introduced two bills aimed at tightening state regulations for abortion clinics and a third measure seeking a $50,000 supplemental appropriation to pay for it.

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JOHN SEPIAK, administrator of the Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan, said it was business as usual at his clinic two weeks after damaging revelations in The Sun-Times.

Report of record changing at abortion clinic probed

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

State authorities are investigating reports that employes at a South Side abortion clinic have been ordered to alter patient records that document dangerous medical practices, it was learned Wednesday.

According to sources, employes claim they were ordered to falsify records of abortion patients dating back at least six months for whom the clinic allegedly had failed to record accurate laboratory results and appropriate medications.

The clinic, the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, was ordered by a court Nov. 15 to stop performing abortions, following Sun-Times disclosures that its state license application, pending since July, had not been approved.

OFFICIALS OF THE Illinois Department of Public Health conceded that the clinic never had been inspected for license approval. Officials said there was at least a six-month delay in such inspections because of an overworked staff.

Employes reported the Summit clinic had been doing about 10 abortions a day during the week and as many as 25 abortions on Saturdays.

Dr. Arnold Bickham, Summit owner, reportedly has fired some of the clinic's employes who he suspected were answering questions from state investigators.

It had been learned Tuesday that Bickham fired all of his employes at the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan., which he also owns.

The firings came one day after Bickham lost court battles that would have permitted Water Tower Reproductive to stay open while he appeals the revocation of the clinic's license.

State investigators have been demanding access to patient medical records in Bickham's clinics for their inquiry into possible disciplinary action against him and physicians working on his staff.

ALTERATIONS OF medical files could result in charges of obstruction of justice, according to attorneys for the Illinois Department of Registration and Education and the Department of Law Enforcement.

Employes from both clinics have described to The Sun-Times abuses they said they witnessed at both of Bickham's clinics and are co-operating with state licensing investigators.

Meanwhile, it was business as usual Wednesday in two clinics where Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigators worked under cover.

Abortions continued to be performed at Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, and at Chicago Loop Medicinic, 316 N. Michigan.

Biogenetics owner Clifford Josefik said that "business is fine" and has been "basically" unchanged by The Sun-Times series.

Josefik said state investigators had visited his clinic several times and that he was co-operating fully.

John Sepiak, administrator of Chicago Loop, said his attorneys had advised him not to talk to The Sun-Times, but he told a reporter: "I'd love to talk to you."

A third clinic, Michigan Avenue Medical Center, 30 S. Michigan, was closed, as usual, on Wednesday, and a clinic employe said owner Dr. Regalado Florendo was not in.

The employe said that although clinic business was "not bad," it had been adversely affected by the publicity of the series.

Chicago Sun-Times special reprint

Indiana abortion clinic is thriving

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'If we wanted to see Bickham, it would have to be in the operating room.'

Copyright, 1978, The Chicago Sun-Times; Sun-Times Photo by Jim Frost

SUN-TIMES reporter Lynn Sweet (second from right) and photographer Jim Frost, posing as a pregnant wife and her husband, listen to a clinic employe at Dr. Arnold Bickham's unlicensed Indianapolis abortion facility.

By Lynn Sweet
Sun-Times Correspondent

INDIANAPOLIS—Bright tinsel Christmas garlands decorate Dr. Arnold Bickham's unlicensed abortion clinic here, where it was business as usual Thursday.

Behind doors wrapped with ribbon and paper to resemble giant holiday gift packages, Biogenetics Inc., on Indianapolis' north side, operates despite many violations noted in a three-page report written by an inspector for the Indiana State Board of Health.

Bickham, whose two Chicago abortion clinics were shut down within the last month, Thursday walked into an operating room at Biogenetics in Indianapolis prepared to perform an abortion.

"She's in the best hands. She's getting the best care available," clinic administrator Harvey P. Jefferson assured a "worried" Sun-Times photographer, Jim Frost.

THE SUN-TIMES sent a reporter, posing as a pregnant woman, and a photographer to Indianapolis in the wake of dangerous medical practices in Chicago abortion clinics disclosed by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. The couple had arranged by phone two days earlier for a $150 abortion at the clinic. Armed with a urine sample of a pregnant woman, the two showed up at the clinic to see it in operation and to interview Bickham.

Bickham previously declined to comment or answer questions about his three abortion clinics in two states.

And, as with his two closed Chicago clinics—which are fighting legal clashes with Illinois authorities—the Indianapolis abortion facility Bickham started in August is gearing for a battle with Indiana officials.

In the latest development, the Indiana State Board of Health has turned over its report on alleged violations by Biogenetics to the Indiana attorney general.

Bickham's present legal problems are not his first tangles with Indiana authorities. Lake County (Indiana) Coroner Albert Willardo Jr. said Bickham failed to respond to a subpena requesting his appearance during a March inquest in the death of a Hammond (Ind.) woman, Sherry Emry, 28.

In March, Willardo ruled that Emry had died of a ruptured fallopian tube "resulting from (an) incomplete abortion" at Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan, a Bickham clinic.

BIOGENETICS OCCUPIES a plush suite that takes up the entire fifth floor of a modern Indianapolis office building. There is no known connection between the Indiana Biogenetics clinic and Biogenetics Ltd., 520 N. Michigan, a clinic also investigated in the series.

Like his Water Tower Reproductive Center, Bickham's Indianapolis clinic is richly and tastefully decorated. Numbered prints and lithographs hang on the wall. Comfortable orange and white seating units are attractively arranged in the reception room. Soft, soothing music plays from unobtrusive speakers. The smaller counseling rooms also are attractively furnished.

Thursday is a long, busy day in the clinic, when it is open until 7 p.m. It also is one of two days that Bickham, 41, who lives on Chicago's South Shore, works in the Indianapolis clinic. By 1:30 p.m., abortion counselors had talked to 12 women seeking to end their pregnancies. Eight more women were expected by nightfall.

The "pregnant" Sun-Times reporter and her "friend" asked to see Bickham before the abortion was to be performed, but that is something the doctor won't do. Clinic administrator Jefferson said it would be "too upsetting" to all concerned. If we wanted to see Bickham, it would have to be in an operating room.

The operating room has an orange examining table with chrome stirrup cups that support the feet. There's another orange chair in a corner, surgical equipment on another side of the small, square room, and paper gowns and packets of gauze stacked against a wall. Tan curtains shield sunlight streaming in the floor-to-ceiling windows.

THE NURSE insists that the patient undress from the waist down or else the doctor would not even come into the room.

Bickham, dressed in a turquoise surgical scrub suit, enters and motions to the "patient" to put her feet in the stirrups. But when the reporter identified herself, Bickham refused to answer questions about his abortion clinics and walked out of the operating room.

Bickham applied for an Indiana license in July, but when an Indiana State Board of Health inspector visited the clinic, she found apparent violations that filled three pages. Discrepancies included too few scrub-up sinks, improper storage of narcotics and no documentation that two staff doctors were legally authorized in Indiana to perform the procedures.

Also, a report filed by the inspector cited that the clinic did not employ at least one medical laboratory technician as required, tissue specimens were not examined and there was no arrangement with a nearby blood bank.

Bickham was notified of the violations and he responded by asking that his license application be disregarded.

THE HEALTH BOARD turned the matter over to the state attorney general's office, which is awaiting the outcome of three other cases against unlicensed abortion clinics. The question is whether the state has authority to license and regulate abortion clinics and the matter is just as unclear in Indiana as it is in Illinois. The court actions are in pretrial stages.

Bickham has been cited in The Sun-Times' series for, among other abortion abuses, not completing pathology reports as required by law and performing abortions on women who were not pregnant.

Meanwhile, in Indianapolis, Biogenetics continues to perform abortions.

State aid chief raps HEW on abortion issue

By Ellen Warren
Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON—The head of the Illinois Department of Public Aid, stung by federal accusations that the state improperly billed the government for $1 million in Medicaid abortions, demanded Thursday that those charges be withdrawn.

In a letter to Health, Education and Welfare Sec. Joseph A. Califano Jr., Public Aid Director Arthur P. Quern accused HEW of irresponsible" behavior in bringing the harges and of "blatant disregard for the integrity" of audit procedures that led to the itial accusations.

Eight days ago, Califano, in a letter to ov. Thompson, accused the public aid deartment of improperly asking for, and reiving, more than $1 million in federal Medid funds for abortions performed on poor omen.

CALIFANO said HEW had paid out the oney for 12,600 abortions not eligible for eral funding under the stringent criteria of the Medicaid abortion funding program.

Quern, in his letter to Califano on Thursday, said releasing findings of a preliminary audit was "a new low in federal-state relationships and is an unprecedented injury to the critically important audit relationship."

Quern's letter also praised The Sun-Times for its "serious, thorough and professional journalism" in a series detailing how Chicago abortion profiteers maim women in their pursuit of sometimes illegal profits from abortion mills.

Quern said he feared that Califano's charges would "effect. . intelligent debate over the issues raised by The Sun-Times articles."

"I REQUEST that the (Califano) letter be withdrawn," Quern wrote, explaining that the alleged overbilling to the federal government for Medicaid abortions arose because of a Chicago federal court order requiring the state to pay the full cost of abortions for poor women.

Quern said his office has repeatedly asked HEW to advise the state how that court order affected federal reimbursement for state-funded Medicaid abortions, but that HEW did not reply until Nov. 16—only a few days before the Califano charges against the public aid department were made public.

"Mr. Secretary, you cannot expect us to accept this," Quern said of the charges, noting, "you have been placed in a position where it will be difficult to admit mistakes."

If the charges are not withdrawn, Quern asked that, at the very least, he be granted a meeting with HEW's inspector general and a copy of the preliminary audit documents that led to the accusations.

AT ISSUE in the controversy are the provisions of the "Hyde Amendment" to the HEW budget which, since Aug. 4, 1977, have prohibited federal spending for Medicaid abortions except when strict criteria are met.

The 12,600 abortions in question—performed in Illinois between Aug. 10, 1977, and June 30, 1978—apparently do not meet those criteria and thus the state is not eligible for federal reimbursement.

Because of an "inadequate" reimbursement procedure, which will be changed next year, HEW already has paid the $1 million in "improper" public aid abortion billings, but intends to get the money back, a HEW spokesman said.

Quern has maintained that the state was required to follow a puzzling bureaucratic procedure that forces it to bill the federal government for questionable abortions and have those bills rejected to reach the point "where the process provided for an issue to be argued."

HEW declined immediate comment on the Quern letter.

Califano has been under pressure from anti-abortion congressmen to monitor carefully federal spending for abortions. Last February, he ordered HEW audits of payment procedures in 12 big states, but only Illinois findings have reached the preliminary stage.

Probe abortions, House asked

By Ellen Warren
Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON—Three Illinois congressmen Friday called for an immediate congressional investigation of widespread abortion fraud and medical abuses detailed recently in The Chicago Sun-Times.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

Citing the documented findings of a five-month investigation by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. that women were killed and severely injured in abortions performed by profiteering doctors, the congressmen asked for immediate hearings to consider legislation against the abuses.

"I was stunned, just absolutely stunned at the terrible treatment that women were receiving and the ripoff of the government that was occurring by some of these people," said Rep. Edward R. Madigan (R-Ill.). He and Representatives Philip M. Crane (R) and Marty Russo (D) called for the investigation.

Their concerns were outlined in a letter Friday to Rep. Harley O. Staggers (D-W. Va.), chairman of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction in such health matters.

THEY WROTE: "The investigation's findings have been documented in a series of articles that appeared in The Sun-Times last week. Among the findings were the discovery of abortion procedures performed on women who were not pregnant and others performed on women more than 12 weeks pregnant; the disclosure that many women have suffered severe internal injuries and that 12 women have died because of unsterile clinic conditions and poor clinical post-operative care; that incompetent and unqualified doctors were performing abortions; that charts recording the vital signs of patients had been falsified and that deliberate inaccurate pregnancy determination testing was being conducted to solicit abortions."

"The Sun-Times disclosed the prominent use of Medicaid cards to pay for abortions at these Chicago clinics. One Chicago abortionist received over $792,000 in 1974 alone," the letter said.

Noting that "these problems are not limited to Chicago or the state of Illinois," the congressmen asked Staggers to set hearings before his committee's subcommittee on health or its subcommittee on oversight and investigations in an effort to determine whether legislation or regulations are necessary "to eliminate fraud and medical abuses" such as those detailed by The Sun-Times.

STAGGERS, REACHED by telephone at his West Virginia home, said he would consult the congressmen next week in Washington. He said that if there are abuses, "we'll certainly take a serious look at it."

Though Madigan is opposed to abortion, he said his view would not color any legislation that might be forthcoming from the proposed hearings.

"The federal government has a responsibility to protect the public health," he said. "Legislation that I would favor would require certain standards to be met by certain people performing these abortions, standards relating to their competency, standards relating to sanitary conditions and inspections to insure that these standards are being met.

"I am aware of the Supreme Court decision (legalizing abortion). I believe that if abortions are being performed that the procedure should be performed in a professionally sanitary and competent way."

Referring to doctors highlighted in The Sun-Times series, Madigan said that "I don't think how people could be receiving worse treatment than from the hands of these particular butchers."

AT ILLINOIS MASONIC Hospital, administrator Tom J. Leiterman says some employes refuse to become involved with abortion patients.

PATIENTS close to the 20-week pregnancy cutoff get moved up on the list, reports Dr. John J. Barton at Illinois Masonic. "Others don't appreciate getting bumped."

Sun-Times Photos by Perry C. Riddle

"WE ALL RECOGNIZE that abortions are here to stay," says Dr. Uwe Freeze at Cook County Hospital. "As a public institution, we can't avoid becoming involved."

Hospital abortion issue 'hot'

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

At many of Chicago's hospitals, the moral controversy over abortion has not subsided.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Analysis

And the reluctance of some hospitals to help women with unwanted pregnancies and the refusal of others to even perform abortions has caused many women to turn to walk-in abortion mills.

Of 90 Chicago area hospitals surveyed by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn., only 26 perform abortions. And just 10 of those perform abortions on women more than 12 weeks pregnant.

Although almost six years have elapsed since abortion was legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court, most women here must rely on the multimillion-dollar abortion industry whose clinics by law can perform abortions only during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

In past weeks, this newspaper has published findings of a five-month investigation by the BGA and The Sun-Times into hazardous conditions found in four Chicago abortion clinics where profits count more than patients.

Those four clinics, the investigation found, accounted for one of every three abortions performed in the state last year. In fact, according to state health statistics, 81 per cent of all abortions in Illinois since 1973 were performed in clinics.

ONE REASON FOR the clinics' popularity is their ability to offer lower prices than hospitals, but the investigation also found another: Many hospitals are trying to avoid the abortion limelight.

Seven hospital administrators were so frightened by the issue that when asked, they refused to even say whether their facilities performed abortions.

And even the hospitals that do perform abortions are often shy about discussing their abortion services publicly. As one hospital administrator put it, "We do it, but we don't want any publicity about it. The less said the better. Even when we get good publicity about our work, it creates all kinds of problems."

The problems may cost the hospital money—money from anti-abortion benefactors. Anti-abortion pickets may appear on hospital grounds. Or worse, hospital workers may simply turn their backs on the medical needs of abortion patients.

But at least three hospitals have overcome such obstacles to continue to give women the safe abortions they demand.

AT ILLINOIS MASONIC Hospital, for example, administrators discovered by 1975 that they had to isolate their abortion service from the rest of the hospital because of the refusal by some hospital staffers to become involved in any aspect of the procedure.

According to Illinois Masonic administrator Tom J. Leiterman, some hospital workers refused to administer intravenous fluids to abortion patients or even transport the women from room to room. "Just like the population at large, everyone in the hospital had personal feelings about abortion and we had to deal with that," he said.

At Cook County Hospital, which performs about 4,000 abortions a year—more abortions than any other hospital in the state—there also were strong feelings surrounding the pregnancy-termination unit.

But, said Dr. Uwe Freese, chairman of County's gynecology division, "We all recognize that abortions are here to stay. As a public institution, we can't avoid becoming involved."

Even so, the hospital limits the number of second trimester abortions (12 to 24 weeks) it performs to about three a week. And the hospital's concession to perform any "late" abortions at all was not voluntary; it was court-ordered.

DOCTORS AND administrators at both Illinois Masonic and Cook County Hopsital—as well as at Michael Reese Hospital—complain that they are doing more than their fair share of the city's hospital abortions.

"I wish there were more hospitals doing it. There is a real need for it," said Steve Drucker, an administrator at Michael Reese, which performs about 1,500 abortions a year, second only to Cook County.

Drucker said that since The Sun-Times began publishing its Abortion Profiteers series, his hospital has had an increased demand for abortions. The wait for a first trimester abortion is now at least a week. And, he added, "It's getting worse."

Michael Reese now performs about eight abortions a day on women up to 12 weeks pregnant. Earlier this year, the hospital was averaging about six such procedures a day. The hospital also performs about eight abortions on women 16 to 20 weeks pregnant.

Recognizing the special demand for second trimester abortions, which cannot be performed outside a hospital, Illinois Masonic performs more than 80 such procedures a month.

ALL THREE HOSPITALS are struggling to keep pace with the demand for abortions. At Cook County, "it's first come, first served," Freese said. "We take as many as we're able to and try to get referrals for the others." He could not say how many "others" the hospital turns away.

At Illinois Masonic, there is a waiting list for abortion patients. "Those patients who are close to the 20-week cutoff may get moved up on the list quickly so we can help them before it's too late," said Dr. John J. Barton, chief of the hospital's department of obstetrics and gynecology. "I know the others don't appreciate getting bumped once they have made this very difficult decision."

Although the cost of a hospital abortion ranges from $50 to $850 *more* than the cost of Chicago's cheapest clinic abortions, the hospital procedures often include such extras as chest X-rays, and other diagnostic services.

At Cook County Hospital, for example, very young abortion patients are automatically enrolled in a special reproductive biology clinic to monitor the possible effects of their abortions on future fertility.

And, because the patient is already in a hospital, there is the built-in benefit of sophisticated medical facilities in the event of complications from hospital abortions.

EVEN SO, DOCTORS at Michael Reese, County County and Illinois Masonic agree that first-trimester abortions can be performed safely and compassionately in clinics. And they add, in most cases, that is where they *should* be performed.

"There are good clinics in this city where women can go," one doctor said. "Besides, if we did as many abortions as we do deliveries of babies, we would have real difficulties with our board and our staff."

Health chief defends his clinic curbs

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

The director of the Illinois Public Health Department conceded Monday that his agency "might have been more aggressive" in investigating abortion clinics, but defended the over-all regulation of medical facilities.

Testifying before an Illinois House Human Resources subcommittee hearing on abortion clinics, Dr. Paul Q. Peterson said, "I think it is possible that the department might have been more aggressive in the way it pursued some of the clinics where we were finding that there were marginal practices."

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

State Rep. Eugenia S. Chapman (D-Arlington Heights), responded, "It disappoints me that you say that you might have been more aggressive. I would hope that you would have said you should have been a lot more aggressive and that you are going to do something." She has introduced legislation to curb some of the abuses uncovered in The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation of abortion clinics.

PETERSON REPLIED, "A great deal has been done and certainly a lot more will be done. I do feel that there are problems and certain changes should be made."

Peterson defended his department's inspectors as "diligent in the way they reviewed records." He said they spent three to four hours inspecting clinics and they used the proper professional procedures.

Although he pointed out that there are only six inspectors to cover the entire state, Peterson said, "I am not willing to admit that we have been irresponsible in the way inspections have been made."

Dr. Arnold Bickham, the owner of two Chicago abortion clinics, challenged the authority of the state to regulate clinics, claiming the regulations are unconstitutional and fail to ensure good medical care. Both clinics are prohibited from performing abortions as a result of Bickham's refusal to admit state health inspectors.

"It is a mistake to treat abortions differently from any other medical procedure," Bickham said.

IN A TWO-WEEK series, The Sun-Times disclosed that Bickham performs abortions on women with negative pregnancy tests, fails to order legally required pathology reports on removed tissue and employs unqualified personnel who falsify routine test results.

Appearing cool and unruffled, Bickham read a prepared statement before the subcommittee defending his record as a physician and attacking the state's abortion law as "interfering with a woman's right to consult with her doctor and her decision to have an abortion."

Bickham said physicians should be permitted to perform abortions in their private offices and that regulation should be left up to the Illinois Department of Registration and Education, which, he said, should employ additional inspectors to "monitor the conduct of health professionals."

In his statement, Bickham claimed that most of the newspaper disclosures about his practices were "untrue, taken out of context, innuendo, and malicious." But he failed to respond to any of the specific allegations except to deny reports of "large profits" at the Water Tower Reproductive Center Ltd., 840 N. Michigan.

INVESTIGATIONS ARE pending by the Cook County state's attorney and the U.S. attorney and Bickham declined to answer any questions by the legislators on advice o attorneys.

TESTIFYING before the Illinois House Human Resources subcommittee hearing on abortion clinics Monday, Illinois State Medical Society chairman Dr. Robert Hartman (left) blamed medical abuses occurring in abortion clinics on the failure of state regulatory agencies. State Rep. Eugenia S. Chapman (D-Arlington Heights) (right), expressed disappointment the-admitted lack of aggressiveness on the part of the Pul Health Department. Seated next to Chapman is the comm tee chairman, Rep. Michael Holewinski (D-Chicago). (St Times Photos by Richard Derk)

Bickham accused the state of "reacting to sensationc in newspapers," in its announced crackdown on abo clinics. "That sensationalism has been designed to sell n papers and assist in building esteem for individual repo who are muckrakers and exponents of yellow journalisn its very worst."

Also testifying before the subcommittee was Dr. Ro Hartman, Illinois State Medical Society chairman, blamed medical abuses occurring in abortion clinics on failure of state regulatory agencies.

Calling the Medical Disciplinary Board, set up by the partment of Registration and Education, "stultified," H man accused department director Joan G. Anderson "wrongfully interpreting the law and the powers of medical advisory board."

HARTMAN SAID that proper inspections have not b conducted, that there has been no communication amc state agencies and that the courts have interfered with the mechanisms designed to protect the public.

In response to Hartman's allegations, Anderson testifi "I cannot speak on specific cases because I am not willing jeopardize pending investigations, but I can say I do not l lieve the department has been unacceptably dilatory in (I vestigating complaints against physicians.)"

Anderson said since the published stories, the departme has employed six full-time investigators, four lawyers and special assistant to pursue the allegations, which have be given "the highest priority."

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BGA urges resignation of top public health boss

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

The Better Government Assn. called Tuesday for the resignation of Illinois' public-health chief and one of his top deputies, charging that the state agency has "failed miserably" in protecting the lives of women seeking legal abortions.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Reaction

The BGA asked Gov. Thompson to fire his $44,000-a-year public-health director, Dr. Paul Q. Peterson, and his $35,000-a-year deputy, Dr. Patricia Nolan, if the two do not resign their posts voluntarily.

Thompson declined to comment on the BGA demand but said he is reviewing the performance of all department heads.

Peterson, appointed when Thompson took office, testified Monday before an Illinois House Human Resources subcommittee considering legislative remedies to abuses in the abortion business disclosed in The Sun-Times Abortion Profiteers series.

DURING A FIVE-MONTH undercover i vestigation of some of Chicago's busie abortion clinics, The Sun-Times and BG documented dangerous medical practices a conditions and identified a number of abo tion-related deaths unknown to state heal officials.

At Monday's subcommittee hearing, Pet son defended his department's regulation state medical facilities, including aborti clinics. "I am not willing to admit that have been irresponsible in the way [clin inspections have been made," Peterson t the committee.

Yet, the BGA executive director, J. T rence Brunner, called Peterson's defense the department "untenable" and "dumi Brunner said the state officials' "unwillir ness to accept the fact that they have n done the job" makes them unqualified lead "the aggressive attack" needed to cu clinic abuses.

The Department of Public Health is t only Illinois agency with the power to reg late and monitor the quality of health care the state's two dozen abortion clinics. B The Sun-Times and BGA investigati showed, the department's regulation of the clinics is so slipshod that at least two clini were permitted to operate without val state licenses.

License of 'Detroit connection' lifted

By Pamela Zekman
and Karen Koshner

The medical license of a Detroit abortionist who gets patients from two Chicago-area referral agencies was ordered suspended for a year by the Michigan Board of Medicine, it was learned Thursday.

In another development, the Lake County (Indiana) coroner announced he is investigating the death Wednesday of a two-hour-old baby whose mother reportedly had an abortion in a Gary clinic.

Coroner Albert Willardo, who previously questioned the care received by an Indiana woman who died after an incomplete abortion at a Chicago clinic, also demanded that Indiana authorities investigate abortion facilities in that state in light of the infant's death.

"If we are going to be criticial of the clinics in Chicago, we better take a good look at the clinics here," Willardo said.

THE MICHIGAN board acted on one of several complaints pending against Dr. Joseph W. Rucker in which he was accused of attempting to perform an illegal abortion in his clinic on a 14-year-old girl who was seven months pregnant. The sixth-grader began hemorrhaging during the abortion and was taken to a hospital for treatment.

A few days later she gave birth to a baby girl. A piece of scalp about the size of a 50-cent piece was missing, according to the complaint.

Michigan law requires that abortions on women over 14 weeks pregnant be performed in a hospital.

In addition to the suspension, the Michigan board ordered that Rucker, a general practitioner and 1958 graduate of the University of Michigan Medical School, take an additional 50 hours of training in obstetrics and gynecology.

Rucker has been battling Michigan medical authorities since 1976, when the attorney general's office lodged the first of many complaints against him. His history of alleged medical abuses in performing abortions was described in The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. investigation on the Abortion Profiteers.

THE COMPLAINTS cover the treatment of six additional women, including two from Illinois. All but two of these patients suffered incomplete abortions, according to the state charges. Two had perforated uteri, one had a lacerated cervix and another required a hysterectomy, according to the charges.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

'A few days later she gave birth to a baby girl. A piece of scalp about the size of a 50-cent piece was missing.'

The Sun-Times and BGA investigation uncovered evidence in a new case now under investigation by the Michigan attorney general's office. It involves an abortion Rucker performed in July on a Joliet woman sent to him by a Chicago referral agency.

The woman and her fiance described in The Sun-Times series how she endured treatment for post-abortion complications while Rucker's dog roamed the procedure room sniffing and licking blood from the floor. Rucker has denied that he permitted a dog in the procedure room.

Rucker operates a clinic named for his father at 17300 Schaefer in Detroit. The Sun-Times series reported that for fees of $50 to $100, the American Women's Center, 6770 N. Lincoln, Lincolnwood, and the Family Counseling abortion service, 4747 W. Peterson, have referred to Rucker Illinois women in their second trimester who are unable to get abortions in Illinois clinics. Illinois law permits clinic abortions only up to the 12th week of pregnancy.

CORONER WILLARDO said he will ask Lake County prosecutors, Planned Parenthood and Indiana Right to Life groups to cooperate in an investigation "to make sure professional standards are being applied by Indiana abortion clinics."

The inquiry is needed, he said, because his investigation indicates that a 31-year-old woman who was six months pregnant underwent a saline abortion Dec. 4 at a Gary clinic. Two days later she gave birth by Caesarean section at a Hobart (Ind.) hospital to a one-pound, 4-ounce, foot-long boy. The baby lived two hours, Willardo said. The mother is still being treated at the hospital.

Willardo said he believes Indiana law prohibits clinics from performing second trimester abortions, but suggested the clinic may have made an honest mistake in estimating the woman's length of pregnancy.

"We are not saying at this point that the clinic did anything wrong," he said. "But in my eyes this is not good medical practice and we should look into just how prevalent such things are in Indiana."

Willardo's previous criticism of the treatment given to a woman who died after an abortion at the Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan, was reported in The Sun-Times series. Sherry Emry died from hemorrhaging due to an undetected ectopic pregnancy five days after she had an abortion. Water Tower owner Dr. Arnold Bickham failed to respond to Willardo's subpena for him to appear at the Emry inquest.

IN ANOTHER development, a federal court judge declined to hear a motion filed by Bickham's lawyers Thursday seeking an injuction to keep the Water Tower clinic open pending Circuit Court action. A Circuit Court judge earlier had refused to grant the clinic an injuction because of a potential harm to the health of the clinic's patients.

U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley dismissed the motion, claiming that the law states attorneys may request a motion to reconsider only once. Crowley denied a similar motion Nov. 27.

Crowley indicated again that he would like to hear the case, if the procedural matters could be straightened out, and advised the clinic's lawyers to appeal the decision.

Attorneys for the clinic said they would file an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Abortions banned at clinic operated by Dr. Bickham

By Karen Koshner

Circuit Court Judge Francis T. Delaney issued a permanent injuction Wednesday prohibiting a South Side clinic owned by Dr. Arnold Bickham from performing abortions.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

Reaction

The order was agreed to by Bickham's attorney, who claimed that the Summit Medical Center, 850 W. 103d, had never performed abortions.

Summit applied for a license from the Illinois Department of Public Health last July. The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. learned from patients and employes that the clinic was routinely performing abortions even though it had never even been inspected by the state, much less granted a license.

SOPHIA HALL, an attorney representing Bickham, told reporters after the court hearing that in agreeing to the injunction, her client is, in effect, acknowledging that present state laws prevent him from performing abortions without a license.

However, she said, Bickham will continue to challenge the constitutionality of that state law in court action involving a second clinic he owns, Water Tower Reproductive Center, 840 N. Michigan

That clinic, where an undercover BGA investigator documented dangerous medical practices disclosed in The Sun-Times' Abortion Profiteers series, also has been closed.

Hall said that the Water Tower Reproductive court cases are "ripe" for a hearing and that she planned to ask U.S. District Court Judge John Powers Crowley Thursday for a temporary restraining order to permit the Water Tower clinic to perform abortions pending a decision on the constitutionality of the law.

Sun-Times
Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1978

Editorial

Insensitive to abuses

With evidence spelled out for him that some abortion clinics brutalize and exploit women, you'd expect the man who runs the Illinois Public Health Department to lead the charge to stop such health abuses.

Not Dr. Paul Q. Peterson. His testimony Monday at a House subcommittee hearing on abortions showed that he intends to do very little.

That means Gov. Thompson should replace Peterson. The job is no place for bureaucrats insensitive to women's agonies, exposed by The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. in the Abortion Profiteers series.

Thompson also should replace Peterson's deputy director, Dr. Patricia Nolan. She, too, underestimated all along what was needed to regulate outpatient abortion clinics.

Instead of attacking practices that threaten women's safety, Peterson attacked the news stories as exaggerated.

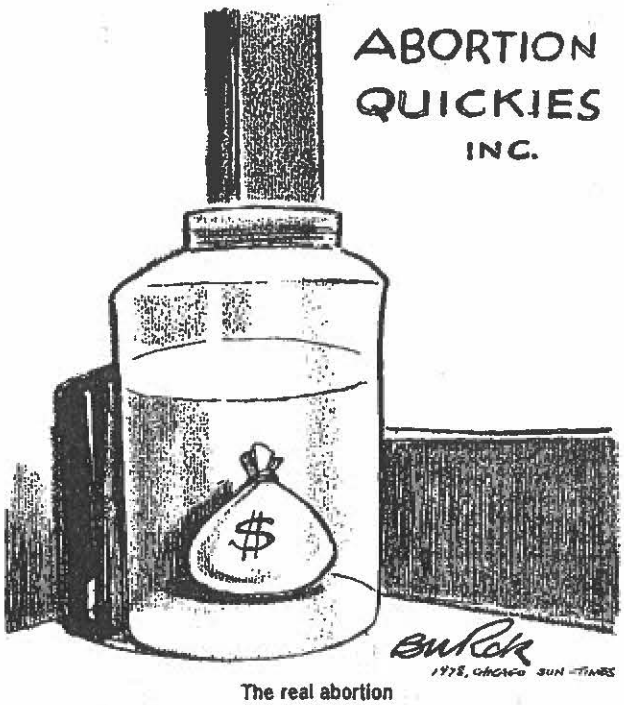
Though some clinics apparently operated on nonpregnant women, among other outrages, Peterson still defended his inspectors as "diligent in the way they reviewed records."

Peterson's view that it's "possible" his department "might have been more agressive" led state Rep. Eugenia S. Chapman (D-Arlington Heights) to appropriately respond, "I would hope you would have said you should have been a lot more aggressive. . . ."

Thompson quickly set up a task force on clinic wrongdoing. Other officials—the state attorney general, the U.S. attorney and the Cook County state's attorney, among them—also acted with necessary aggressiveness.

Even if top health officials might be excused for past errors, they must show firm determination to prevent further suffering.

When they don't, they give Thompson no excuse for not finding replacements who will make administrative changes that are so obviously needed.



The real abortion

Sun-Times
Sunday, December 3, 1978

Abortion pioneers shocked by series

By Pamela Zekman
and Pamela Warrick

The chaplain whose search for competent abortionists circled the globe. The physician who led the first national debate on ending all abortion laws.

The attorney who filed the suit that first legalized abortion in Illinois. The feminist with a conscience—but no medical degree—who performed dozens of abortions in friends' bedrooms.

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS
Background

Together, they and others like them pioneered the way for legalized abortion in Illinois.

In the course of the investigation of Chicago's legalized abortion trade, The Sun-Times and Better Government Assn. documented how, in four Michigan Av. abortion mills, the ideals the pioneers fought so hard to achieve have been subverted by abortion profiteers.

WHILE THEY WERE shocked and saddened by the disclosures of hazardous medical care in some city abortion clinics, these four pioneers told The Sun-Times that the fight for *safe*, legal abortions must go on. It must be waged on many fronts, they said, and it must involve state regulatory agencies as well as doctors, clinic owners and women themselves.

• • •

In 1969, four years before the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion, Spencer Parsons, dean of the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at the University of Chicago, helped establish a group of clergy members to counsel women with unwanted pregnancies.

The group officially became the Illinois Clergy Consultation Service in 1970. By then, law enforcement officials estimate, as many as 50,000 illegal abortions were being performed every year in Cook County. But many of those abortions were dangerous back-room procedures.

Parsons and about 65 other clergymen in Illinois became an integral part of a national, and then international, network. The consultation service sent women to abortion clinics in Mexico, London, Tokyo and Puerto Rico. After 1970, it was able to send some women to New York and Kansas where abortions were legal.

FROM 1969 until 1973, Parsons estimates, the clergymen counseled 15,000 women with "problem pregnancies."

"We simply investigated where it was possible to procure abortions," Parsons said. The group made sure that the places they sent women were safe by asking women to report back on their experiences.

Now that abortions are legal, Parsons said, "the state has to do a better job of regulating and supervising the abortion clinics. I'd like to see some consumer evaluation of patients' experiences. . . . I think in the old days, the Clergy Consultation Service had more feedback of the quality of care women were getting than we have now."

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Sybille Fritzsche is the attorney who filed the original suit that successfully challenged Illinois abortion laws.

While the case she filed on behalf of several "Jane Does" and four Chicago physicians succeeded in legalizing abortion for only 10 days in January, 1971, it was the decision in that case and others that the Supreme Court ratified two years later.

SHE BLAMES the state for what has happened since. "The state can regulate medical procedures [for] cleanliness, sterilization, licensed personnel. But Illinois has really abdicated a lot of its responsibility by not earmarking funds for proper [inspections] of abortion clinics."

Fritzsche said she was most concerned by findings that some Chicago clinics perform abortions without providing counseling and birth-control information to their patients.

"It seems some of these clinics discourage birth control to get more customers. Birth-control counseling should be *mandatory*. . . ."

• • •

Dr. Lonny Myers now is a part owner of a Chicago clinic that performs abortions. She opened the clinic to do vasectomies. "We starting scheduling abortions because people were begging us to. . . . We didn't get in this for profits," she said.

Myers, who was instrumental in getting the state health department to distribute birth-control information, helped bring together the nation's first conference on abortion laws in 1968. Later, she helped found the National Abortion Rights Action League.

DESPITE PEACE offerings from others in the medical profession—including abortions for rape victims—Myers held out until 1973 for nothing less than total abolition of abortion laws. "Our whole approach was birth control first and abortion as a backup," Myers said. "And why should Mrs. Jones qualify for an abortion when Mrs. Smith can't?

"We kept asking, 'What is the crime in abortion?' Isn't it criminal to *require* a 13-year-old girl—or any woman, for that matter—to become a parent?"

Myers, a physician for more than two decades, now says:

"We don't need any more laws. We need a good reliable clearinghouse of information where women can go to find out which clinics are safe. . . ."

• • •

In the late 1960s, a group of feminists got together to provide sympathetic counseling to "sisters" troubled by pregnancy.

"We were mostly students and housewives," said one member of the group, which called itself JANE. They found people who they believed performed safe, albeit illegal, abortions and allowed these abortionists to use rooms in JANE members' homes to do the procedures.

EVENTUALLY, they began assisting the abortionists during the procedures. By the early 1970s, JANE women were doing the abortions themselves. From 1969 to 1973, a JANE member estimated, the women helped 10,000 women obtain illegal abortions.

By 1972, she said, "There were about 30 of us assisting or doing abortions. We discovered we could lower the price of an abortion, which was $500 for the abortionist, to just $100 if we did it ourselves.

"We always had backup doctors, our own gynecologists usually, whom we could call if there were any complications," she said.

Based on the JANE experience, she says she believes paramedics could, and probably *should*, do most first trimester abortions. "The costs of having doctors do them are far too high, and when you have doctors who are just doing abortions for the profit, and not because of any great concern for women's rights and health, you risk the problems of the profiteers."

Abortion abuse: The victims

In the last three weeks, The Sun-Times has taken its readers inside Chicago's abortion racket, a cynical blend of brutality and greed. It carefully documented how certain clinics exploit vulnerable women, ignore their suffering, scoff at medical ethics and pursue a single goal: more dollars. Our series concluded, amid demands for reform, some promising first steps toward assuring safe, compassionate care. Much difficult work remains. And one question cries out for an answer: How could it have happened?

THE ABORTION PROFITEERS

For many decades women endured the risk and agony of back-alley butchers. Once abortion became legal, within certain limits, didn't it occur to state health and licensing agencies that the profiteers would attempt new styles of exploitation? Apparently it never did, until reporters Pamela Zekman and Pamela Warrick, with Better Government Assn. investigators, exposed the l rors at four Chicago abortion mills.

Did leaders of the medical profession h not so much as a whisper about abuses—cluding at least 12 reported deaths—at th clinics? Could the president of the Chic Medical Society have been serious when said, after the reports began, there was ' urgency" in the problem?

Answers from medical authorities incl "lack of funds," "lack of personnel," "la of power" to act—all true, unfortunate yet not necessarily the complete truth.

Could there be another reason, rooted antipathy toward abortion—and, perha antipathy toward women "careless" enou to acquire an unwanted pregnancy? Wh used to be called "women's problem haven't always had first-class attention fro physicians. That era is ending, but it to the medical profession a long time to reco nize the problem. Are the Abortion Pro teers an ugly vestige of that sexist mind-se

In the editorials that follow, we'll sho what the series has accomplished so far, an what remains to be done to help stop abo tion abuses.

. . . Some speedy reactions

A lot has happened since The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. exposed the exploitation of women at four Chicago abortion clinics. Illinois officials have swung into action. Fewer women face abortion mistreatment thanks to steps like these:

- One of the Michigan Av. clinics whose abuses were revealed in our series was closed. So was another clinic owned by the same person.
- Gov. Thompson set up a special task force to seek out wrongdoing at some clinics, an action that we hope will bring about such appropriate remedies as tighter enforcement of existing regulations.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health began investigating all four clinics spotlighted in the series. Each one could lose its license to operate.
- The state Department of Registration and Education is considering punitive action against some doctors at the clinics. Also, for the first time, the department has begun a telephone "hot line" (800-972-5563 and 341-9822), offering women a direct way to complain about abortion-clinic misdeeds.
- The Chicago Medical Society formed a committee to look at the problem. If one purpose is to find ways for the profession to warn the public against slipshod clinics, the committee could be useful.
- The state attorney general is investigating possible deception by two abortion referral agencies uncovered in the series.
- The U.S. Attorney and Cook County state's attorney have subpenaed three clinics' records in an investigation of fraud and illegal kickbacks.
- The Illinois Department of Public Aid is reviewing several abortion cases that could lead to prosecution for fraud.
- The governor's staff and legislative staffs are drafting abortion-reform packages to attack Abortion Profiteers, being careful not to curb a woman's right to an abortion.
- Pro-choice advocates, alerted to the wild outrages that have occurred—abortions on nonpregnant women, for example—are putting their influence behind sound proposals.

Such renewed efforts are necessary to reverse Illinois' tragically blood-stained record on abortion clinics.

. . . And further work

No one can doubt that the General Assembly shares the blame for the anguished victims of abortion-for-profit clinics. As American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Lois J. Lipton said, Illinois' tangle of abortion laws creates "legal disorder and confusion" in which unethical practices can thrive.

There are obvious dangers in seeking new abortion regulations. Abortion foes may try to enact legislation that would deny women a choice. But as The Sun-Times series made increasingly clear, some clinics need further regulation. And clinics perform more than 80 per cent of all legal abortions in Illinois.

The first requirement is to upgrade enforcement. The state Department of Public Health has too few qualified staff members to conduct enough detailed inspections. An amendment to the state license law was urged last week that would make clinics pay a license fee such as hospitals now pay. The income would help fund more inspections. That's an appropriate goal, as is a proposal to mandate at least four inspections a year.

That same amendment also would set specific criteria for clinic operators, similiar to those for nursing homes, to bar operators who have criminal histories. And it would raise the penalties for license violations, among its other provisions.

Another sound idea to reduce abortion abuses is to prevent doctors disqualified by Medicaid in one facility from receiving Medicaid payments in another. Also being studied are ways to toughen anti-kickback rules and to ensure proper pregnancy testing. And an appropriations bill would give Public Health more funds for extra staff.

Any new legislation should be both responsible and restrained, limited to safeguards that can protect women from abortion-mill brutalities like those uncovered by our reporters and the BGA.

But legislation is only part of the answer. Though the medical profession is unfortunately limited in effective ways to rid itself of unethical doctors, that gives medical groups no excuse to duck their duty to do more to expose such men and women to state agencies and the public.

What's more, individual doctors and medical groups should encourage more hospitals to provide abortion services. Only 26 of 90 Chicago area hospitals surveyed by The Sun-Times perform abortions.

There are safe abortion clinics, as our series showed. But until legislators revamp some existing rules and carefully tighten others; many women face exploitation, pain and even death at abusive clinics.

Letters

How readers responded to The Abortion Profiteers

Petty perpetrators

Public horror about those who have turned the aborting of potential human life into a conveyor belt for dollars testifies that morality is very much alive and these petty perpetrators for profit are going down in disgrace.

But might there not be another side to the story? If women can treat potential human life so cheaply, isn't there some cruel justice in their lives being treated cheaply? Isn't the problem not only a society where abortion clinics have become filthy factories, but the filthy factories that women have made of themselves? Isn't the crime as much with the woman who can befoul her womb and then run to a cheap clinic to correct the mishap, as well as with the befouling that goes on in these cheap clinics?

Isn't the problem as much with those who ignore the moral malaise of our society, while concentrating on ugly but inevitable consequences?

Rabbi Samuel H. Dresner
Moriah Congregation, Deerfield

Abortion and ethics

As a concerned clergyman in these days of moral and ethical upheaval, I commend your newspaper for the outspoken stance you have had lately on the abortion profiteers. I have to believe that whatever remains of moral fiber in our country will agree with your expose.

To me, the whole abortion issue is central to the totally unbiblical and non-Judaeo-Christian attitudes toward the sanctity and wholeness of life that has taken from our land the dignity and respect for the individual it once had.

At any rate, you have given me renewed reason to hope in the fact that not all the country is groveling around in the pits of moral syncretism and existential despair.

The Rev. Paul O. Bischoff, pastor
Blanchard Road Alliance Church, Wheaton

A cruel vengeance

You printed a letter from Rabbi Samuel H. Dresner suggesting there is some sort of "cruel justice" in the abortion mills. Perhaps he feels that the hand of God is working to wreak vengeance on the luckless woman "who can befoul her womb and then run to a cheap clinic to correct the mishap." If I did not think that Rabbi Dresner was serious in his contention, I might have passed over the letter as merely a bit of sadistic humor.

If we take this argument at face value, can we not also say that, if the Vietnam War were immoral, all those who died or were crippled in it were victims of a "cruel justice"? After all, if everyone had refused to go, the war would have never happened. The slaughter of those killed in the war was as senseless as the abuse of pregnant women in these clinics.

What Rabbi Dresner purports as cruel justice is merely cruel vengeance. It is vengeance because he (and many others share his view) look at abortion as evil.

I drive a truck for a living, but I know this much: No matter how much evil you see in abortion, two wrongs still don't make a right. They never have and they never will. As a learned man of the word of God, Rabbi Dresner, above all others, should realize this.

Paul Georgen
DesPlaines

Comparsion a must

I want to express my indignation at the letter you published by Rabbi Samuel H. Dresner describing abortion.

I, too, agree that there are better alternatives to abortion, but to accuse women in distress of making "filthy factories" of themselves and that they "befoul" their wombs shows lack of understanding and compassion.

Does Rabbi Dresner believe that women who were raped or were abused as children befouled their own wombs? Are young people who lose control in a moment of passion to be condemned forever in his eyes?

A clergyman without compassion may be more dangerous to society than women in distress.

Rabbi Joseph Tabachnik, West Suburban Temple Har Zion, River Forest

Sick society

Rampant ripoffs in the abortion industry uncovered by The Sun-Times reflect but one more illness of a materialistic society. Add the other 49 states and the affliction that plagues the nation becomes incurable.

When the late President Lyndon B. Johnson termed ours a "Great Society," perhaps unwittingly he was hiding what was even then a "Sick Society."

John B. Battistella, Westchester

Legislator acts on abortion

Congratulations—and thank you, Sun Times. Once again your investigative reporters have turned the spotlight on the overlooked abuse in our society.

The expose of sadistic exploitation of desperate women in search of abortions by greedy profiteers brought a shock realization of the need for instant action. In response, on Nov. 14 I introduced H.R. 3435 in the General Assembly. Briefly, this proposal urges the State Department of Public Health to: increase the frequency of inspections of abortion clinics, be sure these inspections are unannounced and make public the results of such surprise inspections.

The original point of legislation in Illinois making abortion more accessible was to recognize that hundreds of women each year were dying from the results of botched-up, do-it-yourself or back-alley abortions. Licensing of clinics and regulation of procedures were desired to ensure the health and safety of women. Now the responsible agencies must fulfill their obligation to crack down at once to remedy the exposed abuses and to close down immediately all clinics that do not meet state standards.

Rep. Goudyloch (Giddy) Dyer (R-Hinsdale)

Enforce existing laws

I am in total agreement with your editorial "Abortion speed, traps," in which you call for possible modification and strengthening of existing rules as well as their enforcement, which has definitely lagged. You cite the call for a constitutional convention as one of the politicians' recent means to aid the anti-abortion blitz by banning legal abortions.

Such a convention would serve only to limit further the rights of the individual and may not necessarily be limited to the question of abortion. Once called, this convention may go to any lengths the political body may desire to further its own interests without regard to the feeling and rights of the public in general.

We do not need laws to regulate morality, nor do we need new laws passed just because the existing ones are not being enforced. If our state and local authorities do their job in removing the legal offenders, and if newspapers such as The Sun-Times continue to disclose abuses that we ordinarily do not hear, the politicos may find that the abortion question will have to be left to the individual, as our laws intended, and that freedom of individual choice will always remain in our country as long as we do not infringe on the rights of others.

Resa Abrams, Morton Grove

Stress abortion rights

I commend The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. for a careful investigation of the abortion situation in Chicago. As a member of the board of directors of the National Woman's Health Network, I welcome the exposure of those who reap monstrous profits from the pain and needless mutilation of women. Your editorials have rightly charged the State of Illinois with intolerable regulatory disarray.

However, you would be providing an even greater service if you pointed editorially to the fact that one of the clear root causes of this situation is the prolonged struggle over an individual woman's right to decide when and whether she will bear children. Knowing well that women have always found and will always find a way to get abortions—and with terrible mortality and mutilation of the period of illegality only just behind us—we have been distracted from the horrors of the present situation by abstract debate.

While Congress debated the precise entitlement of a rape victim on Medicaid to receive an abortion last summer, women were dying. The situation has become worse over the past year.

Horror at the results of your investigation should stimulate a new drive to make access to the choice of abortion an inalienable right of all women and to remove the profit motive from the delivery of vital health-care services.

Jenny Knauss, National Women's Health Network, Evanston

Revocation isn't enough

It's not enough to revoke the licenses of the abortion profiteers. As Pamela Warrick and Pamela Zekman report, such action hasn't stopped these greedy, sadistic poseurs in the past.

The clinics cited in the investigation should be shut down and their operations imprisoned for the physical and psychological damage they've inflicted on thousands of women.

Magda Krance

Dollars vs. life

I commend The Sun-Times and the Better Government Assn. for bringing out the facts about some abortion clinics in our city.

I am a woman, unmarried and I understand all too well how awful it is to be pregnant and alone. I understand the fears and anxiety, the uncertainty of the future when faced with the possibility of an unwanted pregnancy. I also know that in today's society, it has become all too convenient to take the easy way out.

It isn't easy to have a child when you don't want it, when the man deserts you, when you are unemployed, when you may have been raped. It is not up to me to pass judgment on those women who choose abortion, however. Still, I am appalled and yet not surprised that there are people who would exploit desperate women.

It is sad when people can't think beyond the dollar, when life means nothing but a way to get rich. It is sad indeed that any human being cannot care enough about his fellow man that he or she cannot spend 15 minutes to just talk about alternatives and explore a woman's feelings at such a time because it is not profitable.

"I am sure that not all clinics are like this, and I personally know physicians who do care about their patients and are responsive to their physical, spiritual and emotional needs and are not making any profit. But for those unscrupulous practitioners who would, I say that they should not be allowed to practice medicine.

Gwen Whitley

Victimizing women

Thank you! I laud you series and the BGA investigation on the abortion profiteers. The medical men responsible for victimizing frightened women are a scourge to all of us and a real threat to our pluralistic society.

The scandals we currently deplore were far more commonplace before abortion was legalized. Maternity mortality rates soar when abortion is illegal; abortions, unfortunately, do not decrease.

If we truly care about these victims, let us enforce the current law and rid ourselves of these "abortion mills," allowing the many excellent clinics to continue serving the public well in an unharrased manner.

Carol R. Mullins, Evanston

John Fischetti