

MARCHERS FAVOR ABORTION REFORM

150 Pickets Assail Failure of Albany to Ease Law

By MARTIN GANSBERG

About 150 people—dowagers, housewives, businessmen, medical students and beatniks—marched through midtown yesterday to protest the failure of the Legislature to liberalize the abortion law.

Led by William R. Baird Jr., 34-year-old director of the Parents Aid Society of Hempstead, L. I., who has spent time in jail for disseminating birth-control information and contraceptive devices, the demonstrators began their protest outside the Allied Chemical Tower Building in Times Square at 2 P. M.

For passers-by they flashed signs saying "Abortion Is a Private Matter," "Motherhood Is a Choice," "Repeal All Abortion Laws" and "Deformed Babies—Blessing for Whom?" Sixteen of the marchers carried two-foot-high yellow cards with single black letters that put together spelled "Legalize Abortion."

Except for being harangued briefly by a short man wearing a black fur hat and screaming, "If you don't want to have babies, don't get married," the demonstrators attracted little attention.

But an hour later, after they had marched two abreast along the north side of 42d Street and up Madison Avenue to 51st Street, they drew questions from curious strollers in the spring-like weather. Behind a police barricade across the street from St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, they set up a black lectern.

Referral Service Planned

Mr. Baird, standing behind the lectern, drew the loudest cheer when he said that the Parents Aid Society was arranging for an abortion referral service that would furnish women with the names, addresses, telephone numbers and fees of physicians who would perform the operation.

On Saturday, Lawrence Lader, a prominent researcher and writer on abortion, birth control and population problems, pledged that a secret network would get "the best medical services" for "any woman in need."

While Mr. Baird's wife Eve and their four children watched approvingly, Mr. Baird declared:

"Within the shadows of St. Patrick's, I say no religion has the right to impose its brand of morality on those of other religions."

The Roman Catholic Church was a leader in the fight against changing the state's 84-year-old abortion law which permits an abortion only when necessary to save the pregnant mother's life.

Doctor Explains Abortion

"We're here today," Mr. Baird said, "to let the church know we will stand united against those who oppose legalizing abortion. And I publicly accuse Cardinal Spellman and Mr. [Anthony J.] Travia of being the executioners of the abortion law."

Mr. Travia is Speaker of the Assembly, whose Codes Committee voted last Tuesday against reporting to the floor an abortion-reform bill by As-



The New York Times

PROTEST MARCH: Demonstrators urging legalized abortion parade on 42d Street toward 5th Avenue. They held a rally in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral at end of march.

semblyman Albert H. Blumenthal, Manhattan Reform Democrat.

The Blumenthal bill would have allowed abortions when there was substantial risk that the woman's physical or mental health would be impaired by the pregnancy or that the infant would be born defective.

Earlier, Mr. Baird had called

on Dr. Nathan H. Rappaport, a 25,000 abortions in a 20-year period before 1949.

66-year-old physician who served nine years in prison for performing abortions, to tell why he had done so.

"I violated the law," Dr. Rappaport said in a trembling voice, "as a matter of civil disobedience. I practiced medicine for the benefit of my patients." He said he had performed birth control.

The demonstration ended after many of the marchers picketed briefly outside St. Patrick's Cathedral. Last August, Mr. Baird led a group of pickets at the cathedral in protest of the Roman Catholic Church's ban on artificial methods of birth control.