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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crown Attorney instructs police to lay false charges against pro-life protesters

Crown Attorney Paul Culver instructed Toronto police, who arrested pro-life protesters September 9, to not charge them with "disobeying a court order". This was in direct contradiction to the July 15, 1998 judgement by Judge Milton Cadsby in which the charge of obstructing a police officer was dismissed against Rev. Ken Campbell for a previous identical action at the Scott abortion clinic on Gerrard St. E.

Judge Cadsby made it plain in his July 15 comments that it was about time the four year old "temporary" injunction prohibiting pro-life activity at Toronto's abortion clinics was dealt with by the province. He rejected the "obstruction" charge and ordered that the only proper charge was that of breaking the injunction (disobey a court order).

Mrs. Linda Gibbons of Toronto, Rev. Ken Campbell and Mrs. Anneliese Steden were arrested this past Wednesday by nine police officers in five police vehicles and eventually, on Paul Culver's instructions, charged with "obstructing a police officer". They were peacefully and silently protesting outside the Scott clinic. Rev. Campbell is a well-known evangelist from Milton, Ontario and Mrs Steden is a prominent pro-life activist from Cambridge, Ontario.

Linda Gibbons has served a total of almost four years in prison for refusing to obey the injunction but has never been charged with violating it. The Crown has therefore consistently and deliberately denied Linda, Ken Campbell and now Anneliese Steden any opportunity to challenge the injunction before a judge and jury. "Obstruct a police officer" does not allow such a trial.

Attorney General Charles Harnick has maintained the NDP-obtained injunction despite numerous requests to drop it. Similarly, he has stifled all attempts to quash the five-year-old NDP Court case against eighteen pro-lifers.

This situation is a serious abuse of legal process in which the Toronto police and the Ontario Attorney General appear to be directed by abortion clinic staff to by-pass normal legal process to avoid any interference with clinic abortion activity.

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