

Gregg L. Cunningham, Executive Director

April 2016

Dear Pro-Life Supporter,

CBR's efforts to persuade the press to cover our work has always had its ups and downs but right now we are on the upswing. NBC News London Bureau published a story headlined "Abortion in Europe: How One American Exports 'War' Strategy," April 27, 2016. (We usually indent both margins on long quotes but to get more of the content into this letter, we will use normal margins.) Your support for our work is producing enormous dividends. Please remember that what follows are quotes from an NBC news story (my remarks appear in brackets). Space limits prevent us from including similar CBR European stories from the UK *Guardian* and Public Radio International (PRI):

There's one thing that both anti-abortion and abortion rights activists agree on. A shift is underway in Europe — in politics, prosecution and protest. Battle lines are drawn for what threatens to be a nasty fight, with both sides taking cues from the U.S. In Part 3 of a series, NBC News examines the debate. Graphic pictures of aborted fetuses, prayer vigils and protesters. It's no coincidence that the anti-abortion movement looks the same from London to Dublin to Warsaw. It's mostly Gregg Cunningham.

The California-based activist has been farming out his imagery and strategies to likeminded groups in Europe for more than five years [closer to 20 years]. It started with the trained lawyer building a collection of thousands of photos. 'Aborted baby pictures didn't really exist on any sort of commercial scale in the U.S. until we began to compile the archive that we use,' Cunningham explained. He won't say how or where the images were shot but takes pride in their professional lighting. 'We invented the genre of aborted baby photos that were shot by commercial photographers,' Cunningham said. 'We pioneered the use of that material here in the United States first.'

The Republican former two-term member of Pennsylvania's House of Representatives regularly travels to Europe and shares his pictures — plus notes, advice and strategy. Pro-abortion activists, providers and seekers in Finland, Sweden, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Ireland, England and beyond have been confronted with the same photos of dismembered fetuses as American women from Austin to Buffalo. [Pro-abortion activists allege that] ... the tactics employed by groups tied to the retired Air Force Reserve colonel constitute harassment. They say anti-abortion protesters outside of clinics make a difficult day even worse for women seeking terminations. To Cunningham, though, 'This is a war.' And that's the 'point' — to show something 'really, really upsetting.'

Cunningham says his partnerships with likeminded campaigners were born from a 'mutual affinity.' International groups troubled by abortion began to 'cast about to try to find partners who had successful experience.' Some discovered his Center for Bio-Ethical Reform, which has offices in five states [actually 12 states]. He says skills learned at the Pentagon studying 'adversary forces' — figuring out their strengths and weaknesses — helped to hone his 'multipronged' and 'synergistic' strategy. Part one involves changing public opinion — which starts by changing minds. 'When we could illustrate the success of what we're doing [in the U.S.] — we began to peddle it abroad,' he recounted.

In the U.K., for example, he believed it was critical to stamp out the idea that his abortion images might be offensive enough to be considered illegal. So he specifically designed the posters with the U.K.'s Public Order Act — which governs riots, protests, harassment and the display of written material — in mind. 'We wanted to create signs that would be impossible to successfully prosecute and then use those signs to lure the Crown prosecutor into charging us,' he said. 'Because we wanted to get into court and settle this idea that it was in some way problematic to display abortion pictures in public.' That strategy worked and — in Cunningham's words — prosecutors in England 'took the bait.' Anti-abortion activists Andrew Stephenson and Kathryn Sloane were arrested in 2010 and 2011 — and ultimately put on trial for showing images 'likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.' The case eventually was dismissed — which campaigners fighting against abortion rights claimed as a victory for free speech and a rebuke to their opponents. Cunningham hopes that will be a significant step in the battle to get the procedure outlawed across the U.K.

For Cunningham, it all comes back to history, social reform and — almost always in conversation — slavery. He is prone to cite the story of William Wilberforce, a British politician and Evangelical Christian who helped abolish the slave trade. Speeches in Parliament didn't help Wilberforce 'move public opinion one inch' on slavery, according to the Vietnam veteran. 'Almost nobody in England had ever seen a slave ... They didn't have a picture in their heads of the terrible human suffering being endured by human beings who were being tortured to death so they could have sugar in their tea,' Cunningham said.

That's why Wilberforce switched tactics to using 'very disturbing pictures' to illustrate slavery, according to Cunningham, who said only then did public opinion begin to shift. 'That's the history of social reform,' he added. And that's been his strategy to end abortion since founding the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform — a strategy the 68-year-old says is no different than that of anti-war campaigners or Martin Luther King, Jr. He points out that the anti-segregation icon also saw the value in professional photographers. 'It's a long, long history of social reformers who have used shocking pictures to humanize victims of injustice whose humanity was being called into question, whether it was black people or unborn babies,' Cunningham said.

And the idea that a woman has the right to decide about her own body? 'Conceptually indistinguishable' from arguments made by plantation owners to justify slaves as property, he states. [Omitted content]. But Wilberforce is why Cunningham bristles at accusations that the anti-abortion movement in the U.K. is being Americanized, calling it a 'sort of mythical construct. It looks American only to people who are dumb as a post about their own history,' he said. Cunningham says his mission is to highlight the 'reality' of abortion — 'the whole concept of social reform involves making people look at things they don't want to see.' He claims women are being kept 'in the dark' about studies suggesting links between abortion and breast cancer, depression and eating disorders. 'We don't protest abortion — we expose abortion,' he added.

But experts say studies cited by the anti-abortion movement — and that protesters tied to Cunningham distribute outside clinics — are not widely accepted. [Omitted content]. Cunningham doesn't dispute the existence of studies that contradict the ones he'd like women to see — he said he wants women to be legally obligated to review both. 'Yes, the studies go both ways but that's called science,' he said. 'There are no scientific concepts that don't have a diversity of opinion among researchers.' In a follow-up conversation, he's much less charitable. 'Science is being corrupted,' he says. 'I'm angry about it and I think justifiably so.'

[Omitted content]. One place the Californian has been working for years is in Poland. Cunningham said they took their 'abortion photo archive' there and 'gave it to the activists we felt were the most sophisticated, the most proactive.' The anti-abortion movement in Poland says it owes 'many' successes to its collaborations with Cunningham and CBR. 'They gave us a lot of materials, images, and know-how, which we adapted to the Polish realities,' said Mariusz Dzierżawski, who is leading the 'Stop Abortion' campaign for a law banning terminations outright. Dzierżawski, said he's met Cunningham 'several times' in Poland and also in London. 'We fully support each other,' he added.

Cunningham's strategy has also been embraced wholeheartedly by U.K. based Abort67 [CBR-UK], whose member Andrew Stephenson was arrested in the case Cunningham says he orchestrated. Cunningham 'has this ability to see the problem of abortion and the strategy to end it,' Stephenson said. Abort67 uses Cunningham's images and pickets outside festivals and medical centers in several British cities. 'We're not hobbyists,' Stephenson said. 'We've got a plan. We know what we're doing. We're not ... just guessing at this.' Hearing Cunningham and Stephenson speak is like hearing two men who share a brain. 'We are primarily about helping people understand the reality of abortion just by showing it in public,' Stephenson said. When asked about why his group uses posters of dismembered fetuses on London sidewalks, Stephenson rattles off a familiar sounding theory, almost word for word. 'The history of social reform is the history of painful images, images that people don't want to see,' Stephenson said. 'It's about confronting a culture that doesn't want to know any more about an injustice.'

One recent weeknight, a standing-room-only crowd packed a room in Britain's Houses of Parliament. The event about abortion access was titled 'Preventing Harassment and Putting Pressure Where Power Lies.' Anti-abortion groups insist their demonstrations outside clinics — or 'displays,' to use their terminology of choice — are peaceful. But abortion providers, nurses, and activists say they're anything but. 'If women are trying to access abortion services it sure looks like a protest to them,' according to Dr. Pam Lowe, a senior lecturer in sociology at Aston University who has researched the impact of the protests. Abortion providers like the Marie Stopes clinics try to warn women in advance about what they might face — bloody pictures of a fetus' foot, plastic models of babies — and how to get past the protests. [Omitted content] ... 'They don't stop women from having abortions but they do make difficult days harder.' She stressed it wasn't about limiting free speech — but believes that protests shouldn't be allowed in front of clinics. Demonstrate somewhere else, she said.

Those gathered at the meeting repeatedly criticized the pamphlets which allege links between breast cancer and abortion. Edwards called them just another 'low trick' that constitutes 'dangerous scaremongering.' She added: 'It's bullying women when they're vulnerable, it's lying about truth and consequence.' [It is the abortionists who are lying when they deny the existence of the many peer-reviewed clinical studies linking abortion to breast cancer.]

Nearly 120,000 people in the U.K. signed a petition in March 2015 calling for buffer zones outside of abortion clinics, alleging intimidation by anti-abortion campaigners. 'Protests are taking place daily outside abortion clinics across the country,' the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) said at the time. 'Some protesters are paid by anti-abortion groups to stand outside clinics, and some routinely film women entering and leaving clinics [that is also a lie because cameras are only used for security purposes] and Caroline Lucas, a British lawmaker for the Green Party, described an 'escalation in intimidating activity' [by which she means abortion photos] at abortion clinics in her constituency of Brighton. Cunningham rejects the idea that his campaigners are harassing women — saying if that were true, they'd be arrested. [Omitted content]. Lowe — the Aston University-based academic — says women can 'feel harassed' even if it doesn't meet a legal threshold. Canada and France have buffer zones in place — preventing demonstrators from gathering nearby — but in 2014 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that establishing them outside abortion clinics violated the First Amendment.

There are a few other prominent American anti-abortion activists who fly to Europe for speaking engagements and seminars, too. But the images of the aborted fetuses leave a lasting impression — and cut a clear path back to Cunningham. Like several anti-abortion activists, however, Stephenson is uncomfortable with the word 'Americanization.' [In reality, BPAS, the U.K.'s largest abortion profiteers recently hired an American abortionist as its medical director.] He insists that Abort67 doesn't receive 'any financial assistance in any kind of interpretation' from the U.S. Cunningham performs 'an advisory sort of role' and 'key in acquiring' the aborted fetus images his group displays on British sidewalks. 'We're always

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asking him questions, looking to him for advice and have him visit here quite frequently,' Stephenson added, saying that Abort67 is 'keen to have more affiliations' with U.S.-based anti-abortion groups.

While the U.K. has Abort67, Ireland has a group called Youth Defense. Ireland is seen as critically important for the global anti-abortion movement especially since the country's laws changed in 2013 from a complete ban on abortion to allowing it when a woman's life was in danger. Youth Defense was the anti-abortion movement's answer to public outrage over the so-called 'X Case' — where a 14-year-old girl raped by a neighbor was blocked by Ireland's High Court in 1992 from traveling to England for an abortion. Both Cunningham and Abort67 confirmed they were in contact with Youth Defense. 'It's very normal in the course of life that people share ideas,' said Ide Nicmhathuna, a project manager for Youth Defense in Dublin. The 32-year-old added that Americanization is 'a term that people like to make up if they're trying to tar you with the same brush.' Northern Ireland, meanwhile, has a group called Precious Life. A search of their website shows several images from protests where aborted fetuses were displayed. Cunningham says he's 'conferred' with Precious Life's founder, Bernadette Smyth. On its website, the group states that by campaigning against abortion, it is 'saving babies, mothers, and indeed this country, from the silent holocaust.'

Activists say the American influence in the anti-abortion movement in Europe goes back decades — particularly in Northern Ireland and the neighboring Republic of Ireland. 'There's been a very explicit plea from the American anti-abortion movement to keep Ireland as this beacon of hope in the world where there's no abortion happening,' said Goretti Horgan, an activist and lecturer in social policy at University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. Horgan said one clear early indicator was when glossy, colored literature was sent to her home by anti-abortion groups. 'Back in the '80s nobody in Ireland had colored stuff,' she laughed. 'We knew that they were being supported by the U.S. because of their tactics — they were very, very aggressive whereas the anti-abortion people before that had been very respectable.'

Back in California, Cunningham says that his strategy has evolved and grown over time. Social media is now a priority, with Facebook and Twitter accounts disseminating imagery and leaflets. But he has no interest in Snapchat. 'We don't want our pictures to disintegrate in 10 seconds,' Cunningham explained. However, he maintains the importance of picketing will 'never change' in his quest to end the 'genocide' that is abortion. 'Injustice is reformed in the streets by using nonconsensual methodologies.' he explained. 'You get in people's faces — lawfully. You make them look at things that they're not going to go to a website to look at.' Cunningham added: 'These kinds of revolutions are won in the streets.' There's one place his cause may have a head start. 'I thank God that in Italy the medical profession has not been corrupted the way it has in the United States,' he said. NEXT IN THIS SERIES: Doctors aren't on Board with Italy's Abortion Law. [Yes, CBR is working in Italy as well.]

Please consider increasing your giving to help us prepare for the voter education campaign we'll conduct in swing states during this fall's important election season. The stakes are higher than any in our lifetimes.

Lord bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregg Cunningham', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gregg Cunningham
Executive Director