

# No Exceptions

Eoghan de Faoite



Youth Defence's *No Exceptions Campaign* was rolled out over the summer months and is now continuing into autumn. The campaign, which is both an information and awareness campaign as well as facilitating lobbying, has thus far, been extremely successful in gathering

opposition to the destruction of human embryos. It is the only nationwide public campaign organised to protect human life from conception, and comes at a crucial time when threats to the lives of unborn children come from many unexpected quarters.

Youth Defence (YD) members and supporters have once again answered the call to action and have been busy distributing information, erecting posters, organising meetings, carrying out demonstrations and taking part in media interviews. On top of this our nationwide bus shelter

## Information Leaflet : 170,000 + distributed

The amount of leaflets that were distributed in such a short space of time exceeded all our expectations. We had ordered 120,000 of them and within the space of three short weeks there was not a single one remaining in our office. It is a testimony to your commitment and hard-work that we found it difficult to keep up with the demand for leaflets. Another 50,000 were ordered and distributed, with more to come.

The leaflet clearly explained why destroying human embryos is always wrong and how this barbaric practise is of no benefit to mankind. It also informed people of the benefits of using adult stem cells and how these ethically legitimate and scientifically non-problematic cells are providing cures and successful treatments for patients. Finally the leaflet encouraged people to be vocal in their opposition to embryonic stem cell research and to contact the offices of Bertie Ahern and Mary Harney to object to the legalisation of these experiments in Ireland.

These leaflets were distributed nationwide at churches, shopping centres, major public events, Knock shrine and, thanks to the enormous efforts of volunteers, door to door. Many people are now realising the myths and lies that the media promote about embryo research as well as the therapeutic benefits of adult stem cells. They were shocked to learn that the government are making plans to have embryo research legalised here in Ireland. The information leaflets were crucial to the campaign and we were delighted when people told us that they had seen our posters once they saw the front of the leaflet.



advertisements and enormous campaign posters caused a huge stir around the country as more and more people took notice of them as the days went by.

The abortion referendum of 2002 underlined the importance of protecting early human life from dreadful abuses but embryo research has emerged as a major issue for the pro-life movement in Ireland. The *Commission on Assisted Human Reproduction (CAHR)* was established in 2000 by the then Minister for Health and Children, Michéal Martin. Ever since then the Government's performance in protecting human life from conception has been disastrous. To begin with, the CAHR membership was completely unbalanced and biased towards those who favour the destruction of the human embryo. This was evident when the commis-

sion recommended by 24 votes to 1 that embryo research should be legalised in Ireland.

In April 2005, the CAHR released their overdue report and made very clear recommendations that would allow for the deliberate experimentation and destruction of human life. In fact, their recommendations were so anti-life that even some of the most liberal journalists acknowledged how difficult it would be to get them adopted. These recommendations allowed for human embryos to be frozen and then killed, for them to be cloned and for them to be screened for genetic disorders so that they could then be destroyed. Despite this, the report was handed over to the current Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, who swiftly passed it on to the *Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children* for review.

In July 2005, the commission chairman, Fianna Fáil's John Moloney, promised to hold public hearings

on the report so that there would be "equal opportunity for all sides in the debate to take part". To date we've had no public hearings. Instead of holding hearings, Moloney decided to form a subcommittee to evaluate the report and invited Fiona O' Malley of the PDs and Senator Mary Henry to join him on this subcommittee.

Meanwhile on July 24th Ireland backed a deal to give the go-ahead for the EU to fund embryonic stem cell research in certain EU states. In true Fianna Fáil fashion, the funding was rejected by the Fianna Fáil MEPs at the European Parliament but was



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Eoghan De Faoite and Carolyn Johnston speak with the media at the Press Conference to launch the our campaign against Embryo Research



## Campaign Website

Our *No Exceptions* website ([www.embryoresearch.org](http://www.embryoresearch.org)) was promoted on all the campaign literature and highlighted in media interviews. It is an excellent source of information for people and allows users to contact TD's easily through email. The website is updated regularly with news pieces and also with comments from various scientists, doctors and other experts who give testimony as to the rights of the human embryo. Our leaflets and posters, and the comprehensive *No Exceptions* report, are available to download from the website. It also includes a video of the excellent speech given by Dr David Prentice at the *4th International Pro-Life and Family Conference* hosted by YD and the *Mother & Child Campaign* in March.



# [www.embryoresearch.org](http://www.embryoresearch.org)

given the green light by Minister Michéal Martin at the Council of Ministers which had the final say on the matter. Thanks to this, EU finances, which includes Irish tax-payer's monies will, for the first time, be used to fund this unethical, immoral and unnecessary practice.

Minister Martin consistently refused to join seven other EU countries who were opposed to the funding. In order to appease the consciences of those who were annoyed at his decision, the Minister kept reassuring us that his vote had nothing to do with allowing embryo research take place in Ire-

land but rather helping to fund it in those countries where it was permissible. He said that "Ireland should not start lecturing other countries in terms of what they should do." However, he also admitted that he is "open" to the prospect of embryo research taking place in Ireland. If nothing else, this vote shows the complete hypocrisy of the Fianna Fáil party as they continue to play both cards on the issue of embryo research.

And so at the time of print we are still awaiting the outcome of John Moloney's subcommittee and the decisions they will reach regarding

the report of the CAHR. We've had no public debate, we've had no hearings or submissions, we've had no honest media reports on this issue and once again, it was left up to YD supporters and volunteers to inform the public of what the government is planning to do.

YD's *No Exceptions Campaign* forced this issue into the public domain and encouraged people to look beyond the media hype and misinformation and read the facts about embryonic stem cell research. And the facts are clear:



3. Adult stem cells are an ethical and more successful alternative to embryonic stem cells and they have already been used beneficially in more than 65 different conditions.

As the campaign continues we hope and pray that as many people as possible will be made aware of the truth, and that sufficient pressure will be put on the government not to legislate in favour of embryo destruction in this country.

Well done to everyone who helped to make *No Exceptions* such a great campaign.

1. Human life begins at the moment of fertilisation and should be allowed to continue uninterrupted until natural death.

2. Research on human embryos always kills the embryo and such experimentation has never benefited a single patient.

## Media Interviews : 35

Both local and national media were extremely interested in our campaign and most of the media coverage worked to the advantage of the campaign. In particular, radio interviews - 35 of them and counting - gave us ample opportunity to explain the issues involved in embryo research and allowed us to promote the website we had developed for the campaign so that people could get more information. Several radio presenters remarked on the professionalism of the campaign and the wealth of information made available in the *No Exceptions* report and website.

Although the print media generally have a pro-embryo research editorial policy, YD's campaign forced them to at least acknowledge the ethical problems and the lack of success that is associated with this research. Sinead Ryan of the *Evening Herald*, in an article that was bizarrely critical of our posters, wrote that "Scientists - like the rest of us - are divided about the benefits and ethics of stem cell research". Patsy McGarry of *The Irish Times* resorted to quoting ancient beliefs instead of modern day science to back up his point of view and Ian O'Doherty in the *Indo* was simply furious. *The Irish Times* did print our poster in full colour; a great advert for the campaign.





## Bus Shelter Advertisements

The advertising component of our *No Exceptions Campaign* was officially launched at a press conference in Dublin on the 14th of August. These large, striking and hard-hitting bus shelter advertisements were displayed nationwide and caused a huge stir across the country. The caption on the advert - "Don't use me for spare parts" - summed up the real nature of embryo research and got people thinking seriously about the issue. We received many calls to our office and visits to our *No Exceptions* website as a result of these posters. They directly led to many of the media interviews that we conducted as part of the campaign.



## Campaign Posters : 2000

Due to soaring cost of advertising we decided to invest in 2,000 campaign style posters as an effective way of spreading the message as cost-effectively as possible. These posters carried the same message as the bus shelter advertisements and were erected on lamp poles the length and breadth of the country by our marvellous volunteers. God Bless their dedication.

The posters caused much interest in the campaign because, unlike at times of elections and referenda, there were no other posters on the poles. They grabbed the attention of people in towns all over the country from Donegal to Cork, who then contacted our office for more information. The posters were an excellent way of increasing awareness of the campaign.



# Ethical Treatment Saves Lives

## Hear Jacki Rabon's Testimony

Jacki Rabon suffered serious injuries in 2003. She fractured her spine at T12 which made her a paraplegic. She was told she would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. In 2004, she flew to Portugal to undergo surgery by Dr. Carlos Lima who had been successful in treating paralysis using adult stem cells. After a few short months of rehabilitation Jacki regained feeling in her lower body and can now walk with the assistance of leg braces.

She gave her testimony to members of the US House of Representatives in June 2006. She is a living witness to the amazing ability of adult stem cells in treating debilitating conditions. Jacki is an avowed advocate of adult stem cell therapy. She opposes the use of embryonic stem cells.



**JACKI RABON**

Walking with braces six months after undergoing adult stem cell surgery to repair a spinal cord injury that left her paralysed



### Public Meetings

On 30th September and 2nd October Youth Defence will hold two information meetings in Dublin and Cork. These meetings will feature Jacki Rabon from the US. She suffered a spinal cord injury as the result of an accident and consequently became paralysed. After being treated with adult stem cells in Portugal, Jacki can now walk with the assistance of leg braces. She is a promoter of ethical adult stem cell therapy and vigorously opposes using and destroying human embryos for any reason. Jacki is a living witness to the amazing ability of adult stem cells to help treat people and is also a strong defender of human life.

You are cordially invited to attend and bring friends or family members.

### Jacki will speak at these venues

**Saturday, 30 September 06 @ 4pm**  
Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street, Dublin 1

**Monday, 2 October 06 @ 8pm**  
Imperial Hotel, South Mall, Cork City

### Newspaper Advertisements

As part of the *No Exceptions Campaign*, advertisements were placed in the *Alive!* newspaper and the *Irish Family*, with others to come. The advertisement explained to people the current threat to unborn human life and encouraged people to call the office of the Tánaiste and the Taoiseach to object to any legislation that would allow for embryo destruction in Ireland. Between these adverts, and the leaflets being distributed, many hundreds of phone calls have been made to both offices and they are still incoming.

Mary Harney's office was receiving so many calls that they tried to deflect callers to Michéal Martin's office and eventually resorted to taking the phone off the hook completely. We are building a register of all the complaints so that the level of opposition to destructive embryo research cannot be denied.

### HUMAN EMBRYOS WILL BE DESTROYED. Please help stop the killing

DEAR ALIVE READER,

Embryo Research destroys human life. Pope Benedict has called it murder.

And now plans are being drawn up to legalise this research in Ireland. Using unborn babies for experimentation and to harvest stem cells is simply monstrous. **We can't allow it.**

But our government wants to deny legal protection to unborn babies from the moment of fertilisation. They want to give multinational bio-technology companies the right to experiment on the unborn.

In order to allow these gruesome practices, our government will need to amend the Irish Constitution. They'll need to say that embryos have no rights unless they are implanted in their mother's womb.

That means that human embryos can be legally cloned, abused and killed. If we allow human life to be abused in this way we are no longer a pro-life nation.

**Please help us to stop this killing.**

**Make your voice heard!**  
Phone Mary Harney the Minister for Health **TODAY** on 01 6354148 and tell her you are opposed to any changes in the law which would allow embryo research or restrict the right-to-life of unborn children.

**We are building a register of complaints to have evidence of opposition to embryo research. After you have rung the Minister's office, please call the YD office on 01 8730463 to log your opposition.**



YOUTH DEFENCE

A: 60a Capel St, D 1 T: 8730463 E: info@youthdefence.ie W: www.truthtv.org