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C-SPAN AIRS LIVE VIEWER CALL-IN ON ABORTION WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

Idaho and Maryland Lawmakers Discuss State's Abortion Bills

Washington, D.C., March 29 -- On Friday, March 30, from 6:30 - 8:00pm ET, C-SPAN's Live Viewer Call-in program will feature two state senators on both sides of the abortion issue discussing the abortion bills recently debated in their legislatures.

Maryland State Senator Paula Hollinger (D), will be in the C-SPAN studios to discuss last week's attempts by the Maryland state legislature to pass abortion legislation.

Idaho State Senator Roger Madsen (R), the primary sponsor of an anti-abortion bill passed by the Idaho legislature last week, will be live from Boise, Idaho, via satellite.

An eight-day filibuster in the Maryland State Senate ended when a compromise proposal, consisting of an abortion rights bill and an anti-abortion bill, was sent to the State House of Delegates. The measure was then defeated by a house committee.

Senator Madsen has said the Idaho bill, currently being considered by Gov. Cecil Andrus (R), was drafted to challenge "Roe vs. Wade." The Associated Press describes it as "the nation's most restrictive state abortion measure."

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Loyola Marymount Wins; Minnesota Beats Syracuse—D1

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1990

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No. 109

promise on Abortion Collapses in Maryland House

two contradictory bills, one guaranteeing continued access to abortion and one placing severe restrictions on the procedure.

The proposal, designed to put the abortion-rights question up to the state's voters in a referendum, was conceived by Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Prince George's) Thursday to end an eight-day filibuster in the Senate that had virtually brought the business of the General Assembly to a standstill.

Throughout the extended debate, a group of 16 senators controlled the floor with back-to-back speeches, blocking passage of abortion-rights legislation favored by a majority of senators and delegates.

Despite a wearying discussion and speculation that Gov. William Donald Schaecher would intervene to break the deadlock, the stalemate persisted until abortion-rights supporters agreed to the compromise. Schaecher never took a position on the Senate bills or the abortion issue.

Although senators hailed the proposal as, in the words of one, "the essence of fairness," it drew scorn from some of the 141 members of the House, who criticized the Senate for failing to act decisively.

Abortion-rights supporters also denounced the plan, and lobbied to kill it in the House.

"When 16 crusaders have forced their will on the entire Maryland General Assembly and the State of Maryland, you don't have a fair situation," said Karyn Strickler, executive director of the National Abor-

tion Rights Action League in Maryland.

House members waited through the day for an opinion from Attorney General J. Joseph Curran Jr. Curran already had said he believed the concept of linking the bills was legal, but he said in an opinion tonight that he had questions about the constitutionality of the antiabortion bill.

House leaders decided the issue was too complicated and divisive to sort out in the closing two weeks of the 90-day legislative session, and would be too confusing for voters as well.

See ABORTION, A10, Col. 1

Soviet Convoy Passes Lithuanian Parliament

Vinius Leaders Say Military Pressure Being Used as 'Psychological Warfare'

By David Rernnick
Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, March 24 (Saturday)—A convoy of Soviet tanks and armored personnel carriers rolled into the Lithuanian capital and past the parliament building this morn-

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Sen. Paula C. Hollinger, who co-sponsored the abortion-rights bill, speaks against bill that would have imposed restrictions.

Md. Panel Kills Abortion Compromise

ABORTION. From A1

timore County). Arnick provided the tie-breaking vote to kill the bills.

Arnick said he voted against the bills on the recommendation of House Speaker R. Clayton Mitchell Jr. (D-Kent), who did not want the "convoluted" Senate plan to reach the House.

Mitchell, who has been endorsed by antiabortion groups, would not reveal his position today. "No comment," he said.

Senate President Miller, who drew up the plan and sold it to his colleagues, said he was disappointed by the House decision, but did not feel the Senate debate was a waste of time.

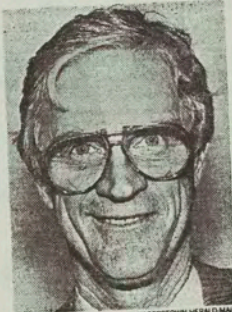
"We live in a democracy. Views were heard, votes were taken. I think some purpose was served," Miller said.

The Senate plan set up a unique mechanism that supporters said would give Maryland voters a "clear choice" on the abortion issue. One bill would have had no limitations on abortion until the fetus reaches viability. Later abortions would have been allowed only to protect the life and physical or mental health of the mother or in cases of fetal deformity. In some cases, it would have required the notification of parents of minors who wanted an abortion.

The other bill would have allowed abortions before viability only to preserve the life or physical health of the woman or in cases of rape, incest or deformity in the fetus. After viability, abortions would have been allowed only to save the woman's life.

Senators counted on citizens to petition at least the abortion-rights measure to referendum on the November ballot. If it had been passed in referendum, it would have become law. If it were defeated, the abortion restrictions would apply.

Both bills would have been prospective, because a woman's right to an abortion is still protected under the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Abortion-



DEL. JOHN S. ARNICK
... cast tie-breaking vote to kill bills

rights supporters wanted to revamp Maryland laws, however, because they believe the *Roe* decision eventually will be overturned.

Senate leaders on both sides of the issue suspected earlier in the day that the House would reject the compromise, and despite their eight days of emotional discussion, said they understood the House action.

"If I had a preference, it would be that they just end it," said Sen. Thomas Patrick O'Reilly (D-Prince George's), who like other abortion opponents believed it was premature for the legislature to act until the court clarifies its position on abortion.

On the other side, Sen. Paula C. Hollinger (D-Baltimore County), an abortion-rights advocate, said she was unsatisfied with the compromise from the start but went along with it at the urging of Senate leaders.

Abortion-rights supporters in the House committee attempted unsuccessfully to move their bill to the House floor. "We have seen one body abdicate responsibility," said Del. Paul G. Pinsky (D-Prince George's). "The issue is not going to go away. Voters care about it. We should be out front and upfront about it and take the lumps."

Others on the committee expressed concern about being the

only ones in the House voting on such a volatile issue in an election year. "We'll be standing out quite visibly . . . Being put in that position is an untenable position," said Del. Lawrence A. LaMotte (D-Baltimore County).

There is a slim chance the issue could be resurrected on the House floor if enough advocates on either side feel strongly enough to wage a fight against Mitchell and other House leaders.

Abortion-rights activists said they felt although they didn't gain anything, they didn't lose either. "No doubt about it, we weren't able to do what we wanted to do," said Bebe Verdery, lobbyist for Marylanders for the Right to Choose. "Our next strategy is just to work to defeat anti-choice lawmakers. We have several picked out."

Richard Dowling, executive director for the Maryland Catholic Conference, which fiercely fought the abortion-rights legislation, hailed the committee vote.

"We experienced a victory here this year," Dowling said. He said it was a sign of the increasing strength of the antiabortion movement in Maryland. "The sleeping giant is waking up."

National abortion-rights activists, who are watching similar efforts across the country, blamed Senate leaders for failing to take a stronger role.

Some abortion-rights activists have criticized Miller for not putting more pressure on the filibustering senators by decreasing round-the-clock debate.

Still, with the filibustering taking place late into the night and frequent quorum calls keeping the senators close to the State House, the marble-walled chamber and wood-paneled lounge became something of a pressure cooker. Senators and advocates on both sides sniped at each other on and off the Senate floor, in remarks that were sometimes personal. One abortion-rights senator received a bomb threat.

Staff writer Jo-Ann Armas contributed to this report.

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