

PRO-LIFE NEWS IN BRIEF

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Abortion Ship Sails but Performs No Abortions

Pro-lifers rejoiced when the maiden voyage of the Dutch "abortion ship" ended with no unborn babies killed. The ship, called the *Aurora*, docked in Dublin and Cork from June 14-25 and was limited to distributing abortion information since the Dutch government has yet to issue a license for the ship to perform abortions.

Before the *Aurora* arrived in Dublin, media reports and publicity announced that women would be given abortions with the abortion pill, RU486, while the ship was moored 12 miles offshore in international waters. The abortions were supposed to be legal under Netherlands law, since the ship is registered there.

However, the truth emerged once the ship docked: it lacked both a Dutch license to operate a medical facility and an Irish license to carry passengers out to sea, according to the *New York Times*.

Rebecca Gomperts, founder of Women on Waves, the group that runs the abortion ship, said that the lack of a license was a "terrible disaster," the *Irish Independent* reported. But a spokesman for the Pro-Life Campaign called the voyage a "publicity stunt" and criticized the hype surrounding the abortion ship.

"There is already a debate under way in Ireland on the issue, there has been for a number of years, and we see the ship as a distraction from that," the pro-life spokesman said, according to the *Irish Independent*. "Any debate is helpful but raising hysteria is not."

Women on Waves claimed that 120 women contacted the abortion ship to ask about abortion while it was in Dublin. The group has not yet announced when and if it will sail again.