

# Bishop Hogan Decries Ulster Injustice

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Lent only because of traditional joyous celebrations planned for some time, I have strongly recommended a prayerful and reflective observance of this day to support the members of our one family, our brothers and sisters of Northern Ireland who live in a society that is sick unto death.

With all the conflicting reports made to the American public, I chose to ask some questions from an expert who has spent his life in probing the social problems that beset mankind. Dr. Douglas Hyde had this answer to my question: What is the nature and magnitude of the problem in North Ireland?

"Behind the present troubles in Northern Ireland, lie eight hundred years of resistance to domination by a dictator (or big neighbor) and a settlement made fifty years ago which whilst it solved one immediate problem, guaranteed others for the future. During the last fifty years the Catholic minority in the north, which is a minority of course only because they are shut off behind the artificial border, has suffered the most blatant discrimination in jobs and housing and equally important, in that it might appear to be a psychological point, they've suffered exclusions from the mainstream of the life of their people. They've been excluded from playing a full share in determining their own future and determining their own lives and destiny. They've had practically no meaningful say in what happened to them. The present support of the Catholic people in Northern Ireland for the IRA grows out of the fact that hopes were raised when they were promised reforms and then when they saw these reforms being

jeopardized, their frustration and anger boiled over. Most immediately, this situation has been inflamed by the detention without trial of many hundreds of Catholics for alleged association with the IRA whilst Unionist advocates and supporters of violence go scot-free.

"If one wants proof of the truth of the point that Pope Paul has made so often, that peace is a fruit of justice and war grows out of injustice, then you have it right there in Northern Ireland. The immediate danger is that terrorism will escalate and very possibly bring some appalling backlash from the Protestant majority in the north. The pitiful thing is that that backlash would come from people living in slums very little better than the ghettos in which Catholics live. The particular danger of still further escalation of violence, of terrorism from the IRA, comes because the Unionist government, and backing that, the British government, insists that a military victory over the IRA must precede any political settlement. But all recent experience has shown that you cannot get a military victory in a situation like this. A political and social answer is needed; out of that, political and social reform must be offered now."

The voice of the Church has been clearly and repeatedly raised in protest of the violence. The Archbishop of Armagh, Cardinal William Conway, spoke to the Irish nation on a Christmas telecast from Dublin:

"When the sense of the sacredness of human life becomes devalued in a society, that society is seriously ill. To kill a man deliberately, to snuff out an innocent life, is a terrible deed. The

person who can do it is already less than a man, some part of his human nature has frozen to death. On whatever side he is, such a man is committing a crime against God, and the man who says 'a life for a life' is flying straight in the face of the express teaching of Christ who quoted this very principle and rejected it."

Yet we have to face the existential fact that there are limits to human tolerance and when the spirit of man is crushed to a feeling of hopelessness and despair, he will no longer meekly submit to injustice. Here it becomes our duty to shatter the hypocrisy of the lords of the citadel of power, and thunder ferocious warnings against the perpetrators of injustice, like God's prophet Amos who raged against his contemporary society and Christ Himself, who did not hesitate to utter words to pierce shame and penetrate the hearts of the Pharisees of his day. There is nothing poetic in His words — "You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?"

Offer with me today this Eucharistic prayer for peace and justice, deepening of faith, reconciliation in Northern Ireland, and let their troubles never distract us from examining our own hearts in these same areas. How faithful have we been to St. Patrick's legacy? How well do we fulfill our vocations as ambassadors of peace, justice and reconciliation? How loud is our proclamation of faith?

Let our prayer today re-echo the plea of the Irish long ago for Patrick's intercession: "Come, O holy youth, and walk once more with us."



Bishop Hogan at Corpus Christi

Pope Paul

## Easter Center of Life

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Pope Paul has described Easter as being at the very "center" of Christian life.

"Easter," he told pilgrims during his mid-week audience, "is a fact which concerns all the faithful in a personal way . . . as Christ existentially wishes to celebrate His passage from death to life in each one of the faithful."

The Resurrection, he added, calls upon Christians to realize the necessity of "re-awakening moral conscience . . . a judgment of the order which must preside over our conduct, the use of our freedom, the fulfillment of our duties and the orientation and the fate of our lives with respect to God."

"Today," the pontiff said, "much is said about conscience. We must say that the term 'Conscience' is very often abused. How much propaganda is being made today to spread not conscience by 'inconscience' in approving, with unilateral theories of prejudgment or of the so-called re-vindication of the economy of modern man, activities which detract from every moral rule?"

"To celebrate Easter we must pass through the restoration of moral conscience which cannot come without penance and confession," he added. "Easter is an extraordinary adventure."

## Abortion Report Draws Rebuke Of U.S. Bishops

Washington — The U. S. Catholic Conference issued an immediate denunciation of a report on abortion, contraception and sterilization made by the presidential commission on Population Growth and the American Future.

The commission report recommended repeal of laws in about half of the states prohibiting contraceptive advertising, store display and vending machine distribution.

It also urged all states to adopt laws similar to New York's which allows abortion by a doctor at the mother's request.

The USCC labeled the report as "naive in its assumptions and punitive in its recommendations." It urged it be treated with "benign neglect."

The commission report was its second; the first called for a reduction and gradual halting of population in the United States. A third report is in the works and will touch on policies for immigration, government organization and population distribution.

Earlier, in reaction to the first report, a spokesman for the USCC accused the commission of sidestepping "basic ethical questions" on the dignity of man and launching a "carefully orchestrated program" for population control.

Msgr. James T. McHugh, director of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Division on Family Life, charged the commission with defining "quality of life in terms of the number of people rather than in terms of man's view of himself as a person, and the social, cultural and religious values that we commonly associate with the dignity of man."

The priest's statement came in response to a report issued

March 11 by the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future.

The commission, a 24-member panel created by Mr. Nixon in March 1970, and headed by John D. Rockefeller 3d, called for a deliberate government policy on population growth, maintaining that the birth rate must be curtailed and then brought to a gradual halt.

The report was the first of three and dealt mainly with the quality of life. Later reports are expected to confront more volatile issues, including legalized abortion.

Msgr. McHugh, in challenging the procedures used in releasing piecemeal the results of the two-year study, said a problem of credibility was created in regard to the substance of the report.

"We are faced with the fact that after two years of research and intensive discussion, the commission finds itself unable or unwilling to present a clear and complete report to the American people," the USCC official said.

He maintained that the procedure of periodic press conferences to release the reports "indicates that the commission seems more concerned with molding public opinion than with the objective research."

Msgr. McHugh described the report as a "carefully orchestrated program to convince us that 'fewer is better.'"

"The commission dodges the complexities of harmonizing population size with the development and allocation of resources," he said, "and continually resorts to the cop-out argument that things may be easier if the population is smaller."

## Bishop Lends Support to Voter Drive

by BARBARA MOYNEHAN

The Monroe County legislature's president and minority and majority leaders have committed themselves to an April 4 resolution on the mobile registration issue as a result of a confrontation with three representatives of the Rochester Coalition for a Student Vote in Bishop Joseph L. Hogan's office Monday.

Through the efforts of area high school and college students, the League of Women Voters has offered to minimize expenses by volunteering, at no cost to the county, to serve as registrars.

Bishop Hogan told Joseph N. Ferrari, Republican president of the legislature, Samuel Poppic, Democratic minority leader and Henry Williams, Republican majority leader, and the three students that he was unable to vote last year because he did not make it to the registration center at 36 W. Main St., "the only registration center for a county that covers almost 700 square miles and is open only 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days a week," he said.

The students present, Susan Dollinger, graduate student at Brockport, Lucille Pourier, a junior at Nazareth College, and Joseph Fichera, a senior at Madison High School pressed for immediate action since schools will be getting out in May and June. They assured the legislators that representatives from the League of Women Voters would be at the upcoming meeting with the voting commission, Thursday, March 23 to commit themselves to the volunteer service, thereby insuring the legislators any cost would be minimal.

The students also stressed the need for decentralized registration for the handicapped and aging.

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