

# Ford Opposes Abortion on Demand

By JOHN NOVOTNEY

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — Vice President-designate Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) opposes abortion on demand and has co-sponsored legislation in the House of Representatives which would restore to the states the power to prohibit or regulate abortions.

Interviewed by Religious News Service as he walked, surrounded by four Secret Service body guards from the House floor to his office in the Capitol, Ford said he has "introduced the legislation that would permit each state to make a decision on whether or not they want to go along with the Supreme Court decision" (which overturned most state abortion laws).

"In my opinion," he continued, "that's the practical approach — it gives the people of each state the honest opportunity to express themselves on this very critical issue."

He went on to point out that "in Michigan, I, in the last election of 1972, voted against the proposal that would have permitted in effect abortion on demand."

Ford, described by those who know him as a "faithful Episcopalian," co-sponsored earlier this year a resolution introduced by Rep. G. William Whitehurst (R-Va.) which read as follows:

"Nothing in this (U.S.) Constitution shall bar any state or territory or the District of Columbia, with regard to any area over which it has jurisdiction, from allowing, regulating, or prohibiting the practice of abortion."

The resolution was aimed at blunting the effect of the January Supreme Court controversial abortion decision.

A Ford aide, however, said that the lawmaker (who has been in Congress 25 years) is "keeping an open mind" on a Constitutional amendment introduced, a few days after the court decision, by Rep. Lawrence J. Hogan (R-Md.). The Hogan measure states:

"Neither the United States nor any state shall deprive any human being from the moment of conception of life without due process of law, nor deny to any human being from the moment of conception within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Hogan, a Roman Catholic, is perhaps Congress' most outspoken opponent to abortion, and while his resolution has attracted a good deal of interest here and around the country, other members of Congress (including Whitehurst) have introduced their own resolutions regarding abortion with differences from Hogan's which they obviously consider important.

Ford's spokesman said the vice president-designate "is not foreclosing support for the Hogan Amendment. It is entirely possible he could support" it, he added.

"Basically he (Ford) feels the Supreme Court decision was wrong and something should be done to rectify it," the spokesman said, adding: "but as to what should be done, he hasn't taken a hard and fast position" — except for co-sponsoring Whitehurst's resolution.

In his July 23 newsletter (called Washington Review, a Report from Your Congressman, Ford listed bills or resolutions he had sponsored or co-sponsored since the first of the year, and among them he listed one to "Amend the U.S. Constitution to restore (his emphasis) to the states the power to prohibit or regulate abortions."

The June 25 newsletter reported on a survey of opinion he had earlier taken of his constituents, from which the following is excerpted:

"Offered three choices, only 31 per cent of my respondents said

they favor allowing the Supreme Court ruling on abortion to stand. Nearly half of the respondents — 45 per cent — want a constitutional amendment which would prohibit abortions in all but extreme circumstances (such as saving the mother's life), while 18 per cent favor a constitutional amendment which would restore to the states the power to regulate abortions. The combined vote for constitutional amendments which would reverse the Supreme Court decision is 63 per cent."

Ford told constituents in his Aug. 4 newsletter that he voted for both the "conscience" and "living human fetus" amendments of the Public Health Service Act, which the House approved 372-1, extending for one year 12 health programs, including one regarding abortion.

The "conscience amendment," he explained, is a "provision which would prohibit a court or public official using a cutoff of federal funds to force an individual or institution to perform or assist in the performance of sterilization procedures or abortions."

## Certain of Allende Suicide

# Cardinal Reports on Chile

Philadelphia [RNS] — Cardinal Raul Silva y Henriquez of Chile is reported to be certain that the late President Salvador Allende committed suicide on being ousted by the military junta.

In talks with Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia, Cardinal Silva also revealed:

That deaths in the coup which toppled Allende from power and in the violence which followed amounted to 1,200 to 1,500 including police and members of the armed forces.

That solid evidence exists that Allende supporters had distributed arms toward the

formation of a para-military force in Chile.

In what the Catholic Standard and Times, archdiocesan newsweekly, called "far-ranging conversations," Cardinal Silva also revealed that his nephew was among the physicians who examined the body of President Allende.

The newspaper said that Cardinal Silva had won worldwide acclaim for the moderate tone of a statement he issued following the Sept. 11 coup — a statement which asked "respect for those fallen in the struggle toward the moderation of the vanquished . . . (retention) of

the advances achieved under previous governments . . . (a quick return) to institutional normalcy."

In his talks here the cardinal reportedly revealed that reliable sources placed the number of deaths in Santiago during the struggle following the coup had been 1,000 — also that 300 Chileans died in other parts of the country.

Any reports of deaths in excess of 1,500, Cardinal Silva reported as saying, are exaggerated.

It was reported that Cardinal Silva told Cardinal Krol that more than 5,000 weapons had been turned in to churches throughout Chile. Citizens may leave them without fear of reprisal.

Included among the weapons surrendered at local churches, it was reported, were 2,300 rifles and some cannon, bazookas and anti-tank guns. Many of the weapons, it was reported, were of Russian or Czechoslovakian manufacture.

Cardinal Silva told Cardinal Krol that the Chilean bishops had established two relief committees, one to help refugees from abroad who had fled to Chile for asylum; and a second, a committee of peace, to provide legal assistance for those arrested during the coup and scheduled to be brought to trial after martial law was lifted.

According to the Catholic Standard and Times report, the Chilean prelate "noted that the military junta has already pledged that foreign refugees would not be returned to the nations from which they fled, but would be allowed to depart for other nations willing to receive them."

"Cardinal Silva said the junta had intended to send President Allende into exile and had a plane to carry him out of the country, but the President shot himself before the presidential palace was taken."

During his Oct. 25 visit to Cardinal Krol, Cardinal Silva reported that 80 priests were detained after the coup, but only eight were still in custody. One priest, the newspaper said, was executed after he apparently permitted a hospital of which he was administrator to be used as an outpost for snipers.

Cardinal Silva admitted that some missionary priests have been deported from Chile, the newspaper said, but he is reported to have attributed their deportation to previous involvement in Chilean political affairs.

## Unit Urges U.S. Bishops Build Bridges to Priests

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — A U.S. Catholic bishops' committee, in a report on the exercise of authority in the Church, called for a "formal and structured" relationship between the bishops' conference and provincial, regional and national priest organizations.

Noting that the "chasm between priests and bishops (is) widening," the committee said new forms or structures must be found, not only to build better contacts between local churches but to facilitate collaboration between priests and bishops in "supra-diocesan bodies and enterprises."

The Ad Hoc Committee for Priestly Life and Ministry, chaired

by Archbishop Philip M. Hannan of New Orleans, made its report today (Nov. 14) during the five-day annual general meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in Washington, D.C.

In addition to a priests-bishops structure, the committee also urged that the practice of inviting priests to participate in national and regional bishops' meetings "be continued and expanded and that the agenda be distributed to them in time for consultation on the local level."

The ad hoc committee, which is this year attempting to make itself a permanent NCCB agency, also said that "serious consideration" should be given to permitting priests "to have a voice in national, regional and provincial meetings of bishops, at least on those matters which relate directly to priestly life and ministry."

It was in this vein that the committee pointed out the recommendation made in a recent world synod of Catholic bishops document that "new structures" be developed to make it possible for bishops and priests to collaborate.

The ad hoc committee also proposed that councils or senates of priests "become truly consultative" in the sense that consultation "derives from the very nature of the Church as a people and communion of believers," and reflects "our belief in the universality of the gifts of the spirit of God."

The committee, noting that "the rights of individuals may at times be violated or abridged even in the life of the Church," stressed the need for guarantees of due process in every diocese.

## Deaths

### Sister Urban

Mass of the Resurrection for Sister Urban Schreiner of the Sisters of St. Joseph was offered in the Motherhouse chapel Nov. 3, 1973.

Father Joseph Aubin, her nephew, was celebrant, with Father Robert Kreckel. Fathers Joseph Reinhart and William Gordinier assisted. Msgr. William Naughton and Fathers Frederick Walz and Thomas Erdle also were present.

Sister Urban taught in Our Lady of Perpetual Help School for 13 years, in St. Francis Xavier School for six years, and for shorter periods at St. John's, Greece; St. Agnes, Avon; St. Francis de Sales, Geneva; St. Patrick, Seneca Falls, and Immaculate Conception, Ithaca. Her last teaching assignment was in St. Anthony's, Rochester, 1958-61, when she retired.



ON THE LINE  
Bob Considine

The Road to Damascus was a place for the moment of truth a long time before Israeli tanks rolled in its direction and ran into the armor of the Syrians, Iraqis and Jordanians.

A great Jew named Sha'ul, educated at the feet of Gamaliel in the city of Jerusalem, and possessed of the rights and privileges of Roman citizenship, had a memorable experience on that road that leads from the Damascus Gate in the Jerusalem Wall to the oldest city in the world.

The New Testament, with an assist from the Encyclopedia Britannica, helps us with this:

"... Such claims, particularly that of a crucified Messiah, struck at the very conceptions which Paul's Jewish training had nourished and his rabbinic studies had so recently confirmed, and threatened the essential features of Judaism itself: To exterminate this sect and to destroy this blasphemous heresy root and branch became the supreme passion of his life (Gal. 1, 13). Nothing could be more surely the will of God than that he should oppose with all means at his disposal 'the name of Jesus of Nazareth' and pursue to the death all who belonged to 'the sect of the Nazarenes' (Acts XXVI, 9-11). Thus he literally 'laid waste the church' (Acts VIII, 3).

"To further this purpose he set out for Damascus fortified with documents from the religious authorities in Jerusalem, authorizing him to secure the followers of Jesus of Nazareth who had gone there and possibly to bring some back to face trial for heresy.

"He reached Damascus but not

as he expected, for on the way he was confronted with Jesus of Nazareth and soundly converted to the new sect which he had been so zealously persecuting, certainly one of the most amazing reversals of purpose in the whole history of mankind. The (New Testament) differs slightly in details respecting accompanying phenomena that changed Sha'ul into Paul — the light, the sound, the fall to the earth, the blindness — but agree substantially as to what Paul saw and heard and said, and his subsequent relationship with Ananiás in Damascus . . ."

Whatever, Christianity may never have reached the communication center of Rome, and therefore Western civilization, without the travels and travails of the saint who started down the road to Damascus as Sha'ul and reached his destination as Paul.

One way to stop the inexorable extinction of rare animal life is to purchase a box (available at toy stores and elsewhere) of small replicas labeled "Vanishing Animals." It is the brainchild of Louis Marx, the toycoon. It is officially sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, which will receive a royalty on every package sold (and most of Marx's royalties). Sad statistic: Since the year 1600 A.D. about 130 full species have ceased to exist.

The dodo is dead, but perhaps you can help save the snow leopard, mountain gorilla, ringtailed wallaby, J. Fernandez seal, Arabian oryx, giant otter, mountain zebra, rhino, panda, walia ibex and dozens of others man and his messiness are killing off.

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