

Cardinal Reports to Pope On Problems in Chile

Rome [RNS] — Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez of Santiago, Chile, after more than an hour's consultation with Pope Paul at the Vatican, told newsmen here that he was gravely concerned over the growing rupture between the Catholic Church and the Chilean government.

He said he came to Rome to consult with the Pope and members of the Vatican Secretariat of State because he believes "this is the obligation of a bishop who finds himself in a situation as difficult as ours."

The Chilean prelate met with Cardinal Jean Villot, Vatican secretary of state, and with the prefect of the Vatican Congregation of Bishops, Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio, concerning the growing church-state strains in Chile.

In recent weeks, a number of priests have been arrested, the Apostolic Nuncio to Chile, Archbishop Sanz Villalba Sotero has given refuge to fugitive leftists,

the government of Gen. Augusto Pinochet has threatened retaliation and strongly criticized local Church leaders, and an interreligious peace committee strongly supported by Cardinal Silva has been ordered dissolved.

Cardinal Silva with other Chilean bishops, has in recent months increasingly challenged government policies, particularly the use of torture on political prisoners and the suppression of human rights. He also spoke out in defense of several priests, including some Americans, arrested and jailed for aiding a wounded leftist guerrilla leader.

The guerrilla leader, Nelson Gutierrez, a top official of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), was aided by Catholic priests and nuns and then took refuge in the apostolic nunciature in Santiago. Other top guerrilla leaders, including the nephew of former President Salvador Allende, reportedly escaped.

After arresting several priests and nuns — several of whom were deported — for aiding the guerrillas, the government demanded that those taking refuge in the nunciature be handed over to security forces.

While a spokesman for the Apostolic Nuncio in Santiago confirmed that leftist fugitives were given refuge, the Vatican has issued no statement on the situation.

During his Rome news conference, Cardinal Silva denied that he was leading the Chilean Catholic Church toward socialism, in opposing policies of the strongly anti-Communist military regime of Gen. Pinochet.

"Church policy is neither left nor right," the cardinal declared, "it is to tell the truth."

DPC Urges Easier Church Access

A resolution concerning access to churches, approved at the December meeting, was the first originating in a parish council to be acted upon by the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Mrs. Nancy Werner, as liaison for the Southeast Region introduced the resolution requesting that new buildings in the diocese include entrances for the handicapped and that efforts be made to solve existing problems. They also asked each region to list the church buildings in the region that are accessible and make the list available to those interested.

That action completed the process that enables small groups to express their concerns to the entire diocese through the DPC. Howard Benjamin, president of the parish council at Monroe Community Hospital, started the process, noting that many residents at the hospital are unable to attend Mass at other churches because they can't get into the buildings. The request to make the buildings accessible was communicated to the regional council by the parish's delegate, Sam Giambra. At Father John Mulligan's suggestion, the resolution was drawn up and then presented to the DPC by Mrs. Werner. The DPC's approval signalled their agreement that the idea would be good for the entire diocese.

Mrs. Werner reports little reaction as yet, but she has become aware of a similar problem. The deaf, while able to enter buildings easily, are often unable to participate in the services inside.



Photo by Anthony J. Costello

Farewell Dinner

More than 300 persons attended a farewell dinner for Father William J. Schifferli, retiring pastor of Christ the King parish, Sunday, Jan. 4 at Barry's Party House. At head table, from left, are Father David W. Mura, associate pastor; Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey; Rosemary Schifferli, Father Schifferli's sister; Father Schifferli; Father Raymond G. Heisel, pastor of neighboring St. Margaret Mary's; Auxiliary Bishop James E. McCafferty; and Father Daniel Brent, diocesan superintendent of schools, who resides at Christ the King. Father Schifferli has been a priest for 35 years and for the past 16 years has been pastor at Christ the King.

High Court: Private Hospitals Can Ban Elective Abortions

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand a lower court ruling upholding the right of a government-supported but privately operated hospital to forbid doctors from performing elective abortions.

The court declined to review a case involving Orange Memorial Hospital in Orange County, Tex. The hospital was built by the county government with local and federal funds on land owned by the county, but in 1973, the hospital and land was leased to a non-profit corporation established to operate the hospital.

In 1973, shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision liberalizing abortion laws, Dr. John C. Greco began to perform elective abortions at the hospital.

The board of directors of the hospital corporation adopted a motion by the medical staff preventing further elective abortions — as opposed to medically necessary or therapeutic abortions. Dr. Greco sued to change the regulation.

Both the Federal District Court and the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit supported the hospital. The district court ruled that if the hospital were a public institution it would have to allow elective abortions, but since it was private it could constitutionally forbid non-therapeutic abortions.

The appeals court affirmed the district court ruling, with mixed reasons. Two of the three judges agreed that since the hospital was privately operated, there was no state or government action, and thus no constitutional violation.

The third judge appeared to disagree on whether there was enough government involvement to constitute state action, but found no requirement to allow abortions.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the case, over the dissents of Justice Byron R. White and Chief Justice Warren E. Burger.

The question is important, the

conflict is clear, and this court has a responsibility to resolve it," Justices White and Burger said. "The task of policing this court's decisions (on abortion) is a dif-

icult one, but having exercised its powers as it did, the court has a responsibility to resolve the problems arising in the wake of those decisions."

Priest-Intern Transferred

Father James B. Callan was reassigned in the priest-intern program as assistant at St. Ambrose, effective Friday Jan. 2. He has been serving as an assistant at St. Peter and Paul, Elmira, since shortly after his ordination in October 1974. He will not be replaced in Elmira, the Pastoral Office said.

**Your
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Jan. 8, 1815: Battle of New Orleans: General Andrew Jackson defeats British forces in America's second War of Independence. In the War of 1812, Britain sought strategic outposts on the Gulf of Mexico area. Gen. Sir Edward Pakenham even planned to take New Orleans, despite the difficulty of getting soldiers into the marshy terrain of the Delta. The American forces, under Andrew Jackson, were outnumbered and unskilled, compared to the British regulars. Battle was scheduled at Chalmette field for Jan. 8.

The night before, the womenfolk of the soldiers spent the night praying to the Blessed Virgin in the Ursuline shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succour, New Orleans. The Ursuline nuns made a vow of a yearly Mass to Our Lady if victory were won.

While the battle was on, Father William Dubourg offered a Mass of petition. At Communion time, a herald brought the news of an incredible victory.

On Jan. 23, at Jackson's request, a thanksgiving service was held in the New Orleans Cathedral, and the General and his staff personally visited the Ursulines to thank them for their prayers. Rochester Diocesan Bicentennial Commission.

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