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Death Penalty Loses in Senate

Albany (RNS) — The State Senate has upheld Gov. Hugh Carey's veto of the controversial death penalty bill—failing by one vote to override the governor's veto.

The Senate voted 39-19 to override the veto, one vote short of the required two-thirds majority of the 60-member Senate.

Supporters of the bill, which would permit executions for certain categories of "intentional murders," said they plan to continue pressure for its passage.

Two Democrats were expected to support the over-ride — Sen. Israel Ruiz Jr. of the Bronx and Sen. Vander L. Beatty of Brooklyn — but they changed their minds and upheld the governor.

Major religious bodies of all faiths have spoken out against the death penalty bill, but some leaders acknowledged that many individuals within their membership wanted the death penalty restored.

Sen. Dale Volker of Depew, chief sponsor of the bill, said at the opening of the six-hour debate on the veto motion that capital punishment "is an issue that transcends party politics."

"It's people politics — the people are demanding that we act," he asserted. Supporters of the death penalty bill hold that it was the only effective deterrent to some crimes. Opponents argue that the death penalty is morally unacceptable and had no deterrent effect.

The proposed bill would permit execution for a wide range of "intentional murders" and provided for a two-tier jury system to allow for consideration of "mitigating circumstances" before convicted persons were sentenced.

Pilgrim Statue At Rome Mass

Rome (RNS) -Thousands of Catholic faithful paid homage here May 1 to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under her title of Our Lady of Fatima, at a Mass celebrated by Pope Paul's vicar for the Diocese of Rome, Cardinal Ugo Poletti.

The occasion for the ceremony at the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love was the arrival in Rome of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, from Portugal, on its 38-day pilgrimage to 20 countries on three continents.

Tactics Assailed By Cardinal

Chicago (RNS) - Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York condemned recent proabortion activities of the Chicago-area Planned Parenthood Association as "vicious" and "a disgrace."

Speaking at a news conference following a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Cooke, chairman of the NCCB committee for pro-life activities, said, "I have never seen more scurrilous things,"

The cardinal showed the press a series of cartoons and editorials sent to Chicago area newspapers under a cover letter signed by the public education director of the Planned Parenthood Association in Chicago.

One of the half-dozen cartoons caricatures a Catholic bishop holding matches and a can of gasoline. The prelate is pictured as saying he is not worried about abortion because "we've got the faithful out burning down the clinics."

A spokesman for the Chicago-area Planned Parenthood Association at first tried to defend the materials but later the Chicago chapter repudiated the materials, saying they do not represent either the chapter or the national organization.

Brazil Bishops Reject Move to Conservatism

Rio de Janeiro (RNS) —
Brazil's Roman Catholic
hierarchy has rejected a
move to turn the Church in
Latin America away from the
goal of developing a theology
of liberation that would lead
to widespread social change
on the continent.

The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops met at Italci, in Sao Paulo State, to select delegates to the third general Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) in October in Peubla, Mexico.

That conference is expected to chart the course the Latin American Church should follow over the next 10 years.

The first CELAM meeting in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968, endorsed a fitheology of liberation," denounced the conditions of poverty under which the Latin American masses lived, and called for sweeping changes in the social, economic and political structures of the region.

Since that time, the Catholic Church has moved sharply to the left, with bishops and priests not only speaking out against military dictatorships, but also identifying with the struggle for social and political structures of the region.

Some Latin American

Catholic leaders, however, believing that the Church has gone too far in its opposition to the status quo and is even flirting dangerously with Marxism, have launched a strong counteroffensive, hoping to slow down, if not reverse the swing toward what they decry as "Christian socialism."

The CELAM secretariat based in Bogota has circulated a preparatory document for the Puebla

meeting that devotes relatively little attention to the causes of poverty and violence of Latin America and redefines the Church's role in society as essentially evangelistic.

The Brazilian Bishops
Conference produced a
document that contained 127
amendments supplanting the
"conservative" spirit of the
preparatory document and
espousing the
Church's "liberal" thrust.

Stevens, NLRB Agree; Injunction Is Dropped

Washington, DC. (RNS) -- After a negotiated settlement, the National Labor Relations Board announced it has dropped efforts to seek a sweeping nationwide injunction against the J.P. Stevens Co.

Under terms of the agreement, J.P. Stevens is committed to end alleged illegal anti-union activity which would have been covered by the court order in exchange for dropping the federal injunction. Many religious agencies have spoken out against Stevens policies and some have supported a boycott of its products.

The NLRB announced it would seek the injunction late last year, began legal

procedures in January, and then announced its intent to reach an out-of-court settlement with Stevens in March.

Without admitting guilt, the company agreed to stop any illegal activities aimed at thwarting union activity and to rehire 11 workers who were said to have been fired for pro-union activities.

Under the agreement, if the NLRB determines that Stevens breached the agreement with illegal anti-union sactivities, it can resubmit its request for injunctive relief without contention from the company. This would, injessence, make it easier and quicker to take the case to court in the future.

