

Pope Assails Soviet Trials, Convictions

Castelgandolfo (RNS) — Pope Paul has sharply criticized the trials and convictions of three Soviet dissidents, calling their alleged crimes "ideological infractions" and their sentences too severe.

"Today," the Pope said, "the universal heritage of culture in society is that a political opinion or the vindication of one's right cannot, as such, be persecuted or punished as a crime."

The Pope, addressing 3,000 visitors in the courtyard of his summer residence here and by radio hookup additional thousands in St. Peter's Square in Rome, did not mention by name Anatoly B. Shcharansky, Aleksandr Ginzburg, and Viktoras Petkus.

The pontiff said that the Conference on European Security and Cooperation at Helsinki, "whose meetings were attended by the Holy See with careful and loving attention, was intended to be a decisive and progressive moment in human civilization, but the ending of the trials which the whole of the world's press is speaking about, obliges us also to express our pain and reaffirm our confidence in the coherent and progressive maturation of the moral sense of all peoples."

The convicted dissidents were members of a group that monitored and sought to publicize Soviet violations of the human rights provisions of the Helsinki accords.

Pope Paul said he felt obliged to speak out because of "the sentences inflicted



Aleksandr Ginzburg, left, holds his son before his arrest in 1977. Above, Anatoly Shcharansky was sentenced to 13 years at hard labor.

Shcharansky was sentenced to 13 years at hard labor for treason and espionage; Ginzburg to eight years for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, and Petkus to 15 years in prison, labor camp and internal exile on similar charges.

with such severity on persons of ideological infractions" and because of "our commitment professed at Helsinki."

The Pope said his hope is that "all countries and peoples of the world may find themselves united in common

homage and in practical affirmation of the lofty ideals of human rights. May the sufferings of the condemned persons and their families to whom we equally dedicate our thoughts be turned into a higher good for their country and for humanity."

Kinsolving Becomes 'Independent'

Silver Spring, Md. (RNS) — The controversial priest and columnist C. Lester Kinsolving announced he has left the Episcopal Church to serve an independent parish here. The church, St. Thomas the Apostle, is not related to either the Episcopal Church or the nascent Anglican Church in North America, he said.

He said he "is not renouncing the Episcopal Church. There are many people in the Church whom I love and respect and I have served it for 22 years, but I am deeply disturbed about many things in the Episcopal Church today."


Mr. Kinsolving, a syn-

dicated newspaper columnist, was recently granted readmission to congressional press galleries. The privilege was removed in early 1977, following allegations he had accepted payments from South Africa to promote that government at annual shareholder meetings of U.S. corporations.

Blue Army

An all-night vigil of devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary will begin at 9 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 4, at Holy Rosary Church. Father Thomas Corbett will celebrate the opening Mass. Deacon Steven Gagnier will conduct a

holy hour and Father Robert Meng, pastor, will celebrate the closing Mass at 6 a.m. Saturday. The monthly devotions are sponsored by the Rochester chapter of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima.

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