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National/International Report

Three local women arrested during Washington protest

From NC News and local reports

Washington (NC) — Three Rochester-area women, each identifying herself as Winnie Mandela, were arrested Monday, April 27, and charged with "obstructing a passage" at the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in Langley, Va.

The three women were among nearly 600 Monroe- and Wayne-County residents who traveled to Washington by bus to participate in the Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa, an April 25 march from the White House to the Capitol building. Approximately 75,000 people took part in the march, which was designed to express opposition to U.S. policies in Central America and South Africa.

Two days later, on April 27, nearly 400 of the marchers — including the three Rochesterians — were arrested as they sat down in front of entrances to CIA headquarters during the morning rush hour.

According to "Jack Spula of Rochester's Peace and Justice Education Center (PJEC) the charge is a misdemeanor in Virginia and carries a maximum penalty of one year in jail or a \$1,000 fine. The women — who are affiliated with PJEC and Nuclear-Free Zone of Rochester — are being held at the Fairfax County Jail in lieu of \$1,000 bail for refusing to provide authorities with their correct names. Each was charged under the name Jane Doe.

Also arrested at the CIA was anti-war activist and former priest Philip Berrigan, who spoke April 26 at a separate rally calling for the impeachment of President Reagan, Vice President George Bush and Attorney General Edwin Meese.

On April 25, the 75,000 marchers withstood chilling winds and overcast skies to stand six hours on the lawn in front of the U.S. Capitol cheering dozens of speakers, including Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit.

Bishop Gumbleton called on U.S. citizens to accept responsibility for their government's actions and echoed marchers' concerns about the way their tax dollars are spent.

Many marchers took time off from work to make the trek to Washington by chartered bus from cities throughout the nation, including Cedar Falls, Iowa; Boston; Ann Arbor, Mich.; Houston; Los Angeles; Tampa, Fla.; and Portland, Maine.

Students from Catholic and state universities skipped classes to journey to Washington to participate.

Shouting into a microphone in front of the crowds gathered in front of the Capitol April 25, Bishop Gumbleton told the marchers, "The Gospel I read, preach and try to live calls us to stand with the poor" and fight the policies of "those who would exploit."

In a speech that received loud applause, the bishop called for an end to the "evil and madness" of the arms race, an end to testing of nuclear arms, and an end "to U.S. wars in Central America." He also called for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

As a pastor in inner-city Detroit, the bishop said, "I have seen the bitterness of poverty and injustice." He added, "We must weed out racism, not export it with foreign policy."

Recalling the assassinations of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador and four U.S. churchwomen in El Salvador, Bishop Gumbleton said they were murdered by "the Salvadoran military establishment" funded by U.S. taxpayers.

"We want an end to lies, do we not?" the bishop asked the marchers. "We want an end to the immoral contra war, do we not?"

The purpose of the march was "to call the U.S. government to accountability," the bishop said, adding he holds the government accountable for "lawlessness, deceit and violence."

Bishop Gumbleton ended his speech with the words of Archbishop Romero: "In the name of God ... I beseech you, I beg you, I order you, stop the repression and stop it now."

Actor Ed Asner, former president of the Screen Actors Guild, said before he went on



SOLE SYMBOL — One-year-old Tess Hobbs examines a pair of shoes on the Washington Ellipse, as demonstrators form a large peace symbol with their shoes. The demonstration near the White House was part of a larger rally and march to protest Reagan administration policies in South Africa and Central America.

stage at the event that the thousands of protesters present gave him hope because they showed that people care.

"This has been a terrible age of 'play it safe' and 'let George do it,'" he said. "Get ahead' — that's been the name of the game in this age of yuppiedom. But these people here are exercising their rights of citizenship, standing up for their principles."

Dr. Benjamin Spock, who participated in the demonstration, agreed with Asner. "Too many families these days teach no beliefs except 'getting ahead.'

"It's important to believe in something wider or bigger — something spiritual," the 83-year-old pediatrician said in an interview. The fact that churches today are "lined up for disarmament," he commented, is a positive sign.

The marchers were told by the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, senior minister of the interdenominational Riverside Church in New York, that "we are here because we believe with George Washington that morality is indispensable to political prosperity."

He said the Reagan administration thinks revolutions are inspired by communists. The truth is, he said, "revolutions are made by repressive regimes, for the simple reason you can't have a revolt without revolting conditions."

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