

National/International Report



This is the Enemy

CREATING AN ENEMY — A U. S. anti-Nazi poster from 1942 is one of the propaganda images studied in "Faces of the Enemy," a PBS documentary to air June 11 at 8 p.m. on WXXI-TV 21. Sam Keen explores the psychology of enemy-making, probing the mind, imagination and emotions that allow individuals and nations to kill.

South African ballot brings charges, gloomy predictions

PRETORIA, South Africa (NC) — A southern African bishops' conference official predicted gloom for the country's black majority after South Africa's white voters rejected the liberal opposition in a parliamentary election.

After the May 6 election, an interracial Catholic couple was among hundreds of South Africans facing eviction because of what one bishop called an "election payoff" by the ruling National Party.

At the same time, the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference announced it was extending the term of its secretary general, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, imprisoned under South Africa's emergency laws since June 1986.

Sister Brigid Flanagan, acting secretary general of the conference, said results of the whites-only election showed a "massive rejection" of black interests.

However Sister Flanagan said the outcome was "not a surprise." She said the government's pre-election campaign played on white racial fears and prejudices — claiming, for example, that a vote for the liberal Progressive Federal Party was a vote for the black-run rebel African National Congress.

"It's amazing how the black people still have hope" for full participation in South Africa's political and economic life, she said.

The southern African bishops said in a pre-election statement that the voting would be "unjust" because a minority, the whites, would be voting for a body whose law-making affects all South Africans.

In the election for the white House of Assembly, the ruling National Party won 123 seats, an increase of seven, while the Conservative Party won 22 and the Progressive Federal Party dropped to 19 seats from 26. The South African Parliament is divided into the 178-member all-white House of Assembly, a 85-member colored (mixed-race) House of Representatives, and a 45-member Indian House of Delegates. The 25 million black South Africans have no parliamentary representation.

By mid-May, the government issued at least 100 eviction notices to interracial couples, aimed at forcing non-whites out of neighborhoods designated for whites only. The orders were seen by many South Africans as an election present from the National Party to its supporters.

On May 16, Jimmy and Shan James opened their Durban beachfront luxury apartment to prospective buyers under pressure from the government. Shan James is of Indian background. The couple was married in Durban's Emmanuel Cathedral in September 1985, a few months after the government repealed the law barring such weddings.

The eviction notices were "an election payoff more than anything else," Archbishop Stephen Naidoo of Cape Town said May 14.

"It is ridiculous that the government should lift the ban on marriage between people of different races and not allow them to live together," Jimmy James said.

In another matter related to South Africa's racial tensions, the bishops' conference extended the term of its imprisoned secretary general until the end of 1987. The term was to have expired at the end of May.

In the May 14 announcement, the bishops also repeated their "vehement protest" of Father Mkhathshwa's continued detention.

The priest, the first black to hold the conference post, was detained June 14, 1986, two days after the government declared a state of emergency in the face of mounting nationwide protest of its racial policies.

Father Mkhathshwa is being held in the Pretoria Central Prison without having been charged or tried, the bishops' statement said.

Sister Flanagan said he is "well, physically and morally" and receives regular visits from relatives and the prison chaplain, Msgr. John Magennis.

However, she said the conference president, Bishop Wilfred Napier of Kokstad, South Africa, has been denied permission to visit Father Mkhathshwa.

Priests' council federation urges reinstatement of archbishop's powers

By Kay Urtz

ST. PAUL, Minn. (NC) — Delegates to the National Federation of Priests' Councils have called on their bishops to help resolve "the impasse that presently exists" between Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle and the Holy See.

Meeting in St. Paul May 11-15, first in general convention and then as the federation's House of Delegates, the priests also passed several resolutions urging more justice for Church personnel and backing a variety of justice and peace activities.

The priests voted 121-3 for a resolution which said Archbishop Hunthausen should have his authority restored to him immediately, completely and unconditionally.

The Vatican-requested division of authority between the archbishop and his auxiliary, Bishop Donald Wuerl, is "extremely divisive" and "has not in fact brought about any positive results," the resolution said. The division of authority was announced last September.

The resolution was introduced by delegates from the Seattle priests' council and was co-sponsored by councils or associations of 10 other dioceses.

The federation elected Father Joseph Brink of Covington, Ky., as president-elect for the coming year and president from 1988 to 1990. He is to succeed Father Richard Hynes of Newark, N.J.

The federation's two-day business session May 14-15 followed a three-day general meeting to which lay leaders were invited for the first time. The chief focus of the meeting was the U.S. bishops' 1986 pastoral letter on the economy.

Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, head of the committee that wrote the pastoral, keyed the convention.

The federation gave its annual President's Award to Monsignor George Higgins, calling him the "dean of American Catholic social action." Monsignor Higgins, who now teaches theology at The Catholic University of America, spent more than 30 years

handling labor and social justice concerns as an official of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

In resolutions they approved, federation delegates:

- Called unanimously for more justice for workers in the Church, including development of clear personnel policies and wage and benefit scales, and recognition of rights of employees to organize and bargain collectively.

- Backed, without dissent, a motion to promote use of inclusive or gender-neutral language and to encourage discussion of that issue at meetings of priests' councils.

- Opposed, 115-4, further U.S. aid to the contras, the guerrilla forces fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

- Supported, 119-2, the recent anti-nuclear peace protest in Nevada at which Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit and retired Bishop Charles Buswell of Pueblo, Colo., were arrested.

- Urged, by a 119-3 vote, congressional support for a peace tax fund.

- Backed, 119-1, the sanctuary movement's efforts to give a safe haven in the United States to refugees from Central America.

- Called, without dissent, for action to bring about full employment as a U.S. policy.

- Urged, with one opposing vote, the release of public financial statements each year by the Holy See.

- Voted 131-1 to adopt Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, secretary general of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, who has been arrested repeatedly by South African authorities and is currently under detention, to show support for his witness against his country's system of apartheid, or racial segregation.

The delegates also agreed, by 72-46, to form a study group on alternative administration models for parishes, with the aim of examining ways trained lay people could assume more administrative responsibilities, freeing priests for more pastoral work.

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