

World & Nation

C-J Capsules

Lefebvre to visit Vatican

Vatican City (NC) — Rebel French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who has recently threatened to ordain his own bishops, is expected to meet in mid-July with Vatican doctrinal officials, according to Vatican and other sources.

A meeting between the suspended archbishop and officials, including Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is scheduled for July 14 at the congregation's offices, French press reports quoted an aide of Archbishop Lefebvre as saying.

The archbishop's visit is one of several recent efforts by his Society of St. Pius X to have its "traditionalist" point of view heard at the Vatican, according to Father Paul Aulagnier, an official of the society.

Dioceses adopt insurance plan

San Francisco (NC) — Twelve Catholic dioceses in California, Nevada and Arizona have announced the start of a joint self-insurance plan July 1.

Called The Ordinary Mutual, the plan is an effort to head off skyrocketing liability insurance costs, which in some cases have gone up 100 percent a year or become unavailable commercially.

Covered in the new plan are some 980 parishes, 615 schools and a variety of other church operations in the 12 dioceses, such as cemeteries, social service and youth agencies, seminaries and central diocesan offices.

K of C contributed millions

New Haven, Conn. (NC) — The Knights of Columbus gave more than \$67 million to charitable causes in 1986 and donated more than 24 million hours in volunteer services, according to an annual survey.

The survey found that the physically handicapped and the mentally retarded were the principal beneficiaries of Knights of Columbus fund-raising events. In 1986, \$1.3 million was donated to the disabled and \$11.2 million was given to aid the retarded. Local Special Olympics received \$674,369.

The Knights also provided \$1.7 million in direct grants to seminarians for educational expenses. An additional \$565,784 was given to seminaries and religious houses of study.

Aid campaign halfway to goal

Washington (NC) — Organizers of a "true humanitarian aid" campaign for the people of Nicaragua announced July 9 that they were halfway to a \$100 million goal. They said they hoped to repair damage inflicted by the Reagan administration's "violent and sleazy" Central America policy. The campaign, called "Quest for Peace," began last November after Congress voted by a narrow margin to provide \$100 million to aid Nicaraguan contra rebels.

British examine bioethics issues

London (NC) — The British bishops have reiterated their calls for stringent controls on artificial human fertilization, including a ban on the creation of "spare" embryos and on any experimentation on human embryos. In a July 9 statement, the bishops' Joint Bioethical Committee, which represents the prelates of England, Wales and Scotland, said legislation "to prohibit any generating of human embryos for a purpose other than the immediate transfer of each and every embryo to the womb" is "of overriding urgency." The statement came as a response to the British government's consultation paper on proposed legislation, following the 1984 Warnock report on human fertilization and embryology.

Cardinal calls for reconciliation

Seoul, South Korea (NC) — Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou Hwan of Seoul called his country's plans for democratization hopeful and urged national reconciliation.

The cardinal said the plans provide the most hope for people at the bottom of society.

"Hereafter, I hope that politicians of the ruling and opposition camps will transcend partisan interests, make concessions and work for the nation together," Cardinal Kim said in early July.

Bork's supporters and foes draw battle lines

Washington (NC) — Abortion opponents have warmly welcomed President Reagan's nomination of Robert H. Bork to the Supreme Court. Abortion supporters and civil rights and education groups have threatened to turn his confirmation hearings into a long hot summer, vowing to fight against Bork, 60, a federal appeals court judge nominated by Reagan July 1 to succeed Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr.

Senate Democratic leaders predicted that Bork faces a confirmation battle so bitter that it could last well past the Oct. 5 opening of the next Supreme Court term.

But though Bork has been labeled a "judicial conservative," in some ways he might just as well be described as a judicial enigma.

In nominating Bork, "President Reagan has fulfilled his 1984 campaign promise to appoint highly qualified Supreme Court justices who will interpret the Constitution according to its text and history," the National Right to Life Committee said in a July 2 statement.

The day before Bork's nomination, National Abortion Rights Action League executive director Kate Michelman pledged, "We're going to wage an all-out frontal assault if Bork is nominated."

With his nomination, she said, "a woman's right to choose an abortion is threatened."

The day of the nomination, Freddie Hodge, executive director of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, predicted "a massive grass-roots mobilization" against Bork.

David N. O'Steen, National Right to Life Committee executive director, said that abortion opponents will launch an even larger grass-roots effort in support of Bork.

"Apparently the pro-abortion movement fears that Roe vs. Wade will not survive an honest reading of the Constitution," O'Steen said.

Richard McMunn, director of publications for the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, called Bork's designation "an excellent nomination" because "he's got the credentials."

McMunn said Bork believes Roe vs. Wade was "a raw exercise of judicial power. The court usurped what rightly belonged in legislation."

"While not a flat statement as being opposed to abortion, it's at least encouraging," he said.

But Bork's record on abortion shows that he has both agreed with and contradicted those pro-lifers who are rallying to his support.

One of his most controversial positions is that the privacy doctrine that serves as the basis for abortion rights is unconstitutional. In testimony in 1981, Bork called Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that struck down most state abortion laws, "an



President Reagan tells White House reporters that he is nominating Circuit Court Judge Robert H. Bork, left, to serve on the Supreme Court.

unconstitutional decision, a serious and wholly unjustifiable judicial usurpation of state legislative authority."

But in the same testimony, he rejected a proposed bill that would have declared that life begins at conception and would have defined the 14th Amendment's protection of the person as including the unborn.

He said the question the proposed bill raised was "whether it is proper to adopt unconstitutional countermeasures to redress unconstitutional action by the court."

"I think it is not proper," he continued. "The deformation of the Constitution is not properly cured by further deformations."

Bork's views on cases involving parochial schools have also taken different tacks. He disagreed with a 1925 Supreme Court decision in Pierce vs. Society of Sisters, that upheld the right of parents to send their children to parochial schools.

Yet in 1974, when he was solicitor general, Bork filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Supreme Court supporting the Title I program, then under review in a Missouri case.

His brief argued that "the use of public school teachers to provide remedial educational services to educationally deprived children on private school premises would not violate ... the First Amendment."

Eleven years later, the Supreme Court, voting 5-4, ruled that Title I provisions allowing public school teachers to instruct students in parochial school classrooms were

unconstitutional violations of the First Amendment.

How far Bork would go in extending interpretation of other rights under the Constitution is ambiguous. But civil rights groups are opposing Bork's nomination as strongly as abortion rights groups.

Benjamin Hooks, NAACP executive director, said he would fight Bork's nomination "until hell freezes over, and then we'll skate across on the ice."

According to Hooks, Bork is "cast in the role of an ultraconservative who wants to go back to original intent" of the Constitution. "Original intent means women can't vote."

Jerome Ernst, director of the National Catholic Conference on Interracial Justice, said his organization is trying to balance its concern about Bork's civil rights record with its support for anti-abortion views.

"Obviously we can't be too happy with much of his record," Ernst said, citing Bork's position on affirmative action. Bork has questioned the constitutionality of giving preferential treatment to members of racial minorities who have not been victims of discrimination themselves.

On the other hand, Ernst said, the conference is "mainstream Catholic Church" in its support of pro-life issues.

"We're concerned about both — the right to life and civil rights... How do you put the seamless garment together in this case?" Ernst asked.

Jewish, Catholic officials meet with cardinal

Informal talk termed serious, but cordial exploratory session

By Liz Schevtchuk

Washington (NC) — American Jewish and Catholic officials met July 9 in New York City with Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, Vatican secretary of state, because of interfaith tensions sparked by Austrian President Kurt Waldheim's June 25 visit to Pope John Paul II.

The Catholic-Jewish meeting, preceded by a July 8 meeting between Cardinal Casaroli and top U.S. Catholic officials, was announced by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in Washington July 10, following inquiries from National Catholic News Service and other news media.

According to Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, NCCB president, the cardinal and the Jewish delegation held a "serious, cordial" talk that was "reflective of mutual trust and concern."

Archbishop May did not attend the July 9 meeting between the cardinal and Jewish leaders, although he did attend the July 8 meeting between the cardinal and U.S. Catholic officials.

The cardinal and Jewish leaders conferred at the residence of Archbishop Renato Martino, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

One of the participants, Rabbi Marc T.

Tanenbaum, international affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, characterized it as "a useful meeting, one that the Jewish representatives see as the beginning of a process of necessary clarification between the Holy See and the world Jewish community."

"We look forward to a series of follow-up steps that we discussed with Cardinal Casaroli in order to help clarify the deep misunderstandings which emerged as a result of the meeting that Kurt Waldheim requested and held with the pope," he said.

Rabbi Tanenbaum added that the New York session "was an extremely serious but open and clearly very respectful discussion, whose purpose was to try to restore the mutual trust and respect that has been developing between the Vatican and all of us who have been involved in Vatican-Jewish relations for the last 20 years or so.

"In that sense, it was a good beginning," he added.

The NCCB announcement revealed that Catholic officials attending the initial July 8 meeting with Cardinal Casaroli were Archbishop May, Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York; Bishop Francis J. Mugavero of Brooklyn, moderator of the NCCB Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations; Bishop William H. Keeler of Harrisburg, Pa., who chairs the NCCB Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; and Monsignor Daniel F. Hoye, NCCB general secretary.

Msgr. Hoye and Bishop Keeler then joined Cardinal Casaroli for the second meeting

July 9 with Rabbi Tanenbaum and three other representatives of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation: Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, the committee's chairman; Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly; and Rabbi Gilbert Klapperman, president of the Synagogue Council of America.

Archbishop May, in his official statement, noted that "my prayer is that this meeting will mark the beginning of an intensification of efforts by both Catholics and Jews to explore our common faith heritage, to eliminate discrimination, and to increase mutual understanding and respect."

The St. Louis archbishop said the U.S. church leaders shared with Cardinal Casaroli "our assessment of Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States, especially as they have been impacted by recent controversies and allegations that the Catholic Church is insensitive to the memory of the Holocaust," in which the Nazis slaughtered millions of Jews.

The pope's meeting with Waldheim, who has denied accusations linking him to Nazi war crimes, prompted strong criticism of the Vatican from Jewish quarters and warnings that Jewish groups might pull out of a scheduled meeting with the pontiff in Miami Sept. 11.

At the Miami meeting, the pope and a Jewish representative are scheduled to read their respective prepared statements, but no exchange of dialogue is planned.