

World & Nation

Capsules

Theologians decry practice

Washington — About 100 theologians and ethicists, in a statement released March 24, rejected on moral and legal grounds the withholding or withdrawing of food and water by artificial means for non-competent, non-dying patients.

Except in rare circumstances, they said, it "is not morally right nor ought it be legally permissible" to withhold food and fluid from patients in irreversible comas or who are otherwise debilitated.

Chilean bishop fears attack

Santiago, Chile — Bishop Tomas Gonzalez Morales of Punta Arenas has joined nine other people in his southern Chilean diocese in appealing for court protection following death threats from a paramilitary group known as Chilean Anti-Communist Action.

Bishop Gonzalez wrote in a formal appeal filed in mid-March that "finding ourselves threatened with death and having our right to life and to physical and mental security disturbed by arbitrary acts committed by unknown persons, we are ... (turning) to the justice system to solicit the proper protection."

Cardinal fights torture

Washington — Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns of Sao Paulo, Brazil, said the Brazilian church is working on convincing authorities there that "even torture of so-called common criminals" is wrong.

Cardinal Arns said publication of records of a clandestine project he sponsored documenting torture in Brazil resulted in widespread Brazilian opposition to the torture of political prisoners.

Pope reaffirms celibacy rule

Vatican City — In a letter to the world's priests, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed priestly celibacy "for the whole of our lives" and told priests to find strength in Mary "when we meet difficulties along our chosen path."

"We freely renounce marriage and establishing our own family, in order to be better able to serve God and neighbor," he said.

Waldheim critic OKs visit

Rome — Scheduled formal meetings between Pope John Paul II and President Kurt Waldheim during a June papal trip to Austria should not be a divisive issue between Catholics and Jews, said a major Jewish critic of Waldheim.

"Don't make Waldheim the mediator between Catholics and Jews," said Gerhart M. Riegner, co-president of the board of directors of the World Jewish Congress.

The Geneva-based Jewish congress has been one of the organizations most active in gathering war crimes evidence against Waldheim.

Pro-life nuns criticized

Washington — Two board members of the National Coalition of American Nuns have called two nuns threatened with dismissal from their order for their abortion views "less than sensitive" to the responsibilities of their order.

The board members, School Sisters of Notre Dame Jeannine Gramick and Margaret Ellen Traxler, also accused Catholics For a Free Choice, which opposes church teaching on abortion, of having "designed the whole impasse in order to create a cause celebre" for its own public relations purposes.

Pastoral teaching questioned

Washington — Church personnel and even some bishops are guilty of teaching what they think the U.S. bishops' pastoral on war and peace "should have said rather than what it does say," a federal government official has written in a new book.

Church leaders teaching about the 1983 pastoral letter have "confused the faithful," wrote Matthew F. Murphy, an information officer for the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. His book, "Betraying the Bishops: How the Pastoral Letter on War and Peace is Being Taught," was released March 8.



Sefako Nyaka, a South African journalist, demonstrates against the government's closing of *New Nation* newspaper. Nyaka was one of several reporters taking part in the rush-hour protest in central Johannesburg, South Africa.

South African bishops' newspaper banned

By Bill Pritchard

Washington (NC) — The government of South Africa has imposed a three-month ban on the publication of *New Nation*, the newspaper of the Southern African Bishops' Conference. The white-minority regime announced that the ban was imposed as a penalty for the newspaper's publication of articles found politically objectionable by Minister of Home Affairs Stoffel Botha.

The ban was imposed March 22, after the newspaper failed in an attempt to challenge the state of emergency rules under which the penalty was assessed.

Last November, Botha had warned *The Nation* that it faced banning or censorship under South African emergency laws for stories it published, including ones on the opening of a new office of the outlawed African National Congress and a speech by Govan Mbeki, a top official of that organization.

The ban remains in effect until June 10,

with a possibility of renewal.

The order came in what acting editor Gabu Tugwana called a unique issue of a government gazette "issued especially for us." Tugwana has been editing the newspaper since the editor, Zwelakhe Sisulu, was detained by the government in December, 1986. According to Tugwana, the government has been silent on Sisulu's case since the journalist was apprehended.

Tugwana said the newspaper's staff will continue to gather and edit articles and be paid, despite being unable to publish. The 33-year-old editor said the exercise would be "training in advanced journalism."

According to Tugwana, Botha "could not challenge the authenticity" of the articles that induced the ban, but "formulated his own subjective opinion" about their alleged threat to public order.

The editor said an appeal of the ban could take up to 18 months, far longer than the ban itself is scheduled to last.

Tugwana described Botha's action as "a relief, in a way. It's different from having this thing hanging on your neck and (not knowing) when the guillotine would be executed," he said.

Tugwana called the ban part of "an intensive attack by the government on the media" which the government would continue until it frightened the press "into towing the line."

But he said the government won't "stop the voice which they intend stopping, which is the voice of the (black) majority."

Since the ban was announced, Tugwana said, the newspaper has received telegrams of support from various local and international organizations.

New Nation was launched by the southern African bishops as a general news publication. It has gained a reputation for covering news concerning the black community, which has been ignored or avoided by large, commercial media.

Irish churchmen promote peace after rash of killings

By Bill Pritchard

Washington (NC) — The Irish hierarchy and a British cardinal have called for peace and understanding in the wake of mounting tensions in Northern Ireland following the murders of five people at the Belfast funerals of two Irish Republican Army members.

Three of the victims were mourners killed at Milltown Cemetery in predominantly Catholic West Belfast by a Protestant extremist throwing grenades during the March 16 funeral of three IRA insurgents. The IRA men had been shot dead by British agents on Gibraltar while taking part in what the British agents claim was a bombing mission.

Three days later, two British soldiers were slain by members of a funeral procession for an IRA agent who had been killed during the March 16 funeral attack. The British soldiers had disobeyed orders to stay away from the area and apparently blundered into the midst of the procession.

These five deaths — plus the murders of a Protestant woman, a Catholic supermarket worker and a Northern Ireland policeman, among other incidents — have strained a cooperative agreement between Britain and the Irish republic. Supporters of the agreement, however, say they are determined to prevent disintegration of the accord.

On March 20, Ireland's primate, Cardinal Tomas O Fiaich of Armagh, Northern Ireland, said he was horrified by the "brutal and obscene murders" of the British soldiers, Corporals David R. Howes, 23, and Derek T. Wood, 24. The two men were beaten and shot dead by members of the funeral cortege, which is believed to have contained IRA

members. British military officials said the two soldiers were members of the Royal Corps of Signals, not undercover agents as some have alleged.

"The thought of these soldiers being savagely beaten and shot in cold blood will give rise to feelings of revulsion in every Irish man or woman who has a pound of human feelings," Cardinal O Fiaich said.

The following day, the cardinal and the leaders of the Methodist, Anglican and Presbyterian churches in Northern Ireland called jointly for "repentance and forgiveness" and prayed for civil leaders to "act with responsibility and sensitivity."

In a St. Patrick's Day homily, Cardinal O Fiaich had condemned the killings of three Catholics in the March 16 cemetery attack as one of the worst atrocities committed in the past 20 years of Protestant-Catholic conflict in the province.

In England March 22, Cardinal George Basil Hume of Westminster said that the deaths of the troopers were "the bitter fruit of a gospel of hate, which has been preached relentlessly by the IRA for nearly two decades."

He called for "political and peaceful solutions" to the troubles in Northern Ireland and for reaffirmation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, a political and consultative pact between Britain and the Irish republic.

Political leaders of both nations vowed to uphold the agreement.

In a March 21 speech before Parliament, British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Tom King called for continued joint efforts with the republic "to defeat terror-

ism." He also said a confidential, province-wide hotline was being established in Northern Ireland for receiving tips on terrorists.

On March 22, Bishop Cahal Daly of Down and Connor, whose diocese includes West Belfast, referred to the day the troopers were killed as "black Saturday" and offered sympathy to Corporal Howes' fiancée. He also said the "good Catholic people" of West Belfast had been "unjustly misrepresented by the world by the barbarous behavior of a few."

But the bishop reserved some criticism for British politicians, who he said had "too little recognition of Britain's responsibility" in Northern Ireland's problems.

"In Britain, there is little understanding in depth of Irish affairs (and) little awareness of Irish sensitivities and rights," he said.

The British Parliament's interest in the situation, "with honorable exceptions ... is too often confined to the latest atrocity," Bishop Daly said.

Bishop Edward Daly of Derry, Northern Ireland, told an American congregation that Northern Ireland's troubles are primarily economic and political. He spoke during a March 10 ecumenical prayer service for peace at St. Patrick's Parish in Richmond, Va.

Bishop Daly was accompanied by Anglican Bishop James Mehaffey of Londonderry, Northern Ireland, who said "it's sad that Christians are afraid of each other" in the province.

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