

World & Nation



**BANGLADESH WATER** — Student volunteers supply drinking water to residents of Bangladesh's capital city of Dacca. According to health officials there, more than 100 people have already died, and at least 150,000 have become ill after drinking polluted water or eating rotten food.

**State court faces right-to-die ruling on 'conscious' patient**

Albany, N.Y. (NC) — New York state's highest court will decide whether to remove an intravenous tube providing nutrition for a critically ill 77-year-old woman, who hospital officials say is conscious but unable to swallow or to speak without difficulty.

Catholic leaders said it is the first right-to-die case in New York and possibly in the nation involving a patient who is neither comatose, brain dead or terminally ill — all factors in previous right-to-die rulings.

The New York State Court of Appeals in Albany expedited its review of the case and heard arguments August 31 after lawyers for the hospital where the woman, Mary O'Connor, is a patient appealed a ruling by the Appellate Division of the state Supreme Court.

That ruling upheld a lower court decision to allow Mrs. O'Connor to be removed from all life-support systems, be placed on pain killers and permitted to go home to die.

Mrs. O'Connor, who is from the Bronx, N.Y., was debilitated by a series of strokes over the last two years and was admitted last June to the Westchester County Medical Center, where doctors inserted an intravenous feeding tube.

Hospital officials have been battling with Mrs. O'Connor's two daughters, who have blocked the insertion of a nasal feeding tube to replace the intravenous feeding.

The daughters have argued that their mother told them before her illness that she objected to keeping people alive by artificial means and that after taking care of two relatives who died of cancer she said more

than once she wished to die with dignity.

Hospital spokesman Barry Bowman told National Catholic News Service September 7 that Mrs. O'Connor "is absolutely conscious, although she is not legally competent."

"But she does respond to instructions to move her limbs in conjunction with whatever treatment she gets and she does speak, though in a limited fashion," he said.

The ethics board of the hospital in July voted unanimously that it would not withdraw any food or water from Mrs. O'Connor.

In a friend-of-the-court brief submitted to the Court of Appeals, the New York Medical College, run under the auspices of the New York Archdiocese, said Mrs. O'Connor's circumstances were "far removed from any that should justify forcing physicians to starve her to death or to bring about her death through dehydration."

It added there was no evidence Mrs. O'Connor "expressed a decision to refuse the basic hydration and nutritional support."

Traditional Church teaching holds that no one may take a life or withhold ordinary treatment but that extraordinary means are not required to prolong life in cases where death is imminent.

Some theologians have argued whether procedures such as tubal feeding that must be arranged by physicians can truly be called "ordinary," but others consider such devices within the bounds of normal care.

**Priests' conference promotes compliance in racially segregated Yonkers**

By Tracy Early  
New York (NC) — Catholic priests in racially divided Yonkers, N.Y., encouraged city compliance with a court-ordered housing desegregation plan.

But the priests' initial work produced a mixed response, according to Father Patrick M. Carroll, chairman of the Yonkers Area Conference of Catholic Clergy and administrator of St. Joseph's Parish.

Yonkers drew national attention over its longstanding refusal to comply with a court order to begin racial integration of its residential neighborhoods.

U.S. District Judge Leonard B. Sand,

ruling in the 7-year-old case, found Yonkers guilty of pursuing policies of deliberate segregation in schools and public housing for the past 40 years.

As a remedy to the segregation of blacks in the southwestern area of the city, Sand ordered Yonkers to locate 200 units of low-income housing on seven sites, to be followed by 800 units of moderate-income housing, all in the white, eastern section of town.

The city council initially voted against the plan. Then, as fines levied by Sand escalated to \$1 million a day, council members voted September 10 to comply with the court.

Father Carroll said some local residents attacked a comment by Monsignor Charles McManus, Yonkers-area vicar, urging Catholics to follow the judge's order.

At a September 2 press conference called to release the text of a letter from Yonkers priests, Monsignor McManus said, "The remedy order binds us."

"The 200 units must be built according to the law," he said. "Once something is the law of the land, we would expect members of the church to follow it."

"A lot of parishioners got very upset when they saw that," said Father Carroll.

Father Carroll said Monsignor McManus and the other clergy were not arguing that the

plan for the 200 units should be carried out precisely according to the judge's plan. Details of the current plan are not "cut in stone," and the clergy conference's housing committee believes the judge would accept some modifications, Father Carroll said.

Central to the Yonkers dispute is whether racism is the reason for the opposition to the housing plan, or whether class or economic issues or a legitimate concern for community values are all involved.

Father Carroll said he thought racism was a factor "to some extent." But he said the clergy were issuing their letter to serve the cause of reconciliation.

**Europe ... Hawaii ... A Cruise ...**  
**Whatever ... Wherever ...**

Because members of our staff have travelled to every major tourist destination in the world, our consultants are able to tailor the best combination of air, sea and land arrangements to suit your requirements to a "T" ... for "Travel."

**Judy Graper Travel** — Call us for a free quotation —  
The Barn Bazaar  
Clover Street at Jefferson Road  
Pittsford, New York 14534  
(716) 385-3820

**THE EXPERIENCE OF GRIEF:  
Helping Oneself and Others**

An interactive video teleconference featuring Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Director, Center for Loss and Life Transition, Fort Collins, Colorado.

Focusing on: the experience of grief, helping the grief stricken, and managing the stress that accompanies both.

**Tuesday, September 20, 1988**  
**12:45 - 5:00 PM**  
**Rochester Institute of Technology**

**All interested parties are encouraged to attend.**  
**For more information, please contact:**  
**Gabrielle Weiss, Grief Resource Information & Education Forum tel: 223-1888**

This valuable community service has been made possible through the courtesy of GRIEF, INC., WESTERN NY SIDS CENTER, ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND

**Crawford FUNERAL HOME INC.**  
496 North Winton Road  
Rochester, New York 14610

Announcing a major fall exhibition at  
The Strong Museum

**CULTURE & COMFORT**  
People, Parlors, and Upholstery  
1850-1930

And, October 14-16,  
a symposium

**Culture and Comfort:  
The Draped and Upholstered Interior, 1850-1930**

Lectures on upholstery in American houses and commercial interiors, the upholstery trade and spring-seat manufacture, and the idea of the comfortable chair.

Workshops on identifying and preserving historical textiles and on upholstery in historic sites and museums.

Registration required; Reduced fees before October 1, 1988  
Call (716) 263-2700 x202 for information

**THE STRONG MUSEUM**  
One Manhattan Square Rochester, New York