

# Police raid Chinese village; hundreds hurt

HONG KONG (NC) — Chinese police armed with nightsticks, electric prods and bricks reportedly raided a largely Catholic village in northern China, killing two persons, wounding more than 350 and arresting 32 in a two-hour incident.

A Hong Kong-based Catholic source said the April 18 attack took place in the village of Youtong, southwest of Peking, and followed a period of tension between local authorities and underground Catholics over religious services. About 1,500 underground Catholics — those professing loyalty to the Vatican — are said to reside

in the village. Another 200 villagers are said to belong to the government-approved church, which has no formal ties to Rome.

The attack came after villagers resisted police who were attempting to arrest a priest and four lay leaders, and to demolish a tent used for worship, the source said.

Describing the raid as a "savage blood-bath," the source quoted Catholics from the area as saying the raid was coordinated by security authorities in Luancheng county and nearby Shijiazhuang city.

The source said a letter was circulated in north China describing the incident.

Of those wounded, the source said, 88 were seriously injured.

Two young people reportedly died soon after the event and a nun received severe injuries to her eyes. More than 230 of those injured were said to have received slight wounds. The source said authorities prevented the injured from receiving medical attention and ordered hospitals not to treat them.

About 5,000 policemen and other officials were said to be involved in the raid.

Officials of government-approved Catholic organizations in Peking — the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and Chinese Catholic Church Administration Commis-

sion — could not be reached for comment.

Apparently the incident capped a period of tension over local authorities' ban on worship services by the underground Catholics.

Catholics had erected a large temporary tent March 17 on the site of the former church at Youtong, destroyed during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, and Masses had since been held there every morning, the source said.

Local authorities had visited the village several times during April, and had ordered villagers to dismantle the tent and cease the religious services, the source said.

## Military raids may begin witch hunt, prelate warns

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (NC) — Archbishop Arturo Rivera Damas of San Salvador has criticized what he says might be the start of a "witch hunt" against Salvadoran labor unions and humanitarian aid groups.

During a homily in San Salvador's Metropolitan Cathedral, the archbishop also said he opposed reinstatement of a military state of siege, an option being considered by Salvadoran President-elect Alfredo Cristiani.

Archbishop Rivera Damas, speaking April 23, condemned the violence that claimed 42 lives the previous week and the arrests of 100 leaders of labor and humanitarian organizations in raids conducted by the military.

"We must guard against responding to violence with brute force, executed indiscriminately," the archbishop said. "We hope that the raids on the offices of labor unions and humanitarian groups do not signal the beginning of a persecution in which the just pay for the sinners."

The raids were carried out by army units on the offices of the country's principal labor unions and aid organizations, such as

the Christian Committee for the Displaced. The military arrested dozens of people it said were suspected of being collaborators of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front guerrillas.

Archbishop Rivera Damas warned that the military actions "must not be a preamble to a witch hunt" in El Salvador and differed with public comments by Cristiani that the reinstatement of a military state of siege might be necessary after the president-elect assumes office June 1.

"We believe that a state of siege is not necessary. ... To educate the public one must use conviction rather than coercion and force," Archbishop Rivera Damas said.

He also called on the military and Cristiani's National Republican Alliance to halt verbal attacks against the church, such as recent accusations that Catholic human rights agencies were linked to the guerrillas.

"We are partisans ... of dialogue," the archbishop said. "Let them understand that we will not renounce the church's own identity in its defense of human rights."

## Supreme Court

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to use the case to review, and overturn, its 1973 abortion decision.

Among the many groups filing friend-of-the-court briefs in the case was the U.S. Catholic Conference, which, like the government, also asked for a reconsideration of *Roe vs. Wade*. "The court's application of privacy principles to abortion in *Roe vs. Wade* was fundamentally flawed," the brief said. "There is no basis for *Roe vs. Wade*'s inclusion of abortion within the right of privacy."

Fried told the court during the oral arguments that even if *Roe vs. Wade* is overturned, courts could still have some jurisdiction in abortion matters. For example, "the court would have ample power to strike down" laws that do not allow latitude for an abortion "where the life of the mother is at risk," he said.

"We are not here today suggesting the court would allow extreme, extravagant and bloodthirsty regulations and that it would lack the power to strike those down," he said.

Also participating in the oral arguments was Missouri Attorney General William L. Webster, who focused on issues raised by provisions of the law struck down by the lower courts, such as the state's decision to bar abortions at public hospitals and to prevent encouragement of abortions.

"We contend that the government is certainly not obligated in and of itself to become an advocate for abortion," Webster told the justices.

Under the interpretation of *Roe vs. Wade* by lower courts, "states have effectively been forbidden" not only to outlaw abortion "but to regulate abortion in any significant way," he said.

The state "does not in any way affect a woman's constitutional right to choose abortion over childbirth," even if it reaches a "finding" on when life begins, Webster argued.


In their comments to the attorneys, the justices raised numerous questions. Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Antonin Scalia, John Paul Stevens, Byron R. White and Anthony M. Kennedy raised points about limits or penalties under Missouri law preventing doctors from discussing abortions with patients at public facilities or performing abortions.

Scalia, questioning Susman, noted that the *Roe* decision drew some distinctions between abortions at various stages of pregnancy and said, "I don't see why a court that can draw that line can't separate abortion from birth control quite readily."

Scalia also questioned Susman when the latter said that in fetal development, "both sides would agree as to when a heartbeat can first be detected" but that it is (a) question of labels" that causes differences about the nature of the life involved.

"I agree with you entirely," Scalia said, "but what conclusion does that lead you to? That, therefore, there must be a fundamental right on the part of the woman to destroy this thing that we don't know what it is, or rather, that whether there is or isn't (a right) is a matter that you vote upon — since we don't know the answer, people have to make their minds up the best they can."

As is usual in Supreme Court arguments, the justices gave no indication of conclusions they might reach or when they might issue their decision. Decisions in cases argued this spring are expected by the time the court ends its 1988-89 term around July 1.



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