

Chamorro's upset win raises hopes of exiles

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (CNS) — Opposition leader Violeta Chamorro's upset victory in Nicaragua's presidential election Feb. 25 raised Nicaraguan exile hopes and opened questions about the future of three priests who defied church orders to serve the Sandinista government.

President Daniel Ortega, looking tired and shaken as it became clear early Feb. 26 he had lost his re-election bid, promised in an emotional television address to respect Chamorro's win.

With 60 percent of the vote counted, the Supreme Electoral Council gave Ortega and his Sandinista National Liberation Front 41.5 percent of the presidential vote against 54.3 percent for Chamorro.

Chamorro, the wealthy publisher of the daily newspaper La Prensa, heads the National Opposition Union, a coalition of 14 groups that range across the ideological spectrum and were united primarily by their dislike of the Sandinistas.

Exiled Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega, head of Nicaragua's Juigalpa Prelature, said the election provided a "new opportunity" for "equal rights and equal opportunities" for his countrymen.

In a telephone interview Feb. 26 from Miami, where he works with other exiles, Bishop Vega said the church's role will be to help build the new society and "correct" the "extreme attitudes" of right and left that have developed under Sandinista rule.

He also said there is concern in the exile community that some with "extreme right" views might seek to "go back and claim old privileges." Bishop Vega was expelled from Nicaragua in 1986 for allegedly supporting U.S. military aid to the National Democratic Front — more

commonly known as the contras. Later, when the government relented and opened the way for his return, the churchman vowed to stay in self-exile until the Sandinistas left power and Nicaraguans had their political rights restored.

"I am in ... position to go (back) the day the new government takes office," he told Catholic News Service. "I am still the bishop of this prelateure."

Bishop Vega had sharp words for three fellow clergymen suspended from their ministry for serving in high Sandinista government offices despite Vatican orders to step down. They are Foreign Minister Father Miguel D'Escoto, a member of the Maryknoll order; Father Fernando Cardenal, education minister and a Jesuit expelled from his order in 1985; and his brother, Father Ernesto Cardenal, culture minister.

"For a long time, they haven't been thinking how to be priests, but to be dominators of the people," said Bishop Vega.

In Miami, Nicaraguan community leaders expressed joy at Chamorro's victory and expressed hope that many of the 150,000 Nicaraguans living in exile in the United States could start returning home.

"The Nicaraguan people have triumphed by ousting the (ruling) Sandinistas with their vote," said Aristedes Sanchez, a member of the political/military commission of the Miami-based Nicaraguan Resistance.

"We congratulate the Nicaraguan people and Mrs. Chamorro and throw all our support behind her so she can achieve the reforms necessary to achieve democracy," he said.

"The Resistance will send a commission



Violeta Chamorro, Nicaragua's newly elected president, heads the National Opposition Union, a coalition of 14 groups that covers the ideological spectrum, but is united in opposing the Sandinistas.

to speak with Mrs. Chamorro to see how in the shortest possible time we can return and reincorporate ourselves in civic and political life in Nicaragua," he said.

One of Chamorro's top aides, Ernesto Palaccio, is former director of the Resistance office in Washington.

Sanchez said some exiles would want to return as quickly as possible, but other

Nicaraguans said they wanted to wait and see if the political transition was successful.

"I don't think it will be a massive return. I think people will wait to see how the new government works and whether the economy works," another exile leader, Oscar Rosales, said in a radio interview.

New Brooklyn bishop would ban Cuomo from speaking in diocese

By Ed Wilkinson
Catholic News Service

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — Newly appointed Bishop Thomas V. Daily of Brooklyn said at a Feb. 20 press conference that "I have no trouble saying" that New York Gov. Mario Cuomo would be barred from speaking in the 219 parishes of the Brooklyn diocese, the nation's ninth largest.

Bishop Daily, pressed by reporters about his view of Cuomo's abortion stand, said, "I'm not about to stand here and criticize Mario Cuomo because I am not on top of that situation. But I will be."

"Let me just say this, though — that if anyone supports either directly or indirectly the promotion of killing babies in the womb, that is terrible," he added.

Cuomo has said he is personally opposed to abortion, but that a pregnant woman should have a right to an abortion.

During debate over a 1986 policy in the neighboring New York Archdiocese forbidding those who "deviated from church teaching" from speaking in archdiocesan parishes — with Cuomo mentioned specifically by the New York vicar general — Cuomo spoke at St. James Cathedral in Brooklyn.

"As a Catholic, he's (Cuomo) got a problem," Bishop Daily said. "He's got to be consistent. I think anybody in politics has got to bring some consistency to moral truth in the laws of the nation. That's only a natural and a good thing to do."

He added, "I find it to be a contradiction to have a private view on one thing and to have a contradictory view in public. I don't buy that. I think that politicians have to be consistent, especially on the life issue."

In reaction to Bishop Daily's remarks about him, Cuomo was quoted as saying, "We have a political difference. The difference between me and the bishop is a political one, not a theological one."

His remarks appeared in a Feb. 22 news column in *The New York Times*.

Bishop Daily, the founding bishop of Palm Beach, Fla., was named Feb. 20 as the sixth bishop of Brooklyn, succeeding Bishop Francis J. Mugavero, who reached the mandatory retirement age of 75 last



New Brooklyn Bishop Thomas V. Daily talks to reporters.

June.

Bishop Daily described himself at the press conference as "more of a conservative than a liberal ... but I hate tags. I want to be a Catholic." Bishop Daily also scored Dignity, an organization of homosexual Catholics that has called for a change in church teaching on homosexuality. Dignity, he said, "purports to be Catholic and I make this judgment that it is a group which is just a caucus that has an objective to see homosexuality in the same vein and in the same nature as heterosexuality. That's not so."

Bishop Daily suggested that Courage, an organization of homosexuals who support Catholic teaching on homosexuality, is a better alternative to Dignity because it promotes chastity.

He faulted government for its lessened role in social programs. "The church cannot make up doing for the poor what the government could do and should do," he said.

On lay involvement he said, "One of the greatest contributions of the Second Vatican Council is that we move into the laity, that we use the laity, that we bring that kind of leadership and talent into the working of the church. I see that as a tremendous resource."

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"BUT THE COMFORTER, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
JOHN 14:26