

Say expresses hope for hostages' release

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Peggy Say, sister of hostage Terry Anderson, said as the sixth anniversary of his captivity in Lebanon passed that his release would signal an improvement in relations between the United States and the Arab world.

"It's always been my prayer that the release of the hostages would effect some kind of reconciliation between the U.S. and the Arab nations," Say said in a March 12 interview with Catholic News Service.

"That way, the past six years would have some meaning," she added. Anderson is one of six Americans held in Lebanon. Four Britons — including Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite — two Germans and an Italian are also believed held by pro-Iranian Muslim extremists in Lebanon.

The hostages have been moved from Beirut, where they were kidnapped, to new hideouts in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon, according to security sources in Lebanon.

Conditions for release of Anderson, who was the chief Middle East correspondent for Associated Press at the time of his capture March 16, 1985, are the best they have been in Anderson's nearly six years in captivity, Say said.

President Bush, she noted, had instructed Secretary of State James A. Baker III to bring up the hostage situation in his talks with Middle East leaders in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War.

And the demand by Anderson's captors that 17 political prisoners be released from a Kuwaiti jail has been met, she said — albeit in a roundabout way.

After Iraq invaded Kuwait Aug. 2, the political prisoners were freed by their jailers. "Some stayed home to fight in Kuwait" against the Iraqis.

"I never had any animosity toward the Arab people at all," Say said. "It was a few people, not a nation, that committed this."

Likewise, Anderson's captors "did not take my brother because they hate Americans," she said. "They hate what our policy has been doing in the Middle East."

Say noted that the U.S. government turned a deaf ear to her in the wake of the recent Iran-contra arms-for-hostages scandal. She called it the lowest point in her six-year quest to free Anderson. Say added, however, that diplomats from Arab nations continued to listen to her concerns.

She said she preferred to see diplomacy win her brother's release, without "the

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Peggy Say, sister of hostage Terry Anderson, places a candle March 15 during a "No Greater Love" ceremony in honor of hostages being held captive in Lebanon. Anderson, the Associated Press bureau chief in Beirut, has been held for six years, longer than any other hostage. With Say are her husband, David, and grandson, Randy Brewington. Her son son, Edward Langendorfer, looks on.

Prelate seeks remorse for King beating

LOS ANGELES (CNS) — Archbishop Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles has termed the brutal treatment of Rodney King by Los Angeles police officers a "community tragedy" and called for a public observance of remorse for the March 3 incident.

In a statement to be published March 22 in *The Tidings*, Los Angeles archdiocesan newspaper, Archbishop Mahony also gave indirect backing to calls for the resignation of Los Angeles police Chief Daryl F. Gates.

The beating of King, a 25-year-old black unemployed construction worker, by three white patrolmen under the eye of a sergeant was captured on videotape by a witness in a nearby apartment complex. The four police officers were indicted March 15 on various charges related to the beating.

"Police chiefs, sheriffs and all law enforcement leaders throughout Southern California must demonstrate the highest level of responsibility in word and in action, both publicly and privately," Archbishop Mahony said.

"If this level of public trust and confidence cannot be recaptured or sustained, then those in leadership must seriously consider stepping aside in order to heal the deep wounds which have now erupted so openly," he added.

The Los Angeles archbishop noted that the city has scheduled a public celebration of the return of troops from the Persian Gulf region for May 19.

"Before we raise our heads high on May 19 for the city's public reception of our Persian Gulf military personnel, we need a public observance in which we ask forgiveness from all the Rodney Kings who have been victimized knowingly and unknowingly, and in which we begin a desperately needed healing throughout our

community," he said.

"Anything less is a betrayal of the public trust and confidence which the people of the City of the Angels rightfully expect and deserve," he added.

Among other steps suggested by Archbishop Mahony to heal the rift caused by the King incident were:

- Introduction of "a remedial program as soon as possible to retrain every officer in race and community relations using the Rodney King incident as a teachable moment."

- Increased efforts to "lessen the violence which has spilled onto the streets of Los Angeles in so many terrible forms."

- Clear statements by all public officials that "no disregard for human rights will be tolerated by public servants."

- A reversal of the tendency in "many segments of public service" to "treat minorities and the poor with a different level of respect and a lesser standard of conduct."

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