



DEMANDS FOR CHANGE — A masked protester leads other demonstrators chanting anti-government slogans June 2 at riot policemen in Seoul, South Korea. The demonstrators were demanding the ouster of South Korean President Roh Tae-woo.

Victory celebration draws anti-war activists to rally

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Anti-war protesters should not blame President George Bush, Congress or the military for the outcome of the Persian Gulf war, syndicated columnist Colman McCarthy said at a June 8 inter-faith memorial service and rally protesting the National Victory Celebration parade just blocks away in Washington.

Protesters should say, "There's only one person to blame — me," McCarthy said, adding that they should ask themselves, "What more can I do in my personal life and my political life to pacify the world?"

"It's easy enough to solve problems across the ocean, but somebody's hurting in the living room," he said. "We've got to get the nukes out of our heart before we get them out of the heartland."

A few hundred people gathered across the street from the White House to remember all those killed in the gulf.

Countless more people strode past them to be among the estimated 800,000 parade-walkers. Except for one stroller exclaiming "Saddam lovers!", a reference to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, no bad blood was expressed between parade watchers and protesters.

The parade cost \$12 million. Patricia Perkins of the Desert Flower Network, sponsor of the protest, said organizers spent less than \$1,000 — all of it from their own pockets.

"What are you doing about teaching the

kids peace making and conflict resolution?" McCarthy asked.

"We've got to do the hard work of organizing our schools," he said. "We've got to break the cycle of violence. The Pentagon is there. ROTC programs are flourishing across the country."

Children, he said, should be given a choice "between Dan Quayle and (Jesuit Father) Dan Berrigan," a longtime peace activist.

He advised, "Don't be dismayed by the large crowds at the parade. Don't try to change them, don't try to change the Pentagon, don't try to change the government. Keep them from changing you."

Other cities also faced criticism for parade plans.

Seattle canceled a planned parade after some questioned the value of celebrating high-tech weaponry along with the soldiers. One consequence of the Washington parade was inch-deep tread marks left by tanks on the city's main streets.

Los Angeles' Cardinal-designate Roger M. Mahoney offered similar concerns before a May 19 parade in Hollywood.

"I would have hoped that the L.A. celebration," he said, "would have focused upon the men and women of our armed forces, together with their continuing contributions to peace and to helping a vanquished and poor people, rather than glorifying weapons of destruction."

Contributing to this story was Peter Droege in Los Angeles.

Californians debate televised executions

By Sister Mary Ann Walsh
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The executive director of the California Catholic Conference called for televising executions so people can "see firsthand what executions are like."

"The fact that these executions take place by the will of the people means the people ought to see directly what's being done in their name," said Jesuit Father William J. Wood. Citizens who favor capital punishment might feel differently if executions were not so far removed from them, he said.

Father Wood made his comments June 3 in a telephone interview. Four days later a federal judge denied San Francisco public television station KQED the right to film an execution in San Quentin. The station planned to include the footage in a documentary on crime and capital punishment.

U.S. District Judge Robert Schnacke said that bringing cameras into execution chambers could threaten prison security and reveal the identities of the executioners. The judge also said print journalists should be allowed to view executions.

KQED had asserted that, by allowing journalists who use sketch pads, notebooks, pens and pencils to watch executions and by barring cameras of any kind, the rules governing press access to executions treat TV media unfairly because TV is not allowed to use the tools of its trade.

In the wake of that suit, San Quentin Warden Daniel Vasquez barred all journalists, print and broadcast, from witnessing executions. Members of the print media had been traditionally included among witnesses viewing the proceedings.

Vasquez said TV coverage might induce violence among inmates, who have televisions in their cells, and would disrupt his attempt to make the execution "as solemn and respectful a procedure as possible ... especially for the condemned inmate, his family and the prison staff."

An execution "has to be carried out with tactfulness and precision," he said. "I don't want to make it a spectacle."

California has not executed anyone since 1967. From the late 1960s until the mid-1970s all executions were on hold nationwide while the U.S. Supreme Court considered their constitutionality.

Death Penalty Focus of California, a group opposed to the death penalty, favors televising executions but also called for "the right of a condemned person to prevent the televising of his or her own execution."

The group said it was "appalled that the public debate on the death penalty is not on whether an execution should take place, but only whether the execution should be televised."

Jesuit Father Paul W. Comiskey, legal counsel to the Prisoners Rights Union in California, said televising executions, even without permission of the one to be executed, would spur more public discussion on the death penalty.


Father Comiskey told Catholic News Service that the current debate surrounding the lawsuit on televising executions shows the issue really is over "whether the criminal justice system and the ultimate sanction are for revenge or healing."

"This is a theological issue," Father Comiskey said. "Many Christian groups are now advocating a complete overthrow of the criminal justice system and 'taking it back' to make it a source of healing rather than brutality."

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., a death penalty opponent, has introduced a bill proposing executions be made public to show the "barbaric" nature of the killings instead of holding them in "cloak-and-dagger secrecy."

Hatfield said his proposal is "repulsive," but only "because the reality of legalized executions is repulsive."

"But if we do want to execute people, we should not do so in hiding," he said.



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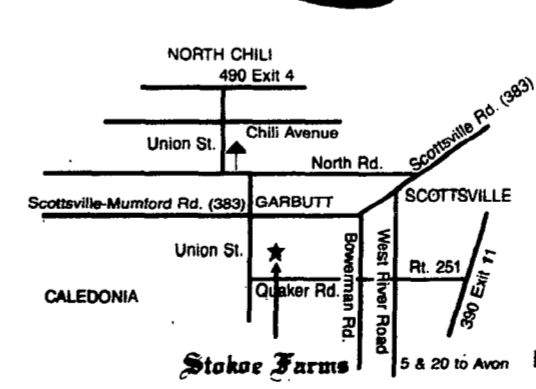
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