

World leaders observe changes with concern

By Bill Pritchard
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As political changes continued to sweep through Eastern Europe, Catholic leaders in the United States and overseas urged officials and citizens alike from the Baltics to Yugoslavia to rebuild their societies non-violently.

Pope John Paul II called on Catholic Lithuania to create a secure future for its people.

And Lithuanian-American Catholics were cautiously optimistic when looking at the future of their ancestral homeland, which faces daunting economic problems.

Many Catholic leaders expressed concern over the growing violence in the war between breakaway Croatia and the Serbian majority of the Yugoslavian federation.

In Germany, the bishops were seen as being influential in pushing the German government to pressure Yugoslavia to stop the war.

During his weekly general audience Sept. 4, the pope encouraged newly independent Lithuania to "restore through a common effort a free and honest future."

Speaking to a group of 70 Lithuanians attending the audience, the pope was making

his first public comment about Lithuania since Aug. 29, when the Vatican recognized the tiny Baltic state's independence from the Soviet Union and announced it was ready to resume normal diplomatic relations.

The Vatican said it "never recognized the forced annexation in 1940" of Lithuania by the Soviet Union and "has considered interrupted but not broken its diplomatic relations."

U.S. Catholics with Soviet links watched the tumultuous changes in the Soviet Union with hope and expectation.

"This is absolutely phenomenal what we've seen in one week," said Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, who visited Lithuania, Latvia, Byelorussia and Ukraine a year ago.

"My first reaction is great hope — hope that the failure of the coup will solidify ... democracy and the freedom of the various republics," he said, referring to the failed coup attempt by Soviet Communist hard-liners. The hard-liners' failure accelerated the downfall of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union.

Focusing on the Yugoslavian crisis Sept. 1, the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, warned against using warfare to achieve nationalist goals in the fractured federation.



AP/Wide World Photos

Croatian women weep during a funeral for soldiers killed in Osijek, Yugoslavia, Sept. 6 in fighting with Serbian forces backed by the Yugoslav army.

The "temptation to violence" is seen "in the grave internal Yugoslavian conflict, signaled by the very real war in act between Serbs and Croats," said the Sept. 1 editorial.

The newspaper praised Yugoslavian peace demonstrators.

"The mothers of multi-ethnic Yugoslavia have entered the scene, in the name of sons lined up on opposing barricades, to ask for an end to the civil war," the editorial said.

It cited the Yugoslavian situation as a warning that the end of communist rule in East Europe must not lead to wars among rival ethnic and nationalistic groups.

At the same time, European leaders must

understand that certain "nationalistic agitation" is based on "legitimate feelings" having historical roots, it said.

Meanwhile, the German hierarchy was said to be a force behind the German government's leading role in European efforts to broker a solution to the Yugoslavian conflict.

In late August and again in early September, the German bishops urged stronger action by Bonn and the rest of Europe to stop the violence and resolve the political and ethnic crisis.

On Aug. 26, the Permanent Council of the conference issued a statement endorsing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia.

Lutheran body accepts abortion only as a 'last resort'

ORLANDO, Fla. (CNS) — After rejecting several conflicting proposals, the 5.2 million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America passed a statement Sept. 3 that accepts abortion only as a "last resort" in the most serious circumstances.

The statement was approved 905-70 by the church's biennial Churchwide Assembly. The vote marked a departure from the stand of a number of other mainline U.S. denominations. Leading Methodist, Episcopalian and Presbyterian bodies have opposed any legislative restrictions on abortion and tended to treat it on the moral level as a matter of personal conscience.

The new Lutheran statement opposes

abortion except in cases of:

- "Clear threat to the physical life of the woman."
- "Extreme fetal abnormality" in which the child would not live long outside the womb.
- A pregnancy that occurs "when both partners do not participate willingly in sexual intercourse," as in cases of rape or incest.

Beyond those situations, it said, "this church neither supports nor opposes" other abortion-restricting legislation.

The statement deplored the huge number of abortions in the United States, saying that "the strong Christian presumption is

to preserve and protect life."

It asked Lutherans debating abortion to take seriously both "the moral value of the newly conceived life" and "the moral seriousness of the decision faced by the woman" and to avoid using "the language of 'rights' in absolute ways that imply that no other significant moral claims intrude."

In earlier debates during their Aug. 28-Sept. 4 assembly, delegates voted down a series of other abortion proposals.

Rejected were resolutions to:

- Support "freedom of conscience" regarding abortion. The resolution would have said the Gospel demands "acceptance" of the choices made by pregnant

women.

- Declare that "taking of human life in any way is a violation of God's will and therefore sinful."

- Oppose all abortions except to save a mother's life.

- Declare that "human life begins at conception."

The approved statement was the first on abortion by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, formed in 1988 by the merger of the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America.

Call 716/328-4340
to order your
subscription to the
Catholic Courier

The Rochester Theater
Organ Society

"Dedicated to preserving the sound of the 'King of Instruments'"

Presents:
FR. JAMES MILLER
Saturday, September 14
8:15 pm
AT THE AUDITORIUM CENTER
875 Main St. East
Special Discount for Senior-Citizen
Groups of 10 or more

50¢ OFF
THIS AD ENTITLES SINGLE-TICKET BUYERS TO 50¢ OFF THE \$5.50 PURCHASE PRICE BY PRESENTING THIS AD AT THE BOX OFFICE THE EVENING OF THE CONCERT.
For further information, call E.T.O.S. at 544-6595 C.C.

The Great American
POOL COVER SALE
Is On NOW!
Book Your Pool Closing Today

SAVE 30%
BUY NOW & SAVE BIG ON OVER 200 WINTER COVERS IN STOCK

SUPER GUARD 5 Year Warranty		SUPREME GUARD 7 Year Warranty	
ROUND		ROUND	
12'	31.62	12'	39.59
18'	56.42	15'	57.23
21'	69.94	21'	91.73
24'	85.33	24'	113.67
27'-28'	106.43	27'-28'	140.91
OVAL		OVAL	
12'x24'	53.19	12'x24'	68.68
15'x30'	72.20	15'x30'	95.73
18'x33'	91.67	18'x33'	120.74
RECTANGLE		RECTANGLE	
12'x24'	71.55	12'x24'	85.55
16'x32'	103.53	16'x32'	125.24
18'x36'	120.37	18'x36'	146.50
20'x40'	138.56	20'x40'	169.40

**WINTER GUARD
3 Year Warranty**

ROUND
12' 27.66
24' 71.13

RECTANGLE
16'x32' 86.55

* Note: Prices do not include special order covers.

PUBLIC NOTICE... ALL POOL OWNERS
Your filtration system has been in non-stop operation for an average of 2,520* hours! We recommend that upon closing your pool for the season, you bring your pump and motor to American Pool Supply for a complete overhaul to insure trouble-free operation for next season. Ask any member of our staff for complete details.
Call 872-3900 or 315-597-6171 NOW!
*Based on usage from Memorial Day through Labor Day at 24hrs./day.

American Pool Supply
205 North Ave., Webster 872-3900
3713 Main St., Waltham (315) 897-6171
1500 N. in former H. H. Moore Bldg. Corner of N. 4th & Main St.

Book Your Pool Closing Today!
383-8700
WINTERIZING HOTLINE
or call 315-597-6171
Winter Chemical Kits Available