

Killings in Northern Ireland are worst in years

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (CNS) — The Irish Republican Army's botched terrorist bomb attack Oct. 23 started a new wave of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland that left 24 dead and dozens wounded by the end of the month.

The nine-day killing spree was the worst in Northern Ireland since the early 1980s.

It started when an IRA bomb exploded Oct. 23 at a fish and chips shop in a commercial section of Protestant West Belfast crowded with Saturday afternoon shoppers, killing 10 people and injuring 59.

It climaxed with a massacre Oct. 31 of costumed Halloween revelers by Ulster Freedom Fighters. Two masked gunmen taunted "Trick or treat!" before opening fire with automatic weapons at the Rising Sun pub in Greysteel, a Northern Ireland village 80 miles from Belfast, killing seven people and wounding 11.

In between were almost daily shootings, including a Protestant attack on Catholic garbage workers in which two were killed and five wounded at a Belfast dump.

The IRA said the Oct. 23 bomb in the Shankill Road area of Belfast was intended for participants in a meeting of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, a Protestant paramilitary group which the night before had killed a Catholic taxi driver. The Protestant group was believed to have headquarters in offices above the fish and chips shop. The bomb apparently exploded early, killing shoppers and the IRA member who delivered it to the shop.

In the week that followed, Protestant gunmen killed seven Catholics.

The Halloween attack in Greysteel — in which two of the seven dead were Protestants — provoked a riot overnight by more than 100 Catholic youths in Londonderry, which security forces broke up with plastic bullets.



The remains of Mark Rogers are carried through Belfast's streets by his brother Thomas (left) and his brother-in-law Liam Hunter Oct. 28. Rogers was one of two council workers recently killed by Ulster Loyalists in retaliation for an IRA bombing.

The new wave of violence drew condemnations from every side and seemed to have scuttled months of private peace negotiations by Gerry Adams, head of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein, and moderate nationalist leader John Hume, a Northern Ireland representative in the British Parliament.

In the United States Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston urged Irish-Americans to work for peace in their native land. Their love for Ireland must be "more than an intermittent nostalgia for an island nation wrapped in a romantic mist," the cardinal said at a memorial Mass Oct. 28 for the victims of the violence.

"If we love Ireland, we must work for peace in that land. We must press upon our nation's leaders those policies which will further the cause of peace," Cardinal Law said.

The Northern Irish strife has led to nearly 3,100

killed and more than 35,500 wounded over the past quarter-century in a country with a population of only 1.6 million — about 950,000 Protestants and 650,000 Catholics.

Cardinal Cahal Brendan Daly of Armagh, primate of all Ireland, sharply condemned the "criminal action of the IRA" after the Oct. 23 attack but urged people to support the Hume-Adams peace negotiations.

British Prime Minister John Major repudiated the Hume-Adams discussions as a basis for peace but said Britain would intensify peace efforts in Northern Ireland.

In a report to Parliament Nov. 1, he said he and Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds had agreed at a meeting in Brussels Oct. 29 that neither Britain nor Ireland should negotiate with those backing violence.

Major called the pub massacre "a barbarous and despicable attack" by "murdering butchers" and urged a renunciation of violence on both sides. "Revenge simply breeds revenge and that is no way forward for Northern Ireland," he said.

"If and when such a renunciation of violence has been made and had been sufficiently demonstrated, new doors could open and both governments would wish to respond to the new situation that would arise," he said.

Adams — who angered many by helping carry the coffin of the IRA member who died in the Belfast bombing — said Major "has no real interest in developing a peace process" and "has been inexcusably negative and dismissive" toward the Hume-Adams proposals.

Highlighting the tragedy of the renewed violence was the death in the Belfast bombing of Leanne Murray, a 13-year-old Protestant girl who vacationed in the United States last summer with Roisin Coulter of Belfast, also 13 but Catholic.

Pope condemns cloning Calls it the path to self-destruction

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II, in the wake of successful human cloning experiments, warned that scientists had embarked on a path toward manipulation and "self-destructive madness."

The pope made the remarks Oct. 31, a week after U.S. researchers announced they had cloned human embryos in the laboratory. The embryos died within six days.

The Vatican newspaper and other church officials are calling the experiments "intrinsically perverse."

The pope, while he did not refer explicitly to the cloning tests, said contemporary culture was giving "evasive" and misguided answers to such basic questions as: When does the human being begin to exist as a person? and, What is his dignity?

"The ethical relativism does not stop even at the identity and dignity of every human life, thus opening the way to illicit and disturbing experiments," he said.

"The universal conscience justifiably

reacts. How is it possible not to be deeply worried? One understands that, in crossing this boundary, there is nothing left to protect the human being from deceptive manipulations and from the temptation of a self-destructive madness," he said.

As seen in the history of this century, he added, this "madness" is sometimes given legal backing by legislatures.

One element of the cloning experiments that brought church condemnation was the use of human embryos as disposable research material. The pope reiterated that respect for human life from the moment of conception was "among the fundamental and indispensable duties of the moral law."

This was a basic message of his recent encyclical on moral theology, "Veritatis Splendor" ("The Splendor of Truth"), he noted.

Pope John Paul said the new experiments were symptomatic of "an insidious culture of death" that threatens contemporary people, coupled with a poor understanding of the moral law.

He asked Mary to help save modern society from the "abyss" of irresponsibility and poor moral judgment, by providing a clear perception about intrinsically evil acts.

Embryos

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Although twins and other multiple births do occur naturally in some cases, "I think do occur naturally in some cases, but I think do occur naturally in some cases, to generally reproduce us one by one," Lejeune said.

A member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences since 1974, Mejeune was in Washington for a series of lectures on "Human Nature and Scientific Knowledge."

The Oct. 26-29 lecture series at Wa-

shington's Providence Hospital was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family.

Asked in the interview whether there was a simple rule that scientists could use to decide whether certain research would benefit society, he said there is "one guideline, only one by which to judge everything."

"And that is: 'What you have done to the smallest of mine, you have done it to me,'" he said. "Nothing more, nothing less."

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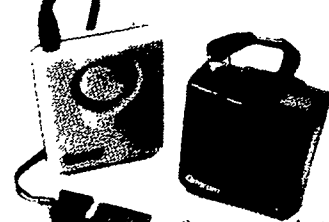
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