

WORLD & NATION

Church leaders criticize U.S. land mine ban stance

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — As the world moved closer to a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel land mines by international treaty, pressure increased for the United States to join that process.

A spokesman for the U.S. bishops urged President Clinton to end his opposition to the treaty, and a Vatican official said the exceptions sought by the United States would have hurt the treaty.

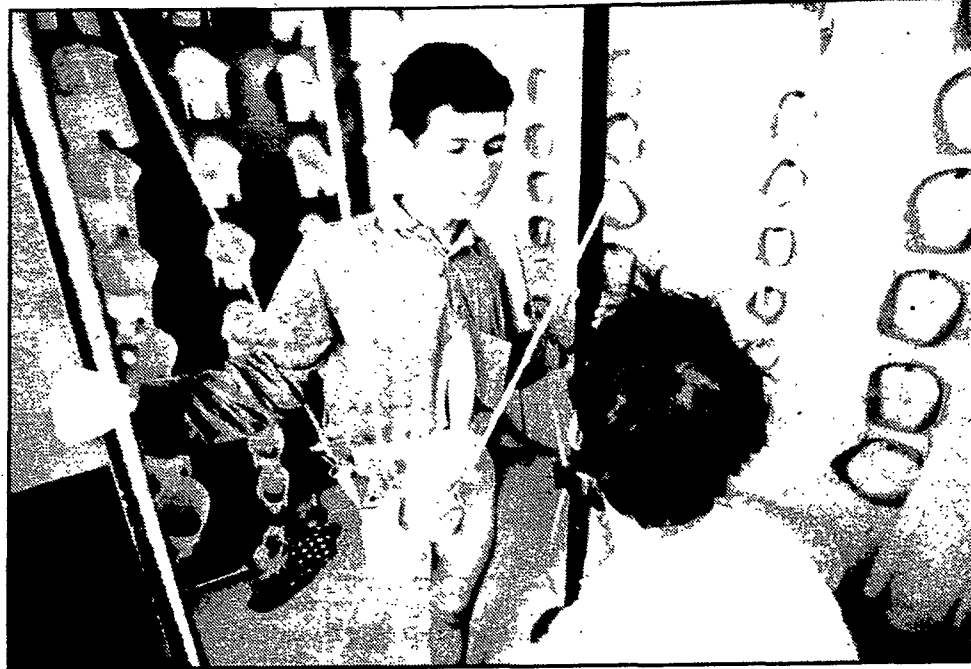
While more than 100 nations conferring on treaty language met Sept. 1-17 in Oslo, Norway, U.S. efforts to introduce exceptions to the ban brought the unusual sight of an Irish bishop picketing the U.S. Embassy in Dublin.

The treaty agreed upon in Oslo is part of the fast-track Ottawa process that seeks to take advantage of growing world opinion against anti-personnel land mines to prod the world's governments into outlawing their production, sale or use.

The Ottawa process was started last year by an initiative of the Canadian government and is to end this December with a treaty-signing ceremony in Ottawa.

President Clinton announced Sept. 17 that he would not sign the treaty because of his obligation to protect the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea, where the Pentagon regards land mines as a major deterrent to an invasion by North Korea, and because it would not allow U.S. use of certain package defenses combining anti-personnel and anti-tank mines.

Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark, N.J., head of the U.S. bishops' International Policy Committee, said: "I profoundly regret U.S. rejection of the proposed treaty. ... I fear that our nation's



An Afghani victim of a land mine is fitted for an artificial limb at an orthopedic center in Afghanistan. At a Sept. 1-17 conference in Oslo, Norway, the United States refused to support a proposed treaty to ban antipersonnel land mines worldwide.

leadership has lost an important opportunity in the urgent struggle to effectively ban these indiscriminate killers."

Msgr. Alain Lebeau, the Vatican's charge d'affaires to the European Community and its representative at the Oslo conference, called the campaign for a worldwide ban a success despite the U.S. rejection of the treaty.

"Concern to reach the total interdiction of these weapons as rapidly as possible was evident" among all those involved in the negotiations, he said in an interview with Vatican Radio Sept. 18.

While amendments to the treaty could

have led to its support by the United States and perhaps other military powers, it would have meant the loss of the treaty's humanitarian character, he said.

He said he hoped even the countries that do not sign "will consider this convention as a point of reference if not as an objective to be reached."

With such international and popular support for the ban, he said, it is hoped that "progressively and according to their own rhythms, these countries will reconcile their doctrines of national military defense and their legislation with the new convention on anti-personnel mines."

Humanitarian and religious organizations, including many Catholic missionary, development and public policy organizations, were the prime movers behind the ban campaign.

Among the estimated 26,000 people killed or injured by land mines each year, most are civilians. Many of the casualties occur long after the hostilities are over, and the threat of undetonated land mines in fields and pastures poses a major obstacle to postwar reconstruction and development in some countries.

As the Oslo meeting's end neared, Bishop John Kirby of Clonfert, Ireland, picketed the U.S. Embassy in Dublin Sept. 12.

On behalf of the Irish Catholic overseas aid agency Trocaire, of which he is the chairman, and Oxfam, Pax Christi and other Irish aid agencies, he presented embassy officials with a letter protesting U.S. efforts to gain exceptions that would undercut the treaty's comprehensive ban.

Bishop Kirby said that in travels to places Trocaire works he has seen the effects of land mines, and he is still haunted by the image of a Cambodian teenager who lost both arms to a mine.

Archbishop McCarrick said if Clinton would not accept the Ottawa treaty, "at a minimum we also urge him to actively support the bipartisan legislation now before Congress which enacts a U.S. ban ... with a limited provision for a presidential waiver on Korea."

He said the U.S. Catholic Campaign to Ban Land Mines, launched this summer by the U.S. Catholic Conference and other national Catholic organizations, "will continue to work to persuade the president and Congress that an early, effective and comprehensive ban on anti-personnel land mines is an urgent moral priority."

CALENDAR

All Diocesan

Religious Activities

- **FRI, SEP. 26** — Reception: sponsored by the Catholic Leadership Forum; Genesee Valley Club, 421 East Ave., Rochester; 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m.; call Mary Conslor, 716/328-3228, ext. 281 or 800/388-7177.
- **SAT, SEP. 27** — Pilgrimage: to the Shrine of the North American Martyrs, Auriesville; includes Mass; for information, call 610/435-4190 or 973/244-1990.
- **SAT, OCT. 4** — Trip: to the Abbey of the Genesee; with Catholic 20's/30's; call Karen Rinefierd, 716/328-3228 ext. 255, 800/388-7177 ext. 255, or e-mail krinefierd@dor.org.

Chemung Schuyler

Religious Activities

- **SEP. 27-OCT. 2** — Parish mission: Eastside Catholic Parish, 161 High St., Elmira; 10 a.m. Mass, 7 p.m. services; Fr. Bernard Finerty, OFM Cap, directing; evening child care provided.
- **MON, SEP. 29** — Mass: for law enforcement officers; St. John the Baptist Church, corner E. Second & Lake Sts., Elmira; 5

p.m.; pasta supper to follow; Fr. Patrick Connor, celebrant.

Livingston County

Meeting

- **SUN, SEP. 28** — Meeting: of Christian Writer's Fellowship of Monroe and Livingston County; Beaver Rd. Church of Christ, 375 Beaver Rd., Chili; 2 p.m.; 716/266-9704.

Religious Activity

- **FRI, SEP. 26** — Registration deadline: for Sept. 28 cantor workshop; St. Mary's Church, 13 North St., Geneseo; 7-9 p.m.; \$10 per person, \$60 per parish; call Elaine, 800/388-7177, ext. 328.
- **MON, SEP. 29** — Mass: prayers for success of Fr. Robert Collins' bone marrow transplant; Mass 9 a.m. service 7:30 p.m.; evening prayer, 10 p.m.; eucharistic adoration 9 a.m. Monday to 9 a.m. Tuesday; St. Joseph Church, 14 Washington St., Livonia.

Monroe County

Fundraisers

- **SUN, SEP. 28** — Hike of Hope: for Cephas' Prison and Parole Ministry; Genesee Valley Park Round-house Pavilion, Rochester; 1:30 p.m.

Health

- **OCT. 14** — Next-to-New Sale: Blessed Sacrament Parish, corner of Monroe Ave./Oxford St., Rochester; 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Wed.-Fri., 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. (half-price sale); baked goods, lunch and supper available.

Meetings

- **SAT, SEP. 27** — Workshop: "Strengthening Youth Ministry"; St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 2000 Highland Ave., Rochester; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; 716/271-7017 or 716/242-0080.
- **MON, SEP. 29** — Program: "Codependency: A Feminist Perspective"; Dugan Center at St. Mary's Church, 15 St. Mary's Pl., Rochester; 12:10-12:50 p.m.; for more information call 716/232-7140.
- **TUE, SEP. 30** — Lecture: "From Terror and Pain to Compassion and Joy"; Nazareth College, 4245 East Ave., Rochester; 12:30-1:30 p.m.; Sr. Beatrice Ganley, SSJ, will read from memoirs; 716/389-2456

Religious Activities

- **FRI, SEP. 26** — Registration deadline: for "Experiences of Prayer: Biblical and Personal Insights"; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; 7:30-9 p.m., Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24; Fr. Sebastian Falcone, presenting; 716/336-4370.
- **MON, SEP. 29** — Reservation deadline: for Oct. 5 presentation "Embracing the God Within"; SSJ

Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave., Rochester; 1-7 p.m.; supper included; for single, Catholic men and women; call Sr. Marilyn Pray, 716/235-4068.

■ **TUE, SEP. 30** — Registration deadline: for Oct. 4 presentation "The Spirituality of Work: A Fad? ... or Our Future"; The Dugan Center at St. Mary's Church, 15 St. Mary's Pl., Rochester; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; to register, call 716/232-7140.

■ **TUE, SEP. 30** — Registration deadline: for "Couples Retreat"; 13 sessions bi-weekly beginning Oct. 6; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; 7-9:30 p.m.; call 716/336-4370.

■ **WED, OCT. 1** — Mass: in honor of St. Therese; Carmelite Monastery, 1931 Jefferson Rd., Henrietta; 9:30 a.m.; Bishop Clark, celebrant.

■ **WED, OCT. 1** — Registration deadline: for bi-weekly series beginning Oct. 7; "At-Home Retreat" — 13 sessions; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; 9:30-11:30 a.m.; call 716/336-4370.

■ **SUN, OCT. 5** — Play: "St. Francis: Troubadour of God's Peace"; drama performed by Leonardo Defilippis; Guardian Angels Church, 2061 E. Henrietta Road, Rochester; \$5 per person, maximum \$15 per family; 716/334-5630, or 924-7550.

Social Activities

- **SAT, SEP. 27** —

■ **Celebration:** of 75th anniversary of St. Ambrose Parish, 25 Empire Blvd., Rochester; 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; chicken barbecue 3-7 p.m.; Mass 5 p.m.

■ **SAT, SEP. 27** — Potluck dinner: and video night; with St. Thomas More Singles Club; St. Charles Borromeo Church Hall, 3003 Dewey Ave., Rochester; 6 p.m.; for more information call 716/482-5656.

■ **TUE, SEP. 30** — Cheerleading: Tournament of Champions; Bishop Kearney High School, 125 Kings Hwy. S., Rochester; 5 p.m.

Tompkin Tioga

Religious Activity

- **SAT, SEP. 27** — Pre-Cana class: St. James Church, 17 Whig St., Trumansburg; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; to register call Jane & Jim Doolittle, 607/564-9296.

Yates Ontario Wayne

Religious Activity

- **WED, OCT. 1** — Presentation: "Everyday Spirituality & Prayer"; St. Bernard's on the Road; St. Michael's Church, 401 S. Main St., Newark; 7:30 p.m.; Fr. Sebastian Falcone, presenter.