

about them  
rk, I realize  
st deeply in  
stewardship.  
y share a vi-  
l as a source  
ts. Further,  
ss that such  
n their care  
trength and  
good of oth-  
relationships  
r, they are  
erously to  
nt and trea-

, to you and  
en, girls and  
work for the  
great per-  
nd you give  
to our faith  
hop.

ony and the  
one will find

3, 2002

l the last  
one-year  
postage.  
29-9530.

PO Box

ed weekly  
; 50 issues  
of known  
Rochester,  
H. Clark;  
: mailing  
society,  
lers, mort-  
t status of  
es has not  
: Courier.  
otal num-  
ailed 8/9.  
d through  
e distribu-  
31/1839.  
00%.

# Leaders oppose Iraq strike

## Mounting opposition marks church views

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As U.S. pressure mounted for an invasion of Iraq, opposition to a unilateral strike was growing among church leaders and peace groups across the globe.

U.N. weapons inspectors said Sept. 30 that they would return to Baghdad under the assumption of having complete access in their search for nuclear, biological and chemical weaponry.

A U.N. resolution drafted by Washington and London demanded that Iraq open all sites, including presidential palaces, to inspectors, or face military action.

In Canada, church leaders warned against supporting any U.N. resolution that makes it virtually impossible for Iraq to meet the demands.

Such a U.N. resolution "would be a mere cover for an invasion that might be multinational but would still be unjust," said the 15 church leaders and heads of coalitions in a Sept. 25 letter to Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

"This is a time for intense diplomacy and face-to-face negotiations, not for missiles and high-altitude bombing," said the letter.

The leaders, including Bishop Jacques Berthelet of St. Jean-Longueuil, Quebec, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, asked Chretien to resist growing pressure in favor of a new invasion of Iraq.

The leaders called on the prime minister to ensure that the Canadian government supports a negotiated, peace-building approach "consistent with international law and taking the common good of Iraq's people as its starting point."

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said it would be immoral for the United States to attack Iraq alone or with only a few allies before a new round of inspections, reported the Italian Catholic newspaper *Avvenire*.

As long as the United Nations and most of its member nations support weapons inspections instead of immediate military action, the United States does not have a right to act unilaterally, the cardinal told reporters after a speech on politics and morality.

Asked by reporters if U.S. military action against Iraq could be justified morally, he answered, "Certainly not in this situation."

"The United Nations exists. It must make the decisive choice," he said. "It is necessary that the com-



Father James Russell of Lake City, Minn., is flanked by lay and religious participants in a prayer vigil for peace in Washington Sept. 25.

munity of peoples and not an individual power make the decision.

"And the fact that the United Nations is trying to avoid war seems to me to demonstrate with sufficient evidence that the damage which would result would be greater than the values trying to be saved," the cardinal told *Avvenire*.

Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace group, mobilized demonstrations and peace vigils in the United States and Britain.

In London, about 60 Pax Christi members, along with a group of Japanese Buddhist monks, participated in a seven-hour vigil Sept. 24 outside Parliament, while lawmakers inside debated a military strike against Iraq.

Pat Gaffney, general secretary of Pax Christi, said the vigil was called to urge politicians to work toward a peaceful, nonviolent resolution to the situation in Iraq.

"The simple message was, 'No to war in our name. Yes to peace with justice,'" she said.

In Washington, Pax Christi USA joined Network, a Catholic social-justice lobby, in organizing a Sept. 25 lobbying day as part of a series of what organizers called "action days on Iraq."

David Robinson, Pax Christi's na-

tional coordinator, said it was essential that those who oppose a strike against Iraq let their feelings be known to lawmakers.

"We need to come here in person, sit down and press the case," he said. "The U.S. can't join the list of rogue nations by violating and abandoning international law.

"Let the U.N. and its inspectors have the six months that they need to do their job," Robinson said.

These protests followed by a week a letter to U.S. President George Bush in which the U.S. bishops stated that "pre-emptive, unilateral use of military force to overthrow the government of Iraq" cannot be justified at this time.

The bishops urged Bush "to step back from the brink of war and help lead the world to act together to fashion an effective global response to Iraq's threats."

In their letter to Bush, the bishops used Catholic

just-war criteria to argue that unilateral strikes against Iraq would differ from the use of force against Afghanistan, part of a broader war against terrorism in response to Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

"Given the precedents and risks involved, we find it difficult to justify extending the war on terrorism to Iraq, absent clear and adequate evidence of Iraqi involvement in the attacks of Sept. 11 or of an imminent attack of a grave nature," the bishops said.

The letter, dated Sept. 13 and released in Washington Sept. 17, was signed by Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville, Ill., president of the U.S. bishops' conference, on behalf of the bishops' Administrative Committee.

Bishop Gregory also was among a group of religious leaders who met at the White House Sept. 16 with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Bishop Mark S. Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Bishop Frank T. Griswold, primate of the Episcopal Church, joined Bishop Gregory for the meeting with Rice. It was scheduled to discuss the churches' concerns about the Holy Land.

### GERMANY (CNS)

The German bishop's conference issued a statement in dealing with the possibility of a deal with Iraq. The deal would allow Iraq to keep its nuclear weapons but to mis-

Under the proposal, every component of the deal will cooperate with inspectors and those groups that may be re-

The proposal also said they have the same objective enough to the deal.

Experts estimated that as many as 17,000 people were

### BOSTON ARCHDIOCESE GETS LEAD OF \$2.5 M

BOSTON (CNS) — The Archdiocese of Boston received a \$2.5 million mortgage loan from the Bishop of Columbus Sept. 27.

The initial advance will pay off the \$9 million the archdiocese currently has outstanding under a line of credit and enable the archdiocese to provide in-home financing for a new Catholic Charities day-care center in South Boston.