



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONCERN OVER UNREST IN CHILE IS VOICED

WASHINGTON--Concern over the government-imposed state of siege and the escalation of violence in Chile has been expressed by Bishop James W. Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In a (September 12) cable to Juan Francisco Cardinal Fresno of Santiago, Bishop Malone cited recent events affecting the Church in Chile and assured prayers "that the long tradition of democratic rule and civil debate within Chile will speedily return."

Three French priests were expelled and two U.S. maryknoll priests were detained briefly and released since the state of siege was imposed by the government after the September 7 attempted assassination of President Augusto Pinochet.

Text of Bishop Malone's cable:

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NATIONAL CATHOLIC OFFICE FOR INFORMATION

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"I wish to express to you my heartfelt sympathy over several events affecting the Church of Chile, including attacks against the Vicariate of Solidarity, the tragic case of the two young people set afire in July, and most recently, the detention and expulsion of several priests of your archdiocese.

"I deeply regret governmental decision to reimpose the state of siege with its attendant lack of judicial guarantees and deplore the escalation of violence whether employed by government or opposition forces.

"I pray that the long tradition of democratic rule and civil debate within Chile will speedily return and that the longed for social peace that you have worked for so tirelessly will soon become a reality."

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