

Human rights advocate says, 'Fight for the living'

By Mary Jo Pitzl

The definition of human rights must be expanded to include everything that makes life possible, Chilean human rights spokeswoman Isabel Letelier said Thursday.

Letelier addressed about 100 persons in the Nebraska Union Centennial Room. She is the widow of slain Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier.

Letelier's speech was sponsored by

Union Program Council's Talk and Topics Committee, Centennial College, UNL Political Science Dept., UNL Modern Languages Dept. and Nebraskans for Peace.

Letelier and Washington associate Ronhi Moffitt were killed Sept. 21, 1976, when a bomb exploded in their car in front of the Chilean embassy in Washington D.C.

Cause of the incident has not been determined. Strong suspicion points to the

work DINA, a secret police that seized power when Chilean President Salvador Allende's government was overthrown by a violent junta in September 1973.

Letelier was an opponent of the military junta, his wife said. When the junta took control, he was imprisoned in a concentration camp for a year, she said.

Letelier and his family were exiled to the United States after his release from the concentration camp. His widow continues to live in Washington, D.C., speaking about human rights and waiting for the day when she can return to a free homeland.

"Do not mourn for the dead," Letelier told the audience. "Fight for the living. Fight to release prisoners, to change the laws, to make the people who have disappeared appear."

Letelier said more than 1,000 persons have vanished with no clue to their location since the junta took control.

"You cannot dispose of more than 1,000 people without someone knowing," Letelier said. The Chilean court has persistently refused to intervene with the kidnap cases, according to Letelier.

"The legal system in Chile is a cruel, sinister joke," she said, explaining that all operations are controlled by DINA.

In a question and answer period following her lecture, Letelier said DINA is the

only apparatus keeping the Chilean subversion together. The junta banned all political parties.

Letelier predicted that the only way to restore democratic government in Chile will be through a transition government to replace the junta.

She said steps have been taken to increase human rights. Two weeks ago, Letelier said she attended a meeting of the United Nations Committee of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. A resolution co-sponsored by the U.S. denounced the flagrant actions of the Chilean junta and was passed 25-1 by the committee.

Letelier said human rights advocates should write the Chilean junta demanding the truth about the disappeared citizens.

"We know that international pressure does work," she said, adding it was this force that freed her husband from the concentration camp.

Letelier said the U.S. Dept. of Justice is investigating her husband's death, but that she is dissatisfied with its progress. She said she requested a special prosecutor for the case from U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell last week, but her request has not been met.

Letelier will speak again at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the First Presbyterian Church, 17 and F streets.



Isabel Letelier

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Anti-death penalty bill killed, senators still divided

By Paula Dittrock

A bill to abolish the death penalty was killed in the Nebraska Legislature 29-20 Thursday.

The vote on Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers' LB64 followed floor debate which began Wednesday.

Several senators voiced opposition to the bill after Neligh Sen. John DeCamp told the legislature that an amendment would not ensure a person will spend more than 15 years in prison. The amendment proposed to require a minimum sentence of 30 years for first degree murder.

Citing what he called the good time law, DeCamp said a reduction in the sentence will automatically occur.

"I'm not talking about anybody taking any further action," said DeCamp after Hemingford Sen. Sam Cullan suggested a constitutional amendment to restrict the Board of Pardons' powers should LB64 pass.

Opposing the bill, Bellwood Sen. Loran Schmit said inmates have killed other inmates at the penitentiary.

Calling the death penalty more powerful than life imprisonment, he said he found it difficult to vote to abolish capital punishment when inmates are taking lives.

Murders not stopped

Chambers said the threat of capital punishment is not stopping murders within prison walls now.

Adams Sen. George Burrows warned that abolishing the death penalty would pressure policemen into "executing the suspect on the street."

He said he would oppose the death penalty if used freely but cited a history of state conservatism toward imposing the punishment.

Asking senators to think twice before touching the red button to kill the bill, Swigart said detection and certainty of punishment are what deter crime.

Scottsbluff Sen. William Nichol said the issue of capital punishment is like religion. Noting that each member must decide for himself, he challenged senators to ask their constituents about the issue during Easter

vacation.

In favor of death penalty

He said a poll he took in his district revealed that 95 per cent of his constituents favored the death penalty.

Columbus Sen. Donald Dworak also endorsed LB64. He said the only reason for capital punishment "has to be revenge," and added "I don't think that's reason enough to take the life of an individual."

DeCamp said Wednesday that he would introduce an amendment making capital punishment mandatory for specific crimes.

He told the senators Thursday that he has agreed to withhold this amendment until Chambers has been given a chance to advance his bill.

Chambers' bill is to abolish capital punishment while DeCamp's amendment would make the death penalty mandatory in certain cases.

Chambers called the death penalty a "gross mistake" and promised to offer an amendment asking for a five year moratorium on capital punishment if the bill fails to advance.

Report on sex discrimination still in writing stage at HEW

A federal report on alleged sex discrimination at NU, once expected in January, is not completed yet.

The U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) sent two investigators to UNL last November to look into charges filed in a 70-page report by the NU ad hoc Committee on Women's Concerns.

HEW is obligated to investigate all charges filed with its office. After its investigation, the department writes a report outlining its findings. It is this report that was expected in January.

According to Jesse Milan of the Civil

Rights Office at HEW's regional headquarters in Kansas City, the report "is still in the writing stage." He said research problems and other demands were delaying the report's completion.

The complaint alleged sex discrimination in the university's hiring, firing and pay scale procedures. It also alleged that the university did not properly advertise job openings and that women were denied promotions and tenure when hired.

Milan said he could not reveal details of the report until it is finished. NU faces possible loss of federal financing if it fails to comply with the report when finished.

Once the report is finished, and if the university is found to be not in compliance with federal guidelines, HEW notifies any federal agency that funds the university.

After notifying the agencies, HEW will seek voluntary compliance through negotiations with the university. If this fails the U.S. Justice Dept. could be asked to take action.

Milan told the *Daily Nebraskan* in November that the report would be completed by January. He would not estimate when he expects it to be completed.



Photo by Ted Kirk

Farmer Ezra P. Boondock left his prize cow, Emelia, at the side of the road while he went into the corner grocery to buy a plug of Redman. When he returned someone had chained Emelia to the fire hydrant. Ezra thought it was "udderly" senseless. So do we. April Fool!

friday

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 Entertainment: A 1,278-pipe organ will flood the Wesley House with music. . . p. 12
 Sports: UNL's crew club hosts Washburn University at Branched Oak Lake this Saturday. . . . p. 14