

Officers convicted in priest's killing

Associated Press

TORUN, Poland — Three secret policemen were convicted Thursday of murdering a pro-Solidarity priest and given prison terms ranging up to 25 years. The fourth man in the case, a colonel found guilty of instigating the plot, was sentenced to 25 years.

Chief judge Artur Kujawa said Col. Adam Pietruszka, the highest-ranking Interior Ministry officer charged in the death of the Rev. Jerzy Popieluszko, played a "cynical" role and created "an atmosphere conducive to committing the crime." Popieluszko was beaten to death and thrown into a reservoir last October.

There was a great public outcry over his murder, and the public trial of the four security agents was unprecedented in a country where secret police normally are beyond reproach.

The lawyer for Popieluszko's family called the verdicts "just," and a church spokesman said a 25-year-sentence gives a man "a lot of time to think about himself and about others."

The five-judge panel rejected the prosecutor's request that the ring-leader, Capt. Grzegorz Piotrowski, 33, be sentenced to death by hanging.

It convicted Piotrowski of kidnapping and killing the popular, outspok-

ken priest along with two lieutenants — Leszek Pekala, 32, and Waldemar Chmielewski, 29, who were given 15 and 14 years respectively.

Piotrowski and Pekala wept as the sentences were announced, journalists reported from the courtroom. Chmielewski, who has been troubled by a nervous disorder since the killing, trembled, keeping his head low in the defendants' dock. Pietruszka, 47, remained impassive.

Twenty-five years is the most severe punishment in Poland short of death, which was the maximum penalty faced by the defendants.

Piotrowski al be denied all civil rights for 10 years after they get out of prison — which costs them their military ranks and honors, and the right to vote and hold office.

The government said it would refuse comment on the case. The Roman Catholic Church said it would issue a statement after a Feb. 13-14 meeting of the bishops of this devoutly Catholic nation, but a spokesman at the episcopate in Warsaw said prison terms were severe enough punishment.

"The church is not going to criticize it (the verdict) as too high or too low," said the Rev. Henryk Brunka of the episcopate press office. "The death penalty is very rare in Poland. In cases of a 25-year sentence a man has a lot of time to think about himself and about others."

Animal

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do anything repetitive or unnecessary.

Also, through unannounced on-site inspections, the committee has the power to shut down any experiments that do not adhere to the regulations concerning housing and caring for the animals. Researchers must maintain the animals at the highest level of health possible, Sanford said.

Sanford said there are always bad apples, but most people in the science community go through the same mental anguish as lay people when deciding to use animals for research.

"We wouldn't be here if we didn't love animals," Sanford said. "That's why we got into this business in the first place."

He said the scientific community usually agrees that when research can be conducted without live animals, it should, if the research can still achieve the same level of competency and results.

Stanford said it takes less time and less money when research is done without live animals because the lab animals are expensive, being bought only from those people licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to insure the animals quality. That means the animals have been inbred so they are genetically close, and therefore fewer animals can be used.

Before the LARR, each department or college was responsible for the care of its own animals, making it difficult to be sure that each person was following the guidelines.

Dr. Dave Gross, professor of veterinary physiology and pharmacology, believes that the first issue to consider when using animals in medical research is whether people believe there are significant health problems that are of great importance to society and need solutions.

"If people accept that premise, then the issue is, is there any way to accomplish that aim without using animals," Gross said.

He said that one must try to find out if a drug or surgical procedure is dangerous or efficacious, and that "this sort of thing does not lend itself to computer work," or using live cell or tissue from an animal.

"You cannot model this very, very complex system (the human body) in a cell culture," Gross said. And there is no way to tell how something is going to happen in an entire system when it has only been tested in a minute part of the whole, he said.

Gross said almost 500,000 people a year, in the United States alone, have cardio-vascular disease.

"We've made huge strides in the last 50 years based almost entirely on animal experimentation," Gross said of his medical field. "If you don't think that's a worthwhile thing for

society to do, that's a philosophical question for each person to answer."

Gross said another important decision to be made involves who should do experiments and how.

"Anyone doing experiments of any kind on animals should have as a part of their philosophical make-up, and of their training, a reverence for life," he said. "That means that you don't waste an animal's life. That whenever you use an animal, the experiment is well thought out ahead of time and provides an answer."

"The general public has no way to judge what is good science and what is bad. Their general response is to stop everything. The answer to that is not to throw away the good science, you can't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Gross said he sees very little difference between raising a rat for research or raising livestock for slaughter. He said those people who think animals should never be used in research, should never use any animal products of benefit from any research done on animals, lest they be hypocrites.

McMurray said that people mistreating pets is a more common abuse of animals, than the inhumane treatment of animals in the laboratory.

"Irresponsible pet ownership is another kind of animal abuse," McMurray said. "And now you find people who say you shouldn't use pound dogs for experiments. If we don't use them for something, they're simply going to go up in the smoke stack of your local A.S.P.C.A."

Gross asked what the difference is between a relatively untrained person loading animals into a gas chamber and asphyxiating them, which he said is painful, and a trained person putting a needle into the animal and putting it to sleep?

Dr. Paul Wellman, assistant professor of psychology, also does research involving live animals. He supports the work done by animal rights groups.

"One of the things that the animal right's people have done, is to make people more sensitive," Wellman said. "Academia tends to produce researchers without a clear rationale in mind, without having a reason for doing it. I think we're beginning to move beyond that."

Pam King, president of the Brazos County Humane Society, said she worries most about research that is repetitive and that causes pain to the animal.

Kim said she is not sure if it is ethical to do research on live animals, but there are many experiments that she feels are definitely wrong.

"Most of the animal rights groups are not trying to wipe out animal experimentation, but are trying to give a base of thought to it," she said.

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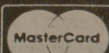
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