

Pope Lists '15 Ailments Of The Curia'

VATICAN CITY (AP) — To the Catholic Church's "seven deadly sins," Pope Francis has added the "15 ailments of the Curia."

Francis issued a blistering indictment of the Vatican bureaucracy Monday, accusing the cardinals, bishops and priests who serve him of using their Vatican careers to grab power and wealth, of living "hypocritical" double lives and forgetting that they're supposed to be joyful men of God.

Francis turned the traditional, genteel exchange of Christmas greetings into a public dressing down of the Curia, the central administration of the Holy See which governs the 1.2-billion strong Catholic Church. He made clear that his plans for a radical reform of the structures of church power must be accompanied by an even more radical spiritual reform of the men involved.

Ticking off 15 "ailments of the Curia" one by one, Francis urged the prelates sitting stone-faced before him in the marbled Sala Clementina to use the Christmas season to repent and atone and make the church a healthier, holier place in 2015.

Vatican watchers said they had never heard such a powerful, violent speech from a pope and suggested that it was informed by the results of a secret investigation ordered up by Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI in the aftermath of the 2012 leaks of his papers.



Pope Francis

In 'Year Of Action,' Obama Rocked Boat

HONOLULU (AP) — President Barack Obama rang in 2014 by declaring a "year of action," vowing to strengthen the nation by focusing on fairness, competitiveness and the power of American diplomacy. Since Congress seemed unwilling to help, the president said he'd act alone.

On immigration, climate change and U.S.-Cuba relations, at least, Obama stayed true to his word, reshaping on his own decades of American policy he argued had outlived its time. In a flurry of executive decrees taken over the heads of lawmakers, Obama added major notches to his legacy and tackled important issues for key support groups.

He also angered Republican lawmakers along the way and suffered a crushing midterm election defeat.

"America does not stand still, and neither will I," Obama said in his State of the Union address in January.

All told, Obama issued more than 80 executive actions and related measures this year, according to a report by the White House Monday compiling the president's memoranda, orders and directives to federal agencies. Many were designed to use existing laws to meet new objectives, accomplishing what Congress couldn't or wouldn't get done through new legislation.



Obama

Christie Doing Foreign Policy Homework

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — It's after 9 p.m. on a Sunday night in late November and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie is deep into a conference call, talking about nuclear weapons and Iran.

One voice is advocating a hard line, arguing against allowing Iran any capability to enrich uranium. Another summarizes the status of current negotiations and argues that forcing Iran to give up enrichment entirely isn't realistic.

This is how Christie has spent many of his nights during a year in which he raised record-setting amounts of campaign cash for his fellow Republican governors and methodically tried to recover from a political scandal involving traffic jams near a New York City bridge. Late at night, away from the spotlight of the midterm elections and 2016 speculation, he's been on the phone with some of the brightest foreign policy minds in the Republican Party, getting ready to run for president.

"They've been much more quiet in general in their outreach and their approach than, say, (Texas Gov.) Rick Perry, who's been very public and active," said Lanhee Chen, who served as 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney's chief policy adviser and is among those that Christie's aides have sought out for guidance.

"And I think that reflects a difference in terms of what they perceive that they need to accomplish here very early on to be viable as presidential candidates," Chen said.

Convicted Killer Remains Segregationist

PARCHMAN, Miss. (AP) — Craggy-faced and ornery, Edgar Ray Killen bears the signs of his 89 years. His hands are still scarred and rough from decades in the east Mississippi sawmills. He has a muscular build even as he maneuvers in his wheelchair. Time has not softened his views and he remains an ardent segregationist.

And he steadfastly refuses to discuss the "Freedom Summer" slayings of three civil-rights workers, which sparked national outrage, helped spur passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and landed him behind bars.

Killen was interviewed by The Associated Press inside the Mississippi State Penitentiary, where he is serving a 60-year sentence; it was his first interview since his conviction on state charges of manslaughter in 2005, 41 years to the day after James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were killed and buried in a red clay dam. An earlier trial in 1967, on federal charges, resulted in a mistrial.

Killen wouldn't say much about the 1964 killings. He said he remains a segregationist who does not believe in race equality but contends he bears no ill will toward blacks.

The three civil-rights workers — black Mississippian Chaney and white New Yorkers Schwerner and Goodman — were investigating the burning of a black church outside Philadelphia when they were stopped on an accusation of speeding and held for hours in the Neshoba County jail. Witnesses testified that Killen rounded up carloads of Klansmen to intercept the three men upon their release and helped arrange for a bulldozer to hide the bodies.

Arizona To Change Its Execution Drugs

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Arizona officials said Monday they are changing the drugs they use in executions after an inmate in July gasped repeatedly over the course of nearly two hours while being put to death.

According to a letter from Department of Corrections Director Charles Ryan to Gov. Jan Brewer, the department no longer will use the combination of midazolam, a sedative, and hydro-morphone, a pain killer.

Instead, the agency will try to obtain pentobarbital and sodium pentothal, the powerful but obsolete sedative that was used in most lethal injections in Arizona until it became difficult to obtain. If the state cannot obtain those drugs, it will use a three-drug combination that includes midazolam and potassium chloride, among others.

The July 23 execution of Joseph Rudolph Wood, convicted of murdering his ex-girlfriend and her father, called into question the efficacy of the drugs used after it took nearly two hours for Wood to die. He gasped over and over before taking his final breath and was given 15 doses of the drugs.

Wood's attorney, Dale Baich, says the execution was botched.

British Singer Joe Cocker Dies At 70

NEW YORK (AP) — Joe Cocker, the raspy-voiced British singer known for his frenzied cover of "With a Little Help From My Friends," the teary ballad "You Are So Beautiful" and a contorted performing style uncannily parodied by John Belushi on "Saturday Night Live," has died. He was 70.

His London-based agent, Barrie Marshall, said Cocker died Monday of lung cancer in Colorado, where he has lived for the past two decades.

Cocker, an interpreter more than a writer, became a star through his dazzling transformation of the Beatles' "With a Little Help From My Friends." Featuring a gospel-styled arrangement and furious call and response between Cocker and the backup singers, the song became a No. 1 hit in England and the highlight of his characteristically manic set at the Woodstock festival in 1969.

In a statement Monday, Paul McCartney remembered hearing Cocker's cover of the song he and John Lennon co-wrote for Ringo Starr and finding it "just mind blowing," a "soul anthem."

Hack Counterattack?

North Korea Experiencing Severe Internet Outages

BY ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — North Korea experienced sweeping Internet outages for hours before coming back online late Monday. One computer expert said the country's on-line access was "totally down."

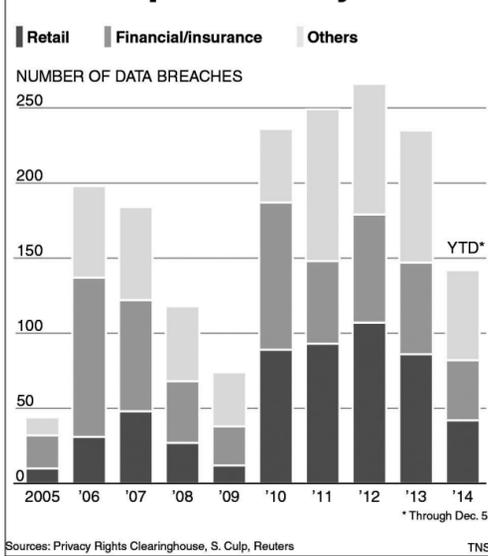
The White House and the State Department declined to say whether the U.S. government was responsible.

President Barack Obama said Friday the U.S. government expected to respond to the hacking of Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., which he described as an expensive act of "cyber vandalism" that he blamed on North Korea. Obama did not say how the U.S. might respond, and it was not immediately clear if the Internet connectivity problems represented the retribution. The U.S. government regards its offensive cyber operations as highly classified.

"We aren't going to discuss, you know, publicly operational details about the possible response options or comment on those kind of reports in anyway except to say that as we implement our responses, some will be seen, some may not be seen," State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said.

North Korea has forcefully denied it was responsible for hacking into Sony. But the country has for months condemned the "The Interview," a Sony satirical comedy about a plot to assassinate the North Korean leader. Sony canceled plans to release the movie after a group of hackers made ter-

U.S. companies and cybercrime



roristic threats against theaters planning to show it.

North Korea is one of the least connected countries in the world. Few North Koreans have access to computers, and even those who do are typically able to connect only to a domestic intranet. Though North Korea is equipped for broadband Internet, only a small, approved segment of the population has any access to the World Wide Web. More than a million people, however, are now using mobile phones in North Korea. The network covers most major cities but users cannot call outside the country or receive calls from outside.

North Korean diplomat Kim Song, asked Monday about the Internet attack,

told The Associated Press: "I have no information."

Ivan Simonovic, the U.N. assistant secretary-general for human rights, told reporters he didn't want to speculate about the nature of the Internet outages but said he hoped it would be "thoroughly investigated."

Doug Madory, the director of Internet analysis at Dyn Research, an Internet performance company, said Monday the problems began over the weekend and grew progressively worse to the point that "North Korea's totally down."

South Korean officials said early Tuesday in Seoul that Internet access to the North's official Korean Central News Agency and the Rodong Sinmun newspaper

were working normally again.

Another Internet technology service, Arbor Networks, which protects companies against hacker attacks, said its monitoring detected denial-of-service attacks aimed at North Korea's infrastructure starting Saturday and persisting Monday. Such attacks transmit so much spurious data traffic to Internet equipment that it becomes overwhelmed, until the attacks stop or the spurious traffic can be filtered and discarded to allow normal connections to resume.

Given North Korea's limited connectivity and lack of Internet sophistication, it would be relatively simple for a band of hackers to shut down online access, and it should not be assumed that the U.S. government had any part, said Dan Holden, director of security research at Arbor Networks.

"Anyone of us that was upset because we couldn't watch the movie, you could do that. Their Internet is just not that sophisticated," Holden said.

Madory said one benign explanation for the problem might be that a router suffered a software glitch, though a cyber-attack involving North Korea's Internet service was also a possibility. Routing instabilities are not uncommon, but instead of getting better, as one might expect, "it's getting worse, getting progressively degraded," Madory said.

"This doesn't fit that profile," of an ordinary routing problem, he said. "This shows something getting progressively worse over time."

Cuba Says It Has A Right To Grant Asylum To US Fugitives

BY MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN
AND ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

HAVANA — Cuba said Monday that it has a right to grant asylum to U.S. fugitives, the clearest sign yet that the communist government has no intention of extraditing America's most-wanted woman despite the warming of bilateral ties.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has urged President Barack Obama to demand the return of fugitive Joanne Chesimard before restoring full relations under a historic detente announced by Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro last week.

Chesimard was granted asylum by Fidel Castro after she escaped from the prison where she was serving a sentence for killing a New Jersey state trooper in 1973 during a gunbattle after being stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike.

Asked if returning fugitives was open to negotiation, Cuba's head of North American affairs, Josefina Vidal, told The Associated Press that "every nation has sovereign and legitimate rights to grant political asylum to people it considers to have been persecuted. ... That's a legitimate right."

"We've explained to the U.S. government in the past that there are some people living in Cuba to whom Cuba has

legitimately granted political asylum," Vidal said.

"There's no extradition treaty in effect between Cuba and the U.S.," she added.

In a letter to the White House made public Sunday, Christie said Cuba's asylum for Chesimard, who has changed her name to Assata Shakur, was "an affront to

"We've explained to the U.S. government in the past that there are some people living in Cuba to whom Cuba has legitimately granted political asylum."

JOSEFINA VIDAL

every resident of our state, our country and in particular, the men and women of the New Jersey State Police, who have tirelessly tried to bring this killer back to justice."

The first woman ever placed on the FBI's most-wanted terrorist list was living so openly in Havana that her number was listed in the phone book.

The FBI and the New Jersey State Police have offered a \$2 million reward for information leading to Shakur's capture.

Bernadette Meehan, a spokeswoman for the White House's National Security Council, said the Obama administration will "continue to press in our engagement with the Cuban government for the return of U.S. fugitives in Cuba to pursue justice for the victims of their crimes."

Several infamous convicts and sus-

pects in high-profile American cases live openly in Cuba, as are others convicted of less serious crimes. Among these are a woman convicted of killing a police officer four decades ago, a man sought for a 31-year-old armed robbery, airplane hijackers and dozens of people accused of Medicare and insurance fraud.

Cuba occasionally returns people convicted or suspected of committing crimes in the U.S., but it doesn't observe traditional extradition and refuses to send anyone back for a crime Havana considers political in nature, according to the State Department.

The Castro government's frequent position on returning fugitives has been to ask for the U.S. to return people wanted in Cuba.

"We've reminded the U.S. government that in its country they've given shelter to dozens and dozens of Cuban citizens," Vidal said. "Some of them accused of horrible crimes, some accused of terrorism, murder and kidnapping, and in every case the U.S. government has decided to welcome them."

In Cuba's first detailed public response to Obama's historic announcement last week, Vidal said Cuba is open to all of Obama's moves to improve relations and strengthen private enterprise and civil society on the island. That includes U.S. equipment to improve the Cuban Internet and U.S. exports to Cuba's new class of private business owners.

Avera

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It is the 'gold standard' of hospital accreditation. We could just allow a team from CMS or the State of South Dakota to come in and survey us, and that would meet all their acquired legal inspections. But we see this as a way to ensure our community that we have the highest standards and we are achieving those standards. Number 2: As a teaching facility with a campus here — the Yankton Ambulatory Program the Sanford School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota — we are hoping to teach many physicians and other people on campus. We want to assure them that we are at the highest level possible of accreditation."

Theresa Guenther, BA, MSE and executive director of Clinical Quality at ASHH, said the Joint Commission ensures that ASHH is at the top when it comes to quality patient safety.

"They were here for a three day survey, and when I say 'they,' I mean a nurse surveyor, a physician surveyor and an environments of care surveyor," she said.

The surveyors interacted with the medical staff, nurses, front-line staff, board, administrative leadership team and other employers during those three days.

"We answered various questions mainly about the quality of care and patient safety, and assured them that we were following all the policies and procedures that we should be following," Guenther said.

She said the accreditation is a great

way to celebrate with ASHH employees, medical staff, board and the Yankton community the quality care the hospital gives.

"We just want the community to be aware that we have that kind of outside recognition — but more importantly validation — that our staff is doing a nice job," she said.

ASHH also received word in November that it would be recognized as a Top Performer in Pneumonia and Surgical Care for the first time. ASHH was one of three hospitals in South Dakota to receive the honor.

The Joint Commission's Top Performer on Key Quality Measures program recognizes accredited hospitals that attain excellence on accountability measure performance. The program is based on data reported in the previous year about evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to be the best treatments for certain conditions, including heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children's asthma, inpatient psychiatric services, stroke, venous thromboembolism, immunization and perinatal care.

In order to be eligible for any of the awards, hospitals must have a minimum 95 percent quality rating for those disease areas. Avera Sacred Heart was at 99.6 percent in 2013.

"To be named among 'top performers' in hospitals that voluntarily hold themselves to higher standards is an additional feather to our cap," Ekeren said.

There are certain guideline provided that hospitals must follow to potentially receive these awards.

"For example, in pneumonia care you have to provide the right antibiotic in the right timing to the patients that come into your facility who are diagnosed with

pneumonia," Guenther said.

"For surgical care, the evidence is based on care measures. Those come from medical associations that say, 'If you take care of your patients in this way, they will have the highest probability of having the best outcomes,'" she said. "If a person comes in for an elective surgery, such as a hip or a knee replacement or a hysterectomy, we would need to provide antibiotics within one hour of your procedure start time."

Guenther said that the antibiotics will help prevent infections.

"It is also important to stop those antibiotics after the surgery," she said. Within 24 hours after the patient receives three doses, antibiotics need to be stopped so the patients don't get resistant to them.

Guenther said it is also important that the appropriate antibiotics are prescribed.

"The federal government has a specific list of antibiotics to use, depending on the types of surgery a patient has," she said.

ASHH is featured in the Joint Commission's "American Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety" annual report on the Joint Commission website and on the Joint Commission's Quality Check® website for its honors.

"It's another outside validation that we are doing things right," Ekeren said.

Go to jointcommission.org for more information.

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