

Archbishop Tutu calls for abolition of death penalty

Martin Griffith
Associated Press

RENO, Nev. - Two days after a Texas man's execution prompted a loud outcry, Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged the United States to abolish capital punishment.

At a news conference Saturday prior to accepting an honorary doctorate from the University of Nevada, Reno, Tutu said too many innocent people have been sent to death row.

"I don't want a morato-

rium on the death penalty. I want the abolition of it," Tutu said.

"The death penalty is one of the oddest things about this country.

"For the life of me, I can't understand why a country that's so committed to human rights doesn't find the death penalty an obscenity. I've always been amazed by this streak of vindictiveness in a society that's so caring in so many ways."

Tutu, 69, who won the

Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his efforts to end apartheid in South Africa, said he fears innocent inmates could be executed in the future.

In Illinois, 13 death row inmates have been cleared and released since the state reinstated capital punishment in 1977, prompting Gov. George Ryan to place a moratorium on executions.

Gary Graham insisted he was innocent moments before a Thursday execution that presented Texas Gov.

George W. Bush with the loudest outcry over capital punishment since he began his run for president.

"When you see the evidence of so many mistakes, you realize more mistakes can be made," Tutu said. "Once an execution is done, you can't correct it."

Tutu also urged the United States to come to terms with its history of slavery.

"You'll keep being haunted by slavery until you face up to it and what it did to

slaves," he said. "We discovered in South Africa the incredible potency of saying 'I'm sorry.'

"Once those simple words are uttered, they're an open sesame. Ask for forgiveness and work for reconciliation."

Despite conflicts around the world, Tutu said he's upbeat about the chances for world peace.

"Have you seen what's happened between North and South Korea? Have you seen what's happened between

Protestants and Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland.

"People are tired of conflict and they've seen how costly it is. We have to work at it, but I believe we can have universal peace."

Tutu gave a speech Saturday titled "Reconciling Love: A Millennium Mandate" as part of UNR's Millennium Speaker Series.

He's retiring this summer after two years as a visiting professor of theology at Emory University in Atlanta.

Toni

(Continued from Page 1)

Brando; a few of the major motion picture studios were listed.

Along with the names, Ono had a detailed budget. After adding the invitees, number of plaques and letters of appreciation needed, and assuming the convention room would be donated, Ono's budget was an estimated \$1,500.

"In those days, that was considered a lot for a one-night event," she said.

As the night grew longer, Ono and company still had not come up with a name for either the award or the event.

"Then suddenly, it hit me," Ono recalled with excitement. "The word image came to my mind and I immediately said, 'Let's offer image awards to these individuals. That's it. We will simply recognize them for the images they portray.'"

I can't help but to glance over the fragile sheets of paper that gave birth to one of the most honorable events in African-American award ceremony history.

I remember Ono saying she had no idea that her simple concept would take off so quickly, and almost immediately, on an international level. It rose so fast she lost control of it, leading to the present quandary with many claiming they created the Image Award.

The recent acknowledge-

Scholarship

(Continued from Page 1)

on the Michigan Education Assessment Program test, which students are not required to take.

The ACLU says students in poorer districts are at a disadvantage because those schools might not have the same resources as wealthier districts to teach for the test.

"The state is essentially punishing students for the schools they attend," Moss said. "If they want to reward student achievers, they need to look at other factors."

Moss said things such as a student's grade point average, class rank, financial need and extracurricular activities should be considered, not just the test scores.

Plaintiff Anita White said she took the test for the scholarship but didn't get the money. Now she can't afford the school of her choice, Michigan State University.

ment puts the argument to rest. Ladies and gentlemen, accepting for her long awaited award is none other than the creator, Ms. Toni Ono.

But the award ceremony was just the beginning. Ono and five committee members spent countless nights meeting and making phone calls to the top brass, movers and shakers in Hollywood. Next came deciding the girls needed to host the event.

"The girls who would represent — who would walk on stage to hand these prestigious awards to the winners of a specific category must be hand picked," she said.

She thought of having 10 girls from all races. She and the other committee members chose American Indian, African-American, Japanese, Hawaiian and White girls. Ono suggested that they be dressed in identical attire, from head to toe and named them the Immie girls.

She wanted the girls to stand for equality and to say to the world, "Hey deep down inside, we are all alike. The only difference is our skin color."

She also wanted the girls to show the public that the NAACP is not only for blacks, but that it's for all people. On Sunday August 13, 1967, the first NAACP Image Awards ceremony was held at the International Ballroom at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

Ono served on the Hollywood Screen Actors Guild Minority Committee (where she is still listed). "Back then the guild was called the Screen Extra," she said.

Ono began her acting career in 1955, when there were only six blacks listed in the guild and the only roles offered were either maids or Africans in the jungle. Oni's first "real" role as an extra was in the movie, "Something of Value," starring Sidney Portier.

"Gosh, I was so fascinated with him. He was so extra ordinaire," Ono said with a smile.

In 1960, the black Hollywood actors and actresses began to see light at the end of the tunnel, though their acting careers were on the verge of ending. "The Apartment," starring Jack Lemmon, was the first movie to portray blacks in decent roles.

"It got us out of the jungle and into the office," Oni said. "To this day, every time I see Jack, I make sure I walk over to thank him."

Oni's credits include "Funny Girl," a two-year run on "Starsky & Hutch," "Hill Street Blues," the movie "Porgy & Bess" directed by Otto Preminger, "Marcus Welby M.D.," "Peyton Place," "Mission 'N Impossible," "Planet of the Apes," "Anna La Costa," "Poseidon Adventure" and "The Great-

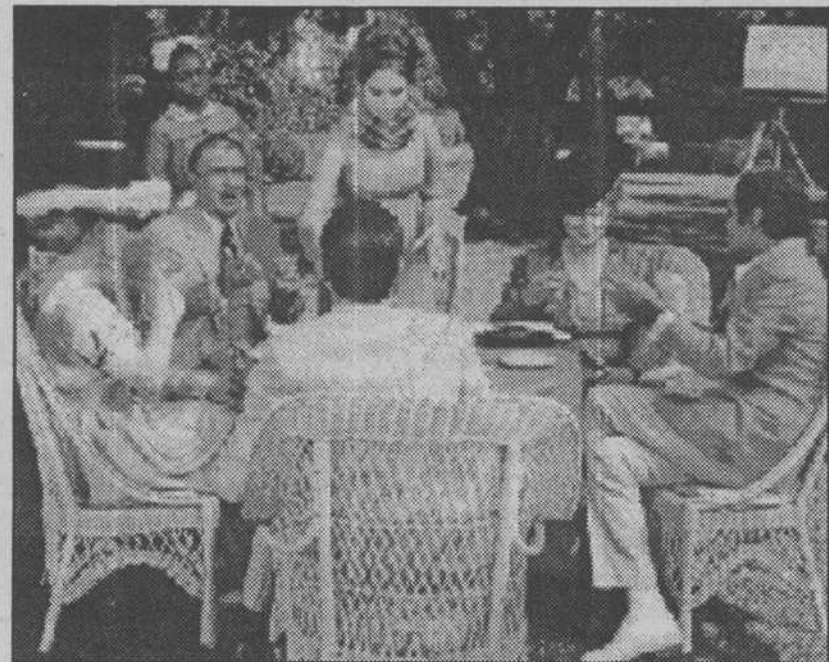
"I feel it's unjust," said White, who had a 3.4 GPA at Belleville High School in western Wayne County. She plans to attend Central Michigan University instead.

"A scholarship would have made a big difference in my choice of a college," she said.

Truscott said using grade point averages to award scholarships isn't fair either. "That is not a uniform standard. An 'A' in one school is not an 'A' in another," Truscott said, adding that students who fair poorly on the test can take it again.

About 40,000 students were awarded scholarships this year. Money for the program comes from Michigan's share of the multistate tobacco settlement.

Students who qualify receive either \$2,500 to attend a Michigan school or \$1,000 if they go to an out-of-state institution.



Toni Ono plays maid role on the set of *Funny Girl* starring Barbara Streisand. Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

est Story Ever Told," to name a few.

The time spent toiling dangerous roles under bad conditions in horrible locations paid off. A slightly visible scar on her right leg came via a stunt-double role on the movie, "The Singing Nun," and hanging from a helicopter on the set of, "Mission 'N Impossible," were worth it, she said.

Ono receives a Retired Motion Picture pension and is considered "qualified" to live in the Motion Picture Home instead of a rest home, if she chooses.

"That is where Harold Nicholas, of the famous Nicholas Brothers lives now," Ono said of the Motion Picture Home. She said today's actors, especially for African-American actors, must overcome the difficulty

of putting in enough time if they want to receive such benefits at the end of their careers.

Her name is on the Screen Actors Guild's list of Hollywood actresses. She is also an active member with the Las Vegas NAACP.

"I have informed President Gene Collins that I am here for the branch if they need me to assist them in any

way," she said.

After meeting with Ono, a.k.a. Ms. Vaz, I can say that her story brings a new meaning to the old saying "some things in life are worth waiting for."

Congratulations go out to Ono for her patience and persistence. Though you are the award's creator, the recipients and the viewing audience, are the real winners.

NEED A JOB?



NEVADA PARTNERS

We offer FREE:

- Employable Skills Training
- Computer Skills Training
- Internet/WebPage Training
- Career Counseling
- Job Placement Assistance
- Vouchers for Sheriff's, Health and T.A.M. Cards for Our Clients
- and More!!

NEVADA PARTNERS

Dr. Elias F. Ghanem Education Center
710 W. Lake Mead Blvd.
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 399-JOBS (5627)

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1992