



Source: Reuters, AP, 'Key nations 'regret' Iran standoff',  
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Dear Sirs,

I refer to my most recent letter to you on the subject of my presence here in Limbo. As yet, I have received no answer to my letter, and I feel that this has become a matter of some urgency since the Standing Committee on the Future of Limbo is about to bring down its final judgment. I cannot refrain from commenting that it is about time the status of Limbo was cleared up once and for all. Apart from the fact that I have had just about enough of the Pelagian Controversy and Augustine droning on about deprivation of the Beatific Vision, not to mention the more recent controversies about the souls of aborted babies, a decision to close the Limbo facility once and for all would make it impossible for anyone else to suffer from the same kind of administrative bungling that has befallen me.

However, whilst I would welcome a final decision on the future of Limbo, I am also deeply concerned that, should the Standing Committee finally decide to close the facility down, my own situation would be even more anomalous than it is at present. Meanwhile, the Limbo Parole Board, with the customary ineptitude which characterises the entire Celestial Bureaucracy, has allowed several deadlines to pass without arriving at any kind of decision about my case whilst I continue to be left in...well, Limbo.

Since it appears from your last communication to me that you have lost all of my paperwork, allow me to refresh your memory about my case. I am a baptised Catholic (yet another copy of my baptismal certificate is attached to this letter). I have always maintained that I died in a state of grace. Your most recent letter disputes this, citing two unconfessed mortal sins, to wit:

1. The consumption of a small steak on Friday, 15 June 1951

and

2. The admittedly extremely lewd daily thoughts concerning my neighbour's wife between 18 July and 23 October 1960, which you have categorised as an 'internal sin (mortal)'.

I cannot resist commenting here that I marvel at the inconsistency of the Celestial Bureaucracy. On the one hand, you appear to be able to effortlessly resurrect these comparatively trivial misdemeanours from your records, whilst at the same time being able to lose entire files of important paperwork essential to my entitlement to Eternal Bliss. Whilst I accept that these transgressions are indeed at least technically mortal sins, I do not accept that they can be considered so in the full spirit of the definition. If we are to define sin as 'nothing else than a morally bad act' (I cite St Thomas here), I cannot accept that the consumption of a 4 ounce (125g) steak on a Friday falls into this category, even if technically it did, at the time, break a Church injunction. I ask the Parole Board to consider whether this can really be considered in the same category of evil as genocide, also classed as a

mortal sin? As for the Impure Thoughts: I accept that I had them, and took pleasure in them, thus putting my lapse into the category of *delectatio morosa*, as you so officially observe. However, I should point out that I could never have acted upon them owing to the unfortunate side effects of the medication I was on at the time, and that in fact these side effects could be considered a punishment in itself for my fruitless fantasies.

Be that as it may, the whole question of the status of these misdemeanours is swept away by the fact that, although I had not technically been to confession for some years prior to my untimely death, I did make a full Act of Contrition at the moment of death (the records of which you also appear to have lost), and I should therefore not be here at all, but gazing upon the Beatific Vision for all eternity. In fact, according to your guidelines, even if I had not made the full Act of Contrition, I should still not be here, but the Other Place, a fact that seems to have consistently escaped you in all the correspondence we have had on this matter to date.

My case in a nutshell is as follows: by your own definition, Limbo is the resting place of the unbaptised souls of infants and the souls of the righteous who died prior to the Redemption. You must accept that these guidelines alone preclude my presence here, and yet this is where I, a card carrying Catholic, have been languishing inexplicably since my demise, and I am yet to receive a rational explanation for this unforgivable bureaucratic bungle. Moreover, your quibbles about the state of my soul at the time of my death are beside the point and could in fact cloud the issue of my resettlement in the likely event of the closure of the Limbo facility.

I ask you to consider what it has been like for me, having nothing but puling infants and grumbling ancients for company, with none of whom I even share a common language. One thing is perfectly clear (even though I cannot communicate with any of these people), and that is that they, too, are becoming increasingly resentful of their anomalous situation. If Thomas seriously believes that the unbaptised soul can no more resent deprivation of the sight of the Beatific Vision than a man can resent not being able to fly like a swallow, then he was not present at the public meeting of the souls of the righteous in Limbo immediately after the assumption of the soul of Kerry Packer into Paradise. For this reason, I hope that the Standing Committee arrives at a decision sooner rather than later. As for my own case, I beg that you will review the facts I have set out herein as quickly as is feasible and relocate me to Paradise immediately.

I remain, sir,

your humble servant...

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Anne Brennan (with reference to the [Catholic Encyclopedia](#).)*