

Aquinas Principal Asks Sports Relations With Public Schools

Aquinas Institute called on Rochester public school officials this week to cancel their policy of barring Aquinas from athletic and scholastic relations with local public schools.

In a statement made to sports writers and radio commentators, the Rev. Eugene Cullinane, C.S.B., principal of Aquinas, charged that Aquinas has been "kicked" from Rochester high school life and activity. He requested a conference with public school officials to mend the strained relations which have existed since all local interschool sports were banned nearly two years ago.

FATHER CULLINANE expressed his firm desire to establish friendly relations with public school officials.

"Whatever has been the cause of the breach in public relations between Aquinas and other high schools of the city, we want to take this opportunity of stating that my policy is the policy of my country—the Good Neighbor."

School with Father Cullinane was the Rev. Cyril Carter, C.S.B., faculty athletic director, who revealed that Aquinas had been repeatedly refused in its efforts to schedule city and regional public schools in basketball, baseball and other sports.

Aquinas last played Rochester

public schools in 1947 when the Dewey Avenue school met several city school baseball and basketball teams.

BUT IN THE Fall of 1947 the physical education department of the Rochester schools, headed by Herman J. Norton and his assistant director Elmer K. Smith, refused to let any public schools book athletic contests with Aquinas because of alleged violations of the letter and the "spirit" of the athletic code of the New York State Public High Schools Athletic Association.

Although Aquinas and other Catholic schools of the state can not be members of this association they are bound by its rules when playing teams that are members.

Crux of the official opposition of Mr. Norton was the Aquinas interschool football schedule which brought Catholic teams from other states to play in Rochester.

Charging that Aquinas violated state scholastic rules governing preseason practice, transfer students, age limitations and the traveling distance of their opponents, the public school officials criticized the "spirit" of emphasis in the Aquinas football policy.

FATHER CARTER declared that last December in a hearing before regional public school athletic officials he successfully exonerated Aquinas of all the

charges and rumors against its football policy. But the board denied his appeal for resumption of athletic relations with local and regional school teams.

"I was turned down," he said, "because they claimed Aquinas violated the 'spirit' of the rules."

Father Carter during the December hearing argued that Aquinas, as a "non-member" of the state association, should not have to abide by public school rules when playing other non-members in football. He assured the board that in all other sports contests with public schools Aquinas would comply fully with state rules.

Aquinas has never asked to play Rochester public schools in football but adequate basketball and baseball schedules cannot be arranged for the Little Irish unless city schools will compete in those sports.

During the past summer the contested Rule 13 of the state athletic code has been changed to say that non-public schools must meet state eligibility requirements "in all sports" if they wish to engage with public schools in any sports. Father Carter charged that this recent change in Rule 13 was a tacit admission that Aquinas was eligible last year to compete against public schools but now was effectively blocked by a strategy of discrimination.

Text of Father Cullinane's Statement To Newsmen on Athletic Policy

(Following is statement made to Rochester sportswriters by the Rev. Eugene Cullinane, C.S.B., president of Aquinas Institute.)

I have only recently arrived in Rochester. For the past ten years I have been teaching in Canada, and nine of those years were spent in the great Canadian Northwest almost two thousand miles from the Kodak City. Not only am I a newcomer to this city and this state, I am a newcomer in the field of high school educational work. For the past ten years I have been teaching in colleges and universities.

Since I am new to the city, I stand today as very much of a greenhorn in the arena of Rochester high school sports. If I were wise, I would probably take a seat in the stands, keep out of the public view, and spend a year or two just watching the games and getting the feel of the Rochester sports situation.

BUT SOMETIMES it is the stranger, or the greenhorn, who rushes in where angels fear to tread. I have decided to do just that. I have made up my mind not to sit back, but to step forward and speak -- on the record -- about a subject that I feel needs to be brought out into the daylight, into the good, clean fresh air of Rochester public opinion. It will no doubt come as a surprise to many Roches-

ter people that my first public statement as Principal of Aquinas is being made on the subject of sports to the sports writers and commentators of the Rochester press and radio.

We all know that Americans, as a people, are sports conscious. Although we are in dead earnest about the great moral and spiritual values that are at stake everywhere in the world today, we also get very serious about the World Series. We are not by nature war minded, we are, if anything, fun minded. We have always been far more interested in baseball than in bombs. We have liked the Army best when it was fighting for its life not with bullets, but with a football, on the ten-yard line against Notre Dame.

THIS, I suppose, is the light-hearted side of the American character and the American way of life. We like sports, but sports also like us. By that I mean that good, clean, healthy competitive sports have played, and continue to play, a most significant role in the physical and moral development of American boys and girls. As busy as are F.B.I. men in our times, they would be much busier, and far more numerous, if it were not for American athletics.

What I am saying is that, with us, sports are not an end in themselves; they are a means to an end. They contribute beyond measure to the healthy growth

and development of our young people, supplying as well to both youngsters and adults a most wholesome form of entertainment. They help make Americans sound in body and strong in those virtues that are most necessary for good citizenship.

ALMOST OVERNIGHT we of the United States of America have discovered that we are citizens, not only of this land that we love but citizens also of the world. In the mysterious workings of Divine Providence we have been called upon to break down the barriers of enmity, suspicion and hate that divide our world, and to assume a position of world leadership amongst the nations in the defense of freedom and justice everywhere, without which there can never be peace that is decent, lasting and worthy of man.

High school sports in Rochester are a part of this world picture. They have their role to play in the building, not only of better America, but of a better world. I am sure they are doing that in every respect save one.

Speaking now as a citizen of Rochester, as a citizen of the United States of America and as a citizen of the world, I want to direct your attention and the attention of the people of Rochester to the fact that for some years one of our high schools has been barred from the city wide high school athletic program. This school has literally been exiled from Rochester high school life and activity. So thorough and complete has been the isolation imposed upon it that not even a chess tournament or debating contest could be arranged with any of the other schools.

The fact that the isolated school is a Catholic school should be a matter of grave concern to every real American in this city. When our young people grow up and mature in the midst of divisions and enmities based on religious or racial distinctions, our educational system sows strife and discord. We thus tear down by our actions the ideals of sound American citizenship that we attempt to teach through our textbooks and class-work in the Social Studies. If we think we can eliminate the great iron curtain here in our own back yard, we are sadly mistaken. One world can never come, united nations will never exist, until there is understanding, friendship and brotherly love to break down divisions and foster unity.

WHATEVER MAY have been the cause or causes of the breach in relations between Aquinas and other high schools of the city, I want to take this opportunity of stating that my firm policy is the policy of my country -- that of the Good Neighbor. I see no reason why Aquinas cannot carry on an inter-regional program in football and an interscholastic program with the other schools in basketball and the other sports. The fact that more than 11,000 tickets had been sold for the opening Aquinas football game up to last Saturday is only one indication of many that there is a real need for inter-regional football here and that it has the approval of the vast majority of Rochester citizens.

I see no reason either why representatives from Aquinas cannot meet with the representatives of the other high schools in the city to iron out whatever misunderstandings and differences have brought about this unhappy breach in athletic and scholastic relations. As a proof of my desire for friendly relations I am sending today to the principals of the other schools an invitation to be present as my personal guests at the dedication of the new stadium and the opening game of the football season next Sunday.

ON GUARD REV. PATRICK J. FLYNN

(Continued from Page 1)

Suppose Aquinas were a boarding school, nobody would ask about the football players' home towns.

Again, look at it another way. There is a boy in a Pennsylvania town or a New England hamlet. He has football ability and wants to learn the game. He cannot find the coaching or the opportunities for competition on his local school team. So the lad comes to a school in Rochester where he is given topflight training and experience in the game he loves so well. Is this really wrong? This corner can't see it.

If some student genius in mathematics or languages came to Aquinas from anywhere nobody would object. Why penalize a youngster who has a future as a football player?

EDUCATION TODAY is big business. It costs money. Catholic educators who must rely on a nominal tuition and the generosity of friends are keenly aware of the increasing difficulty of operating a private supported school.

In this regard the Aquinas team with its tremendous patron popularity has brought some monetary assistance to Aquinas. The Basilian Fathers with an indebtedness of approximately half a million dollars, represented both in the school and the stadium would be less than human if they did not appreciate the prospect of profit from the football gate.

Only the unrealistic and the carping idealist will level the charge of "commercialism" at Aquinas. Understanding and loyal friends of Aquinas who pay to see their boys play each Sunday afternoon, will be very happy if Aquinas holds the top of the score when the game ends.

They will be doubly happy if the stadium is filled before the game starts.

And why shouldn't they be!

Coadjutor Archbishop Lakobe, Pa. — (NC) — Officials at St. Vincent Archdiocese and College have announced that the Holy See has confirmed the election of the Rt. Rev. Denis Strittmatter as Coadjutor Archbishop of the Lakobe Benedictine Community.

RECENT YEARS has also seen Aquinas develop a football team which ranks with the best schoolboy teams of the nation. Along with this the Basilian Fathers who direct Aquinas have now given Rochester its first major sports stadium. In erecting this stadium, which has cost in excess of \$400,000 the Basilian Fathers have assumed an indebtedness of \$300,000.

Thanks to the Basilian Fathers and their host of good friends the stadium is now a reality. This represents an adventure and an achievement in private enterprise rarely matched in any city in the United States.

OF COURSE the progress of Aquinas, particularly its football team, has had to face a barrage of carping criticism. This was to be expected. Any time you try to step forward you must expect to dodge the brickbats of opposition.

Going "big time" in football as the saying goes, was forced upon Aquinas almost by necessity. When Aquinas launched its football team more than a decade ago the city's public high schools had no football teams. As the Aquinas team developed it became more and more evident that small high schools with football teams were hopelessly outclassed against Aquinas.

In order to find suitable competition Aquinas was forced to engage the best of the high school teams anywhere. And when you compete with the best you want the best for yourself in training, in coaching and in players.

And right from the start Aquinas has provided for its boys the best in training and coaching. There was Coach Johnny Sullivan who pioneered the program and laid the groundwork for football at Aquinas. Then came Notre Dame's Harry Wright and now there is Boston College's Mickey Connolly.

THERE HAS been criticism, too, about the fact that Aquinas football team uses a few "transfer" students. We are unable to

become excited about this aspect. Suppose Aquinas were a boarding school, nobody would ask about the football players' home towns.

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SUNDAY, OCT. 2



AQUINAS

will play host to Bishop Byrne School, Port Arthur... better known to Rochester Football Fans as

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Plenty of good seats available for Sunday's game and the balance of that wonderful schedule... at **KNOFF CLOTHES, Inc. - Seneca Hotel**
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 Open Sunday, Oct. 2nd from 9 A. M. til game time.

Stadium Dedication at 1:30 P. M.
Kick Off at 2 o'clock

Anglicans Oppose Vatican Envoy

Hullfax, N. S. — (RNS) — Proposed appointment of a Canadian ambassador to the Vatican was disapproved here at the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada.

By a vote of 55 to 44, the Lower House adopted a resolution submitted by the Diocese of Calgary which declared that the nomination of a Canadian envoy to the Vatican would "constitute a breach of the principle of equality of all religious communities in their relations to the State, which is essential to the preservation of harmony in Canada."

When H. A. Porter, St. John City lawyer, told the House that action approving the resolution would be interpreted as motivated by bigotry or fear, delegates raised cries of "no, no." Porter declared that "the Pope is a political force and nothing you may do will give him more power than he now has."