

Official Denies TV Ban On Luther Film

Chicago (NC) — The Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Chicago issued a statement "Emphatically stating" that the archdiocese did not oppose telecasting by WGN-TV here of the film "Martin Luther." He added that if a station deems the Luther film "Positive Presentation of religious beliefs" and decides to show it, "We will not protest the decision in any way whatsoever."

THIS WAS THE second statement by Monsignor Edward M. Burke, diocesan archdiocesan intervention in the plans to show the film.

WGN-TV dropped the film from its scheduled December showing because of "emotional reaction" to plans to show it. Protestant groups have protested loudly charging that the "Roman Catholic Church" forced the cancellation.

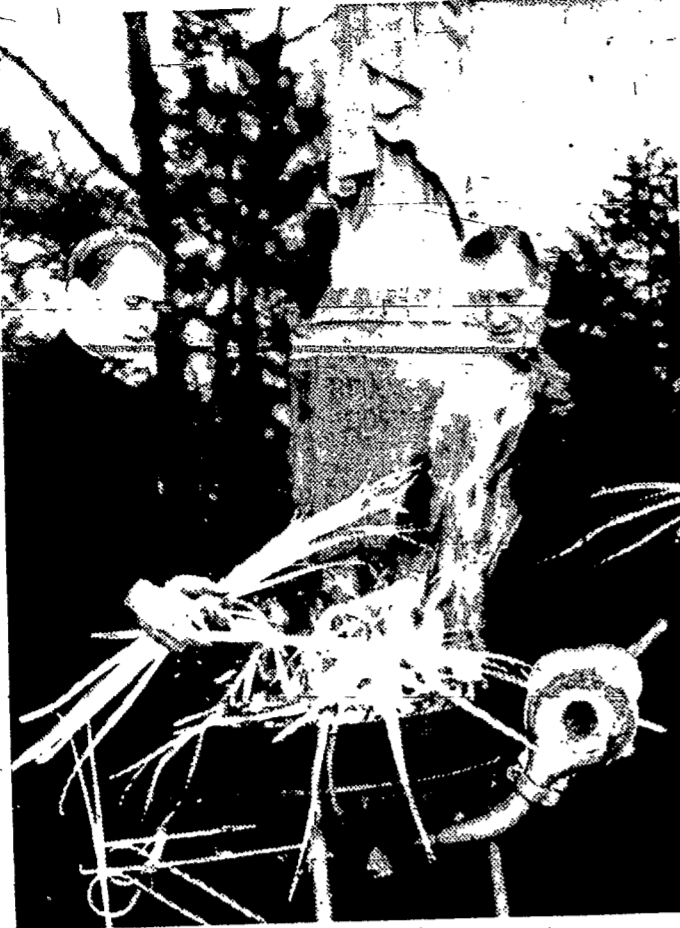
SAYING it is not surprising that some Catholics have protested plans to show the film, Monsignor Burke said that "what is surprising is that the protests of individual Catholics should be reported... as the action and policy of the Archdiocese. All freedom-loving men will deeply regret and deplore such a situation."

Vermont Governor Names Catholic

Montpelier, Vt. (RNS) — Governor Joseph B. Johnson named H. Francis Mahoney, a Roman Catholic, as one of two new members of the Vermont State Board of Education. The appointment becomes effective March 1.

Mr. Mahoney is chairman of the Springfield (Vt.) school board.

His appointment was based partly on religious considerations dating back to demands by The Vermont Catholic Tribune that Catholics should have representation on the board.



'Thou Art Dust And Unto Dust Thou Shalt Return'

Palms blessed last year (left photo) are gathered and burned for blessing later on Ash Wednesday. In a ceremony dating back to the Fifth century, ashes, (center photo) are blessed three times with water after prayer, quoted in part, "O, God, who desires the

repentance of sinners, deign to bless these ashes, which are to be put upon our heads in token of humility and obtain forgiveness..." Imposition of ashes on head of young priest, (right photo), tonsured in the rite of ordination, is on the crown of the priest's

head, while most faithful have ashes placed on forehead. Priest prays, "Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return." Celebrant is Father Walter J. Schmitz, S.S., Theological College, Catholic University of America. (NC Photos)

Protestant Ministers Hail Catholic 'Open House'

Belleville, Ill. — (RNS) — Protestant ministers here voiced approval of "Operation Understanding," a month-long project of the Belleville diocese to promote better understanding of Catholicism among non-Catholics.

IN A LETTER to Bishop Albert R. Zuroweste of Belleville, the Ministerial Alliance noted the prelates' recent "friendly gestures toward the Protestant community... first your letter commending the Memorial (Protestant) Hospital campaign and now your fine program entitled 'Operation Understanding.'"

Referring to a planned "open house" in all Catholic churches of the diocese, the alliance said: "We hold the latter enterprise so highly that we shall encourage our congregations to attend the open houses and we shall be in attendance also."

At the open house event special committees organized by the Diocesan Councils of Catholic Men and Women were to explain the church and its furnishings to visitors.

BISHOP ZUROWESTE had termed "Operation Understanding" one of the greatest projects ever undertaken by the diocese. He said its purpose was to help non-Catholics "learn what a Catholic really believes and practices."

Coast City Votes Father Serra Name

Rivera, Calif. — (RNS) — The area of Pico and Rivera, where some 60,000 suburbanites now live, will be named Serra City after Father Junipero Serra, the famous Franciscan priest who built nine of California's missions, if and when it incorporates.

That was indicated by the results of a newspaper contest to select a name for the area. Of 2,831 ballots received, 45 per cent favored the name Serra City, and 33 per cent chose El Rancho.

Incorporation proponents have taken the first step toward their goal filing a map of the proposed area with county officials. Petitions will begin circulating shortly, after which further steps toward incorporation may be taken.

New Jersey Lawmakers Reject Euthanasia Move

Trenton, N. J. — (RNS) — The New Jersey Assembly unanimously passed a resolution praising the New Jersey Medical Society and its board of trustees for condemning a move by a group of doctors to bring about the legalization of euthanasia (mercy killing).

A PETITION bearing the names of 166 New Jersey physicians had urged the legislature to permit by court order, the mercy killing of incurably ill persons, at their own request and after examination by a board of doctors.

The New Jersey Medical Society said these physicians had acted in opposition to the accepted position of organized medicine in the state.

Assemblyman Francis Werner of Camden, sponsor of the resolution, told the legislators that "being a God-fearing man I will resist any and every effort to legalize euthanasia."

HE CHARGED that the proposal is anti-religious in that it would put aside the Fifth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." "So-called mercy killing," the legislator said, "is still simply murder. Only God has the power to call a person to the great beyond."

Free Schooling

Bogota, Colombia — (NC) — Bogota's Catholic schools will provide education for 150 Hungarian refugee children free of tuition fees, it was announced.

Court Upholds 'Under God' In Flag Pledge

"Wall Grows Higher" — See Editorial on page 4.

Albany, N. Y. — (RNS) — A Supreme Court justice here refused to order the State Education Commissioner to delete the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance recited in the public schools.

Political Careers Defended By Senator Kennedy

Notre Dame, Ind. — (NC) — A Massachusetts Senator said here that politics has become "one of our most neglected, most abused and most ignored professions."

Sen. John F. Kennedy, speaking at the 108th annual Washington Birthday exercises at the University of Notre Dame, pointed out that politics "ranks low on the occupational list of a large share of our population and its chief practitioners are rarely well or favorably known."

Cited as "a renowned Catholic citizen" and as a "brilliant architect of the future of a number of the United States," Senator Kennedy was presented the annual Patriotism Award of Notre Dame's senior class.

The Massachusetts Democrat urged Notre Dame seniors that "each of you, regardless of your chosen occupation, consider entering the field of politics at some stage in your career."

He advised them to ignore "the sneers of the cynics or the fears of the purists for whom politics will never be an attraction."

Pointing out that politicians were not always held in disfavor as they so often are today, Senator Kennedy said:

"Our nation's first great politicians were traditionally our ablest, most respected, most talented leaders, men who moved from one field to another with amazing versatility and vitality."

Judge Isador Bookstein ruled that while the First Amendment guaranteed a citizen's "right to disbelieve" it gave the disbelievers "no preference over those who do believe in God and who, in pledging their allegiance, choose to express that belief."

THE RULING was made in dismissing a petition by Joseph Lewis, national president of the Free Thinkers of America, and Alfred L. Klein of Staten Island, a member of the group and the father of two school students.

They argued that inclusion of the words "under God" in the pledge to the flag was a violation of Church and State.

"If I properly apprehend the intent, design and purpose of the First Amendment," Judge Bookstein wrote, it was conceived to prevent and prohibit the establishment of a state religion; it was not intended to prevent or prohibit the growth and development of a religious state."

He noted that exclusion of references to the Deity would invalidate the President's oath of office, the Declaration of Independence and the oath of the court, all of which invoke God.

THE JUDGE also ruled that "children of non-believers" were perfectly free to omit the words "under God" when pledging their loyalty to "one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all."

He dismissed as not relevant an argument that the omission would "humiliate" the non-believing school children.

The case centered on a state education department action mandating the pledge to include "under God" after Congress in June 1954, changed the official version of the pledge to embrace that phrase following the words "one nation."

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