



TOWARD TOMORROW
Fr. Henry Atwell

The Baby Jesus has been banned from the Christmas celebration at the nation's Capitol by a recent court order. Now even a child in primary grades can see that Christ has to be in Christmas otherwise you have only —mas.

The reason Jesus got booted out of his birthday is because he offends the sensitivities of some people.

I can't help but think what a precedent has now been established.

Besides taking the ham out of hamburgs and the heat out of hot dogs, we will soon have to give up many cherished American customs.

Lest we offend the vegetarians, we will have to take the turkey out of Thanksgiving, and, even with Jesus already gone, we'll have to make further modifications. So as not to offend Black people, we'll have to stop singing White Christmas.

So we won't offend the many young Americans who resisted the draft during the Vietnam war, we will have to remove the veterans from all Veterans Day observances, and in respect for the sensitivities of those who have burned our nation's flag, we'll have to take the flag out of Flag Day.

In deference to shut-ins, we'll have to remove that intrepid traveler Columbus from Columbus Day and for those who want no ethnic nor religious identifications, we'll have to take St. Patrick out of St. Patrick's Day and St. Valentine out of St. Valentine's Day.

And for those who still think baseball is our national sport, we'll have to close down all football fields, basketball courts and racing tracks.

I suspect that the good Lord is a bit happy to get out of that national Christmas pageant. He was certainly more exploited than adored, as he is in most of the Christmas displays where he is inserted not so much as Lord but rather as an emotional inducement to shoppers to buy beyond their means.

But if there is to be true separation of church and state, as the courts so repeatedly insist, then I think the courts have little business intruding on customs and practices which people are free to attend or not.

There was recently much disturbance because Catholics tried (and in many cases succeeded in) having a Maude television episode on abortion canceled. Critics said that was raw Catholic power, a form of censorship, and that the television audience should be free to turn their sets on or off or switch to a program according to their choice without prior pressure from this or that religious group.

They may have a point there and if they do then the same holds true for those people, and there are thousands of them, who do want the Baby Jesus in Christmas pageants. He ought not to be eliminated when those who don't want him there can very freely go elsewhere for either entertainment or their own preference in piety.

"Separation" in my opinion should work both ways — if the church is expected to stay out of politics then the government's courts should stay out of religion. The Baby Jesus in Christmas no more violates any American's freedom than do kosher laws violate the free enterprise system.

Perhaps in past decades religious rites and practices were

forced upon people and even pupils in schools, but that chapter of our history has long ago ended and we are faced now with a new version of violation of our freedom. In previous times, we were forced to accept what many of us did not want. Now we are denied the chance to have that which many of us do want. In either case, freedom is inhibited.

Public Issues To Be Aired

Public education and social services will be two of the topics aired at a legislative hearing conducted by the New York State Council of Churches in cooperation with the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (GEM) Oct. 11 at 10 a.m. The hearing will be moderated by Father Henry Atwell, executive secretary of GEM, at the First Presbyterian Church, 101 Plymouth Ave.

The public is invited to a 9:30 a.m. coffee hour preceding the opening session on financing public education. Father Charles

Mulligan, director of the Office of Human Development, will be one of the speakers at the second session, on social services. He will discuss the issue of welfare rights.

Legislation pertaining to prisoner rights and victimless crimes and the new state drug law will be discussed at the third session.

Carolyn Micklem, a member of the Jail Ministry, explained that the hearing will "let the state council know the concerns of this area."

SERVICE RECOGNIZED

Elmira — Thirty-eight employees at St. Joseph's Hospital recently were honored for their years of service. The 40-year-old award was given to Sister Mary Wuest, SSI, director of nuclear medicine.

Geneva Yattaw, Sister Mary Christopher and Sister Karen were cited for 15 years of service.

Ten year recognitions were given to Mother Agnes Cecilia, a member of the hospital's board of directors, and Sister Martha Gersbach, hospital administrator.

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CLIFFORD-Goodman: 3 rooms. Unfurnished apartment. Appliances, Heat, \$135. Security. 160 Nichols Street.

APARTMENT: Four rooms, stove and refrigerator, Heat included. 467-8764.

303 WEST Ave.: Three clean rooms, upper apt. 225-1974.

UNFURNISHED, 4 rooms, utilities, suitable couple. References. \$145. 544-9508.

FOR SALE

REPOSSESSED sewing machine, 1973 Zig-Zag, Dial-n-sew, automatic buttonholes, blind hems, stretch stitch, decorative, and more. Twenty-year guarantee, 1-year free sewing lessons. Balance due \$36.00 or three payments of \$12.00 a month. Call credit manager, 288-2100.

LEFT on layaway, brand new 1973 Zig-Zag sewing machine, makes buttonholes, blind hems, plus fancy stitches, all without attachments. Full price \$30 or 3 payments of \$10 monthly. Necchi-Elna Sewing Center, 244-0830.

"R"BIKE Family Cycling Center. Royce-Union, Mossberg, Repairs. All makes. 270 Norton Street, 342-6875.

CLOTHES: Play and dress. Boys' and girls'. Sizes 2 and 3. Brand names. Many to choose from. Excellent condition. 225-4029.

'73 CHEVY wagon, 3-seat, Power, V-8, carrier, green. 247-4207.

NEW Cars: At low cost. Consumers auto buying service. 467-9145.

MG MIDGET, 1972. Good Condition, \$2,000 or Offer; Nick 872-6546.

WAREHOUSE: Sale; desks, chairs, files, safes, partitions; new, used. 1-5 daily, Tues., Thurs. till 9, 543 Atlantic at Culver. 482-3270.

ANTIQUES, Dolls, Clocks, Lamps, Glass, Silver, China, Others. 345. Chill Riga TL Road.

CLOTHES: Boys, winter size 3 & 4. One season: Excellent condition. 586-8924.

MOVING: Furniture & garage sale — from September 28th to October 5th, 603 Plank Rd.

GARAGE Sale: Must sell everything. French Provincial Dining Room Set, excellent condition. 272 Desmore Rd. (off Norton).

SINGER Zig-Zag sewing machine. Makes buttonholes, blind hems, monograms, and overcasts. Fully guaranteed. Will sacrifice for \$39 or 3 payments of \$13 monthly. Necchi-Elna Sewing Center, 244-0830.

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