

Life, Liberty and Law

Nancy Murphy

Rebuilding Begins For St. John's Church

By **DICK BAUMBACH**

Elmira — Reconstruction has started at St. John the Baptist Church here. The church was heavily damaged by fire last Dec. 27.

Father William Tobin, pastor of the church, said the Welliver Construction Co. Inc. of Elmira is putting a new roof on the building.

Father Tobin said plans call for the roof to be in place before any interior work starts. He said contractors estimate that the church will not be ready for services until early next year.

No cost estimate for the reconstruction is available, Father Tobin said, because contractors are working on a cost plus basis.

"They are charging us for the labor and materials and then five

per cent for overhead and 10 per cent for their profit, but they can't give us any figure on exactly how much the rebuilding is going to cost," he said.

Included in the roof work will be the erection of a new steeple and air conditioning. Prior to the fire the church had both items. St. John's was the only Catholic church in the Elmira area to have air conditioning.

Father Tobin said the church's interior will be similar to what it looked like before the fire. "We

feel we had a very beautiful church before the fire and we want it to look the same way when we are done," the priest said.

The fire broke out during the early morning hours of Dec. 27. All available Elmira fire-fighters were called in to battle the blaze.

COURIER DEADLINE

The Courier-Journal deadline is noon Thursday for articles intended for the following Wednesday edition.

"Every civilization is established and consolidated by observing a strict sexual code, is maintained while this strict code is kept, and decays when sexual license is allowed."

The gentleman who wrote these challenging words had devoted seven years trying to disprove their logic. He devoted seven years to the study of every known civilization of mankind, from the eighty primitive tribes through the modern nations. Joseph Daniel Unwin, Ph.D., the late British social anthropologist, stated in his published conclusions, "Frankly, I had hoped to dispel the idea, but I had not proceeded far before I was forced to conclude that the brave hypothesis probably contained an awkward and perplexing truth.

"The evidence was such as to demand a complete revision of my personal philosophy. For the relation of the factors (of sexual discipline and cultural expansion) seems to be so close that, if we know the sexual regulations a society has adopted, we can prophesy accurately the pattern of its cultural behaviour."

How many of our sex educators teach Dr. Unwin's conclusions? Where are the classrooms and the libraries whose shelves hold his papers? Or for that matter, the book stores? Why does it take weeks to obtain a single copy of his 62 page booklet "Sexual Regulations and Cultural Behaviour"? During his lifetime, Dr. Unwin was Classical Exhibitor, Oriel College Oxford; he was a Fellow Commoner in Research, Peterhouse Cambridge. He died at 41. He did not write for Playboy Magazine. He did not write for Harpers. Nor was he granted glittering funds from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundation, HEW, or giant pharmaceutical companies. He did not spend his years or impoverish his intellectual gifts researching new and grandly painless methods to prevent or destroy society's unwanted, the 'costly eaters.'

He studied and recorded the facts as he found them along the path of mankind's cultural development. ("A rationalist, like all non-scientific thinkers, is usually egocentric enough to regard his personal opinions as having universal validity, but a scientist has to concern himself with facts alone.") He traced the patterns and charted the results. His conclusions are clear. And they deserve the attention of every parent, churchman, writer, teacher, librarian and legislator in America... not to mention the United Nations.

"If during or just after a period of expansion," he wrote, "a society modifies its sexual regulations, and a new generation is born into a less rigorous tradition, its energy decreases. It enjoys the usufruct (i.e. the right to use, and the enjoyment) of its conquests for so long as it has the energy to retain them, but if it comes into contact with a more vigorous society... it is deprived of its sovereignty." The greater or lesser amount of sexual discipline, he noted, will have an effect within three generations.

I suggest that in the almost 40 years since Dr. Unwin spoke these words to the British Psychological Society, America entered upon, sustained and may now be emerging from the peak of an era of awesome scientific expansion. And in my considered opinion we have allowed a sudden and total reversal of our traditional moral disciplines. Having discarded the basis upon which we had previously rested our values, we now direct our energies toward the alluring utopian perfection of humanity by humanity. As Dr. Unwin said, "the profane has penetrated the sacred." We are attempting to

both recreate mankind and control the universe to indulge our individual comfort, and to deaden our moral responsibilities. And I feel that we can as a nation entomb ourselves within the span of three generations.

Are we so shallow that we will allow our children to be prevented or manipulated; that we will allow our natural energies to be twisted and controlled; our values to be distorted by budgetary considerations and the humanist's plastic logic? Are we so lethargic morally that we will not only allow but encourage by our silent accommodation the deliberate elimination of the handicapped, the imperfect, the non-productive and the aged?

Or is there somewhere deep within us the strength and the discipline of truth, which will emerge to accept the obvious challenge?

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