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See also DENVER Post same date

Protest at Regis College

Frank Morriss, an abortion foe, burns his Regis College diploma of 1943 during commencement at Regis on Sun-

day, Mothers' Day. Morriss was protesting the appearance of Gov. Dick Lamm, an abortion proponent, to

speak at commencement. Others canceled financial aid to show their anger. STORY ON PAGE 5.

Abortion foes protest award to Lamm

One Regis College alumnus burned his diploma Sunday, while others carried signs bearing such messages as "Lamm should be stewed, not honored."

Others resigned their seats on the school's 250-member board of honorary directors, an alumni group that pledges a minimum of \$100 annually from each member.

A spokesman for Council 539, Knights of Columbus, said the organization plans to end its 30-year program of providing scholarships to Regis students — currently \$4,000 a year.

All these actions came Sunday as about 125 antiabortion demonstrators protested the

presentation of the Jesuit school's first citizen award to Gov. Lamm.

Lamm was invited, at the request of graduating seniors, to speak at the college's 97th commencement exercises. Several seniors indicated later that they were more offended by the protest than by the governor's presence.

The protesters were infuriated by the presentation of an award to a man who, as a state representative, helped bring about passage of Colorado's abortion law — once considered the most liberal in the nation.

They were particularly incensed that it was presented on Mother's Day.

In his remarks, Lamm stressed the theme

that man lives in a finite world with finite resources that cannot continue being squandered.

As he spoke, alumnus Frank Morriss, class of '43, burned his diploma and shouted to fellow protesters: "You cannot follow Lamm and the lamb of God." He called Lamm's presence "Mother's Day blasphemy."

After the ceremony, Lamm said he found the experience "intensely moving" despite the protests.

"I am personally honored to see the faculty of Regis respecting, but not agreeing with, a divergence of views," Lamm said.

Making his way to a reception afterward, Lamm was steered by a State Patrol officer to avoid a confrontation with protesters.

By that time, they were marching in a circle, reciting the rosary.

Five uniformed police officers were assigned to the area.

Regis President David M. Clarke issued a statement saying, "One of the oldest traditions of higher education in this country is the free and open discussion of ideas.

"For his commitment to the open debate of ideas — both in the public policy arena and in higher education — Gov. Lamm has been selected as a recipient of the Civis Princeps (first citizen) Award and as commencement speaker."

A college spokesman, Mrs. Mary O'Donnell, said the school had received about 100 telephone calls protesting the governor's presence at the commencement, including a few from nonCatholics. Most, she said, came from members of antiabortion groups.

She said the students invited Lamm to speak because many admired his views on environmental issues.

"They admire somebody who is willing to take an unpopular stand on abortion and other issues such as opposing the '76 winter Olympics for Denver."

In her introduction, Miss Miller cited Lamm's sponsorship, during his tenure in the House, of the land use bill that became law last year.

A few protesters left their seats and marched out as Lamm began speaking, but there was little disturbance as he delivered his remarks.

Later, Jerry Durnford of the Knights of Columbus said Council 539 canceled its scholarship program though students receiving scholarships will continue to receive aid.

"The cancellation was the only way to get our message across," Durnford said.

Far from hurting students, the cancellation will "do students a favor," he said. "Going to



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g commencement at Regis College
ay, Frank Morriss of Wheat Ridge

(dark glasses; pointing) harangues
other demonstrators about the "blas-
phemy" of inviting Gov. Dick Lamm,
an abortion advocate, to speak.

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Abortion foes protest Regis award to Gov. Lamm

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Regis would harm the students' Catholic traditions."

Mrs. Mary Rita Urbish, state director of the National Right to Life Committee, called Lamm's presence on the campus "an insult to mothers."

"I am here because I'm a mother of three

girls," she said, as fellow protesters marched and recited the rosary softly. She said other organizations joined her group to promote the demonstration.

"I can't believe that a Catholic college, run by Jesuits, would honor the man who is the father of permissive abortion in this country," Mrs. Urbish declared.

John Lyons, a graduate of 1961, said the invitation to Lamm "reflects intellectual and moral poverty."

"Gov. Lamm believes that only through human means can the world's problems be solved. He puts his trust in man, not God." As he resumed his marching, Lyons said of Lamm's presence: "I find it appalling."

But others attending the ceremony made it clear they were appalled by the protest. A few argued vehemently with the protesters.

A graduating senior, Winslow Mills of Littleton, ended an angry debate with two women in the protest line by yelling an obscenity at them as he stomped off.

"They mucked up our graduation, Mills said. It's our day. It's the biggest moment in our lives.

"Most students were upset. It is disturbing. Let them take on Gov. Lamm somewhere else," Mills said.

At one point, four small girls carried a mock coffin bearing a headstone with the legend:

"Here lies Regis. Thought not a fetus. Fell victim to the abortionist's sword. Today I ask you Lord. To whom can I look toward."

Among the three alumni directors who reportedly resigned was Robert L. Ord of Ever-

green. He submitted a letter saying, "Please remove my name from membership as a Regis College director. Your most recent affront to the Catholic community is inexcusable . . .

"When you have Richard Lamm, you don't need me," he concluded.

Mrs. O'Donnell said she'd been informed that at least two others on the alumni board had resigned, but she was unable to supply their names.