

8-14-69

# Bigoted And Benighted

By FRANK MORRISS

You would have to go to the days of Nativism and the Know Nothings, or possibly the heyday of the Ku Klux Klan to match current bigotry in print as far as the Catholic Church is concerned. It reached a malodorous depth of crudity recently in the pages of the SEATTLE-POST INTELLIGENCER where a pro-abortion columnist wrote insulting attacks on the Holy Father. Archbishop Thomas A. Connolly called the column "particularly vicious and insulting," and his call for economic reprisals against the paper frightened its management into a half-hearted apology.

A more recent column by the WASHINGTON POST's Nicholas Von Hoffman does not quite match the crudity of the Seattle screed, and for that very reason it is more dangerous, especially when you consider the Hoffman column appeared in a number of other subscribing papers. Hoffman isn't very subtle in hinting at what he wants — financial and other legal penalties against Catholics who do not bend before the popular insistence upon contraception. (Just how popular that insistence may be we aren't apt to know, since it is common Liberal practice to claim support without proving it.)

Wrote Hoffman: "The unchecked begetting of kids isn't like other religious practices. If an orthodox Jew wants to stay away from pork, that's his business. He isn't hurting anybody else, but that's not true of babies. What is true is that 70-year-old Italian celibates who cling to their aversion of contraceptives won't be alive to suffer the consequence of their erroneous teachings."

No, but there will be a number of fortunate souls around who can choose for themselves whether a highly populated future is all as bad as the Hoffman's of this world are predicting. And it just might be one of those products of "unchecked begetting of kids" who may be the genius needed to solve some of that society's problems. Hoffman, of course, won't be around to know either, unless he has stumbled upon some secret of immortality.

His arguments about orthodox Jews and dietary laws against pork aren't too convincing, either, when you think about it. I suppose swine growers would be able to make out an argument at least as plausible as Hoffman has done that should all Jews be coerced into abandoning their teaching in this regard the economy of the hog industry, and of the Nation as a whole, would be

significantly benefited. Under Hoffman's "logic," the government should step in and see that Jews brought their consumption of pork up to the national average.

It is simply the old absolutism brought up to date — the enlightened deciding what is good for everyone and then imposing that "good," like it or lump it. There is not the least concern for what men's natural rights may be. The laboratory and the sociologist's office are becoming new star chambers, where the scientific aristocrats decide our future actions. Ironically, the very ones who shout that what goes on in the bedroom is no concern of the Pope are quite willing to make it the concern of the scientists and the government. They never stop to consider there is

one difference — the Pope speaks as the representative of Christ; the government usually speaks as the representative only of power.

Sadly, the anti-Catholic press is no longer exclusively the secular press. One national Catholic newspaper, once respected as being uncompromisingly Catholic, recently presented a nasty little slur on the Irish custom of giving contributions to the parish on the event of a friend or relative's death. No one would suggest that such contributions to some public charity or health organization out of place. But the new anti-Catholic press thinks it highly disedifying if such go to the Church.

Bigotry is becoming highly ecumenical — I mean, of course, only anti-Catholic bigotry.