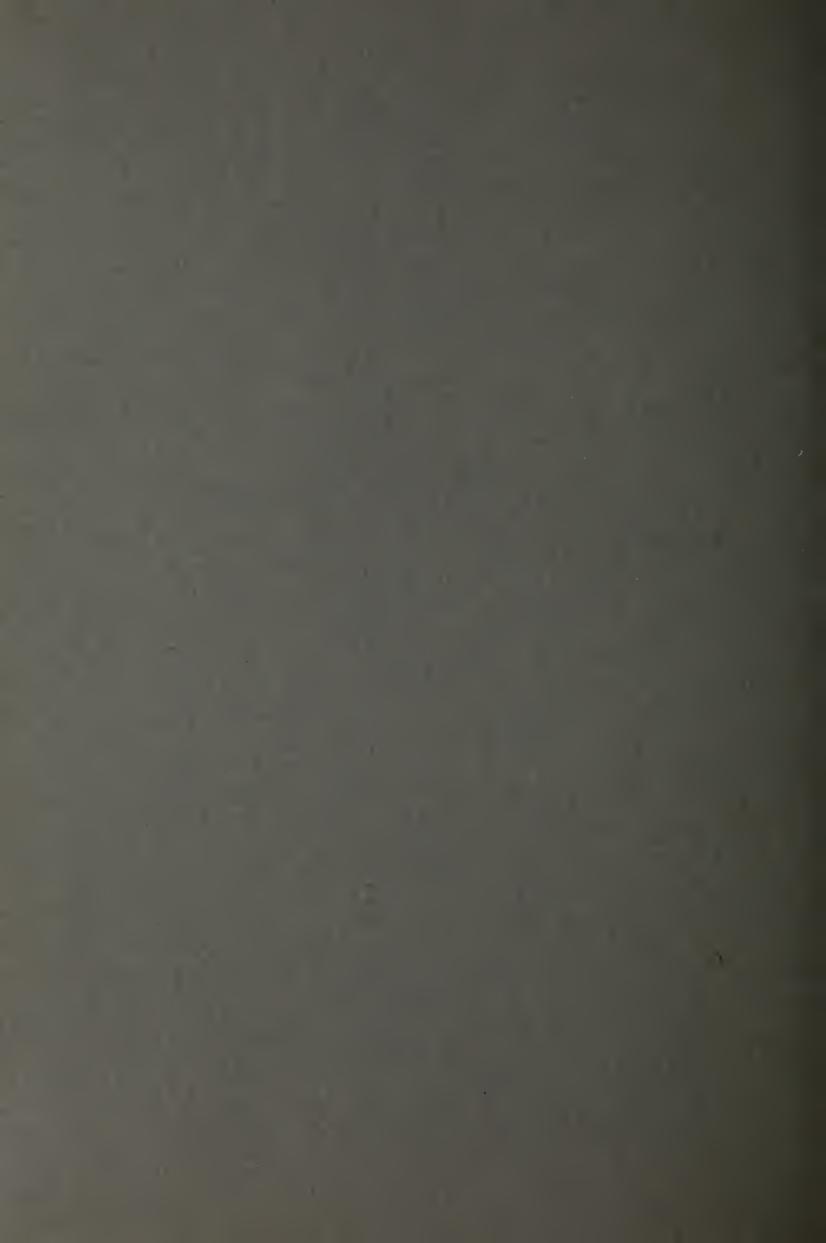




THE CATHOLIC HOUR



THE ROAD BACK



THE ROAD BACK

Two addresses delivered in the nationwide Catholic Hour, produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in cooperation with the Nation Broadcasting Company, on July 20, 1947 and July 27, 1947

BY

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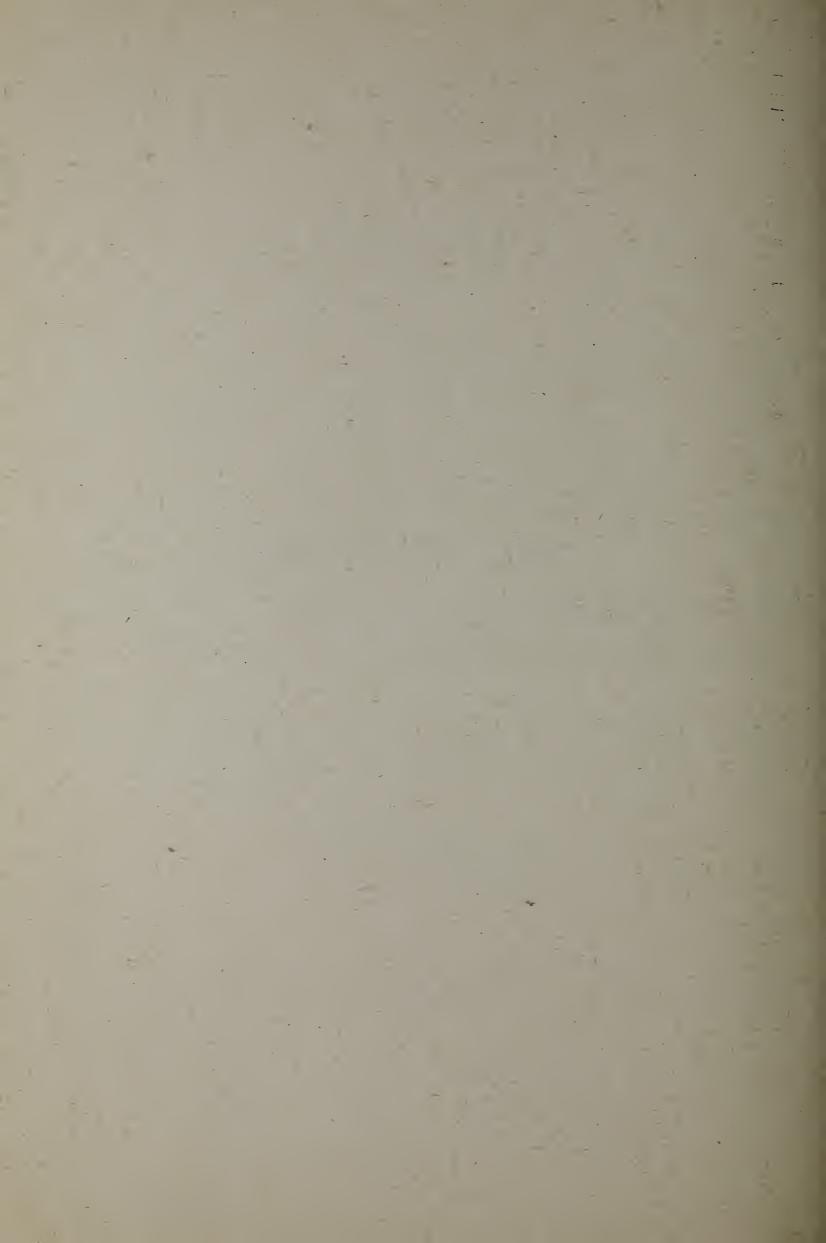
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BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS

Address Given on July 20, 1947

Friends of the radio audience:

I am grateful for the privilege of addressing my fellow Americans over the radio on the subject, The Road Back.

My particular topic today, Back To Fundamentals, is a challenging one especially in presentday times when the thinking of people is largely in terms of change for change sake under the guise and in the name of progress. But unless we challenge this modern novelty mania, this urge for the new merely because it appears presently useful or expedient, with no counting of the cost in consequences moral or spiritual, the road back to sane, safe and durable principles of life and living will become permanently impassable.

Today, not only has our erstwhile American way of life become secularized, the modern temper seems to be to remove entirely its age old sign posts, religion and morality, which George Washington called indispensable supports of political prosperity. Indeed, Washington went further in speaking of the necessity of religion and morality to the well being of a nation and its citizens, when he said: "In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens."

It is the subversion of these "great pillars of human happiness," these "firmest props of the duties of men and citizens," it is the removal of these sign posts along our erstwhile American way of life, which has led so many people today beyond the cross roads into the dead-end street of un-American secularism.

As I observe life and living today—and by that I mean when I meet my fellow men and women in every day professional, business and social contacts, when I read books and magazines and newspapers, when I attend the theatre and movies, when I listen to the radio—in a word when I observe the phases of every day life and living, I am convinced that one of the chief characteristics of people is a veritable mania for novelty, a craze for change.

All that almost anything from a hair-do to a philosophy seems to need today to assure its popularity is that it be dubbed "new," or, to use the present day jargon, to say, "It is out of this world."

As far as hair-do's are concerned, they, at least, are on the outside of the head. But when you find novelty philosophers. who, as has been well said, spurn any philosophy which can't prove that it was born yesterday, you get the ultimate, or should I not call it the nadir in novelty. Tt. is my humble opinion that such novelty philosophy, called by its adherents "the philosophy of total change," is the source of much, if not most, of our faddish thinking, customs and living.

There is, of course, no objection to the new when the new is as good or better than the old. But to blindly follow the new for novelty's sake, to ape novelty to keep up with the self-designated so-called intellectual or social elite when such novelty compromises or proscribes fundamental Christian principles of faith or morals, is bartering our birthright for a mess of pottage which is often more a mess than pottage. I have frequently asked myself the question which I would respectfully suggest to my radio audience today, why and whence all of the mania for novelty, this craze for change, and why and whence this ever-increasing spurning of the past, this veritable scorn for what is old?

Perhaps the best answer that can be given to such an inquiry is contained in this sentence from a radio address of our beloved Holy Father Pope Pius XII to the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine which met in Boston, Massachusetts, a few months ago. Said our Holy Father: "Perhaps the greatest sin in the world today is that men have begun to lose the sense of sin."

When I first read that sentence, not only did its frank truth appear to me, but it compelled the further realization that when the sense of sin is dulled or lost novelty is on the loose, because there is no standard of truth or morality to which novelty is beholden.

Moreover, when a philosophy of life and living has not only begun to lose the sense of sin, but when, in the manner of our present dominant novelty philosophy of secularism, it scoffs at the very idea of sin as outmoded and incompatible with the socalled scientific knowledge of man's nature, we can see that the loss of the sense of sin is effect as well as cause of this novelty mania, this craze for change.

But this novelty philosophy of secularism, or to call it by its given name, this philosophy of total change, does more than flout the sense of sin. Its basic tenets, which are but a modern adaptation of the philosophy of the German philosopher, Hegel, have been well summarized in this fashion: "There is no reality antecedent to the universe; the universe is self-creating; man is a part of nature and he has emerged as the result of a continuous process."

What the implications of such a philosophy are to us as Americans, to our philosophy of government, and to our erstwhile American way of life is readily apparent. Belief in man's Godgiven nature, belief in man's inalienable rights above and beyond the State, belief in God the Creator, which the founders of our Republic called basic, selfevident truths, is discarded.

More than that, or rather as an inexorable result of such iconoclasm of these fundamental principles, since there is no God, there is no divine or natural law, no stable standard of morality, no moral law, might is right as long as might lasts and is useful or expedient.

The anomalous position in which this philosophy of total change, with its foreboding implications, places our nation today as it seeks to assume the role of world leadership against totalitarianism should be evident to all who realize the ideological kinship such a philosophy has with Marxism.

Nor can we truthfully, or even hopefully maintain that this philosophy of total change, with its iconoclasm of fundamental Americanism and its consequent destruction of our erstwhile American way of life and living, has little influence on the masses of people.

Our present day 70,000,000 Americans with no Church affiliation, our federal statistics on divorce, one for every three marriages in the past year, the appalling let-down in juvenile and grown-up morality in our nation, with crime news crowding the columns of our daily press, all of these untoward conditions are indicative of the truth of this statement made by Dr. Walter Albion Squires, a Presbyterian Minister, in his book written thirty years ago, entitled Educational Movements of Today. Said Dr. Squires: "Sooner or later philosophical systems work their way down into the thinking of the masses and there they become potently formative of all that pertains to human life and conduct."

It is in this manner that secularism, the philosophy of total change, the philosophy which seeks to divorce our culture and education from religion has worked itself down into the thinking and conduct of the masses.

It came into our educational thinking stealthily at first, more than fifty years ago, under the guise of progress in educational method and technique. But with the cunning of its ideological Fascist relative, secularism in education at first camouflaged its aims, then cleverly confused educational method and purpose, until, in recent years, with its adherents numerous and articulate in educational institutions, associations and publications, secularism in education, the divorcement of our education from its traditional religious basis, has become a dominant philosophy of public education.

Moreover—and here again secularism manifests its ideological kinship to totalitarianism—secularist educators who have over the years cleverly contrived the sequence from non-sectarianism, to un-sectarianism to secularism in education, are now seizing upon the American political principle of the separation of Church and State and are using it as a means of substituting the cult of secularism for traditional religion and morality.

Perhaps some corroboration of these facts may be implied in these words of Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President Emeritus of Columbia University, who said: "The separation of Church and State is fundamental in our American political order, but so far as religious instruction is concerned, this principle has been so far departed from as to put the whole force and influence of the tax-supported school on the side of one element in the population, namely that which is pagan, and believesin no religion whatsoever."

Do we think amiss, therefore, when we conclude that it is through secularism in education that this Godless philosophy of total change with its expediency morality standard euphemistically called the "new morality" has worked itself down into the masses until it is largely responsible for what I would call our present day environmental atmosphere of "anything goes, do as you please if you can get away with it"?

With the sign-posts of traditional religion and morality thus removed the American way of life, with those indispensable supports of human happiness, those firmest props of the duties of men and citizens, as Washington called religion and morality, no longer regarded as guiding principles of human life and conduct, people are entering the dead-end street of secularism almost unwittingly, lured along by what is aptly called "secular optimism founded on trust in the scientific method and in automatic moral progress."

The time has come, therefore, for us to post the entrance to the dead-end street of secularism with the sign: "Do not enter. Turn around."

But we must do more than that. We must re-erect at the cross roads of the American way of life, where so many are turning to the left, the age-old sign posts, "Religion and morality, turn to the right."

This is the road back, the road of faith in God. A faithless world is a loveless world; and a faithless, loveless world is a warbreeding world. If God is not the Father of all mankind, then the brotherhood of man is but a gesture of tolerance predicated upon expediency, which is ephemeral, and not on love, which is lasting.

FORWARD WITH FUNDAMENTALS

Address Given on July 27, 1947

Last Sunday I was privileged to speak to you on the subject, "Back to Fundamentals." I endeavored to portray what I termed the novelty mania in present day thinking and living, and I referred briefly to some of the tenets of the dominant novelty philosophy of secularism, aptly called the philosophy of total change. I sought to show that this Godless, moralless philosophy has worked its way down into the thinking of the masses largely through the medium of secularism in education, with the result that religion and morality, which Washington called "the firmest props of the duties of men and citizens," are being ignored if not discarded by increasing numbers of people. The road back from this dead-end street of secularism I called the road of faith in God.

Today I would like to discuss with you, in all humility, the necessity for a renewed awareness on the part of God-believing people of those fundamental principles of morality which mark the way of true progress along the road of faith in God.

It is a commonplace fact that, because of scientific discovery and achievement, man knows much more than even his immediate forebears about the physical universe and about his physical self. Atomic fission and the accomplishments of preventive and curative medicine and surgery are perhaps the most recent popularly known evidence of this fact.

Such increased scientific knowledge and achievement. however, seems to have begotten, not only among scientists, but among the untutored observers and beneficiaries of scientific progress, a sense of self-sufficiency, which causes man to be unmindful of the fact that his spiritual self, his soul and its destiny, the whole truth about the whole man, has never been disclosed by scientific analysis or prognosis.

This self-sufficiency, moreover, has produced an indifference to these scientifically undiscovered truths, and it has tended to lead man farther and farther away from faith in God and consequently farther and farther away from the idea of dependence upon God and the need of God's assistance.

It is this indifference to spiritual values, this loss of the idea or sense of dependence on God and the need of God's assistance, which has made people unaware of those basic moral principles which must activate human living and guide human destiny away from the threatened suicide of civilization.

It is, of course, idle to mention the Ten Commandments to the unbeliever. His defense mechanism against everything that savors of tradition is that it is outmoded by science. He offers in substitution for traditional morality what he calls the new morality, a sanctionless system of self-indulgence with a weathervane standard of expediency.

Let us look at some of the phases of life where this weather-vane, expediency-standard morality, this so-called scientific morality, this new morality seeks to prevail.

Family life, which is the cornerstone of our sociological structure, has been made the guinea pig of expediency morality standards under the general scientific panacea of eugenics. "The right to be well born" is a favorite slogan of those who would tell us all about what even scientists in the field can tell us so little, namely the principle of life.

Because science has made progress in the field of genetics up to the point of the origin of the principle of life, the secularistic sociologist predicates his eugenics panaceas upon the assumption that life, which the founding fathers of our republic called an endowment of the Creator, must be ordered, and living must be regulated, by mere man-made mechanistic principles from the moment of conception to dissolution.

Moreover, it is remarkable with what ignominious terminology the secularistic sociologists camouflage the paganism of their panaceas.

They call it old-fashioned when one seeks to point to the basic deficiencies in secularistic sociological thinking. They summon statistics of infant and maternal mortality, of economic improvidence and poverty, of juvenile delinquency, the result, they say, of having too many children. But, the net result of their panaceas seems to be that family life, both of parents and children—where there is a child, or perhaps two—is continually requiring more and more welfare service from nation, states and cities to salvage the ever-increasing wreckage of broken homes.

The modern habit of writing "God stay out" over the doorways of many modern homes is a tragic substitution for the traditional motto "God bless our home" which, thank God, still ornaments the homes of people who believe that God is the author of life, the co-planner and co-Creator in parenthood.

This is not traditional ideal-This is stark reality all ism. around. about us. If life is not God-created, an endowment of the Creator, the new morality, expediency morality, which is wrecking family life at its very foundation, must prevail in its headlong rush to atheistic totalitarianism. If God is the author of life, then life and living must take God and spiritual values, moral values sourced in God, into the planning of parenthood and family life.

We can see further evidence of this planning without God, where human life is concerned, in that latest pagan excrescence of secularistic sociology, euphemistically called, euthanasia.

With the inexorable logic of Godless expediency morality, and as a result of an utter hopelessness to understand or cope with the inscrutable designs of Divine Providence, our modern expediency moralists are clamoring at the doors of legislatures to legalize the murder of the aged, insane and incurably sick under the guise of mercy.

Here again we have human planners, to whom the sacredness of God-given life means nothing, to whom the Commandment of God, "Thou shalt not kill," means nothing, measuring mastery over life and death in terms of expediency. From the cradle to the grave life is merely a span of years to the Godless. moralless planners. To them "Earth is darkness at the core, and dust and ashes all that is." For them these words of the poet are mere platitudes:

"Life is real, Life is earnest, And the grave is not its goal; Dust thou art to dust returnest

Was not spoken of the soul."

Perhaps I can best sum up the evils of expediency morality standards, as they affect family and social life today, in these words of Archbishop, now Cardinal Stritch, of Chicago. Said the Cardinal: "In the false light of mere materialistic concepts of man and society forces are working in the disguise of human welfare and social betterment which are violative of human rights and destructive of culture. I refer to the sociologists and social workers who make man a mere social segment, a humble recipient of such rights as human society bestows upon him. It is the fallacy that man lives only for human society or for the state. In this materialistic strain much of the dominant social thinking of our times is being done . . . Searching for a counterpart for the moral law it proposes expediency and social demand for the guiding principles in behavior when it does not hold behavior to be only a physiological question or the expression of compelling inherited or environmental necessities ... We have seen its outcroppings in . . . companionate marriage, divorce, school sex education and a growing demand that the State do all the care of the needy, and if it gains a wider control we may expect to see its ultimate social achievements in rigid materialistic collectivism, persecution of minorities, the painless murder of the useless, aged and feeble-minded and deadly sick, and other unthinkable, unmentionable social tragedies."

Certainly these warning words of the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago are indicative of the evil of the absence of fundamental moral principles in our modern day secularistic sociology.

Moreover, when we consider the plight of the youth of today, in the light of these warnings, we are compelled to the conclusion that the problem of juvenile delinquency cannot be solved by soulless materialistic profession-Granted the initial and alism. often major cause of such juvenile delinquency is traceable to delinquent home and family life, the fact outstands that parentally undisciplined youth cannot be reclaimed by the sanctionless discipline of expediency, let wellmeaning psychiatrists and sociologists labor as they will.

Granted all that psychiatry has discovered about the interrelation of physical, mental and emotional states, granted all that sociologists may do to produce economic and recreational atmospheres conducive to environmental betterment, the fact stands out, in the case of those who need to be thus ministered

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to, and in the vastly greater number of those who do not, that there is no hope for stability and abiding purpose in life and living in merely materialistic expediency standards of conduct. There must be a standard of right and wrong in the Divine Law, in the Ten Commandments which antedate the Christian tradition and in that Christian tradition which has been the vehicle of knowledge and teaching of this standard for nigh on two thousand years.

For men to call this standard, and this tradition outmoded, because of the discoveries of science in the realm of the physical, is as unscientific as it is unreasonable. As was well said in the foreword flashed on the screen at the showing of the motion picture, "The Song of Bernadette," "To those who bel'eve in God no explanation is necessary. To those who do not, no explanation is possible."

Even the unbelieving scientist who denies God is forced to make acknowledgment, albeit none too generous, of the futility of his atheism. Sir Arthur Keith, for instance, a great English Doctor and brain specialist, once wrote: "I cannot help feel that the darkness in which the final secret of the universe lies hid is part of the great Design. The ultimate reason for man's existence is the only fruit in the garden of life which he can never hope to pluck."

The thought occurred to me when I read that confession of futility by Sir Arthur Keith, as the thought always occurs to me when I meet the unbeliever in book, or in person, what the unbeliever needs is humility of mind. Finite minds appear even science. They are too proud to have faith even though faith has opened many a door to which science has no key.

The road back to faith in God, posted with the signs of fundamental moral principles expressed in the revealed law of God, is the road forward to man's eternal destiny.

In concluding my radio addresses may I assure you, my fellow Americans, that I have endeavored to speak to you out of the fulness of a Catholic American heart, a heart that is none the less Catholic because it is thoroughly American, and none the less American because it is thoroughly Catholic. And may I tell you good-bye in the familiar heart-warming words of the great apostle of the radio, "God love you."

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met. . . .

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country....

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our countrymen. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all. this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This word of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven: a strength, and a power divine through Christ; pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

110 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

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	Safford Tucson		1450 kc
	Yuma		1240 kc
California	Fresno	KMJ	580 kc
	Los Angeles	KFI	640 kc
	Sacramento San Francisco	KCRA	1340 kc 680 kc
	Denver		850 kc
Connecticut	Hartford		1090 kc
District of Columbia	Washington	WRC	980 kc
Florida	Jacksonville		930 kc
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	Pensacola Tampa		1370 kc 970-620 kc
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Georgia	AtlantaSavannah		750 kc 1340 kc
Idaho	Boise		1380 kc
			670 kc
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•	Springfield		1030 kc
Michigan	Detroit		950 kc
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110 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

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North Dakota	Fargo		550 kc
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	Toledo	WSPD	1340 kc
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City Tulsa	WKY	930 kc 1170 kc
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	Erie		1230 kc
	Johnstown	WJAC	1400 kc
-	Lewistown	WMRF	
	Philadelphia Pittsburgh	KYW	1060 kc 1020 kc
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(Revised as of May, 1947)

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