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Guttmacher— The Church vs. Family Planning

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THE HIGH priest of family planning came to town yesterday to address a crowd of the faithful.

And some 200 local Planned Parenthood Association people were treated to one of what Dr. Alan F. Guttmacher calls one of his "sermons."

This one was billed as "The New Look in Family Planning" but it emerged as the president of Planned Parenthood World Population's view of the scoreboard in the continuing confrontation of family planners and the Catholic Church.

Looking back at his beginnings as an obstetrician-gynecologist almost 50 years ago, Dr. Guttmacher marveled at this country's acceptance of birth control.

"There is some slight opposition here and there—Catholics, Orthodox Jews," he said, "but more on our stand on abortion than birth control."

PLANNED Parenthood, he said, is working with church groups all over the world, such as two Catholic church birth control projects in Peru, which he recently visited.

"There are 22 clinics in the slums in Lima and 19 in the coastal cities—all with the blessings of the Cardinal," he said. "Several of them meet in the church basement or at the home of the parish priest."

Dr. Guttmacher, explaining the rules of the game in Peru, calls them "an interesting shoehorn into Catholic thinking." A woman, it appears, may be put on the pill for two years, a month after giving birth to a child. When her two years are up she may practice the rhythm method of

HIGH PRIEST of family planning, Dr. Alan F. Guttmacher, in town for one of his famous "sermons."



birth control, go to another clinic, or get pregnant.

IN COLOMBIA, Dr. Guttmacher talked about a Catholic priest who runs a radio network, and who promised to push the concept of family planning but not birth control. The priest, Guttmacher explained, wanted to give the

church time to get used to the idea of "responsible parenthood."

"He said 'Next year, I'll tell them (his listeners) how.'"

He also talked about a mass he attended during a recent family planning conference with a group of international Jesuit leaders.

"Only two people were blessed—Alan Guttmacher and the Pope," he said. "So you can see, I was in good company."

DR. GUTTMACHER, who also is noted for his books on sexuality, pregnancy and birth control, called all of these Church related programs "ins."

"We have got to show the Church we won't turn people away from Catholicism," he said.

Turning to the abortion issue and the recent U. S. Supreme Court decision legalizing early abortions, Dr. Guttmacher warned of "tough times ahead."

"All of the bishops and right to life groups won't take this thing lying down," he said.

"They are trying for a constitutional amendment which would establish that the fetus has personhood from the moment of conception. And if they can get it past two-thirds of the Congress and three-fourths of the state legislatures they can negate what the Supreme Court has done."

DR. GUTTMACHER said he had "the word" that the Church was now polling Congress, to access its chances

"Remember—we moved a huge boulder that obstructed the gate, but it is still on the hill. And if we relax the pressure, it will roll down and roll over us," he concluded. "The fight is far from over."