

Dan Berrigan Gets Parole, Pledges to Uphold the Law

By Ken W. Clawson
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The U.S. Parole Board yesterday ordered the release of ailing antiwar priest Daniel Berrigan effective Feb. 24 after a hearing at which the Jesuit promised to respect and obey the law.

Rep. William R. Anderson (D-Tenn.), a staunch defender of Berrigan and his brother, Philip, who is also in prison for antiwar activities, personally appeared before the eight-member parole board to plead for the priest's release.

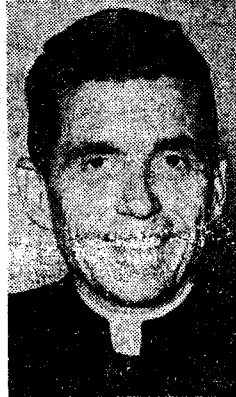
After the parole was granted, Anderson said, "Thank heavens. Justice and humanity has been served and

a most valuable human life has been lengthened."

In Stockholm, two liberal members of the Swedish Parliament chose the day of the parole hearing to nominate the Berrigan brothers for the Nobel peace prize.

The Parole Board did not attach any unusual conditions to Daniel Berrigan's parole, although Anderson and Berrigan's lawyers, Charles R. Nesson and David Rosenberg of Harvard University, said Berrigan would abide by any "reasonable" parole regulations.

See BERRIGAN, A31, Col. 1



DANIEL BERRIGAN
... health deteriorating

BERRIGAN, From A1

Father Berrigan, who has spent 16 months in the federal penitentiary at Danbury, Conn., is to live at Woodstock College, a Jesuit seminary in New York City, where he will teach and write. He will reside with the Rev. Robert Mitchell, his superior in the Jesuit order who also appeared on his behalf before the parole board.

As is the case in other paroles, Berrigan is to report to his parole officer once a month and will not be able to travel outside New York City without permission until the end of his sentence Aug. 2, 1973.

The priest was sentenced to three years in prison for destroying draft records at Catonsville, Md., on Nov. 8, 1968. He eluded the FBI for several months afterward and started serving his term on Aug. 11, 1970.

His brother, Philip, is serving two jail sentences in Danbury for antiwar activities. Philip went on trial Monday in Harrisburg, Pa., in connection with an alleged kidnap and bomb plot involving Henry Kissinger, White House foreign affairs adviser.

In his letter to the Parole Board, Father Berrigan documented the deterioration of his health while in prison. He said he had a chronic digestive disorder that was sapping his strength and making it necessary to subsist on bread and milk periodically. He said he was unable to work a full day

in the prison library, often stopping at midday to spend two or three hours in bed.

In the six months since the Parole Board last turned him down, Berrigan said he has had time to think further about his situation. He said the Catonsville draft raid, one of the early antiwar acts by Catholic activists, was "impelled by the war and by my own conscience."

But he said he understood the severity that would follow another such offense—his first clash with the law. "I would like to affirm here my respect for the law of the land and my habitual and firm determination henceforth to obey the law.

"I will pledge that I will abide by conditions imposed by the parole . . . I would like to allay any fear that I would flee the jurisdiction of the board or the parole supervisor."

But Berrigan, who often poked fun at the establishment during his heyday, couldn't resist ending his communication to the Parole Board on a wry note. He said he would be grateful for a parole, and also for any contribution he made teaching and counseling other convicts.

"But it strikes me that the rehabilitative advantages of prison life are by now fully exploited in my case," he wrote.

He closed the letter with his signature and prison number —23742-145.