

BERRIGAN FREED AFTER 39 MONTHS

Says in Danbury He Will
Continue Antiwar Fight

By LAWRENCE FELLOWS
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DANBURY, Conn., Dec. 20—The Rev. Philip Berrigan walked out of Federal prison here today within the limits of his parole to bring an end to the war in Southeast Asia.

The gray-haired, 49-year-old Josephite priest said he harbored no regrets or resentments because of his imprisonment for having burned draft board records.

But he was severely critical of prisons as institutions, contending they contributed more than anything else to crime.

"One can get very subjective about them, having felt their destructiveness in one's bones," Father Berrigan said. "Their time has passed, if they ever had a time. They are an obsolescent, bankrupt loss.

"They are laboratories of waste, injustice and desperation, outstanding examples of reciprocal revenge between society and the prisoner."

Father Berrigan was met by his brother, Daniel, a Jesuit priest who also had been imprisoned and was released in February. Also present were other members of his family and a crowd of antiwar well-wishers that numbered more than 300.

The Berrigan brothers were convicted in 1968 of burning draft board records in Catonsville, Md. Father Daniel Berrigan was sentenced to three years. His brother was sen-

tenced to six years, because of concurrent sentences for a raid on draft records in Baltimore and for smuggling letters in and out of the Federal prison in Lewisburg, Pa., while he was confined there.

Father Philip Berrigan was also tried with six others on a charge of plotting to kidnap Henry A. Kissinger, the adviser to President Nixon, and to destroy heating tunnels in Federal buildings in Washington, but the charges were dropped when the jury reached a deadlock.

Father Daniel Berrigan, who is 51, was released on parole

after 18 months in prison, partly because he is troubled by an ulcer and a hernia.

Another brother, Jerome, an English professor at Community College in Syracuse, was at the prison this morning with his wife, Carol, to take Philip first to New York City and then to their home in Syracuse.

Father Philip Berrigan was hatless and wore a lightweight tan windbreaker when he left the prison this morning. He gave a clenched-fist salute to inmates who could be seen waving from behind bars. To the crowd of supporters who met him he said he was not

sure precisely how he would get active again in the antiwar movement.

"It will take a little while to find out what can be done," he said.

He walked a mile with the crowd to the Amber Room, a restaurant and ballroom, to participate in a religious service there, and afterwards to conduct a news conference.

When Daniel Berrigan was released from prison he had held a similar meeting at a church, but the parishioners complained afterward. Today no church in the neighborhood was available to the Berrigans.



The New York Times/Edward Hausner

The Rev. Philip Berrigan, left, waving yesterday after leaving prison in Danbury, Conn. At right is the Rev. Daniel Berrigan, one of his brothers.