

## Church Council Bars

### Award to Bob Hope

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By GRACE LICHTENSTEIN

A group of activist clergymen has persuaded the Council of Churches of the City of New York to cancel its plan to present the 1971 Family of Man Award to Bob Hope.

Instead, the award will be presented posthumously to Whitney M. Young Jr., the executive director of the National Urban League, who died last Thursday in Nigeria.

At a tumultuous meeting of the council's general assembly Monday night, about 20 clergymen, led by the Rev. Richard J. Neuhaus, demanded that the planned award to Mr. Hope be

Continued on Page 15, Column 1

dropped because of the comedian's "uncritical endorsement of the military establishment and the Indochina war."

The dissidents, according to Mr. Neuhaus, a vocal opponent of the war, also objected to Mr. Hope's "unconscionable mocking of those in society who are deeply committed to social justice," such as hippies and draft resisters.

The Rev. Dan M. Potter, executive director of the council, said yesterday that "there was a long debate, and it finally was decided that even with all the embarrassment it might cause, the choice should be withdrawn."

### 'Bob Is Delighted'

A spokesman for Mr. Hope in New York said the performer had been notified indirectly of the change, but had been led to believe it was being made

to believe it was being made because of Mr. Young's sudden death.

"Nobody mentioned anything about static," said the spokesman. "Bob is delighted that man of Whitney Young's stature is to be awarded."

The spokesman added that Mr. Potter had mentioned the possibility of the award's going to Mr. Hope in 1972.

Dr. Potter, who is also director of the Society for the Family of Man, said the assembly felt strongly "that Whitney Young's contribution was so substantial that his death should be recognized this year." The suggestion to make the award to Mr. Young was made by the Rev. Wyatt T. Walker of the New Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem, according to Dr. Potter.

When the suggestion to switch the award came up, several council officials argued against it, according to participants. Among them was Charles Halsey, a partner in Bache & Co., the brokerage concern, who is chairman of the committee that handles the annual Family of Man dinner in October, at which the award is presented.

### Insists on Discussion

The choice of Mr. Hope for the award was made at the February meeting of the council's board of directors. It became known Monday at the general assembly meeting at Brick Presbyterian Church, Park Avenue and 91st Street.

Mr. Neuhaus, who heads an activist group called New York Clergy Interreligious Coalition, said he had interrupted the meeting to insist on a discussion of the planned award.

When he told the 250 delegates assembled that Mr. Hope had been chosen, he said, "many delegates were shocked." "A lot of people laughed because it was so patently ludicrous," he added.

Mr. Neuhaus is pastor of St. John the Evangelist Lutheran

Church in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.

The principal Family of Man Award is a gold medallion awarded annually to a public figure who has made a special contribution to mankind. Previous recipients have included Presidents Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Lyndon B. Johnson. Last year, Mayor Lindsay received the award.

### Target of Controversy

Awards are also given at the Family of Man dinner in a variety of specific fields. In 1969, the awards were the target of controversy when Dr. S. I. Hayakawa, president of San Francisco State College and a firm disciplinarian in dealing with campus rebellion, was selected for the education award. Mr. Neuhaus was among the clergymen who protested that choice.

The dinners have been the subject of much division within the Council of Churches in recent years. The division began when antiwar clergymen picketed the 1966 dinner at which President Johnson received the main award.