

RIVERA

"Let's Not Let It Happen in St. Louis"
Rev. Holland B. London over Station KSTL

After reviewing recent incidents of demoralizing influences in the nation, with emphasis on Washington, the Rev. London delved into sports and highlighted boxing scandals, planned phonies in wrestling, sellouts in basketball and overcommercialism in football. He then devoted most of his ~~his~~ sports comments to baseball:

"Baseball has been fortunate in that no scandal has touched it since 1921. This is due to the careful vigilance of the commissioners of the game, the owners and the club executives. They are aware of the dangers and have guarded against them.

"However, it has been called to my attention that recently some elements may have been creeping into baseball that are not at all consistent with the desire to make the game and the players an example for the youth of today. I have learned through friends and other ministers that a certain player of questionable moral standards has come into the major leagues and that when his background was called to the attention of the general manager of the Chicago White Sox, this player was immediately shipped away to the St. Louis Browns.

"Now I am not against men who have made mistakes and are trying to come back. However, I am opposed to having these men in a position where they will set an example to others, particularly youngsters. I also want to see the Browns come back, but not on a weak foundation. I want to see them build on a strong foundation, like the Cardinals have done.

"I am not interested in getting into an argument with Mr. Veeck or Mr. Hornsby, but I wish they would use only players of unquestioned morality. The party who I am concerned about is Manuel Rivera, recently acquired by the Browns. He had served 4½ years of a 20-year sentence to a penitentiary and has had several more charges placed against him.

Again, I want to say I am sympathetic with this young man's efforts to start anew and wish him well. However, I have been informed that he has continued to misbehave since his sentence and that his offense is of such a nature I can not even mention it over the air.

"Recently I had dinner with a minister from Atlanta, where Rivera once played, and he advised me that his conduct ~~against youngsters~~ had been such that special committees had studied his mental behavior and after a series of exams they had declared him ready for another chance in life. But he has not boasted a clean record.

"The question is should we build our clubs on such men? Let's not bring disgrace and scandal on our fine city. Let's build our ball clubs and our city on a solid foundation."