Religious Issue Topic Of Discussion At Duke

By KENT ANDERSON

Although many, hoped it would not be so, and others, well meaning as they may be, sought to deny it was so — there is, nevertheless, a religious issue in this year's presidential campaign. Senator Kennedy and Vice-President Nixon are undoubtedly very capable men, upon either the burden and respect of the Presidency might well be placed.

UNFORTUNATELY in the minds of many people either side of the issue, a objective appraisal of the characters of these men cannot be made without the stigma of religious bigotry. There is great criticism of those who may base their choice on this bigotry, yet there is a feeling that the great fault lies in our own Catholic-Protestant relations.

At Duke University recently, a discussion between Dr. T. A. Langford, Protestant member of the religion department, and Father John Breunig, chaplain of Catholic students, was directed toward "The Catholic Church in the Issues of Separation of Church and State." They agreed that "the Protestants don't understand and the Catholic's won't explain" the religious issue in the current campaign. Dr. Langford believes the main difficulty Protestants encounter is "who speaks" for the Catholic faction. He felt that many Protestants are not sure what a Catholic President would mean so they oppose such a situation. "Most Protestant fears are matters of un-

turn, stated that there was a confusion of practical applications of Catholicism with its theoretical values. Although Senator Kennedy, if elected would not "take dictation" from the Catholic Church, he would be expected to follow his own conscience. "Instead of a single individual, the Catholic social ethics would control Kennedy in matters of birth control and segregation." In problems concerning Red China, for instance, such "social ethics" would not apply and Kennedy would then make a "practical decision."

Although this "breach" may exist until past election time it can only be hoped that each vote in November will be cast with the desire to bring the best qualified man to the Presidency without a tainted victory. Just as no Protestant should refuse to vote for Sen. Kennedy simply because he is a Catholic, neither should any Catholic vote for him because he is.