

IN ARIZONA STATE PRISON

Ex-Chaplain Tells Of Knifings, Perversion

FLORENCE — (AP) — A fired chaplain has detailed a story of knifings, homosexuality and discontent at the State Prison.

The Rev. John B. Butcher, 27, an Episcopal minister, told of the incidents in a report made to Gov.-elect Sam Goddard and state legislators.

The minister was dismissed Dec. 3 by Warden Frank Ayman. He subsequently released his report, and said the warden then forbade him to set foot in the prison again for any reason. Butcher cited homosexuality,

lack of mental health facilities and a poor parole system as major sources of discontent among prisoners.

His report cited frequent knifings and a recent incident in which a prisoner suffocated himself by setting a fire in his cell.

Butcher, who was appointed to the job by Eyman in September, 1963, said: "My views on capital punishment got me dismissed by the warden." The minister is against the death penalty.

Butcher said his report "kept me from going back even to give my final sermon."

Eyman declined comment on Butcher's allegations regarding prison conditions, but the warden said the former chaplain has voiced dissatisfaction for some time.

"This isn't new," said Eyman. "Three months ago I asked the Episcopal bishop for a replacement for Mr. Butcher. He hasn't sent one."

Butcher, who also is pastor of the Christ Episcopal Church in

Florence, said the prison's Catholic chaplain, the Rev. William T. Byrne, resigned and now is in a Phoenix rest home.

In his report, Butcher said the prison averages at least one serious knifing every month.

"In the fall of 1963," he said, "I remember four serious knifings in the course of one month."

Butcher said homosexuality, debt and snitching are the three major causes of the knifings. "When a man incurs a debt

through a loan or through gambling and is unable to pay, he finds that exorbitant interest is charged by his creditor.

"Failure to pay is met with the threat that if the man fails to pay by a specific date, he better get his shank (homemade knife)."

Butcher said a man who tries to escape homosexual relations by telling a guard is "branded a snitch and his life is now doubly in danger."