

America's Peril ⁶⁻⁸⁻⁸ Is Moral Decay

By REV. JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

Just how far out of the jungle are we?

Americans are living in an era of unprecedented prosperity. Yes, there are little pockets of poverty. But when else in the history of the world have "poor people" had enough money to travel half way across the nation to protest? Very few of us are in want. We can always buy it on time. Televisions, automobiles, leisure, as much beer and whiskey as we can sop down.

BUT AMERICA'S peril today is not the wild-eyed fanatic who pulls a trigger on a gun, nor the hate-filled racist, nor even the Communist. Our greatest peril is the moral and spiritual decay on the block where I live.

Edward Gibbons, in "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," stated five basic reasons for the fall of

PERSPECTIVE

Rome: (1) the breakdown of the home, (2) the rapid increase of taxes (3) the reckless craze for pleasure, (4) the build-up of gigantic armaments when the real danger was the decadence of the people within, (5) the decay of religion.

When the Goths poured over the walls of Rome, it was not that the walls were low. The Romans were low. They had sunk to the level of a sensual, selfish society and the gradually weakened fiber of a once selfdisciplined nation left them open for the heathens to destroy.

SO SOMETIMES I get a bit tired of the guy who sits in front of his TV slopping up booze and muttering about the sad state of affairs in America. What's he doing to make things better?

"Well," he says, "at least I don't go around shooting people." No, and neither do 99.9 per cent of the other two hundred million Americans. But what's he doing to make things better?

Is he raising his kids in a Christian home? Is he teaching them the Bible upon which our nation's constitution is based? Is he actively worshiping God and supporting a local church that teaches a man how to live in this sinful society? Just where does the blame rest?

A **YOUNG** housewife who had been out with a married man last Tuesday night sat before her TV set Wednesday morning and heard the news about Senator Kennedy's shooting. She shook her head as she sipped her coffee and said to her neighbor, "What's this nation coming to?"

I'm sorry, my dear, it's not a collective question. It's a personal one.

The prophet Jeremiah speaks to our time when he states: "An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land . . . and my people love to have it so . . . but what will you do when the end comes?"