

March 17/99

It was surprising that the relationship of Washington's mother to revolutionary times was not aired recently on the C Scan program.

However, the eleven Episcopalian presidents were brought out,

As you will notice, many other <sup>such</sup> presidents were mentioned, or will be on succeeding programs.

Notice the Saturday evening <sup>1254</sup> of several years ago enclosed.

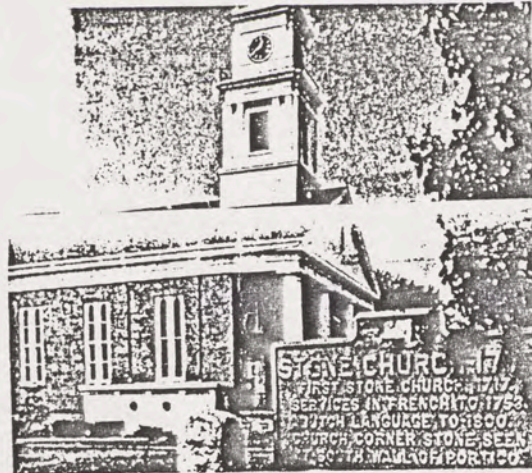
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Federal Way, Wa 98003

The program was marvelous? I came nearly to mention the article during the program.

J. Amherst  
Pres



## Persecuted for centuries, the Protestants are a cultured, successful and proud



Huguenots established New Paltz, N.Y., in 1678.

### America's Huguenot Heritage

The religious persecutions of the 17th and 18th centuries drove thousands of Protestants out of France, and an estimated 20,000 had settled in the American colonies before the Revolution. The Huguenots greatly influenced American history. George Washington had a Huguenot ancestor, as did at least five other Presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John Tyler, James Garfield and Theodore Roosevelt.

A Huguenot refugee named Apollos de Revoire settled in Boston, became a silversmith, and sired a son who signed his name Paul Revere. Three members of the Continental Congress—Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and Elias Boudinot—were Huguenots.

Francis Marion, "the Swamp Fox," was a Huguenot; so were Gen. John C. Frémont, Admiral Dewey of Manila Bay and Flying Tiger boss Clair Chennault.

Descendants of Huguenots founded Bowdoin and Vassar colleges; they enriched our literary heritage with the writings of Thoreau, Whittier, Longfellow. One of our greatest industrial dynasties, the Du Ponts, trace their line to a Huguenot family.

Because of their important part in the Revolution, the Huguenots received land grants from a grateful government and began spreading westward. There are now active Huguenot societies in almost every state.

But most important of all, according to Kenneth Hasbrouck, president of the largest Huguenot group in America, the Huguenot Society of New Paltz, New York, "The Huguenots brought the idea of freedom of conscience, freedom of thought. They fled from religious persecution, but unlike many others who were persecuted, the Huguenots believed in freedom of religion for everyone, not just themselves. The Huguenots gave us the true spirit of democracy."

PARIS.

For a minority group," French Protestants will tell you with a becoming touch of modesty, "we are not doing badly."

Nor have they, one might add, done badly in the United States. Down through the years, the Protestant refugees from France have made a shining contribution to American cultural, political and economic life.

There are only 900,000 Protestants in France today—no more than two percent of the country's population. As religious minorities go, this is not large; in the dominantly Protestant United States the Catholic minority is about 23 percent of the population. However, the French Protestants make up in energy what their group lacks in size, and their importance in the structure of their country is enormous.

What does it mean to be a Protestant in France? It means, for one thing, to be out of step. In a Catholic country known for centuries as the Elder Daughter of the Roman Church, it means to challenge the infallibility of that church—or, for that matter, the infallibility of any church. It means to deny the need of a hierarchy of clerics as intermediaries between God and man. It means to doubt most of the miracles that are part of the nation's lore along with its religion; to worship in a bare and sober church, worlds away from the carved images and silver altars that crowd the churches of the prevailing faith. It means to find oneself outside the old and mighty current of Latin mores and tradition.

"There is something in our situation," one ranking Protestant remarked, "that foredooms us to loneliness. Doubtless that is one reason why we stick together."

### They Remember Persecutions

Centuries of persecution have left their stamp on France's Protestants. Although they have enjoyed full religious freedom for the past 175 years, they cannot quite forget the hell they have been through. It is not exceptional to meet a Protestant Frenchman who casually mentions that his forebears were killed or tortured for their faith. "One of my ancestors was burned," a man may tell you over a cup of coffee. Or, "Five of my family were cut down by the king's dragoons." Or, "I descend from a Bible smuggler who was caught and sent to the galleys."

The United States—along with Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and the British Isles—has been on the receiving end of the mass exodus of Protestants from France during the centuries of persecution. An estimated 20,000 French refugees had arrived in the North American colonies