

Moral Lesson In Eichmann Trial

MELBOURNE: The trial of Adolph Eichmann would be significant only if the court repudiated his defence of "superior orders" and "state interest" Mr B. A. Santamaria, president of the National Civic Council, told a Y.M.H.A. luncheon here recently.

Mr Santamaria was speaking on the topic, "Two Religious Minorities."

He said that Eichmann stood condemned as the perpetrator of the mass murder of six million Jews, but what would be on trial was his plea that he had carried out orders from his superiors in the interest of the state under a national emergency.

This defence was a challenge to the conscience of civilised mankind, said Mr Santamaria.

He explained that the significant aspect for the world in connection with the case was whether the court would reject Eichmann's plea only as far as his own case was concerned or whether it would permanently establish the moral lesson that there was no justification for any acts of brutal mass murder and genocide simply because they happened to serve the interests of the state at that time.

He said the same doctrine of "State interests" was

used by Stalin in the Soviet purges in the murder of

10,000 Polish officers at Katyn, and by the Chinese Communists in the mass murder of Buddhist lamas in Tibet.

NAZI THEORY

Communism with its brutal justification of mass murder, had essentially the same theories as Nazism, and Jews and Christians alike must fight for the sacred rights of the individual, and help destroy the evil doctrine of the superiority of the state.

The conduct of the Nazis and the Communists had set a common pattern for our age, and it was the duty of all to combat this evil doctrine and fight for the supremacy of moral law, Mr Santamaria said.

NO CONTACT

Earlier, Mr Santamaria said he regretted there was so little contact between the Catholic and Jewish communities of Australia.

Catholics were also a minority, and as such, subject to prejudice, although on a more subtle level.

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He recalled the efforts of two Popes to save Roman Jewry from the outrages of the Nazis, and the statement of Pope Pius XI, that,

spiritually, Catholics are also Semites.

Mr Santamaria said that, when studying Jewish teachings, he had been struck by the fact that the superiority of divine laws over human laws was always recognised, as well as the supremacy of moral laws, and the rights of the individual.

In this, he felt, there were many points of unity between the Jewish faith and his own.