The GREAT IMPONDERABLE in the closing days of the presidential campaign is the religious issue. Unfortunately, that issue, the same as Bangour's ghost, will not be downsized.

The Catholic hierarchy of Puerto Rico did Sen. Kennedy a great disservice by waving a banner in which they endorsed the re-election of Luis Munoz Marin as governor of that American commonwealth. As American citizen, the Puerto Rican bishops certainly possess the right to oppose any other candidate for public office. But to forbid Puerto Rican Catholics to vote for Munoz and to create a Catholic Action party - the first on American soil - in their effort to bring about Munoz's downfall is to verify the fears some persons have about any organized religion in politics.

Sen. Kennedy was quick to object to the action taken by the Puerto Rican bishops of his own church.

The extent to which any church, no matter the denomination, should inject itself into the current political controversy is always moot.

Munoz and his general fitness for office. Unfortunately, the religious issue is the concern of the religious issue. Perhaps the bishops have manifested that concern by subtly injecting their views into the current political controversy.

The extent to which a church, no matter the denomination, should inject itself into matters of little consequence in the current campaign.

Kennedy has many liabilities, but his good works are not to be downgraded by his religious affiliation as it is to condemn as bigots others who oppose him on those grounds.

Reformation Sunday commemorating the anniversary of that day in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his theses on the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral will be observed in many Protestant churches this Sunday.

Indications are that in some Protestant churches, notably those of a fundamentalist persuasion, opposition to Kennedy solely on the basis of his religious affiliation will be expressed from the pulpit. It is also assumed that Reformation Sunday will be the beginning of a renewed drive to fan the flames of the religious issue.

There would appear to be little, if any, difference between the action taken by the Puerto Rican bishops and that which has been taken, or will be taken, from some Protestant pulpits on the mainland. In either instance the action does no witness of the established American principles.

Republican are now accusing Democrats of subtly injecting the religious issue into the campaign and that issue into the campaign and that in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his theses on the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral will be observed in many Protestant churches this Sunday.

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And That's A Fact...

The election is so close that if either Pat or Jackie started to wear eye shadow, her husband could lose by an eyelash.