

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE*

- 1857 Convention instructs the Foreign Mission Board "to consider the expediency of making application to the Secretary of the Navy to send an exploring expedition up the river Niger, and also to the Smithsonian Institution to print the Grammar of the Yoruban tongue, prepared by Brother Bowen." (T. J. Bowen was a missionary to Central Africa.)
- 1872 The United States Government promises 160 acres of land to any denomination that would establish schools among the Creek Indians. The Creek nation promises \$10,000 toward a building plus \$75 for each pupil boarded and educated. . . . The Convention instructs the domestic and Indian (Home) Mission Board "to adopt such measures as may be necessary to secure the provision subsidies, and all other funds necessary for the establishment among the Creek Indians, of a Creek Orphan House, on the plan of industrial school."
- 1873 The Convention instructs the Board to take steps to secure the subsidies offered by the government and the Creek Nation.
- 1876 The Creek Nation offers subsidies for the proposed Baptist school, but the Board is unable to raise the other necessary funds.
- 1877 Committee on Mission Schools Among the Indians reports: "This land offered as subsidy is their the Creeks own, for they bought it, and this money is their own school fund, and was never given to them by our government. This money is not raised by taxation, hence their people are not taxed to support a denominational school."
- 1878 The Convention adopts the report of its Committee on Indian Mission Schools, which indicates that the land belonged to the Indians; that the school fund of the Creeks was a part of the annuities due to the Indians from the Government as interest on the fund held in trust, created from the sale of Indian lands. The Committee declares that in accepting the proposal of the Indians to give the land and the other subsidy to a Baptist school, there is "no compromise of Baptist principles. There is no union of Church and State in this case." (The Home Board reports in 1880 that it has made the necessary arrangements with the Indians regarding the subsidies and that the school is under construction.)
- 1913 Convention adopts the following resolution:
Whereas, the complete separation of church and State has
ever been, and is now, a fundamental principle of Baptist belief
and practice; and

*Source material: SBC Annuals, unless otherwise indicated.

Whereas, In many places there are efforts being made to divert State and city municipal funds to the maintenance of certain religious schools, and other institutions; be it

Resolved, That the Southern Baptist Convention reaffirms its unalterable belief in the absolute separation of church and State and hereby expresses its sympathy with all who are having to fight efforts of any who would try to violate the holy principle of the absolute separation of church and state.

- 1914 The Convention adopts another resolution on the separation of Church and State, which declares that Southern Baptists "view with serious alarm and vigorous protest the efforts of the Roman hierarchy to gain control of our government" The resolution further states: " . . . we deeply deplore the presence of a papal legate as the representative of the Vatican at our national capitol for the purpose of influencing governmental affairs." Also protested against "the presence of national representatives in their official capacity at ecclesiastical functions." Again, that Baptists affirm their "determination to perpetuate this priceless boon religious liberty for our present and all coming generations."
- 1915 Convention repassed the 1914 resolution with the following addenda:
- Whereas, Since the Convention adopted the resolutions of Dr. Porter, at the instigation or under the influence of the Romish hierarchy, a bill has been introduced into Congress, which persistent effort is being made to enact into law, prohibiting the transportation by the United States mails of all "publications which are, or are represented to be, a reflection on any form of religious worship practiced or held by any citizen of the United States;
- Whereas, This and all such legislation saps the foundation of our precious and boasted American freedom of utterance, remanding us to the dark and persecuting age of the past, in the union of church and state, by making the United States government the executive of the Romish church against religious and civil liberty.
- Resolved, That we hereby petition our representatives in both houses of Congress to keep on the watch against this and all such Romish schemes and legislation, to kill it whenever and in whatever way it shows itself on the floors of Congress. . . .
- 1916 The Convention declares that since the employment of chaplains of the Army and Navy by the government may " . . . tend in the direction of a violation of the . . . principle of separation of church and state, we would earnestly urge that no ecclesiastical system be allowed to fasten itself upon any branch of the public service."

- 1918 A resolution looking toward the abolishment of a government employed chaplaincy: "leaving the religious services to the discretion and election of the different Christian denominations . . ." is referred to a committee to report in 1919. The resolution declares that "Religious liberty cannot be absolute where any of its appointments or appropriations are by authority of the state. . . ."
- 1919 The Convention adopts President J. B. Gambrell's address which contained a strong protest against the policy of the Government concerning the religious arrangements for service men, which policy the War Department declared was "in the interest of breaking down, rather than emphasizing denominational distinctions." . . . The report on the President's message declares that the promotion or discouragement of "denominational distinctions" is outside the legitimate sphere of the Government.
- 1920 A special committee on chaplaincies reports that it has carefully studied the chaplaincy, its relation to the government, etc., and can not find any clear violation of Baptist principles. The Convention adopts the report which includes a recommendation that "the Home Mission Board be instructed to include in its work, religious work in the army and navy; to keep in touch with the authorities; to gather and compile all possible information concerning the policies of the Government in the matter of Chaplaincies; to co-operate in all proper ways for promoting the spiritual interests of our men in the army and navy; to seek to encourage in their work Baptist Chaplains now in the service, and to approve the application of Baptist ministers for appointment as Chaplains as the respective departments may require such approval before making appointments." . . . Convention approves a proposed amendment to the United States constitution offered by President J. B. Gambrell to "prohibit Sectarian Legislation and the support of Sectarian institutions from public funds." . . . The Convention, upon a resolution by L. R. Scarborough, instructs the Convention's Commission on Social Service "to communicate the resolution offered by the President of the Convention see above . . . to the proper officials and committees in the Senate and House and to represent the Convention in bringing proper influence to bear upon Congress for the passage of a resolution proposing such amendment to the several states for action."
- 1921-
- 1929 Home Board Secretary becomes a member of the Chaplaincy Commission, Washington, D. C.; Board co-operates with this Commission and helps support it for about 10 years.
- 1922 The Convention endorses House Joint Resolution 159, which would prohibit government appropriations to sectarian purposes, introduced by Representative Upshaw of Georgia through the influence of the Convention's Commission on Social Service. The Convention requested its passage by Congress.

- 1929 The Commission on Social Service includes in its report an extended treatment of the relation of religion to government and the relation of government to religion, enunciating the Baptist principle of separation of Church and State.
- 1931 Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Convention appoints a committee of three "to handle for the Southern Baptist Convention the matter of the appointment of Chaplains in the . . . Army and Navy."
- 1932 The Committee on Chaplains of Army and Navy requests an appropriation for its work It continues the co-operation with the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains in Washington.
- 1936 Rufus W. Weaver, chairman of the Committee on Chaplains of the Army and Navy since 1935, reports that the Committee had approved 36 of 48 applications received during the past year. . . . The work of the Committee continues to be done at no cost to the Convention. . . . The Convention adopts the following recommendation of the Committee:
- ". . . that the names of this Committee shall be changed from the Committee on "Chaplains of Army and Navy" to the "Committee on Public Relations;" that the President of this Convention and the Executive Secretaries of the four boards of the Convention shall be ex-officio members; that five others shall be appointed who shall reside in or adjacent to the City of Washington, one of whom shall be a competent lawyer; that the present work of the Committee shall be continued and that, as situations arise, in which agencies of this Convention are compelled to confer, to negotiate, to demand just rights that are being threatened or to have other inescapable dealings with the American or other Governments, this committee shall function, when so requested by any existing board or agency of this body, as the representative of Southern Baptists and shall report in detail to the Southern Baptist Convention the results of such conferences and negotiations."
- Convention adopts a resolution reaffirming the doctrine of the separation of Church and State. . . . The resolution includes a commendation of Southern and Southwestern Seminaries for "declining to accept from the National Youth Administration of the Federal Government, the allotment made to said institutions for student aid funds. . . ."
- 1937 Referring to its duties assigned by the Convention in 1936, the Committee on Public Relations declares:
- The power of this Committee is thus definitely limited. It is not permitted to enter the field of politics; it possesses none of the characteristics of a lobby, seeking to secure legislation favorable to moral reform; it has no right to initiate anything, unless requested to do so by some official of this Convention; its mission is to secure facts, and it declines to make recommendations unless the facts, in the judgement of your committee, unmistakably call for action.

- 1938 Chairman Weaver reports that his committee has been working jointly since last year with a similar committee appointed by the Northern Baptist Convention. The latter body has resolved: ". . . when principles held alike by Northern and Southern Baptists are endangered, this committee shall be authorized to act in co-operation with the Committee on Public Relations appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention." . . . Weaver reports activities of the two committees: (1) in bringing to the attention of the American Government the suppression of the rights of Baptists in Rumania and thereby bringing the Rumanian Government to open the churches which it has closed; (2) in securing the assistance of the American State Department in securing the property rights of the two Foreign Mission agencies of the Northern and Southern Conventions in China which has been seized by the Japanese; (3) the problem of Federal aid to education . . . Weaver declares: "Throughout the coming year, these two committees will continue to act together, whenever there is presented to them by any agency, Northern or Southern, the desire to impress upon this or any other Government the just demands of American Baptists. We feel that we have developed a greatly needed technique by which the impact of our American Baptists may be brought to bear in the defense of our principles and our rights." . . . The Committee continues its chaplaincy work.
- 1939 The Committee on Public Relations continues to deal with the problems of the Rumanian crisis, the effect of the conflict between China and Japan, a bill in Congress by which would result in the taxation of churches through Social Security, and Federal aid to education, and chaplains, . . . The Convention instructs the Committee "to oppose the appropriation of any federal funds to be spent directly in support of parochial or other non-public schools." It also approves the designation of the endorsement of applicants for the chaplaincy to a subcommittee of the Committee on Public Relations. . . . The Committee also recommends that it be made a standing committee of the Convention; that it be instructed to act as a joint committee with the Committee of the Northern Convention. . . . The Convention, however, moves slower and says: "As situations arise in which agencies of this Convention are compelled to confer, to negotiate, to demand just rights that are being threatened or to have other inescapable dealings with the American or other governments, this committee shall function but only when so requested by the president of this Convention, by the Executive Committee of this Convention, or by any . . . agencies of this Convention, and shall report in detail to the Southern Baptist Convention the results of such conferences and negotiations."
- 1940 Chairman Weaver indicates that the Public Relations Committees of the Northern and Southern Conventions have formed in 1938 an Executive Committee with two representatives from each Committee and himself as Chairman, representing both Conventions; Weaver has continued to serve as chairman. The proposed plan of co-operation includes the following recommendation regarding the basis of representation and services to be performed:

The Associated Committees on Public Relations recommended that no Convention shall have more than 10 members on its Committee on Public Relations, one-half of whom shall be, including the President, officers of the Convention and that each of the smaller Baptist bodies that wish to co-operate be entitled to one representative if its members be less than 100,000 and one more for every 150,000 members in excess of 100,000.

This plan would enable American Baptists to speak with one voice and to act as one man in defense of the principles that bind them together in an indissoluble spiritual unity. This plan would call for action by each of the participating Baptist Conventions that would empower its own Committee on Public Relations to associate itself with like committees representing other Baptist bodies.

The Convention, however, votes to continue the Committee on the same basis as last year.

1941 On request of the Committee on Public Relations the Convention transfers chaplaincy work to the Home Mission Board. The Committee makes the following recommendations which the Convention adopts, thus clarifying the functions of the Committee and superseding all "previous action of the Convention inconsistent therewith:"

1. The Committee on Public Relations shall hereafter until further action by the Convention be a standing committee of the Convention.
2. In keeping with the numerous previous actions of the Convention, the Committee shall be composed of "the President of the Convention, the Executive Secretaries of the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Relief and Annuity Board, and the Sunday School Board of this Convention, and the chairman of the Social Service Commission, and five other members living in or near Washington, D. C., one of whom shall be an attorney in good standing." In default of a meeting of the full committee the representatives in or near Washington shall be designated as an administrative committee, clothed ad interim with the powers and functions of the full committee.
3. As situations arise demanding action on the part of the Committee involving dealings or actions of the American and other governments, this committee shall function as a representative of the Southern Baptists when so requested by existing boards or agencies of the Convention, and in the discharge of the responsibility thus imposed the Committee shall have the right to enter into and implement conferences by appropriate action with like Committees of other Baptist bodies, including the Northern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention of America, Incorporated, where matters of common interest are involved. In

such conferences thus implemented the Committee will be free to join in the issuance of any pronouncement, petition, or protest to any government whenever in its judgment the vital interests of the denomination are involved or threatened.

The functions thus conferred are not to be construed as giving any authority to the Committee which may lead to its merger with other agencies resulting in the loss of its identity as a committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. This identity shall in all respects be maintained with the reservation of full power on the part of the Committee to act independently of such agencies.

The Committee will always welcome suggestions from any agency of the Convention in the accomplishment of purposes herein set forth and will present full and accurate reports of its activities to the Convention for such consideration and disposition as the Convention may determine.

- 1942 The Committee on Public Relations reports that it has organized with the Northern Baptist Committee on Public Relations a "Joint Conference" with equal voice in its deliberations by the representatives of the two conventions. This organization eliminates the objections that have hitherto existed against a joint executive representing both conventions and is in line with the action of the Convention at its 1941 session. The report explains that this conference committee "may act only upon the request of existing boards or agencies of the Convention." The Committee "assumed that it is authorized to act upon the request" of the executives of the agencies . . . The report indicates that steps have been taken to extend to the two colored Baptist Conventions a co-operative part in the work of the Joint Committee.
- 1943 Committee on Public Relations reports that the Joint Conference Committee has created and worked through the following committees:
1. Committee to express the Christian concern of American Baptists in the proper handling of the Japanese evacuation problem and to present a statement as adopted to the Secretary of War.
 2. Committee to present the convictions of the Committee regarding the moral conditions surrounding our Army Camps and to urge the Government to take immediate drastic steps to not only ration intoxicating beverages but to prohibit sale and use to our armed forces at least until victory for the cause of liberty and humanity is won and a righteous peace established.
 3. Committee to consider participation in the Civilian Defense Program.
 4. Committee to confer with government officials with the hope of allowing necessary gasoline rationing to denominational officers whose duties require them to travel.

5. Committee on relationship of Baptists to the International situation.
6. Committee to recommend to our constituency a wider use and distribution of the American Baptist Bill of Rights as adopted by both the Southern and Northern Convention in 1938.
7. Committee to prepare a statement regarding the application of the Victory Tax on churches as employers.
8. Committee to confer with the Foreign Mission Conference and with Mr. Nelson Rockefeller regarding desire of American Baptists to promote cordial relations with Latin America.

- 1944 Convention authorizes the committee "to form a program of action to co-operate with all worthy agencies that seek the realization of complete religious liberty throughout the world;" . . . The Executive Committee refers to the Committee on Public Relations the matter regarding the Victory Tax involving churches and denominational organizations. (p. 42)
- 1945 Report of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations declares that the Committee has primarily concerned itself since the outbreak of the World War with the "implementation of Religious Liberty in the Peace Organization."
- 1946 Convention adopts a recommendation of the Public Relations Committee to make it a standing Committee. . . . Convention also approves the establishment of a permanent headquarters for the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations in Washington, D. C., under the direction of a salaried secretary, for the purpose of arousing Baptists and all others "in the support of universal religious freedom, looking toward the international proscription of religious persecution throughout the world." The Convention approves the following services which such a secretary, in association with the Joint Committee, could render:
- "1. To represent all the Baptists of this country in negotiations with our own and other governments whenever our principles are involved or our rights are endangered; the Pronouncement on Religious Liberty adopted by the supporting Conventions in 1939, being the basic guide for action; to make surveys, studies, investigations and to submit his reports with recommendations on any public issue or problem or any other assignment submitted to the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations by any Baptist convention, board, society or other denominational agency.
 - "2. To arrange for a popular text-book on Religious Liberty, especially designed for our Baptist youth; for articles in current magazines, the secular and the religious press; for addresses over the radio--all supporting complete freedom of religion as essential to the securing and the maintenance of an enduring

world peace; for the preparation and publication of a definite history of the struggle for freedom of religion, and for the promotion of hearty co-operation with all groups committed to the furtherance of the fundamental freedoms and to the international proscription of religious persecution throughout the world;

"3. To explore, study and advise Baptists concerning any and all federal legislation that violates the principle of the separation of Church and State; such as Senate bill 717, now pending, which, if passed in its present form, will appropriate directly to the non-public or parochial schools \$250,000,000 annually;

"4. To maintain the Baptist witness in the Nation's Capital, to appear before congressional committees when measures are being considered that favor one religious faith above another, to formulate plans by which Baptist conviction shall find effective expression through petitions to the President, the Congress, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the United Nations Organization or other bodies, signed by the constituents of our Conventions and other friends of religious freedom; to promote a nationwide movement for the creation of a demand that complete religious freedom shall be embodied in the anticipated revision of the Charter of the United Nations, to the end that this God-given right be made a basic element in international law.

"5. To act, when definite instructions are given by the supporting conventions in regard to domestic situations; to protest to the proper authorities when Baptist principles are to any degree violated by our own government, and to appeal through diplomatic and other channels when in other lands any are made to suffer for conscience's sake, and to correlate the activities of other religious, fraternal, and civic organizations and agencies, as these activities coincide with the efforts of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations.

"6. To stimulate through existing cultural and publicity agencies of all Baptist conventions, a comprehensive and general program of education in Baptist historic principles and witness; to promote comity, fellowship, understanding and closer co-operation on the part of all the Baptists of this nation through the recognition of a common inheritance, a common mission and a common witness to be borne to the competency of the human soul under God, and to strengthen collaboration and mutuality of concern among all Baptists within the United States irrespective of geography, language, national origin or race."

(pp. 118-119)

- 1947 The Convention adopts recommendations of the Executive Committee "That in matters of common interest the Social Service Commission and the Public Relations Committee co-operate to carry out the purpose of the Convention;" also, "That the scope and functions of the Public Relations Committee shall be as outlined in the report of that committee to the 1946 annual Convention. . . ." The Public Relations Committee reports that the Joint Committee has secured J. M. Dawson as full-time executive secretary. Office opens in Washington in August, 1946. Deals with the problem of government aid to church schools; assists leaders of the Southern Convention in making contact with government officials; serves on government committees; publishes a monthly newsletter, "Report From the Capital." Convention votes to commend President Truman for his promise to recall M. S. Taylor from the Vatican as soon as the peace treaties are signed . . . To "register firm opposition to the passage of any bill for Federal Aid to education" Also, that Baptist schools, hospitals and other institutions be warned of the danger of accepting grants of the money from the government . . . "for any purpose" for this would "weaken the Baptist witness in behalf of the principle of separation of church and state."
- 1948 Secretary Dawson announces the organization of "Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State," an effort to mobilize all groups in the country who would uphold the First Amendment of the Constitution.
- 1949 The Joint Committee adopts a constitution which states the purpose as follows:
The purpose of the Joint Conference Committee shall be to act in the field of public relations whenever the interest or rights of the cooperating Conventions which constitute the Committee call for conference or negotiation with the Government of the United States or with any other Governments, or whenever Baptist principles are endangered through legislative action, or when any of the cooperating Conventions or any of their agencies may refer to the Joint Conference Committee any matter of common interest or concern, for discussion and recommendation. The Joint Conference Committee shall be empowered to enunciate, defend, and extend the historic, traditional Baptist principle of religious freedom with particular application to the separation of church and state as embodied in the Constitution of the United States; to communicate and commend to the President, Congress, Courts, and Departments of the Federal Government such declarations as Baptists from time to time officially adopt concerning public matters; to make such contacts with the various departments of any government as may be found necessary or desirable in the legitimate transaction of legal or other business between such government and the denomination's agencies or approved representatives; and to inform the Baptist constituencies of governmental movements and measures affecting principles held essential to true relations between church and state and the right application of Christianity to the life of the Nation.

- 1950 Convention changes the Public Relations Committee to the Public Affairs Committee, . . . The Committee reports dealing with such matters as "the limitation of Federal aid to public schools only, inquiry into Federal aid to denominational hospitals, support of the prohibition of interstate advertising of intoxicating liquors, liberalized provisions for the admission of displaced persons in the United States, applications of Baptist churches to establish F.M. radio broadcasting stations, and adoption of the United Nations International Bill of Human Rights." It has also assisted the four co-operating Conventions and groups or individuals endorsed by them through making "legitimate contacts with the Government in reference to chaplains, surplus, property, passports, problems in Germany, church institutions, missionary boards, the protection of holy places in Palestine, and . . . the discontinuance of the President's envoy to the Vatican." Committee counsel is offered to large numbers of correspondents who requested such help from the Committee. . . . The report declares that the Committee has no organic connection with the POAU, but that some of its members serve on the official personnel of the organization.
- 1951 Popular demand for the monthly newsletter of the Joint Committee on Public Affairs forces the Committee to limit free copies to Baptist editors, executives, secretaries, and heads of institutions.
- 1952 Executive Committee of the Convention sends a petition, protesting the appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican, to the President and to members of Congress; also sent letter to Baptist pastors asking that they urge their members to write the President, Department of State, and Congressmen. Support for the Committee's work is still coming largely from the Southern Convention. . . . Dawson is now designated as Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. . . . The Committee is considering "the feasibility of employing a competent person to make a scientific research into all violations of church-state separation . . . and to continue, if possible, in other capacities." The dissemination of requested information is "probably the most significant accomplishment of the year. . . ." Almost a half million copies of one booklet are printed and distributed . . . Committee sponsors a conference at Ridgecrest together with the Social Service Commission. . . . Dawson reports extensive travels, speaking engagements, participation in conferences in the Departments of State, and service in an advisory capacity, with other church leaders, on the Religious Advisory Committee of the Federal Civil Defense Administration . . . Committee reports amending its constitution "to add that this Joint Committee shall be expected to transmit through its proper agencies any findings that result from its investigations and research in the field of public affairs, together with any recommendations which in its judgement need to be considered by the supporting Conventions."
- 1953 The Committee employs C. E. Bryant of Baylor University for six weeks of research into the allotment of Federal funds to church agencies. The resulting report is widely circulated.

- 1954 Dr. C. Emanuel Carlson, formerly dean of Bethel College (Baptist), St. Paul, Minnesota, succeeds Dawson as Executive Director. Walter Pope Binns succeeds Alexander as Chairman of the Committee of Southern Baptists.
- 1955 The Convention's "Committee on Public Affairs" reports that it has continued to co-operate with similar delegations from the American Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, Inc., the National Baptist Convention of America, the Baptist General Conference of America, and the North American Baptist General Conference, for the "maintenance of a clear witness in public affairs." All have shared in the meetings of the Joint Committee; all but the National Baptist Convention of America have shared in the financial support of the Committee. . . . The Joint Committee sets up a special study committee "for a thorough canvassing of Biblical truth as it applies to the Christian's participation in church, state, and society."
- 1956 The Convention approves the Constitution and By-laws of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs . . . The statement of purpose is the same, except for a few changes in wording, as that adopted in 1949 plus the amendment of 1952 (q.v.) . . . Article IV on "Authority" states: "The Joint Committee, or its Executive Committee, shall be responsible for initiating consideration and study, and for recommending action to its co-operating conventions on any matter or any issue falling within the scope of its interests and concerns as set forth in Article III Scope and Purpose7. The Joint Committee or its Executive Committee is authorized at all times to issue pronouncements on any matter or issue consistent with action previously taken by the co-operating conventions, committees, or agencies." The Joint Committee is to have four standing committees: Executive, Finance, Domestic Situations, and World Issues.
- 1957 Committee on Public Affairs reports that "the services of the office have been sought by an increasing number of Baptist agencies wishing consultations on the meaning of the application of the principle of separation of church and state." Its research program is continued . . . "Plans have been developing for a broader educational effort among our people, looking forward to a larger public significance of the spiritual principles involved in our message." The "necessity of carrying its information and organization into our work on the state and local levels has become more apparent during the year," the report declares. . . . Two Baptist state conventions have established standing committees on Public Affairs. The report expresses hope that other states would do likewise; also points out that such committees could work together with the Southern Baptist Committee on Public Affairs.
- 1958 Joint Committee on Public Affairs employs W. Barry Garrett as its associate director in charge of information services on January 1st Committee announces several studies completed or in progress on religious liberty and separation of church and state.

- 1959 The report of the Public Affairs Committee declares that although authorized to do so, the primary function of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs "is not to make pronouncements either in the direction of governments or in the direction of the Baptist constituencies. The Committee is rather an information and interpretation agency in both the above directions. In its insistence that the government keep its hands off the affairs of the churches, the Committee is also concerned that the churches shall not presume to control the affairs of state. Thus the Joint Committee serves as a two-way communication channel whereby the interest of both the government and the churches may be made clear to each other." The report states that the services of the Committee are available to "the various denominational agencies that must deal with church-state problems." . . . The Committee now sponsors an annual "Religious Liberty Conference," the third to be held in September. . . . Invites Canadian Baptists to participate in the work of the Joint Committee.

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