

LIGHT

A Bulletin of the Social Service Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
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Number 10

"... AND ON EARTH, PEACE ..."

Peace is a concept grossly misunderstood in our day. To the great rank and file of mankind it means only the cessation of armed conflict, a sort of "truce," a breathing spell between the bloody struggles of history. Peace, as Jesus spoke of it, is the gift of God. It is an inward disposition of the soul which brings quiet and calm in the midst of life's storms. It is an attitude of the mind toward one's neighbor, one's friend . . . and even toward one's enemy.

Peace, as Jesus presented it, is something dynamic and not static, it means that a man will not just talk about the love, mercy and justice of God but that he will do something aggressive toward the implementation of these essential attributes of the character of God. Peacemakers cannot be called the "sons of God" unless they bear in their own characters the marks of the character of God.

The sharing of peace which is the gift of God not only means that our responsibility is to bring man into a right relationship with God, but that also we must bring man into a right relationship with his fellow man. Peace, in its deeper meaning calls for a new, more penetrating understanding of both God and man.

It is this aspect of better understanding of the problems and needs of our fellow man to which we want to give our attention now.

Southern Baptists are moving into a new day with a new South. Ever since the highly significant pronouncement on *Race Relations* at St. Louis in 1947, and with the continued emphasis of the Committees and Commissions on Social Service and Civic Righteousness, there have been emerging tremendously important indications of a deepening of insight into and meaning of Christian brotherhood.

Here are the records. Out of the one-time "solid South" with its grandiose delusions of "white supremacy" the voice of prophets can now be heard and here is what they say:

OKLAHOMA

Meeting in Oklahoma City, on November 10, 1949, Oklahoma Baptist Convention adopted its report on Social Ser-

vice under the chairmanship of Dr. John P. Newport. We quote in part:

"This year your Social Service Committee is not attempting to list facts showing the desperate need of personal and united Christian social action. The facts are evident and available from many sources. Rather we are suggesting some definite methods and techniques which can help us to do something positive at the community and state level through our local churches.

"We recommend that every church take some definite step this year towards improving Race Relations in your community and in our nation.

(1) Secure copies of the pamphlet "Race Relations" which is a Charter of Principles approved by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1947 and reaffirmed in 1948. Copies may be obtained from the office of the Social Service Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. Especially call the attention of your people to the following principles of action:

- a. We shall think of the Negro as a person and treat him accordingly.
- b. We shall continually strive as individuals to conquer all prejudice and eliminate from our speech terms of contempt and from our conduct actions of ill-will.
- c. We shall teach our children that prejudice is un-Christian and that good-will and helpful deeds are the duty of every Christian toward all men of all races.
- d. We shall protest against injustice and indignities against Negroes, as we do in the case of people of our own race, whenever and wherever we meet them.
- e. We shall be willing for the Negro to enjoy the rights granted to him under the Constitution of the United States, including the right to vote, to serve on juries, to receive justice in the courts, to be free from mob violence, to secure a just share of the benefits of educational and other funds, and to receive equal service for equal payment on public carriers and conveniences.

f. We shall be just in our dealing with the Negro as an individual. Whenever he is in our employ we shall pay him an adequate wage and provide for him healthful working conditions.

g. We shall strive to promote community good-will between the races in every way possible.

h. We shall actively co-operate with Negro Baptists in the building up of their churches, the education of their ministers, and the promotion of their missions and evangelistic programs.

(2) Teach Study Course books such as, *Of One* by Dr. T. B. Maston."

(3) "Appoint a committee in your church to investigate the conditions and needs of the Negro section in your community and bring the results to your people."

(4) "If possible, in February of each year exchange pulpits and choirs with a local Negro church."

(5) Ask the Negro churches to join with you in Simultaneous Revival Meetings."

GEORGIA

Dr. L. G. Cloverdon was Chairman of the Committee on Social Service, which scored organized attempts to encourage racial and religious hatred. The report further deplored as anti-Christian and anti-democratic the use of any Christian symbol by the promoters of the racial hatred and bigotry.

Although the Ku Klux Klan was not mentioned by name in the report, it was quite obvious that it was to this group that Georgia Baptists addressed themselves through the report which they adopted.

The section on Race Relations is as follows:

"The many problems in the field of race relations are yielding slowly to a rising Christian conscience. The intelligent study of these problems by the leadership of both principal races and the improved educational facilities for the Negro are the forces in our social

(Continued on Page 3)

SOUTHERN WOMEN AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

I am concerned that our constitutional freedoms are not shared by all our people; my religion convinces me they must be and gives me courage to study, work, and lead others to the fulfillment of equal justice under the law. I will respond to calls from the Southern Regional Council to serve my faith and my community in the defense of justice.

With this pledge, 150 church women leaders from twelve Southern States recently concluded a two-day conference in Atlanta on "the spiritual approach to social issues." The meeting was inter-faith, inter-denominational, and inter-racial.

Guest speaker and participant in the conference was Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who is presently serving as the United States delegate on the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations.

Mrs. Roosevelt stressed the responsibility of the individual to work for a broader democracy at the community level. Citing her experiences as a delegate to the United Nations, she declared that every failure of democracy in the nation weakens us in the eyes of the people of the world.

"The economic and military leadership of the United States," she said, "is unquestioned. But we have not yet succeeded in giving the world the moral and spiritual leadership which it so desperately needs."

The conference opened Thursday morning with a keynote address by Mr. Paul D. Williams, president of the Southern Regional Council.

"It is important," he told the conference, "that we ponder our spiritual heritage, for there are many people in the world and in our own country who think otherwise. . . . In a sense there are no such things as Catholic rights, or Protestant rights, or Jewish rights— or, for that matter, Mongolian rights, or Negro rights, or Caucasian rights. There are only human rights. . . ."

To do our part to see that opportunity for registration and voting is legally and actually secure for all.

To visit the courts and make our influence felt in the interest of equal justice.

To encourage better selection and training of policemen.

A Program of Action

We, as Southern church women joined in a "Fellowship of the Concerned," pledge ourselves to enlist the aid of others in putting the following program of action into effect in our communities.

Law Enforcement

To inform ourselves of the areas in our communities where law is not equally enforced, and to work for corrective action.

To work for appointment of Negro policemen.

To commend public officials when they show courage and integrity.

To call to the attention of authorities violations which are known to us.

To get in touch with the Southern Regional Council when tension arises and to take all possible local action to prevent violence.

Public Opinion

To affirm, in personal relations and religious and civic work our conviction of the dignity of all human beings and the ideal of equal justice.

To support and encourage pastors who offer progressive leadership in the community.

To affiliate with other groups working for the same objectives.

To discuss problems with our newspaper editors; to commend their good works; and to urge the adoption of improved practices in handling of racial news (as outlined in the Southern Regional Council pamphlet *Race in the News*).

To urge local schools to cooperate in using existing materials to build better human relations.

To begin, on however small a scale, an institute on race relations.

We endorse the Home Town Self-Survey as a means of self-education and constructive action. (Information available from the Southern Regional Council.)—*The New South*.

POSTSCRIPT ON THE STEEL STRIKE

The following open letter was written during the recent steel strike to the president of the U. S. Steel Corporation, Mr. Benjamin Fairless, by the Rev. Clair M. Cook, Pastor of Bethany Methodist Church, East Rochester, N. H.

Obviously it did not appear in the daily newspapers on any wide scale. It is reproduced here for your consideration:

Dear Mr. Fairless:

I have read your protest over the presidential board's recommendations—your statement that imposing a "non-contributory principle" in pensions "is a revolutionary doctrine of far-reaching significance." Perhaps we need a revolution—one which will, in the fact-finding board's words, make adequate pensions and social insurance "one of the fixed costs of doing business—one of the first charges on revenues before profits."

As I understand it, your company and others annually lay aside millions of dollars as fixed charges (tax-free) against plant and machinery obsolescence, but nothing, or next to nothing, against "human machinery" obsolescence: it is not necessary to buy such replacements, but

only to hire them by the hour.

I understand that you have a pension awaiting you from your company when you reach the age of 65, amounting to about 32 per cent of your present salary. Our Methodist bishops receive pensions equalling 40 per cent of their salary; but perhaps that is excusable, since your pension would pay twenty-one of theirs at \$3,600 per year.

Of course, I understand that only the first \$50,000 of the annual pensions for you, Mr. Olds, and Mr. Voorhees are fully paid by your company.

Still, the entire \$110,460 annual pension which President Homer of Bethlehem Steel may expect in 1961 (assuming his present salary level) costs him no contributions. Did you mean that the principle is revolutionary, or only its application to union members?

Although I was once a dues-paying member of the United Steelworkers, Mr. Murray has not authorized me to speak for him. But perhaps he would be willing to play fair, Mr. Fairless, by accepting a pension plan which applied your own executives' rules down the line.

If your services are worth \$103.95 an hour as compared to the average \$1.85 an hour, and your pension will be over 83 times the \$100 a month set by the board, why not just scale you own plan down and apply it?

On that basis, since you and your board chairman, Mr. Olds, and your finance committee chairman, Mr. Voorhees, start off with \$150,000 of your total \$210,675 pensions paid by your company, you might offer to pay \$71.40 out of that monthly \$100 without worker contribution.

And since you and the company join in paying for the balance of your own pensions, you and the workers should join in the other \$28.60 per month, to insist on your contributory principle.

But aren't you deducting payments from every worker's pay check now for that very purpose? And aren't you by law making company contributions also to their retirement under Social Security? As I understand it, average federal retirement payments are about \$30 per month now.

So counting up both, you can follow your own established practice with a clear conscience and still arrive at a \$100 a month. This plan has a further beauty for negotiating; not only do you keep your principle, but the worker may keep his whole pay check.

Incidentally, the workers will hardly forget that you gentlemen received raises of more than \$20,000 each within the past year. That average of 13% more would mean over 21¢ an hour, applied to the average worker.

Yours for the Golden Rule,
Clair M. Cook.

"... PEACE ..."

(Continued from Page 1)

order which, in the end, will resolve the racial tensions and solve the major problems involved.

"The Negro has the right to a good home, to make an honest living in harmony with his abilities, and to educate his children. He has the right to achieve his highest cultural, civic and religious aspirations, as these are encouraged by our common religious heritage. He has a right to voice these aspirations in speech and press and in determining the character of society in which he lives.

"He has a right to proper opportunities for personal development, to participate in political self-determination in harmony with our American democratic principles, and to the protection and good will of his fellow-citizens.

"On the other hand, the members of both races as citizens of our American democracy need to assume the responsibility of good citizens; for privilege and duty are equal factors in maintaining social order. The responsibilities of Christian citizenship have never been greater than they are today.

"Your commission, like the others, deplores as anti-Christian and anti-democratic the use of any Christian symbol by the promoters of racial hatred and bigotry. Any organized attempts to encourage racial or religious hatreds have no place in a Christian democracy."

NORTH CAROLINA

Dr. B. Y. Tyner, Chairman of the Committee on Social Service and Civic Righteousness, presented in the report of that Committee to North Carolina Baptists a group of practical principles and suggestions in race relations which "we as Christians and churches should recognize, respect, teach, and act upon in the field of race and minority group relations.

"(1) All Christians are brothers in Christ.

"(2) Every member of a racial or minority group is a person and should be treated as such.

"(3) No racial group because of biological inheritance is superior or inferior to any other group.

"(4) The members of all racial and minority groups should be recognized as citizens, constituting a state under one government, with equal rights.

"(5) All citizens have the right to equal privileges and treatment in our local, state and federal governments.

"(6) All racial and minority groups have a right to be represented by members of their own group on bodies concerned with the general welfare of the community—police, education, courts, elections, and so forth.

"(7) Christians should protest in-

justices and discriminations against any group and strive to promote community good will between all groups.

"(8) The members of every group should eliminate from their speech terms which degrade or show contempt for other groups, especially in the presence, and the teaching, of children.

"(9) As Christians, we must believe, and teach that prejudice or ill-will toward any group is un-Christian."

"We would suggest," the report added, "that our pastors set an example of Christian fellowship by having joint meeting of local white and Negro ministerial unions, by an occasional exchange of pulpits, by utilization of Negro choirs in our white churches, and vice versa, and by working closely with Negro ministers in improving social conditions in the community as a whole."

After Dr. Tyner moved the adoption of the report, he called on Dr. E. M. Poteat to address the Convention on matters contained in the report.

Concerning race relations, Dr. Poteat said:

"That is not the most pleasant of subjects. While we have hope about it, our timidity is colossal. Are we bold? Is it the part of boldness to say nothing about segregation—hated and frightening word—is it a subject about which we must not talk? If segregation is not un-Christian, we must advocate it; if it is un-Christian, we must protest against it."

VIRGINIA

Rev. John H. Garver was chairman of a special committee on inter-racial relations which reported to the General Association of Virginia Baptists as follows:

"Your committee is convinced that in recent years much progress has been made in inter-racial understanding and good will and co-operation on the part of Virginia and Southern Baptists in their relations with Negro brethren, and indeed on the part of all Christian peoples in their inter-racial relationships. Also we are greatly encouraged by the fact that the race problem has finally begun to weigh heavily upon our Christian conscience, and more of us are realizing as never before that as Christians we cannot continue indifferent when human rights are infringed and when human personalities are suppressed, especially when such takes place at our very doors.

"We are persuaded that Jesus gave the fundamental principles of right human relationships when He said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' and 'Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' These fundamental teachings take no thought of differences of color or culture or economic conditions. People are people regardless of these considerations, and the Lord is the Maker of them all. Jesus

recognized no distinctions, and He was no respecter of persons. 'God so loved the WORLD that He gave His only begotten Son.' And we are commanded to give His gospel of love to all mankind. And a gospel of love must be lived as well as preached. 'One is your Master, and all ye are brethren.'

"An awkward conscience regarding this vital problem has prompted Christian leaders in many local communities to take definite steps toward better racial understanding. Ministers of different races meet together more frequently, and fellowship between them has become easier and less stilted and formal. Women's and young people's groups also more often meet together, with both races taking part in the discussions, to their mutual understanding and profit. More and more Negroes are participating actively in such community projects as community chests and welfare agencies, with representation on their governing boards. The Negro's right to vote is no longer questioned. Some of their race run successfully for public office, and many take their turn in serving on jury duty. Their schools have been greatly improved in many communities, as regards physical equipment and quality of teaching the salaries paid. Health services have also been largely extended among them. Of course much still remains to be done in certain sections of our own state and throughout our Southland in order fully and generally to equalize the services and privileges enjoyed by Negro citizens, but all must recognize that most encouraging progress has been made in many areas and that efforts in this direction are continuing steadily.

We want to state that although we definitely recognize the value of certain forms of legislation for the protection of human rights and for the common good of mankind, yet we are of the conviction that the problem of race relations is basically moral and spiritual and that any adequate solution of the problem must be sought in those realms. We believe that people of good will, people of God, people who have the mind and spirit of Christ will want to do right and be fair and deal justly, and will want to overcome pride and intolerance, and will want to cultivate mutual good will between all people, and will want to be kind and helpful to any less fortunate persons or groups, and not in any spirit of condescension or patronage, but rather in the spirit of humility and brotherly love, in imitation of Him who is our Elder Brother and Saviour of all men and who Himself did not make distinctions between men because of race or color or any other difference.

"It is the opinion of your committee that in this attitude and practice alone lies the solution of our problem of inter-

racial relations. The spirit of Christ in the hearts of whites and Negroes alike is the only means of arriving at our desired end of mutual respect and helpfulness and happiness in our inter-racial relations. And that fact challenges us all alike, of every race, not only to profess Christianity and preach it, but seriously to undertake the practice of it in our daily walk with one another.

"And finally we suggest that in some appropriate and practical way pastors and churches throughout the state observe Inter-racial Day which is the Second Sunday of February."

FLORIDA

"Prof. H. H. Barnette, of Stetson and a member of the Southern Baptist Social Service Commission, told the Convention that race hatred is un-Christian and un-scientific.

"He called on Florida Baptists to take the lead in bettering race relations and listed a number of 'practical recommendations' that could be carried out by individuals and groups. Among them—accept men on the basis of ability not color; avoid slurs and stereotyped jokes about minority groups; use the regular titles of Mr. and Mrs. when referring to Negroes; participate in organizations that are moving towards better race relations; exchange pulpits and choirs; more intergroup work on the youth, lay and ministerial level."

Commenting on this article in the *Daytona Beach Evening News*, Dr. Barnette wrote as follows:

"Though this came near the end of reports, it was not put in the paper in that order. Other things which preceded it were put on the inside of the paper and my report was given a prominent spot on the front page.

"Recently I had a Jewish student write a paper on 'The Social Conscience of Florida Baptists as Reflected in the Annual Reports to the Convention.' This is a revealing paper. The study covered

from 1880 to 1948. He shows that the major interest of Florida Baptists was to evangelize the Negro—good, but not a word, until 1948, about the race problems as such. The report last year was inspired by the Social Service Commission's Report to the SBC. This Jew exclaimed that this marks a significant change of attitude of at least a few Florida Baptists toward race."

ALABAMA

Rev. J. C. Stivender was chairman of the Committee on Social Service that put the Alabama Convention on record as saying, "Politicians and agitators have done race relations much harm. We deplore the stirring up of the race question for political and selfish purposes. We condemn the actions of organizations church continue to agitate the race question, set one race against another and stir up racial animosity."

NEW MEXICO YOUTH ON RACE RELATIONS

High in the mountains of New Mexico, each summer the State Woman's Missionary Union provides a camp for the young people of the Baptist churches of that State.

The following is the camp code, which becomes a part of the thinking and acting of every young person who comes to share the fellowship and the inspiration of camp days.

OUR CAMP CODE

By God's help and through the study of His Word and world history, I shall try to become sufficiently informed until I can truthfully say:

That there is no place in the world "distant" or "far;"

That no place, culture, custom, or people is "strange," "exotic," "queer," or "bizarre;"

That people may be "illiterate" but never "ignorant;" they may be "simple," but never backward;

That there is no superior or inferior race, creed, or color;

That Christ died for all people and therefore there are only two classes of people in the world: Christians and non-Christians;

That such meaningless clichés as "East is east and west is west and never the two shall meet," "the white man's burden," or the "yellow peril," shall not be a part of my conversational vocabulary;

That the use of such nick-names as "nigger," "dago," "chink," or "wop" shall at all times be actively condemned;

That "Important Persons" includes everybody of good will;

That every race has made its own distinctive contribution to the world's culture; and

That the carrying out of God's World Plan and the establishment of the Brotherhood of Nations is the personal responsibility of everyone who has accepted His Salvation.

IS THIS THE ROAD TO PEACE?

Militarism and Youth

Shadows of the *Hitlerjugend* and the armed children of Soviet Russia hang over free America, as military leaders spend millions in an attempt to fasten peacetime conscription (Universal Military Training) on its teen-age boys.

Militarism in Propaganda

To make more palatable the militarization of a country once proud of its freedom from prussianism, the armed services have vaulted into the top three users of newspaper advertising space and radio time. Hundreds of men and millions of taxpayers' dollars go into the job of moulding an acquiescent public opinion and influencing legislation.

Militarism in Education

Expansion of ROTC to many more college campuses is another way in which the military seek to gain control of American thinking. ROTC means Army officers on the faculty; Army subsidies influencing policy; Army reaction submerging liberal free education.

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