



Christian Life Bulletin

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News of the Commission and Its Work

Dr. J. B. Weatherspoon's term of membership on the Christian Life Commission expired this year in accordance with the rotation requirement in the constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention. He became a member of the Commission in 1930 and has been its chairman since 1943. His last six years as chairman of the Commission were under the special tenure provision applicable to local members when their experience is needed for the welfare of the agency. Dr. Weatherspoon was thus drafted for his last term of office, but when the office was moved away from Louisville, the rule for special tenure no longer applied. It was necessary, therefore, that we give him up, which we did with much reluctance. His sane counsels and capable leadership through the rapid social changes of the last quarter of a century have kept Southern Baptists on an even keel and have led us forward into ever enlarging areas of our social responsibilities. The Commission appointed a committee to formulate an adequate and appropriate statement of appreciation for the services of this faithful and capable leader and for the contribution he has made to Christian thought and life.

Congressman Brooks Hays of Arkansas was the unanimous choice of the Commission to succeed Dr. Weatherspoon as chairman. Mr. Hays had served one period of six years as a member of the Commission, his term expiring in 1954. He was re-elected to membership by the Convention in May 1955. Mr. Hays is a Christian statesman of the greatest integrity. He is a member of the Second Baptist Church at Little Rock and takes a leading part in the religious life and affairs of the District of Columbia as well as in the halls of Congress. He was one of the leaders in organizing the breakfast club for prayer for the members of Congress and in the establishment of the beautiful prayer chapel just off the rotunda of the Capitol building. For several years Brooks Hays has been a member of the important Foreign Relations Committee. On July 28 of this year his appointment by the President was confirmed by the Senate to be a representative of the United States of America to the 10th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Senator Fulbright of Arkansas in speaking from the Senate floor in support of this nomination said in his closing paragraph: "Brooks Hays is a well-known churchman, and at the present time is chairman of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. The

Christian Life Commission has devoted much attention to the problems of world peace, and I know that the members of this religious organization who have worked with Congressman Hays have great confidence in his ability to serve in the General Assembly with credit not only to his State and Nation, but also to the great religious body to which he belongs." (Cong. Record, 7/28/55, p. 10180).

Paul H. Sanders of Nashville was elected vice-chairman of the Commission to succeed L. D. Johnson of Danville, Virginia, whose membership had expired. Mr. Sanders is a deacon and Sunday school teacher in the Belmont Heights Baptist Church of Nashville. He is frequently used as a teacher and counselor in college conferences and summer assemblies. He is a member of the law faculty of Vanderbilt University. His comments and law interpretations have been published in the *Vanderbilt Law Review* and other law journals. He is vitally interested in our work from a Christian viewpoint.

Nine New Members were elected to our Commission by the Convention at Miami. They are W. Barry Garrett, editor of *The Baptist Beacon*, Phoenix, Arizona; John P. Gates, pastor, First Baptist Church, Bethesda, Md.; John L. Phillips, pastor, First Baptist Church, Carmi, Ill.; Henlee Barnette, faculty, Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Alton Green, pastor, First Baptist Church, Belen, New Mexico; W. Howard Lee, pastor, West Main Baptist Church, Danville, Virginia; Brooks Hays, U. S. Congress, Washington, D. C.; Paul H. Sanders, law faculty, Vanderbilt University; Dewey R. Roach, Bible Department, Belmont College, Nashville.

A School of Alcohol Studies sponsored by the Allied Church League of North Carolina will be held at Pfeiffer College at Misenheimer, N. C. on September 6, 7 and 8. Those on the faculty for this school are Clifford Earle, Department of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.; Caradine R. Hooton, Board of Temperance of the Methodist Church; C. Kenneth Pepper, Department of Pastoral Care at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital; Wayne W. Womer, Virginia Church Temperance Council; and A. C. Miller, Christian Life Commission. R. M. Hauss, Executive Director of the Allied Church League, Shelby, N. C., is dean of the school in charge of promotion.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

A DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The Christian life is a way of living. Jesus so taught us by precept and example. In the beauty of his life character unfolds its highest integrity. In the processes of his thought reason raced to conclusions unreached by man and logic leaped to heights unscaled by him. Language finds in Jesus its most accurate expression, philosophy its noblest thought, art its highest ideal, law its perfect fulfillment, and work its purest motive. All the glories of other paths Jesus makes the crowning virtues of his own. And in him the heart of man finds peace in forgiveness and his soul its final rest.

POWER

Everyone has a desire for power. It is a part of the human drive with which God has endowed us. But few of us desire the power God wants us to have. It costs to secure it and costs more to use it. One price we pay is obedience. "Tarry ye until ye be clothed with power." Obedience is difficult when we must wait. We want action. We must go places and do things in search of something we can count or measure. Another price we must pay for power is prayer. Prayer is the most costly function of the Christian. In it God reveals so much that we have to give up. Rather than surrender we refuse to pray. A third price for power is unity. The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples when "they were all together in one place." Disruption in the fellowship within our churches and among the churches today reveals the lack of the Holy Spirit in our lives and quite often in our methods of work. God's promise of power is freely given but it cannot be freely received.

A FADING LIGHT

We have often observed that where the churches are most numerous we also find the highest rate of known juvenile delinquency and crime. How can we account for such a tragic fact? Is it because when many of the members of a church move away from its neighborhood into another part of the city, the church continues to center its interest in its members to the neglect of its immediate community? One is reminded of the oft-quoted line, "The light that shines farthest shines brightest at home." The churches in these days of changing population and increasing crime rates must identify them-

selves with the people in their neighborhoods and come to grips with the social problems of their whole community more vitally than ever before. The church in the community must attack. It must not become a fading light in a growing darkness.

AN EVENING'S READING

On a recent evening at home I sat down to read on current issues. My sight was attracted to LOOK magazine which had on its front cover a picture of the flattened ruins of a great city over which there lingered what appeared to be the ominous red glow of a raging fire. Superimposed on this picture was a printed title "INSIDE HELL" described as a survivor's report on what really happened at Hiroshima when the A-bomb fell. "That one bomb", comment the editors, "killed—directly or indirectly, at once or in time—around 200,000 men, women and children. They were blasted to bits, or crushed, or suffocated; they were stricken with radiation sickness, or simply fried to death in a man-made temperature that, for one awful flash of a moment, exceeded 1,800,000 degrees Fahrenheit beside which the blazing surface of the sun itself is cool." I read this story of terrifying events and human suffering through to the end. I laid it down in a spirit of deep dejection.

My glance fell on another title, "Atoms for Peace" written by Harold Stassen, special assistant to the President on disarmament. "For the first time in the history of the world we have a weapon that is reversible," writes Mr. Stassen. "All through history we have been able to turn the plowshare into a sword, but only today, in the twentieth century, do we have a sword we can turn into a plowshare." Who knows but that the twentieth century will mark the beginning of the fulfillment of that prophecy by Isaiah, "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

As I thought upon my evening's reading and mused on this prophecy, I rejoiced that the Southern Baptist Convention in its meeting at Miami had approved by overwhelming vote our recommendation on world peace which carried with it a strong protest against atomic weapons.

SURVEY OF FACTS

THE CENSUS SPEAKS

Among the many changes that are taking place today none are more significant than the changes in our population. From April 1950 through June 1954 California gained 1,968,000 in total population. During this period Florida averaged a gain of 130,000 annually, Michigan 52,000, New Jersey 44,000 and Arizona and Ohio, 38,000 each. On the other hand Pennsylvania and seven southern states have each been losing 30,000 or more persons annually since 1950. Our melting pot has become a great mixing bowl.

Between 1940 and 1952 the average population of the United States increased 19%. Children from 5 to 9 increased 45% while those in the adolescent age group decreased 6%. These children of 5 to 9 in the last decade are becoming the adolescents of the present decade. The greatest increase in juvenile delinquency in our national history developed in the last decade out of a 6% decrease in the number of adolescents. What may we expect in our present decade from this 45% increase in the adolescent age group? A more important question is what are we going to do about it in our own community.

There is a bright spot in the crime picture. The homicide rate in our country has fallen to an all-time low level. Since 1934 this rate has fallen from 5.8 per 100,000 to 1.9 in 1954. Among 20 states with the highest homicide rates in 1952, 16 of them were southern states. Such a record is usually laid to the high proportion of non-white residents in the South. But this does not tell the whole story. While the national rate involving white males only was 3.7 per 100,000 in 1952, it was an average of 7.7 for the states with the greatest proportion of non-white population.

OUR NATIONAL GAMBLING COSTS

Fifty million adults and large numbers of minors in the United States wager each year a total of thirty billion dollars. This is an average of \$743.00 per family. It is twice as much as we spend on social welfare, three times more than we spend for education, and fifteen times more than is contributed to our churches.

Six billion of this thirty billion wagered is the operators' take. This is more than the combined profits of U. S. Steel, General Motors, General Electric, and a hundred other large manufacturing concerns in our country.

After deducting the amounts which go to the winners and operators there is left a colossal sum which is used by gangster promoters for many forms of illegal business, political bribery, traffic in dope, white slavery and many other channels of corruption.

Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee makes this pertinent comment: "Although the annual cost of gambling in this country reaches astronomical figures in dollars, the cost to our nation in what it does to our human resources is more appalling. These losses in human character cannot be calculated in material dimension."

WHERE DRIVING IS SAFER

A nation-wide survey by *Clipsheet* reveals the basic reason for the greater safety of America's toll roads: they are unanimously "dry." A survey of the 15 turnpike authorities in 14 states shows that all of them operate under policies that prohibit the sale of alcohol on toll roads under their jurisdiction.

Kentucky's new toll road will bring the number to 16. Governor Wetherby of that state has approved a plan to ban the sale of liquor or beer, as a safety measure, in any restaurant to be built along its new toll road.

Turnpike authorities in states where toll roads are still on the planning boards or in the construction stage already have made it clear that this policy will be the practice on their highways.

These policies of the various turnpike authorities serve both as example and warning to our nation as we enter the greatest era of highway construction in our history. The Senate recently approved a highway building program calling for combined federal and state expenditures of over \$23 billion within the next five years.

SLAVE OR FREE?

"One out of every ten heavy cigaret smokers develops lung cancer," writes the science editor of the *Washington Star*. For the Christian, Paul has a word on this: "All things are lawful for me but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me but I will not be enslaved by anything. . . . Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." (1 Cor. 6:12, 19-20 RSV).

CHATTANOOGA SETS AN EXAMPLE

Those who preach defiance of the Supreme Court's segregation ruling will find little comfort in the courageous action of the Chattanooga Board of Education. In announcing its decision to comply with the ruling of the court "the board has made it plain that the months ahead will be spent not in looking for loopholes and plotting evasive tactics but in an honest effort to work out an integration plan as ordered by the court," as *The Nashville Tennessean* puts it. The members of this Board of Education leave no doubt about their high ideals of American citizenship in the statement they have released and from which we quote:

"We are citizens of the United States of America. It is the obligation of every American citizen to uphold the Constitution of the United States—the very foundation of our way of life.

"We believe that law in its broad meaning protects, defends and benefits each and every human being in this land of ours. Without law, and without respect for law and the willingness to comply with law, our society could easily return to the jungle where the only deciding factor in the relationship of one human being with another becomes solely a question of brute force. The ideal of justice which pervades our way of life would be lost, and the weak, whether physically weak or otherwise, would have no protection from those who are stronger than they.

"We will not be a party to what is an attack upon the very foundation of our way of life and all that it has meant and all that it will mean to the welfare and happiness of us all."

The way of a superior man is threefold; virtuous, he is free from anxieties; wise, he is free from perplexities; bold, he is free from fear.—Confucius.

A PROBLEM WITH A SOLUTION

The racial antagonisms in our country have grown largely out of our refusal to apply the principles of our democracy. The situation has been made more acute by the reflection of world tides of racial tension and unrest. Physically, the peoples of the earth have been brought closer together; psychologically, they have drifted farther apart. Closer proximity and greater economic interdependence have not made it easier for them to live in mutual understanding and harmonious cooperation. Mankind is not at present drawn together in any definite pattern of moral unity. The ultimate political problem of the world must be to determine how the different racial and cultural groups can dwell together in peace.

In a country like ours, where social institutions are inextricably bound up with a Christian civilization, this state of affairs is a reflection upon the sincerity of our Christian profession. We cannot escape the conclusion that the problem of race relations is a Christian problem. Christian forces are the only forces qualified to understand and to take hold of the issue. We wonder why we have been so hesitant to bring our Christianity to bear upon it. We have a conviction that the only hope of an ultimate solution of the whole question is to be found in the acceptance and the courageous application of the truth and spirit of Christ among the peoples of all races.—Stewart A. Newman

Nobody knows the age of the human race, but all agree that he is old enough to know better.—Anonymous.

The Christian Life Conferences at both Ridgecrest and Glorieta this summer were outstanding in interest and in the quality of the addresses and discussions. All who attended were by no means in agreement on the issues discussed but they were willing to discuss them and to examine Christian evidences. This usually leads to a better understanding and ultimately leads to a Christian solution for the issues we must meet.

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