

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

JOINT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC RELATIONS



The Northern Baptist Convention
The Southern Baptist Convention
The National Baptist Convention
The National Baptist Convention, Inc.

J. M. Dawson, Executive Secretary

E. HILTON JACKSON, Chairman

W. B. LIPPARD, Secretary

November, 1946

UNITED NATIONS

The Executive Secretary of the Joint Conference on Public Relations, as the former Chairman of the Southern Baptist World Peace Committee, represented the Baptists along with other members of the Committee at the San Francisco Conference. At the Miami meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, the work of the World Peace Committee was merged with that of Public Relations. It appears that Northern Baptists have an equal interest with Southern in support of the United Nations. Accordingly, the Public Relations Secretary is devoting considerable time to addresses on the subject, invitations having been received from a number of State Conventions.

On Friday, October 25, he attended the dinner in New York, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, given in honor of the delegates of the United Nations, at which time the President and Secretary-General of the United Nations and others made addresses. In addition to the above activities the Public Relations Secretary has also participated in several conferences held in the Department of State in Washington, devoted to discussion of aspects of the United Nations work, among them the Bill of Rights as related to education and economics, in concrete application to European conditions; and also to re-education in Germany.

In closing his fine address before the Waldorf-Astoria guests at the United Nations dinner, Former Senator W. R. Austin, now the United States member of the Security Council, having spoken most optimistically of United Nations success and decried the disposition of many to magnify controversies within beyond any reason, emphasized the possible effect of Christian prayers on the outcome. He appealed to the God of the universe for divine guidance, and believed that the General Assembly meeting here in an atmosphere of prayer would be greatly assisted toward righteous decisions.

ATTENDANCE OF BAPTIST WORLD CONGRESS

At the meeting of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations, October 2, it was the opinion expressed in vote that responsibility for transportation arrangements to the Baptist World Congress, to be held in Copenhagen next July, does not fall within the scope of the Committee. That, in the opinion of the members, is properly the responsibility of the several Conventions cooperating with the Baptist World Alliance. It is understood that a number of brethren, each representing his Convention, are promoting the attendance, and with entire harmony so that it is likely that arrangements will be worked out whereby Baptists North and South will go in large numbers and find delightful fellowship. This office will do everything that is legitimate for it to do toward this end. It is most gratifying that interest in the Congress is apparently increasing daily.

MEMBERSHIP IN SECRETARY FORRESTAL'S CIVILIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

By invitation of Secretary Forrestal, the Public Relations Secretary has accepted membership in his Civilian Advisory Committee. In this capacity he is serving on the Sub-Committee on Religion and Morals. The Committee as constituted is as follows: Bishop G. Bromley, Methodist, President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; Monsignor E. J. Flanagan, Head of Boys' Town; Reverend J. Hugh O'Donnell, CSC, President of Notre Dame University; Father Edward V. Stanford, Rector Augustinian College of Catholic University; Right Reverend William Scarlett, Episcopal Bishop of Missouri; Dr. Channing E. Tobias, National Council Young Men's Christian Association; Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, Cleveland; and J. M. Dawson, representing the Baptists. The Committee as a whole consists of about one hundred leaders in American life. Several meetings have been conducted recently in which sub-committees on religion and morals, health, recreation and education as related to the men in the Navy have undergone most searching inquiry, and have received the frankest discussions with decisions, which it is believed, will contribute to the welfare of these men in service.

STATE AND FEDERAL MONEY FOR PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

By action of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations a brief has been submitted by the able constitutional lawyer, Mr. E. Hylton Jackson, as a friend of the court, to the United States Supreme Court setting forth arguments in reversal of New Jersey decision in a case involving the appropriation of state money for the transportation of students to parochial schools. The decision in this case will be far reaching, as legislatures in several of the states have voted to appropriate tax money for transportation of students to parochial schools, and it is possible that a bill pending in Congress in respect to education may include such. If the Committee should find that its position is in accord with the judgment of the Supreme Court, it is felt that this will constitute a great victory in behalf of separation of church and state as provided for in the Constitution of the United States. The outcome, soon to be announced, is watched with keenest anxiety.

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SURPLUS CHAPELS IN DISSOLVING CAMPS

Several applications have come to this office from Baptist churches in localities where camps have been discontinued, for chapels, now surplus property, to be sold to the highest bidders. We have been glad to render whatever service possible in contacting the Chief of Chaplains, who has final say in respect to the disposal, but we find from experience that the Officer in charge of disposal of such surplus property in the district is really the determining factor. We would therefore suggest that full reasons for applying be set forth to those regional officers, rather than depend upon remote decision in Washington.

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CHRISTIAN MESSAGES TO PRINCE TAKAMATSU

Upon request of Reverend Peyton Stephens, Columbia, Missouri, one of our former missionaries to the Orient, the Public Relations Secretary joined in writing an appeal to Prince and Princess Takamatsu, Tokyo, Japan, to pursue their investigation into Christianity. The brother of the Emperor is reported in the press to be deeply interested. Through the courtesy of General L. D. Miller, Chief of Chaplains, the messages were forwarded with a prayer that they might be effective.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

- THE UNITED NATIONS, by Louis Dalivet. New York: Farrar, Straus and Company. \$1.75.
- ANIMAL FARM, by George Orwell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$1.50.
- CHAMPIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, by Rufus W. Weaver. Nashville: Broadman Press, Cloth 60 cents, paper 40 cents.
- BAPTISTS IN THE U.S.S.R., by J. H. Rushbrooke, 16 pages, 10 cents. Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee.
- THE REVOLT AGAINST GOD, by Rufus W. Weaver, New York: Fleming H. Revell Company. \$2.50.
- SALUTE TO INDIA, by J. Z. Hodge. New York: Friendship Press. \$1.00.
- RUSSIA ON THE WAY, by Harrison Salisbury. New York: Macmillan. \$3.50.

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DIARY OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
(In addition to routine office hours)

October 1 - Prepared report of two previous months' work in opening the Washington Office for submission to fall session of Joint Conference Committee.

October 2 - Meeting of the Joint Conference Committee, 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., followed by Executive Committee.

October 3 - Morning: Presented Dr. S. F. Lowe, Chairman of Southern Baptist Radio Commission, to Secretary Vernon Jackson of International Shortwave Broadcasting, State Department, and remained in conference. Evening: Delivered Address, National Memorial Baptist Church, Foreign Missions Dinner, on "Christianity and the World Situation."

October 4-5 - In Conferences with Secretary Forrestal's Civilian Advisory Committee to the Navy, Sands Point, Long Island and New London, Connecticut, as member of Sub-Committee on Religion and Morals.

October 6 - Preached Temple Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., one hundredth and fourth anniversary sermon, "The Church in the Present Crisis."

October 7 - Afternoon and evening, informal conference of Public Relations Secretaries, American Non-Catholic Churches, Quaker Meeting House.

October 8 - Address, Chevy Chase, Maryland Baptist Church Brotherhood, "The Denomination's Stake in the Office of Public Relations."

October 9 - Conference with Chairman E. Hilton Jackson on his service to the Joint Conference Committee in preparation of brief to be submitted to Supreme Court of the United States as friend of the Court in New Jersey case protesting expenditure of state tax money for transportation of students to parochial schools.

October 10 - Meeting with District of Columbia Baptist pastors.

October 11 - Represented Joint Committee in State Department Off-the-Record Conference on the Bill of Rights as proposed for adoption by the United Nations.

October 12 - Assisted Secretary Baptist World Alliance with obtaining authorization relief work in Europe.

October 13 - Preached First Baptist Church, Alexandria, Virginia, on "The Meaning of an Awakened Church Now."

October 14 - Gained full possession of office by transfer of furnishings belonging to Washington Bible College to Assembly Room, Baptist Headquarters.

October 15 - Installed office secretary, Mrs. Julia Swann Inman, graduate W.M.U. Training School, Louisville, and former secretary to Dean of American University, Washington, D. C.

October 16 - Address, Petworth Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., on "The Challenge of the Present Crisis."

October 17 - Address, First Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., on "The Churches and The United Nations."

October 18 - Off-the-Record Conference of members of United States Education Mission to Germany with members of National Organizations, Department of State, on "Re-education of the Germans."

October 19 - Preparation of article, "What Kind of Culture for an Enduring Democratic Nation?"

October 20 - Sermons, Second Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., opening week of evening evangelistic messages.

October 21 - Correspondence with Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, London, President Baptist World Alliance, in reference to program of Baptist World Congress, Copenhagen, next July.

October 22 - Commendation of surplus chapel property bid for Southside Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, to Chief of Chaplains, United States War Department.

October 23 - Assurance from Chief of Chaplains, United States War Department, that letter from Reverend Peyton Stephens, Columbia, Missouri, to Prince Takamatau, brother of the Emperor of Japan, appealing the Prince to become a Christian, would be delivered.

October 24 - Address, Maryland Baptist Convention, Baltimore, on "The Kind of World We Seek to Build."

October 25-26 - Attendance on United Nations dinner, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, to hear Secretary-General of United Nations and others on opening of General Assembly of United Nations.

October 27 - Concluded special evangelistic messages to Second Baptist Church, Washington, D. C.

October 28 - Departure for Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and California speaking engagements.

RELIGION IN THE CAPITAL

In Washington the 35 Baptist Churches working with the District of Columbia Convention have a reported membership of 26,373. By agreement these churches cooperate on an equal basis with both Northern and Southern Baptist Conventions. This seems appropriate from the historical standpoint, inasmuch as Baptist life, North and South, under the leadership of such men as Luther Rice, had initial inspiration here. It is also very desirable from a national view, because the capital holds an equal interest to all our people.

Negro Baptists are very numerous in Washington. They maintain more than one hundred churches. Here is their great Howard University, doubtless the most important Negro institution in the world. The two Negro National Baptist Conventions are represented in the District.

The several denominations have established offices here on public relations. The exact nature of these offices indicates considerable variation. The Friends, or Quakers, call theirs a Legislation Committee, with a paid Secretary in charge. The Methodists have a Board of Temperance and Morals and own a handsome building. The Congregationalists were pioneers in social service and support a competent staff. The Church of the Brethren and others have representatives. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America sustain a research office which reports to social action committees on some fifty distinct subjects. The Roman Catholics have two magnificent buildings on Massachusetts Avenue, the street of the Embassies, one of which is occupied by National Catholic Conference on Welfare and the other by the Apostolate to the United States. They have, as is well known, two of their largest universities here, one of them Georgetown, which reputedly supplies the best training in Government Foreign Service to be found anywhere in the world.

The interest of the President, members of Congress, Cabinet Members, Justices of the Supreme Court, department heads and workers in diverse, as might well be imagined, varying from active enlistment in local churches of their faith to absolute neglect of any religious obligations. All, however, must be quite aware of the strength of the religious forces in America, and usually are very responsive to the churches' approach.

THE CATHOLICS AND THE GOVERNMENT

Requests from some of the Baptist editors for articles on the above subject have been complied with. Not to repeat such as have appeared in print, it will be in order here to state the case in part.

The situation in the Capital of the Nation is very much like that throughout the United States. The Catholic church is stronger numerically than any single denominational group, numbering 17,330,558 members above thirteen years of age and over. The Catholic church would doubtless rather capture America than achieve any other aim. Toward realizing this aim, it has a vast and astute organization at work.

The Catholics are fully aware of the significance of Washington, the center of our country and the most important city in the world today. Here they maintain two of their largest universities, one of which, Georgetown, which undoubtedly offers the best course in Government Foreign Service to be found anywhere in the world. The Catholics have also established here a National Welfare Conference headed by Bishops and Archbishops and housed in a very fine building on Massachusetts Avenue, the street of the embassies, not far distant from the impressive building which is the official residence of the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. By means of this organization they are set for the control of the social life of this country. They seek to accomplish this stupendous objective by claiming to be the only true church and the only real authority on morals. As a means of impressing this upon the minds of the people, they have the most elaborate provision for interpreting the news, not only to their own lay readers in a manner to engage deepest interest, but also to furnish their treated copy to secular newspapers, many of which accept it. The great news agencies are doubtless also subject to the influence of such treatment. Retreats for journalists are conducted by the Catholic experts with a view to instructing reporters and writers how to present the news acceptably. Many of the great columnists, like Paul Mallon, Courtney Savage, and Mark Sullivan, are Catholics.

We do not forget either how the overwhelming Catholic majorities in certain European countries and in Latin South America are assisted by the powerful American hierarchy, so that our Government finds it extremely difficult to resist their pressure in its effort to follow a righteous course. Nor do we forget the ample resources of Catholics, through their schools and ministries to the sick, the suffering, the poor; nor their contacts with both capital and labor, nor their rigid attitude toward marriage and divorce, as a standard in morals. By these and other outstanding means they manage to influence the social thinking of immense areas of our population.

Should our answer to the Catholic propaganda be purely negative, or should we attempt something more positive? Should we become more articulate and expressive?