

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. MILTON JACKSON, Chairman

W. D. LIPPARD, Secretary

January, 1947

THE CRISIS IN ITALY

Premier Alcide de Gasparri has resigned and is now undertaking the formation of a new government. Gasparri is the head of the Roman Catholic party in Italy and is favorable to the continuation of the Concordat made between the Pope and Mussolini in 1929. Under this agreement Roman Catholicism is recognized as the official religion in Italy, is given a practical control of religious education of children of Italy, and receives from the Italian Government an annuity amounting to more than \$2,500,000. This concordat was made between Mussolini and the Pope and in this the Pope recognizes the House of Savoy as the sovereign power in Italy. Mussolini is dead; the king of Italy has been dethroned. A new government is being set up. The continuation of the Concordat is now being fought for by all of the Roman Catholic forces in Italy.

The treaty with Italy signed by our Secretary of State, Mr. Byrnes on January 20, 1947, contains the following: "Italy shall take all measures necessary to secure for all persons under Italian jurisdiction without distinction as to race, sect, language or religion the enjoyment of human rights, and of the fundamental freedoms including freedom of expression, of press and publication, of religious worship, of political opinion and of public meeting." "The acceptance of this treaty by Italy should result in complete freedom of religion in Italy and the denouncement of the Concordat made with the Pope of Rome. This is the issue which now confronts the people of Italy. A new constitution is being framed. The Federal Council of the Evangelical Churches in Italy has made an appeal to the framers of the new constitution, and earnestly requested the adoption of the following: "Every man has a right to the profession of his own ideas and convictions, to the free and full expression of his own religious faith both inwardly and outwardly, to the same manifestation individually and collectively of his own faith and the propagation of it, to the free private and public exercise of his own cult provided it deals not with a religion or cult implying principles and rites contrary to public order and morals". The adoption of this article approved by the Commission on the new constitution December 1946 would give the legal foundation for complete freedom of religion in Italy.

The issue is now in the balance. If the Concordat remains it becomes a violation of the above article proposed for the new constitution, and furthermore a violation of a treaty which Italy is called upon to sign.

Rufus W. Weaver, Chairman
Committee on Religious Liberty

THE TAYLOR MISSION

Under this heading Sumner Welles has written in his syndicated story a defense of the appointment and retention of Myron Taylor as personal representative of the President at the Vatican. He says it is hard to understand how it runs counter to the principle of separation of church and state. This is disturbing, because it reveals to what extent the principle has been obscured in governmental thinking. We admit that the fact that the Vatican is both a church and a state tends to cloud the issue, but contend it does not present the charges publicised. Mr. Welles thinks the mission cannot "shape our internal policies". We think it is this sort of reasoning which in effect puts the Government under complicating influences exerted by those who seek to capitalize on Government favor. Whatever excuse for the appointment in war time -- and granting full sincerity of purpose on the part of President Roosevelt, we think that was a mistake -- we hold that there is not now a pretext for the continuance of the office. Mr. Welles complains that some protester declared the Taylor mission represents "one of the most dangerous chapters in modern secret diplomacy", as if the protestant meant that information secured by the diplomat must immediately be made public. We rather think the criticism was lodged instead against the dubious establishment of "a listening post", which gives the Vatican an advantage that it has not been slow to utilize, and which may in the end seriously embarrass our country in dealing with certain countries, notably Russia.

THIS OFFICE A MODEL FOR NEW ONES

Recently two more offices on public relations have been opened by religious denominations in Washington, namely, the Lutherans and the Evangelical United Brethren. After a study of the various similar offices, they have let it be known that they wish to pattern theirs to a marked degree after this one. Considering the fact that ours is a meagerly-staffed, slender-budgeted office, a joint conference, therefore, limited in no small measure to the common objects and directives of the participating four conventions which sustain it, and further that we are yet in somewhat of an exploratory stage as to what we are eventually to do, this is encouraging, if not flattering. We desire to register gratitude for the full measure of cooperation accorded by Baptists, North and South, white and colored in the specific undertakings of our people; and for the fine approach of non-Baptist groups in matters on which Protestants must stand together, or else "hang separately."

THE CASE OF STEPINAC

The Executive Secretary of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations addressed the Baptist pastors of Philadelphia. They commended to him the following action taken by the Ministers' Union of Philadelphia and Vicinity:

Whereas: The Philadelphia County Chapter of Catholic War Veterans, with the approval of Cardinal Daugherty and the blessing of the Pope, held a mass meeting in the Philadelphia Municipal Convention Hall on Sunday, December 1, 1946, at which time, according to press reports, a resolution was passed relative to the arrest, trial and imprisonment of Archbishop Stepinac of Yugoslavia, and

Whereas: Part of the resolution was addressed to the Federal government, the President and the State Department of the United States as follows,

"That our protest be brought to the attention of our Federal government together with the request that the President and State Department of the United States of America insist on the immediate release of Archbishop Stepinac from prison and the cessation of the persecution of Catholics in Yugoslavia.", and

Whereas: According to the best available reports, the government of Yugoslavia did not prosecute the Roman Catholic Church as a religious body, but prosecuted an individual priest, as a citizen, for a crime against his government, and

Whereas: Protestants are being ruthlessly persecuted in Spain, Mexico, Italy and other countries of Europe and South America, and similarly Jews in many parts of the world, and

Whereas: There are religious conflicts between and discriminations against religious groups within the United States,

Resolved that the Ministers' Union of Philadelphia and Vicinity, meeting in the First Baptist Church, Monday, December 9, 1946 declares the following to be its position:

First: That we protest and condemn the persecution of any religious group anywhere in the world. We hold that all groups should enjoy freedom of worship without molestation from governments or other religious groups.

Second: That all any religious group has a right to demand of its national government is the unmolested right to worship as it pleases and to propagate its faith insofar as the exercise of those rights do not tend to destroy or overthrow government or to involve the government in difficulties with other nations.

Third: That if the United States, which is a government of all the people should accede to the request of the Roman Catholic Church and interfere in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia it would establish a precedent which would undermine the historical, American position of separation of church and state. It might further invite a series of such petitions from other religious groups. For instance, some Protestant group could well request our government to insist on the rescinding of the recent action of Franco's Catholic government in Spain which has passed restrictive legislations against Protestants, practically assuring their extermination.

Fourth: That we vigorously oppose the request addressed to the President of the United States and the State Department by the Roman Catholics as being wholly outside the jurisdiction of our government. We hold that the Archbishop Stepinac affair is exclusively the business of the government of Yugoslavia and the Roman Catholic Church and that our government has no moral or legal right to interfere in the internal affairs of another nation.

Be it further resolved that copies of this action be published in the newspapers of Philadelphia and sent to the President of the United States and to the State Department.

BAPTIST CONSISTENCY IN RESPECT TO PRINCIPLES

At a meeting of the Joint Conference Executive Committee, it was voted that disclaiming any desire to dictate to local communities from this office, we remind and request the denomination to bear in mind the necessity for scrupulous consistency in respect to the constitutional principle of separation of church and state, for which we have historically stood. The Baptists through this office are fighting a battle for strict observance of it in America, and manifestly we could not assist Baptist groups by Governmental contacts in efforts to gain Federal gifts. Any exception to a proper regard for this principle by our people in the states might become the occasion for ridicule of us, even a national scandal. It is only fair to say that possible misunderstanding as to actual conduct of Baptists in certain cases could arise over complications existing at first, which are subsequently straightened out in the transfer of Government surplus property to Baptist enterprises. In the final settlement of any particular matter involving business with the Government, it should be crystal clear that we are acting with absolute consistency in refusing to reach hands into the public treasury at the tax-payers' expense sans their consent.

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LIQUOR ADVERTISING

The W. C. T. U. for the present is concentrating attention on restraining liquor advertising. If a bill proposed by Senator Capper of Kansas prohibiting the transportation in interstate commerce of advertisements of alcoholic beverages should pass, it would afford some relief. Religious Brotherhoods are lending active support of this movement. Meanwhile abuses in the liquor trade mount skyward.

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BAPTIST WORLD CONGRESS

Both Northern, Southern and Negro Baptist Conventions are working diligently through their officially appointed committees on delegations to the Baptist World Congress to be held in Copenhagen July 29-August 3. Itineraries for several groups are being arranged, notably one under the direction of Chairman E. B. Willingham of the Northern Baptist Convention and another under Chairman Porter Routh of the Southern Baptist Convention. One of the largest is "The All-American Tour", headed by Dr. J. W. Marshall. The Department of State has indicated approval of as many as two thousand passports for the Congress. All are exhorted to secure credentials from their Convention headquarters, register with the Baptist World Alliance Office, 715 Eighth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., and make reservations with the party-manager chosen for the trip.

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COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

Both Southern and Northern Baptist Conventions in their last conventions adopted strong resolutions against universal peacetime conscription. Both resolutions contained explicit directives to social action agencies to exert efforts against this totalitarian measure (see Social Service Commission Report, Southern Baptist Convention Annual, pages 125-126; and Report of Resolutions Committee, Northern Baptist Yearbook, pages 175-176).

President Truman has submitted to Congress a proposal for universal training in the appointment of his Special Commission on the subject, saying he wished the word "military" deleted, insisting that he desired the army and navy to teach our youth the meaning of our government and how to take care of the temple of God entrusted to them. The Commission, however, bears the title, "President's Commission on Universal Military Training", and by opponents is regarded as a "stacked" committee, prior published utterances of each member certifying it as such. Of course, the military-minded in the armed forces wish some bill providing for universal military training adopted, along with the new Secretary of State, General Marshall, the former Chief of Staff. The churches so far as action of general bodies is concerned, are on record as being unanimously against this. So are the educational organizations against it, with possibly one state group voting in favor. Labor and farm groups are emphatically against it.

Those against it are offering the following arguments as the most likely to be effective with Congressmen who are confronted with making some disposition of the proposal, and should be emphasized in writing your Congressman:

1. We have had enough of compulsion by the government. We want less rather than more compulsion and we certainly don't want compulsory military training in peacetime. Since when did instruction in democratic government devolve upon the army and navy? What are the schools for? and the homes? and the churches?
2. The United Nations is considering world-wide disarmament and since Russia has asked for disarmament within three months any attempt to pass peacetime conscription in this country would undermine our chances of getting world disarmament and would sabotage the United Nations.
3. Now is the time for economy in government. Military expenditures should be reduced -- not increased. Compulsory military training of a million boys each year in addition to a regular military establishment is too much. One-third of the national budget already goes to the military establishment.
4. Compulsory military training will increase immorality and disease if present and past records of the Army mean anything. Witness the mile-long men seeking prophylactic treatment in Japan and the reeking reports from Germany, together with the liquor situation in the camps. Are military men the best qualified persons to teach our boys how to care for God's temple, the body?

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BOOKS COMMENDED

THE MEETING OF EAST AND WEST, by F. S. C. Northrop. New York: Macmillan.
\$6.00. By many regarded the best book of 1946.

I CHOSE FREEDOM, by Victor Kravchenko. New York: Scribners. \$3.50.
Anti-Russian.

SOVIET PHILOSOPHY, by John Somerville. New York: Philosophical Library.
An objective effort to survey principles.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY, by Herbert W. Schneider. New York, Columbia University Press. \$4.50. Invaluable for an account of American culture - social theory, political history and religion.

THE PLOTTERS, by John Roy Carlson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. \$3.50. An expose of Ku Kluxers, Fascists, America Firsters, Communists.

COLOR AND CONSCIENCE, by Buell G. Gallagher. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.50. The church and the race problem.

Two books of high value on labor and management: SPOTLIGHT ON LABOR UNIONS, by William J. Smith, \$2.50; COMMON-SENSE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP, by G. E. Fosbroke, \$2.50. Both published by Essential Books, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND SOCIAL POLICY, by John C. Bennett. New York: Scribners. \$2.00. A master speaks on vital questions.

NEWMAN, THE CHURCH HISTORIAN, by Frederick Eby. Nashville: Broadman Press. \$1.75. A discerning biography of the most distinguished church historian produced by Baptists.

LAST REPRIEVE, by Edwin McNeill Poteat. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$1.00. The urgency of Christian action in Reference to World Peace.

THE EIGHTIETH CONGRESS

A Quaker's Impression: The Friends Committee on National Legislation in January 23 number of its Washington News Letter describes the new Congress as follows: "The new Republican-controlled Congress convened January 3 in the midst of a tug-of-war over the seating of Senator Bilbo and over committee assignments under the Reorganization Act, and in a welter of statements and promises of speedy - if not rash - actions on labor legislation, tax reduction, budget paring and investigations of most of the administrative agencies of the Government. Already in two weeks there has been a noteworthy sobering of tone as the responsibilities really begin to be faced...."

"During the first two weeks of the Eightieth Congress 1576 bills and resolutions were introduced. One would designate the second Sunday of October as Grandmother's Day; another by Representative McDonough of California would provide for the payment of pensions to daughters of veterans of the War of 1812. Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin introduced S. 79 and Representative Melvin C. Snyder of West Virginia sponsored H.R. 503 which would establish a Department of Peace. Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois called for the establishment of a Peace Division in the Department of State, in his H.J. Res. 13. Representative Robert F. Rich of Pennsylvania in H. Con. Res. 10 proposes a joint session of the two Houses of Congress during February 1947 to ask God's divine guidance in the deliberations and actions of Congress."

Displaced Persons: Legislation concerning immigration and displaced persons will be in the hands of the Judiciary Committees headed by Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin and Representative Earl C. Michener. If S. 151 by Senator Claude Pepper and H.R. 860 by Joseph R. Farrington of Hawaii should pass, Koreans would be eligible for naturalization. Perhaps a million refugees in Europe are longing for a place to live

without fear of political or religious persecution. A fair share for the United States to take would be 400,000. Emanuel Celler of New York, in his H.R. 36, would authorize 250,000 displaced persons and refugees to enter. Several bills have been introduced amending the Immigration Act of 1924 to make this possible. In opposition Stephen Pace of Georgia in H.R. 138 would "deny admission to the United States to all immigrants while the number of unemployed persons within the United States is 100 or more." Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma and Representative Ed Gossett of Texas are sponsoring measures to stop immigration, even under the quota system. Meanwhile United Nations has approved the establishment of the International Refugee Organization with a budget of \$160,000,000 for the current year, of which the United States is expected to supply \$68,000,000. The while Jesus Christ is calling to the haves in behalf of the have-nots. In sharp contrast with United States attitude, Argentina with a population of 14,500,000 is planning to introduce 4,000,000 European immigrants at the rate of 30,000 annually, and has set up selection offices in Rome, Madrid and elsewhere, to carry through a program of action rather than talk, to make her country a major power in the American Hemisphere.

Texas Ties Cherished: It may seem very personal, but the Executive Secretary of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Relations must say he finds joy in fellowshipping the Texas delegation in Congress. Recently he accepted their hospitality at lunch in the Speaker's dining room at the Capitol. On Friday, January 31, he offered the invocation for the 500 Texans at dinner in the Statler given in honor of the former Speaker, Mr. Sam Rayburn of Texas, when Chief Justice Vinson of the Supreme Court was the speaker and Attorney General Clark of Dallas was the toastmaster.

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FEDERAL AID FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION, NOT FOR SECTARIAN ASSISTANCE

The National Education Association, in its past several issues of the NEA Journal, offers arresting reasons for federal financial aid to public education in the States of the Union. Ten million in the Nation are virtually illiterate at a time when social ills traceable to ignorance are mounting, when the United States is expected to lead the world into a new order of life. Many of the States are unquestionably too poor to give their children the kind of education needful. Conditions are by no means equal in the States. Federal aid has been extended, in various forms, by different acts of Congress for the past one hundred and sixty years. The urgency for more definite and generous aid at the present has been the finding of Commission after Commission appointed for inquiry into the need.

Last year, in the 79th Congress, was introduced by Senators Lister Hill, Robert A. Taft and Elbert D. Thomas, an excellent bill, which is still pending and which if enacted would provide adequately and fairly for equalizing educational opportunities in the several states, without in any way interfering with state and local control over the operation of the public schools. It does not propose to include sectarian schools. This was S. 181, and was strongly opposed by the Catholics.

Other bills are being offered which do propose to include in the huge sums to be appropriated "assistance to non-public tax-exempt schools of secondary grade or less for necessary transportation of pupils, school health examinations and related school services, and purchase of non religious instructional supplies and equipment, including books." Such a bill is S. 199, introduced January 15, 1947 by Senator Aiken. The bill has the cordial support of the Catholics. As evident from the wording, if passed would enable parochial schools out of tax money to pay teachers, build houses, transport and equip pupils---in short, provide what Protestants have long feared would be done under the Catholic appeal.

Doubtless the country will be fully alerted to the situation, every citizen will inform himself as to the proposals of the pending bills, and believers in the principle of separation of church and state as established in the Constitution, will let his representative and senator know of his conviction.

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HOW OTHERS FEEL ABOUT LIQUOR

The National Temperance and Prohibition Council: "The gigantic liquor bill of approximately eight billions of dollars annually, and the consequential cost which may be as much more, impede the economic recovery of the country and eventuate in crippled production and under-consumption. The brutalities, accidents, hotel fires, vastly increased crime and juvenile delinquency, corruption, distress and oppress the country. The time has come when every Christian organization and individual should demand the immediate consideration by responsible authorities of definite and practical remedial measures.

"We favor the enactment of legislation which will allow the people of political subdivisions to outlaw the sale of alcoholic beverages.

"We believe that the time has now come when the combined moral forces of the country must obtain the outlawry of liquor advertising. The present tremendously increased consumption of liquor is due largely to the fact that the organized liquor interests are able to promote their traffic by means of all kinds of liquor advertising. This aggressive promotion of liquor sales must be stopped. We urge all good citizens of the country to support the Capper Bill which aims at the elimination of all liquor advertising.

"We particularly protest radio advertising of beer, wine, cocktail rooms and taverns and we protest the unfairness of the networks and radio stations in their refusal to sell equally desirable time to the opponents of the liquor traffic."

W. E. Melton, Main Street Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Florida: "As a layman I think I can partly answer your question, 'When will equitable dealing with liquor begin in this country.' When religious groups stop resolving this and that about the liquor question and get down to the difficult and courageous task of doing a few practical things to educate and caution the public relative to the decline of our people. When pastor's and educational directors, by and large refuse to swerve from our duty every time some 'prominent' church leader - even a life-long deacon from a so-called 'leading family' - clears his throat in meeting, or private, and suggests that we will cause division in the church if we pursue the question of temperance 'to the extreme'. When we educate our people to their responsibility as citizens to qualify to vote - AND THEN VOTE. When we do a little bold and plain advertising on the subject of the evils of alcohol. If a certain distiller, to get people to drink can tell publicly on billboard the 'merits' of his product, why can't a few billboards be displayed here and there telling the truth about liquor? If for instance it is suggested by a distiller that a certain brand of whiskey adds to the fellowship of a social gathering, why can't we tell the other side of the story on the highways to the effect that a certain brand of whiskey will promote drunkenness and brutality and will wreck homes and our nation."