

May 28, 1947

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CITIZENS ON CHURCH AND STATE

On May 15, there was held in the National Memorial Baptist Church an informal conference of representative Protestant leaders on matters of church and state. The Executive Secretary of the Baptist Joint Conference Committee, who convened the conference, presided. Present were: Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, Editor, The Christian Century; Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary, Federal Council of Churches; Dr. John H. Gardner, Jr., representing the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America; Superintendent William A. Cook, Cincinnati (the man in the center of the Catholic-public school debate); Elmer R. Rogers, representing the Scottish Rite Masons; Doctors Yost and Longacre, national officers of the Seventh-day Adventists; Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, Secretary, National Association of Evangelicals; Dr. Frank Gagliotti, our recent emissary to Italy; Dr. Stanley I. Stuber, representing Northern Baptists; Representatives Joseph R. Bryson and Brooks Hays, who explained the proposed amendment; Dr. W. C. Smalley, Edmonton, Canada, representing Canadian Baptists; the Honorable E. Hilton Jackson, Chairman of the Joint Conference Committee; Dr. Raymond Wilson, representing the Friends; Dr. Thomas Keehn, representing the Congregationalists; Dr. Frederick E. Reissig, representing the Washington Federation of churches; Dr. James A. Crain, Executive Secretary, the Disciples, Indianapolis; Dr. Charles R. Bell, Jr., Chairman, Wisconsin Religious Liberty Association; Dr. Robert E. Van Deusen, representing the Lutherans; Dr. W. O. Lewis, Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance; and a number of local pastors.

While no press releases regarding the Conference were made at the time, it can be stated that the discussion was thorough going, harmonious and determined. It can be announced now that another Conference was agreed upon, to be held at an early date in Washington, at which the following committee on plans and policies will report: Dr. Louie D. Newton, Baptist; Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Methodist; Bishop William Scarlett, Episcopalian; Dr. John A. Mackay, Presbyterian; and Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, Editor of the Christian Century. Another committee to recommend the best legal approach will report at the same meeting.

This means that a united front along broad, constructive lines may be expected to grapple with the American crisis on church and state in concerted action. Despite the recent discouragements, the outlook brightens toward a new day in the life of the Nation.

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NEW JERSEY ACTS

On Thursday night, May 15, at eight o'clock, there was held a great Taxpayers' Rally in Camden, New Jersey. George F. Gray, of Trenton, presided. The purpose of the meeting as stated in thousands of handbills distributed was: "To protest the use of State Tax Money for transporting children to Parochial schools, which use weakens the barrier between Church and State." The address was delivered by E. Hilton Jackson,

prominent Washington Attorney, who argued the recent case coming up from New Jersey before the United States Supreme Court. The upshot of the meeting was to adopt resolutions looking to the repeal of the New Jersey law which the United States Supreme Court sustained. It thus appears that New Jersey is determined to meet the crisis precipitated by the decision in a very effectual manner, setting the example for other states which are afflicted with the same conditions imposed by acts of their legislatures. We quote from a part of Mr. Jackson's splendid address delivered on the occasion:

"The true remedy is that proposed by the people in the state of New Jersey in holding meetings of this character and thus arousing public opinion throughout the state with a view to a change by popular vote in the fundamental law of the state, and to cooperate with like-minded people in the remaining states to the end that they, too, might thus safeguard this eternal principle of liberty. Thus not only by eternal vigilance may we preserve the cherished principles of the First Amendment.

"We also believe that the Supreme Court, when once it is made aware of the anxiety felt by the people of the United States as they contemplate the opening wedge reflected in the Everson Case, will give further consideration in any case arising hereafter, and thus reexamine the question anew and by differentiation or repudiation refuse any longer to be bound by any abortive attempt to amend the Constitution by judicial interpretation. The citizens of New Jersey are to be congratulated in challenging the validity of the resolutions of the Board of Education, although made pursuant to a state statute. The people of the state by such conduct have presented to the Nation a consistent determination to preserve inviolate the liberties of our founding fathers. This state was the first to ratify in November 1789, the first ten Amendments constituting our Bill of Rights and now stands ready to challenge and overthrow by all legitimate means the consequences of a decision which challenges the integrity of our public school system, and raises the question as to whether this Nation can survive two systems of education which would carry us back to the days of our forefathers who left the shores of Europe in order that they might worship here the Almighty according to the dictates of their own conscience without state aid and state control. It is believed that the issue may be summed up in the following language:

"The spirit which would make the state sponsor for any form of religion or worship, and the religion, whether Protestant or Catholic, which would make use of any of the powers or functions of the state to promote its own growth or influence, are un-American; they are not native to the soil; they are inconsistent with the equality of rights and privileges and the freedom of conscience which are essential to the existence of a true democracy."

"According to the Associated Press report, which came from Admiral Byrd's flagship on his recent expedition to the South Pole enroute to Australia, it appeared that prior to leaving this southern most point his plane was piloted over the exact location of the Pole, and that as he passed this pivotal point he dropped a bundle of flags tied together. These flags were not merely American flags, but represented all of the constituent members of the United Nations Organization. As he dropped them he made the historical remark, 'I have tied them together because they belong together'.

"It would seem that the time has arrived when all citizens who would preserve the priceless liberties guaranteed by this great charter of human rights must bind themselves together in a common objective until a government for all the people has been firmly established."

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION AND THE JOINT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Baptist Record, Jackson, Mississippi:

"Dr. Walter P. Binns of Missouri presented the report of the Committee on Public Relations and submitted the following recommendations which were adopted:

1. "That we express our appreciation of the pledge which President Harry S. Truman made to Dr. Louie D. Newton, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and others, that he would recall Myron S. Taylor from the Vatican as soon as the peace treaties are signed. We hold that it was a violation of American policy for this representative ever to have been appointed and there is no valid reason for his continuation in the position he now occupies.

2. "That we register our firm opposition to the passage by the Congress of any bill for Federal Aid to education which includes provision, directly or indirectly, for the application of public tax money to church schools.

3. "That we call to the attention of all Baptist schools, hospitals and other Baptist institutions the danger of accepting grants of money from the government for buildings or equipment or for any other purpose. The acceptance of such grants upon any pretext whatever will weaken the Baptist witness in behalf of the principle of separation of church and state.

"Dr. J. M. Dawson of Washington, executive Secretary of the Joint Conference Committee of American Baptists, was applauded after he spoke vigorously in favor of the committee's report.

"Many people think of religious liberty as something that belonged to the days of Martin Luther, Roger Williams or Thomas Jefferson," he said.

"But recent circumstances have conspired to make religious liberty more alive, more nearly paramount than ever before in human history."

"Dr. Dawson asserted there was a 'deplorable drift toward the union of church and state, resulting in dangerous encroachment on the Constitution and the sinister growth of clerical control over government.' He declared this had come about largely through neglect, and he called for united action now.

"He said the Baptists were not impelled by any narrow, selfish bigoted spirit in their concern for separation of church and state, for they wanted all religious groups to have equal rights.

"The Richmond-Dover Memorial was presented by Dr. Jas. H. Ivey of Richmond, Virginia and enthusiastically adopted."

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The above account is deeply appreciated. It is in line with interpretations given by the Southern Baptist press generally. President Newton's address, various resolutions adopted, and the whole attitude of the more than eight thousand messengers present combined to give strong support to the great objectives of the Joint Conference Committee.

The report to the Convention as presented by Walter Pope Binns, Chairman, was signed by the members of the Southern Committee: J. M. Broughton, E. H. DeGroot, Jr., E. A. Fuller, N. I. Gressett, L. L. Gwaltney, Brooks Hays, T. L. Holcomb, F. H. Jackson, C. O. Johnson, S. F. Lowe, R. P. Naney, L. D. Newton and M. T. Rankin.

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NORTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION AND THE JOINT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The Northern Baptist Convention in Atlantic City, held May 19-24, adopted the following report on Public Relations which was signed by the fifteen members: W. W. Everett, Chairman; W. B. Lippard, Secretary; E. R. Bowler, D. B. Cloward, C. W. Cranford, J. C. Hazen, C. W. Cranford, Gordon Palmer, Gordon Potest, E. H. Pruden, I. M. Ross, L. W. Smith, M. C. Stith, S. E. Stuber, E. B. Willingham and J. R. Wilson.

"The Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations is the only agency in which the Northern Baptist, Southern Baptist and Negro Baptist Conventions are organically related in a cooperative enterprise. Each of the participating Conventions has its own Committee on Public Relations, which together form the Joint Conference Committee whose membership comprises 15 Northern Baptists, 15 Southern Baptists and 7 Negro Baptists.

"Two meetings were held last year, at which various matters of national and international concern to Baptists were considered. On May 26, 1946, the committee achieved its long-cherished hope of opening an office in the national capital and of employing a full-time Executive Secretary. Dr. J. M. Dawson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas, and chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Committee on World Peace, was appointed to this position. It is gratifying to report that he has already proved to be the right man in the right place. Thorough unity of thought and heartiness of cooperation characterize the representatives of the participating conventions, and the committee looks forward to a long period of service and usefulness in the conservation of historic Baptist principles and in representing American Baptists in whatever issues of public interest, political, legislative, social and moral, are of Baptist concern. In the interests of efficiency and prompt attention to issues as they arise the committee in its organization is divided into four sub-committees dealing respectively with world issues, domestic situations, religious liberty and Baptist cooperation. In addition, the committee maintains a Finance Committee and an Executive Committee.

"Among issues to which the committee has given serious attention are Federal aid to public education, the Supreme Court's decision sanctioning the payment from public funds of transportation to Roman Catholic parochial schools, the President's personal ambassadorship to the Vatican, safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms in American legislation and in the activities and functions of the United Nations. Through Dr. Dawson the committee has been in contact with numerous government committees, and a significant publicity service has been rendered in supplying information and news releases to Baptist periodicals and to secular news agencies. In its activities the Joint Conference Committee feels free to proceed in matters where there is common ground and agreement. It acts in behalf of and on specific requests of national boards and agencies in the constituent conventions. It makes no commitments whatsoever that involve organic union or any infringement on the autonomous procedure of Baptists. It recognizes that there are ways in which Baptists can and should act independently of other churches, and that there are also great issues, such as the separation of church and state, upon which all Christians of whatever denomination or creed need to stand united against a peril that is common to all. The committee has established many legitimate contacts with various departments of the federal government, and through Dr. Dawson has been represented at various Congressional hearings the subjects of whose discussions were of concern to Baptists.

"The committee records with sincere regret the death of Dr. R. W. Weaver on January 31, 1947, who more than anyone else had envisaged the necessity and possibility of a Committee on Public Relations that would truly represent all American Baptists. He wrought wisely, diligently and sacrificially to bring about the establishment of this committee, and it is gratifying that he was permitted to live to see it as the culmination of his own long and distinguished career."

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The Convention, through its General Council, made a special order for the consideration of strong resolutions asking for the recall of Myron Taylor from the Vatican, for the omission of government appropriations to church schools and for the establishment of a National Council of Citizens on Church and State. The Executive Secretary of the Joint Conference Committee was invited to address the Convention, which he did in support of the resolutions which were carried unanimously.

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RICHMOND-DOVER MEMORIAL

A paper, doubtless historic, adopted by the Baptist pastors and subsequently by the general pastors association of Richmond, Virginia, is being widely voted unanimous acceptance. Following its most illuminating whereases, it presents the following resolutions and plan of action.

"Therefore, be it resolved, that as American Citizens -

"1. We register our disappointment and alarm over the various legislative enactments both state and federal and the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court which permits the use of public tax funds for the support of schools other than public schools; by thereby infringing upon the separation of church and state and violating the guaranteed principles of our Constitution.

"2. We stand for the enactment of state and national legislation in language so clear that it cannot fail of true interpretation, which will preclude the use of public funds for church purposes or which will contribute to the benefit of any religious group.

"3. We propose that a determined effort be made to extend the principle of religious liberty to all nations of the world through the United Nations, and we earnestly petition the United States Government to champion firmly the rights of religious minorities everywhere in accordance with the Charter and Bill of Rights of the United Nations.

"4. We urge all American citizens to defend and to propagate the principle of religious liberty and separation of church and state and to make clear the issues involved by a constructive plan of cooperative action.

"We recommend this plan of action:

"1. The adoption of the above resolutions.

"2. That these resolutions become the basis for memorializing the other Baptist Associations of this State, the General Association of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention meeting this spring in St. Louis.

"3. That a pattern which will serve as a program of action for our Baptist people be suggested to include:

"(1) Newspaper Display Advertisements -

"a. The Historic Principle of Religious Liberty in America.

"b. The Current Threat to Religious Liberty in America - the need of extended Religious Liberty as a World issue - setting forth its values in undergirding the whole process of democratic culture.

- "c. The Public Schools as the unifying, integrating force and sponsor of Democratic Culture.
- "(2) That pastors be requested to preach simultaneously in cities and associations as early as practicable to be followed on Wednesday evenings by a study of our Baptist history.
- "(3) That the above resolutions upon adoption be sent to the members of the State and National legislative bodies; that pastors and laymen be urged to express their views on the principle of Religious Liberty and to voice their opposition to objectionable features of pending legislation by direct letter to their representatives; and that petitions be prepared for circulation among the congregations of various churches.
- "(4) That a brief and simple pamphlet be written on religious liberty and the issue before us for general distribution.
- "(5) That Dr. J. M. Dawson, Executive Secretary of the American Baptist Public Relations Committee be requested to present the above matters to the Northern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, Inc., and the National Baptist Convention, seeking to secure united purpose and action by Baptists of the United States.
- "(6) That the Dover Association authorize the Committee from the Richmond Baptist Pastors' Conference to act for the Dover Association and to carry through this program in cooperation with other agencies named.

"(Signed by)

"Reuben E. Alley,
"John W. Hughston,
"James H. Ivey, Chairman."

INDISPENSABLE BOOKS ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A FREE AND RESPONSIBLE PRESS: Report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press. University of Chicago Press. 139 pages. \$2.00.

Foreword by President Robert M. Hutchins. A general report on mass communication: newspapers, radio, motion pictures, magazines and books. Financed by Time and The Encyclopaedia Britannica. Confined to the roll of the agencies of mass communications in public affairs. Incomplete but informing.

BEHIND THE SILKEN CURTAIN: A Personal Account of Anglo-American Diplomacy in Palestine and the Middle East, by Bartley C. Crum. New York: Simon and Schuster. 297 pages.

An exceedingly lively story and eye-opening as to the Near East problem.

WHY THEY BEHAVE LIKE RUSSIANS, by John Fischer. New York: Harper and Brothers.

One of the most discussed books of the year. Very readable and regarded as fair.

SHALL: Citizen and Soldier, by William Frye. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. 396 pages.

A careful biography important to possess when the office of Secretary of State is headed by a soldier in peace-making times. Laudatory but authentic.

IN HISTORY, By Sherwood Eddy. New York: Association Press. 285 pages.

A Christian interpretation written by a competent man who summarizes his lifetime study, observation and insights in a single volume.

BEING FIT TO LIVE WITH, by Harry Emerson Fosdick. New York: Harper and Brothers. 219 pages. \$2.00.

Theme: You must not be part of the problem but help to be the answer.

WARTIME CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND POPE PIUS XII. New York: MacMillan. 125 pages. \$2.50.

Offers no light on the Pope's services to the United States during the war years. Fraternal exchange of courteous letters.

POLITICAL RECONSTRUCTION, by Karl Loewstein. New York: MacMillan, 497 pages. \$4.00. Author law professor in Germany until Hitler; later professor of Political Science in Yale; more recently at Amherst, also lecturer at University of California at Berkeley; 1942-1944. Special Assistant to Attorney General in Washington; now legal Adviser of Emergency Committee for Political Defense in Montevideo. Will be regarded by many as significant contribution.

FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY, by F. Ernest Johnson, Editor. New York: Harper and Brothers. 278 pages. \$2.00.

Anything the author writes is of value, but this volume is more mature and most timely.

RUSSIA: A Concise Handbook. Edited by Ernest J. Simmons. Cornell University Press. 494 pages, \$4.50.

This is a factual book, not a set of opinions. It aims to present Russian geography, history, government, law, economics, banking, agriculture, industry, communications by means of railroads, highways and air; medicine and health, education, religion, Soviet philosophy, the language, literature, art, music, drama, architecture and science. The writers are recognized specialists.

AMERICA MUST BE CHRISTIAN, by H. C. Goerner. Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, 141 pages. \$1.25.

The gifted and scholarly professor in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who succeeded Dr. W. O. Carver as head of the Department of Missions, has supplied the churches with an excellent class book for study groups.

MR. STASSEN'S EFFERDICE

The courtesy of addressing the Southern Baptist Convention extended to Harold Stassen, who is an avowed candidate for the Presidency of the United States, imposed certain restraint upon the messengers. The candidate, before speaking at St. Louis, seized the occasion for declaring his disagreement with the Convention for unanimously adopting previous to his arrival resolutions demanding the recall of Myron Taylor from the Vatican and urging no government appropriations to parochial schools. Telegrams protesting Mr. Stassen's strange performance, out of regard for proprieties, were not publicly read. New Orleans Baptist pastors did, however, soon thereafter send him a telegram expressing that his position, in their judgment, was both "inconsistent and unthinkable". He did not lack for similar communications from multitudes over the country.

The Executive Secretary of the Joint Conference immediately wrote him, inclosing the secretary's statement made to the Senate Committee on pending education bills, which included numerous quotations from the great dailies and journals of the country adverse to the recent Supreme Court decision, suggesting that he was perhaps not aware of the pronounced hostile feeling of the public from coast to coast on this matter. The secretary did not accuse him of what the Christian Century declared was an obvious bid for the Catholic bloc of votes, to be expected in the 1948 election. He did suggest that while none might count on a Baptist bloc of votes (for there is no politically-minded hierarchy to over ride the full liberty of each Baptist citizen voter), presidential candidates might possibly awake to discover that the surest way to be defeated is to make a bid for the Catholic bloc! Protestants, and millions beside them numbered among the Masons, educators, Jews and citizens generally, stand strictly against clerical control over government and for the American traditional and Constitutional guarantees of separation of church and state.

Mr. Stassen's long telegram to the Northern Baptist Convention in Atlantic City proved even more offensive, for it attempted to rebuke the Baptists for deploring the recent decision of the Supreme Court, a right long established in law and exercised generally as proved by the overwhelming newspaper editorials. It further evidenced the certainty that if nominated and elected, Mr. Stassen would claim the right to maintain an official representative at the Vatican.

It is not surprising, therefore, that according to him the unhampered privilege of holding to his opinions, the program committee for the Baptist World Congress thought it better that he not attempt to interpret church and state to those attending the Congress in Copenhagen.