

October, 1947

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHURCH AND STATE

Acting as convener, the Executive Secretary of the Joint Conference on Public Relations for the Baptists of the United States, is able to announce that a second Conference on Church and State will be held in the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., at 10 o'clock p. m., Monday, October 13. This is the outgrowth of a widely representative gathering of national leaders held in Washington, May 15. At that meeting, acting with a rare unanimity, two committees were appointed: one on plans and policies and the other on a legal approach. The committees are composed of some of the most eminent men in the nation and now stand ready to report. Pledged to attendance are notables from every Protestant denomination, from educational and other significant groups. Out of this second conference may be expected to issue a movement confined to this single issue of church and state which is likely to arouse the country from one end of it to the other in behalf of conserving the American doctrine of separation of church and state with its corollary of religious liberty.

\* \* \*

BAPTIST WORLD CRUSADE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Climaxing the Seventh Baptist World Congress held in Copenhagen, Denmark July 30 - August 3, was the adoption of a Manifesto on Religious Liberty. This was the preliminary report of a Commission of Seven appointed by the Congress to conduct a World Crusade on Religious Liberty. The Commission consists of Dr. Stanley I. Stuber, New York; Dr. M. E. Wood, Shreveport, Louisiana; Dr. M. Ronchi, Rome, Italy; Dr. A. T. Ohrn, Oslo, Sweden; Dr. Bredahl Petersen, Copenhagen, Denmark; Dr. T. G. Dunning, London; and Dr. J. M. Dawson, Washington, D. C.

The paper proclaiming the principles on which the Crusade will be waged was a ringing one. The plan will be to make an early survey of the exact status of religious liberty in every land, proceed to such remedial approaches as may be possible, and seek to educate the public everywhere in the true principles of religious liberty.

\* \* \*

JOINT COMMITTEE AND THE BAPTIST WORLD CONGRESS

The Baptist World Congress commended the attendance of many members of the Joint Conference on Public Relations for the Baptists of the United States. Present were Dr. B. Lippard, Dr. J. C. Hazen and Dr. Stanley I. Stuber of New York; Dr. Louis D. Newton, Atlanta, Georgia; Dr. C. Oscar Johnson, St. Louis; the Honorable Brooks Hays, Little Rock, Arkansas; Dr. M. T. Rankin, Richmond, Virginia; Dr. E. H. Pruden, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Ellis A. Fuller, Louisville, Kentucky; and the Executive Secretary, Dr. M. Dawson, Washington, D. C.

Dr. C. Oscar Johnson was chosen President of the Alliance.

Several of those named above hold membership on the Baptist World Alliance Executive Committee. All mentioned made addresses. The Committee was officially represented by the Executive Secretary, who spoke on "The United Nations From The Christian Viewpoint", also preached to the vast audience on musical evening. Following the Congress he made a tour of Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and England gaining insight and undergoing experiences which it is believed will be of much value in the conduct of the work.

\* \* \*

#### BAPTISTS, THE CATHOLICS AND COMMUNISM

One of the most disturbing factors in the present deplorable tension between the United States and Russia is the Roman Catholic campaign against Communism. The intensification grows out of the functioning partnership between the United States and the Vatican established through the maintenance of Myron C. Taylor as the personal representative of the President to the Pope.

In opposition to atheism and the materialistic philosophy of Communism, Baptists and Protestants generally stand united with Catholics. In another important respect, however, they are not together. Let us illustrate: The Executive of Southern Baptists, Dr. Duke McCall of Nashville, Tennessee put it this way: Baptists oppose the Communists because the Communists deny religious liberty; Catholics oppose the Communists because the Russian Government denies clerical control and church partnership. The Baptists do not believe in partnership of the church with the state. They are, therefore, strongly set against President Truman's maintaining an official representative at the Vatican, which they think is contrary to the American Doctrine of separation of church and state, and is a functioning partnership with a church." Now that partnership has been further implemented. The President and the Pope during the summer exchanged letters which pledged each other support in the noble endeavor of restoring moral order to the world. As to be expected, Dr. McCall, who was in Rome at the time, reacted most unfavorably to what seemed to him to emphasize this functioning partnership between State and Church. He said: "Baptists refuse to be pushed into the camp of totalitarian Roman Catholicism as the only alternative to Communism." With this attitude fourteen million Baptists in the United States, North and South, with an infinitesimal exception, would undoubtedly heartily agree. In fact, it is plain the Protestants in general fear the Pope will provoke war with Russia on the issue of Russia's denial of church partnership, and thus involve millions of anti-Communists in the dire struggle who have long since repudiated clericalism in government.

#### "THIS FREEDOM NOW"

The Executive Secretary cut short his tour of Europe following the Baptist World Congress in Copenhagen in order to hasten home for the long-attempted completion of a book manuscript on the subject of religious liberty. The title is This Freedom Now. It has been accepted for publication and should be off the press before January 1, 1948. The book is one for which there is a clamorous demand. While we have historical books and academic discussions, there appears to be no existing book presenting the matter as a living, paramount issue. The book has been written frankly from the standpoint of meeting an urgent present need. It will be invaluable as an interpretation of the factual backgrounds of the great issue of church and state with which this office is

uch concerned, and will be therefore an instrument for conducting the work. This notice is intended to be an explanation of an effort at service - and not a sales talk - but some idea of the scope and nature of This Freedom Now may be gained from the subjects of its eleven chapters which are as follows: I--A Living, Paramount Issue. II--The Dread Power of the Totalitarian State. III--Bondage Under An Old Yoke - Union of Church and State. IV--Overcoming The National Drift. V--Can National Unity Survive? VI--Is The Foundation Secure? VII--Toleration Is Not Enough. VIII--Can We Risk Free Speech? IX--Heroic Witnesses In Crucial Countries. X--What Hope of Universal Acceptance? XI--The Real Road to Freedom.

\* \* \*

#### COMPILATION OF CHURCH RESOLUTIONS

During the summer the Joint Conference office compiled the resolutions of the various religious bodies in America which have acted on matters pertaining to church and state. The impressive things about this volume are: (1) its size, making a considerable book; (2) its agreement, showing that all non-Catholic denominations are in perfect harmony in respect to this question. Below we give a brief summary.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in Pittsburgh in November, 1944 offered a notable statement concerning the situation. It began by observing that separation of church and state had been the great bulwark of religious freedom in America, creating a climate favorable to good will and cooperation among Protestants, Roman Catholics and Jews. This fact imposes the obligation upon every beneficiary to maintain the principle zealously. For this reason the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican should be firmly opposed as something which is contrary to the spirit of the American tradition, and something which encourages union of church and state, because it actually sets up diplomatic relations with the Roman Catholic Church. In taking such a stand the Federal Council disavowed any effort whatsoever to speak against Roman Catholicism as a form of Christian faith and worship. On the contrary it expressed the desire to seek every possible opportunity to cooperate with Roman Catholics, as Christian brethren, in common efforts for the welfare of mankind. It did find it necessary to make a sharp distinction between the Catholic religion and the political power exercised by the Roman Catholic hierarchy for its own institutional ends.

The various denominations, each upon its own initiative, and oftentimes regrettably without thoughtful regard for the value of concerted action, have successively voiced their unequivocal disapproval of the national drift and sounded the call for correction of it.

Northern Baptists, in a lengthy resolution, specifically condemned the Vatican appointment and the 1947 Supreme Court decision which sustained the New Jersey legislature in authorizing public tax money for the transportation of Catholic children to parochial schools. At the same time Southern Baptists were reiterating their oft-expressed demand that Myron C. Taylor be recalled from the Vatican and that pending education bills in Congress offering federal aid to church schools, be amended so as to exclude such sectarian aid. Former Governor Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota, a fellow Baptist and a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, upon being invited to address Southern Baptists meeting in St. Louis, took issue with his Southern brethren, demurring at their repeated demands; and he later sent a six hundred word telegram to his Northern Baptist brethren meeting in Atlantic City, even protesting their right critically to review the five-to-four decision of the United States Supreme Court in the New Jersey bus case. Plainly he did not convert any in either Convention to his viewpoint. Stoutly dissenting from him, E. Hilton Jackson, Chairman of the Joint

Conference Committee on Public Relations for the Baptists of the United States, North and South, white and colored, representing a total of more than fourteen million members, answered the candidate's amazing arguments against any one's reviewing the Supreme Court decision adversely. His demolishing article which appeared first in The Christian Century was afterward widely copied. The Baptists felt peculiarly aggrieved that one of their number in seeking the highest office in the land should apparently make a studied bid for the Catholic bloc of votes. It could only backfire. Subsequently Mr. Stassen publicly admitted to members of his party that his deliverances injured his campaign.

Congregational-Christian utterance has been restrained, having sensed the inadvisability of reviving any semblance of former movements in America which could with any degree of justice be characterized as bigoted or intolerant. These churches, however, felt they must make emphatic protest against an envoy at the Vatican and were in no wise to be appeased with the promise of early recall. "If the President is disposed to honor the national ideal, Mr. Taylor will not continue one day longer in Rome", they proclaimed on the housetops. They found it difficult to believe that the Roman Catholics who had been the recipients of so many considerations at the hands of America should even wish to be accorded a singled-out, privileged position among the churches. While standing for federal aid to the public schools, they insisted that under no guise must public tax aid be extended to church schools.

Disciples of Christ, in their action on this matter, stated the case most admirably "We place on record our unalterable opposition to any policy of practice by the federal government or its executive officers which, whether formally or informally, creates a bond of connection between the government of the United States and any church and thus has the effect of enhancing prestige and power of one church to the disparagement of all others."

A solemn word of warning came from the National Association of Evangelicals, meeting in Omaha in April, 1947: "This United States - Vatican relationship is already beginning to fan the flames of intolerance and bigotry and will inevitably result in the introduction of the religious issue into American politics....We urgently request that the President terminate forthwith this intolerable unAmerican relationship."

The Evangelical and Reformed Church could not content itself with an action on the part of the General Synod; but welcomed the widespread response of its local congregations in unequivocal indorsement of the official attitude of their Church as a whole.

The Evangelical United Brethren, now one of the largest church groups in the entire country, emphatically drew back from the tendency of America to drift into acceptance of the age-old policy of union of church and state as advocated by the Catholics.

The Methodist Bishop's Council in May 1947 arrested the attention of readers of the daily press throughout the country with their vigorous manifesto. "We are aware of the denials of religious liberty in many countries where government, at the insistence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, has passed legislation seriously limiting the freedom of other religious bodies." The bishops cited the lamentable situation in Argentina where the law now requires the teaching of the Roman Catholic religion even in Protestant Churches. "Are our Roman Catholic brothers, with whom we desire the friendliest of relations and for whom we demand the same religious liberty we insist upon for ourselves, to push their demands so far that we must, in self-defense, take steps that will protect our liberties and those of our children?"

The conservative Presbyterians found following their 1947 declaration, consistent with their utterances since 1788 on this subject, that the requests for copies were so numerous as that the Stated Clerk could not supply them.

The Protestant Episcopal Church, through its National Council, gave out advice to its bishops, chairmen of diocesan departments of social relations, officers of women's auxiliaries, other leaders, and all committee members that the Church reaffirmed its support of the American principle of separation of church and state and opposition to the application of public funds for sectarian purposes, as bus fares and text books.

No more active churchmen in the interest of religious liberty live in America than the Seventh Day Adventists. They pray for it here and for it in all lands, and they give labor incessantly for it. Their letter to the President urging the recall of Myron Taylor as personal representative is a model of courtesy, logic and consistency.

Perhaps the most extended and ardent contemporary expression on this subject was supplied by the American Unitarian Association in its 121st annual meeting. For convincing exposition of the principle of separation of church and state, with freedom of religion, it is unsurpassed. The resolution adopted in the 122nd session deals more specifically with tax support of non-public schools but is just as unequivocal.

As would be expected the same sentiments are shared by and fully expressed by the General Assembly of the Universalist Church in America. It calls the Vatican ambassadorship an "extra-legal office."

The Lutheran Pastoral Conference of Greater Cincinnati (Missouri Synod) in a published statement June 9, 1947 anent the shameful Catholic procedure in the North College Hill dispute in that city declared: "Almost from its beginning in this country the Lutheran Church has maintained parochial schools. Never at any time has it asked for either federal, state or county aid in maintaining these schools. The granting of such funds is, in our estimation, a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States."

\* \* \*

#### CASES PENDING

The Supreme Court of the United States has been requested to affirm that a public school must pay for the transportation of pupils to Roman Catholic parochial schools - the growing out of the refusal of the Township School Board of Kennett Square, Penna., to transport a daughter of Paul Connell to a parochial school.

The United States Supreme Court is called upon to decide whether religious teaching may be conducted in the Gary public schools by teachers employed by the churches.

New Jersey's constitutional Convention by a vote of 50 to 28 incorporated a clause permitting the State Legislature to appropriate public funds for the transportation of children to non-public schools - will it be ratified?

Still pending in Congress, to be dealt with on reassembling, are the various educational bills providing for federal aid to the public schools, with extension of aid under certain conditions to church schools - notably the Taft-Aiken Bill, S. 472.

\* \* \*

#### OFFICE ACTIVITIES

In response to commendations made by us we have received notice from the Chief of Supplies of the War Department that several surplus properties have been allocated to Baptist Churches and institutions on basis of regular purchase price conditions.

The Executive Secretary will address annual state meetings of the Baptists in New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and elsewhere, but he has had to decline many invitations in order to meet the pressing duties of the office.

A proper contact with various interests, as the United Nations and significant national movements heading up in Washington committees, necessitates the employment of many hours on the part of the Executive in addition to regular routines in this office. These need not be enumerated here but it will be understood that the denomination is entitled to share, and is obligated to share in suitable ways with such.

\* \* \*

WELCOME, BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE HEADQUARTERS

On October 8, following the meeting of the Joint Conference Committee on the preceding day, the Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance will convene in Washington. On the evening of the 7th, a mass meeting in welcome of the establishment of headquarters of the World Alliance in Washington, D. C. will be held in the First Baptist Church at which Dr. C. Oscar Johnson, the new President of the Alliance will speak along with others. The President of the United States and all Baptist members of Congress have been invited to attend.

The removal of headquarters from London to Washington was decided by the 7th Baptist World Congress meeting in Copenhagen July 30 - August 3. An auxiliary office will be conducted in London, an arrangement quite necessary because of the Baptist participation in relief in stricken European countries. There is hardly any demurrage on the part of Europeans to this new set-up since it appears appropriate for the headquarters to be in America where the officers now reside and in the country which must give so much of leadership to the rest of the world, particularly in a country where the majority of the Baptists reside. There will never be, however, any lack of appreciation of the great service rendered by London Baptists where from the beginning the office has been conducted. It is hoped also that the Golden Anniversary of the Baptist World Alliance will be the Ninth Baptist Congress scheduled to be held in London. Meanwhile, American Baptists will strive to prove worthy of the honor which has come to them in the possession of the office in Washington.

\* \* \*