

MAY 4, 1949

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Following in the footsteps of American Baptist precedent in the establishment of foundations for the reception, conservation and application of funds in the interest of Baptist churches, institutions and causes, the District of Columbia Baptists have set up a foundation which starts off with a creditable sum of money, invested with encouraging results. The charter is similar to charters of other Baptist foundations now in successful operation elsewhere. The board consists of well known business men and ministers whose ability engenders confidence.

Visiting leaders from North and South have repeatedly urged that no other center in the world presents a more commanding challenge than our National Capital, which is now, doubtless, the most influential city on the earth. Baptists are sadly lacking in adequate equipment for accepting the ministries which open to them. Of the thirty-five white Baptist churches in the District proper, nearly all are in acute need of enlarged facilities. Many of them find it necessary to conduct two morning worship services to accommodate the throngs. After years of struggle the Chevy Chase Church recently dedicated a handsome new building in a section of the city where such a building was imperatively required. The First Church, where President Truman worships, a downtown church admirably located, is heroically undertaking to replace its old, limited meeting house with a million-dollar structure, if at all possible. But each one of the thirty-five might offer a most impressive statement of need. To use but one additional example: the Luther Rice Memorial Church has a large and beautiful half block in one of the most promising parts of Washington, but is severely handicapped with a small temporary building in which two morning worship services overflow.

In respect to institutions, it will always be a source of sorrow to Baptists that due to lack of funds which might have saved it, the great George Washington University was lost to Baptists. Our only existent institutions are the Baptist Home For Aged Women and The Baptist Home for Children, both badly in need of enlargement. The acquisition of the Baptist Building has, after one year of occupancy, thoroughly demonstrated the immense value of such a building to denominational prestige. Roman Catholics have not been tardy in seeing this and have accordingly concentrated their largest collection of physical properties in Washington to be found anywhere in America. Baptists wishing to make a permanent investment where it will count most for the Kingdom of God could hardly overlook Washington, D. C.

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SEE INSIDE PAGES. Federal Aid to Education; Roger Williams, Founder of Full Religious Freedom in America; Veterans Hospitals; Atlantic Pact; "Salvation Conditioned on Ignorance"; the DP Bill, and other important subjects discussed.

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WEAVER MEMORIAL IN BAPTIST BUILDING

On June 10, the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, the First Baptist Church of Washington and the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations will unite in unveiling a bronze plaque in the Baptist Building as a memorial to the late Rufus Washington Weaver. This will be in recognition of his secretaryship of the Convention, his pastorate of the Church, and his part in establishing the Joint Conference Committee by the four national Conventions in the United States. Besides an excellent profile of Dr. Weaver, the plaque will have the following inscription in quite legible letters:

RUFUS WASHINGTON WEAVER

1869

1947

PROFOUND PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL FOR HALF A CENTURY - AGGRESSIVE LEADER IN THE CAUSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - PRESIDENT OF MERCER UNIVERSITY - FRIEND OF THE STRUGGLING STUDENT - EMINENT SCHOLAR AND AUTHOR IN THE FIELD OF COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS - INDOMITABLE ADVOCATE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE - ARCHITECT AND DEVOTED NURTURER OF THE JOINT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE OF AMERICAN BAPTISTS - INDEFATIGABLE IN HIS EFFORT TO ESTABLISH THIS CENTER FOR LOCAL AND WORLD BAPTISTS - CHRISTIAN STATESMAN AND WORLD CITIZEN.-)

HE TRANSLATED LOVE INTO LIFE.

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THE SITUATION IN REGARD TO FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Pending in Congress are two bills, S. 246, the offering of Senator Thomas of Utah, and H.R. 1570, similar to the Senate bill. Believers in separation of church and state have felt solicitude lest these bills, if enacted, would by the omission of the word "public" in a critical section, afford a loophole for sectarian institutions to gain access to tax funds. Accordingly considerable effort--we think, well advised--has been made by non-Catholics to have these bills so amended that neither directly nor indirectly there will be any application of public tax monies to the support of private or sectarian schools.

Now comes information that Roman Catholics, believing that the government should apply tax funds to Catholic schools as well as to public schools, feel that "the current trend in Federal aid legislation assumes that non-public educational institutions have no right to support." The Roman Catholic bishops are, therefore, urging their obedient followers to flood Senators and Representatives with appeals to vote for the McMahon bill, S. 496, which provides for a division of the Federal aid funds between public and parochial schools, asking them at the same time to oppose the Thomas Bill which in all places save one stipulates that the aid must be to public schools. Along with the Catholic churches, other organizations like the Catholic War Veterans and the National Catholic Educational Association are pleading for the McMahon measure.

In this juncture it appears that the prospects for sustaining the American principle of separation of church and state are somewhat brighter than last year, since there are reasons to believe that the Administration leaders and the National Education Association would welcome a strict limitation of Federal aid to public schools. But it is not a time to relax effort in this direction; rather it is the occasion for more insistent communications to Congress.

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ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY IN VETERANS HOSPITALS

Listening to Dr. Paul Magnuson, Chief Medical Director of the Veterans Administration, who addressed a group representing national organizations in the home of Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, the Executive Director of Baptist Public Relations, felt impressed with a proposal made by him. It was that the President appoint a Commission, of which competent non-office holders might also be members, who would recommend locations for new hospitals. In the past powerful pressures exerted on politicians by local chambers of commerce have resulted in huge wastes of money and most unfortunate inadequate service to those for whom the Nation must care.

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CONCERNING THE ATLANTIC PACT AND ARMS ACCOMPANIMENT

The National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, held in Cleveland, March 8-11, did not pass upon these matters, though it did set up some "guiding principles" for the consideration of all. Since then Dr. Walter Van Kirk has publicly expressed the opinion that churches generally are not apt to take a position pro or con. The Northern Baptist Council on Social Progress, in the absence of a mandate from its Convention, sent out a questionnaire which is inconclusive. It occurs to the Joint Conference Committee's Executive Director that the churches can properly urge the Congress to afford ample time for thorough discussion of every aspect of the Pact and the Arms commitments before ratifying or making appropriation.

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UNITED NATIONS HONORS RALPH J. BUNCHE

The American Association for the United Nations has invited the Executive Director of the Joint Conference Committee to share in a dinner in honor of the Honorable Ralph J. Bunche on Monday evening, May 9, at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, New York City. The purpose of the dinner is to award a citation to Dr. Bunche for distinguished and unselfish service in advancing the ideals of the United Nations in connection with Israeli and the Arabian nations. The program will consist of addresses by President Evatt, Secretary Trygve Lie and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United Nations and others. Doubtless the entire country agrees in the appreciation of the great achievements of this distinguished negro. This event in New York is only one of many. Another such will be the award of the Spingarn medal by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the NAACP 40th Annual Convention to be held in Los Angeles, California, July 17.

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ANNALS OF ROGER WILLIAMS, FATHER OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

(Recognizing the marked public interest in the recent discussion which arose over Maryland's celebration of the so-called Toleration Act of 1649, the following is believed to be desirable as a statement of fact concerning the origin of religious liberty in America.)

February 5, 1631. Roger Williams and his wife Mary arrived at Nantasket, near Boston harbor, on the good ship Lyon. Friend of John Winthrop, Jr., who was the son of Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay Colony, trained in jurisprudence under Sir Edward Coke in England, a profound student of history, theology and philosophy in

Cambridge University, chaplain to leaders of Oliver Cromwell's movement, Roger Williams came to America a pronounced Separatist--advocate of the separation of the Massachusetts Church from the Church of England and of complete separation of church and state.

October 9, 1635. On this day at Newton Roger Williams was sentenced to banishment from the Massachusetts Bay Colony because of his advocacy of the principles which he had espoused. He was sick in body and worn out in mind by the long disputes and much travels to and from Boston and Salem. His flight was delayed because of an effort to induce him to recant, also by the confinement of his wife in the birth of their second daughter whom they named Freeborne in protest against the persecution of the Bay Theocracy and in honor of the freedom for which they suffered. The decree of banishment was never revoked. In bitter cold and a driving snow storm in mid-winter, he set out resolutely toward Narragansett Bay and worked his way through deep snow into the intricate wilds of the forest.

June 16, 1636. On this day the Providence plantation was established with absolute freedom of conscience from civil control. According to Ernst in the best and most authentic biography of Williams (Roger Williams by James Ernst, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1932), "Providence was the first modern government from which religious power was eliminated. Separation of church and state and liberty of conscience now became a fact. Williams denied the civil state a right to inquire into the beliefs of its citizens. He held the people ought not to be out off from civil society because their consciences dare not bow down to any worship but what they believe."

March, 1639. Williams was immersed by Ezekiel Holliman, after which he immersed Holliman and eleven others, founding at Providence the first Baptist church in the New World. It is to be regretted that Williams later doubted the validity of this baptism and withdrew from the church, but at no time did he ever repudiate the principles of the Baptists. (See A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States by Albert Henry Newman, D.D., LL.D., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1915).

March 14, 1644. On this date the British Parliament granted a free charter of civil incorporation and government to the Providence plantations, the first free charter of government issued to any English colony--those to Massachusetts, Connecticut and Plymouth were trading company patents, and that to Lord Baltimore was a proprietary patent. "By the Providence experiment he had welded these diverse elements into a modern civil society based on a social compact or written constitution, granting religious liberty and liberty of conscience, writing, printing, speech, debate, dispute, and association, and incorporating the principles of separation of church and state, people's sovereignty and the rights of man." (Ernst, p. 220).

May 18, 1647. On this day the General Assembly at Portsmouth, in what amounted to a constitutional convention, adopted the charter and organized a civil government of the Commonwealth. "In the constitution adopted we have prefigured the future constitutions of the United States and the several states, by its political principles, its preamble, bill of rights, and body of civil and criminal laws." (Ernst, p. 274).

July 8, 1663. On this day a new charter was granted to Providence plantations by King Charles II under which the actual experiment in liberty and democracy was allowed to continue unmolested with continuation of the civil laws, courts of justice and government "as have been heretofore given, used, and accustomed". A royal act without precedent.

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In the history of democratic thought and the rights of man, Roger Williams will stand forever as the founder of full religious liberty for all without regard to any particular belief or any belief, with complete regard for the rights of conscience. A monument at Geneva honors him with Luther, Calvin and Knox as one of the five leading men in the Reformation era. Two American historians, Channing and Bancroft, rank him with the world movers of history, and chief among the New English colonists of the Seventeenth Century. His political program which called for absolute liberty of conscience, separation of church and state and people's sovereignty was the original pattern for the American system.

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SALVATION CONDITIONED ON IGNORANCE?

The country has been somewhat stirred by the controversy in Boston between a priest in charge of St. Benedict's Center and three ousted teachers of Boston College on the one hand and Archbishop Cushing on the other. The priest and the teachers had accused Boston College, a well known Catholic institution, of heresy because it taught under certain conditions one might be saved outside the Catholic Church. The ousted teachers and silenced priest submitted a sixty-seven page book entitled, "From the Housetops" in which they showed the historic teaching of the Roman Catholic Church unequivocally asserted that no one could be saved outside of membership in the Catholic Church. The open scandal was moderated by the statement of the following allocution by Pope Pius IX given December 9, 1854:

We must, indeed, hold on faith that no one can be saved outside the Roman Apostolic Church, that she is the only ark of salvation, that whoever shall not have entered her will perish in the flood; but we must equally hold for certain that those who labor under ignorance of the true religion, if such ignorance be invincible, are not held guilty before the eyes of the Lord.

With this allocution the revised Catholic catechism, released somewhat after the beginning of the controversy got into the public prints, agrees. It is a relief to find out that one can possibly be saved outside the Catholic Church, though it is a bit distressing to discover, according to these "authorities", that such salvation is conditioned upon ignorance! How pitiable is the condition of all non-Catholic Christians! Relief to non-Catholics in this dire situation has come as the result of atmospheric influence on the Roman Catholic Church in America. In other countries of the world no such concession has been made.

A somewhat parallel situation is seen in the Roman Catholic doctrine in respect to religious liberty which reads:

If the country is distinctively Catholic...the civil rulers can consider themselves justified in restricting or preventing denominational activities hostile to the Catholic religion....In a country like the United States, where the religious affiliations of the citizens are so numerous and so diverse...complete equality for all religions is undoubtedly the most commendable policy. (Freedom of Worship, The Catholic Position, by Francis J. Connell, approved by Archbishop Spellman, New York, The Paulist Press, 1944.)

But constitutions can be changed, and non-(Roman) Catholic sects may decline to such a point that the political proscription of them may become feasible and expedient. What protection would they then have against a

(Roman) Catholic State? The latter could logically tolerate only such religious activities as were confined to the members of the dissenting group. It could not permit them to carry on general propaganda nor accord their organization certain privileges that had formerly been extended to all religious corporations. - Comment on Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, Immortale Dei, by John A. Ryan, writing under imprimatur of Cardinal Hayes, quoted in The Roman Catholic Church in the Modern State, Faith Press, Ltd., London, pages 131-133.

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IMMINENT PASSAGE OF DISPLACED PERSONS BILL

On February 28, 1949, the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations addressed Congressman Francis E. Walter, Chairman, Sub-Committee Number One, House Judiciary Committee, as follows:

The broad general resolutions approving admission of 400,000 displaced persons in four years passed by the Southern Baptist Convention on May 4th, 1947, and the Northern Baptist Convention on May 23rd of the same year, have since then been re-affirmed and amplified by several more recent and more detailed statements, urging amendment to the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. The Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations for the Baptists of the United States at its meeting, February 8, 1949, voted unanimously to indorse the Senate Bill 311 and the Bill in the House offered by Congressman Celler, H. R. 1344. We understand the general purpose of the amendments is to simplify procedures, to lengthen the life of the measure to enable 400,000 to be admitted in four years, and to remove the several clauses which discriminated against certain groups.

From the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons the Baptist Office on Public Relations has received a letter expressing -

...thanks for your good help in making the House Judiciary Committee aware of the dangers inherent in the "groups and elements" provision which was under discussion in connection with the Celler bill on displaced persons. You will, I think, be pleased to hear as we were that the final bill which came out of the Committee did not have the "groups and elements" provision in it. The fact that the "groups and elements" provision, which gave undue preference to the recent political refugees at the expense of the long-term displaced persons was finally voted down by the Committee, is due I think in large measure to the strong opposition to this proposal which was voiced by the various Protestant denominations who are concerned with resettlement of displaced persons. The bill approved by the House Subcommittee on Immigration will probably go to the full House Judiciary Committee for final review and should be voted on by the House as a whole within the next few weeks.

Probable provisions of the Celler Bill H. R. 1344 as modified by House Subcommittee on Immigration will include:

1. Date of eligibility for displaced persons January 1, 1949;
2. The number increased from 205,000 to 300,000 with the President

permitted to admit another 100,000 if he deems it in the best interests of the United States and necessary for final liquidation of the DP problem;

3. No groups and elements formula is contained in the bill. The Celler Bill's provision against discrimination in favor of or against a DP because of his race, religion or national origin is retained. Supplementing this the DP Commission is instructed to "insure that equal opportunity for resettlement under the terms of this Act shall be afforded to eligible DPs of all races, religions and national origins. The extent to which the Commission has accomplished the foregoing objectives shall be specifically indicated in the semi-annual report of the Commission."

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IMPORTANT BOOKS RECOMMENDED

CAN PROTESTANTISM WIN AMERICA? By Charles Clayton Morrison. Harper & Brothers, New York, clothbound, 219 pages, \$2.50.

Probably no one in America is better equipped than Charles Clayton Morrison to answer the question raised in this title. Knowing well his ecumenical passion, the reader would expect to hear pessimistic notes. However, his voice is not continuously gloomy for he does indicate certain hopeful signs. His contribution is a real one and should be widely welcomed.

OUR PROTESTANT HERITAGE. By Members of the Faculty of Union Theological Seminary. John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, clothbound, 208 pages.

This book is written by the members of the faculty of the Presbyterian Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. Like all symposiums it lacks something of unity, but the seven chapters are carefully written and are thoroughly worthwhile.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. By Cecil Northcott. The MacMillan Company, New York, clothbound, 124 pages, \$2.00.

This little book constitutes a valuable statement concerning the meaning of religious liberty, its effects in history, and a most helpful survey as to the extent to which religious liberty prevails throughout the world. The Congregational author makes due acknowledgement of the Baptist passion for this principle.

STALIN & CO. By Walter Duranty. William Sloane Associates, New York, clothbound, 258 pages, \$3.00.

It will doubtless be agreed that Mr. Duranty, Dean of Russian correspondents, long time representative of the New York Times in Moscow, is the best qualified man to give a factual account of Communistic Russia. He disavows any effort to pass upon the moral aspects of any of the politics, personalities or issues, but to report them faithfully. He dispels a popular notion that the Politburo and not Stalin controls Russia. In our judgment this is the most reliable current book on the subject.

THE AMERICAN POLITICAL TRADITION. By Richard Hofstadter. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, clothbound, 378 pages, \$4.00.

This commanding book contains essential information for anyone who would understand America--who and what made it. One should feel especially grateful for the account of the founding fathers and of such great leaders as Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Abraham Lincoln, Wendell Phillips, Grover Cleveland, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

REPORT ON AMERICA. By Robert Payne. The John Day Company, New York, clothbound, 270 pages, \$3.50.

Robert Payne presents a view of the American scene from the standpoint of an Englishman. His detached objective view is much needed to accompany those that readers obtain from writings of native sons. We commend this book.

AMERICAN ARGUMENT. By Pearl S. Buck with Eslanda Goode Robeson. The John Day Company, New York, clothbound, 206 pages, \$3.00.

Any book by Pearl Buck is apt to be widely read. In this instance she has associated with her Eslanda Goode Robeson, wife of the singer, Paul Robeson, an author who has assisted in sufficient researches to enable one to grasp a proper understanding of our country and its people. If one is particularly interested to know how the United States looks to women as mothers, as Americans, as world citizens, and above all as human beings, he should read this book.

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