

April - May, 1950

THE RECORD OF A YEAR

Annual Report To The Conventions

As a constituent of the Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations, established by the Southern Baptist Convention, The Northern Baptist Convention, and the two National Negro Baptist Conventions, your Convention Committee submits this report for the year past.

All should keep in mind that the Joint Conference Committee, as shown in Article II of its Constitution, is instructed to act for the Baptists of the United States when the interests or rights of the cooperating Conventions are involved, and especially to confer or negotiate with our own government or with any other government where Baptist principles are endangered. This action applies particularly to the maintenance of the principle of separation of church and state in our land and to the insistence on religious liberty for all groups and individuals everywhere in the world.

The Joint Conference Committee is composed of some forty members, chosen from the chief officers of the Conventions, and others from the ranks selected for their fitness. The Committee seeks through its headquarters in the Baptist Building in Washington, D. C., of which Dr. J. M. Dawson is the Executive Director, to carry out these voted provisions and any mandates laid upon it by the four participating Conventions. In its two semi-annual sessions it attempts to offer a fairly representative Baptist judgment on vital aspects of public affairs in the findings of sub-committees working under the head of Domestic Situations, World Issues, Religious Liberty and Baptist Cooperation.

During the past eventful year this Committee has dealt with such matters as the limitation of Federal-aid to public schools only, inquiry into Federal-aid to denominational hospitals, support of the prohibition of interstate advertising of intoxicating liquors, liberalized provisions for the admission of displaced persons into the United States, applications of Baptist churches to establish F. M. radio broadcasting stations, and adoption of the United Nations International Bill of Human Rights. In behalf of the four supporting Conventions, and groups or individuals endorsed by them, the Committee has made many legitimate contacts with the Government in reference to chaplains, surplus property, passports, problems in Germany, church institutions, missionary boards, the protection of holy places in Palestine, and emphatically regarding the discontinuance of the President's envoy to the Vatican.

A most important phase of the Committee's work is giving pertinent information to our own people and others concerning the Baptist position in respect to public matters. The Executive Director publishes a monthly newsletter under the name of REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL, he writes much for the press, and has produced another book entitled The Liberation of Life, soon to appear. His volume, Separate Church and State Now, written upon request, is achieving a gratifying circulation. Perhaps a service as important as any rendered is the extensive counselling on questions committed to the office, that afforded in letters and briefs in answer to correspondents by no means confined to Baptists, and personal participation in numerous conferences together with delivery of sermons and

addresses throughout the country. While the Joint Conference Committee has no organic connection with Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State, several of its members serve on the official personnel of POAU out of recognition of the fact that maintenance of separation of church and state cannot be had without the cooperation of all who hold to that principle.

Your Committee rejoices that in recognition of the services of the Public Relations Office, both the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and the General Council of the Northern Baptist Convention have recommended some increase in the allotment of funds for its work. The Joint Conference would also call attention to the recommendation of both Conventions' boards that the name be changed from Public Relations to Public Affairs, a designation which more correctly defines the activities of this office.

FEDERAL AID TO DENOMINATIONAL HOSPITALS

At the semi-annual session on March 14, the following was adopted with one dissenting vote:

"It is the opinion of this Committee that a grant, or gift, or allocation of tax funds by a state, or by the federal government, to a hospital, owned, controlled and operated by a sectarian religious organization, as contemplated or permitted by the Hill-Burton Act, is a violation of the provisions of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

"The decisions of the United States Supreme Court in the Everson and McCullum cases state that 'no tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion.' The denominationally-owned hospitals are operated for the double purpose of ministering to the sick and forwarding the purposes and programs of the denominations. They are generally recognized as very effective agencies for commending the Christian faith as interpreted by the supporting churches."

NOTE: Up to March 15, 1950, 76 of the 99 government grants to denominational hospitals have been to Roman Catholic institutions. Of the total sum granted to these hospitals \$43,264,685, the Catholics have received \$35,925,248. Only three Baptist out of some thirty Baptist hospitals in the United States have received aid, and two of these have changed status from Baptist ownership.

AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VATICAN

The Joint Conference Committee on Public Relations, officially constituted by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Northern Baptist Convention, the National Baptist Convention, and the National Baptist Convention, Inc., representing a total constituency of sixteen million Baptists throughout the United States, in session in Washington, D. C. Tuesday, March 14, 1950, hereby unanimously:

(1) RECORDS ITS SATISFACTION at the acceptance by the President of the United States of the resignation of Mr. Myron C. Taylor as his personal representative (Ambassador) to the Vatican. This terminated a relationship which in the judgment of the Committee on Public Relations has for ten years constituted a violation of the American principle of Separation of Church and State.

(2) RESPECTFULLY REMINDS THE PRESIDENT of the United States of his pledge that this ambassadorship to the Pope would be terminated with the establishment of peace following the second world war. This pledge was made on two occasions to committees representing the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America with recognized Baptist leaders among those present, and by letter to the President of The Associated Church Press.

(3) EARNESTLY EXPRESSES THE HOPE that, having accepted Mr. Taylor's resignation, the President will do nothing toward appointing a successor to him or toward continuing the office.

(4) REGISTERS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE an intense disapproval of any proposal which might lead to the establishment of any official representative between the President or the government of the United States and the Vatican. We should deplore the decisive religious controversy which such a move would precipitate.

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD ISSUES

Edward O. Clark, Acting Chairman
Pastor, The Chevy Chase Baptist Church
Washington, D. C.

I. Concerning the United Nations.

We commend the accomplishments of the United Nations in seeking to further understanding between nations and in patiently building machinery to effect working adjustments between the various nationalistic points of view. In the light of the difficulties of the situation, the accomplishments have been worthy.

The United Nations, we recognize, operates under unusually severe limitations, especially in the matter of the veto plan. We believe that this organization could become a much more effective instrument for peace and good-will if these limitations were modified. We strongly urge, therefore, that the members of the United Nations representing the United States take the initiative in promoting a Commission to study anew the machinery of the United Nations with a view to broadening the scope of its operations and to increasing its effectiveness as an agency for world peace. Meanwhile we urge that our Government give its increasing support to the strengthening of this world organization in every way possible.

II. Long Range Plans for International Co-operation.

It is further urged that our national leaders keep an open mind with regard to plans for closer international co-operation which go beyond the present scope of the United Nations and which may materialize in the distant future. If world peace is to be an ultimate reality, it seems essential that many powers now in the exclusive domain of nationalism shall have to be placed in some democratic, international order yet to be devised. Whether such a plan should involve a world government or some kind of confederation of the nations, we do not propose to say, but the question of a more effective world organization than we have at present must challenge our thinking.

III. The Implications of the Hydrogen Bomb.

To the Honorable Brien McMahon, Senator from Connecticut, and others goes the credit for making proposals challenging the nations to face, in terrible realism, the implications of modern explosive warfare. We of the churches call for the launching of a moral

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and spiritual crusade for peace. We commend the proposals of Senator McMahon as a basis for discussion by the nations in order that the whole world may face, before it is too late, this life-and-death issue of our day.

Specifically, we stand for the following program in our effort to implement a moral and spiritual crusade for peace:

1. Recognition that mankind stands at the most crucial crossroads in all history, due to the destructive character of modern warfare.
2. The voice for peace and understanding by the democratic nations must be empowered to reach all peoples of the world.
3. We favor the mutual and drastic limitation of armaments, provided it has universal acceptance by the nations and is coupled with the economic rehabilitation of backward nations.
4. It is most urgent that some satisfactory plan for the international regulation of the manufacture of atomic and of hydrogen bombs be accomplished under the United Nations.
5. Recognition that real security is a spiritual thing and must be based eventually upon the friendly spirit and good-will of nation to nation.

To carry out this program in the interest of a peace that will be truly Christian, we call upon all world leaders to labor with undaunted faith.

IV. The Crisis in China and Burma.

We seek the right of maintaining our mission work in China and in Burma in its integrity. We re-affirm the principle of democracy and basic human rights as proclaimed by the United Nations to be essential for a free and a peaceful world. Our State Department is urged, therefore, to use its influence in preserving the rights of our nationals in these countries in their promotion of mission work.

V. Internationalization of Holy Places.

The plan for the internationalization of the holy places of Palestine has been adopted by the United Nations. It has not, however, been put into effect because of the serious difficulties encountered. The problem is not an easy one to solve. We believe, however, that it merits further serious study and that in this study due consideration should be given to a plan which will:

- a. Find likely acceptance of both Arabs and Jews;
- b. Offer protection and preservation of all holy places throughout both the Arab and Jewish territories;
- c. Remove the holy sites from factional disputes and from likelihood of desecrations.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Edward B. Willingham, Chairman
Pastor, National Baptist Memorial Church
Washington, D. C.

Religious liberty is being attacked by powerful world forces today. Danger threatens from philosophies and powers which deny the existence of God and the place of religion with men. Quite openly do the Communist leaders seek to destroy personal rights which have commonly been held sacred, and religious liberty has suffered severely at their hands. We place ourselves on record against the Communist threat to the right of all people everywhere to worship freely, and without restraint, in accord with the dictates of conscience.

Danger also threatens religious liberty from those who have a religious philosophy which claims peculiar privilege to itself and denounces all others as heretical, to be tolerated only so long as expediency demands. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, responsible to the Pope in the Vatican, is identified with aggressive movements in various parts of the world today where religious liberty is either denied, throttled or threatened. Vigorously would we contend for the right of Roman Catholics to hold to religious views in keeping with conscience. Just as vigorously do we place ourselves on record against the church-state hierarchy which aspires to control governments and affairs of people through political and economic power with disregard for individual soul liberty and denial of the principle which we know as religious liberty. Roman Catholic "religious toleration" is by no means to be accepted as identical with religious liberty.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN ITALY

The Italian Interior Ministry, defending the incident in which missionaries of Texas Churches of Christ were stoned, informed the United States Embassy in Rome that American Protestant activities in Italy often aid Communism, and also that "Communists are about the only Italians who join Protestant cults". It should be remembered that there are more Communists in Italy than any other country except Russia. Since Roman Catholics claim 98% of the Italian population, we might ask what Catholics are doing about welcoming Communists among their number. Evangelicals in Italy have united in denying the false charges and they call upon "all Americans to compel the Italian government to abide by, respect, and execute Article 15, Section I, Part II, of the Peace Treaty, which Italy signed in Paris and which has been ratified by the governments concerned, which provides:

"Italy shall take all measures necessary to secure to all persons under Italian jurisdiction, without distinction as to race, sex, 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."

ROMAN CATHOLIC FRANCO REGIME IN SPAIN

Special interest should center on Spain since there is much agitation to have the United States lend aid to the Franco Government there. Even though the United Nations and our own United States contend for religious liberty, consider a few of the tyrannies of the Roman Catholic Franco regime in Spain: (a) Protestants are denied the right to propagate their faith, although Roman Catholics have that right in Protestant countries; (b) Protestants must hold their services in inconspicuous buildings on a side street, and no sign or insignia indicating it is a church is allowed on the building; (c) Protestants are not permitted publicly to bury their own dead with the rites of their own church;

(d) worshipping by gatherings in private homes is forbidden; (e) publication and sale of the Protestant version of the Bible is forbidden; likewise, Protestant hymnals, religious papers and books; (f) Protestant books sent in from abroad do not pass the censor; (g) Spanish Protestants are not allowed to have their own school, although in Protestant countries Roman Catholics may have their own schools provided they pay for them; (h) Protestant children are subject to compulsory Roman Catholic instruction in state schools; (i) government permits to reopen Protestant chapels are refused; (j) no new permits for services have been granted to Protestants for almost two years; (k) permits to build new Protestant chapels are not granted; (l) no Protestant is allowed to hold a government position, teach school, or serve as an army officer.

RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION IN LATIN AMERICA

The Roman Catholic Church-State has turned to Latin America. Its military agency and secular arm is the Madrid-Buenos Aires Axis headed by Francisco Franco of Spain and Peron, the Argentine dictator. With this military arm and secular power it hopes to make itself secure in Latin America and recover the continent of South America for Spanish control after 131 years of freedom, gained by the great liberators. Already several countries bear silent and unmistakable evidence of the fate that awaits other Latin American powers.

Take the example of the Roman Catholic massacre of Protestants in Bolivia. On December 24, 1949, eight evangelical Bolivians and the Rev. Norman Dabbs, a Canadian Baptist, in the words of La Patrie of La Paz, were "clubbed and chopped to death". The instigator of the crime was a Roman Catholic priest, Javier Tumiri, who incited an Indian mob to do the massacring. This unprovoked massacre was committed while the evangelists were peacefully at worship.

CLOUDS OVER NORTH AMERICA

Recent developments have been pyramiding to warn people in the United States and Canada of attitudes and intentions of the Roman Catholic Church-State. The Vatican is zealously seeking to extend more and more control over this continent. The utterances of Cardinal Spellman and his unsavory attack upon Mrs. Roosevelt are typical. The efforts to lay hold on public tax funds for Roman Catholic use in schools and church charities should be a warning. Attention has been called to the power of the Roman Catholic Church-State over such vital agencies as: (a) The Press, including all news sources which it suppresses, colors or uses to its personal advantage; members of the Roman Church hold strategic positions in nearly all of the large periodicals and daily papers; (b) The Radio, and other news channels; (c) Catholic Action, which extends its control or influence to various boards and organizations such as education, labor, social, political, industrial, and financial.

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DR. DAWSON ANSWERS ATTACK ON POAU

(Washington Religious Review, April 10, 1950)

THE program of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State has been blasted here by the Rev. Thomas Keehn, legislative secretary of the Council for Social Action, Congregational-Christian Churches.

During several recent addresses before Washington church groups, Mr. Keehn has been outspokenly critical of the POAU program. In a statement to The Washington Religious Review, Mr. Keehn further clarified his position on the issue. Later, Dr. Joseph M. Dawson, recording secretary and co-founder of POAU, and prominent Baptist public relations

official, issued a rebuttal statement to the Review. Dr. Dawson spoke for Dr. Glenn Archer, executive director of POAU, who is out of the city.

"POAU is in no way representative of Protestantism," said Mr. Keehn in his statement. "By using the word 'Protestant' in the first word in its name, it presumes to speak for Protestantism in the issues involving separation of church and state. At least to the public it appears as the spokesman for Protestantism. This is more inaccurate and misleading."

Mr. Keehn declared that "the nature and program of POAU tend to make it an anti-Catholic movement, even though it disclaims this purpose," and added:

"Apparently, the major support of the organization, both financially and in its program, comes from the 'and others,' rather than from Protestants. As far as the program goes, I believe this organization has performed a real disservice to all religious groups---Catholic, Protestant and Jewish---by the role it played in supporting the Supreme Court decision which prohibited released time for religious teaching in the Champaign (Illinois) case. In my opinion, this decision was welcomed primarily by the secular forces of the country and regretted by the great majority of the religious forces. POAU was on the wrong side of the tracks as far as organized religion was concerned."

"I think, however, that the motive of those individuals who initiated POAU and carry on its program is commendable. All Americans interested in a free, democratic society and in the responsibility of religion to influence this society should stand together in supporting this doctrine of separation of church and state."

Dr. Dawson's reply follows:

"I regret that Mr. Keehn, unlike many of his fellow Congregationalists who actively support POAU, apparently has himself been unable to part with the ideas of union of church and state which prevailed in the establishment of the Congregational Church in Massachusetts Bay Colony, and continued in the union of that Church with the State of Massachusetts until 1833. His repeated criticism of the United States Supreme Court interpretations of the First Amendment in favor of complete separation of church and state indicates that he finds it difficult to support this American principle which has been vigorously championed by nearly all Protestants in this country.

"That Mr. Keehn's objections to POAU are not shared by all Congregationalists is proved by the fact that one of the organization's chief founders and officers is a distinguished member of his church. The personnel of POAU's officers, Executive Committee and National Advisory Council is composed of outstanding leaders in all the major denominations ranging down to the smaller, such as the Congregationalist, even to the very least. Its steadily growing membership throughout the nation reveals a truly representative cross-section of American Protestantism.

"Mr. Keehn is correct in stating that POAU does not act officially for the Protestant denominations. There is no single existing organization which could. POAU was organized by individuals, and in the interest of perfect freedom of action expects to continue on that basis. While it has not been officially adopted by any denomination, it has been most widely and warmly commended by Protestant churches, associations, conventions and conferences throughout the United States.

"Mr. Keehn is also correct in stating that the remarkable financial support which has been accorded POAU is not confined to Protestant church people. As its name plainly shows, it embraces all Americans who believe in separation of church and state, with religious freedom for everyone -- Catholic, Protestant, Jew and non-churchman alike. While contributions have not been adequate for the great task POAU has undertaken, they have neverthe-

less been hearty and generally well-distributed.

"According to both friends and foes, FOAU, in its two short years of positive action to awaken the public to the duty of maintaining the American Constitutional principles, met with unexpected and large success. It hopes, while ever emphasizing the positive approach and fully respecting the faith and worship of every believer -- Catholic, Protestant, Jew and conscience under whatever name -- to keep on resisting the application of public funds to non-public institutions, to correct sectarian instruction in the public schools, and to denounce any ambassadorship by the United States to any church -- in short to prevent, if possible, the threatened overthrow of America's most distinctive and beneficial principle, the separation of church and state."

IMPORTANT BOOKS RECOMMENDED

EARLY CHRISTIANS OF THE 21ST CENTURY. By Chad Walsh. Harper & Brothers, \$2.00.

The deathbed misery of one civilization and the appearance of the next civilization waiting to take its place -- what an account to undertake! But Chad Walsh is a competent author, hence his judgement on the present and his vision of the future merits high respect even though one should remain unconvinced as to some of his findings.

THIS NATION UNDER GOD. By Elbert D. Thomas. Harper & Brothers, \$2.75.

The Utah Senator, in this his sixth book, has made a stalwart plea for the principle of separation of church and state and for public morals based on the recognition of God. In addition there are valuable biographical materials.

THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. By Virgil Henry. Harper & Brothers, \$2.50.

This is a factual presentation containing dependable information, but it fails to offer a completely satisfactory solution of the problem.

THE DIPLOMAT. By James Aldridge. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, \$3.75.

This highly readable novel is the most enlightening portrayal of the meaning and methods of diplomacy in the present world situation.

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION POLICY. Edited by William S. Bernard. Harper & Brothers, \$4.00.

The prolonged nationwide discussion over the admission of Displaced Persons makes this reappraisal of the American immigration policy indispensable to all who would speak or write on the subject.

Order from this office a copy of Separate Church and State Now, by Joseph M. Dawson, \$2.50. Publishers declare this book has received the most generous reviews since Moffatt's translation of the Bible.