

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

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AMERICAN UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE AFFAIRS



JANUARY 1951

LETTER TO PRESIDENT TRUMAN AND SECRETARY ACHESON

President Harry S. Truman
The White House

The Honorable Dean Acheson
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sirs:

I note from the press that the Department of State is preparing a formal note to be delivered to the government of Yugoslavia, probably on January 6, date of the Orthodox observance of Christmas, deploring religious persecution in that nation and expressing American disapproval of such a policy. I observe that the bill on the Yugoslav loan authorization, signed by you, embodies an amendment written in by both the House and Senate providing that "nothing in this act shall be interpreted as endorsing measures undertaken by the present government of Yugoslavia which suppress or destroy religious, political and economic liberty, and the Yugoslav government shall be so notified when aid is furnished under this act."

I wish to commend this action as being thoroughly in accord with American principles and with those of the free nations of the world. I am wondering if you are going to consent to the inclusion of a similar statement to Franco Spain when an ambassador is appointed and a United States Loan becomes effective.

With highest respect,

Most sincerely,

Joseph M. Dawson
Executive Director

GRATIFYING PROVISIONS FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

News of the annual sessions of the Executive Board and National Advisory Council of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State, January 31, with assurances of a great mass meeting in Constitution Hall, February 1, is warmly welcomed. POAU, now equipped with magnificent headquarters building at 1633 Massachusetts Avenue, with no debt; and ably staffed with Executive Director Glenn L. Archer, Director of Promotion John C. Mayne, and Publicity Director Stanley Lichenstein, is constantly enlisting more supporters and winning an ever-enlarging influence over the Nation. This fact is admitted by its foes and accepted joyfully by its friends.

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The organization of the Religious Liberty Department of the National Council of Churches, with a board of forty-six representatives of the churches enrolled in the parent body, under the executive direction of A. D. Willis, promises much. For those friends who have feared that there would be some conflict between this organization and POAU, it may be confidently predicted there will be none; but on the contrary the utmost fraternal cooperation as each group pursues its own methods with use of its own means.

There can be no question about a newly awakened concern for religious liberty, both in this and other lands, nor about a real determination in America to maintain our distinctive Constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

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ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATION OF PROTESTANTISM

Two notable books on Protestantism have recently come to our desk, both of which we wish to commend to all who would be helpfully informed on the subject. They are listed below:

Luther and His Times. By E. G. Schwiebert. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. 892 pages, \$10.00.

Positive Protestantism, An Interpretation of the Gospel. Hugh Thomson Kerr. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 147 pages, \$2.50.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND POLITICAL ACTION

Editor The Tidings, Roman Catholic newspaper for the Diocese of Los Angeles:

"His [Senator Millard E. Tidings] astonishing overthrow may not be unrelated to the fact that in Baltimore there exists, so far as I am aware, the only well organized and militant Catholic Action group in the United States.

"At least Time magazine, an objective witness, testifies that Tydings 'was almost solidly opposed by Maryland Roman Catholics.'

"There is further evidence in Chicago and New York especially, that the American Catholic electorate has far outstripped its traditional leadership, political and often journalistic.

"In behalf of Senator Scott W. Lucas, majority leader in the senior chamber, the time-honored campaign was conducted. A republican wave from rural Illinois would be met and broken by the dam of huge Democratic majority in Chicago.

"But the customary majority failed to materialize. The machine was unable to deliver. Lucas fell and great was the crash thereof. His toga was snatched by a deadly critic of Acheson foreign policy, Everett Dirksen.

"The question is whether this reversal could have been brought about without a spontaneous and wholesale mutiny of Catholic voters.

"In New York City an independent candidate for Mayor, Vincent R. Impellitteri, who had neither organization nor funds, smashed Tammany Hall and the Bronx machine of Edward J. Flynn. There are 2,000,000 Catholics in Greater New York, and hosts of them

must have voted for Impellitteri....

"The point should not be labored too far, but it is a fact that the most drastic overturns occurred in commonwealths where Catholic voters were particularly numerous.

"It seems possible that the masses of Catholic electors have sensed the truth that American politics is no longer a sporting contest between two parties, but a matter of life and death for their country and their faith; and that they, and perhaps they alone, can save the world."

NOTE: This same article was printed on the editorial page of the Tennessee edition of The Register, Roman Catholic newspaper for the Memphis diocese, and possibly in many other Roman Catholic publications throughout the United States. Feeling the unfavorable reaction to Roman Catholic control of elections, the Catholic Review of Washington, D. C. entered, indirectly, a disclaimer of such action, using an apologetic statement made by Time Magazine which subsequently said in effect that the Roman Catholic influence might have been inconclusive.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC REPUDIATION OF CIVIC CLUBS

In the opinion of many eminent churchmen, when the Roman Catholic Pope pronounced the unreasonable, superstitious dogma of the bodily assumption of Mary, the Roman Church erected one more barrier between it and the rest of the Christian world. In the judgment of any informed citizen, when the Roman Church announces that it is the only Christian group fighting against Communism, it commits an inexcusable error based on arrogant, or worse -- ignorant -- assumption, because it is common knowledge that the most effective forces against Communism in the whole world are Protestant. The latest wall which the Roman Church has erected between itself and an unfanatical world is its repudiation of Rotary and other civic clubs.

There is little surprise that laymen among the Romanists in America, even many prelates affected, have been shocked. In all free lands these clubs are distinguished for their democracy, fraternity and broad community cooperation. It would appear that the hierarchy's adverse decree is based on fear of exposure to democratic ideas and practices, or else is a refusal to have nought to do with any organization it cannot control. A lamentable aspect of this strange action by the Romanist authoritarian church is its smear of the noble Masonic order. These, and other dictatorial acts by the hierarchy, may explain the growing abandonment of the Roman Church by multitudes of its priests and laity.

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TEMPERANCE FORCES VOCAL IN WASHINGTON

The closing week of January in the Nation's Capital was filled with voices for temperance. In the Calvary Baptist Church January 21, Bishop Hammacker and Dr. J. M. Dawson addressed a large meeting in behalf of education in respect to alcohol and narcotics in the public schools. On the evening of January 25, in the First Baptist Church, Dr. Dawson presided and presented Dr. Daniel A. Poling, who spoke along the same lines. A pleasing feature of this service was the remembrance-ceremonials recognizing the work of the famous Rev. T. Devitt Talmage for the sobriety of the youth of America. On Wednesday evening, the 24th, the Executive Director spoke to assembled representatives of national temperance bodies at the Methodist Building on "How It Looks to the Baptists". On Thursday morning, the 25th, the venerable Dr. Clinton L. Howard presided over the annual breakfast of temperance leaders in the Senate Dining Room, where many eloquent speeches were heard.

CONCERNING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ITALY

Frank B. Gigliotti, a former Italian, now a Presbyterian Minister in California, writes:

"We have been having quite a few arrests and persecutions in Italy because we need a juridical clarification of the three articles in the Constitution, freedom of assemblage, freedom of association, and freedom of religious worship.

"These articles 17, 18 and 19 of the Constitution have been continuously violated by the so-called Internal Security Laws that were written by Mussolini and which have never been changed. We shall have to have a juridical clarification, and we may have to go all the way to the Italian Supreme Court with it, because in changing the Constitution the Penal and Civil Codes were not changed, and until they are challenged by someone that they are conflicting with the Constitution they will prevail, especially when it affects the interest of the Roman Catholic Church, with the threats of priests and bishops hanging over the heads of local officials who are subject to removal by a so-called Christian Catholic Government.

"I have been carrying on a campaign of education, and every time that one of our people has been disturbed I have seen to it that it was taken to the courts and on a recent decision we were upheld on an appeal in the lower courts, but the government immediately appealed the appeal from the lower to the higher courts. These provincial courts would correspond to our state courts. Now we will have to take the thing up through the federal jurisdiction."

CONTRIBUTION TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The Executive Director's new book, THE LIBERATION OF LIFE, Broadman Press, Nashville, \$1.25, is apparently to be widely received as a new contribution to religious liberty. While it deals primarily with spiritual freedoms, many of its passages include civil aspects of religious liberty. Note the following:

"We can only conclude that religious liberty is fundamental to all human freedom. This liberty, which is the flower of all human experience and touches all the springs of life, liberates man at the highest levels of his capacities and achievements. To provide for it and protect it, in order that it may grow and bring forth its noblest benefits, is the duty of the modern state. To give religious liberty its rightful place among the great freedoms, an international Bill of Rights, recommended by the United Nations, should be universally adopted."

NO U. S. AMBASSADOR TO VATICAN

According to the Religious News Service, on recommendation from the Department of State, President Truman has decided it would be unwise to nominate an Ambassador to the Vatican. Senators have emphatically concurred in this decision. All hail!