

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

FEBRUARY 1951

THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF UNITED STATES SENATORS

The church affiliations of all the Senators in the 82nd Congress have been identified. It will appear that there are:

19 Methodists	8 Congregational	2 Church of Christ,
11 Presbyterians	5 Disciples	Scientists
11 Episcopalians	5 Lutherans	2 Friends
9 Baptists	3 Latter Day Saints	1 Unitarian
9 Roman Catholics	3 "Protestants"	1 Jewish

The Baptist Senators are: Frank Carlson, Kansas; Walter F. George, Georgia; Theodore Francis Green, Rhode Island; Olin D. Johnston, South Carolina; Estes Kefauver, Tennessee; Robert S. Kerr, Oklahoma; Russell B. Long, Louisiana; John L. McClellan, Arkansas; A. Willis Robertson, Virginia; Charles W. Tobey, New Hampshire.

The Roman Catholic Senators are: Dennis Chavez, New Mexico; George W. Malone, Nevada; Pat McCarran, Nevada; Joseph R. McCarthy, Wisconsin; Brien McMahon, Connecticut; James E. Murray, Montana; Herbert R. O'Connor, Maryland; Joseph C. O'Mahoney, Wyoming; John O. Pastore, West Virginia.

ANNUAL MEETINGS OF POAU REACH NEW HIGH MARK

The annual report of Glenn L. Archer, Executive Director of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State, made to the Board of Directors showed gratifying progress -- acquisition and use of beautiful headquarters building, debt free; handsome increase in contributions, with no deficit or debts; large growth in membership throughout the Nation; and best of all, marked improvement in the public understanding of POAU's functions, expressed in its name, and consequent larger influence on American thought in church-state relations.

The mass meeting in Constitution Hall was presided over by Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, Vice President. The addresses by President Edwin McNeill Potrat on "Would It Make Any Difference in Legislation?" and by Paul Blanshard on "The Vatican and the Kremlin" were calm, courteous, reasonable, factual and convincing. It is not surprising that addresses of such intellectual caliber delivered to a mammoth audience with many members of Congress, judges, government officials, and thoughtful citizens present, should immediately evoke public outcry from the Roman Catholics who hold to a different concept of church and state. It was disappointing to observe their resort to ugly name-calling and grievous charges.

The meetings revealed another challenging situation. While the New York Times, The Washington Evening Star and some of the wire services gave fair and adequate reports

of the meetings, some newspapers were plastered in the same article with inclusion of Roman Catholic opposition to a discussion which was limited strictly to church-state relations and offered no condemnation of the faith, worship or religious practices of any body. Just what considerations -- pressure or what else -- explains such strange departure from accepted standards is difficult to determine. The Washington press should awake to the realization that only 16 per cent of the Capital is Romanist and that the other 84 per cent is entitled to report of what such vast majority says, whether agreeable to newspapers or not. Can we not hope that ethical standards of reporting will be adopted. Certain wire services also might profit from becoming alerted to the same conditions and the prevalent percentages in the population throughout the country as a whole. Surely no newspaper could wish to rest under the implication that it is partisan.

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SYNOPSIS OF ADDRESS BY DR. J. M. DAWSON BEFORE
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

"Does the granting of Federal Aid for services for children in denominational schools violate the principle of separation of church and state?"

I answer that it does for the following reasons:

1. Such aid would be contrary to the American system. The Supreme Court of the United States has said this in both the Everson and the McCollum decisions in forbidding direct and indirect church aids.

This is undoubtedly the opinion of the majority of American citizens. It is significant that since the announcement of this decision no state has added bus transportation for the children of parochial schools. Prior to that thirty-two states had forbidden it. It is further more significant that the following large educational groups have declared against direct or indirect aids to other than public schools: The National Education Association, National Parent Teachers Association, American Association of Chief School Officers, American Association of School Administrators, and The Horace Mann League. These organizations represent substantially the opinion of all Americans concerned with public education.

All the Protestant church bodies of the country, constituting a majority of religious affiliation, have uniformly opposed public buses for church schools, and besought Congress not to mandate such.

2. To grant Federal Aid for services for children in denominational schools is manifestly contrary to the interests of the public schools. Let us freely concede that every religious group has the right to establish schools of its own and that each parent has the right to choose whether he shall patronize his church school or the public school. This does not, however, confer the right to tax all the people for the support of schools established by some of the people. It does not rightfully set up the power to subsidize the church schools of some of the people to compete with the public schools for all the people. If such aids are to be extended, even though indirectly, they will ultimately impair our cherished public school system which is the Nation's greatest cultural asset and its greatest single promoter of national unity. Instead of unity through the public schools, bitter conflict, as in other lands where public and church schools bid for tax support, would inevitably ensue. So keenly do the states feel that public funds should be reserved for Public institutions only, every one has adopted constitutions guaranteeing this.

We can readily understand, therefore, that when representatives of eighty-six national organizations met in Washington, November 13-14, 1950, for a two-day conference to study the need for additional financial support for the public schools of our

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country, by consensus of opinion and with few exceptions the group suggested certain principles to be observed in the preparation of a general Federal Aid to Education bill. They held that the funds should be limited strictly to public school purposes and eliminated all provisions for transportation, even for public schools.

Let it be said once and for all, that the right of a citizen to enjoy the special privilege of patronizing a church school in no way obligates the state to assist him in exercising his privilege. In the case of an epidemic the public health department may immunize all who will use its facilities. At the same time the law permits each person in the community who prefers to use the facilities of his own private physician. Would anyone contend that the public should assume the burden of the private medical fee?

3. To grant Federal Aid for services for children in denominational schools would eventually impair, if not destroy, our most cherished American principle of full religious liberty to every individual and group. So long as religious organizations can use government to gain their purposes, freedom of thought and of conscience yes, even of limb are in danger. That is why the States have been so determined about excluding, by Constitution, any possible sectarian benefit, either from tax support or by sectarian instruction in the public schools.

Sometimes we hear the statement that services to children in connection with church schools are only "fringe" benefits, or auxiliary services. But on closer examination it will be found that the churches asking such "fringe" or "auxiliary" services have by no means relaxed their efforts to secure large benefits, even direct appropriations, for their institutions, as shown by unnumbered official documents.

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GOVERNMENT AID TO DENOMINATIONAL HOSPITALS AGAIN

In a letter to Dr. Karl P. Meister, Executive Secretary of the Methodist Board of Hospitals and Homes, Chicago, the Executive Director said:

Concerning the matter of hospitals, our Baptist people as a rule have steadfastly declined aid from tax funds for the support of their institutions. I take the liberty of enclosing herewith a statement by our lawyer in reference to this matter. The Baptist State Conventions of North Carolina and Alabama have, upon confronting this question, recently voted decisively against government aid. Large sums were involved: \$697,356 in North Carolina and one and a half million in Alabama. The Kansas City Baptist Association officially withdrew from the sponsorship of a large denominational hospital to be erected at Kansas City chiefly by means of government appropriation.

The Federal Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, forbids the support of church institutions by tax funds. The following from the Supreme Court decision, we think, bears directly on the matter:

The "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another....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. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect "a wall of separation between Church and State."

Most of the state constitutions are as explicit as the following in the State of Oklahoma, Article II, Section 5, which reads as follows:

No public money or property shall ever be appropriated, applied, donated, or used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, or system of religion, or for the use, benefit, or support of any priest, preacher, minister, or other religious teacher, or dignitary, or sectarian institution as such.

On the basis of this provision a court in Oklahoma ruled that it was illegal for the City of Seminole to turn over a bond-erected hospital to the Roman Catholics. As I stated to you, a case will undoubtedly come sooner or later, and there are several communities clamoring for such a test case in which the Supreme Court will be asked to rule on this matter.

In writing the above you will see why I feel so distressed that the Methodists have seen fit to accept such public funds for some of their denominational hospitals.

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SPRING SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Religious Liberty Department, National Council of Churches, New York City

State Brotherhood Convention, Spartanburg, South Carolina

Temperance Addresses, Calvary Baptist Church, First Baptist Church and National Council of Temperance Leaders, Methodist Building, Washington, D. C.

Office of Federal Civil Defense

Sermons, Fifth Baptist Church, Clarendon First Church, Fairfax Baptist Church

Annual Session, POAU

American University, Washington, D. C.

7 addresses under auspices of Florida Baptist State Convention

American Federation of Teachers, Statler Hotel, Washington

Centennial addresses, First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas

Pre-Easter Noon-day meeting in theater for Protestant Churches, Corpus Christi, Texas

Address on Religious Liberty, Eastern District, Maryland

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REQUEST TO READERS OF NEWSLETTER

Due to the ever enlarging mailing list we are compelled to request all others than executives, editors, secretaries and heads of educational institutions to send us One Dollar to cover production cost and mailing for one year. We rejoice in the marked interest in this publication and regret the necessity of making this request.

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