

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

THE COUNTRY'S TAX MONEY APPLIED TO D. C. SECTE

July 13, 1951

The Honorable John L. McMillan, Chairman
Committee on District of Columbia
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McMillan:

At the suggestion of Mr. William N. McCloud, Clerk of the House District Committee, I am writing you concerning the pending proposal to appropriate large sums of the people's money raised by taxes throughout the United States for certain sectarian hospitals in the District of Columbia. I am enclosing herewith statements which you have doubtless read in the Washington Post and Evening Star.

(The Washington Religious Review, Larston D. Farrar, editor; and Religious News Service publicised essential elements in these statements).

I beg to say that Baptists have almost uniformly declined any tax monies for their hospitals. I represent in this Committee more than sixteen million adult Baptist church members. If all belonging to Baptist families and those who hold with us were counted, our community in the United States would exceed twice that number. In declining government aid to denominational hospitals they are acting on the two recent Supreme Court decisions: one in the Everson Case; and the other, repeated in the McCollum Case, in which the Court says 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."

In this position the Baptists are not alone. The National Chapter of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State yesterday went on record as opposing such diversion of public tax monies to sectarian purposes. POAU is maintained by representatives of all the Protestant denominations, Masonic bodies, Jewish people, and many others which hold clear convictions about the Cherished American principle of separation of church and state.

(The POAU Chapter stated: "The Sisters of Charity, however estimable may be their motives and their work, are not public officials. They are controlled by and responsible to, not the people of the United States, but the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. The doctors and nurses who are employed by them are required to conform even in their medical practices and procedures, to a rigidly prescribed Catholic code, which differs, at many significant points, from the beliefs of non-Catholic citizens.")

Some effort has been made to answer the contentions which I offer in the enclosed communication published July 5, in the Washington Post. One of these by the President of the Executive Staff of Providence Hospital denies that his institution is sectarian, whereas the Catholic Hospital Association meeting in Milwaukee last year repeatedly

acknowledged the religious and sectarian character of Catholic hospitals. Dr. Caulfield mentions a Supreme Court decision rendered fifty-two years ago in regard to an isolation ward. I agree with the eminent Dr. Stokes of Yale University in Volume Two of his Church and State In The United States, pages 731 and 732, where he says: "It would be a mistake, however, to read too much into the court's opinion, which is mainly based on the fact that the hospital is actually doing exactly the work for which it was incorporated....Whether the case would be similarly decided today may be open to question." In any event the Supreme Court has recently declared emphatically as above indicated by us in the Everson and McCollum cases.

Another person writing in the Washington Post, signing himself "Southern Baptist", (likely a member of Congress who voted for the Hill-Burton Act) says: "The sectarianism or nonsectarianism of the sponsor of a hospital to be built under the Hospital Survey and Construction Act is of no moment." Sectarian character of the hospital is of no moment? That is exactly the issue as forbidden by the Supreme Court in the two decisions cited. If that position is adhered to by your Committee, it will greatly accentuate the resentment of millions of American citizens who would thus be compelled to pay taxes for the support of hospitals which are definitely known to be owned, controlled, and operated by sectarian groups.

As stated in my article, I have been actively engaged in denominational hospital business and have full acquaintance with the nature of the business. I bring these matters to your attention without any prejudice whatsoever toward any given group, for the principle of no tax money for sectarian purposes applies to all religious groups alike. Nor is it prejudicial to the devoted work of the nurses. For example, Dr. Caulfield thinks to enlist sympathy by stating that the nursing nuns arise at four o'clock in the morning. He surely must know that nurses in all hospitals, public private and denominational rise at four o'clock in the morning. Many remain on duty all night, and such devotion has nothing whatever to do with the issue of public money allocated to sectarian uses.

Thanking you for your earnest consideration of these representations in the interest of the people and of our Government, I am

Most sincerely,

Joseph M. Dawson,
Executive Director.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ITALY

The New York Times of June 20, 1951 carried the following item:

ROME, June 19--Manfredi Ronchi, secretary general of the Baptist Evangelical Foundation in Italy, protested today that the Ministry of the Interior was impeding the freedom of the foundation by requiring it to obtain special permission to open new churches and that the state-controlled radio monopoly in Italy had refused permission for a broadcast of ritual for next Sunday.

A Government spokesman denied that the Government interfered with the activities of the Baptist foundation. He stated that no request to open new churches had been refused and that the Sunday broadcast would be crowded out by two canonizations relayed from the Vatican radio station.

The Rev. William D. Moore of the Baptist Evangelical Foundation took issue with the Government spokesman. Numerous evangelic churches in Italy have

3.

been closed by police on instructions from the Minister of the Interior Mario Scelba, Mr. Moore said. Those closed, he said, include a Methodist church in Terni, a Baptist church in Lentini and a mission station at Padigliani.

In a private letter Dr. Moore states: "We are encountering growing evidence of a strong, organized, and subtle campaign on the part of those who are opposed to liberty in Italy. So we meet with situations occasionally where our work is affected; but usually the effect is on the side of right and results in deepening and strengthening in the long run the Master's cause. The time is coming soon when the Italian Parliament will have to solve the issue on the basis of the Constitution of the Italian Republic, which respects the equality of 'cults' in Italy. Of course there is much campaigning and propaganda against the parity of cults, and an effort to delay eventual full application of the principles on which the new republic is based. However, there is some evidence of a stiffening on the part of those who favor a genuine republic without clerical government; and I am glad to say that some of that is a stiffening of backbone on the part of some of the Government's highest leaders. The battle may turn out favorably after all. I am sure that if we have faith, and faithfulness, the Lord will do his part, and what ought to be done will be done. May He keep us all from littleness and pettiness in a time when bigness is required and greatness is needed in all of us."

RIGHT OF MINISTER TO BE POLITICAL CANDIDATE

Robert Tate Allen in The Washington Daily News, July 2, 1951, raises the question, "Is principle violated when a minister announces as a candidate for political office?" The occasion for posing this question is the campaign of Dr. Daniel A. Poling for the office of Mayor of Philadelphia. He writes:

"Monsignor Thomas McCarthy, director of the Bureau of Information, National Catholic Welfare Conference, questioned 'how Dr. Poling's fellow-Baptists, so outspoken for separation of church and state feel about one of their own pastors running for public office?'

"Pointing out that the Catholic Church forbids its priests from entering politics or officially endorsing any political campaigns, Monsignor McCarthy said, that 'contrary to what (Author) Paul Blanshard says, no priests gave an official support to the Al Smith presidential campaign in 1928.'

"Dr. Joseph M. Dawson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said:

"'If Dr. Poling is not officially representing some church, and is acting solely as an individual citizen, he has the right to participate in politics, like any other person. The question of separation of church and state is not involved, since there is no organic connection between a church and government.'

"Dr. Dawson's views were shared by Rep. O. K. Armstrong (R., Mo.), teacher of the Vaughn Bible Class of Calvary Baptist Church. He said:

"'The question of separation of church and state does not enter into it, for Poling cannot represent his church in an official capacity in the mayor's office. I should be greatly surprised if any of my fellow-Baptists protested one of our preachers peeling off his coat, taking a whip of cords and "cleansing the temple", a bit, as Dr. Poling intends to do.'

THE CONSTITUTION UPHOLD AGAINST SUBVERSION

V. T. Thayer, in his new book, The Attack Upon The American Secular School (Beacon Press, Boston, \$3.00) not only thoroughly vindicates the institution of the American public school, but effectively answers the effort of Roman Catholics and a handful of Protestants to subvert the plain meaning of the Constitution by the device of substituting a mischievous interpretation for the traditional and judicial interpretation.

Thayer's book along with that by Conrad H. Moehlman (The Wall of Separation Between Church and State, Beacon Press, Boston, \$3.00) leaves the perverse subversionists not a leg to stand on. J. M. O'Neill, a Romanist, with some pretensions of scholarship last year set forth the undermining view in his book, Religion and Education Under the Constitution, Harper and Brothers, New York, \$4.00. In effect, it argued that the Constitution does indeed forbid a monogamous union between a single church and the government, but emphatically permits a polygamous union between the government and all the churches! This is as good as believers in union of church and state could wish. If adopted, it would allow all sects to obtain just as much tax money as they have political power to pressure out of legislators. It would also allow for the insinuation of clerical control over government.

* * *

WHAT OF U. S. REPRESENTATION AT THE VATICAN?

Persistent rumor as to U. S. representation at the Vatican will not down. When former Secretary of the Navy Matthews received his new appointment, he said that in his new job he was "going to be more than Ambassador to Ireland". Could the long-time head of the Knights of Columbus mean that he was going to be the White House spokesman to the Vatican? Walter Winchell, who sometimes reports the truth, said over radio that Washington newspaper men believe the President will nominate someone to represent the U. S. at the Vatican. Assembly man Giacco has offered a resolution in the New York State Legislature calling for this. Roman Catholics are undoubtedly pressing hard for it. Will Protestants and all who believe in separation of church and state keep silent?

* * *

AMERICAN BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARDS

Dr. M. Forest Ashbrook, Executive Director, the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board of the American Baptist Convention: "Since, unfortunately, there has been confusion in the minds of some people as to whether ministers serving denominational Boards were eligible for inclusion under the Social Security Act or not, I think it might be well to state that the American Baptist Convention Boards have accepted the government plan for their lay employees. It is the uniform conviction of our National Boards that there was no intention in the passing of the law to include ordained ministers who are serving in the exercise of their ministry. Thus, none of the National Boards have included any ministers under the Social Security provisions."

* * *

BAPTIST PASTOR ALARMED

Rev. A. di Domenico of Philadelphia writes to say that he is alarmed over the following statement by Father Patrick Henry O'Brien: "We the Hierarchy of the Holy Roman Catholic Church expect all loyal children of the Church to assist the President with all our strength to see that the individuals, comprising the United States Supreme Court, shall obey the President's injunctions and if necessary we will change, amend or blot out the present Constitution so that the President may enforce his or rather OUR humanitarian program on all places of human rights as laid down by our Saintly Popes and the Holy Mother Church."