

# REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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JUNE 1952

## WORLD MISSION ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

As is well known, the Baptist World Alliance has a Commission on Religious Liberty. The Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is honored with membership on that Commission. The Executives of the Alliance are spending a week at Tollose, near Copenhagen, Denmark, the first week in August, to which some eighty Baptist leaders have been invited for intensive studies relative to Baptist distinctives. The conference will be preceded by the All-Europe Baptist Federation. It is our expectation, unless Providentially hindered, to attend these meetings and outline principles and policies looking toward advancement of full religious liberty for all peoples. Meantime the office in Washington will be administered by Mr. C. E. Bryant, who has been released by Baylor University for a period to undertake a special research into violations of constitutional prohibitions of tax aids to sectarian institutions, without regard to the religious affiliation of violators.

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## DISCIPLES AGAINST PUBLIC FUNDS FOR CHURCH HOSPITALS

Among the resolutions passed by the International Convention of the Disciples of Christ in Chicago, May 22, was one which insisted that public funds in aid of hospitals be limited to those which are publicly owned and controlled by municipal, county, state or federal governments. This action is to be commended, because it places one more non-Catholic group on record against an unjust practice which compels all the people to pay taxes for building sectarian institutions, in clear violation of the Constitution as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court. Baptists have consistently maintained that Federal grants to church hospitals are illegal and unjust, a position again urged by the Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs before a Senate Committee in April of this year. It is gratifying to note that public sentiment is crystallizing against the rank injustice which results in one-sixth of the total Federal grants to hospitals under the Hill-Burton Act going to Roman Catholic hospitals, acknowledged to be the Catholics' most effective recruiting agency. No wonder Dr. Roswell P. Barnes of the National Council of Churches said recently: "The non-Roman churches must soon make up their minds as to whether they can appropriately request or accept tax funds for ecclesiastical institutions, such as hospitals, colleges and welfare agencies." Perhaps no better statement has been made than that contained in a letter to our office from Dr. J. H. Nicholson, Pastor Emeritus of the West Broadway Methodist Church, Louisville, Kentucky: "To my mind if the government can give money to build church hospitals, it can and should give money to build and support church schools."

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### WAIL FROM ONE WHO HAS BEEN HIT

Professor James M. O'Neill, the smiling Brooklyn speech professor, with whom this writer has appeared in forum discussion and on television, author of the Roman Catholic venerated textbook, Religion and Education Under The Constitution, and of a recent purported "answer" to Paul Blanshard's widely read books, is in distress. O'Neill is the bland author who is confidently trying to disinter the long buried theory of "non-preferential government aid to all churches", with the heroic endeavor after resurrecting it to galvanize the corpse! Wincing under telling blows, delivered by Protestants and most Americans, against this dangerous theory, which James Madison effectually slew with the argument that it meant the same thing as establishment of religion, the gallant R. C. issues a challenge. He dares anyone or any group to "cite a single instance of a Catholic bishop in the United States opposing the Constitutional provisions relating to government and religion."

Of course, O'Neill himself is a conspicuous example of a Catholic opposing the Constitutional provisions relating to government and religion in the United States. But a more notable instance is that of all the Roman Catholic bishops, sitting in the National Catholic Welfare Conference in November 1948, when they openly and stoutly opposed such provisions and denounced the United States Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution on this very matter. Does not O'Neill know that the Federal Constitution is what the Supreme Court says it is? Not only did all the Catholic bishops attack and ridicule the United States Supreme Court's interpretation, which was strictly in accord with the authentic, historic interpretation; but they pledged themselves to offer unceasing opposition to it!

Professor O'Neill's pitiful appeal for sympathy for his people, on this account and on account of their unblushing, continued pressures on Congress for tax aids to their sectarian institutions, will fall on deaf ears. In vain may he wail that resistance to the Catholic pressures, based on their false and presumptuous construing of the Constitution, brings his people under suspicion of disloyalty to the Constitution. How silly to charge that all the Protestants, Baptists and non-Catholic groups who refuse to yield to the Roman Catholic pressures are doing so in order to make money out of their convictions of right!

### MIXED MARRIAGES

#### A Southern Baptist Convention Resolution

Unjust and undemocratic demands of the Roman Catholics are:

1. If a Baptist marries a Roman Catholic, he must take instruction from the priest several weeks before the marriage, but the Roman Catholic is forbidden to take any instruction from a Baptist minister.
2. The couple is told that the ceremony must be preformed by a priest, or the marriage will not be recognized as valid by the hierarchy and they will be regarded as living in adultery. This is un-American because our government says that any minister, judge or justice of the peace may perform a legal marriage ceremony.
3. The Baptist is required to promise that the unborn children will be members of the Roman Catholic church, reared in the Roman Catholic church, and will not attend Baptist churches at any time. We believe that no one has the right to make a pledge that unborn children will be either Roman Catholic or Baptist. No one has the right to sell or barter the freedom and liberty of unborn children. We believe that if a Baptist and a Roman Catholic marry they should decide for themselves where the children will go to

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church. When the children reach the age of accountability they should be allowed to choose for themselves the church of their choice.

4. In a marriage of a Baptist and a Roman Catholic, the Baptist is forced to promise that the children will attend a Roman Catholic school and not the public school. We believe that this is undemocratic. The government has established the public school system and we believe that children born of a Roman Catholic and a Baptist should go to the public school.

5. Baptists in the United States oppose having American marriage laws made in Rome by the pope. The problems involved in the marriage relation are to be settled by the conscience and intelligence of the people and not by a small group of persons in a foreign country.

The Roman Catholic Church assumes an unwarranted and unholy authority when she attempts to control the marriage laws of the state or to ignore and supplant them. The New Testament nowhere teaches that a marriage must be contracted before a priest or minister in order to be valid.

We should teach our Baptist children that marriage is the supreme partnership of life and that it is a violation of the principle of religious liberty to make the promises demanded by the Roman Catholic church. Our children should know the dangers of these promises so that they can take their stand as free, independent American citizens and refuse to make any promises that the Roman Catholic lover does not make. Marriage should not be a one-sided partnership where one gives up everything. It should be equal for both.

#### SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

##### American Baptist Convention Resolution

WHEREAS, The American Baptist Convention has repeatedly expressed opposition to any kind of formal diplomatic relations on the part of our government with the Vatican, either in the form of a personal ambassador of the President or a regularly appointed Ambassador or Minister; and

WHEREAS, The President of the United States has not withdrawn his announced intention of making another nomination of an Ambassador; and

WHEREAS, In this election year the issue of an Ambassador to the Vatican is likely to be urged upon the candidates selected by the major political parties; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we reaffirm our opposition as consistently set forth in the resolutions of this Convention, and that we call upon our people to exercise constant vigilance that immediate and appropriate action might be instituted if and when a further nomination is made. Furthermore, be it

Resolved, That the General Secretary of the American Baptist Convention be authorized to send this resolution immediately to the Chairman of each of the major political parties and to the candidates after they have been nominated, that they may be conscious of our position on this matter in which we stand united with all people who believe in the separation of Church and State, and that the candidates be requested, as soon as nominated, to express their policies on this issue. Furthermore, be it our principle of separation of Church and State. Furthermore, be it

Resolved, That we express our appreciation to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and to other

voices that were raised, for their immediate, effective, and cooperative action in the recent crisis.

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#### SOME TEMPERANCE ACTIVITIES IN WASHINGTON

##### For Protection of Homes Against Liquor Advertising

A resolution introduced by Representative E. C. Gathings of Arkansas (H. Res. 278) passed the House on May 12. It provides that the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce shall conduct a full and complete investigation and study to determine the extent to which the radio and television programs currently available to the people of the United States contain immoral or otherwise offensive matter, or place improper emphasis on crime, violence, and corruption, and (2) on the basis of such investigation and study, to make such recommendations (including recommendations for legislative action to eliminate offensive and undesirable radio and television programs and to promote higher radio and television standards) as it deems advisable. The subcommittee consists of Representative Oren Harris (D. Ark.) chairman and Representative Arthur G. Klein (D. N.Y.), F. Ertel Carlyle (D. N. C.), Homer Thornberry (D. Tex.), Joseph P. O'Hara (R. Minn.), J. Edgar Chenoweth (R. Col.) and Harmer D. Denny, Jr. (R. Pa.).

Many are writing in to urge support of the Bryson Bill (H.R. 2188) which prohibits liquor advertising over radio and television.

##### For Narcotic Instruction

On June 11 the Executive Director presided over an all-day conference of members of the International Federation of Narcotic Education in the Willard Room of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany in Washington, at which a number of distinguished speakers were heard. The avowed purpose of this organization is declared to be to promote an international, non-profit, long range, educational program, which will specialize in scientific instruction for all youth, especially public school students, regarding the harmful effects of habit-forming drugs and narcotics, including especially alcoholic beverages and tobacco, as a necessary and indispensable aid to morality, character building and health education.

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#### NOTES ON PERTINENT LITERATURE

The Return to Morality, by Senator Charles W. Tobey. Doubleday and Company, New York. \$2.00.

This little volume contains the valiant testimony of a stalwart Baptist, whose voice is adding power to the reform movement in America.

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A Protestant Manifesto, by Winfred E. Garrison. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, \$2.75.

Protestants cherish the great witness to their principles given by this trusted author and welcome this distinguished new contribution.

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Mr. Harold R. Rafton, P. O. Box 8, Shawsheen Village, Andover, Massachusetts, who has for long rendered invaluable aid to the American system of church-state separation, has lately published in The Churchman a commanding article entitled, "Protect American Democracy from Roman Catholic Authoritarianism". It may be had from him upon application.