

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

This monthly newsletter is sent free to editors, executives and institutions. In order to cover cost of production and mailing a charge of \$1.00 per year is made to all others.

OCTOBER, 1952

JOINT COMMITTEE ADVANCES

The semi-annual session of the Committee, October 7, well-attended and on the whole harmonious, marked signal advance toward attainment of the high ideal set by the Conventions when they established the Committee.

Much interest centered in the report of C. E. Bryant, who during the past summer, on behalf of the Committee, undertook the important, pioneering task of research into use of public tax funds for church purposes. There was disappointment that his elaborate detailed report to the Committee could not be adequately considered in the session. It was explained by the Director that the Bryant report in this form was intended primarily (1) for students of the question who might wish to examine it at any time; (2) for future use of the office in dealing privately and publicly with the question on a factual basis; (3) for an unpropagandizing statement of findings to be regarded as the result of a scientific effort to ascertain the facts on the widest scale, whether as violations of the First Amendment as accepted or alleged, entirely without regard to what the Joint Committee itself might construe as real violations or not; and (4) while already fully authorized by Joint Committee vote, this scientific research would remain in the custody of the Committee, entirely at the disposal of the Committee for such use as the Committee might wish to make of it in the future. It was felt by the full Committee in session that there should be a studied digest of the extended report, with suitable evaluation and Committee approval, in publishable form in order that the public may understand the Committee's estimate of an effort which has already received nationwide attention from the Baptists and especially from those outside the ranks of the denomination.

The Joint Committee, by formal vote, offered thanks to Mr. Bryant, to Baylor University and others for making the research possible. Dr. Brimm, as Secretary, wrote Mr. Bryant, "We regret that you were unable to be present to tell us many of the things which you must have encountered in the course of your research, but which you were not able to include in the report. It would have been most helpful to have had your interpretation of matters as you found them." To President White of Baylor University he wrote, "It was pointed out by the Committee as this report was discussed that its effects will be felt down through the years ahead."

A pleasing incident of the Committee was to welcome into participation a representative of the Baptist General Conference of America (Swedish Baptists of the United States) and to receive assurance of future participation by the North American Baptist Conference (German Baptists of the United States).

All officers were re-elected: E. B. Willingham, Washington, D. C., president, W. P. Binns, William Jewell College, vice president; Hugh A. Brimm, Louisville, Kentucky, Secretary; and E. H. DeGroot, Jr., Washington, D. C., Treasurer. Application to the supporting agencies for some increase in funds was approved. Date of the next session was fixed for March 10, 1953.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC SITUATIONS

D. B. Cloward, Chairman

We believe it to be the duty of all citizens in a democracy to register and vote in national, state and municipal elections. We therefore call upon Baptists of our several conventions to consider both their duty and responsibility as Christian citizens to cast their vote November 4, after prayerful study of the party platforms and the qualifications of the several candidates running on these platforms.

General elections in America have always brought vital issues to the people for discussion and action. In this election year the issues are even more crucial inasmuch as they affect more than the security and well being of one nation -- they affect the peace and security of the entire world.

Candidates for both the high offices of the national government as well as those for local and state office ought to be supported on the basis of personal fitness as well as their stand on the issues involved, rather than their stand on one or two issues.

We would strongly urge the establishment of the highest standards of ethics for men and women in public office. We condemn without qualification the acceptance of bribes in any form by public servants. At the same time we condemn as equally guilty those who offer such bribes for personal advantage or corporate gain.

We feel that the basic reforms in the whole structure of government will come only when as citizens we participate intelligently and fully in local as well as national concerns, as we realize that the moral climate of the nation is usually set by the quality of local government.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND WORLD ISSUES

W. P. Binns, Chairman

In that each of the cooperating Baptist Conventions of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has supported from its founding the United Nations, the Committee now urges that the Government of the United States and other member nations give financial and moral support adequate to the opportunities which challenge the Organization. As one such opportunity we point out in particular the beneficial results of its expanding Technical Assistance program. Since the United States in the past three years has shifted the purpose of its foreign aid program from bolstering peacetime economy to building up military economy, the UN Technical Assistance program becomes the major force for raising basic living standards in needy areas of the world. We urge the extension of this program and of the related point four program of the United States Government.

As Baptists believing in freedom of conscience and the right of every individual group to freedom of worship, we protest the continued persecution of both Roman Catholics and Protestants in the various Communist dominated countries. This continued persecution is a vivid denial of Communist propaganda that the forces of Communism are the defenders of peace and the welfare of the common citizen.

In view of the difficulties which certain religious bodies are facing in some countries today, we as Baptists who have always stood for the principles of religious liberty for all people, would call attention once more to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which has been agreed to by the countries comprising the United Nations. We would underscore especially Article 18, which reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or

belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

With regard to recent news dispatches from Italy concerning the restriction of public worship, we commend our State Department for the prompt and clear statement in support of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and our treaty with Italy. We would voice again our concern for the exercise of religious liberty, especially in those nations which have given their endorsement of this ideal.

We note with gratitude and approval the positive stand which has been taken on behalf of religious liberty by India, Burma, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. It should be remembered that each of these countries has a strong indigenous religion of its own, but nevertheless has kept its doors open to the representatives of other faiths, and guaranteed to all the people the right to choose their own religion, and to change their religious loyalties as they wish.

We would express our continued concern over the situation in Columbia, South America, and express the hope that both church and state authorities there will protect the rights of minorities in the exercise of their religious convictions.

We must state quite frankly our growing concern over reports that are circulated from time to time that foreign aid funds provided by our government are sometimes used to promote the program and interests of religious bodies in other lands, and would request our officials who administer these funds to exercise great care in seeing to it that the same principles of the separation of church and state which operate in this country be observed in our expenditures of American money and the use of American property abroad.

* * *

HEAVY SCHEDULE OF ADDRESSES

The Executive Director is undertaking an unusually heavy schedule of addresses in the month of October. He will speak at Salisbury, Maryland; Rockford, Illinois; Nashville, Tennessee; Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro and Lenoir, North Carolina; Logan, West Virginia; Malden, Massachusetts and New York. The occasions of these addresses include dedication of a church building for religious education, dinner discussion of the citizen's duty to his government; Baptist history, Reformation Day, and present perils to religious liberty. November and December are scarcely less crowded.

* * *

PRECEDENT FOR JOINT COMMITTEE

According to A History of the Baptists, by Robert G. Torbet, Isaac Backus of Boston, one of the foremost colonial contenders of separation of church and state, set the precedent for the establishment of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs nearly two hundred years later. This indefatigable advocate of religious liberty operated among the colonial Baptists at large under the direction of the Warren Association. The Backus Historical Society at the Andover Newton Theological Seminary has collected hundreds of items which show that he worked along lines substantially the same as those now undertaken by the Joint Committee. John Adams told Backus that he might as well expect the solar system to change as for Massachusetts to give up establishment, but apparently the stars in their courses fought to bring this to pass.

* * *

BOOKS HEARING ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Your Rugged Constitution, by Bruce and Esther Findlay. Science Research Associates, Chicago. This is a unique and invaluable pictorial and succinct presentation of the Constitution, of service particularly to those in public relations work.

America's Greatest Challenge, by Walter E. Myer and Clay Coss. Civic Education Service, Washington, D. C., \$2.75. In line with findings of the recent National Citizenship Conference, held jointly under the auspices of the National Education Association and the Department of Justice, this book makes a distinct contribution to vital elements in training and equipping citizens for responsibilities in government. It makes an especial appeal to ministers and civic leaders.

A Centenary History by Adolf Olson. Baptist Conference Press, 5750 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, \$7.50. Dr. Olson has traced the history of Swedish Baptists and the Baptist General Conference of America through a century in this large volume. It constitutes an important addition to Baptist history. Not to be ignored is an accompanying booklet, Centenary Glimpses, by Martin Erikson.

BAPTISTS HAVE ONE-THIRD OF ALL PROTESTANT CHURCHES

One-third of all Protestant Churches in the United States are Baptist Churches. One-fifth of all Protestants in the United States are Baptists belonging to one of 11 Baptist bodies in America, says Penn Baptist.

There are 79,546 Baptist Churches with 17,065,572 members. All of the Churches of 70 major Protestant denominations number 266,526; they enroll 87,081,504 members.

These facts were reported on the basis of 1951 statistics in the Yearbook of American Churches, published on September 15 by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Following is the table of the eleven largest Baptist groups.



<u>Baptist Bodies</u>	<u>Number of Churches Reported</u>	<u>Inclusive Church Membership</u>
American Baptist Convention	6,706	1,554,304
Southern Baptist Convention	28,289	7,373,498
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.	25,350	4,467,779
National Baptist Convention of America.....	10,851	2,645,789
American Baptist Association	2,105	286,691
Free Will Baptists'	2,700	400,000
General Baptists'	654	50,487
Natl. Baptist Evangelical Life and Soul Saving Assembly of U.S.A.	254	57,674
Natl. Primitive Baptist Convention of U.S.A.	1,009	79,000
Primitive Baptists	1,000	72,000
United American Free Will Baptist Church	618	78,350
Totals	79,546	17,065,572