

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

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JANUARY, 1953

A NEW ADMINISTRATION BEGINS

With Inauguration Day Washington has a new face. The meaning of all this will be interpreted differently by individual citizens throughout the country, but everywhere apparently there is hope of a new and better era. Without at the moment seeking to analyze the issues and appraise members of the Government, we note the religious attitudes.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Mrs. Eisenhower have chosen the National Presbyterian Church as their place of worship in Washington, D. C. The historic church, of which Dr. Edward L. R. Elson is pastor, counts five previous presidents among its former worshippers. General Eisenhower is not a member of any church but calls himself a "Protestant." Mrs. Eisenhower is a Presbyterian.

Vice President Richard Nixon and his wife are Quakers.

Cabinet members-designate of the next President, it is reported, include three Presbyterians, two Episcopalians, and one each Methodist, Mormon, Unitarian and Roman Catholic. They are affiliated as follows: John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, Presbyterian; Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, Presbyterian; Arthur E. Summerfield, Postmaster General, Presbyterian; Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense, Episcopalian; George M. Humphrey, Secretary of the Treasury, Episcopalian; Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General, Methodist; Ezra Taft Benson, Secretary of Agriculture, Mormon; Sinclair Weeks, Secretary of Commerce, Unitarian; and Martin A. Durkin, Secretary of Labor, Roman Catholic.

As to religious affiliations of Senators, the Methodists lead with 19. There are 13 Baptists, 12 each of Presbyterians and Episcopalians; 10 Roman Catholics, seven Congregationalists, five Lutherans, four Disciples of Christ, two Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), and two Unitarians. The following religious groups have one Senator each: Christian Science, Friends, Jewish Congregation, and the Latter Day Saints (Reorganized). One Senator withholds information as to his religious affiliation, and four others simply list themselves as "Protestants."

In the House there are 434 members. It is reported that 331 have indicated their religious affiliations as follows: Protestants, 76 per cent; Roman Catholic, 18 per cent; Jewish, 3 per cent; all others, 3 per cent.

It should be observed that religious pressures exerted upon public officials are most powerful when they come from areas where a particular church either dominates or constitutes a balance of power in one or the other of the great political parties. Watch this in the months ahead. This accounts for the fact that a group that seems proportionately small may yet secure marked congressional or presidential consideration.

PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Will the appointment of Clare Boothe Luce as United States Ambassador to Italy impede the progress of religious liberty there? She is an ardent Roman Catholic who has shown a pronounced propagandizing tendency. Not a few Protestants have expressed solicitude over the appointment. While no one should be denied selection for public office on the grounds of identification with a particular religious faith, the question is should anyone be chosen for public office on the grounds of holding to a certain faith?

The press reports that Egypt's Supreme Court has upheld freedom of worship as the inherent right of every Egyptian. The Egyptian government has also agreed to simplify conditions required for permits to build places of worship. The reform appears to have resulted from an appeal made by Coptic Christians. If as reported, this represents a gratifying advance over the intolerance of other Mohammedan countries.

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A resolution calling upon the State Department to protect the legal rights of Baptists in foreign mission stations to worship freely was adopted by the Alabama Baptist Convention at its annual meeting. It cited "instances of religious persecution which have occurred in Italy, Spain and South America this year."

The world will watch the attempt to work out Church-State Relations in Yugoslavia. Will Tito, a Communist, albeit outside the orbit of Russia, permit freedom to the Roman Catholic Church? Is his proscription of Vatican control over the Roman Catholic Church final?

TOWARD ALLAYING PROTESTANT-CATHOLIC TENSIONS

The death of Thomas Sugrue, distinguished Roman Catholic author, removes from the American scene a conciliatory force in relation to Roman Catholic-Protestant tensions. His contentions, had they been adopted by the hierarchy, would have occasioned improved feelings between the two faiths.

At South Bend, Indiana, a Notre Dame professor has pleaded for better contacts and cooperation. He exhorts his Romanist colleagues not to fear compromising their faith if they should refuse to stand aloof in isolation but should work together with men of good will for "worthy objectives."

In Milwaukee the American Catholic Sociological Society was told that tensions between Protestants and Roman Catholics could be harmful to America and should be the subject of professional research. The warning was voiced to the Society's 14th annual convention by two Catholic sociologists who agreed that Protestant-Catholic tension was becoming serious.

The sociologists were Louis A. Radelt of New York, director of the Commission on Community Organizations of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and Frank Fahey, sociology instructor at Nazareth College, Nazareth, Mich.

Mr. Fahey, one of these, reported on the results of a survey he conducted with John J. Kane, an associate professor of sociology at Notre Dame University, among 49 Protestant ministers in a midwestern community. Almost 90 per cent of the ministers felt that Protestant-Catholic tension was increasing, Mr. Fahey said. About 98 per cent, he said, believed recent attempts to appoint a U. S. envoy to the Vatican had added to the tension.

According to the survey, 91.8 per cent of the clergymen believed that if Roman Catholics became a majority in the U. S., they would strongly influence American society toward less democratic procedures and principles. Three-quarters of the ministers sur-

veyed said Protestants were more tolerant of Catholics than Roman Catholics were of Protestants and that Romanists were becoming more powerful and prominent in national politics. The Protestant clergymen felt that religious beliefs were the area of greatest tension, followed by federal aid to education, international affairs, domestic policies, the Vatican envoy question and censorship, Mr. Fahey said.

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GROWING OPPOSITION TO POSSIBLE VATICAN APPOINTMENT

The National Council of Churches, in the biennial session at Denver, unanimously opposed diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, in its Fifth National Conference held in Washington's Constitution Hall, emphatically pronounced against any such relations.

The Southern Baptist Executive Committee, in its December session in Nashville, adopted a resolution expressing the hope that "the new administration will not renew any form of diplomatic relations with the Vatican or any other ecclesiastical body.

The Nashville action was in accord with motions adopted in many Baptist state conventions and by many general pastors' associations throughout the country.

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COLOR LINES FADING?

From New York comes a report that President Dwight D. Eisenhower pledged a group of 12 Negro clergymen that he would appoint a commission to "get all the facts" on the treatment of minority groups in the United States. Representatives of the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches in America, an organization claiming a membership of 7,000,000 Negroes, headed by Dr. W. H. Jernagin of Washington, D. C., the organization's executive committee chairman, asked for the action. Eisenhower professed "amazement that Negroes were still barred" from some hotels in this country. An eight-point program presented by the group was "favorably" received by General Eisenhower, and evoked his comment that he was "determined to do what is right under the law."

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The Executive Director of this Committee was among those appearing before the President's Commission on Immigration. He spoke at the request of the Baptist World Alliance in behalf of some revision of the McCarran Act. One outcome of the Act, however, has received wide acclaim from religious leaders, and that was the abolition of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Of its passing Dr. Edward B. Willingham, chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said "America, as the great melting pot, has demonstrated the principles of Christian human relationships."

"As we strive to build up goodwill among people of all continents," he said, "this is a good opportunity to show that our ideals can work with all people."

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DENOMINATIONAL HOSPITALS MAKE NEWS

Religious News Service reports from Martinsburg, W. Va., that the Roman Catholic Sisters of the Holy Ghost will complete a 100-bed addition to Kings Daughters Hospital, which they operate there, without the Federal funds they have been seeking unsuccessfully for nearly two years.

Application for a government grant under the Hill-Burton Act was made by the order before it started work on the addition 21 months ago. But the West Virginia Board of Health delayed forwarding the application because "the necessary papers were not in order."

Mrs. Ralph Fisher of Moorefield, a board member, also said that three Martinsburg residents, including two Protestant pastors, had opposed the grant on the ground that it involved the use of public funds for church purposes.

Meanwhile, work on the building had to be halted, with the addition about half-completed, when the sisters' funds were exhausted.

A sum of \$500,000, which the order had been holding in escrow to put up against the requested \$1,100,000 in Federal funds, will now be released to complete the work--on a smaller scale--along with another \$150,000 raised by the sisters from private sources.

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At Winston-Salem, N. C., the Wake Forest University Hospital has been given \$65,000 to construct a memorial chapel for its department of religion. It hopes to become an outstanding training center for religious counselors and hospital chaplains in the South.

The gift was made by the Atlas Supply Company in honor of Egbert L. Davis, president of the hospital's board of trustees for 20 years, and the late Mrs. Davis, first chairman of the hospital's women's auxiliary. Reid Holmes, administrator of the hospital, said the new chapel should be completed in about a year and will make possible "a forward step in our religious program that could not have been accomplished in any other way." It will accommodate more than 100 worshippers in pews and has additional space for wheel-chair and stretcher-borne patients, he said. The building also will include private rooms for conferences between patients' families and ministers or doctors, as well as offices for the hospital chaplain and the director of the department of religion.

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BOOKS RECEIVED AND COMMENDED

The following books of interest to all who wish to keep informed on current public affairs are commended by this office:

- Ideas of the Great Economists, by George Soule. The Viking Press, New York. \$3.50.
- A Many-Splendored Thing, by Han Suyin. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, \$3.75.
- Paul Bunyan, Last of the Frontier Demigods, by Daniel G. Hoffman. University of Pennsylvania Press for Temple University Publications, Philadelphia, \$4.50.
- Monopoly and Social Control, by Henry A. Wells. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C. (Phone for price.)
- Jefferson and the Rights of Man, by Dumas Malone. Little, Brown and Company, Boston. \$6.00.
- The Life and Good Times of William Randolph Hearst, by John Tebbel. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York. \$4.00.
- Canada, The Golden Hinge, by Leslie Roberts. Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York. \$3.50.
- Verdict in Korea, by Robert T. Oliver. Bald Eagle Press, State College, Pa. \$4.00.

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