

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

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APRIL, 1953

THE BAPTIST CONVENTIONS AND THEIR JOINT COMMITTEE

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has adopted its annual report to be submitted to its supporting Conventions. At Houston the Southern Baptist Convention has assigned a choice period on Friday evening, May 8, for receiving the report from the Executive Director. At Denver the American Convention has allocated thirty minutes to an address to be given by the Executive Director on Tuesday afternoon, May 26. Our report in full will appear in the book of reports at each Convention, so is not published here. Suffice it to say that the Committee is able to report a year of substantial progress with a record of achievements and faces the new denominational year with widespread and enthusiastic support.

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CONCERNING A SUCCESSOR TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the meeting of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, March 24, the Executive Director submitted the following request:

Dear Brethren:

For nearly seven years I have had the pleasure and honor of serving you as Executive Director. The day inevitably approaches for one of my age to retire. Anticipating the event of retirement, perhaps you would think it wise to appoint a representative committee to recommend the best procedure for selecting a successor, to be followed at the time of my contemplated resignation. Having given the matter much thought and having sought advice on the subject from a number, it appears well to make a request that, in the interest of the stability and continuity of the work in future years and to save precipitate action at any time, you provide a plan for carrying it forward in a manner to preserve the utmost cooperation as enjoyed during these years of my term of service. Doubtless the special committee with its recommendations could be ready to report at the autumn session.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph M. Dawson

In response to this request, the Committee authorized the appointment of a special committee of 9 members to bring in a report at the October 13 session concerning administrative procedure and future policy. After due consideration Chairman E. B. Willingham named as members of this subcommittee: American Baptists--Reuben E. Nelson, W. B. Liphard, Mrs. G. B. Martin, D. B. Cloward; Southern Baptists--Porter Routh, W. P. Binns, George B. Fraser, A. C. Miller; National Baptists--Benjamin E. Mays.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON WORLD ISSUES
March 24, 1953

(As our newsletter goes to press hearings on the Bricker Resolution are being conducted. President Eisenhower, Secretary of State Dulles, Attorney General Brownell stoutly oppose the Resolution. Most religious bodies and civic groups which support the United Nations, while deeply concerned for safeguarding the national sovereignty, believe that the Resolution poses a departure from our historic policy and a threat to the United States' proper participation in international affairs. They hope, therefore, that the Resolution will be defeated. -- Editor, Report from the Capital.)

I. We call the attention of our several conventions to the Resolution (S.J. Res. 1) introduced by Senator Bricker with 63 co-sponsors, which would limit the scope of the government's power to conclude treaties and Executive Agreements, by way of an Amendment to the Constitution.

We believe (1) that although treaties are the supreme law of the land, Supreme Court decisions make it quite clear that a treaty cannot be used to abridge rights guaranteed under the Constitution; (2) that it is essential to our security for the Federal government to be able to deal with emergencies arising in world affairs; (3) that the proposed amendment would prevent us from participating in any kind of a disarmament plan, any international control of atomic energy, and the effective continuance of our Reciprocal Trade program; (4) and that if this proposed amendment were adopted it would make it very difficult for the U. S. to work with and through the United Nations.

Since we feel that the U. N. is at present our best instrument for peace, and that the passage of this amendment would seriously hinder our government's efforts toward world understanding and peace, we therefore urge our people to give the matter prayerful study and consideration and then proceed to take effective action.

II. Point IV Program --

We are deeply concerned that the gains already made under the Point IV program should not be jeopardized by an unimaginative determination to cut government expenditures abroad regardless of consequences. While we recognize that curtailments in foreign aid will and must be made in the future, we are convinced that any program of curtailment must be geared to the realities of the situation in undeveloped and backward areas, and that the investments already made shall not be thrown away by a failure to continue assistance in certain situations in which humanitarian requirements justify it, and the benefits to the free world are so significant as to make any other course seem utterly foolish. As Christians we are not only concerned with preserving free institutions in a free society, but we are also concerned with human need wherever it is to be found. We therefore express the hope that the Point IV program will continue to receive the careful and sympathetic support of our people.

Respectfully submitted in behalf of
M. T. Rankin, Chairman, by

Mrs. G. B. Martin
Edward H. Pruden

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EXCERPTS FROM REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
March 24, 1953

A periodical survey of religious liberty, as of this day, would indicate the outlook for progress is hopeful. There are certain issues, however, both at home and abroad which admonish diligence. We must forever be alert to the danger from the waves, otherwise the tides may sweep our liberties away.

It would be a long step toward religious liberty everywhere if the principles of liberty outlined by the Vatican and set forth for the Government of Yugoslavia were observed in Italy, in Spain and throughout the world. As published, these requirements for the Roman Catholic Church are:

"(1) The faithful must be guaranteed freedom not only to frequent churches but also to manifest their faith. Nobody should be molested for these reasons or prevented from practicing his religion.

"(2) Catholic parents must have the right to have their children baptized and to have them educated in Catholic schools whose existence must be respected by the civil authorities.

"(3) Catholics must receive the right to have their own press.

"(4) Catholics must have the right also to found and contribute to associations of a religious, pious or charitable nature.

"(5) Catholics must be free to contribute toward maintaining their clergy and religion.

"(6) The faithful must be allowed to keep in touch with their bishops and clergy must suffer no impediment in preaching Christian doctrine and giving their flock religious assistance.

"(7) Catholic seminaries must be allowed and no obstacles thrown in the way of religious, charitable and teaching activities of religious congregations."

Baptists of America will agree that in stating these demands the Vatican has enunciated principles which each religious denomination would insist upon for itself in its own name.

CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS

Next to the reports of the death and burial of Stalin in Moscow, the Congressional investigations have crowded for space in the daily papers. They have not been overlooked in radio reports and discussions.

The investigations of the "Voice of America" and the threatened investigations of schools and colleges, and even of churches and ministers, have brought about legitimate concern on the part of thoughtful people in every section of our country.

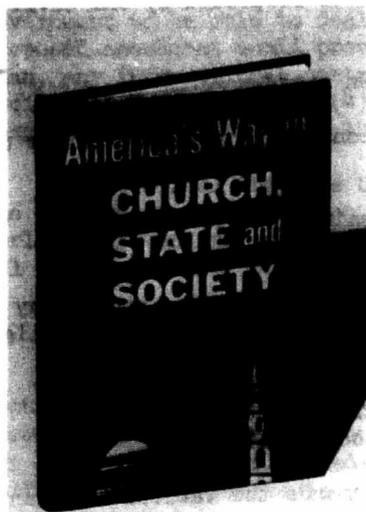
Surely we would not question the right, and even the duty, of Congressional committees to make investigations. This is a method which has been established by law and in practice across the years. Even Senate and Congressional committees, however, are obligated to recognize the rights of the people provided to them in the Bill of Rights. It

is possible that danger may arise from reckless use of power by men, who, by their methods, may come to be the tool for the promotion of communism rather than a means of eliminating Communists from any hurtful connection or position within our government.

When responsible commentators, eminent ministers, along with thoughtful editors, come forth to assail the motives and to point out the dangers involved in the methods being employed by Congressional investigating committees, the American people who love freedom do well to be on the alert. In some countries of the world the people have been robbed of their liberties by dominating groups from within, rather than the forces from without. We would express the conviction that the great body of our American people have not gone communistic, and that wise limitation should be placed upon the powers of those who would investigate them in the schools or in the churches.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest F. Campbell, Chairman pro tem
for Walter P. Binns, Chairman



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A BOOK GREATLY TO BE DESIRED

Primer on Roman Catholicism for Protestants, by Stanley I. Stuber. Association Press, New York, \$2.50.

A long awaited book, much needed by non-Catholics, is this. It represents a thoroughgoing study of authentic sources by a competent and trusted Baptist publicist. Within convenient compass it presents the essential differences between Roman Catholics and Protestants on all subjects. It is a rich mine of information offered in a usable handbook. We commend it to all who would have the essential facts.

This book might well be used in study groups, in counselling with those about to join a church, and assuredly should be in every church library.

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