

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.

JULY, 1953

SCURRILOUS ARTICLE WIDELY DENOUNCED

When J. B. Matthews, an employee of Senator Joseph McCarthy's Congressional Investigating Committee, published in the July American Mercury a scurrilous article which contained ugly charges against the Protestant ministry, the careless author met with a storm of rebuke over wide areas. He wrote: "The largest single group supporting the Communist apparatus in the United States today is composed of Protestant clergymen." The author then proceeded to call many names, including several Baptists, leaving the impression that Protestantism is a hotbed of subversion.

Perhaps no Baptist cited by him had a more pronounced anti-Communist record than Dr. Rufus W. Weaver, founder of the Joint Committee on Public Affairs for the Baptists of the United States, several years deceased. It happened that in the very year, 1941, in which Matthews alleges Weaver committed the offense, Weaver was writing his powerful book, THE REVOLT AGAINST GOD, in which he attacks the errors and crimes of Communism. Three Baptist ministers, J. W. Storer, president of the Southern Convention, and J. D. Grey and Louie D. Newton, former presidents, declare that of 27,000 Southern Baptist preachers, not one is known to be a Communist. Representative leaders of the American, National, and other Conventions give similar assurances. Is Matthews, a former Methodist minister, carrying a grudge for fancied injuries received in the past from his associates? Or are we to understand from statements in his article that he has deplorably fallen for the Roman Catholic claim of absolute purity with respect to Communism, to the disparagement of Protestants? Whatever his motives, the fact stands that Protestantism with its championship of the individual and essential human freedoms has incontrovertibly proved to be the strongest bulwark against Communism, fascism, and all forms of tyranny, throughout the whole world today.

* * *

MORE BAPTISTS PERSECUTED BY COMMUNISTS

To the long list of Communist persecutions of Baptists, such as killing Dr. William Wallace in China, must now be added another lamentable incident. A Communist court at Pardubice in eastern Bohemia has sentenced four Czechoslovakia Baptist leaders to prison terms ranging from 5-18 years for "espionage and sabotage", the Prague radio reported.

Dr. Jindrick Prochazka, former head of the Baptist training college at Prague was sentenced to 12 years.

Jan Ricar, Baptist Brotherly Union chairman for Czechoslovakia, 18 years.

Michel Kejsar, Slovakia chairman of the Union, 5 years.

Cyril Burget, secretary of the Baptist church in Prague, 7 years.

All were stripped of their rights as citizens and their property was confiscated, the broadcast said. According to the Prague Radio report, all four pleaded guilty to having "engaged in espionage and sabotage from 1945 through 1952 under the cloak of their religious activities and at the direction of the center of the World Baptist Union (Alliance) in the U.S.A."

* * *

WHY RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ITALY SUFFERS

We have received an important publication (not for sale) from the Legal Office of the Federal Council of Evangelical Churches in Italy, which after listing and describing specific cases of religious intolerance and oppression by the Government explains why this condition persists. The causes cited are:

1. The Roman Church under Jesuit leadership insists that the regulations set up by the Papal-Mussolini Concordat of 1929, rather than the Constitution of 1948, shall apply in all cases.
2. The Christian Democratic Party, backed by the Roman Church, has blocked the establishment of a constitutional court which might require the observance of the new Constitution.
3. The fanatical Minister of the Interior has exercised arbitrary powers toward suppression of religious minorities.
4. Publication of abuses is not made in the dominant party's press, and when Communist newspapers take note of them, the Protestants are labelled Communists, thus subjecting the sufferers to charges of hostility toward the United States.

* * *

PUBLIC AFFAIRS EPITOMIZED

The Senate having voted (viva voce) to extend the Hill-Burton Act for two years, the House is expected to follow. It really looks as if this matter must be appealed to the courts for final settlement of its constitutionality. Baptists have a near-perfect record for declining tax aid for their hospitals.

The courts have ruled that Dr. W. S. Abernethy, emeritus pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., must pay income tax on \$200 per month received as an honorarium from his former parishioners.

According to a national survey conducted by the Catholic Digest, Baptists lead all other groups in the number of church members -- 67% -- who promote their faith in the endeavor to recruit others. Good for our soul winners!

On June 15, Congressman Heselton introduced H.R. 5722, a bill to amend Section 7 of the War Claims Act of 1948, which primarily benefits the Roman Catholic Church and is, therefore, to be regarded as class legislation. By it the Archbishop of Manila will be put into position to receive approximately thirty millions of dollars for claims previously denied by the War Claims Commission for good reason.

The public should be warned that the Watkins bill for amending the McCarran Immigration Act is intended merely to increase the quotas, thus allowing 75,000 more Italians, and does not provide for the admittance of more refugees, as the President recommended. Everyone should stand for an "all-refugee" bill.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has cooperated with other religious groups in an appeal to the Department of State to use its diplomatic influence with the Austrian Parliament to allow churches now discriminated against to own property in Austria. At present only Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches may legally hold property as church organizations there.

In the meeting of the Baptist World Alliance Executive Committee in Green Lake, Wisconsin, June 23-26, the Executive Director of the Public Affairs Committee served as proxy for Dr. Henry Cook of London, President of the All-European Baptist Federation. It is assured that the World Congress, to be held in London in July, 1955, will give emphatic attention to the cause of religious liberty in every land.

In the passing of Secretary M. T. Rankin of the Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board, the Public Affairs Committee has suffered great loss. Dr. Rankin served as chairman of our sub-committee on World Situations and brought to his task remarkable acquaintance with global matters together with extreme felicity of expression.

Secretary John Maguire of the Florida Baptist Convention, in a letter to the Public Affairs Committee, corrects the false impression conveyed in a newspaper interview some time past. He states that Baptists would be the last to establish a system of parochial schools in Florida and have no intention of disobeying a possible United States Supreme Court decision adverse to segregation in the public schools.

The Baptist churches of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, have withdrawn from support of Bible Classes in the public schools. They assign as reasons: 1. That the instruction is entirely Protestant, admittedly sectarian. 2. That these sectarian classes are conducted in the school buildings clearly in violation of the United States Constitution as interpreted by the McCollum decision by the United States Supreme Court.

While opposed to censorship in general, the Executive Director of the Baptist Public Affairs Committee appeared in support of H.R. 569 which would exclude obscene matters from the mails. The bill omits the word "blasphemy", which some groups are seeking to insert to prevent protection from criticism of law violations of which they are guilty.

Our Sunday Visitor, Roman Catholic weekly says: "In the cities of the north Catholics constitute an average of 31% of the entire population. In some cities they number better than 40% of 50% or even 60%. Hence every third person, or every two out of five, or even every other person, is a Catholic. In the fifty largest cities in the United States there live 24,000,000 Catholics and no more than 8,000,000 affiliated Protestants. Hence the non-Church-goers are acquainted with three times as many Catholics as Protestants."

Senator Lister Hill, who persistently ignores the United States Constitution, which forbids application of tax funds to churches, as in the Hill-Burton Act for church hospitals, is still endeavoring to have tax revenue from Federal owned submerged oil lands apply to church schools as well as public schools.

The Indiana Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional a statute which forbade raffles and lotteries, but exempted churches and fraternal organizations from this prohibition.

4.
The court pointed to a clause in the state constitution which forbids giving one class of citizens any privilege which is not extended to all citizens. If gambling is wrong, it is wrong for everyone. The use of its profits for moral purposes doesn't make immorality moral.----Washington Times-Herald.

AUTHORITIES PRONOUNCE THIS A "MUST" BOOK

The American Library Association declares the book should be in every library. The Religious Book Club agrees.

"This Washington author has read everything, remembered, critically examined. His book is, of course, a must for everyone interested in this field."----Washington Post.

"The book appears at a glance to be a most worthwhile study, and I hope to find time to do it justice."----Dwight D. Eisenhower

"I shall read the book with interest."----Paul Hoffman, Chairman of the Ford Foundation.

"Dr. Dawson has made an important semantic contribution to the argument by clearing the word 'secular' of the sinister quality given it by some who are looking for a convenient cuss word."----Edwin McNeill Poteat in Raleigh News and Observer.

"I am profiting tremendously by your masterful presentation."----Representative Brooks Hays.

"With a forthrightness that is as timely as it is informed the author states the case for complete separation of church and state."----The Baptist Program, Southern Baptist Convention.

Price: \$2.50 per copy; in ordering from this office add 25 cents for protective mailing.

Name _____

Address _____

AN EXHAUSTIVE BOOK OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

A book of 675 pages, CHURCH, STATE, AND FREEDOM, by Leo Pfeffer, is put forth by the publishers, the Beacon Press, Boston, as "the first full-length treatment of the explosive church-state issue, by a specialist in law." It is worth many times its price of ten dollars. The able author declares his purpose is to examine America's radical experiment which is unique in human history, how it came to be made, what its implications and consequences are in application to democratic living today, and what forces are seeking to frustrate and defeat that experiment. No one can fail to find it comprehensive, authoritative, absolutely fair. The answers to all the questions are in it. It will therefore long remain a classic for consultation. After reading it one feels more grateful than ever that the American system of church-state separation came into being under inspired founders, and is convinced that it will abide as long as sincere, competent citizens like Pfeffer live to expound it.