

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS



The American Baptist Convention
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CHURCH AND STATE MEET IN THE POST OFFICE

In 1954 Congress passed a bill which would have granted Post Office Department employees a five per cent salary increase. This bill was vetoed by President Eisenhower, chiefly because it did not provide a method for increasing postal revenues to help finance the cost of the higher salaries.

Legislation is now pending, and will probably pass, providing for a general salary increase and reclassification of postal employees. Even without the expected increase in salaries, it is estimated that the Post Office Department deficit for the fiscal year 1955 will be \$313 million. This demonstrates the need for increased revenue to offset the larger expenditure for salaries, if the proposed bill is passed by Congress and signed by the President.

To meet this need, Representative Tom Murray of Tennessee, chairman of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, has introduced a bill, H.R. 2988, with the approval of the Post Office Department. This would provide \$343 million in additional postal income through boosting postage rates on first-class letters, second-class newspapers and magazines, and third-class books and advertising circulars.

The pending bill includes a provision that there will be no change in the present second-class rate of 1.5¢ per pound on newspapers and magazines published by non-profit organizations. For other publishers, however, an increase of 30 per cent is proposed, to take effect in two steps over a period of two years. The following table, based on information in a recent issue of Congressional Quarterly, shows how the second-class postal rate for non-profit organizations compares with present and proposed rates on other publications:

Postal Zones	Non-profit Organizations	Other Publishers		
	Rate per Lb.	Present Rate per Lb.	Proposed for 1955	Proposed for 1956
First, Second Zones	1.5¢	1.95¢	2.2¢	2.5¢
Third Zone	1.5¢	2.6¢	3.0¢	3.5¢
Fourth Zone	1.5¢	3.9¢	4.5¢	5.0¢
Fifth Zone	1.5¢	5.2¢	6.0¢	7.0¢
Sixth Zone	1.5¢	6.5¢	7.5¢	8.5¢
Seventh Zone	1.5¢	7.8¢	9.0¢	10.0¢
Eighth Zone	1.5¢	9.1¢	10.5¢	12.0¢

This preferential treatment for non-profit organizations obviously creates a policy problem for us Baptists who are committed to the fullest measure of separation of church and state.

To be sure, we have not asked for any consideration, but neither have we resisted the system. Perhaps some studies would be in order to determine the nature of the problems and the costs involved in freeing ourselves from this kind of dependence upon government favor?

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THE NEW NATIONAL RESERVE BILL

H.R. 2967, introduced January 25, 1955, was the original proposal for a new enlarged military reserve. Hearings on this bill were held by the sub-committee of the House Armed Services Committee February 8-March 25, resulting in a revised bill, H.R. 5297. The revised bill was approved by the sub-committee March 27, and has since then been in the full House Armed Services Committee. On April 27 it was sent to the Rules Committee for scheduling on the House floor. Predictions are that debate will begin on the Floor between May 4 and May 13.

Among the interested church groups, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, under the competent leadership of Mr. E. Raymond Wilson, have followed the bill most closely. They summarize as follows the 28-page bill, copies of which may be secured from the Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.:

I. The Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951 is amended to provide:

A. An effective 8-year period of military obligation for all men who enter the Armed Forces for service or training. Part of this obligation may be fulfilled by required duties in the Reserves. (p. 2, H.R. 5297.)

B. A new program under which:

- (1) Young men under 19 (and certain others with "critical skills") may enlist for 6-months military training and 7½ years of service in the Ready Reserve (Army Reserve or National Guard). (pp. 5-7.)
- (2) Failure to perform Reserve duties would make the trainee subject to induction in the Armed Forces for another 24 months active service, etc. (p. 9.)
- (3) The number of men enlisted annually in this program is set by the President between statutory limits of 100,000 and 250,000. (p. 6.)
- (4) The National Security Training Commission is to advise with the Department of Defense and report to Congress on the welfare of trainees. (p. 6.)
- (5) Enlistments under this program cease July 1, 1959, unless the date is extended by Congress. (p. 5.)

- C. Should recruitment efforts by the states for their National Guard fail to procure the desired number of enlistments, and the state authorities request them, former 2-year draftees and/or 6-month trainees may be assigned by Federal authorities to these programs. (p. 3.)

II. The Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 is amended to provide:

- A. Authority for the Reserve Forces to organize and train up to 2,900,000 men in an available force known as the Ready Reserve. These are to be supplemented by an unspecified number of inactive, selectively callable men known as the Standby Reserve. Both groups consist of men with unexpired military service obligations. (See I.A., above.) (p. 13.)
- B. (1) Mandatory performance of 48 weekly drills or other training, plus 17 days active training by Ready Reservists. Alternative to this is 30 days active camp training. (pp. 13, 22.)
- (2) Punishment for those Ready Reservists who fail to perform adequately. They may be ordered and required, subject to court martial, to train for 45 days and lose certain economic benefits of service. (p. 22.)
- (3) Opportunity to reduce time in the Ready Reserve for persons with 2, 3, or 4 years of active service in the Armed Forces. They may, if they fulfill required duties satisfactorily, discharge their Ready Reserve obligations in 3, 2, and 1 years respectively: i.e. a total of 5 years in active duty and Ready Reserve combined. (p. 16.)
- (4) Permission for the President, in time of emergency, to call up to a million Ready Reservists, without prior authorization of Congress. (pp. 21f.)
- (5) Exemption from drill for persons who served actively in the Armed Forces prior to July 27, 1953, end of the Korean War. (p. 13.)
- (6) Deferment from their Ready Reserve duties upon their request for Ready Reservists who become ministerial students or ministers. (pp. 3f.)
- C. Standby Reservists are not required to take active drill or training and would ordinarily be men who had completed stated periods of Reserve training. They would be subject to selective recall in the event of war or national emergency declared by Congress. (p. 14.)

- III. The National Defense Act is amended to provide that a state may set up an organized militia for its own use when the National Guard may be called away; these state defense units are not available as such to the Armed Forces; the new militia is to be composed of men not eligible for active duty or for the Reserves. (pp. 24f.)

Friends Committee on National Legislation pertinent comments on the bill include the following:

"This new program is a pilot-UMT project. Proponents declare it is not UMT because of the ceiling on size, the enlistment clause, the review date. However, the passage of this bill carries us most of the way to universal military training. Drafting, enlarging, and extending become easy finishing touches which a weary public will not be able to resist: We must recognize the dynamics of military encroachment behind this bill."

"An expansion of the Ready Reserve from present active strength of 800,000 to the proposed 2,900,000 means 2 million more men would be involved in the compulsory service than are now in the voluntary. Besides the tremendous costs in money and time, morale problems would be multiplied, for under compulsion inefficiency and low morale would find optimum conditions for development in the Army Reserve already noted for maladministration and neglect."

"The teeth in the compulsory Reserve requirement are the power to court martial a man who neglects or refuses his Reserve duty. Problems of discipline will be many, as training encroaches on family needs, job schedules, take-home pay, vacation time, summer work of farmers, etc."

"The President now has the power to direct the 3 million men in the Armed Forces. This bill adds to that power one now reserved to Congress, i.e. to call out a million Reservists from civilian life in case of an emergency he declares."

THE "SECRETARY OF PEACE"

The news of the appointment of the prominent Baptist layman, Mr. Harold Stassen, to be a special presidential assistant on disarmament with full cabinet rank was read with great interest across the nation. It is sincerely to be hoped that Christians all over the world will give much thought and prayer to the undergirding of this novel development in our nation's political life.

To look at the appointment simply as the finding of a new job for Mr. Stassen, with the expiration of the Foreign Operations Administration due on June 30, or as the grasping of a propaganda opportunity, is to neglect the new status of war which has resulted from A- and H-bombs. Through the centuries past there have been gains to be had for some by means of war. For the first time in history self-interest now requires all peoples and all classes to be genuinely desirous that major wars be avoided.

In the past all nations have spent enormous sums for defense and for war. What we and other nations will be willing to forego in order to have peace remains to be seen. At this point Mr. Stassen and America merit our concern in the first instance, then our interests must encompass the world.