

# REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

## BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS



The American Baptist Convention  
The Southern Baptist Convention  
The National Baptist Convention of America  
The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.  
The North American Baptist General Conference  
The Baptist General Conference of America



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### LIBERTY AND THE MILITARY SERVICES

Individual liberties do not integrate easily with military organization. In the long story of military effort the human person with his rights and potential seldom appeared as the highest value. When viewed against the background of this long story, it will probably be agreed that the American armed services have made noble efforts toward the recognition of the personal liberties which constitute a part of our way of life. This effort, however, is not without problems, many of which are becoming more apparent now as we move into a time of armed preparedness during peace time.

### CHAPLAIN'S GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

Two organizations which have interested themselves in the problems of the conscientious objector have recently cooperated to publish a guide which contains the basic information that the chaplain will need in dealing with the conscientious objectors in the Armed Forces. The guide is published by the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, 2006 Walnut Street, Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania, and the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, 401 Third Street, N. W., Washington 1, D. C.

The meaning of the term "conscientious objector" is considerably clarified by their description of the varieties of objection:

"Many people have scruples against war, but the 'cutoff line' of refusal to participate differs.

"There is a large group of men whose conscientious objection has led them to establish this 'cutoff line' at the point of entering combatant service. They enter the Armed Forces with a I-A-O classification (available for noncombatant service only). Or they are drafted with a I-A classification but seek a noncombatant assignment after entering the Armed Forces. This is probably the most numerous group which Chaplains will encounter.

"Another group has established their conscientious objection at the point of entering the Armed Forces. Military duty of any type is a violation of their consciences. The vast majority of these are in civilian work. Some, however, are in prison because they were denied the I-O classification, a prerequisite for civilian work. They refused induction into the Armed Forces, were brought to trial, and sentenced.

"A small group of conscientious objectors approach the 'absolutist' position. Some of these refuse civilian work even though granted

the I-O classification. Still others do not register with Selective Service. Both of these groups are sentenced to prison. Some have been sentenced two or three times.

"Conscientious objectors take these various positions for a great many different reasons. The majority are objectors on religious grounds and only religious objectors are recognized by the draft law. However, some men object to participation in the Armed Forces or combatant duty on ethical, political, or philosophical grounds."

The section of the pamphlet which deals with the religious backgrounds of the objectors is also enlightening: "Conscientious objectors are recognized by practically all religious bodies including Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, and others. Statements of Religious Bodies on the Conscientious Objector lists excerpts from pronouncements of 57 religious bodies giving recognition to conscientious objectors."

The various classifications which are available under the Selective Service Regulations are listed as follows:

- Class I-A-O: Conscientious Objector Available for Noncombatant Military Service Only;
- Class I-O: Conscientious Objector Available for Civilian Work Contributing to the Maintenance of the National Health, Safety, or Interest;
- Class I-W: Conscientious Objector Performing Civilian Work Contributing to the Maintenance of the National Health, Safety, or Interest;
- Class I-W: (Rel): Conscientious Objector Released from Civilian Work.

The remainder of the pamphlet describes the recognition given to the conscientious objector in the Armed Forces Regulations and discusses the problems of the conscientious objector as well as offering suggestions of bibliographical materials and organizations that are available for assistance.

#### ARMED SERVICE TRANSPORTATION TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Attention has recently been called to the fact that the Air Force has carried the recognition of religious differences to the point of providing at Air Force expense transportation to private schools for the members of the Air Force families. Air Force Regulation No. 34-13, dated September 1, 1955, makes the following provision on the subject:

"a. Transportation may be provided at Air Force expense for dependent school children who attend the nearest adequate private school, if the installation commander finds that such schools are not accessible by regular means of transportation and finds that any one of the following conditions exist:

- (1) Military transportation facilities required and established for other authorized purposes can be utilized without detriment to the purposes for which authorized. For example, when seats are available on a bus transporting dependent school children to public schools, such children may be trans-

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ported thereon to private schools within a reasonable distance of the established route.

(2) The general morale and welfare of the personnel concerned requires attendance at sectarian private schools within a reasonable distance of the military installation.

(3) The public schools, if any, available in the locality are unable to provide adequately for the education of the children.

"Prior approval of Headquarters USAF is required for transportation to be provided on the basis of a finding under subparagraph (3) above. Requests for approval will be forwarded to the Director of Military Personnel, Headquarters USAF, accompanied by the findings and a statement of all the material facts.

"b. If an installation commander is requested to provide transportation to sectarian private schools but determines that he will be unable to provide such transportation, he will forward his determination to the Director of Military Personnel, Headquarters USAF, setting forth in detail the nature of the request, the extent of the service required, the accessibility of the schools to regular means of transportation, and the factual basis for his determination.

"c. No expenses will be incurred with respect to dependent school children attending private schools, except in elementary and secondary grades equivalent to those provided as public education in the area where the installation is located."

#### THE ANNAPOLIS CHAPLAINCY AND SERVICES

The pattern of religious services and the appointment of chaplains at West Point and at Annapolis are current subjects of study by a special committee appointed by the General Commission on Chaplains. The situation at West Point, in particular, has been the subject of several resolutions by different religious bodies.

The United States Military Academy at West Point has developed a long tradition, with very few exceptions, of appointing outstanding Episcopalian clergymen as civilian chaplains at the cadet chapel (Catholic cadets are excused). Some in the General Commission on Chaplains have contended that these practices are tantamount to the establishment of Episcopal worship and theology as official religion. They have also urged that the practice results in having the cadets come out as officers without having had appropriate contacts with the customary run of chaplains who serve in the Army under appointment of the Chief of Chaplains.

Annapolis, on the other hand, has a "Navy service" which is liturgical, and in reality Episcopalian, since it uses the Book of Common Prayer and has the Episcopalian hymnal in the pews. This service is conducted by a Navy Chaplain, but the chaplain is not free to order his own service. If he cannot conscientiously conduct the "Navy service", he has no choice but to withdraw. Here, also, the cadets are required to attend. Apparently four years of Episcopalian worship experience is deemed to be necessary to make a Baptist or a Methodist boy into the most desirable kind of officer for either the Army or the Navy. The numerous church-state relations that are involved in these situations certainly seem to merit very careful study.

## MILITANT LIBERTY

The office of Admiral Arthur Radford, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, has recently undertaken "A Program of Evaluation and Assessment of Freedom" under the slogan "Militant Liberty." Copies of this booklet are available from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Division of Public Documents, Washington 25, D. C. at a cost of 15¢ per copy.

As a foreword to the booklet, Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense, says: "It is essential that members of our Armed Forces thoroughly understand and support the principles upon which our nation was founded. The rights endowed by our Creator place upon each of us commensurate responsibilities to dedicate ourselves to the preservation of these principles and our American way of life." Secretary Wilson goes on to explain that the material used under "Militant Liberty" was prepared as a thesis by Mr. John C. Broger, formerly president of the Far East Broadcasting Company, and now a consultant in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mr. Broger's attempt to analyze and contrast the "basic conflicts between Communism and the free world as it affects the individual" has been so well received by the Pentagon leaders that it has been adopted as a kind of official ideology. The news releases that accompanied it indicated that it is to be taught to all of the men in the armed services and that it offers "a means of measuring the trends toward individual liberty or authoritarianism in any given area." Since it is to become part of the training of most of our young men, the paper deserves careful analysis. The news releases also said that: "Later efforts will be made to 'sell' it to the peoples of the Free World and those behind the Iron Curtain."

The "thesis" is essentially an attempt to diagram or chart the concepts of liberty which have prevailed in the American tradition. In order to do this it is assumed that liberty is simply ideological, and fails to recognize the complexity of social forces, of personal attitudes, and of individual competencies that constitute the actual warp and woof of liberty.

The discussion seems to assume that where government regimentation of the Communist variety is absent, there is freedom. Obviously, this does not follow. The paper lacks awareness of the social stratification, the economic forces, or the ecclesiastical powers which have demonstrated their oppressive powers through the centuries.

In attempting to delineate the scope and direction of liberty, the statement says this on the subject of religion:

"Concerning RELIGION, as the nation tends in the upper direction there is increasing freedom of religion. The individual worships as, when and where he pleases, according to the dictates of his own conscience. As the nation tends in the lower direction, there is decreasing freedom of religion until, in the extreme, the state replaces religion and will tolerate no other."

Does not this seem to make religious liberty appear as a product of political liberty? A better case could be made for the reverse relationship. This, then, raises the question whether political ideology really goes to the core of the problem of liberty. While the Pentagon cannot do the job, and ought not to try, the future of liberty calls for cultivating and feeding the roots of liberty. These go deep into the spiritual commitment of the person. The issues of life do not resolve by choosing between two official ideologies.