



# REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

★ RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ★ BAPTIST PRINCIPLES  
★ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## Prayer By Legislation Is Unconstitutional

Prayer "composed by governmental officials as a part of a governmental program to further religious beliefs" is unconstitutional, according to a decision by the United States Supreme Court.

The Court ruled (6-1) that the so-called Regent's Prayer in the State of New York violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The prayer says:

"Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country."

The State Board of Regents in New York is a governmental agency created by the State Constitution. It has broad supervisory, executive and legislative powers over the State's public school system.

In 1951 these state officials composed the prayer for use in the public schools every morning along with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States. The teacher was obliged to conduct this opening exercise, but the pupils participated or refused to participate voluntarily.

The Court presented a 15-page opinion read by Mr. Justice Black. Mr. Justice Douglas concurred with the decision but for a different reason from that given by the others. Mr. Justice Stewart presented a six-page dissent.

In ruling out the Regent's Prayer the Court said: "We think that the constitutional prohibition against respecting an establishment of religion must at least mean that in this country it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part

of a religious program carried on by government."

An officially composed and administered prayer by government constitutes an "establishment" of religion, according to the Court. This is expressly forbidden by the First Amendment.

The Court went out of its way to point out that its action is not hostility toward religion or prayer. It is for the protection of religion and to guarantee its free exercise that the Court arrived at its conclusions, the decision said.

"It is neither sacrilegious nor antireligious to say that each separate

government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance," the Court said.

In its opinion the Court reviewed the struggle for religious freedom in England and in early America. It pointed out the bitter controversies that raged in England over the Book of Common Prayer which was created under governmental direction. Religious groups fought fiercely to gain the favor of the reigning monarch to

(See, Prayer, page 5)

## Executive Director Calls For Deliberation On Legislation On Prayer In Public Schools

By C. Emanuel Carlson

At the March meeting of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs the problem of proper religious expressions in the public schools was placed on the agenda for next October. Arrangements were made for the preparation of materials for discussion and action. The Committee may have something to say as a Committee in October. In the meantime, I speak only for myself. Nevertheless, I must urge that we keep the issue clear, and encourage a thoughtful public discussion of it. Out of such a discussion, carried out in a spirit of good will, we Americans may rediscover the nature of true prayer.

In the New York prayer case the Supreme Court has really faced only one issue—shall government agen-

cies direct the prayers of the American people? This question points to the very heart of the Baptist movement. Present day Baptists will want to proceed deliberately and prayerfully as they formulate their role in this new public debate on an old, old problem. The information service of our office will offer full text of the court's decision and a running account of the discussions. Baptists will be particularly interested because the decision recounts much of our distress in the past. The decision is full of Baptist history, and of Baptist insights.

All friends of genuine prayer experience must obviously be cautious about the devising of prayers by government agencies. Unfortunately, some have thought the question to be

(See, Deliberation, page 6)

# The Storm In the Capital

By W. Barry Garrett

The lid blew off when the Supreme Court announced its decision, June 25, that official government prayers in the public schools are unconstitutional. Clergymen, legislators and parents throughout the country have poured rivers of venom on the Supreme Court for its decision. Not since the 1954 decision on school desegregation has there been such a public reaction to the Nation's highest court.

Shouts against the Court members have been heard across the Nation. "Impeach the Supreme Court!" "Pass a constitutional amendment to reverse their decision!" "Proof that they are Communist sympathizers!" "Another step toward the secularization of America!" "The decision is the most tragic in the history of the United States!" "June 25, 1962 will go down as a black day in our history!"

These and many other bitter reactions fill page after page of the Congressional Record. The newspapers have been full of quotes from the Roman Catholic hierarchy and other clergymen who condemn the decision.

Fortunately, however, emotions are beginning to subside and the public is beginning to ask, "What happened? What was the actual decision? Is there really any cause for alarm?" Common sense is beginning to return. Reason must take over before the Congress or the public does something which would be regrettable.

## The Storm Explained

**Pent-up Anger:** For the past decade feeling against the Supreme Court has been rising. This is natural and in line with the history of the Supreme Court. Major court decisions have always resulted in: (1) moves to limit the terms and powers of the Court members; and (2) efforts to amend the Constitution to reverse the Court's decision. So far neither have been done.

A large part of the explosion against the Court comes from sectional and political differences. Much of the Nation views this reaction as a carry over from earlier historic divisions. Time heals most wounds, but some are slow to heal.

Furthermore, in the system of checks and balances of the American Government there is a built-in tension between the legislative, executive and judicial branches. It is normal to expect each branch to be jealous of its own powers and prerogatives. Much of the fury of members of Congress can be interpreted in this light.

**Johnny Didn't Read:** Much of the reaction to the Supreme Court decision is irrelevant to what the Court did and said. Plainly, many clergymen and members of Congress have not read the decision. Some have obviously relied on the less competent newspaper reports. They heard a rustle in the bushes and shot before they looked.

When people take time to read the full text with care, most Americans will agree that the Court's decision and the accompanying opinions constitute one of the finest documents in the history of church-state relations in the United States. An almost full text of the Court's opinions was published in the leading newspapers in Washington and in New York. Probably many other papers in the nation did the same thing.

There is no excuse for a member of Congress or for a clergyman to express uninformed and unintelligent opinions in a case as important as this decision on "official" religion in public schools. All have a right to disagree, but they have a responsibility to be informed if they are to be respected leaders.

**Aid to Parochial Schools:** The Roman Catholic hierarchy has been bitter in criticism of the Court's decision. This is to be expected. The Cardinals see their campaign for federal aid to parochial schools disappearing as vapor on a hot summer day. This decision makes the Catholic Church's chances for aid from the federal government for its parochial schools almost nil.

Already it has affected the bills on higher education that are tied up in Conference Committee between the House and Senate. A scheduled meeting of the Committee was postponed a week in order for the Court's decision to be studied. Even spokesmen in the House for Federal grants to church-related colleges are pessimistic about their chances. The Court's

decision will affect elementary and secondary parochial schools even more directly.

It is no wonder that the Roman Catholic clergy is attacking the decision.

**Politics:** Congress is tense and nervous. Frustrations over inability to enact a far-reaching legislative program and jumpiness over approaching elections this fall lead Congressmen to grasp at any diverting issue. The Regents' Prayer case is made to order. They are taking full advantage of it.

The play to the grandstand is in full swing. Like love for mother, Congressmen cannot appear to be against God. Little children need religious education, and legislators cannot be against this. Votes are too important for them to take any chance on losing them by agreeing with the Supreme Court.

**Prejudice:** Nobody will admit it but resentment against Jews, free-thinkers, Unitarians and atheists goes a long way to explain the negative reaction of many people against the Supreme Court. While it is true, and perhaps unfortunate, that many of the cases involving religious liberty have been initiated by minority and unpopular groups, it is not true that these groups are imposing their views on the majority of the American people.

Basic policies of American life should be decided on principle. Reactions to decisions should be made on the basis of right or wrong rather than on prejudice.

## What Was Not Decided

The Court did not say that children cannot pray in the public schools. It did not even say that classes cannot have prayer nor that teachers must not refer to God.

The Court did not say that Bible reading in the public school is unconstitutional. This problem will come up in the next session of the Court.

The Court did not eliminate "God" from our public life and did not rule out references to Deity in national ceremonies and observances. Prayers on public occasions are unaffected.

The Court did not limit the free exercise of religion, and it did not say that people could not practice their religion in public places and on public occasions.

The Court specifically said, "There is of course nothing in the decision reached here that is inconsistent with the fact that school children and others are officially encouraged to express love for our country by reciting historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence which contain references to the Deity or by singing officially espoused anthems which include the composer's professions of faith in a Supreme Being, or with the fact that there are many manifestations in our public life of belief in God. Such patriotic or ceremonial occasions bear no true resemblance to the unquestioned religious exercise that the State of New York has sponsored in this instance."

#### What Was Decided

The Supreme Court said that prayer "composed by governmental officials as a part of a governmental program to further religious beliefs" is unconstitutional.

The point of the decision is that the Court said that the Regent's Prayer in New York State was an "official" prayer and thus it violates the rights of the citizens of New York and of the United States under the provisions of the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

The Court said that such an "official" prayer constitutes an establishment of religion, thus violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Justice Douglas dissented from this reasoning, although he agreed that the Regents' Prayer is unconstitutional.

The Court said that the establishment of religion has a tendency to destroy government and to degrade religion. Furthermore, the Court opined, that governmentally established religions and religious persecutions go hand in hand.

Rather than its decision being an attack on religion or a furtherance of the secularization of American society, it was the opinion of the Court that it was rendering a service to religion.

#### Proposals For Action

The customary types for handling this kind of crisis are now prevalent. Among the current proposals the following are most prominent.

Either impeach the Supreme Court justices, or limit their term of

office. At present their appointments are for life.

2. Amend the constitution to state specifically that in spite of the First Amendment it is not unconstitutional to have prayer and Bible reading in the public schools. This proposal ignores the fact that such practices have not been ruled out by the Court's decision.

3. President Kennedy said that some will agree with the Court and others will disagree. But as believers in constitutional government we must abide by the decision. Respect for the orderly processes of government must prevail.

4. Teach the true meaning of prayer to our children at home and be faithful to the churches. President Kennedy said that this simple remedy is open to every American. He urged the Nation to avail itself of this opportunity.

### President Explains Nature of Prayer

President Kennedy said, in effect, that the answer to the public school prayer problem in America is not legislation but for the people to pray at home and to attend their churches.

At his press conference the President was asked his opinion of the Supreme Court decision banning "official" governmentally written prayers in the public schools. The question also asked about legislation that has been introduced in Congress to make it constitutional to have prayers and Bible reading in the public schools.

The President said that he had not seen the proposed legislation and that his opinion would have to be based on the language it used and what effect it would have on the First Amendment.

As for the Court's ruling Mr. Kennedy said that some would agree and others would disagree with it. But, he continued, "in the efforts we are making to maintain our constitutional principles we will have to abide by what the Supreme Court says."

"We have a very easy remedy here," the President declared, "and that is to pray ourselves. We can pray a good deal more at home and attend our churches with fidelity and emphasize the true meaning of prayer in the lives of our children. I hope as a result of that decision

### JFK Restates Views On Aid To Church Schools

President Kennedy again emphasized his position on separation of church and state by stating that public aid to parochial schools is unconstitutional. However, he declared that a different situation holds in the question of aid to higher education.

At his press conference the President was asked which of the two bills (Senate or House) he preferred, in view of the fact that one of them provides for grants to church-related as well as to public colleges.

(The Senate bill on higher education provides for loans to private colleges, while the House bill provides both loans and grants to both public and private schools. The Conference committee is now trying to iron out the differences between the two.)

In reply the President said that "my opinion is very clear, on the basis of the Supreme Court decisions, in the case of elementary schools." On the other hand, his view that aid to church-related colleges is constitutional is based on a legal brief prepared last year by legal experts in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in cooperation with lawyers from the Justice Department.

Mr. Kennedy said that elementary and secondary schools are compulsory and universal. "There is a tradition connected with the public school system that has placed them in a special place in the life of our country," he said.

The colleges are in a different category, the President said. For this reason he emphasized that, in his opinion, aid to higher education is basically a matter of public policy rather than constitutionality.

all Americans will give prayer a greater emphasis at home."

The President, who is a Roman Catholic, made his statement on the "true meaning of prayer" in spite of vigorous attacks on the Supreme Court's ruling against "official" prayers by two Roman Catholic Cardinals. Francis Cardinal Spellman and James Francis Cardinal McIntyre earlier issued stinging rebukes of the Court's decision.

## Sectarian Religion Is Taught In 'Secular' Texts

Sectarian religion is taught in parochial school textbooks in science, mathematics and languages, according to a study made by the Religious Liberty Department of the National Council of Churches.

The study was done as a reply to Rep. Roman C. Pucinski (D., Ill.), a champion of federal aid to parochial schools. At a hearing before a House committee on education last year he asked a witness, "Would you be good enough to tell me how you perpetuate a religious faith in an algebraic formula?"

The Chicago Congressman was defending the practice of giving aid to any school (public, private or church-related) for specific purposes in the national public interest. He claims that such courses are "totally unrelated to religious teaching."

The issue was joined by Dean Kellogg, executive director of the Religious Liberty Department. A thorough study was made of parochial school textbooks used in courses in science, mathematics and languages. George R. LaNoue, a graduate student in political science at Yale University, examined over 100 textbooks used in Roman Catholic, Seventh-day Adventist, Christian Reformed, and Missouri Synod Lutheran church schools. His findings are in a 192-page report that includes over 40 pages of quotations from the books surveyed and 120 photostats.

In an article in the June issue of the Phi Delta Kappan Mr. LaNoue gives a summary of his views and findings. He demonstrates that not only can religious doctrine be taught in an algebraic formula, or at least in an arithmetic book, but also that it is being taught. Therefore federal aid to parochial schools for "secular" subjects is unconstitutional.

Many of the books used in parochial schools are standard textbooks, but they are altered for parochial school use. The alterations incorporate the cultural aspects and the sectarian doctrines of the denomination using the books.

LaNoue lists seven general ways in which religion is included in sci-

ence, mathematics and language courses. They are:

1. Religious symbols and subjects used in examples for arithmetic and grammar drill.

Example: "In millions of homes Our Lady's challenge has been accepted, but she wants billions throughout the world to join the Family Rosary for Peace. Do you know how to write in figures numbers such as those just mentioned?"

2. Specific sectarian doctrines taught where controversial matter appears in the text.

Examples were cited from both Catholic and Seventh-day Adventist textbooks. The Catholic book on science emphasized the Catholic doctrine of the origin of man, while the Seventh-day Adventist book taught the reasons for the seventh day as the sabbath.

3. A general theistic Christian approach to all matters.

Example: A Christian Reformed text was cited to illustrate the centrality of faith in God and his Word and that the Universe exists for the glory of God. Parochial schools make this emphasis in all courses.

4. Request that the children concern themselves with specific church goals.

Example: "And remember, dear young people, the greatest thing you can do in this life is to play your part in spreading the gospel message and in preparing for Christ's second coming." This was from a Seventh-day Adventist book, but similar approaches are common in parochial books in geography and language of all groups.

5. Appeals to church authority for proof of a point.

Example: "(Why study science?) You see, then, that whatever reasons others may have for studying science, Catholics, especially, should be most interested in doing so, since it is one way in which they can do what God made them for—to know, love, and serve him."

6. Selective emphasis on Catholic institutions and contributions to the culture and on facts favorable to the Church and omissions of institutions

and contributions to the culture by non-Catholics and of facts unfavorable to the Church.

Example: "Teachers of French in Catholic schools have long regretted the lack of appropriate reading material to present to their students. In this volume only writings that are positively Catholic in tone or at least those that are essentially unobjectionable are included."

7. Defense of church social ideas and regulations.

Example: "As you learn more about the evils that surround you, you will be glad that you are an Adventist. The stand which the church has taken is for your protection. You will be happier in living up to the high ideals of the church and loyally supporting its program of healthful living." Such views are common in science and language books.

Since 1958, when the NDEA was passed, 162 loans totaling \$2,000,000 under Title III have been made for equipment to teach science, mathematics and languages. Many of the loans have been made to parochial schools. The "secular subject" concept is being urged as a constitutional compromise for broader federal aid to parochial schools.

Mr. LaNoue points out that this new argument for public aid to parochial schools "completely contradicts the traditional philosophy of the Catholic Church." He quotes Pope Pius XI's encyclical, "The Christian Education of Youth," as saying that the entire school including its organization, teachers, syllabus and textbooks in every branch must "be regulated by the Christian spirit."

This philosophy was not mentioned in hearings before Congressional committees last year by Catholic spokesmen. LaNoue says, "Obviously, an admission that the whole curriculum of a church school is permeated by religion would run the supporters of federal aid to parochial schools into the First Amendment wall."

LaNoue shows that this new approach to church school aid "undermines the very purpose of a separate parochial school system." He asks,

If, after all, the church school teaches religion only one or two hours a day, why not send all children to public schools for all the 'secular' subjects and release them to the churches for the periods of religion?

The argument for "secular subject" in religious schools has been so effective that it "has almost come to be accepted as public policy," LaNoue says. This was the basis of a position taken by a legal "Memorandum on the Impact of the First Amendment to the Constitution upon Federal Aid to Education" by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The reasoning is that since the national defense has a strong interest in instruction in science, mathematics and languages, and since the connection between such courses and religion is assumed to be nonexistent or minimal, aid for such purposes are constitutional, even though taught in church schools. LaNoue's report explodes this idea.

Both public policy and constitutionality are considered in LaNoue's report. Since the NDEA states that public funds should not be used to subsidize religion, and since the courses aided by the NDEA integrate religion with the other subject matter, there are serious constitutional questions raised.

If proper supervision of the provision on religion is provided there must be a public authority to supervise local curricula, to censor textbooks for religious material, and to investigate infractions and abuses, LaNoue says. On the other hand, he points out, if there are no controls, the government will run the risk of establishing religion or a church either directly or indirectly.

LaNoue concludes, "Government aid to religious schools in the guise of aiding 'secular' subjects violates both constitutional principles and sound public policy."

## Food For Needy People Limited By Finances

The distribution of American agricultural surpluses to needy people in the world through church channels at other private and public agencies is limited only by available funds, ac-

## Prayer By Legislation Unconstitutional

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revise the Book of Common Prayer in accord with their particular viewpoints.

The Court said that the Founders of America and the writers of the Constitution had these events fresh in their minds when they added the First Amendment. "Our Founders were no more willing to let the content of their prayers and their privilege of praying whenever they pleased be influenced by the ballot box than they were to let these vital matters of personal conscience depend upon the succession of monarchs," the opinion said.

Two purposes of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment were explained by the Court. The first was "a belief that a union of government and religion tends to destroy government and to degrade religion." The second "rested upon an awareness of the historical fact that governmentally established religions and religious persecutions go hand in hand."

The Court said that one of the reasons that many people fled state established religion and religious persecution in Europe was that they were "filled with the hope that they could find a place in which they could pray when they pleased to the God of their Faith in the language they chose."

It is unfortunate, the Court pointed out that many of these same people established rigid religious regulations when they arrived in America. It is this kind of religious coercion that the First Amendment was designed to prevent. This is the im-

cording to President John F. Kennedy.

The President was asked at his press conference why more American surpluses could not be made available to starving millions in the world by extending the Food for Peace program, larger distribution through church channels, and other agencies.

"I agree that we should always try to do more," the President said, "and in answer to your question, the reason is only the limitation of available funds. This food has to be bought, and it has to be appropriated for, and it has come out of the taxpayers of the United States."

port of this recent decision in the New York prayer case.

The Court recalled the persecution by established religion such as endured by John Bunyan. The battle for religious liberty in Virginia led by the Baptists, Presbyterians and others was reviewed by the Court. Roger Williams was lauded for his contribution to the nature of true religion and the proper relations between church and state.

The Court anticipated misinterpretation and misuse of its ruling on the Regent's Prayer. To answer these the Court said:

"There is of course nothing in the decision reached here that is inconsistent with the fact that school children and others are officially encouraged to express love for our country by reciting historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence which contains references to the Deity or by singing officially espoused anthems which include the composer's professions of faith in a Supreme Being, or with the fact that there are many manifestations in our public life or belief in God. Such patriotic or ceremonial occasions bear no true resemblance to the unquestioned religious exercise that the State of New York has sponsored in this instance."

While concurring with the decision of the majority Mr. Justice Douglas criticized the other judges for basing their opinion on the view that the New York prayer constituted an establishment of religion. He said that "the point for decision is whether the Government can constitutionally finance a religious exercise."

Justice Douglas cited 18 kinds of "aids" from the government for religion now available. He said that there is a long list of additional aids in each state. The context in which he made his remarks would indicate that he considered them all unconstitutional.

The lone dissenting opinion was voiced by Mr. Justice Stewart. He said that he did not agree that the Regent's Prayer is an "official religion." Since he held that New York had not interfered with the free exercise of anybody's religion, he said, "I think this decision is wrong."



## Twenty-Three National Religious Leaders Sign Statement Approving Prayer Decision

Thirteen out of twenty-three prominent national religious leaders signing a statement approving the Supreme Court decision against "official" prayers in public schools are Baptists.

The statement prepared by the Christian Century, an undenominational weekly published in Chicago, declares that the Court's ruling "protects the integrity of the religious conscience and the proper function of religious and governmental institutions."

In an editorial the Christian Century said that earlier condemnations of the Court ruling were "not representative of sober Protestant thought." The danger of hasty judgments such as were expressed by some, the editorial pointed out, is that "church leaders are tempted to speak without thought, to appraise without study."

"The unhurried views of Protestant leaders" were sought by the Christian Century. The result was wide approval of the action taken by the Supreme Court.

The statement signed by the 23 leaders is as follows:

"We are in agreement with the Supreme Court that 'It is neither sacrilegious nor antireligious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance.'"

"We call upon the American people to study this decision prayerfully and without political emotion. We believe the Court's ruling against officially written and officially prescribed prayers protects the integrity of the religious conscience and the proper function of religious and governmental institutions."

The Baptists who signed the statement are:

Theodore F. Adams, pastor, First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., past president, Baptist World Alliance; Herschel H. Hobbs, pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City,

president, Southern Baptist Convention; Edwin A. Tuller, general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.;

C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C.; Edwin T. Dahlberg, pastor, Delmar Baptist Church, St. Louis, former president, National Council of Churches; Frank E. Johnston, associate general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.;

Samuel Miller, dean, Harvard University Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.; Kyle Haselden, managing editor, The Christian Century, Chicago; Carlyle Marney, pastor, Myers Park Baptist Church, Charlotte, N. C.; W. Hubert Porter, associate general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.; and W. Barry Garrett, associate director, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C.

Others who signed the statement are:

George C. Bonnell, pastor, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City; Aubrey N. Brown, Jr., editor, Presbyterian Outlook, Richmond, Va.; Truman B. Douglas, executive vice president, Board of Homeland Ministries, United Church of Christ, New York City;

Harold E. Fey, editor, The Christian Century, Chicago; A. Raymond Grant, Bishop, Oregon Methodist Area, Portland; Dwight E. Loder, president, Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill.;

Malvin H. Lundeen, secretary, Lutheran Church of America, Minneapolis; Edward O. Miller, rector, St. George's Episcopal Church, New York City; and Richard H. Raines, Bishop, Methodist, Indianapolis.

## Deliberation

(Continued from page 1)

whether they were for or against prayer.

Much of the confusion apparently has resulted from the prior arguments used. In the comments of recent months the missing factor was clarity as to what prayer is. When one thinks of prayer as sincere outreach of a human soul to the Creator, "required prayer" becomes an absurdity. The "recitation of a prayer" has been called "morally uplifting" without recognizing that hypocrisy is the worst of moral corrosion. Some have felt that our "national heritage" is in danger, without realizing that the distinctive of our heritage is not legislated prayer but a people praying in freedom under the guidance of their church and of the Spirit of God. The strangeness of the present debate is that the call for "less government" coincides with a public defense for government-formulated prayer. Obviously, we need time to rethink the New Testament premises of our faith and practice, and also to rethink the meaning of American history.

Fortunately there are two provisions in the freedom of religion clause of the First Amendment. There shall be no "establishment," and there shall be no "restraint on the free exercise." I hope the Court will defend both.

During the intense discussions which are probable, Baptists will want to assist the American public come to a true understanding and experience of prayer. The issues of our day, including the problems of communism and of secularization, will not be solved by the prayer formulas set up by official agencies. As Americans we must go deeper than legislation and conformity in order to meet the call of God upon us in our day.

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## Church Groups Work On Church-State Relations

Many of the denominations have taken far-reaching steps in the area of church-state relations. Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, the National Council of Churches and others are studying church-state issues in the light of their theological principles.

Historically, the theology of church-state relations has been an important facet in each of the religious movements. The present political and religious scene presents so many new developments that all churches are finding it necessary to rethink their theology as it affects church-state relations.

This is a task which the churches must do for themselves. They can get little help either from governments or from citizens' organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, or Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (POAU). Such civil liberties type of organizations have an important role in the practice of the American Constitution, but the churches must decide for themselves what their principles and policies are.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has developed a significant program of information services from Washington and conducts studies in depth to interpret the meaning of religious liberty today. It has sponsored five national Religious Liberty Conferences. A sixth is scheduled for October this year on "Church-State Problems in Higher Education."

The denominations that sponsor the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs look to this committee for many responsible activities.

The General Conference of the Methodist Church has authorized its Board of Christian Social Concerns, in conjunction with other agencies, to prepare a report on church-state problems for the General Conference in 1964. Dr. W. Astor Kirk is director of this study.

In July (2-13) the Methodists are conducting an "Institute on Church-State Relations" on the campus of Wesley Theological Seminary at the American University, Washington, D. C. Lecturers will include many

of the nation's outstanding authorities in the field of church-state relations.

Lutheran groups are taking a new look at the problems in church-state relations. The Missouri Synod some time ago commissioned a theological analysis of church-state problems under the direction and editorship of A. G. Huegli. Publication may be in 1962.

The United Lutheran Church in America has begun an extensive study of "church-state relations in a pluralistic society" with the leadership of Rufus Cornelsen. Paul C. Empie is directing a series of studies in the church-state area for the Committee on Social Trends of the National Lutheran Council. Other specialized church groups have also begun studies of their involvements with the state.

The United Presbyterian Church in 1960 created a Committee on Church and State with Professor Elwyn Smith as chairman. This committee will report its recommendations on eleven church-state issues to the General Assembly in 1962.

Extensive work has been done and is projected by many of the divisions of the National Council of Churches. For instance, the Committee on Religion and Public Education of the NCC has done significant studies in the field of education and religion. The Division of Foreign Missions has been conducting a survey of "Government Relations to the World Mission of the Church."

The Division of Christian Education of the NCC has worked with the Council of Protestant Colleges and Universities to appraise the policies and practices of church-related institutions of higher education. The Cleveland National Conference of the Churches and Social Welfare included a section on "Government and Social Welfare."

The Department of Religious Liberty of the NCC, Dean Kelly, secretary, is doing comprehensive studies of church-state relations. The climax of these projects will be a National Study Conference on Church and State in Chicago, April 7-10, 1964. Preliminary meetings will be held in the fall or winter of 1962 and in January 1963. Denominations not members of the National Council will be invited to participate in the conference.

The Seventh-day Adventists are giving denominational expression to their concern about religious liberty through the Department of Public Affairs of their national organization. Other denominational groups are likewise developing their own approaches to religious liberty problems.

In these denominational developments it is significant that a constant exchange of information is being carried on by the church leaders. They have informal consultations. Materials are shared. Viewpoints are discussed and courses of action are planned.

### Get the Facts About the Court Decision on Prayer

Much misinterpretation and misinformation has been published about the recent Supreme Court decision on "official" prayer in public schools. As a service to the Baptist people and to the general public the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is making available mimeographed copies of the complete text of the decision, including the one dissenting opinion. Cost is 25c per copy. Ask for "Supreme Court Decision" and send 25c in coin to:

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The cooperating denominations that maintain the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs are the American Baptist Convention, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., North American Baptist General Conference, and Southern Baptist Convention. The Baptist Federation of Canada also sends representatives to the Committee.

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## Baptist Bodies Face Church-State Issues

Religious liberty problems were faced this year by the American and Southern Baptist Conventions in their Philadelphia and San Francisco meetings.

The American Baptist Convention reaffirmed its 1960 and 1961 resolutions that said "the separation of church and state is central to our American heritage." It expressed concern about continuing efforts by sectarian groups to break down the principle and to secure Federal aid for church-related schools.

The American convention also commended "the President of the United States and many members of Congress of both political parties for their courageous stand on separation of church and state." The Convention urged them "to continue to resist all pressures to compromise this fundamental American principle."

### Churches and Taxation

Tax policies as related to the churches were brought before the American Convention. However, in view of studies conducted by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs the Convention did not spell out a firm policy statement until more information is in hand.

The Southern Baptist Convention unanimously passed the following resolution:

"Be it therefore resolved: That we ask the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to continue their study of possible effects of tax deductions upon our people and agen-

cies as related to churches and church contributions."

Suggestions from the national government that tax policies relating to church interests might undergo restudy and revision triggered the actions of the conventions. However, discussions have been under way among religious groups for several years as to whether or not churches and their agencies should accept aid from the government in the form of tax exemptions and other favors. (Note: The annual Religious Liberty Conference of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in 1960 studied "The Churches and American Tax Policy.")

### Lord's Day Observance

The Southern Baptist Convention asked the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to give attention to the religious liberty problems involved in legislation on observance of the Lord's Day. Here is the resolution:

"Whereas, the Supreme Court of the United States has recently made a far-reaching decision supporting the legality of a law setting aside a day of rest; and

"Whereas, there are requests for the designation of Sunday as a day of worship by the laws of the land;

"Therefore, the Southern Baptist Convention requests the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to assemble and disseminate full information on the developments and the values in this matter, and that it encourage a broad study and discussion of this information in the Convention so as to clarify the meaning of the Baptist concern for religious

liberty as it applies to this area; and that the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Christian Life Commission give attention as to the religious and ethical implications of this problem."

## Baptist Heritage To Be Theme of Special Week

A week of preaching on the "Baptist Heritage of Religious Liberty" will be featured by the National Baptist Memorial Church in Washington, D. C., March 24-29, 1963, according to Dr. Lee Shane, pastor.

Outstanding preachers from five of the Baptist groups that maintain the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs will be asked to preach on various aspects of religious liberty. It is hoped that these sermons will later be published as resource material for observance of the 1964 Baptist Jubilee year. Theme for the year will be "For Liberty and Light."

Another project by the National church is the development of Freedom Hall to depict the Baptist heritage of religious liberty. The Baptist story will be told by dioramas, pictures, models, photographs and historical exhibits.

As a memorial to religious liberty in the Nation's capital the Nations church was built in part by funds from both the American and the Southern Baptist conventions. The cornerstone was laid in 1921 by President Harding, and the building was dedicated in 1933 by Justice Charles Evans Hughes.