

Report from the Capital

SEPTEMBER 1967



News Analysis

by W. Barry Garrett

SOCIAL SECURITY STATUS OF CLERGY MAY BE CHANGED

WASHINGTON (BPA)—The House of Representatives has passed a bill that would reverse the Social Security status of ministers. The new bill would make coverage automatic for all ministers as self-employment persons unless the minister objects on grounds of conscience.

The new provision, a part of a revamped Social Security program, now goes to the Senate where committee hearings began August 22.

Under the present Social Security law, clergymen are exempt unless they irrevocably choose to participate. The new proposal would make coverage automatic unless the minister chooses not to participate on grounds of conscience.

For ministers not now covered by the program and for those persons ordained or employed as ministers in the future, there would be a two-year period in which they could apply for exemption.

The new bill states that the application for exemption would be allowed only if "... he is conscientiously opposed to the acceptance of any public insurance which makes payments in the event of death, disability, old age, or retirement or makes payments toward the cost of, or provides services for, medical care."

The proposed bill appears to meet the requirements of resolutions passed over a decade ago by both the Southern and American Baptist Conventions.

In 1934 a Southern Baptist Convention resolution asked that any social security coverage be "a contract between the federal government and the individual, without in any sense involving the churches."

A resolution passed by the American Baptist Convention in 1953 asked that social security legislation allow a clergyman exemption on grounds of conscience.

When this bill was introduced in Congress earlier this year by Rep. George M. Rhodes (D., Pa.), the Baptist Joint Com-

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What are the facts about religion in the public schools of the nation?

In 1965 Dr. Richard B. Dierenfield of the Department of Education, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, made a survey on "Religion in the Public Schools." A comprehensive questionnaire was sent to public school educators throughout the country.

This is the most complete report we know about since the Supreme Court rulings on prayers and Bible reading in schools. The following is a small part of his findings.

School Devotionals: The vast majority of the nation's schools (79.34%) do not have regular devotional services. The largest percentage (96.95%) having no school devotions is found in the West. The largest percentage having devotions (26.02%) is in the South. Only 10.67% of the nation's schools have regular school devotionals.

Of those having devotions it was reported that the services are conducted by teachers (12.9%), students (15.23%) and clergy (7.76%).

Bible Classes: In 95.64% of the schools there are no regular Bible classes. Most of such classes do not carry credit toward graduation and in most of them the teachers are paid out of private funds.

Moral and Religious Values: Nearly all of the nation's schools (98.65%) said they include the teaching of moral values such as honesty, courage, loyalty, and responsibility. Fewer (59.93%) said that they include spiritual values such as love, faith and reverence for a Supreme Being.

Religious Subject Matter: "Does your school system follow a policy which permits instructors to relate religion to their subject matter, if and when such a relationship is pertinent?" To this question 81.38% answered "yes" and 15.81% answered "no."

A similar question concerned "regular organized units on the influence of religion on past and present culture." Very few elementary schools had such courses, but in the secondary social studies 19.2% offered these classes. In 44.06% of the schools there were no classes of this nature in either elementary or secondary schools.

Gideon Bibles: Gideon Bible distribution is permitted in 27.44% of the nation's schools, but 58.88% prohibit such distribution. Prior to the Supreme Court decisions 40.45% of the schools did not allow Gideon Bible distribution. The practice was discontinued in only 17.17% of the schools within the past six years.

"Are you in favor of the distribution of Gideon Bibles in the public schools?" To this 48.01% answered "yes" and 44.15% answered "no."

Baccalaureate Services: A surprising 84% of the nation's schools said they conduct baccalaureate services in connection with high school graduation. Most of these services (74.01%) are held on school property. Attendance is voluntary in 67.61% of the school baccalaureates. The schools report that most of the schools having baccalaureates plan to continue them.

Religious Holidays: Religion based activity was found in 56.06% of the nation's schools on religious holidays, while 39.96% of the schools had no such activity. Of the religious holidays observed by the schools Christmas led with 72.56%, Thanksgiving had 58.78%, Easter 45.88% and Hanukkah 3.1%.

"Do you think public schools should celebrate religious holidays by means of religiously based school activities?" Answers: not proper 30.07%, can be done 53.74%, school has right 11.64%, no response 4.27%.

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL—a bulletin published 10 months during the year by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. A purpose of the bulletin is to set forth information and interpretation about public affairs that are relevant to Baptist principles.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is a denominational agency maintained by the American Baptist Convention, Baptist Federation of Canada, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, Inc., North American Baptist General Conference, Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Executive Staff of the Committee: C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director; W. Barry Garrett, director of information services; Walfred H. Peterson, director of research services; and James M. Sapp, director of correlation services and editor of Report From The Capital.

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Washington Observations

News — Views — Trends

August 25, 1967



THE RENT SUPPLEMENT program is drawing substantial support from the business community. Stressing that the program calls for private enterprise to take a leading role, several business organizations have gone on record in the last two months favoring the program and urging full funding through pending recommendations for federal funds.

TESTIMONY given to the Subcommittee on Independent Offices of the Senate Appropriations Committee in July and August included supporting statements of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, the Mortgage Bankers Association of America, the National Association of Home Builders and the National Association of Mutual Savings Banks.

SENATOR WAYNE MORSE (D., Ore.), in a speech in the U. S. Senate earlier this month, pointed up the usefulness of the television medium in promoting the sale of beer. He cited figures showing the increasing use of television by the brewing industry.

IN 1961, brewers spent 58.1 cents per barrel for advertising on television, according to Senator Morse. In 1965, the per barrel amount for television advertising had risen to 87 cents. This rate represents an increase of over \$30 million per year. Newspaper advertising, Morse pointed out, fell off accordingly, falling from 14.5 cents per barrel of beer to 9.8 cents per barrel over the same period.

A BILL ESTABLISHING procedures for both proposing constitutional amendments by state legislatures and ratifying them by a specially called convention has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Sam J. Ervin (D., N.C.). This two-step method of amendment has never been used successfully, though the Constitution establishes it. One reason for the failure relates to the absence of necessary procedures.

ONE PROPOSAL to call a convention to amend the Constitution to allow one house of the state legislatures to be apportioned on bases other than population is nearing the required two-thirds approval of state legislatures. How Congress would handle this in the absence of procedures is uncertain. It could even ignore the states' request on grounds that the states have proceeded in different ways and have proposed different amendments on the same subject.

THE ERVIN BILL would help settle at law one worrisome point. If a convention were called to respond to one constitutional issue, what would keep it from rewriting much of the Constitution and offering its work to the state legislatures for ratification? Ervin would limit any convention's work to the subject matter raised in the initial state proposals.

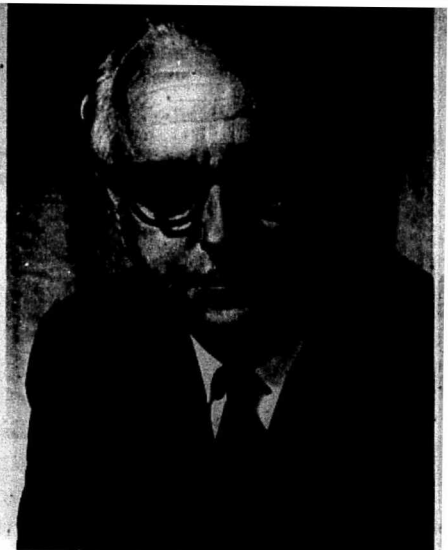
TIME MAGAZINE for August 25, 1967 reports that the Supreme Court's 1962 and 1963 prayer rulings are being ignored in many places. It also finds that few people or groups are able or willing to challenge these local violations of the law. This is another example of the fact that law is not enforced uniformly. Studies show that the same disregard for the Court's rulings has been common since the 1948 case that forbade sectarian religious instruction in the classroom.



THEY ACTUALLY TALK BACK

By DONALD L. McBAIN

An examination of the ways our congregation handles controversial issues and contributes to the education of its members at the same time.



MY LISTENERS PREACH THEIR OWN SERMONS EVERY SUNDAY MORNING.

One Sunday we demonstrated it.

In the introduction to a sermon which undoubtedly included some controversial material (some say all of mine do) I simply listed some titles and names which immediately elicited emotional reactions—Goldwater, United Nations, Nixon, demonstrations, Communism, etc. Then I asked the congregation to be perfectly honest with themselves and admit that as soon as a name was mentioned any statement from that moment on would be immediately filed in a mental compartment providing a ready-made previously conceived interpretation. The embarrassed smiles proved the point!

"It is the preacher's role, among other things, to encourage the right questions."

In other words, on all controversial issues, and most issues have controversial elements, the typical church member immediately preaches his own sermon. Only once in a while does the speaker get through and a creative idea germinates.

If this happens every Sunday morning how do we get these individual sermons aired? In other words, how do we get the reactions of the congregation brought into tension with the affirmations of the preacher so that the created tension can produce the learning process?

First Baptist Church, Phoenix, has not achieved this ambitious goal but we are working at it.

Right now, two thirds of our preaching services provide talk-backs. One Sunday night, for example, the senior minister spent twenty minutes addressing himself to the question "Who Owns Jerusalem?"

The whole Middle East conflict, involving Arabs, Jews and Christians was treated in twenty minutes? Of course not! The twenty minute message was part of a forty-five minute worship service, then after a five-minute break we had forty-five minutes of talk-back. Youth groups at this point meet separately with their own leaders on the same subject.

With 150 people deeply involved in one of the major issues in international affairs you could hardly have what could be called a panel discussion. However, there was well documented and realistic opposition to the minister's thesis that God backs property rights for Arabs as well as for Jews.

All the implications of the "promised land" were pressed and I believe most of us went away with the conviction that we had at least honestly looked at the subject.

Since the minister's approach on this and most subjects tends to be "somewhat direct" there is real need for the listener to feel that he can "get to" the preacher. Not every subject is as controversial as "the six day war" but we do reserve the subjects which are obviously controversial for the Sunday night "arena."

The Wednesday night program, in addition to providing a

regular time for spontaneous prayer is given over to theological considerations and the Bible study becomes a discussion. This takes on a different format and those with theological acumen and a Bible centered interest are faithful in reacting to the minister's interpretation in his verse by verse exposition. Any comment is accepted and we have heard some unbelievable interpretations. Some of the parishioners might say that a wholesome portion of these came from the preacher.

Those of us from the evangelical tradition tend to be authoritarian. If the gospel is revealed we can announce it.

D. T. Niles was right in saying that Christianity is the one religion that is not learned but proclaimed.

However, if the minister has an ounce of security and does not continually suffer "from feelings of inadequacy" it is my belief that he will be much more effective in proclaiming the gospel if the audience can keep up to date in questioning the framework and overtones through which it comes.

Right now, we are giving serious thought to having at least one group every month discussing the Sunday morning sermon. If we weren't in such a cultural bind over the Sunday noonday meal I would prefer doing this every week.

"Even Baptists work harder and are more loyal to the program if they can look the preacher in the eye, explode their differences and get rid of their tensions."

It is the preacher's role, among other things, to encourage the right questions. If much of our preaching can be defined by the cliché "answering questions people are not asking" then it would seem that the only alternative is to make it easier for them to ask the right questions. Our church members ought to be asking questions on theology.

Our people have a right to know whether or not our social emphasis is an imperative of the gospel or a prejudice of the preacher.

The only way we can bring the issues of our day into the pulpit without being rightly charged with being either political or willfully controversial is to give the people, on a weekly basis, the opportunity to talk back.

As a matter of sound methodology in order to really achieve the learning process, I have found it best not to announce controversial topics for Sunday morning. Since this is the largest congregation of the week, obviously sooner or later one must bring to them the light of the "whole gospel for the whole man in all of society."

However, by using the weight of the Biblical context for a Sunday morning sermon some of the most delicate issues can be subsumed under a Biblical thrust which keeps the listener on board long enough to hear the uncomfortable truth.

"Disciples had the eternal privilege of questioning Jesus himself about his doctrines."

I would be hard pressed to think of a controversial issue which does not have a Biblical base from which the minister can speak with authority.

The sermon, like the college lecture, will never disappear. It wasn't a "discussion on the Mount" that was recorded in the early chapters of Matthew, but a "sermon". Nevertheless, these same disciples had the eternal privilege of questioning Jesus himself about his doctrines.

If it is true that the group will never replace the pulpit it is also true that an isolated pulpit will never lead the group very far. I can't think of anything weaker, if not downright unethical, than hurling pronouncements at the pews with no opportunity for reaction. This is why we take a controversial element from the morning sermon and a few weeks later give it the full discussion treatment on a Sunday night.

Of course, if all we want is a great big peaceful congregation we are in the wrong denomination in the first place.

On the other hand, even Baptists work harder and are more loyal to the program if they can look the preacher in the eye, explode their differences and get rid of their tensions.

Incidentally, for the preacher still interested in crowds—it works!

REVEREND DOWARD L. McBAIN is the personable pastor of the First Baptist Church, Phoenix, Arizona and President of the American Baptist Convention.

What I Learned In Washington

By CHARLES L. LIVINGSTONE

Attending a four-day seminar in Washington did not make me an expert on political science or on religious liberty. However, it did give me some new insights into the American political system and suggested some new ways in which I might practice a more intelligent Christian citizenship.

In brief, during a seminar for editors in March, 1967, I learned what some of the problems are and met some of the people who are seeking answers to the problems. (In some cases, I may have been introduced to people who are part of a problem.)

Some of the following statements about my learning experiences in Washington probably should be called "confirmations of former prejudices." But even so, each statement suggests a truth which I shall try to communicate as an editor of curriculum materials; and each statement expresses a truth perceived or confirmed at the seminar for editors.

1. I learned that questions about religious liberty often are exceedingly complex.

Sometimes two important values come into conflict. Fallible men find that they must weigh an individual's right to be different in his religious practices against society's need for conformity in some areas. A study of supreme court opinions, for example, shows that the judges have ruled on cases in which freedom to practice religion was in conflict with an ordered society. The judges also have weighed the right to witness against the right to quiet and privacy and the right to religious belief against the state's right to provide patriotic education.

Reading the opinions of appeals court judges on almost any case is an exercise in humility. These judges hear arguments, take careful note of precedents, consider the possible implications of their decision. Yet they often write conflicting opinions. Surely, then, no responsible or thoughtful Christian will give dogmatic, casual, naive, or flippant answers to similarly complex problems.

Some of the current matters of concern to religious liberty and in church-state relationships are tax exemption for churches and church institutions, health and welfare programs administered by churches, urban renewal programs affecting churches, surplus property distribution to church-related schools, draft exemption for ministers, and the military chaplaincy.

2. I learned that people advocate religious liberty from various motives.

On questions of religious liberty, we Baptists sometimes find ourselves aligned with Jehovah's Witnesses, Unitarian-Universalists, militant atheists, the National Council of Churches, and/or Jewish groups.

Some of these people advocate religious liberty because they are members of minority groups and fear the power and pressure exerted by some large and influential groups. Others advocate religious liberty because they are skeptical about the value of religion in society. Still others view religious liberty as politically expedient because we already have a pluralistic society.

Some Baptists advocate religious liberty because of what they believe about the nature of man as created by God. As we grow in numbers and influence, some Baptists, acting from non-Biblical motives, seem inclined to abandon the principle of religious liberty for all people and advocate it only for those who believe as we do. The task of setting forth the biblical basis for religious liberty devolves partly upon editors of Bible study curriculum materials.

3. I learned that legal safeguards to religious liberty are growing stronger.

Some of my friends will express disbelief at this point, for in much of the recent publicity given to problems of prayer and Bible reading in public schools we have been led to believe that our (referring to Christians only) religious liberty is in danger. As a matter of fact, most of the restrictions upon religious liberty have come from states and municipalities. Few state constitutions have a guarantee of religious liberty like that in the federal Constitution.

Supreme Court decisions, beginning with the *Cantwell versus Connecticut* case in 1940, have established a strong second line of defense for all citizens. Those who say that our freedoms are ebbing away probably have not read the court decisions.

On the legal level, the boundaries of our freedom are set in the courts. On the practical level, the boundaries are set by business and social pressures. Thus some persons may not be enjoying the liberty which the law allows them. This fact probably is the basis for the learning experience listed next.

4. I learned that we need better communication.

CHARLES L. LIVINGSTONE is Editor of *Adult Life and Work Materials*, of the *Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention*.

Baptists have an obligation to communicate their insights on religious liberty which go beyond the Constitution. These insights include the spiritual and religious nature of man. However, we must never give the impression that we act out of self-interest or institutional prejudice.

Without communication of the principles upon which religious liberty is based, public policy will be determined by the principle of expediency. Also our failure in communication will produce a vacuum which will be filled by other voices. Ultimately, a breakdown in communication results in loss of freedom.

In communication there must be no substitute for intellectual competency, for research, and for facts responsibly set forth. However, communication includes the receiving of information as well as the giving of information. We need to communicate by personal example that truth has nothing to fear from open discussion.

5. I learned that I have a stewardship of influence.

Cynics sometimes say that *who* you know is more important than *what* you know. The politically naive make the opposite mistake. As a matter of fact, we should not put knowledge and influence in opposition to each other. To know some of the leaders

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What I Learned

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in Washington is a great privilege. To have a proper knowledge of the dignity and worth of all men also is a privilege. We need men in Washington who will use their influence in the right way. But we also need an informed electorate who can give proper support to elected officials.

I, for one, refuse to be cowed by my inability to influence millions of people through a frontal assault on their attitudes. I can start with only one or two persons. The "grassroots" still are important in the American system.

My views on religious liberty probably will be reflected in my work. For the most part, however, my professional influence will be unplanned. But I shall make no attempt to overcome my prejudice in favor of religious liberty for all people.

I shall not soon forget the intellectual stimulation of the seminar for editors. But the seminar also had an emotional impact. This was due in part to its setting. Washington is more than a city of sixty-nine square miles on the Potomac; it is an emotional experience. Thus I resurrect that trite vacation greeting; I wish you could have been there!

COVER PICTURE

The United States Capitol maintains radio and television studios for use by Congressmen. The scene shown on the cover used a photo backdrop of the Capitol building. The Pennsylvania Senators—Joseph S. Clark and Hugh Scott—are shown interviewing a guest who represents a government agency.

Two types of facilities are maintained by each house of Congress. The Senate and House Office buildings provide comparable facilities which are available for Congressmen to make recordings and film clips for use by their offices. Some Congressmen use these facilities for a regular report from Washington to their constituents on local stations in their home territories.

Radio-TV facilities are provided also in the Capitol building itself. These are under supervision of an executive committee of the respective Press Galleries. Such facilities are operated under regulations of the House and Senate Rules Committees, respectively.

The news media seek to provide the best coverage of committees with live broadcasts and telecasts, recordings and film. On the Senate side, live coverage of committees in session is permitted. Not so on the House side, which permits cameras to be set up only

WRITERS ORIENTATION PARTICIPANTS

The first group of writers and consultants to participate in an orientation on public affairs in Washington last March included the persons listed below.

This was a cooperative venture using the resources and personnel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to serve the personnel of agencies of Baptist conventions related to the Committee.

Other such orientation periods are planned for the future, with the next one scheduled for October 30 - November 2, 1967.

American Baptist Convention

Ronald E. Schlosser, Editor, *Young People's Class*, Audio-Visual Materials and Electives; Associate Editor, *Encounter*.

Southern Baptist Convention

James C. Barry, Consultant, Week-day and Vacation Bible School Work, Field Services Section, Sunday School Department

Miss Annie Ward Byrd, Editorial Co-ordinator, Education Division Office of Sunday School Board

Franklin Farmer, Consultant, Young People's Work, Field Services Section, Sunday School Department

James E. Frost, Supervisor, General Administration Unit, Field Services Section, Training Union Department

Miss Lucy R. Hoskins, Editor, Church Administration Materials

Charles Livingstone, Editor, Adult Lesson Courses, Sunday School Department

Rice A. Pierce, Supervisor, Youth Unit, Sunday School Department

HEW NAMES SECRETARY FOR FAMILY PLANNING

WASHINGTON (BPA) — In a move toward greater government emphasis on birth control, a new post on family planning and population has been created in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), according to announcement by Secretary John W. Gardner.

Mrs. Katherine B. Oettinger has been appointed by Secretary Gardner as the new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Family Planning and Population. For the past 10 years, Mrs. Oettinger has been head of the Children's Bureau of HEW.

In announcing the new post and the appointment of Mrs. Oettinger, Secretary Gardner emphasized that he places high priority on the developments of family planning services designed to insure "the integ-

rity of the family and the maximum opportunity of development for each child."

Gardner said Mrs. Oettinger will give special attention to the needs of unwed mothers and would work for better cooperation among the Department, state and local governments, voluntary agencies and professional groups in the family planning field.

HEW programs of medical and social services, education and research will be coordinated by the new deputy assistant secretary. In addition, she will keep abreast of developments in family planning in other countries and represent HEW in liaison with the Agency for International Development, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund.

Before joining the Children's Bureau in 1957, Mrs. Oettinger served as Dean of the School of Social Work at Boston University. Her background also includes extensive training and experience in social work practice, training and administration.

Secretary Gardner said a major factor influencing his decision to appoint Mrs. Oettinger to the new post was the leadership she has already demonstrated in the family planning field, and the speed with which the Children's Bureau put into effect family planning policies outlined early in 1966.

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in corridors outside committee rooms. Neither House permits live coverage in the chamber itself.

Frequently, a Senator or Congressman meets with representatives of the news media in the studio to repeat portions of a speech, made that day on the floor, for recording or filming. Sometimes an interview occurs before the cameras or a recording is made of remarks by a Congressman prior to or following a debate.

Social Security

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mittee on Public Affairs issued a report in which they said the bill should not be opposed for any reasons related to religious liberty or church-state relations when compared to the present Social Security program.

Since the proposal leaves the minister in the self-employed status, the Baptist Joint Committee staff report continued, the suggested change does not directly affect churches or church agencies.

As self-employed persons, the ministers themselves are now responsible, and would continue to be if the bill becomes law, for the full amount of the Social Security tax.

This distinguishes self-employed coverage from regular coverage where the employer and employee pay equal amounts. The self-employed tax is two-thirds that of the regular tax.

The Baptist Joint Committee staff observed that if the change is approved, more churches would "feel obliged to supplement their ministers' salaries to help them bear the additional expense, but this would not be mandatory."

Under the present program, seventy-five per cent of all ministers have chosen to be under Social Security. Ninety-five per cent of older ministers are covered. Sixty per cent of younger ministers are covered.

Walfred H. Peterson, a member of the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs said that if the new bill becomes law the initiative required to decide not to be covered by the program "would be a slight hindrance to the minister's free choice." But since he will be significantly taxed if he does not show this initiative, it does not seem likely that this hindrance will keep many ministers from acting to exclude themselves. This is one of those rare cases, Peterson continued, where "conscience is buttressed by immediate economic considerations."

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY MATERIALS

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY MATERIALS on current issues on the national scene are available from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The address is 200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. Materials on Baptist principles which relate to religious liberty readily provide background study materials for pastors and church officers, church staff members, church committees and interested church members. Associational superintendents, leaders and committees will find them especially useful in the area of church-state relations.

1967 STAFF REPORTS

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By W. Barry Garrett

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FAMILY PLANNING

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Since that time the Children's Bureau has expanded its services to the point that during the past year 250,000 women were receiving family planning services through programs supported by the Bureau.

The HEW investment in support of family planning programs has tripled since 1966.

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