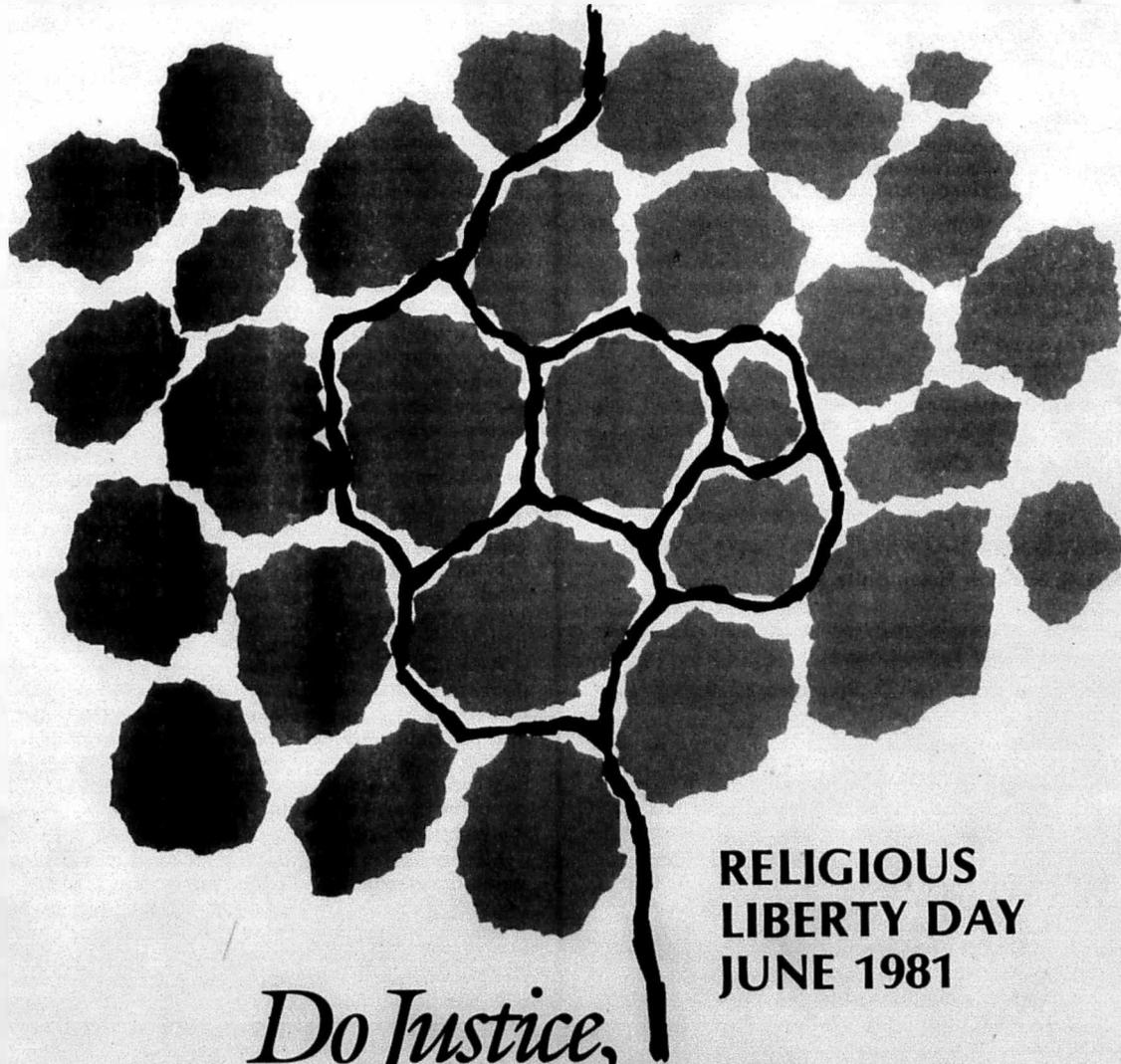


May 1981

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REPORT from the CAPITAL



RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY DAY
JUNE 1981

*Do Justice,
Love Kindness,
Walk Humbly with your
God.*

REPORT from the CAPITAL

"... a civil state 'with
full liberty in religious concerns' "

Vol. 36 No. 5 May, 1981

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Religious Liberty, 1981

When has the subject needed more thorough reflection and support? Those of us who thought there existed a fairly clear consensus on the meaning of religious liberty and the proper role of the religious institutions in America were properly jolted when along came a self-acclaimed moral force bearing judgment on so many ideals cherished by so many. Separation of Church and State was just one.

It was a reactionary influence that flavored a number of issues in the public policy arena, and these it existed as liberating, transcendent truth—things like the Panama Canal Treaties, gun control, prayer in the public schools, and a balanced federal budget, to name a few. So much about the way of human liberation, so little reflective of the *Divine Liberator*.

This number of the REPORT wrestles with the nature of religious liberty. James Dunn reminds us that it is properly founded, not on particulars over which we can disagree, but on the universal truth of the One who alone reveals truth and who alone holds ultimate claim to our conscience. Micah 6:8, the verse that sets into motion our thinking, speaks of the essence of religious liberty as righteousness—right relationship to God. It is more a matter of doing justice and kindness in an attitude of humility before God than arrogant posturing.

William Keucher sounds the "Keynote" for our Religious Liberty Day observance. He evokes a biblical insight, forthrightly declaring that some of our enemies are to be found inside the church (and nation). Narrow definitions of Christian, church, morality or justice are so foreign to the essence of each they inhibit free choice and mute the proclamation of liberty for those holding other views.

Who was it that said "I am a slippery fellow to whom labels do not readily adhere?" The quotation comes to mind when thinking about the phenomenon of "secular humanism." This elusive influence is often but not always equated with the less ubiquitous social humanist. Penrose St. Amant expertly penetrates some of the misunderstanding as it relates to church-state separation and the neutrality our Constitution requires in the face of our national pluralism. Neutrality does not imply, nor favor a secular ideology, but it facilitates free expression of religion while itself remaining receptive to the highest moral insights of all citizens.

Milton Ryder commits his creativity to arranging a worship experience. These pages, used fruitfully by congregations as part of morning worship or to program special services, may involve adults, youth and children. Churches are encouraged to purchase some of the books, music, etc., cited—it's the ticklish matter of copyrights and fairness is urged. Artwork can be duplicated, and the attractive two-color poster is available from this office.

There is an element of personal liberty given up in being part of a well-governed society. John Baker scrutinized his law library and journals for this article on the "right to bear arms." It is related, he discovered, to service in the militia and not to mere whim or sensed right. The subject will remain current in the aftermath of the recent assassination attempt on President Reagan. TV news showed conclusively that guns in the hands of people (kill!) jeopardize life.



A REAGAN ADMINISTRATION budget proposal which would double postage costs for non-profit mailers--including denominational publications and Baptist state papers --has cleared the first hurdle in the Senate but faces an uncertain future in the House where key committee members oppose it.

The administration's proposal to curtail postal subsidies would force non-profit publications to begin paying full rates instead of phased rates this October--six years ahead of the plan devised by Congress to gradually implement full rates over a 16-year-period.

The postal subsidy cuts were assumed in the budget reconciliation overwhelmingly approved in the Senate, but its Governmental Affairs Committee is not specifically bound to slash postal subsidies in achieving the overall cuts required by the reconciliation.

The proposal faces much tougher going in the House where the Post Office and Civil Service Committee has voted to reject the planned cuts. Additionally, the House Budget Committee has approved a budget plan that restores \$150 million of Reagan's proposed reduction in postal subsidies.

The proposed cuts would affect publications of non-profit religious, educational, scientific, philanthropic, agricultural, labor, veterans and fraternal organizations. ■

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION has proposed zero funding for and ultimate abolition of the Legal Services Corporation--the organization which funds civil legal services for the poor. The demise of legal services for the poor would result in unequal access to justice in this country.

The Judiciary Committee is considering a bill by its chairman which would provide funding at this year's level while the House Budget Committee talks of only 60% funding. Letters expressing views on the issue would be helpful to Congress. ■

A MEMBER OF the Jehovah's Witnesses sect who quit his job for religious reasons must be given unemployment compensation benefits, the Supreme Court ruled here April 6.

The high court held 8-1, that Eddie C. Thomas, a practicing member of the controversial sect who left his job at an Indiana foundry rather than produce turrets for military tanks, was denied his free exercise of religion when state authorities refused to provide him with unemployment benefits.

Thomas quit his job at the Blaw-Knox Foundry and Machinery Company when he was transferred from a section producing sheet steel for a variety of industrial uses to another department making turrets for tanks. ■



William F. Keucher

Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land

Tyranny has always been the foe of freedom.

Thomas Jefferson knew that when he pledged "eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

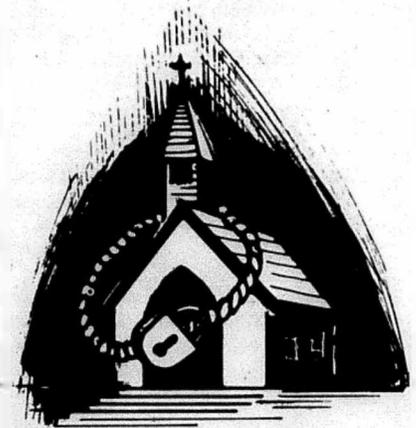
But, if there have always been tyrants who served as enemies of freedom, and who proved unwilling to trust common people with their inalienable liberties, today, the foes of freedom are sometimes to be found inside the camp. Perhaps the words of Jesus need to be heard again: "A man's foes shall be those of his own household." (Matthew 10:36) Those words reminded his hearers that religious convictions and commitments often divide, as well as unite. Today, professedly sincere Christian people (many of whom carry the name of Baptist) may be regarded either as a friend or a foe of Freedom.

In Colonial America, there were religious majorities and voices who believed in liberty only for themselves. They were foes of freedom for Baptists, Quakers, Jews and all who were outside the established churches. If, today, there are loud and insistent voices with similar religious absolutes which they want to see established by means of legal weights and constraints, they, too, must be regarded as foes of freedom—even if they are not agnostics or unbelievers, but in the Household of Faith.

Dr. Keucher, currently serving as President of the American Baptist Churches, USA, is also a member of the executive committee of the Baptist Joint Committee. He is pastor of Covenant Baptist Church in metropolitan Detroit, Michigan.

Such foes of freedom would include those who want to amend the *First Amendment of The United States Constitution* to establish religious prayers and practices by legal mandate. Such foes of freedom would include those who want to limit the rights of other citizens to the full exercise of religion now guaranteed to us all. Such foes of freedom would include those who advocate some religious test to measure or qualify candidates holding or seeking public office. Such foes of freedom desire to radically change the American system of a neutral, secular government with equal liberty for all to a theocratic state, where some religious professions and beliefs are to be favored over others.

Such foes of freedom may have persuasive voices, but they are alien to the historic foundation truths of our constitutional government. Their voices may be amplified by the media, but they are alien to our nation's sense of justice and fair play which finds room for religions pluralism, and which is tolerant of all beliefs, except the belief in intolerance. Their voices may be clamorous and insistent, but they are alien to the biblical message which seeks justice for the stranger and the forgotten people outside the pale. On this Religious Liberty Sunday, we must challenge all of our people to dig again the wells of freedom which have been choked by neglect. We must get in touch with the formative sources of history, to ask for a double portion of the spirit bestowed upon our forebears, so that in our own time we may be, not a foe, but a friend of freedom;



and to espouse a freedom, not for ourselves, but for everyone.

Re-Affirmation of Earlier Commitments

If Baptists do not probe the formative sources of their past history, they will be like a person with amnesia, whose identity suffers because he is only in touch with his present experience and its nearby voices. Let us reaffirm those courageous commitments which have formed the foundation of our friendship for religious liberty.

(1) *We can reaffirm our belief in and support of both religious liberty and freedom of conscience. We helped earlier generations to understand that as an inalienable right possessed by everyone, religious liberty should never be coerced by moral, religious or political majorities.*

George W. Truett said this for all of us when, on the Capitol steps, he declared that "religion must be forever voluntary and uncoerced," that no power "whether civil or ecclesiastical" can "compel men to conform to any religious creed or form of worship."

When the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs was formed, in 1939, one of the earliest statements reaffirming



firmed this historic part of our Baptist witness "in the maintenance of absolute religious liberty for his Jewish neighbor, his Catholic neighbor, his Protestant neighbor, and for everybody else."

(2) *We can reaffirm* our historic support for the *Sixth Amendment* of the *United States Constitution*, which provides that no religious test is ever to be used to measure or qualify, punish or limit the civil rights of any citizen, including the right to seek and to occupy public offices of trust.

In practice, this means that no one is to be disenfranchised on religious grounds. As late as the election of the late John F. Kennedy, many persons were fearful about a Roman Catholic in the White House. The Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference of Houston met with Kennedy and helped to change the intolerant fears of many persons; but, fear remains a foe of freedom.

(3) *We can reaffirm* our continuing support for the *First Amendment* of our *Constitution* which restricts government from favoring one religion or all religions, or from infringing upon the free exercise of religion.

We can help people understand the difference between life in Colonial

America with established churches and religious persecution, and life in *Constitutional* America; which established, not a Christian, Jewish, Islamic, nor an agnostic state, but a neutral, secular state. Such a political reality has made room in its pluralism for adherents of all religions and of no religions. Less than that would be an infringement of our Constitutional rights. That is why mandated prayers and religions by imperious, governmental decree are an insufferable intrusion on the inalienable rights to a free conscience which exist in the people themselves.

One of our earliest documents illustrates the point that America, under the *1787 Constitution* and the *1791 Bill of Rights*, was *not* seen by the founding fathers as "a Christian nation." In 1796, President Washington negotiated a treaty with Tripoli. The treaty was ratified by the United States Senate and proclaimed by President Adams on June 10, 1797. Article 11 stated clearly, "As the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion. . . no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony between the two countries." (P. 411, quoted by Irving Brant, *The Bill of Rights*.)

(4) *We can reaffirm* our support for the *Fourteenth Amendment* of our *Constitution* which forbids persons to be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law. The intimidation of people in public office by broad segments of society organized around a small cluster of single-issue, moral concerns borders on the infringement of the legislator's right and duty to represent the general welfare as well as his *whole* constituency and the pluralism of their views. Such "special interest" groups infringe also upon the rights of the whole people to be fairly represented in their duly elected officials.

(5) *We can reaffirm* our support of the principles which, under our *Constitution*, have allowed both the state and the church to be free for their specific functions. This climate of religious freedom has allowed all religions to flourish, and it has removed the state from controlling, organizing, managing and directing church affairs.

If America were a theocracy, and not a secular state, the government would need to decide whether the God of Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, or whoever, is the head of State. The state would need to decide which special record of revelation—the Bible, the

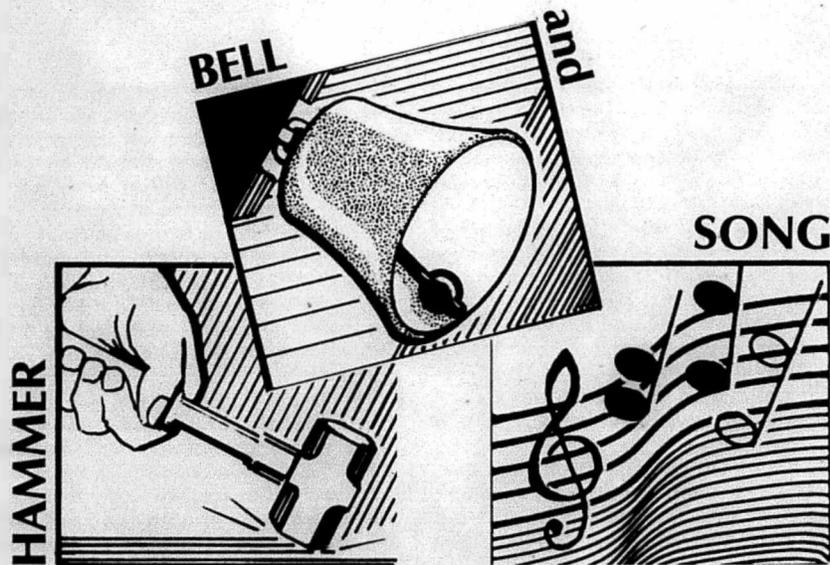
Koran, the Torah—and which creeds were to be proclaimed by law as authoritatively binding on all citizens; and who, therefore, should be punished, fined, or jailed because of his/her different mode of worship.

Instead of being free to celebrate Religious Liberty Sunday, we would be observing an *Act of Uniformity* for every citizen, and most Baptists would be inside jail again, suffering as their fathers did for the sake of a free conscience!

(6) *We can reaffirm* again our convictions that the Living God, alone, is Lord of the conscience, and that the faith and fealty owed to Him can never be given to Caesar. We know that each person answers only to the Lord, and no majority of voices, or of factions, can be allowed to invade the Temple of the human soul and profane the altar where the faith of a free conscience is meant to be offered to God, alone. We can resist the efforts of those who would control, constrain or manipulate the religious persuasions of any other person.

(7) *Last of all, we can reaffirm* our support of the constitutional rights which people enjoy, including a right to speak, to assemble, to disseminate their views, to petition and to dissent. These rights were not gained easily. Political tyrannies, religious absolutes and established majorities sought to silence other voices with their new views in science, philosophy, religion and politics. Our Baptist progenitors were in the thick of the struggle for non-conformity and dissent. Today, we must stand where they stood, and protect the most important of all our freedoms—the right to hear and to follow the Call of God in our daily vocation of faith and faithfulness. If we proclaim that essential freedom so it can be heard everywhere, and enjoyed by everyone, Religious Liberty Sunday will be a boon and blessing to our nation.

The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia's Independence Square contains a revolutionary text from Leviticus 25:10— ". . . proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants. . ." Thousands of spectators come every year to look at the Liberty Bell, but the loss of human freedom tells us that if liberty is to endure, people must be more than spectators. As Baptist congregations and classes observe Religious Liberty Sunday, let us call for more than a passive observance; let us challenge each other to "Ring the Bell" and to proclaim liberty everywhere for everyone.



Milton P. Ryder



An ordained clergyman, Mr. Ryder is director of media education and development, American Baptist Churches, USA, Valley Forge, PA.

in Worship

Religious Liberty Day; a good time to remember our commitments and our freedom as Christians, as Baptists and as Americans! A syndicated columnist, Jesse M. Wester, once described the episode from a film in which two veterans of the Spanish American War returned to a midwestern town. Ben and Trooper were a fascinating contrast. Trooper, though illiterate, always carrying a battered and much used Bible, was consistently calm and serene, while Ben regularly appeared distressed and nerve-racked. Wondering about Trooper's laid-back serenity Ben asked him, "Trooper, why do you always carry that Bible? You can't read it." "I know I can't," Trooper said, "but I know certain words when I see them." "For instance?" Ben asked looking eyeball to eyeball with Trooper. "Well, I know such words as God, heaven, forgiveness and love." "I guess you're right," Ben responded. "I guess these are the big words of life." The theme-dreamers for the 1981 Religious Liberty Day emphasis wisely followed Trooper's insight. They selected just a few words, found in Micah 6:8.

... do justice, ... love kindness,
... walk humbly with God."

In suggesting a worship or celebration option for churches to use in the emphasis of Religious Liberty Day it's especially helpful to notice the context of the prophet Micah's reference. Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, feared that God would punish the hateful injustice of the people in the southern kingdom of Judah. Yet his message contains clear signs of hope for the future. Just prior to the notable verse quoted above, Micah had posed the question of what would be appro-

priate to bring to the Lord as an act of worship. The best calves to burn as offerings to God? (v.6) Thousands of sheep or endless streams of olive oil? (v.7A) Or even his first born child as a sin offering? (v.7B) No, none of these. (The worship committee of your church can sigh with relief at that!)

Micah called not for symbols, gifts or material offerings. He called for action! He called for "behavioral modification" as social scientists today would phrase it. So, to carry out a worship emphasis in this spirit, we might think about how we are not only a nation under God, but a people with a universal consciousness of our brothers and sisters in various stages of want and deprivation, whether we actually see it or not. And the Gospel we hold dear must be loosed to action, wherein we become doers of the Word. ("Do not deceive yourselves by just listening to God's word; instead, put it into practice." (James 1:22 TEV).

Each community of faith will know of human situations and community problems in which doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with God can best be interpreted. (It's sound Baptist theology to affirm the competency of the individual in having capacities by divine gift and right to meet all the demands with which genuine religion confronts him/her.) So this outline process for celebrating religious liberty will allow spaces and places for each community of faith and pastor to imbue the arrangement with very specific, locally relevant concerns.

In 1958, Lee Hays and Pete Seeger wrote "The Hammer Song" Remarkably, the first three verses of the ballad parallel the Micah 6:8 reference and the fourth verse becomes a positive re-

prise. It is very singable, many churches having used it often during the folk song euphoria of the 60's and early 70's. The song is the peg on which this Religious Liberty Day event is hung.

Each person present should wear one of three (hammer, bell, musical notes) pins. They can be mimeographed or photocopied from page eight, cut out before the event and attached with a straight or safety pin. The pin will not only be used to cue the various groups for readings, etc., during the service, but they will also serve as discussion pieces as they're worn home or into other church activities that day. Each symbolizes one verse of Seeger's song and says "Religious Liberty" across the bottom.

Also, plain 3 x 5 cards will need to be located in each pew before beginning the event. Pencils are also needed, both being used in segment 2.

The experience is divided into three parts, each emphasizing one of the three elements from Micah, illustrated by the singing of one of the first three verses of the ballad. Each segment contains a rather predictable number of components, including a place for pastoral comment (if that's necessary it should carefully be kept to less than three minutes). These comments would be separated from the others with the remainder of the segment making a sermon in three, short, separated parts. That in itself could be a refreshing departure from normalcy. Each segment concludes with a unison prayer from Harry Emerson Fosdick's *Book of Public Prayers*.

Suggested Order of Worship

Introduction: (litany)

Choir: (or designated group near the front in the fashion of a choral reading).
When you worship, do you know what to bring to the Lord, the God of heaven?

Congregation: Shall we bring the best calves to burn as offerings to the Lord?

Choir: No—the Lord has told us what is required.

Cong.: Shall we bring thousands of sheep or endless streams of oil?

Choir: No—the Lord has told us what is required.

Cong.: Shall we bring our first-born as offerings for our sins?

Choir: No—the Lord has told us what is required.

Cong.: Then what shall we bring? What has the Lord told us?

All: The Lord requires that we do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God!

Choir: Then so be it!

Segment One

Ballad (verse one only. . . "If I had a hammer")

Responsive reading (between Pastor and people wearing a "hammer")

Pastor: Well, we have sung about hammers. We wish we had some—to hammer out justice!

All: What do those wearing hammers have to say?

Hammers: We want to tell the story of Jesus at Nazareth.

Cong.: What about it? What happened?

Hammers: It was the Sabbath & He stood to read the Scriptures and was handed the book of Isaiah, rolled up in a scroll.

Cong.: And what did He do with it?

Hammers: He found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."

Play reading from *Roger Williams and Mary* (by Albert Johnson) (3 characters are needed; see reading on page 8)

Comments by the Pastor

Unison Prayer from Harry Emerson Fosdick (#1, next column)

Segment Two

Ballad (verse two only. . . "If I had a bell")

Pew conversations

(Spontaneously gathered groups of 6-8 turn and talk with each other about an experience remembered or an historic happening recalled when bells rang for special meaning. Let each group decide which "bell" story they'd like to select and print the name of that bell on a 3 x 5 card clearly. Example: the bell at the Eisenhower funeral at National Cathedral. Collect the cards and let 2 lay-people then divide them and read aloud alternatingly with the people wearing bell pins as follows:)

Reader left: The bell at _____.

Cong. with bells: Once it rang clearly - it rings still in our minds.

Reader right: The bell of _____.

Cong. with bells: Once it rang clearly—it rings still in our minds.

Reader left: The bell at _____, etc., etc., etc..

Comments by the Pastor

Unison Prayer (#2, next column)

Segment Three

Ballad (verse three only. . . "If I had a song")

Comments by the Pastor

Unison Prayer (#3, next column)

Conclusion:

Ballad (verse four only. . . making all three references, hammer, bell + song)

Report from the Capital

Unison Prayers

Eternal Spirit, to whom we belong and in whom we live, we worship thee, seeking a fresh consciousness of thy reality and thy penetrating presence. Too often like creatures of the sea we question whether there is any water, like birds upon the wing we ask whether there is air. For, lo, in thee we live and move and have our being, yet we spin long arguments about thine existence and labor our debates about thine attributes. This day we would not debate but experience Thee. We would not argue but would know.

(2) **O God**, help us never to lose our vision of thee. Thou art the center and the circumference. Thou bindest together all that is worthy and meaningful in life. Steady our faith in thee; and if some of us here today have been shattered by doubt, hurt by disbelief, until life has been drained of its worth, restore to us such a vision of thee that we may believe triumphantly again.

Beget in us a new love for people. Forgive us that so often we are fatigued by them, worn out by their multitude and the irritation of their demands. Give us grace to see beneath the surface into the hearts of persons, to sympathize more deeply with the needs of human lives, to love better the things that are lovely in people, to excuse more mercifully the things that are unlovely, to mend more helpfully the things that are amiss.

(3) **O God**, bless our country. Upon the President and all those associated with him in authority let thy benediction rest. Save us from the folly of a haughty spirit and the disaster that follows pride. From all hardness of heart, all trust in violence, all greed of wealth and power, save us, O Lord! In this day, alike of our peril and our opportunity, lift us up to be a force for freedom, for righteousness, for peace, for true religion among the peoples of the earth.

Beyond the power of any voice to present our varied needs do thou meet them, Spirit of the living God. Gather us into thine everlasting arms, and according to the diversity of our need by the multiplicity of thy supplies, O God of grace and truth!

From *A Book of Public Prayers*, by Harry Emerson Fosdick. © Harper Bros., used with permission.

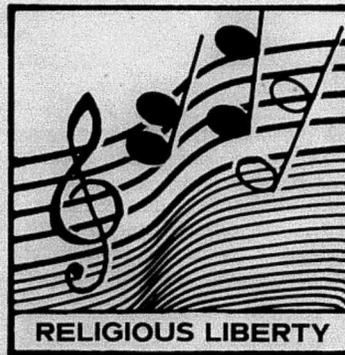
The Hammer Song

D A7 D
 If I had a ham - mer, I'd ham - mer in the morn - ing,
 D^{dim} A7
 I'd ham - mer in the eye - ning all o - ver this land;
 D G A7 Bm
 I'd ham - mer out dan - ger I'd ham - mer out a warn - ing,
 G D G D A7
 I'd ham - mer out love be tween my bro - thers and my sis - ters,
 D G D A7 D
 All o - ver this land.



V.3

I had a song, I'd sing it in the morning
 I'd sing it in the evening all over this land;
 I'd sing out danger, I'd sing out a warning
 I'd sing out love between my brothers and my sisters
 All over this land.



V.2

If I had a bell, I'd ring it in the morning
 I'd ring it in the evening all over this land;
 I'd ring out danger, I'd ring out a warning
 I'd ring out love between my brothers and my sisters
 All over this land.



V.4

Well I got a hammer and I got a bell
 And I got a song to sing all over this land;
 It's the hammer of justice, it's the bell of freedom
 It's the song about love between my brothers and my sisters
 All over this land.

The Hammer Song, by Lee Hays and Pete Seeger. © Oak Hills Publications, used by permission.

Roger Williams and Mary

(By Albert Johnson. Excerpted. © Friendship Press, used by permission.)

Roger: Narrator sits up center, Roger to left center.

Governor Haynes, now that you are governor in place of Mr. Winthrop, let me make my position clear to you. Marblehead Neck is neither your property nor the property of Salem. That land belongs to the Indians. I propose to buy it from them.

Narrator: How can you lawfully buy something from a stupid creature who doesn't even know he owns it? They know nothing of property rights! Great Caesar, man! Did they teach you nothing at Cambridge? Don't you know that all international law impounds the conquered land to the conqueror?

Roger: And by the law of Christ—my conscience says its wrong.

Narrator rises.

Narrator: Williams! It is my duty as your governor to warn you—you are dangerously close to heresy . . . and I presume you know what happens to heretics in this colony!

Roger: I do not consider it heresy to be true to the dictates of my conscience, and the people of Salem stand with me in this conviction.

Narrator: The people of Salem will follow the dictates of this government! And so will you! I am ordering you now to see to it that every subject of the King in Salem takes the oath of submission—regenerates and unregenerates alike!

Roger: Unregenerates? You are ordering unregenerates to take an oath?

Narrator: The oath of submission—an oath of allegiance to the King and this government—I am!

Roger: May I ask your definition of an unregenerate?

Narrator: You know as well as I do—an unregenerate is one not yet worthy to be admitted to the church!

Roger: And the oath? This is an oath before God?

Narrator: Certainly! An oath before God and the church!

Roger: If an unregenerate is barred from God, he can't very well take an oath before God, can he?

Narrator: Are you being insolent, sir?

Roger: Not if you have a sense of humor . . . sir.

(Mary Enters)

Mary: The Governor did not have a sense of humor, nor did the magistrates . . . and there was little humor in what happened in the months that followed.

(Continued on pg. 13)

Secular Humanism and the State



Secular humanism is an imprecise and widely used expression that is applied frequently these days in a pejorative sense to the viewpoint of the government of this country by some who believe Christian values are being undermined by the "secularist assumptions" of the state. Such assumptions amount to what has been called "another competing 'religious' viewpoint."¹ Another commentator on the current scene goes much further and says that the humanists "control everything—the mass media, government, and even the Supreme Court."²

It is, of course, true that some in our society, perhaps for ideological reasons or reasons of self-interest, interpret the separation of church and state in the sense of the opposition of the state to religion. But separation of church and state does not mean that government is opposed to religion or that it sponsors purely secular values or that religious values occupy a category unrelated to the concerns of the state. The separation of church and state and religious liberty, which such separation makes possible, require neutrality by the state where religious doctrine is concerned. Church-state separation does not imply the civil dogma of secular humanism with its non or anti-religious perspective.

The United States Constitution sets itself against "an establishment of religion" but not against religion as such. Indeed the pluralism of American life,

safeguarded by the Constitution, is itself a relative religious value. It provides the context within which the "free exercise" of religious faith can flourish without coercion. The founders of this nation were determined to do away with the coercive religion of established churches because they believed passionately in freedom of conscience and did not believe a religious establishment was an essential ingredient in preserving civil order. For example, Thomas Jefferson stated in a letter to a group of Baptists in 1808: "Freedom of religion is compatible with order in government and obedience to the laws."³

There are those who hold a purely secular view of the world and seek to impose a secular ideology upon American life. They tend to translate the constitutionally required neutrality of the state in religious matters into a constitutionally required secularism. This view stands diametrically opposed to the European idea derived from medieval Roman Catholicism and perpetuated by magisterial Protestantism which assumed that civic stability required a religious establishment and, therefore, that the state church constituted the cement which held society together. The secular interpretation of the proper posture of the American government makes precisely the opposite point that civil peace requires a purely secular state. I do not believe this is the intention of the first Amendment of the Constitution, which reads, "Congress shall make no law respect-

ing an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." The point is not that the government opposes religion with a secular ideology. The point is that the government supports a society which is open to varied religious possibilities, described as "the free exercise" of religion, and is likewise protective of those who hold no explicit religious faith. In contrast to the coercive religious establishments in Europe, where people were penalized for nonconformity, Americans seek a society in which diversity and dissent within the sphere of constitutional protections are safe options.

The United States government is not opposed to Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or other faiths and supports the right of American citizens to accept and propagate a variety of religious options or none. This is not secular humanism. It is the expression of the religious neutrality of the state. What alternative do those who oppose this role by the state suggest? Should we have a Christian state, an established Christianity? If so, what happens to the rights of Jews, Muslims, and other faiths? Should we have an established religious viewpoint normative for the nation? If so, what happens to the rights of those who hold no religious faith? Should we have a secular state, an es-

¹Robert D. Rasmussen, "And the Debate Goes on," *The American Baptist*, February, 1981.

²Tim LaHaye, quoted by Steve Board, *Eternity*, Dec. 1980.

³Cited by Penrose St. Amant, "Baptist Pluralism and Unity," *Baptists and the American Experience*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1976, p. 351.

A distinguished scholar, Dr. St. Amant is visiting professor of church history at Golden State Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, California. From 1972-1977, he served as president of Ruschlikon Baptist Seminary, Zurich, Switzerland, and previously taught at Southern and New Orleans seminaries.

established secularism? If so, what happens to the rights of Christians, Jews, Muslims, and other faiths? These alternatives are clearly unconstitutional. Belief in a purely secular state as the final solution to problems of social injustice and conflict is an implicit form of religion and as such comes equally under the ban of the "establishment of religion" as the explicit beliefs of the traditional religions. Such a state is neither what our founding fathers contemplated nor what most Americans perceive as an implication of the Constitution. Most people in this country oppose Marxism not only because it restricts civil liberties but also because of its dogmatic anti-religious philosophy of the role of government. The constitutionally protected religious option is an essential element in the American heritage.

The Constitution is a bulwark against the coercions of any "establishment of religion" and likewise protects the widest expression of religious faith ever known in human history. It does not dictate a single religious option, of course, but neither does it throw its weight against a "religious" view of the world. It seeks to strike a balance between the Scylla of the coercions of an established religion and the Charybdis of the coercions of an established secularism. The state is religiously neutral; it is not anti-religious.

As Christians, let us struggle for peace and justice in America and the world without identifying specific political and ethical solutions with the religious left, middle, or right. No government, including our own of whatever political party, possesses a divine sanction. God is not a Democrat or a Republican or a Socialist or an Inde-

pendent. But our government, whatever its faults, provides a context in which a free people can pursue the religious quest without fear. This precious heritage must be sustained in the face of several possible threats. The religious right could succeed in restricting religious liberty, as it seeks to shape our social and political institutions according to its own theological criteria out of the fear of what is perceived as intrusions of the secular state into the life of the church. The religious left could respond to this threat by joining secular forces in the effort to restrain what is seen as the illegitimate intrusion of the church into the political process and to preserve a pluralistic society. In both cases, the delicate church-state balance would be pushed one way or the other. The secular ideologists could take advantage of the struggle between the religious right and left to strengthen their conception of the state as an instrument by which life is desacralized in the interest of a purely humanistic and pragmatic view of the world.

I believe an open and experimental attitude toward the fragile state-church balance is appropriate. This means an affirmation of the neutral—not negative—role of the state where religion is concerned, a neutrality that protects the people from the coercions of "an establishment of religion" and removes most impediments where "the free exercise" of religion is concerned. The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States prohibits a religious "establishment", however defined, and also supports the "free exercise" of religion. What is contemplated is a government that opposes the coercions of established churches and at the same time encourages the

free expression of religious belief and practice.

The constitutional guarantee of the "free exercise" of religion provides ample opportunity to bring to bear the resources of religion upon the government of the nation. There are legitimate differences of opinion as to the extent and manner through which such influence should be exerted. The endorsement of political candidates is, in my opinion, not a proper function of the church. To speak of "Christian politics" or "Christian economics" is, I believe, to absolutize relative political and economic views and to run the risk of idolatry. Prudence, wisdom, and openness to alternatives are required as we seek to translate principles of freedom and justice, in which all Christians believe, into specific political and economic structures, concerning which there are widely differing judgments among equally devoted Christians. Nevertheless, we must move into the stream of life because the full range of the Gospel cannot be confined to a ghetto. Its thrust is social as well as personal. The Gospel speaks to the powerful who discover that power is easily corrupted and does not bring the peace it seems to promise. Its voice should speak for those who have no voice. Let it be heard where human rights are violated, where hearts are broken, and where the poor, the aged, and the handicapped struggle for dignity and sometimes for sheer survival.

Jesus came "to preach the gospel to the poor, . . . to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke 4:18) That's our mandate too.



National Religious Liberty Conference

FAITH AND FREEDOM: Evangelism Rooted in Religious Liberty

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS 200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N. E. WASHINGTON, D. C. 20002

John W. Baker

VIEWS OF THE WALL



The President has been shot! This, a more-dramatic-than-usual episode in the American drama, has added more fuel to the debate between those who would ban handguns or rigidly control their sale or possession and those who assert that controls over the sale and possession of handguns would be bad public policy and contrary to the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. This amendment states in absolute terms, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs does not have a position either for or against controls on the sale or possession of handguns, and this article is not intended to express a position on the issue. However, questions have been raised with the staff on the nature of the constitutionally guaranteed right "to keep and bear Arms." What follows is a brief legal analysis of the ways both state and federal courts have interpreted the Second Amendment.

The First Amendment begins, "Congress shall make no law..." and the Supreme Court has held that the remainder of the Bill of Rights should be read as if that phrase preceded each of those amendments. Thus, the protection which is afforded by the Second Amendment prevents infringement by Congress of the right to keep and bear arms but does not extend to actions of the states, *Presser v. Illinois*, 116 U.S. 252 (1886), nor to non-state action, *United States v. Cruikshank*, 92 U.S. 542 (1876). The way remains open to state legislatures to pass gun control laws unless they are forbidden to do so by their own state constitutions.

The degree to which the Congress is forbidden to control the sale and possession of firearms is uncertain. The debates in Congress over the Second Amendment are not recorded in full and discussion was, at best, scanty. This amendment as originally drafted emphasized the relationship of the militia to the bearing of arms: "A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, being the best security of a free state, the right of the

people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; but no person religiously scrupulous shall be compelled to bear arms." Congressman Gerry of Massachusetts pointed out that the key concept of this amendment was that the keeping and bearing of arms by the militia would make it unnecessary to maintain a standing army: "What, sir, is the use of a militia? It is to prevent the establishment of a standing army, the bane of liberty." *Annals of Congress*, August 17, 1789, p. 778.

The courts have held that this connection with the militia was what was intended by the final wording of the amendment. To the courts, the Second Amendment guarantees a collective rather than an individual right, *Warin v. United States*, 530 F.2d 103 (C.A. 6 1976), *cert. denied*, 426 U.S. 948 (1976), and "The arms referred to in this amendment are the arms used in defending the state and civil liberty and not pistols, bowie knives, brass knuckles, billies, and such other weapons as are usually employed in brawls, street fights, duels, and affrays, and are only habitually carried by bullies, blackguards, and desperadoes, to the terror of the community and the injury of the state." *West Virginia v. Workman*, 14 S.E. 137 (1891)

The Supreme Court has affirmed that the right to keep and bear arms is dependent on involvement with the militia. In the only case in which it has handed down a decision on the power of Congress to limit the right to keep and bear arms, *United States v. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174 (1939), the Court sustained a section of the National Firearms Act, 26 U.S.C. §5801 *et seq.*, requiring the registration of sawed-off shotguns. The Court said, "In the absence of any evidence tending to show that possession or use of a 'shot-gun having a barrel of less than eighteen inches in length' at this time has some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia, we cannot say that the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear such an instrument. Certainly it is not within judicial notice that this weapon is any part of the ordinary military equipment or that its use could contribute to the common defense... With obvious purpose to assure the continuation and

render possible the effectiveness of [the militia] the declaration and guarantee of the Second Amendment were made. It must be interpreted and applied with that end in view."

Three years later in *Cases Velazquez v. United States*, 131 F.2d 916 (C.A. 1 1942), *cert. denied*, 319 U.S. 770 (1943), the Circuit Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, upholding another provision of the Federal Firearms Act, said, "Apparently, then, under the Second Amendment, the federal government can limit the keeping and bearing of arms by a single individual as well as by a group of individuals, but it cannot prohibit the possession or use of any weapon which has any reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well-regulated militia."

Since these two decisions there have been a number of congressional acts which have placed stricter limitations on the receipt, possession, and transportation of firearms, and proposals have been made for national registration of firearms and even for prohibiting ownership altogether. As recently as 1978 the Supreme Court left standing a lower court decision which held, once again, that the purpose of the Second Amendment was to preserve the effectiveness and assure the continuation of the state militia. *Oakes v. United States*, 564 F.2d 384 (C.A. 10 1977), *cert. denied*, 435 U.S. 926 (1978).

At what point federal regulation or prohibition of some classes of firearms would run afoul of the Second Amendment is not clear, but it is fair to say that Congress' power to control the right "to keep and bear Arms" is broad. State legislatures are not bound by the Second Amendment—it has not been "nationalized" as yet by the Fourteenth Amendment. Unless a state's constitution and its own judicial interpretation of that constitution prohibit the legislature from controlling or prohibiting the ownership or possession of a class of firearms, the legislature is free to do so. Violent crimes involving handguns have increased in the United States at such a rapid pace in the last few years that, in all probability, there will be attempts to control rigidly or to ban handgun sale and possession by state and federal law. If legislative bodies are able to resist the pressures of the "gun lobby" and pass such laws, the courts will have to make the final decisions as to their constitutionality.

News in Brief



'Power with Arrogance' Destroys Lives, Career

DALLAS—Abuses of the First Amendment destroyed John Henry Faulk's career and it could happen again, Faulk warned at a national seminar on the use and abuse of power.

Faulk, a Christian and personality on the "Hee Haw" television series, told about 400 participants at the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission annual seminar he was blacklisted and later fired from CBS during the McCarthy era communist hunt.

He said the lives of many of his friends were ruined because groups of self-appointed communists hunters had a "Jerry Falwellish attitude of asserting power with arrogance" to smash people's lives.

Holding the Constitution and First Amendment admonish against government meddling in the field of conscience and religion, Faulk said the founding fathers understood that we were "a nation of Christian people and not a Christian nation because civil government has no role to play in the conscience of men."

Tax Decision Appealed

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Supreme Court announced here that it will consider the federal government's appeal of a Western Pennsylvania district court decision which relieved a member of the Old Order Amish religion from paying the employer's share of social security taxes and from withholding social security taxes from wages of Amish employees because such taxes infringe upon their free exercise of religion.

Old Order Amish consider it a violation of their faith to receive social security benefits or pay social security taxes.

Present federal law exempts Old Order Amish who are self-employed from social security taxes. In its request that the Supreme Court review the district court decision, the federal government asserted that Congress did not intend that the exemption be extended beyond self-employed Amish to those who are employers and employees.

Propose Sunday Elections

WASHINGTON—House and Senate committee hearings on proposed legis-

lation moving federal elections from Tuesday to Sunday, as well as other election law changes, are expected by the end of May.

Spokesmen for the House Administration Committee and the Senate Rules and Administration Committee told REPORT from the CAPITAL that the hearings are definitely planned, though no firm date has been set.

Identical bills introduced by Rep. Mario Biaggi, D-N.Y., as H.R. 84, and Sen. S.I. Hayakawa, R-Calif., as S. 57, contain the Sunday election proposal.

The House Administration Committee, chaired by Augustus F. Hawkins, D-Calif., will study several legislative proposals stemming from problems which surfaced during the last national election, including President Carter's concession before the poll closings in the Pacific time zone, the lengthy primary season, and state-by-state spending limitations, a spokesman said.

Court Rules No Violation

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Supreme Court let stand a Minnesota ruling that parents' detention of their 21-year-old daughter in efforts to deprogram her from religious cult beliefs did not constitute false imprisonment.

In 1977, Susan Louise Peterson sued her parents, their minister and three other persons for false imprisonment and intentional infliction of emotional distress after being held captive for 16 days in an attempt to deprogram her from affiliation with a group called The Way Ministry.

The trial court found the defendants not guilty of false imprisonment, a decision which was later affirmed by the Minnesota Supreme Court.

In requesting the high court to review the Minnesota decision, Peterson charged that the false imprisonment and attempted deprogramming by her parents as well as the admission as evidence of the religious organization's financial backing for her lawsuit violated her First Amendment rights.

Bureau Defines 'Church'

HARRISBURG—A church must have at least 25 members, be non-profit, and religious in nature—"that is, it must promote belief in a deity or supreme being—according to the

Pennsylvania Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

These were among the criteria suggested by the state agency in proposing a legal definition of churches in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

The definition is needed to enforce a 1977 provision of the state motor code which establishes a \$10 license fee for church vehicles, which is lower than the regular fee.

The proposed definition also says a church must have at least six of these characteristics: be a legal entity, have a definite ecclesiastical government, have a formal code of doctrine and discipline, have a membership not associated with any other church or denomination, have an established place of worship, have a regular congregation, have regular religious services, have church schools for the religious instruction of the young, have schools for the preparation of clergy.

Ethnic Bias Opposed

WASHINGTON—A coalition of 15 agencies that operate private schools has urged that any tuition tax-credit legislation enacted by Congress exclude parents of children attending schools that are ethnically discriminatory.

In a statement, the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) said, "We urge the enactment of a tax-credit law that has the necessary protections to insure that none of the benefits thereof inures to the advantage of parents who choose to educate their children in institutions which discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin. Without such protections, the council cannot support this legislation."

Book Arm Called Taxable

SAN FRANCISCO—The California Supreme Court has refused to review a lower court's finding that property used for a book publishing enterprise of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is taxable.

An appeals court held that book publishing and distributing were essentially commercial activities, rather than the practice of a religious belief. The state supreme court declined a petition to review that ruling.

INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



Horror, Brutality Mark El Salvador Regime

GENEVA—El Salvador's army and security forces killed 202 children between June 1980 and January 1981, according to an official of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Salvador who represented a World Council of Churches (WCC) commission at a United Nations hearing here.

Roberto Cuellar, director of the archdiocese's Legal Aid Department, represented the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs in testifying before the UN Commission on Human Rights meeting here.

He declared that "the primary responsibility for the violations of human rights in El Salvador lies with the Salvadoran military regime."

Mr. Cuellar said the archdiocese's Legal Aid Department is "uniquely placed to hear from every corner of our country the cruelty and humiliation the common people suffer."

Supporting his contention that the government forces are responsible for most of the violence, Mr. Cuellar noted that "members of the present government who opposed the practice of extermination have themselves been assassinated or have been forced to flee the country."

According to the archdiocese's documentation, 4,400 civilians—mostly women and children were killed in operations of "total extermination" supposedly directed against guerrillas by the Salvadoran armed forces in the past three months.

LONDON—A harrowing picture of brutality by members of El Salvador's National Guard emerges in a report from there by a British Methodist official.

The Rev. John Hastings, Methodist international affairs secretary, said refugees he interviewed told of seeing a middle-aged man beheaded, a 16-year-old girl shot, two other teen-age girls raped and left to die in a burning house, and a river red with the blood of dismembered bodies.

The clergyman quoted a young woman refugee who said she had seen a neighbor, a 60-year-old woman, shot while milling corn at her house and then hanged by National Guardsmen. Several other refugees told of a 50-year-old man who had been be-

headed in front of them as an "example."

"I must have spoken to some 200 people out of the 4,500 I met in a day and a half in the Colomoncagua area," Mr. Hastings said.

"All had stories of brutalities by security forces. One man told how his wife had been bayoneted to death and thrown into the street, and how he had fled with two of his children, having to leave behind the other three. He didn't know if they were still alive."

Mr. Hastings said the National Guard claimed it was exacting punishment for giving shelter to guerrillas. "But often," he added, "it was purely to raise terror, and troops would rampage about killing animals, pregnant women, people who could have had no part in the political confrontation in El Salvador." (RNS)

Prison Ministry Resumed

WARSAW—Under a draft plan proposed by a joint church-state commission, Catholic priests in Poland will be allowed to celebrate Masses in state institutions and resume prison ministries, it was announced here.

The commission of representatives of the Communist government and the Catholic hierarchy also said the church would be granted more freedom from censorship in its publications and greater access to the public media.

March Held in Five Cities

Several thousand evangelical students demonstrated in five major cities recently to protest what they say is "the worst persecution of Soviet Christians since the late 1930s."

Students from area campuses had distributed 20,000 post cards through local church members addressed to Soviet President Breshnev asking that he officially recognize the unregistered Baptist Church there and ease the government's relentless pursuit of Gennadi Kryuchkov, the chairman of the Council of Churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (CCECB).

CORRECTION

In the April 1981 issue on p. 6, drop from the citation on *Bob Jones University v. U.S.* the line "cert. granted, — U.S. — (1981)." The University plans to file a petition for writ of cert.

(From p. 8)

Roger in trapping the Governor had trapped himself . . . the Boston Oligarchy had power—Roger had only his conscience and a few loyal friends.

The trial was swift and a mockery of justice. This would be a lesson to all who would not submit . . .

Narrator: Whereas the court of King Charles in the colony of Massachusetts Bay, continent of America, finds the accused, Roger Williams, guilty . . .

Roger: I am guilty of no offense over which a civil court has any jurisdiction!

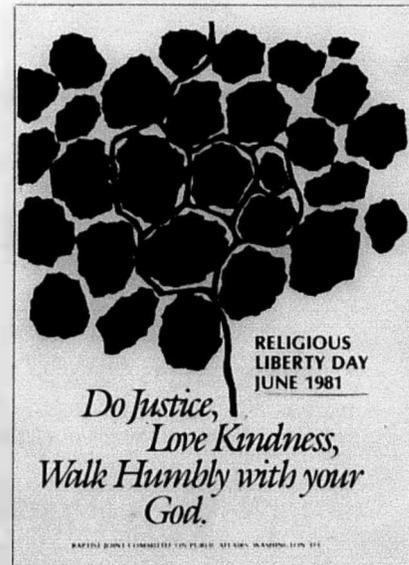
Narrator: . . . the court condemns the accused to banishment . . .

Roger: Banishment!

Mary: Banishment . . .

Narrator: . . . unless the accused will sign a written statement of repentance and retract all accusations made in defiance of this government and will commit himself to complete submission to this government, duly appointed . . .

Roger: I will sign no retraction! I have nothing to repent! My submission is to God alone! . . . And may he forgive you and have mercy on you all.



Order this 17" x 24" two-color poster without charge for June observance

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor: Tom Dybdahl's January piece on the dangers of a national constitutional convention (con-con) was excellent. Moreover, the fear that a new con-con would be dominated by narrow special interests is not a groundless fantasy, as what happened in New York State in the late 1960s bears out.

In our then largest state, voters decided by a small margin in 1965 to hold a state con-con in 1967. Pressure groups seeking tax aid for parochial schools, though clearly a minority in the state, used tight organization and "bullet voting" to control the election of Con-Con delegates. Their single issue minority vote bloc was able to elect two thirds of the Con-Con's delegates. The New York Con-Con, controlled by one sectarian pressure group, then proceeded to draft a new state constitution without the old constitution's strong section against parochiaid.

Fortunately, New York's voters had a chance to ratify or reject the proposed new charter with its seriously weakened church-state provision. They voted it down 72.5% to 27.5%.

A proposed new national Constitution, however, would not be subject to

ratification by the people, but only by state legislatures or special state conventions, whichever method Congress would choose. Theoretically, a proposed new U.S. Constitution, with the Bill of Rights practically destroyed, could be ratified by legislatures or conventions in the 38 smallest states. Even if a large majority of Americans opposed the new charter, it could be ratified and there would be nothing anyone could do about it.

Admittedly this is a worst case scenario. It might be possible to prevent a runaway Con-Con. It might be possible to elect Con-Con delegates who would not tamper with our basic liberties. It might be possible for state legislatures or conventions to defeat proposed amendments or a new constitution that would threaten our liberties.

The worst a new Con-Con could do is wreck our constitution and Bill of Rights, extinguishing the beacon of liberty that has made our country the envy of the world. The least a Con-Con could do is waste a great deal of time and distract the nation's attention from its real problems.

Any change in our Constitution really favored by a large majority of Amer-

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icans can be made by the time tested method of Congressional proposal, following careful hearings and deliberation, and state ratification. Our Constitution and our liberties are too valuable to risk the throw of a pair of loaded dice.

—Edd Doerr
Americans United
Silver Spring, MD

Please send the following:

STAFF REPORTS

- Baker, John W. Nontheistic Religions and the First Amendment**—The courts, . . . have equated nontheistic systems of ethical and moral thought with theistic systems of thought and have included both under the rubric of religion. . . Single copies free. \$3.00 dozen, \$20.00 hundred copies
- Wood, James E., Jr. Government Intrusion into Religious Affairs** (Single copy, \$.30; dozen copies, \$3.00; one-hundred copies, \$20.00)

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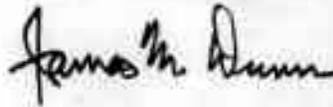
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REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn
Executive Director



Do Justice
Love Kindness
Walk humbly with God

Micah 6:8

Are you out of kelter?
Maybe you say kilter?
Out of plumb?
Out of line?

The Old Testament idea of righteousness was to be where one ought to be in respect to God. Rightness or wrongness was relative, in a sense. Now, don't get in an uproar, keep reading. Rightness or wrongness is determined by and depends upon "where you are relative to God, the still point in a turning world." Relative to Him are you in the right place?

Amos made the point with his plumb line (Amos 7:7-8). In a dramatic object lesson with a weight on the end of a piece of string Amos showed up the out-of-lineness of God's children. They got the message. As a builder tests a wall to see if it is perpendicular to the ground, the biblical righteousness concept checks us out, sizes us up to see if we are "squared away" with the Lord.

In the Bible and in the biblical words, the *righteous* and the *just* refer to the same people. *Doing righteousness* and *doing justice* seem to us ordinary folks to have the same meaning. Being right with God and being *justified* refer to the same correct standing before the Heavenly Judge.

From the very beginning one could not be right with God unless he was right with those about him. During the first century of this area in the boring days of the church, the *righteous* were those who were correct in dealing with their fellow-men. In the Greco-Roman world the *righteous* were the good citizens.

Now after hammering away on those two loaded words, read the theme for this year's Religious Liberty Day:

Do Justice. . .
Be in the right spot considering who God is, where He is, what He is doing in the world.

Do Justice. . .
Don't just learn it, seek it, love it, accept it. Do it.

Do Justice. . .
Allow fellow human beings to be who God made them to be, expects them to be.

Do Justice. . .
As a child of God be passionately dedicated to the right of every human being, made like Him, to come to Him freely, to respond voluntarily or even to turn away rather than be forced to violate conscience and personhood; one can not *do justice* without insisting upon religious liberty for everyone.

Do Justice. . .
Understand that the biblical estimate of human beings, the so-called "doctrine of man" demands nothing less than full freedom of conscience. Religious rigmarole is worse than empty unless it springs from liberty. Pious exercise is to be pitied unless it is freely chosen. One does not become righteous by rote. The deep roots of religious freedom tap the fire in the bones of the eighth century prophets who pled

Do Justice. . .
Love Kindness. . .
There is a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea,
There is a kindness in his justice
Which is more than liberty.

The justice of God is not an awful oughtness, and dead legalism, not a chilling verdict of some celestial Court. The justice of God is freer than freedom, more alive than life.

Walk humbly with God. . .
Live simply, that others may simply live.

Walk humbly with God. . .
Or, as one modern version puts it: order your life modestly. Had you considered the possibility that the way we allocate our own resources reflects upon our dedication to the freedom of those locked in limited lifestyles by our extravagance?

Observe Religious Liberty Day, June 6 or 7, 1981

Reflect upon the theological underpinnings of religious freedom. Mark these dates on your calendar: October 5-6, 1981, and plan to attend the Religious Liberty Conference. The theme is Faith and Freedom: Evangelism Rooted in Religious Liberty.

REVIEWS



The Integrity of MISSION

The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church

By Orland E. Costas 114 pp. New York: Harper & Row. Paper, \$3.95

Integrity of Mission, an incisive expression of the author's commitment to the good news of God's attendance at every point of human need, is also a challenge to the Church to "relate faith to the context of life." Costas affirms human existence—here and now, material and spiritual, for the poor as for the affluent, for the individual and for society, embraced and ultimately fulfilled in the Kingdom of God announced by Jesus Christ. Therein lies mission.

Mission as proclamation of the good news, takes its direction from the "inaugural address" of Jesus with its focus on the poor, the blind, the captives and the oppressed, a passage the author believes is all too often overly spiritualized. It interprets liberation as the vision of a new age in which the oppressed triumph in an atmosphere of freedom, with implications for the future, as for the present.

Mission, also the making of disciples, is concerned as much with the depth of commitment as over the calling of persons to commit their lives to Christ. Discipleship, simply put by the author, is "to follow Jesus." He also spells out the nature of discipleship, which is not always as simple.

Costas cautions that Christians cannot be neutral. In true discipleship, they will be the world's conscience committed to truth, to "justice, love and well-being." The Church must grow as a visible model, a "sign of the new order of life introduced by Jesus Christ, and challenging this world's powers and principalities."

It is about powers and principalities—enslavers, in so many nations—that Costas provides valuable analyses and insights, beginning with the observation that "so close are the ties between liberation and social action that we are forced to see the former in terms of the Church's concern for a more just and humane world." The struggle of the poor for liberation from their material oppressive situation should also be the church's struggle. . . . to be a priestly and prophetic community."

An evangelical theologian who serves on the faculty of the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa., Costas studies and ministered in his native Costa Rica. His acquaintance with Liberation Theology and theologians is first hand, and although he shares some of their concerns, his critique of the excesses of that mode of doing theology is biblically faithful.

Costas, noting the overwhelming destitution of Third World nations, writes:

"In our day the liberating signs of the Gospel would have to include participation in the human struggles against economical and political imperialism, mental and physical infirmities, the ills of ignorance, poverty and hunger, and of racial and sexual discrimination."

He observes, therefore, that when the Christian community orders its mission in the context of oppressive need, their example may be more

threatening to established powers than their taking up of guns and joining guerilla forces in the hills. Writing of a colleague pastor (giving at the same time a clear social analysis of one Latin American country), he saw him as one who is "trying to live out his Christian life and fulfill his ministry faithfully in the midst of a social order filled with deceit, corruption, electoral fraud, mass slaughters, oppression, repression and exploitation of defenseless peasants and workers." He cites the situation as one in which "to dare to stand for the cause of justice was a crime."

This is not a book on religious liberty in a narrow sense, but one which presents the liberation ideal in broad biblical dimensions. It frees religion from narrow theological strictures and from identification with a particular political, economic or culture style or system. The book mirrors the author's own discipleship and personal liberation through Christ. (V.T.)

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY DAY RESOURCES

- O. Carroll Arnold, *Religious Freedom on Trial*, Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press
- Isaac Backus, *A History of New England with Particular Reference to the Denominations of Christians called Baptists*, Newton, Mass: Backus Historical Society
- G. S. Bailey, *The Trials and Victories of Religious Liberty in America*, Valley Forge, PA: ABPS (Judson Press)
- Roland H. Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty*, New York, N.Y.: Harper Torchbooks (Paper)
- Robert Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religious in Time of Trial*, New York, N.Y.: Seabury Press
- Joseph M. Dawson, *America's Way in Church, State and Society*, New York, N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Co.
- Harry Emerson Fosdick, *A Book of Public Prayers*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Edwin Scott Gaustad, *Dissent in American Religion*, Chicago: University of

- Chicago Press
- Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press
- Albert Johnson, *Roger Williams and Mary*. New York: Friendship Press
- Sidney E. Mead, *The Nation with the Soul of a Church*, New York, N.Y.: Harper Forum Books (paper)
- Cecil Northcott, *Religious Liberty*, London: SCM Press
- Leo Pfeffer, *Religious Freedom*, Skokie, IL: National Textbook Co.
- Pete Seeger, *American Favorite Ballads*, New York: Oak Publications.
- Elwyn A. Smith, *Religious Liberty in the United States*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press
- Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States*, 3 vols., New York: Harper & Row. (The definitive work on the subject)
- Anson Phelps Stokes and Leo Pfeffer, *Church and State in the United States*, 2nd ed. rev., New York: Harper & Row (Crystallization of the above volume.)

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