

# REPORT from the CAPITAL



## The Supreme Court

"It is the institution which is charged with the final responsibility of ensuring that basic constitutional principles will be continued despite the economic problems of the developing countries and the food stamps to those who are unable to work." **enforced."**

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O'Connor

# REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 36, No. 9 October, 1981

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## Family Concerns

Justice and equality were served in the past month when Sandra Day O'Connor was confirmed to the Supreme Court. Mrs. O'Connor, who graces the cover of the **REPORT**, in hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee provided ample testimony to her keen intellect and unflappable spirit. Stan Hastey covered the hearings and adds insights into the character of the new justice.

When has the American family held a more prominent role in the future of the nation than at present? Jimmy Carter sensed urgency when he called for the White House Conference on Families. On another track, legislation known as the Family Protection Act has been introduced, raising this question among others, who is doing what to whom? One of Carter's appointees to the 50-member Advisory Committee, James Autry, suggests the bill will saddle the public with a hierarchy of values foreign to the majority and that the family will suffer under government's heavy-handed control rather than enjoy its liberating support. A sad fate for a concern of such great proportions.

One need not be insensitive to parental responsibilities or to community standards to decry the growing practice of purging libraries and curricula of offensive (to some) books and educational materials. Darrell Turner's article is instructive; we all hurt no matter whether the censor be church or state. Books, even those whose contents are not our cup of tea, contribute to intellectual and moral development and maturity. And which book is to be next on the list of undesirables?

Perhaps the one Jim Wallis recently completed. Wallis, one of the participants in the BJC's 1981 Religious Liberty Conference, speaks quietly but writes with thundering grace. *The Call to Conversion: Recovering the Gospel for These Times* struck with tremendous force on executive James Dunn, so much so that his **REFLECTIONS** ponder the failure of Christians and the Church to measure up to the New Testament vision. He notes the risk that comes with the reading of a book whose author allows "the Word of God to speak through his writing." Turner alluded to the fact that the Bible has been on the lists of banned books; here's another that can be dangerous, according to Dunn. Should it be "deep sixed?"

Harold Carter expresses the need for a fundamental unity—over the worthiness of each member of the human family, and consensus on an understanding of the inclusive nature of family. Disciples are called to teach, to baptize, to feed and to love. In the abstract, these themes "preach well", but concretely, they can become as offensive as some nations and people. But no excuse for not following Jesus. Carter's sermon has implications for social policy as well as for Christian mission, particularly when he cautions against undue state and identifying national sentimentality.

—Victor Tupitza



# WASHINGTON OBSERVATIONS

news/views/trends

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR, the first woman ever appointed to the U. S. Supreme Court, put to rest many critics' view that her lack of judicial experience might impair her performance with a dazzling display of constitutional knowledge during her confirmation hearings in early September.

THE FORMER ARIZONA COURT OF APPEALS JUDGE, with no federal bench experience, appeared at ease and totally confident throughout two days of exchanges with members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Three "New Right" members of the panel, set to embarrass O'Connor on the abortion issue, were thoroughly disarmed with her persistent unwillingness to state publicly how she would vote on abortion cases yet to come to the high court. Two of the three ended up voting for her confirmation, with only freshman Sen. Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., resisting with a vote of "Present."

ON CHURCH-STATE ISSUES, O'Connor appears to be a solid choice. As an Arizona state legislator, she once declared her opposition to tuition tax credits. Although declining to reveal her position on the role of religion in the public school classroom, she displayed thorough knowledge of the constitutional foundation on which the Supreme Court's historic 1962 and 1963 decisions were made.

O'CONNOR DID INDICATE OPPOSITION to the idea of removing certain controversial issues from the jurisdiction of federal courts, a tricky constitutional question which the high court may well face if the present Congress adopts any one of several pending bills which would strip the courts of review of any state laws forbidding abortion or busing, or mandating religious exercises in public schools.

WHILE HER CHURCH-STATE ORIENTATION was merely sketched out during the hearings, the unanimous view of top observers here is that advocates of church-state separation could not have hoped for a better choice from President Reagan.

AN INTRIGUING IRONY developed during the hearings, an irony that may foretell political problems for the President. Who would have thought when the new Republican majority took over the Senate last January that hard-rock conservatives such as Judiciary chairman Strom Thurmond, Nevada's Paul Laxalt, and Utah's Orrin G. Hatch would be cast as moderates, barely able to mask their displeasure with newcomers Denton, North Carolina's Job East, and Iowa's Charles E. Grassley, all beneficiaries of

THAT DEVELOPMENT, ALONG WITH despite conservative heavy-weighting countries line of food stamps to those

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backing last year? ck on the New Right by con- have marked a significant right-wing ideologues who

James A. Autry

## 'Family Protection Act': Saving Whom from What?

**T**he Family Protection Act, if passed, is going to hurt a lot of families.

Of course, it depends on how you define family. By the definition of those who support the act, introduced recently by Senator Roger Jepsen (Rep., Ia.), no "traditional" family will be hurt, only those who profess to be families but who, as all right-thinking and God-fearing people know, do not fit the scriptural definition.

Thus, those "non-family" family people—singles, women's-rights advocates, gay-rights advocates, pro-choice advocates and equal-education advocates—will be hurt by the Family Protection Act, because they are not the chosen families.

So the questions emerge: whom is the Act intended to protect, and from what is it intended to protect them? Then there is the increasingly familiar question: What is a family?

Taking the last question first, family definition was debated for almost a year and a half as part of the deliberations of the White House Conference on Families. The National Advisory Committee itself chose to be generic in its planning, referring generally to "families" in their pluralism and diversity." It was a bit of a dodge, but the committee felt that a tight definition could end the conference before it began, and chose to leave definition to the delegates.

As for the delegates, they didn't do much better. In only one conference, Minneapolis, did a definition emerge, and it came as part of a recommendation to the media: "The media should be more positive and supportive of traditional families by . . . using a programming definition of family as two or more persons related by blood, heterosexual marriage, adoption, and extended families."

Mr. Autry, general manager for magazine publishing, Meredith Publications, was one of 50 members of the National Advisory Committee for the White House Conference on Families. His article appeared in the *Des Moines Sunday Register*.

I reach into the files of the WHCF for this definition, because these are the families intended to be protected by the Family Protection Act. The definition comes directly from the religious right and has been taken up by most if not all conservative legislators.

Thus the Act is a thinly veiled conservative manifesto, an omnibus of objectives established in the past few years by ideologues of the right, intended not so much to protect families as to impose an agenda of concerns on the rest of the citizens. Like most omnibus bills, this one is a mish-mash in which there are worthwhile and desirable provisions any reasonable person could support.

For instance, under the taxation title, the bill provides for educational savings accounts that would allow up to \$2,500 as a tax deduction if deposited in a qualified educational savings account. Who could argue?

In another provision the act would allow a \$1,000 exemption for each child born to, or adopted by, the taxpayer during the taxable year. However, there's a conservative rub: the exemption would not be allowed to a single person or to a married person not filing a joint return. The message about single-parenting is clear.

Throughout the rest of the proposed bill, particularly in sections titled Family Protection, Education, Voluntary Prayer and Religious Meditation, and Rights of Religious Institutions and Educational Affiliates, the sections are rife with the conservatives' hidden agendas, stated, of course, in proper legal language and introduced into the record with Jepsen's unctuous rhetoric in which he casts himself against the "wave of humanism."

If you don't follow Washington talk as a casualty you might not know that "humanism" has become the code word for . . . and definitely

corporal punishment methods applied by a parent or individual explicitly authorized by a parent. . . . "OK, so every parent should have the right to spank his child, you say. Of course, but the intent of this section is to give the government less involvement in determining what degree of corporal punishment constitutes abuse.

I really get scared by the education section of this proposed bill. To begin, we must recognize that the federal government has exercised control over local schools by withholding funds until certain guidelines have been met. This makes the conservative mad. They say they want the federal government out of education. But they still want the money, so that leaves only one course of action: change guidelines.

This law would withhold federal funds from any federal, state, or local educational agency which "prohibits parents . . . from participating in decisions relating to the establishment or continuation of courses relating to the study of religion." This is a code that signals to some people that it is all right to impose fundamentalist Christian doctrine into curricula.

And here is a kicker for women's rights people. No federal funds may be spent for educational materials that "do not reflect a balance between the status roles of men and women, do not reflect different ways in which men and women live and do not contribute to the American way of life as it has been historically understood." (Emphasis mine) More code language meaning the traditional definition of family, emphasizing the strong husband/father dominating the domestic scene. Presumably it would be even better if the materials showed a little corporal punishment for the edification of the youngsters.

There are more examples of pernicious language and fuzzy thinking throughout Jepsen's proposition, but space limitations and fear of boredom persuade me to suggest simply that you read the Act for yourself.

All of us concerned about America and about family life in America—about breakdowns of families, about juvenile delinquency, drug-abuse, spouse-abuse, child abuse, violence in the streets and in schools, the emphasis throughout society on sex and . . . most fervently urge the . . . thing: the protection and . . .

(Continued on P. 13)

Report from the Capital

Darrell Turner

## Books— Selection or Suppression

**B**ook censorship is reemerging as a controversial issue in American society.

A main focus of the new battles involves the use of controversial books in public schools. And to attempt to avoid the usual arguments against censorship, protesters are arguing that it is their rights that are being violated, by having to pay tax dollars to purchase books for public schools that violate their beliefs.

Current controversies were presaged in the 1974 textbook dispute in Kanawha County, West Virginia. That fight even involved strikes at mines and bombings of schools as fundamentalist ministers and parents pressured the county board of education to ban certain language-arts books from classrooms.

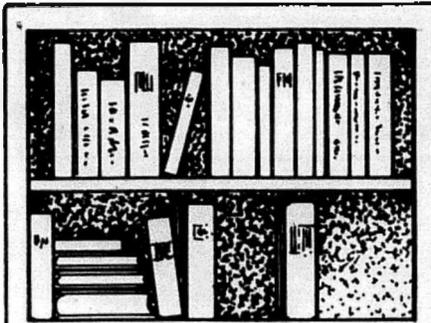
The Rev. Will D. Campbell, director of The Committee of Southern Churchmen and a noted civil-rights activist wrote of the West Virginia dispute in April 1975 that "no one could have known it at the time, but it was the beginning of something big in American public education, something which is continuing to swell around the country."

He commented that "ordinary folk were demanding to have something to do with what goes on inside the classroom. For two decades various groups have concerned themselves with *who* goes into which classroom; now it is *what* goes in."

The protesting parents in West Virginia found empathy in some surprising quarters. Said theologian Harvey Cox:

"One of the major problems in the country is that people don't give a damn what is being taught to their children. If I were to discover my children were being taught things I thought went completely against my beliefs or family beliefs, I would complain, too."

Such protests are not confined to fundamentalist enclaves in developing countries ang food stamps to those



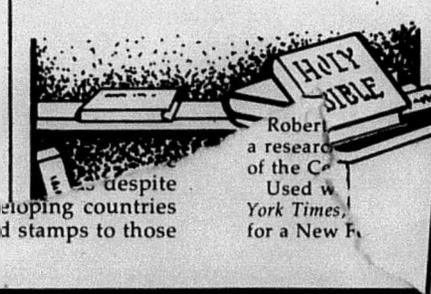
Appalachia. A dispute that is still continuing began in 1976 when the Island Trees school board in Levittown, Long Island, N.Y., pressured by parents, removed a number of books from public schools on the grounds that they were "educationally unsound" and contained materials "offensive to Christians, Jews, blacks and Americans in general."

Several organizations, including eight religious groups, filed suit to have the school board's decision overturned. Most recently, a federal appeals court sent the case back to a district court and ordered a fact-finding trial on the matter.

Circuit Judge Jon O. Newman wrote in that case that "when the disapproval is political in nature—when exclusion of particular views is motivated by the authorities' opinion about the proper way to organize and run society in general—then it verges into impermissible suppression."

Political objections to textbooks have surfaced in several such cases around the country. The Alabama Board of Education recently voted to remove a six-volume textbook series entitled "Justice in America" from the state's approved list after considering complaints presented by four parents.

Among the objections cited by the parents were allegations that the books "encouraged dependence on welfare, ... were anti-capitalist and pro-labor ... supported equal rights for women, and did not stress that the United States is 'a republic and not a democracy.'"



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In some cases, complaints against textbooks have led to more serious actions than simply having them removed from libraries or reading lists. In 1978, eleven high-school English teachers in Warsaw, Ind., were fired for refusing to stop using novels like "Go Ask Alice," and Sylvia Plath's "The Bell Jar" in their curricula. A suit was filed against the school board by a group of high-school students, but it was dismissed by a federal district court.

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in that case in August 1980 that "it is in general permissible and appropriate for local boards to make decisions based upon their personal, social, political and moral views."

Some conservative critics of textbooks maintain that they are simply using tactics that have already been used by liberals.

The *Christian Century*, ecumenical weekly published in Chicago, recently highlighted some of the issues involved in censorship fights in an editorial.

"Even as we examine these cases," the periodical said, "we have to acknowledge that there are certain rights parents have regarding the type of education their children receive. In this, as in all matters of public life, there is a tension between individual rights and group rights, a tension basic to a pluralistic society."

But, the editorial stressed, "fundamental to any free people is the right of access to printed matter, regardless of its worth. The First Amendment was added to our Constitution in part to protect words and ideas which the majority might find objectionable. These are protected under the amendment because freedom is a precious commodity that flourishes best in an atmosphere of openness."

A historical perspective can also be revealing in examining censorship controversies. A display on book banning that was presented at West Virginia State College during the 1974 textbook controversy noted that the Bible has been banned throughout history more frequently than any other book.

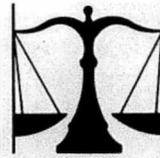
Books featured in the exhibit included John Milton's "Paradise Lost," Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn" and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," and Erich Maria Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front."

Another book that has frequently been banned, the exhibit noted, is Charles Darwin's "Origin of the Species." But that's another controversy.

The author is a staff News Ser

John W. Baker

## VIEWS OF THE WALL



*The First Amendment built "a wall of separation between Church and State" — Thomas Jefferson in a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association.*

*"... the line of separation, far from being a 'wall', is a blurred, indistinct, and variable barrier" — Chief Justice Burger, Lemon v. Kurtzman.*

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, Plaintiff-Appellant,**

v.

**SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Defendant-Appellee.**

No. 80-1370.

United States Court of Appeals,  
Fifth Circuit.

On July 17, 1981 the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit issued a decision in the above case. That decision sets precedents which can be of immense importance in future judicial interpretations of the nature of the First Amendment wall of separation between church and state.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is incorporated in Texas as a not-for-profit organization. It is wholly owned, operated, and controlled by the Southern Baptist Convention. The Convention elects the Seminary's trustees, dictates its purpose, and provides more than 60% of its operating budget. The Seminary's objective is "to provide theological education, with the Bible as the center of the curriculum for God-called men and women to meet the need for trained leadership in the work of the churches." For a student to be admitted, he or she must assert a divine call to Christian ministry, his or her spouse—if any—must express a conviction that the prospective student has received such a call, and the applicant's local church must pass a resolution acknowledging his or her personal integrity and commitment to the faith and recommending admission.

Under a portion of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-8(c), the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission issued regulations, 29 C.F.R. 1602.50, requiring all institutions of higher education with fifteen or more employees to execute copies of the Higher Education Staff Information Report (EEO-6). This report requires the institution to disclose any federal contracts and give each employee's job description, length of employment contract, salary bracket, gender, and

race or national origin. Other information about faculty and staff such as tenure status by gender and race is also required.

The Seminary refused to file EEO-6 on the grounds that as an integral part of the Southern Baptist Convention it was exempted from such disclosure by the First Amendment to the Constitution. The Federal District Court agreed and held that to apply Title VII to any aspect of the Seminary's employment relationships would lead to excessive entanglement of government with religion contrary to the establishment clause and would also infringe the Seminary's rights under the free exercise clause. The Court of Appeals affirmed that decision in part and reversed it in part.

The court saw as the crux of the case the proper classification of the Seminary. The EEOC argued that the Seminary was a religiously affiliated institution and the Seminary said that it was wholly religious. The court held that, "Since the Seminary is principally supported and wholly controlled by the Convention for the avowed purpose of training ministers to serve the Baptist denomination, it too is entitled to the status of 'church.'"

Because the state may not interfere in a church's employment of its ministers, the court felt that it had to determine who were the Seminary's ministers. It held that faculty members, the President and Executive Vice President, the chaplain, deans of men and women, academic deans, and others "who equate to or supervise faculty should be considered ministers . . . . Other administrators and support staff should not be considered ministers. Title VII, the court said, is not applicable to the former but is applicable to the latter.

On the question of whether the applicability of Title VII to the "non-ministers" employed by the Seminary would constitute excessive entanglement with religion the court held that any reliance on "non-ministers" would be minimal and, therefore, could not be considered as excessive entanglement.

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cise of religion to the facts in this case. After reasoning from its own interpretation of these tests in *E. E. O. C. v. Mississippi College*, 626 F.2d 477 (CA 5 1980), the court held that the application of Title VII with its reporting requirements to the "non-ministers" would "not directly burden the exercise of any sincerely held religious belief" and that the government's interest in equal employment opportunity "justifies the almost non-existent impact on the exercise of religious beliefs."

In summing up the court said, "we conclude that an exemption for the Seminary's support staff and other non-ministers is not constitutionally compelled." Further, "Neither the Supreme Court nor this court has held that the employment relationship between a church and all of its employees is a matter of purely ecclesiastical concern."

Thus the court remanded the case to the District Court and directed that court to issue orders to the Seminary to file EEO-6 on all positions which are staffed by "nonministers." The Seminary has asked for a rehearing and, failing that, will attempt to take its case to the Supreme Court. Because there is no conflict of opinion between Courts of Appeal, there is some feeling among lawyers that the Court will not choose to hear the case.

This case presents problems for church-state separationists. The court's application of the "excessive entanglement" test expands the role of the state in dealing with religion. By enlarging on its own decision in *Mississippi College*, it permitted an "on-going" monitoring of the Seminary—or, by implication, any wholly religious organization—so long as that monitoring does not interfere with religious practices. Given the indefinite nature of "religious practices," the role of government in religious affairs has been enlarged greatly.

Separationists also hold that the court misread and misapplied the Supreme Court's free exercise tests. Space limitations permit only one example. By holding that the reporting requirements do not "directly burden" the exercise of any sincerely held religion, the Court of Appeals is undermining the Supreme Court's ongoing commitment on P. 9)

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## Human Rights: Foreign Policy with a Soul

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**T**he defeat of the unfortunate Ernest W. Lefever's nomination to the human rights post at the State Department ought to give pause to this insouciant Administration. Mr. Lefever for all his curious ethics was but one of many Reagan counter-candidates: men dedicated to dismantling the very offices to which they were appointed. That Mr. Lefever was the only one of these to be defeated is due less to his personal peccadillos than to the widespread bi-partisan support that human rights enjoys in the Congress and the nation.

When Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr. announced at his first news conference that "international terrorism will take the place of human rights" in foreign policy priorities, he seemed to be laboring under the mistaken impression that human rights was the invention of former President Carter. The concept of individual human rights was enshrined in international law in 1948 at the founding of the United Nations. Protection of human rights has become a worldwide concern.

In the United States, the Congress responded to widespread dismay over the cynical policies of the Nixon-Kissinger years and enacted the first human rights legislation while Jimmy Carter was still Governor of Georgia. With the election of Mr. Carter, who pledged to make human rights the soul of his foreign policy, Congress relinquished its leadership, although on several occasions pressures by citizens' groups led to the passage of human rights legislation over the Carter Administration's objections.

The human rights community is united behind an activist, even-handed human rights policy. The Reagan-Haig version of human rights—a policy that embraces the terrorists of Chile and torturers of Argentina and the Philippines while berating the Soviet Gulag—only diminishes the cause of Soviet dissidents while ignoring the moral claim of Latin-American and Asian democrats. Once again, the human rights community must find its voice through a Congress that acts against a callous Administration. The defeat of the Lefever nomination suggests that that voice will not be weak.

Mr. Lefever's defeat may have other implications closer to home, for protection of human rights is indivisible whether in the farthest reaches of the third world or right in our own cities. An Administration that casts the lone vote for unrestricted marketing of infant formulas despite their disastrous effects on babies in developing countries has little compunction about denying food stamps to those

whom Treasury Secretary Donald Regan called the "halt, the blind and poor." An Administration that relies on military forces abroad will not hesitate to use the police to squelch upheavals its policies will generate at home. An Administration seeking closer relations with South Africa will no doubt find the Voting Rights Act and affirmative action unnecessary. If the American Civil Liberties Union is branded a "criminals' lobby" (by Edwin Meese III), then Amnesty International will soon be denounced as a terrorists' council. When the national security advisor, Richard V. Allen, dismisses economic and social rights as "a dilution and distortion of the original and proper meaning of human rights," he finds a comfortable home in an Administration that cares little for the unemployed, ill-fed, and ill-housed of this country.

The Administration's support for dictatorships abroad will bring the human rights community together to insist, through Congress, that this country stand for more than anti-Communism and profit.

The Administration's reactionary domestic policies may give birth to a stronger human rights movement at home, a movement that unties the economically disenfranchised—the young, the poor, minority members, working men and women—to demand that this country provide for its own citizens' basic needs, including the right to a job, to old-age security, to health care, and decent housing.

The uproar over the Lefever nomination has elevated human rights to a prominence that even Jimmy Carter was unable to give it. The Administration's arrogant dismissal of human rights concerns will galvanize the human rights movement to challenge the conscience of Americans in the 1980's much as the civil rights movement challenged political and social perceptions in the 1960's.

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Robert Borosage is director of the Institute for Policy Studies, a research organization. William Goodfellow is deputy director of the Center for International Policy, also a research center.

Used with permission of the authors; reprinted from the *New York Times*, in *Coalition Close-up*, the newsletter of the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy.

# News in Brief

## Internment 'Tragic Error'; Redress Hearings Begin

WASHINGTON—During post Pearl Harbor hysteria, 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who were living on the West Coast were moved forcibly to 10 "relocation" camps in the interior.

Now, 40 years later, the full circumstances surrounding the internment by the United States government of some of its own citizens is being officially and publicly aired for the first time.

A Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians has been established by Congress and has begun hearings across the nation.

The campaign to establish the commission and secure some form of "redress" for the wrongs inflicted during the Second World War has been led by the Japanese American Citizen's League (JACL).

A number of U.S. religious groups have issued resolutions or testified to the commission on behalf of the Japanese-Americans, Baptists prominently among them.

The commission is expected to submit recommendations early next year. The hearings are intended to establish why the mass internment without due process of citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry was carried out; whether the Japanese-Americans who lost their property should receive "redress" and if so how much; and what can be done to prevent similar occurrences against U.S. minorities in the future.

A Quaker agency official told a hearing here that the American Friends Service Committee wants "formal acknowledgement of wrong-doing by the American government" and "monetary compensation to the victims."

"For nearly 40 years there has been a collective silence about the evacuation and the internment," said Louis W. Schneider, former AFSC executive.

"All of us have much to gain from public discussion of the issues that surround the mandate of the commission. We feel now as we did 39 years ago that fundamental questions about the reality of a democratic society with racial equality and social justice are intertwined with what happened then to 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry."

Japanese-Americans generally agree with the assessment of former Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas that

the internments were a "tragic error" in which "racial prejudice was a basic ingredient." At no time, officially or unofficially, was any government con-



sideration ever given to the similar internment of Americans of German or Italian descent, even though the war was being waged against those nations as against Japan.

However, there is disagreement on the issue of redress, JACL is the predominant voice, but it doesn't speak for all Japanese-Americans.

Many disagree with the concept of monetary redress, some because they fear demands for redress and rehashing of bitter memories could backfire and lead to new racial hostilities. The outspoken Sen. S.I. Hayakawa (R. Calif.), who opposes redress and is often at odds with the JACL, says the Japanese-Americans are no longer a disadvantaged minority, and shouldn't behave like one. However, Sen. Hayakawa supported the move to establish the investigative commission.

Regardless of the views, most agree with Sen. Daniel Inouye (D. Hawaii), the Japanese-American war hero who lost an arm fighting in World War II. He says there is no way to quantify the kind of anguish the people suffered in the relocation experience, so "you can't put a price tag on it." Many favor redress placed in a "common pot" that could be used by the Japanese-American community for educational and cultural projects that would benefit all Americans.

## Poll Shows High Support for Equal Rights Amendment

PRINCETON—Support for the proposed Equal Rights Amendment has reached 63 percent, five points higher than at any time since 1975, according to a Gallup survey.

In polls conducted regularly since 1975, support never exceeded 58 per-

cent.

The opposition now stands at 32 percent, according to the latest poll taken late in July of this year among adults 18 years and over who said they had heard or read about the ERA. Gallup based its findings on personal interviews among a national sampling of 1,545 persons.

The Reagan administration opposes the ERA because the president believes that equal rights should be enforced through the legislature, rather than becoming part of the Constitution. The proposed amendment states: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

Despite the widespread public support for the ERA, the ratification process has stopped three states short of the 38 that must approve the proposal before it becomes the 27th Amendment to the Constitution.

More than four years have passed since any state legislature voted to ratify the ERA, and none of the remaining 15 states seem inclined to budge from their opposition. The problem is compounded by five of the states which ratified the amendment earlier but are trying to rescind that action.

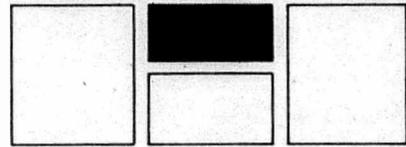
The proposed ERA has already used up the seven years provided in the Constitution for ratification by the necessary 38 states. But Congress granted a three-year extension which expires next June 30.

## SBC College Ordered to Provide Employment Data

WASHINGTON—A Southern Baptist college lost a legal battle here when the U.S. Supreme Court let stand a lower court ruling that the school must provide employment data to a powerful federal agency.

Mississippi College, owned and operated by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, must now supply data subpoenaed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) so that the federal agency may determine if the school violated the rights of a former part-time faculty member.

Five years ago, Patricia Summers, a part-time assistant professor in the psychology department at the Clinton, Miss. school, filed a grievance with EEOC after she was denied a full-time faculty appointment.



## No Tuition Tax Credits in New Tax Cut Package

WASHINGTON—Three sections of the large tax cut package recently signed by President Reagan contain tax changes of special interest to U.S. religious groups.

The final version of the tax cut liberalizes both the amount and scope of the Foreign Earned Income Tax Exclusion. It also reduces the so-called "marriage penalty tax" and allows a tax deduction for charitable contributions made by persons who elect not to itemize deductions when filing federal income tax forms.

Noticeably absent from the tax cut package was any provision for tuition tax credits. President Reagan, who expressed support for the controversial proposal during the 1980 campaign, opted not to include tuition tax credits in his first tax cut proposal to Congress.

Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., one of the primary sponsors of tuition tax credit legislation in the Senate, considers the pending proposals "not entirely dead, but certainly ailing," according to his press representative. The spokeswoman indicated the Oregon senator will push the legislation if Congress considers another tax cut bill this year or in 1982.

## Appeals Court Strikes 'Voluntary' Prayer Law

NEW ORLEANS—In a 2-1 ruling, a federal appeals court has struck down a Louisiana law allowing voluntary prayer in public schools.

Passed last year, the law authorized local school boards to allow teachers "to ask if a student wishes to volunteer to offer a prayer and, in the event that no student does volunteer, to allow the teacher to offer a prayer."

A group of parents in Jefferson Parish challenged the law after the local school board passed a resolution establishing "a moment of prayer and/or silent meditation" at the beginning of each school day.

In reversing a district court ruling that upheld the law, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said, "Since prayer is a primary religious activity in itself, its observance in public-school classrooms has, if anything, a more obviously religious purpose than merely displaying a copy of a religious text in

the classroom."

It added that "even if the avowed objective of the legislature and school board is not itself strictly religious, it is sought to be achieved through the observance of an intrinsically religious practice."

In a dissenting opinion, Judge Allen Sharp said that the decision could be viewed as "projecting a governmental hostility toward religion."

[The Constitution supports individual, voluntary prayer. In this instance, prayer is state-instituted and therefore was found unconstitutional.]

## Judge is not Moved

PHILADELPHIA—A federal judge has ruled that the revolutionary group known as MOVE is not a religion.

District Judge John B. Hannum made the ruling in denying a request by MOVE member Frank Africa to be given a raw-food diet in jail, where he is serving a seven-year sentence for inciting a riot.

Deputy Attorney General Mark N. Cohen said the ruling was based on Africa's testimony at his trial, in which he described MOVE as "a back-to-nature revolutionary group."

MOVE established headquarters in a house in the Powelton section of Philadelphia in the mid-1970s. Police started surveillance of the property in 1977 after members displayed firearms. The city blockaded the area in 1978 and the group agreed to leave the city in August of that year. When it later balked, police moved in and a shootout ensued in which one patrolman was killed and 12 others wounded.

## Tax Exemption Demanded

FAYETTEVILLE—Southview Presbyterian Church here is contesting a county zoning decision that 15.6 of its 20 acres are not tax exempt because it's not "reasonably necessary" for religious purposes.

The church contends that no unit of government should presume to decide what is "reasonably necessary" for the operation of a church, and that the government has set "arbitrary standards for that determination, standards depending on the state of mind of the official when he makes a ruling."

Under the state law the church is challenging, the land is taxable until the planned facilities are built, when

the land and facilities would become tax exempt.

## Pray-in Protesters Lose

SHEPHERDSVILLE, Ky.—A group of parents who believe their children were unfairly punished for skipping school to attend a "pray-in" protesting removal of the Ten Commandments from Bullitt County schools lost a court battle here.

Circuit Judge Charles Sanders ruled that insufficient evidence had been presented to support the parents' legal claim that the children's rights were violated because they were not given excused absences to attend the "pray-in."

## Pledges Must be Paid

MINNEAPOLIS—A suburban Jewish congregation has successfully taken four former members to conciliation court to collect pledges made to a building fund.

The amounts ranged from \$167 to \$1,000.

Hennepin County conciliation court referees agreed with B'nai Emet Synagogue of St. Louis Park that the pledges were enforceable contracts.

## School Time-off Rule Hit

AMARILLO—The American Jewish Congress and the Worldwide Church of God are challenging a local school board's policy of limiting student absences for religious observances to two a year.

A brief filed by the American Jewish Congress argues that the policy "singles out religious absences for adverse treatment."

(VIEWS, from P. 6)

distinction between exercise and belief. Further, it emphasizes "directly burden" in the face of the Court's unambiguous statement, "while the compulsion may be indirect, the infringement upon free exercise is nonetheless substantial," *Thomas v. Review Board*, 101 S.Ct. 1425, 1432 (1981), as well as "The Free Exercise Clause . . . withdraws from legislative power, state and federal, the exertion of any restraint on the free exercise of religion," *Abington v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203, 222 (1963).

This is a deeply troubling decision.

## Harold A. Carter

Pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church, Baltimore, Dr. Carter has gained broad recognition as an outstanding preacher-evangelist and for the innovative ministries of his congregation. *God calls us to Unity* is excerpted from a sermon preached at the American Festival of Evangelism earlier this summer.

# God Calls us to Unity

Some years ago in American life it was common for families to eat all meals together. This was particularly true for the supper meal. When the supper meal was ready, mother called her family together and everyone washed his hands and gathered around the table to eat. Daddy offered the grace, the plates were served and the meal was eaten in mutual love and joy. During the meal, family discussions were held, and children often listened to the wisdom of parents and expressed their own thoughts. The body, mind, soul and spirit were nurtured in those regular family occasions.

Throughout the fourth chapter of Ephesians, Paul called the Christian Church to consecration, unity and to Christlikeness in the Holy Spirit. The Family of God was called to understand her nature and purpose in Christ. God's family moved beyond the bounds of ethnic, cultural and ceremonial differences. God's family demanded acknowledgement that we are indeed serving One Lord, walking in One Faith and eternally inspired by One Baptism. God's family was given a menu consisting of love, joy, peace, faithfulness, and loyalty in the Holy Spirit.

God has called us to join him as a family around one table. The glorious uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ is that He calls all of us, whatever our background, race, color or creed, to come and be fed at His expense. He has called us to his House. He has paid the bills. He has provided for us through His own Body and His own Blood, the meal of faith and regeneration. He is the one who sent out all His messengers, beginning with Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Joshua, David and Esther, the prophets, angels and all the saints, telling generation after

generation, "All things are ready, come to the feast." He is the one who sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who stretched out His arms all the day long telling all of us to "Come and dine, come and dine."

We do not come to our Lord's table as the good ones versus the bad ones. We do not come as those who are rich versus those who are poor. We do not come as those who are spiritually righteous versus those who are secular and carnal. We do not come as the sanctified versus the sinners. We do not come as some full of grace and others full of good works. We all come as sinners saved by God's grace. We all come as the Family of God, needing water and daily bread. We all come because it is late in the evening and we do not have long before the curtain of salvation falls when the Bridegroom Himself will come. We believe God is doing this work today.

From the common table we eat the same common meal. This meal is not elective, it is required. We do not eat God's food like children, eating some and picking over what is left. Jesus Christ has offered to all of us His life for our spiritual nourishment. Why is it then, all over America, so many are eating the religious junk food of cults and oriental fables? Why is it so many are drinking the stale waters of gross worldliness and destructive selfish pursuits? So many desire the sweet candy of the world that takes away the appetite for the basic food of God.

Family of God, we cannot build fires that will light up local communities all around America for the cause of Jesus Christ, on the strength of religious junk food. Satan, the chief enemy of the program of God, desires to entice us with his worldly offers of a watered down gospel and a church calling for no Christian conviction. Satan, says

Jude in his epistle, desires to cause us to lose sight of Jesus, our Lord, while we get busy in theologies that inflate our minds and offer healing to our bodies but leave our souls hungry for God. Jesus was not in the business of offering junk food.

The hour has come for all of us to examine our spiritual food and be certain we are eating the true Bread of Life. It is the junk food of our contemporary culture that seeks to compromise our gospel and waters down our faith that is causing us to lose our power. I want to suggest several meals the church seems to be eating that are causing spiritual diseases.

**The meal of gospel nationalism is tasty but dangerous.** America is a great land, populated with a great people, and governed by great leadership. God has blessed his nation abundantly and crowned it with goods and resources not to be found in any other single nation. It is a single honor to be an American and worship God with freedom supported by the greatest constitution ever penned by the collective minds of men. Praise God for this country, its flag, Old Glory, and the Republic for which it stands. Praise God for the Statute of Liberty standing tall in New York harbor that has welcomed people into this blessed land from all over the world, and provided them a way of life unparalleled in human history.

However, there is a grave danger in identifying the Christian faith with Americanism. The God of the Bible is larger than America. The God of the Bible is the Father of all mankind. He is concerned about the salvation of all, of His children. His heart yearns for the poor people I saw, lived with and preached to, in the Pacific country of the Philippines this past February. He loves the Africans whose countries have been parched with draught and



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We deceive ourselves when we reduce the work of the ministry to healing bodies and offering cheap blessing plans.

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whose bodies are swollen big from malnutrition and slow death. God loves the Cubans and the Haitians so anxious to risk their lives to get to live on these shores.

Feasting at the table of our Lord is an opportunity every nation, every tribe, every people is entitled to.

Billy Graham, in a message preached in the Baltimore Crusade, said he had found a revealing truth while preaching in Poland. He stated that he discovered the sense of Christian zeal and discipleship was far deeper and richer in Poland than he finds even in America. He stated that perhaps our affluence, our material comforts may have dulled our loyalty to the cause of Christ. One year ago, this summer, I conducted a two week evangelistic campaign in Rumania, visiting some fifteen churches. I was amazed with the enthusiastic attendance of people and their willingness to remain in worship a full three and four hours. Their only complaint to me was that I was preaching too short! This same kind of zeal to hear God's Word I have seen where poverty is heavy and where people are referred to as living in the third world. However, with God there is no third world. God only has one world, and that is His Kingdom. Rather than being nationalistically exclusive, we need to be biblically inclusive and truly believe that those who submit their lives to the Word of God are made disciples in the Body of Christ.

**The gospel of worldly peace and sudden prosperity is junk food.** There is a modern tendency to make the gospel conform to peace and prosperity, well-being and material goods. There is a tendency especially for ministries on radio and television, to preach a non-disturbing gospel, a gospel that makes everyone feel "all is well". Again, there is a grave danger in this soothing gospel. Jesus came not only to bring peace, he also came to bring a sword. There is a militancy in the true gospel! There is the order that we must

go forth as sheep among wolves loaded with only one promise, "I'll be with you!"

I contend that if America is to be evangelized, and if both inner city and suburb are to shake hands as brothers and sisters, there must be some real hard work. There will be some misunderstandings before white and black, rich and poor really understand one another. If we are to show the world that we are one in the Spirit and one in the faith, some will be called slanderous names and others may even have to shed blood. We deceive ourselves when we reduce the work of the ministry to healing bodies and offering cheap blessing plans.

This means we will have to speak out against corrupt politicians and corrupt social orders! This means, we will have to fight against our lost educational standards and our lost social and moral values! This means that someone will have to wage war against pornographic slut that poisons human minds and illicit drugs that are all but destroying the remaining fabric of our community! This means that someone must stand up for right of life, and dignity of the human spirit!



**From His common table we go forth to serve.** The greatest response sons and daughters can do after eating a good meal is to grow strong, and develop responsible characters and serve others in a way to make their parents rejoice. This is the joy of the Christian soul! This is the joy of the Christian spirit. This is the final and ultimate celebration of the ages. This the rejoicing all the saints will share when the angels sing the triumphant hymn: "Worthy is the lamb that was slain."

## Quoting

Bert Holmes  
Dallas Times Herald

**T**he nation is often beset with heated arguments about the extent of constitutional protection of freedom of religion, but U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens put the issue into proper perspective in a recent speech to a prayer breakfast at the American Bar Association convention.

Justice Stevens traced the U.S. tradition of religious freedom back 450 years to Englishmen "whose conscience required them to accept a sentence of death rather than to profess a belief contrary to their honest convictions."

Citing sometimes unpopular Supreme Court decisions upholding rights of small religious groups, Justice Stevens declared: "They dramatize the distinction between a compelled ritual and voluntary participation in a common exercise. . . . Each of us treasures what others may ridicule or despise."

The "compelled ritual" Justice Stevens spoke of is a key phrase in any discussion of the Supreme Court's ruling that many mistakenly describe as banning prayer in public schools. What the court actually did was to forbid public schools from prescribing a prayer and requiring students to participate in a ritual they might or might not agree with.

The real genius of the founding fathers in writing our Constitution and in creating a workable and democratic form of government lay in providing a careful balance between the rule of a majority and the protection of the basic freedoms of the individual.

In addressing the bar's prayer breakfast, Justice Stevens avoided the legalese that too often obscures the fundamental issues of freedom. He pointed out: "Not one of you was compelled by your sovereign or by your pastor to attend, to remain or even to listen to what might be said."

Justice Stevens' message ought to be remembered any time someone proposes to compel others to agree with a particular religious viewpoint.

# INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



## Church Agencies Claim Somalian Relief Effective

NEW YORK—Church-related relief agencies say their efforts have helped reduce starvation and improve crops in Somalia, despite reports of an exceptionally high level of theft and corruption in the war and famine ravaged nation.

Some observers are charging that the massive international relief program, aimed to help an estimated 1.3 million refugees in Somalia, is out of control; that up to 60 percent of the food meant for refugees is stolen.

Church relief officials, however, hold that projects they operate in the Somali camps are unaffected.

At the request of the Somalian government, most of the church-related agencies are working at one or another of the major refugee camps, providing medical and long range agricultural aid. One important project is digging wells to relieve the drought problem. Agencies are also helping with logistics, feeding, and other emergency work.

The international relief effort for Somalia has been underway for some three years, directed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and administered by Somalia's National Refugee Commission. Aid has increased over the last year, as word spread of the severe refugee and hunger crisis in Somalia.

Religious leaders who visited the Horn of Africa have reported that some eight million people in drought-stricken, war-torn East Africa face disaster unless they receive help. Somalia, which has become host to the world's largest concentration of refugees, was selected for special emergency aid.

Since 1977, an estimated 2 million people have fled from fighting in the Ogaden area of Ethiopia. More than half have gone to neighboring Somalia, an already poor country which soon became dotted with overcrowded refugee camps scattered in the desert brush, with no roads and limited medical facilities.

The Washington Post carried a critical report by free-lance writer Helen Winternitz in Mogadishu on the relief food distribution in Somalia.

She said officials experienced in global relief know that up to 10 or 20 per-

cent of the food meant for refugees may be stolen; but theft rates in Somalia are considered "exceptionally" high.

"Last year the U.N. and the West dumped a total \$132 million in relief aid into Somalia," Ms. Winternitz said.

"The aid included some 200,000 metric tons of food, with more than half of that donated by the United States."

## Wall Anniversary Observed

WEST BERLIN—Protesters with a grim sense of humor marked the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall by throwing up a small cement-block wall across the entrance to the West Berlin office of Aeroflot, the Soviet airline.

Airline officials were not amused, the makeshift wall was torn down, but the protesters had made their point about the most widely recognized symbol of East German communism.

In the last 20 years, some 185,000 East Germans have fled the country, but at the cost of 178 lives lost trying to get out—72 at the wall and 106 at other border points between East and West Germany.

## Appeal to Save Art Gallery

TEL AVIV, Israel—Southern Baptists are getting protests over a decision to close an art gallery they have operated for 22 years.

When the Dugith Gallery originally opened, it sold books on art and religion. It began showing exhibitions by Israeli artists for decorative purposes, but the exhibits soon became the major focus of the enterprise.

During the 18 years that Chandler Lanier of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has been director of the gallery, more than 200 artists have exhibited their works there. Several have referred to Dugith as "our gallery, the place where we feel at home," he says.

One group of more than 20 artists has placed appeals in print and broadcast media to arouse public opinion to save the gallery.

## U.S. Implicated in Shooting

ROME—President Reagan's personal representative to the Vatican has accused the Soviet Union of slander and serious violation of diplomatic protocol by implying that the United States was behind the assassination attempt on

Pope John Paul II last May.

A statement issued by the U.S. embassy in Rome said the accusation by William A. Wilson was prompted by an article in the June issue of USSR-OGGI (The Soviet Union Today), published by the Soviet embassy in Rome, by Vladimir Katin.

"The article, which purports to explore the circumstances of the assassination attempt on the pope, implicated by innuendo the U.S. government and presidential envoy William Wilson," the statement said.

The allegations relate to supposed fundamental disagreements between the White House and the Vatican on such issues as disarmament, El Salvador, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the status of Jerusalem.

"All these things put together," said Mr. Katin, "represent the unmistakable political background against which the episode of the assassination attempt on the head of the Catholic Church stands out."

## Bainton Compares Authority

TOKYO—A noted Lutheran historian said here that the Protestant idea of biblical inerrancy poses as much of a problem to ecumenical Christians as the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility.

Roland Bainton, 83, professor of church history at Yale University, compared the two sources of church authority in a lecture, "Rediscovering Our Roots in Search of a Future."

The scholar recalled a remark once made to him by a Catholic that "papal infallibility doesn't mean a thing because of the ambiguity of language."

"There is no infallible way in which the infallible pope can infallibly communicate his infallibility."

"When he says something, the question is 'and what does the Holy Father mean?' So you have to have another pronouncement. No, you don't get certainty that way."

Dr. Bainton asserted that the Protestant fundamentalist doctrine of an errorless Bible was not held by early Christians.

Fundamentalists "assume that every word in the Bible is correct and is the Word of God, but that is not early Christianity" he said. "It took them until about 380 A.D. to decide what the New Testament was going to be."



The historian quoted Martin Luther as having said, "The Bible isn't the Word of God. The Word of God is Jesus Christ and the Bible is the manger in which the baby lies. And there was some straw in the manger, too."

Dr. Bainton said the Reformer "had a scale of values in the Bible, and I don't know who in Luther's century did say the Bible is the Word of God."

### White Immigration Rises

JOHANNESBURG—A new immigration boom, due in large measure to a surge of immigrants from Britain and Zimbabwe, is adding considerable numerical strength to the minority white South African community.

According to government estimates, the number of white immigrants entering South Africa this year could well exceed 40,000. South African immigration offices in London and Glasgow, Scotland, report a flood of applications as a result of the unemployment crisis in Britain.

Statistics for the first quarter of this year show that the total of white immigrants from black-ruled Zimbabwe will exceed 12,000.

### Report Creates Stir

SYDNEY—Australia is a racist country in which anti-discrimination laws do not work, education of Aborigines compares with that offered by the Belgians to the Congolese in colonial days, government bureaucrats have undue power over Aborigines' interests, and disease eats away at the nation's original inhabitants at a rate that would be simply unacceptable among whites.

These are some of the conclusions of a five-member team from the World Council of Churches, which visited Australia in June and July at the invitation of the Australian Council of Churches.

The team's 91-page report was issued simultaneously in Sydney and Geneva. The Sydney news conference was chaired by the president of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Rev. Winston O'Reilly.

The team's findings on government policies towards Aborigines singled out the Queensland and Western Australian State Governments as having "consistently acted in hostile and racist

ways to prevent Aborigines from gaining land or any measure of self-determination."

The report is critical of the churches themselves, pointing out that Australian churches have benefitted directly or indirectly from the dispossession of land from Aborigines.

The report recommends: "As an act of reparation and reconciliation, we urge churches to return some land to the Aborigines and to make financial contributions to the self-development of Aboriginal communities."

### 'War' for 'Peace' Toys

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—A small bonfire in front of a wooden chapel in a Buenos Aires slum area sent black smoke and the stench of burned plastic into the air, as children and rednosed clowns danced among the crowd.

It was a festive yet solemn ritual, the annual August ceremonial burning of children's war toys—a symbolic action "to achieve peace, to educate for peace."

The toys, handed over in exchange for soccer balls, were then thrown on a pile in the center of the dusty square in front of the chapel. A match was lit and the war toys went up in fire and smoke.

The event was viewed as a simple, non-violent anti-war statement. What practical effect it might have no one could say. But, as one of the mothers said, "It's a good thing to happen on Children's Day."

### Calls for Peace Conference

MOSCOW—Alexie Bychkov, General Secretary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, called upon leaders of all Christian churches to pool their efforts in the struggle for peace, disarmament, and to build up an atmosphere of trust among nations.

He supported the proposal of Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia for a convocation in Moscow of a world conference of religious leaders for peace and against nuclear threat.

"Such a forum could make an important contribution to the cause of detente, strengthen international security and promote unity among all peaceloving forces," said Bychkov.

General Secretary of the Union of more than 500,000 believers, Bychkov was one of the sponsors of a similar world conference held in 1977.

Bychkov expressed concern over the worsening international climate and its effect on church leaders. At the recent Baptist World Alliance meeting in Puerto Rico, he joined in the resolution that called upon the two major powers to initiate peace talks and move toward disarmament. (APN)

### Give up WCC Membership

DRESDEN—The World Council of Churches Central Committee today "received with great regret" the Salvation Army's withdrawal from membership.

The Army's membership has been suspended at their own request since 1978 following the announcement of a grant to the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe from the Special Fund of the WCC's Program to Combat Racism.

The Salvation Army explained its decision in a letter from General Arnold Brown to the WCC in which he pledges continuing support for the Council's major programs in evangelism, interchurch aid and medical work.

The WCC's Central Committee in reply granted the Army's request for fraternal status but rejected the implication in the Salvation Army letter that the World Council of Churches is motivated by politics rather than the Gospel.

(FAMILY ACT, from P. 4)

There is no disagreement here between civil-libertarians and conservatives, between fundamentalists and liberal Christians or between pro-lifers and pro-choicers. Families are, and I hope always will be, the foundation of our society, the very fabric of our culture. Certainly legislation can be created that enriches the environment in which families will flourish. In that effort, Jepsen and all our representatives would deserve full support.

But we cannot sacrifice this noble goal on the altar of any single group's social agenda. That's what the Family Protection Act represents. If it is passed, we will be stunned by how little it protects and how much it hurts.

# CORRESPONDENCE

**To the Editor:**

For several weeks, I have personally and prayerfully struggled with President Reagan's decision to proceed with the production of neutron weapons. No doubt, this is one of the most, if not the most unGodly and inhuman acts of any governmental leader for many years.

The possession of weapons which can destroy human lives while leaving material possessions intact for greedy plunderers is directly opposed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Only officials who have no real prospect for the basic value of human lives could consider such an unGodly immoral decision. . . . you are all encouraged to peacefully and persuasively lobby against this unGodly action. . . .

T. Wesley Stewart  
Windsor, N.C.

**To the Editor:**

[The] editorial against tuition tax credits in the July-August issue of REPORT from the CAPITAL is the best thing of its kind I have read. I hope we can find ways to give extremely wide distribution to this excellent statement.

Foy Valentine  
Nashville, TN



Reader response to the actions taken by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and to the feature material found on these pages contributes to dialogue and helps sharpen our understanding of the issues. Letters, signed and with full address, should be kept to 200 words. Editors reserve the right to edit for length.

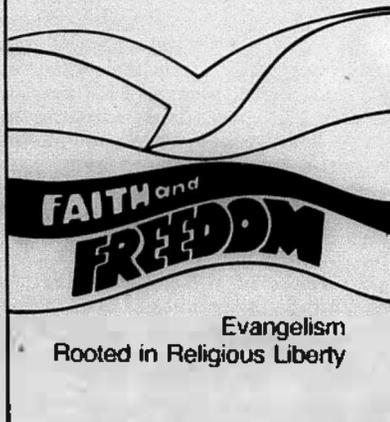
## NOTHING INFALLIBLE

"Some day there will be an accidental explosion of a nuclear weapon, a pure accident, which has nothing whatsoever to do with military or political plans, intentions, or operations. The human mind cannot construct something that is infallible. Accordingly, the laws of probability virtually guarantee such an accident—not because the United States is relaxing any of the conscientious precautions designed to prevent one, or because the Soviet Union is necessarily getting more careless with warheads, but simply because sheer numbers of weapons are increasing. . . . Nuclear weapons will surely spread throughout the world. They may become available in international trade: even that is not to be excluded. With thousands of nuclear weapons in existence, the danger of a nuclear accident in the world is unquestionably increasing.

Oskar Morgenstern  
The Defense Monitor

## National Religious Liberty Conference

October 5-6, 1981



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The trouble with having staked out the position that the Bible doesn't mess around... is that you're trapped... no place to go.

## REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn  
Executive Director



Some folks are more interested in defending the Bible than in doing what it teaches.

In a pale parody of authentic Christianity it has once again become popular in a large hunk of Baptist life for preachers to emphasize, humbly, of course, how much they believe the Bible. Anyone who does not hold the scriptures at the same pre-labeled level of high regard as the self-appointed defenders of the Word is guilty of being... prepare for the worst: a liberal.

Alas, poor misguided souls. Cruel irony of ironies. Shades of Haman, hung on his own gallows. They've sharpened a sword that spills their own blood. These defenders of Scripture must live or die by their own stone of stumbling. They may be the true liberals by failing to take the Bible seriously.

It's a perilous calling to insist that the Bible means *exactly* what it says (rather than what it means). It's a dangerous thing to demand that God said it just as it's in the Book and intended for us to believe it precisely. Bonhoeffer said in commenting on James 1:22, "No one can possess the Word of God for a single instant other than in the doing of it."

The great risk is made plain when one comes along who honestly and fairly describes in plain English what the Bible says; and sets free the ancient, unchanging truths in today's language aimed right at you. Someone pops up ever so often, who with an obvious gift beyond mere talent, a clear evidence of divine mission, allows the Word of God to speak through his writing.

Jim Wallis has done that in his new book, *The Call to Conversion: Re-Covering the Gospel for These Times*. (Harper and Row, \$9.95). Jim is the editor of *Sojourners* magazine and pastor of the Sojourners Christian community in Washington, D.C. that produces it.

The trouble with having staked out the position that the Bible doesn't mess around, once you encounter a writer who makes it understandable, is that you're trapped... no place to go. The unfailing Revelation itself makes clear that "faith without works is dead," that "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he," that if we are His, we do His commandments.

Jim Wallis has laid that burden on us. One must admit that he and the *Sojourners* crowd actually believe the Book over which others bicker. They love their neighbors, the hungry ones, the pot-heads, the street urchins. They work at peacemaking. They take seriously that business about life not consisting in the abundance of things.

One does not have to apply the Scriptures to life exactly the way Jim does to see that he believes and acts on biblical demands. This book does not have much you haven't heard, yet, somehow it's amazingly fresh, tightly written, remarkably faithful to the clear teachings of the Bible.

The three distinctive proving grounds set out in which we all need to be demonstrating the error-free biblical teachings are our response to the poor, our pursuit of peace and our dedication to the community of believers.

No one cluster of Bible verses have been so ignored, spiritualized, accommodated and liberalized as the scriptur-

al teachings about wealth and poverty. We, in a mammon-worshipping culture and materialistic churches, deny by our deeds that we believe the Bible to be truth without error.

Hear Wallis's words:

Most Americans feel that they are 'just getting by.' No matter how much they have, they continue to protest, 'We're barely keeping up with the bills.' Most are up to their necks in installment buying. Even if they wanted to get out, it would take years. They are, indeed, trapped. Or, in more biblical language, they are in bondage. (p. 50)

With our Baptist heritage of religious liberty, perhaps we'd better challenge another foe of freedom: love of wealth. This is especially true since we are the wealthy.

Cyprian, the third-century bishop of Carthage, described the rich this way:

'Their property holds them in chains... chains which shackled their courage and choked their faith and hampered their judgment and throttled their soul.' (p. 50)

Sadly some of the very same folks who protest so loudly the letter-perfect nature of the Bible defy its denunciations of hoarded wealth. Wallis may be right; "Perhaps all the talk of freedom in this country is just a desperate attempt to convince ourselves that we still have some."

Another stark contradiction between biblical people and those who argue about the Bible is the difference over pushing peace. In one chapter, "The Peril," Jim Wallis convincingly pleads for Christians to be peacemakers and to resist the insanity of a nuclear arms race.

Still another theme on which the Bible is taken to tell the truth is the primacy of community. Everywhere one finds a caring fellowship of Bible believing Christians in the churches. Yet, seldom does an entire congregation share in a deep sense of community. Not many churches have escaped the clutches of our culture. Few churches I know about seem to care as much about their mission to the poor as about making the budget. Still, everywhere there is a "church within the church" which could be called a community of sharing followers of Jesus Christ.

No where have I seen a Baptist church that measures up to the vision of community held up by Wallis. Nor have I known a Baptist church that wouldn't be a bit frightened by his idealism, nor one that couldn't use a good dose of it.

Jim Wallis has matured, mellowed, grown spiritually since his earlier and excellent *An Agenda for Biblical people*. This book throws down the gauntlet to those who insist that they believe the whole Bible as is. We need it.

"If we believe the Bible, every part of our lives belongs to the God who created us and intends to redeem us. No part of us stands apart from God's boundless love; no aspect of our lives remains untouched by the conversion that is God's call and God's gift to us. Biblically, conversion means to surrender ourselves to God in every sphere of human existence; the personal and social, the spiritual and economic, the psychological and political." (p. 7)

## REVIEWS



### UNSETTLING EUROPE

By Jane Kramer, 217 pp. New York: Random House, \$9.95, paper.

The Europe most of us never see while on those 10 countries in 12 days overseas tours is the Europe one discovers in this succinct book by Jane Kramer. She depicts the unsettling experiences of four families, not from the objective distance of a writer but with the compassion of a friend. "I like them because they had what seems...to have been a remarkable kind of courage," she writes.

In this vein, Kramer dramatizes the dynamics of generational differences against the background of political involvement in an Italian family. There is the Yugoslav worker isolated by language and culture working in Sweden, all the while contemplating his return to complete the villa he adds to each summer in his native country.

A former well-to-do Indian family, ousted from their native Asian village in Uganda by Idi Amin, struggles in the London village of Southall to regain their composure, if not the wealth, they were forced to leave behind.

Life in France is no easier for the French-Algerian couple driven by the war to resettle in a small community in Provence. There the peasants "do not like strangers much."

Together these four vignettes illuminate lives in transition, their values and aspirations. For American readers the narratives personalize some of the recent events we know largely from newspaper accounts, and cut away misconceptions and biased judgments.

### A JUST PEACE

By Peter Matheson, 156 pp. New York: Friendship Press, \$5.95, paper.

The greatest stumbling block to peace—the peace that is within our grasp—is not to be found in the vested interests in war but in our own attitudes to and concept of peace. Old formulations are out, writes Matheson; the need instead is for a theology of the just peace.

But how to quicken the imagination and involvement of Christians to regard peace as the central issue of our day is the key question. This book shares the reflections of three diverse

groups, in London, Ireland and Scotland struggling over an understanding of peace: challenged by the problem of class in Britain, the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland, and conflict in the Third World.

Matheson alludes to the "general atrophy of imagination," an imagination which can be raised to heights of public indignation by changes in traffic regulations and yet resists with indifference or resignation the crucial issues of war and peace, over-population, world hunger.

This volume was prepared for the 1981-1982 mission study theme, *Europe, Dimensions of Christian Mission*. Matheson is lecturer in Ecclesiastical history at the University of Edinburgh.

(VT)

### DISAPPEARANCES, A Workbook

Edited by Becky Balcock Martos, 168 pp. Amnesty International, USA, \$4.95, Paper.

The term "disappearance" is relatively new to international human rights vocabulary, understood as the widespread apprehension of persons by repressive governments or their security forces in which the detention is never acknowledged to family or friends. Though each prisoner's eclipse is a reality, in a fuller sense these persons will never vanish.

"Many prisoners who have 'disappeared' may well, at worst, have ceased to be. None, however, is lost or vanished. Living or dead, each is in a very real place as a result of a series of decisions taken and implemented by real people. Someone does know and, more importantly, is responsible."

The U. S. section of Amnesty International held a seminar to compile information and experience gained through work on disappearances around the world. Attended by human rights activists and international lawyers, the seminar produced this highly

informative source of documented case studies of varying types of disappearances in Latin America, Africa, Afghanistan, and the Philippines.

After an excellent chapter on the psychological impact of the disappearances upon those intimately related to the victims, the book concludes with a description of specific avenues for channeling one's newfound awareness about such oppression into practical action through both governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Today's crucible of heated debate over the proper influence of human rights in directing foreign policy serves only to heighten this workbook's relevance and worth. Amnesty International, at a time when the attitude of "American first and human rights second" seems to prevail, continues its struggle for basic human rights guarantees contained within the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

—Terry G. Proffitt

It will be a great day for the world when religion, education, and politics recognize that the three constitute a tripartite responsibility for the redemptive and humanizing forces in this earthly existence. Politicians will be expected to avoid cant and pretension, and not many will fail to do it.

### Politics Is My Parish Brooks Hays

Religious leaders must bring enlightenment on the valid claims that the poor and disadvantaged have upon us, and if able to do it competently, link Church life to the government's legitimate and essential activity in housing, food, and child care. The educator must accept a part in the legislative processes. The educator and minister, with the media, are really forerunners of law and public policy, a concept well stated by Sir Henry Maine: "Social opinion must be in advance of the law, and the greater or less happiness of the people depends upon the narrowness of the gulf between them."

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