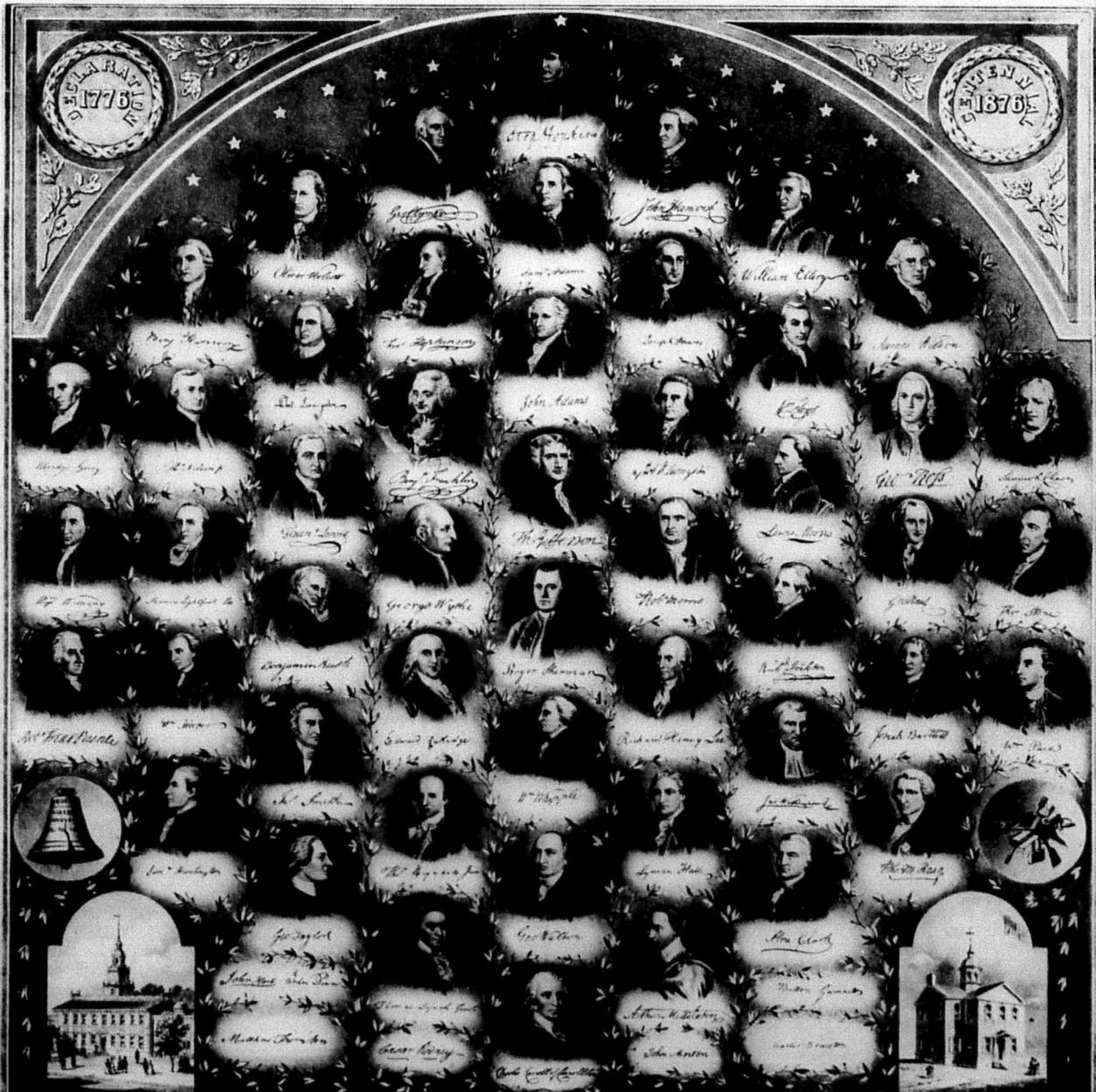


July-August 1982

ISSN-0346-0661

REPORT from the CAPITAL



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

Vol. 37 No. 7

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REPORT from the CAPITAL is published 10 times each year by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a denominational agency maintained in the Nation's capital by its nine member bodies: The American Baptist Churches in the USA, Baptist Federation of Canada, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., North American Baptist Conference, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., Seventh Day Baptist General Conference and Southern Baptist Convention.

Subscriptions: Single, \$4.00 one year; Club Rate, (10 or more) \$3.00 per each year. Student Rate \$1.50; Foreign, please add \$2.00 postage.

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Choose Responsibly

July is an appropriate month for churches to observe Religious Liberty Day, 1982. For the past few months the REPORT has focused on the theme, *Freedom of Expression*, the exercise of responsible choice as a biblical given. It is an emphasis which lends itself to application almost limitlessly. Recent issues touched upon were: a free press/censorship of books and the public media; religious pluralism/denial of religious liberties and spiritual freedom; Constitutional rights/repression of political liberties; peace/nuclear destruction as a violation of human rights.

Virginia Mollenkott makes a strong biblically-oriented statement in behalf of choice as a reflection of God's own revealed nature and freedom in creative activity. As an implication of existence and an



expression of conscience, responsible choice respects God's own self-limiting activity: in entrusting to humankind stewardship over the earth; in granting freedom to respond to God's invitation to forgiving love, rather than compelling or coercing acceptance of it; and dispersing individuals in liberty but encouraging movement toward

community (pluralism in all its diversity) which Christians believe ultimately finds its oneness in God's own being in Jesus Christ. Thus, to override another's will, to design another's value structure, and to determine another's vision of wholeness and justice is to exclude another from full participation in God's global family. It is to assume the role of God-idolatry. "God is angry," both Mollenkott and the scriptures tell us, because God will be God and ultimate judgment belongs to God who alone possesses complete vision and absolute knowledge. Our freedom, therefore, is to be exercised but exercised discerningly and conditioned by holy awe.

Ken Hughes, coordinator of the Interreligious Emergency Campaign, tells us about church communities which are expressing their concern for the poor. Because poverty diminishes each of us, the campaign to take the message to Congress that "the poor have suffered enough" becomes especially urgent. Solutions, not judgments are called for; its of no earthly good to offer stones of opinion when the bread of jobs is called for. To be unemployed today is to be placed inside a bureaucratic, often hostile maze in which choice is severely limited by lack of opportunity and which leads only to greater frustration. The poor can use our added voices of support.

Disagreement over the theology or tactics of new religious groups must not lead to welcoming increased government intrusion, neither in support of 'mailine' religions nor in regulation of new groups. Thomas Brandon sees in anticonversion statutes and the use of deprogramming methods a threat to all liberty, with the potential of violating the freedom of religious expression, thought and conscience.

Victor Tupitza



PRESIDENT REAGAN'S PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON PRAYER in public schools--introduced as **S.J. Res. 199** and **H.J. Res. 493**--is drawing mixed reviews on Capitol Hill. In the Senate, the full Judiciary Committee is expected to hold hearings on the proposal in late July but no action is scheduled in the House where Judiciary Committee leaders oppose the amendment. A Senate Judiciary Committee spokesman said that panel will look at a "broad spectrum" of views on the issue. ●

REP. FORTNEY H. (PETE) STARK, D-Calif., has written House Ways and Means Committee chairman Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., asking that **H.R. 5067** be assigned to his subcommittee for hearings. This bill is being pushed by the Church Alliance for Clarification of ERISA and would allow church pension boards to once again issue tax sheltered annuities to ministers and denominational employees. The future strength of church pension boards is at issue in the proceedings. ●

A BAPTIST CONGREGATION in Maryland failed to convince the U.S. Supreme Court to decide if the state may deny property tax exemption to a residence owned by the church and used by its minister of music.

First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md., asked the Montgomery County supervisor of assessments seven years ago to exempt a parsonage housing the congregation's minister of music. The request was denied, setting in motion a long legal dispute that finally ended here June 21 with the high court's refusal to review the case.

Between its original application in 1975 and the final resolution of the case, the church appealed to a property tax appeals board, the Maryland Tax Court, a county circuit court, the Maryland Court of Special Appeals, the Maryland Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

But at each level the supervisor of assessment's original decision to deny tax exemption to the parsonage was left standing.

Attorneys Garland E. Lowe and John W. Baker, both members of the suburban Washington, D.C. congregation, asked the nation's high court to review the case, arguing that "the state has no authority to examine the religious doctrines of a church or to determine ecclesiastical matters for a church."

They argued further that Montgomery County became excessively entangled in their congregation's affairs by an intensive examination into the minister of music's contributions to the "spiritual" needs of the church.

In addition, they noted that the county exempts three Roman Catholic parsonages and convents, thus favoring one religion over another.

For its part, the state of Maryland argued in a written brief that denying property tax exemption to an "alleged parsonage" for an "alleged minister" did not interfere with the free exercise of religion nor did the county review of the minister of music's duties to the congregation improperly entangle the state in church affairs. ●

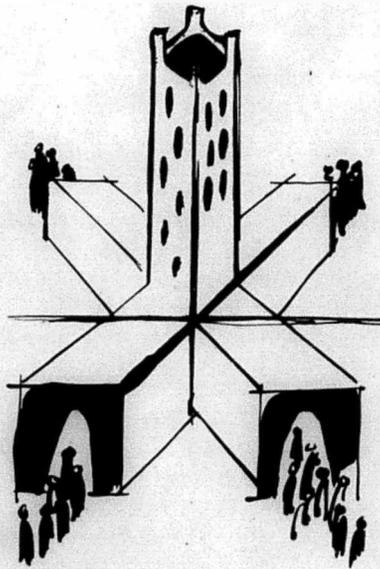
Toward a Biblical Basis

Here in the 1980's, we are witnessing an amazing series of attempts to enforce a monolithic ethical and moral stance upon all American citizens. For instance, during the past few years the following literary works, among many others, have been targeted for banning from public schools and libraries: Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Bernard Malamud's *The Fixer*, J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.¹

Huckleberry Finn is one of the greatest novels in the world, exploring as it does the development of moral responsibility in a boy just learning to distinguish between the property laws of a slave-owning society and the inalienable rights of every human being. *The Grapes of Wrath* is a marvelous sensitizer concerning the plight of migrant workers and the need for the oppressed to find ways of sustaining each other. *The Fixer* is a superb portrait of a Jewish man whose personal dignity cannot be broken despite the frantic efforts of his jailers to humiliate and destroy him. *The Catcher in the Rye* is a study in youthful idealism, the yearning to be totally honest and to save others from hypocritical destruction. *Death of a Salesman* focuses on what makes human beings, despite all our selfish pettiness, worth the attention of other human beings.

Each of these works provides its readers with opportunity for moral growth and clarification of values. Yet each has been pinpointed for removal from public shelves, presumably because some person or group regards something in it as conducive to immorality. I am reminded of the teacher in my "Christian" high school who went into the library, scissors in hand, determined to get rid of all the "filth."

¹Time (April 19, 1982), p. 57.



She was defeated by the Shakespearean plays which contain a great deal of raunchy gutter-humor side by side with the world's most sublime insights into the nature of God, humankind, and the universe.

As John Milton said in *Areopagitica*, people who are looking for "dirt" will find it anywhere, even in the Bible. If we think we are going to remove sin by censorship, we are as stupid as the man who thought he could keep crows out of his yard by shutting the gates! People experience moral growth only by making informed choices ("reason is but choosing"); and attempts to limit what they may read can only narrow the scope of their information and hence limit their opportunity to develop integrity.

But literary censorship is only one prong of a vast religio-political campaign to deny pluralism and enforce a single ethical code on the American people. (The password of the campaign seems to be denigration of "secular humanism"). Because the attempt comes from people who claim to be religious and indeed biblical, it can most effectively be combatted by religious people who understand the biblical basis of pluralism.

Attempts to legislate a single moral standard for everyone—such as the so-called Family Protection Act, which might more precisely be called the Patriarchy Protection Act—are above all attempts to establish control over other people "for their own good." But if even

for Pluralism

God has placed severe limitations on God's power out of respect for human freedom of choice, is it proper for some human beings to seek control over others?

The Genesis creation accounts describe for us the self-limitation of God. Having created Adam and Eve, God put them in charge of all the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). This was no empty, histrionic gesture. By putting humankind in charge of the world, God irrevocably gave up power to change society except through human agency. As we know from the story of the fall in Genesis 3, human beings don't always make the right choices. But God has irrevocably given us the right to choose, and both we and God are obliged to live with the result of our choices.

The Holocaust perpetrated by Hitler is one of the most horrifying examples of the abuse of our human freedom to choose. Many people have asked, "Where was God at Auschwitz and Buchenwald?" The answer is that God was dying in the gas-chambers within the millions of Jews and the thousands of gypsies, homosexuals and handicapped people. Fortunately for us all, God was also present in the action of the Allied armies who liberated the survivors of the concentration camps. My point is that for good or for ill, because of God's voluntary self-limitation, we are God's manifestations within this world. If we do not act in love and justice, we misrepresent God; and that misrepresentation is all that people will be able to learn about God from our witness.

Because we are human, inevitably we see things relative to our own life-experiences, including our family socialization, our education, and our religion. For that reason we may quite possibly be wrong about what is ultimately true, good, and beautiful (that is, "God's will"). We see "through a

glass, darkly" (I. Cor. 13:12). Hence Paul warned us that our knowledge will vanish away, but that love—the way we treat other people—is eternal. When we attempt to *force* our private moral or ethical standards on other people by censorship or legislation to remove civil rights from those we don't agree with, we are elevating our relative human perceptions to the status of divine absolutes. We are setting ourselves above God by seeking *power over* the choices of other people.

...literary censorship is only one prong of a vast religio-political campaign to deny pluralism and enforce a single ethical code on the American people.

Since, as we have seen, even the Creator chose not to exercise *power over* the choices of the creatures, surely it is the height of foolishness for mere creatures to attempt to assert that sort of power over their fellow creatures!

Genesis 11 tells the story of those who planned to build the Tower of Babel, a tower that was to reach to heaven in order to glorify the single name of the people who built it. The result of this attempt at godlike unity was the *furthering of pluralism*—the confounding of the single language into many languages and the scattering of the single people across the face of all the earth.

Just as God could have rested content with the single androgynous earth-creature called Adam (Genesis 2), God could have taught humility to the one unified people at Babel rather than permitting the multiplying of languages and nations. But according to the creation accounts God *chose pluralism* by creating a single human race made up of male and female, who are remarkably similar and remarkably different. And myth and history have *re-affirmed pluralism* in the story of what happened at Babel and in millions of instances ever since. Not one face is the same as any other, not one thumbprint, not even one snowflake! Don't these facts tell us something about the Creator's preferences?

Both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures provide the basis for pluralism by stressing that the whole human race, with all its diversity, is the offspring of the same divine Parentage.

For instance, in his attempt to keep human beings from betraying each other, Malachi cried out, "Have we not all one father [or mother]? hath not one God created us?" (Malachi 2:10). And the Apostle Paul told the Athenian philosophers that God "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of [humankind] for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:25-26).

Undoubtedly, some families are run tyrannously, with an attempt to force every family member to bow to the will of "the head of the house." But God's global human family is not run that way. Humankind forms a family in which the Creator respects the unique personhood of each family member. God sends rain on the just *and the unjust* because God has limited God's own power out of respect for human choice.

According to my understanding of the Bible, God is truly and radically *One*, the only Person from whom all personhood derives, the only Energy from which all energy derives. (Even cruelty utilizes energy stemming from God, although cruelty perverts, distorts, and warps the use of that energy because of fear and alienation). The whole creation is good, but the human use of it may not be.

For instance, Psalm 29:10-11 states that "[Yahweh] sitteth upon the flood; [Yahweh] will give strength unto [God's] people." What does it mean that Yahweh sits upon the flood and gives strength? What *can* it mean except that God's energy is involved in everything that happens? My being is not only *in God* but God is also *in my being*, just as the bird is not only in the air but the air is also in the bird. Although someone may pervert God's good energy into an outpouring of evil, nevertheless apart from my own responsible choice, no evil can touch the center of my being. Nothing can separate me from the love of God.

The same is true of every other human being. My attempts to bring about a just society must always be tempered by my respect for what other people see as authentic to themselves. A great paradox is involved: I am responsible to do justice and hence to oppose unjust world systems, but at the same time to restrain myself from passing ultimate judgment upon other human beings who may be perfectly happy with the systems I oppose.

When the Bible depicts God as being *jealous*, the point is that the One God, the All-Encompassing Spirit, is jealous

of any viewpoint that is less than *global*. God is the loving Creator and energy source for my enemies as well as my friends. Here, then, is the sweeping social implication of radical monotheism: *beneath our diversity we are one* (Galatians 3:28 and elsewhere). And because of that oneness we must carefully *protect the diversity*, just as a truly loving family member, despite disagreements, values and affirms the uniqueness of each other family member.

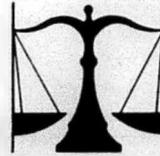
To the degree that we remain apathetic while human and civil rights are denied to any nation or group for any reason whatsoever, our practice denies the unity of the One Spirit and creates distress and divisive delusions in the universe. In the biblical language of accommodation, it would be said that when any of God's creatures are excluded from full participation in God's global family, God is angry. God is a jealous God who deplores our giving the glory of that which *encompasses all diversity* to anything that is only partial, only parochial, less than universal. The whole New Testament principle of mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21 and elsewhere) is a pluralistic principle in which I am called to regard my separate agendas as secondary compared to the good of the whole community (including, but not starring, myself).

So when I try to interfere with other peoples' freedom to choose what they feel to be right for them, or when I remain passive toward the systematic exclusion of others from life's necessities or from full participation in available power, I deny and anger the One Spirit who sits on the flood, without whom "everything is nothing" (Isaiah 45:6, Jerusalem Bible). Biblical inclusiveness is *pluralistic*, never totalitarian or even authoritarian. Though one body, we are many members, each responsible for our own choices, each of infinite value in our uniqueness. □

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott is Professor of English at William Paterson College of New Jersey. The author of six books, including *Speech, Silence, Action! The Cycle of Faith* (Abingdon, 1980), she is a member of the inter-religious Task Force of Women of Faith in the 80's and of the National Council of Churches inclusive-language Lectionary Committee.

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*.

"Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any state to participate in prayer."

These are the words which President Reagan has proposed that Congress and the States approve as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The proposal seems innocuous enough, but simple words such as these can have a profound impact on the United States generally and on its religious freedoms particularly. It is important that we examine both the need for and the potential impact of such an amendment.

It is generally known that the main-line protestant denominations and the Jewish organizations have taken strong positions against a so-called prayer amendment. Catholics appear divided on the issue though the U.S. Catholic Conference opposed the last attempt to amend the Constitution to "put God back in the schools." The important question is why these religious organizations have opposed an amendment which, on the surface, appears to expand religious liberty. Their opposition has two major bases: (1) the arguments for a prayer amendment are based on false premises, and, (2) such an amendment could seriously limit religious liberty in the United States.

False premises

The first false premise about the need for a prayer amendment is that the Supreme Court in the prayer cases banned voluntary prayer from the public schools. Prayer, to be true prayer, cannot be coerced. Thus, all true prayer is voluntary prayer. The Court said: government cannot write prayers or require students or teachers in public schools to be involved in oral or group prayers (i.e. involuntary prayers); government may not sponsor religious exercises; the fact that students may be excused from those exercises does not diminish the coercive element inherent in classes saying prayers. Voluntary prayer—an individual's sacred communication with his or her deity—was not at issue in the prayer cases, was not forbidden in the public schools, and is beyond the power of

Congress, the President, or the courts either to permit or to forbid.

The second false premise is that humans, individually or through their government, have the power or the capacity either to ban God from a public building or any other place or to adopt an amendment which will permit God to enter a place from which man supposedly has banned Him. Such a premise not only is false but also borders on blasphemy.

A third false premise is that because we had state-approved oral prayers in some public schools for a number of years before the Court handed down its decisions in *Engel v. Vitale* and *Abington v. Schempp*, the Court should not have decided as it did. Having noble reasons for doing the wrong thing does not make an action right. We had slavery—for less than noble reasons—in parts of this nation until the 1860's, but in hindsight we know that the institution of slavery was wrong. Government involvement in religious exercises was wrong when it was permitted, was wrong when the Court declared it unconstitutional, and is wrong now. As noble as the reasons for having government mandated or permitted prayers might have been, in terms of religious liberty they were wrong reasons supporting wrong practices.

Finally, those who argue for a prayer amendment assert a cause-and-effect relationship between the *Engel* and *Schempp* decisions and problems which have developed in public schools and in parent-child relationships. This is simplistic. There is not a single bit of scientific evidence to support such an argument. If one is to act simply on speculation, it would be just as valid to speculate that increased TV watching, ready access to automobiles, more family spendable income, the war in Vietnam, or even "those men walking on the moon" was the cause of the problems.

Religious liberty

The potential dangers to religious liberty posed by the adoption of the amendment proposed by President Reagan are numerous. Mention of a few of them should make the point.

One must be aware of the net effect of adding this amendment to the Constitution. The "prayer in the public

schools" decisions held that government constitutionally could not either permit, require, or participate in religious exercises because the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment forbids it to do so. The amendment's proponents, in order to reinstitute government's role in prayer in the public schools, are thus advocating an amendment to the establishment of religion clause. Therein lies a major problem.

Through years of interpretation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment by the Supreme Court, a body of precedent has been developed which gives government and religious organizations firm guidelines on their proper relationships. Under the proposed amendment, as new litigation arises—and be certain that it will—these guidelines, which have given us a high degree of religious liberty with a minimum of church-state friction, will be "up for grabs." They could be altered to such a degree that new government intrusions into the affairs of churches would be legalized.

New words would be added to the Constitution by the amendment. These would have to be interpreted and defined by the courts. I, for one, am not anxious to have the courts define the nature and essence of "prayer" for me. What is the extent of "other public institutions"? What makes a church or one of its agencies a "public institution"? Does tax exemption? If a seminary has students on the G.I. Bill or with guaranteed loans, does it become a "public institution"? If the amendment is to return us to the condition which existed in the schools before *Engel* and *Schempp*—i.e. a government role in prayer—what would be the government's role in prayer in these "public institutions"? These are only a few of the religious liberty/constitutional questions which the proposed amendment raises. However, these few should be sufficient to evoke caution among those who cherish religious liberty about the desirability of passage of this or any other "prayer amendment."

An amendment to "put God back in the schools" is unnecessary and dangerous. Religious people should join their denominations in a vocal all-out campaign against the proposal. □

Ken Hughes

The author is the coordinator for the Interreligious Emergency Campaign.

THE POOR Have SUFFERED Enough

Tim and Joan Smith were married in 1961. They have two daughters. Joan's health is poor. For most of his adult life, Tim has been employed, but recently, at the age of 51, he lost his blue collar job. He has been trying to find work. He has contacted a local church project for food and for help finding a job. The Smiths receive \$82 per month in food stamps. Sometimes Tim can find a job cleaning a basement, shovelling snow or tending a yard. Finally, the Smiths made applications for Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Because there are two unemployed adults in the home they do not qualify. Because he loves his wife and children so much, Tim is starting to face the fact that he may have to leave home so that they can receive the help they need.

A desperate mother of a 19 month old child found her way to legal services. The baby was suffering from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, the condition which leads to crib death. The baby had been protected by a monitoring device which gives an alarm when the child stops breathing. The government was taking away the device because it concluded the baby was "too old" to have the syndrome. Legal services represented the mother before an Administrative Law Judge by presenting medical evidence of the continuing danger to the baby. Benefits have been restored and the baby is still alive.

In countless cases such as these the nation's homeless, elderly, children and impoverished are suffering more now than at any time in recent memory. A faltering economy has combined with a drying up of federally supported programs and services to force people to put plans for the future on hold while they cope with the task of daily survival.

The role of the church in response to this worsening situation, as it often has been in the past, is clearly to provide assistance in whatever way it can. But more and more individual

churches are discovering that to carry out the message of the Gospel means more than providing direct services to the poor. Beyond this vital function the religious community is embracing an advocacy position, which often means representing the poor and powerless in places where decisions affecting their economic present and future are made. Recent events, as will be spelled out in this article, require that such efforts as the Interreligious Emergency Campaign for Economic Justice be mobilized on behalf of the poor.

Only eight percent of the federal budget is for programs targeted to the poor. Yet the bulk of last year's budget cuts were in this area. Food stamps were cut by over \$2 billion, depriving recipients of the 43 cents which is usually received per meal. Nearly 500,000 families, many with working mothers, are the victims of \$1.7 billion cut from Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Medicaid cutbacks are forcing poor families to pay more for medical services out of their own pockets. Rising rents and a severe drop in low-rent housing units is widening the gap between the number of poor families needing homes and their availability. And public service jobs, which had been employing 300,000 persons, have been eliminated.

Additional cuts proposed this year would include:

- Very large increases in rents for poor families living in subsidized housing if they receive food stamps.
- Severe reductions in food stamp and AFDC benefits, with their possible termination in 1984.
- Continued steep cuts in programs to construct or rehabilitate low-income housing units.
- Substantial further cuts in the medicaid program.
- Reductions of over 40 percent in funding for programs to train unskilled, unemployed persons.
- Cuts of one-third in school breakfast and child care food programs, and

termination of summer food services for one million poor children.

- Cuts of 30 percent in the low income energy assistance program.
- Termination of the legal services program.
- Termination of the highly successful Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children.

Those proposing continued deep cuts justify them by claiming the maintenance of a "safety net." What is left unsaid is that 95 percent of the dollars in the safety net are in programs—Social Security, Medicare and Veterans' programs—not devoted to the poor. In fact, social programs mainly aiding the middle class are slated to get thinned 1.5 percent from their \$290 billion budget. On the other hand, of the less than \$80 billion spent on low-income support programs, 44 percent would be cut.

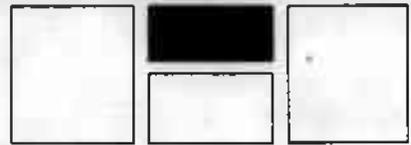
In response to this bleak situation, a group of religious leaders and staff organized a national strategy of advocacy for economic justice. In April, under the banner "The Poor Have Suffered Enough," over 50 church leaders signed a Call to Emergency Action for Economic Justice. The Call portrays the Congressional debate on the future of social programs in truly vital dimensions:

"What is at stake for Congress is whether it will remember the poor and secure their rights or ignore their plight while attending to other concerns. What is at stake for the non-poor American People is whether we will demand justice for the needy or remain passive while their rights and well-being are jeopardized."

Identified by the Call as the goal of the Campaign is the preservation of the integrity of food stamps, AFDC, housing subsidies, medicaid and job training. Preserving this integrity requires adequate funding as well as continued federal responsibility.

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News in Brief



Baptist Senator Proposes 'Middle Ground' For Uniting Advocates of Arms Limitation

WASHINGTON—A nuclear arms control proposal aimed at uniting Americans divided over how best to prevent nuclear war has been announced by a Baptist member of Congress.

Rep. Albert Gore, Jr., D-Tenn., believes there is acceptable middle ground between those who advocate overall freeze and reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union and those who insist with President Reagan that the U.S. must expand its nuclear forces to close a "window of vulnerability." That middle ground, Gore contends, could satisfy both groups to make nuclear war less likely.

In a recent editorial, the *Boston Globe* concurred, stating Gore's plan "wouldn't create an ideal world, but it would lead to a much safer one."

Gore's complex proposal is the product of a 14-month study he conducted as a member of the House Intelligence Committee. It calls for both superpowers to freeze and then dismantle their most threatening and destabilizing weapons—those capable of a first-strike against the other's land-based nuclear missiles. Gore contends it is these "counter-force" weapons that force both nations to keep their nuclear launchers on a hair-trigger alert.

The plan also would eventually reduce the number of warheads on each side to a level half the number allowed by SALT II.

The plan is intriguing not only because of its content, but also because of the reaction it is drawing. Arms control specialists in Washington and Moscow have expressed interest.

Though expressing reservations about Gore's proposed selective freeze not going far enough, it is a "step in the right direction," according to an aide to Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., one of the legislative leaders of the growing nuclear freeze movement.

Gore said he has received a positive reaction from Reagan administration arms control officials.

The Tennessee Democrat said that while President Reagan's recently announced arms control proposal "does not appear, on the surface, to have many similarities to my proposal, I would not be surprised to see the structure of my plan appear on the administration's final draft when the

talks have concluded."

Gore said there are both "positive aspects" and "remaining questions" to the president's proposal which he described as "clearly an opening position and not a proposed agreement."

Positively, Gore said Reagan's proposal signals that the president has determined that "arms control has an important role to play in enhancing our national security."

"This is a significant step for his administration to take," he said, "and it is a new departure."

Though all the details of the administration's plan are not available, Gore expressed concern over its continued reliance on counter-force weapons.

Gore credited the "tremendous outpouring of concern about the nuclear arms race" by Baptists and other members of the religious community with playing "an important role in convincing the president to move forward quicker than he had planned to do and in convincing the president to make a meaningful proposal and not just a cosmetic one."

With the emergence of the Reagan proposal, Gore says the role of arms control advocates is "somewhat changed." He warned against pushing proposals "contrary to the country's official negotiating position" but added that "it is important to provide a counterweight to those voices within the administration who don't put much stock in arms control."

He urged Baptists and others concerned about disarmament to "maintain a high degree of activity" on the issue.

A member of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Alexandria, Va., Gore cited the importance of religion in shaping priorities. Pointing to the "many references in the Bible to the importance of peacemaking," Gore declared, "there is no higher priority for public office than trying to prevent a nuclear holocaust."

Secular Jesus Story Hit

YORK, Maine—Three parents and the pastor of a local church have requested the removal from an elementary school library of a book about the birth of Jesus Christ, which omits religious references.

The book, "A Christmas Birthday Story," is a secular account of the birth

of Christ which describes Jesus as a "just man" and a "wise teacher," says school superintendent Richard E. Barnes. The book doesn't refer to Jesus as the son of God, a fundamental belief of Christianity.

Workers' Health Suffers Under Economic Slump

NEW YORK—The Affirmative Action Coordinating Committee here believes that pervasive discrimination in hiring practices and in the seniority system, aggravated by the economic recession under President Reagan, will result in a disproportionate increase in depression and unemployment among blacks.

Citing a study by Dr. M. Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University, the Committee noted that when unemployment rises one percentage point, 4.3% more men and 2.3% more women are admitted to state mental hospitals for the first time and 4.1% more people commit suicide.

The study disclosed that 4% more people wind up in state prisons, 5.7% more are murdered, and over a six-year period 1.9% more people die from heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver, and other stress-related chronic ailments.

Dr. Brenner's study estimated that the economic slump of 1970, with its 1.4% rise in unemployment, was linked to 51,570 additional deaths by 1975.

Seahawks' School Visits Designed to Evangelize

SEATTLE—The state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union has urged Washington public schools to stop arranging for visits by Seattle Seahawk football players who give Christian testimonies.

The dispute involves assemblies scheduled during school time by a group called Sports World Ministries. Seattle running back Sherman Smith, who has appeared in local assemblies, says the events are designed to recruit "professional Christian athletes."

"What's emphasized to the kids is that they personally have to ask Jesus Christ into their lives," he said. "Some people get offended and write, 'I'm a Jew and damn proud of it,' or 'I'm a Mormon.' Kids who are from different religious backgrounds get offended."

The assemblies are "billed to students as sports and competition programs, but in fact they are outspoken

exhortations to the students to adopt certain religious beliefs," asserts Kathleen Taylor, executive director of the state ACLU. She said state and federal constitutions prohibit government interference in religion.

Soviet Dissidents Get Fed, No Promises from Reagan

WASHINGTON—The Rev. Georgi Vins, one of eight Soviet dissidents who lunched at the White House, said afterward that he used the occasion to ask President Reagan to press for religious freedom worldwide. But the group got no promises of aid from the president.

Speaking through an interpreter, the Evangelical Baptist pastor said he told Mr. Reagan, "American has been blessed by God with more freedom than any other country on earth, but with that freedom comes responsibility—the responsibility not only to defend spiritual values and faith in God, but the religious freedoms of other peoples."

Mr. Vins was himself freed from a Soviet prison and allowed to emigrate to the United States after a congressional effort on his behalf. Seven other former Soviet citizens also attended the lunch.

The group discussed the possibility of Mr. Reagan raising the human rights issue when he meets Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev for arms talks, but the president made no promises, Mr. Chalidze told a reporter.

Mr. Reagan told the group he believes in "quiet diplomacy" rather than confrontational public demands on Soviet leaders, according to other participants in the discussion. But he added that congressional and public pressure could make that quiet diplomacy more effective, they said.

Religious Studies Groups Lead to Reducing Biases

MILWAUKEE—Increased involvement by Christian leaders in the activities of groups committed to the research and study of religion will help increase the understanding of the nature and role of religion in contemporary society, according to a Baptist sociologist and religious scholar.

David O. Moberg, president of the Religious Research Association, said such participation "can also have the indirect effect of reducing the biases and prejudices of other participants

against "Bible-believing Christians." He indicated that religious scholars are often thought of as "anti-intellectuals whose eyes are closed to the scientific and religious realities of the 1980's."

Church Day-care Centers Threatened with Closings

RALEIGH—A North Carolina Superior Court judge has ruled that church-operated daycare centers that refused to obtain state licenses must either obtain the documents or close their doors.

Eight daycare centers operated by fundamentalist Christian denominations in North Carolina refused to obtain or renew state licenses on grounds that licensing requirements violated the principles of separation of church and state. Those centers which had already been licensed turned in their licenses to the state.

The state then filed a civil suit against the daycare centers in 1978. It was on that suit that Judge Henry A. McKinnon, Jr., made his ruling. He observed that the centers didn't challenge until 1978 the state licensing requirements which became effective in 1972. "While the court accepts their objections as based upon religious conviction, it cannot be found that it is a long-standing belief."

In his 11-page ruling, Judge McKinnon held that North Carolina's daycare licensing regulations "as presently applied and as they validly may be applied are at most a minimal interference with any religious activities and ministries of the defendants and do not represent an excessive entanglement by the state with any religious beliefs and activities of the defendants."

Convicted Scientologists Now Face Incarceration

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand the conviction of two former Church of Scientology leaders—one the wife of the church founder—who were charged in a plot to burglarize and infiltrate government offices.

The Supreme Court's action apparently clears the way for Mary Sue Hubbard, wife of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, and another church official, Duke Snider (not the former baseball player), to begin serving prison terms.

Both pleaded guilty to a conspiracy charge in 1979 under an unusual arrangement which left them free to contest the legality of the searches in the appeals court. They were among nine leaders convicted of conspiracy.

Mrs. Hubbard and Mr. Snider had urged the high court to examine whether the FBI had violated the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable searches during the massive raids on the two Los Angeles offices. But the Supreme Court let stand the ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia which upheld the validity of the FBI's actions.

No Sales Tax on Bibles

PROVIDENCE—The Rhode Island General Assembly has enacted legislation exempting Bibles and canonized scriptures from the 6 percent state sales tax.

Churches have been exempt from the sales tax on all of their purchases of whatever nature, but the state formerly collected tax on sales of all religious goods to the general public.

Conviction in Child Death

MINDEN—A jury has convicted a rural couple of negligent homicide for refusing medical treatment for their granddaughter, believing God would cure her of the meningitis that eventually killed her.

Frederick and Docia Mae Ford of Heflin, La., face up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine in the case. No date for sentencing was set.

"We're not upset by it because we know the Lord and the others (the jurors) did not know the Lord," said Mr. Ford, 49. "I have gave my life to the Lord and I think it's right to give my grandbaby's life to the Lord. I trust her to the Lord."



Thomas S. Brandon, Jr.

ANTI-CONVERSION STATUTES — THREAT TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

In the last twenty years, the influx of new religions and new human potential philosophies into American life and culture has given rise to challenges on new frontiers of religious liberty. Though the reason for the rise in these new religious groups is spiritual in nature and ultimately requires a spiritual solution, battle lines have been and continue to be drawn along a legal course.

The influx of these new religions has put a strain on America's tolerance for religious pluralism. The newer religions often do not fit within the traditional theistic definition of religion.

The issues and concerns in this struggle do not merely touch on the rights of the new religions, but cut to the very core of the rights of everyone to exercise his or her religion. Whether agreeable or not, all will be bound by the precedents that are now being set by the new religions and others in this sensitive area of religious liberty.

Even though we, as Christians, disagree with these new religions and consider many of their doctrines rank heresy or blasphemy, we must keep in mind that protection for all groups, no matter how unorthodox their beliefs, is not an approval of what they believe or practice. Rather, it is a commitment to the principle that none of us truly has the freedom to believe unless all of us have that freedom. Members of established religions may not perceive the need for co-existence with unorthodox cults. But any decision which denies the cultists the right to carry out their sincerely held beliefs apart from a compelling state interest erodes protection for all religions. As our history reveals, the religious groups which are repressed and harassed are the unpopular ones.

The first real battle against cults was begun in the late 1960s by deprogrammers. Deprogramming is basically viewed as the forcible abduction and restraint of a religious convert. It usually involves some form of treatment (more severe than cult recruitment),

whether psychological or physical, aimed to get the converts to recant [their new] beliefs and return to [their] former beliefs. This method is used to attempt to reverse the effect of alleged cult indoctrination. Most of those who resort to deprogramming believe or fear that the convert has been "brain-washed."

While deprogramming was originally aimed at the cults, it now has involved attempted deprogrammings of several Baptists, members of fundamentalist Bible churches, several Episcopalians, a Roman Catholic priest, members of some charismatic groups and a 35-year-old woman who had a Ph.D. in Spanish, for her political views. The authors of the book, *Snapping*, state that Billy Graham and Oral Roberts use mind control and that the *I Found It!* campaign of 1976-1977 was a cult. Many anti-religionists believe that conversion is not beneficial and limits society's capacity to reach its full potential.

The leading case in the deprogramming area dealt with the conservatorship law of California. In March, 1977, a judge ruled that five adult members of the Unification Church be placed in the custody of their parents for 30 days. The judge refused to bar deprogramming during the custody. In appeal in *Katz v. Superior Court*, the California Appeals Court reversed the action of the judge, stating:

As applied in the present case, an individual seeking salvation through religion cannot tell whether or not he will be placed in the custody of another on charges that he has been deceived by artful and designing persons . . . There may be severe inroads on the individual's freedom to practice his religion and to associate with whom he pleases because of the threat of proceedings such as this.

To deprive a person of liberty and freedom of action without properly ascertaining the necessity of legal control over the person, stated the Court, is "to license kidnapping for the purpose of thought control."

There has been a growing trend for legislatures to "deal with the cult situation" by introducing bills which would grant a court the power to appoint a guardian for "an incompetent or incapacitated person." These bills are being pushed by anti-cult groups, parents who have children in the affected groups and legislators eager to please their constituency. Those doing the pushing are pursuing the wrong course and are tampering with the very heart of religious liberty. Many of the movers are religious people, but many are anti-religious, viewing not just cults or new religions as dangerous, but all religions as dangerous and an impediment to society reaching its full potential.

The Supreme Court case of *U.S. v. Ballard* stands for a proposition that lies at the heart of the First Amendment in a free society: individual thought and belief, must be beyond the reach of government.

Supreme Court Justice Jackson in his famous dissent in *U.S. v. Ballard* had this principle of protection in mind when he said, "For the price of freedom of religion or of speech or of the press is that we must put up with, and even pay for, a good deal of rubbish."

Presently, bills involving some regulation of cults, guardianships or laws allowing civil suits are pending in at least ten states. Guardianship bills have been defeated in the 1981 session of the Connecticut and New York legislatures, but will be re-introduced in later sessions. (The New York bill was passed by the legislature only to be vetoed by the governor.) Six states, including New York, Kansas, Ohio, Texas, Oregon, and Connecticut have guardianship bills pending or to be introduced at the time of this writing. Two states (Pennsylvania and Maryland) are considering resolutions to study the influence of cults in their state. Minnesota has a bill pending

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... protection for all groups, no matter how unorthodox their beliefs, is not an approval of what they believe or practice. Rather, it is a commitment to the principle that none of us truly has the freedom to believe unless *all* of us have that freedom.

which would allow a convert damages in a civil action against a group for unfulfilled promises. In the state of Delaware a bill amending the Criminal Code in reference to "religious kidnaping" has been introduced.

The bills, while attempting to target only certain groups, could be applied to many mainline religions and denominations. They would inevitably be applied in a discriminatory manner, depending on the particular predilections of the judge or parties involved.

The issues of deprogramming, conversion and the anti-conversion statutes revolve around the central issue of individual liberty, i.e., that of the right of the convert to choose which religion he believes. Deprogramming and the anti-conversion statutes violate that individual liberty and freedom of religion, thought and conscience.

No doubt there is great concern on the part of parents with children in some of the groups in question. It is easy to empathize with the parents, but the current remedies and those proposed address the problems only as legal. These are not entirely legal problems.

They surface in the legal arena, but they have a spiritual beginning. If the Christian community and others are going to deal effectively with this trend, then it must be on a spiritual plane. □

Americans Worked to Balance Peace Documents; Media Focuses on Graham

NEW YORK—The peace conference sponsored by the Russian Orthodox Church and held in Moscow May 10-14 was far more complex and significant than was apparent in the American press. Media attention to evangelist Billy Graham tended to eclipse the World Conference of Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life from Nuclear Catastrophe.

Even observers at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow reluctantly admitted that the conference was more evenhanded than they had predicted. Because of the efforts of American church leaders, especially four denominational executives and a seminary professor, the final document addressed to all governments of the world called on both the USSR and the U.S., as well as other nuclear powers, to "hasten the pace of implementing programs of disarmament."

Two of the church leaders, Avery D. Post and William P. Thompson, chief executives of the United Church of Christ and The United Presbyterian Church, were particularly active in lining up support for a carefully balanced statement. They labored effectively behind the scenes with Eastern European and Russian church leaders with whom they have worked in the World Council of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America, and Bruce Rigdon of Chicago's McCormick Theological Seminary, served on the crucial drafting committee. Both had won the confidence of church officials in Socialist countries through earlier efforts in East-West dialogue.

Another major document, considered the best-written and most helpful paper to come out of the conference, will be presented to delegates attending the second Special Session of the United Nations on Disarmament which opened in June in New York. The U.N. conference was urged to "lay the foundation of a world in which the security of each nation is assured by all without recourse to arms, and in which the resources, both human and material, of the whole of humanity are deployed for all peoples."

Many of the addresses, as well as the finding of discussion groups on various sub-themes and gatherings of each of the religions, identified the theological and spiritual resources of

Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shintoism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism that can be utilized in the search for world peace.

The fact that the Soviet government permitted and encouraged the gathering of 580 persons from so many faiths did not go unnoticed. Even assuming that the Soviet officials intend to use the gathering for propaganda purposes, the attention given to the conference in Moscow (including a concert by the USSR State Academic Symphony Orchestra) will strengthen the position of the Russian churches. As Arie Brouwer pointed out in a major platform address, a "propaganda war is also a war without winners."

Kremlinologists are, in fact, studying the non-inflammatory tone of addresses by government officials who brought greetings and a candidly realistic address by Mr. G. Arbatov of the Soviet Institute of U.S. and Canada Studies, to determine whether they signal a more conciliatory mood among Russian leaders.

The presence in Moscow of well over 100 accredited journalists was also a significant event. American participants had insisted that the conference be open to a free press. Archbishop Pitirim of Volokolamsk, head of the publishing department of the Russian Orthodox Church, provided untiring assistance to both the religious and secular media.

Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Byelorussia, who directed the preparatory work for the conference, initiated a heretofore unprecedented procedure as plans for the conference were developed. Although technically the invitations were issued by Patriarch Pimen, Filaret requested and received assistance from knowledgeable leaders in the U.S. and elsewhere in developing the invitation list. Though the names were screened, the conference was far more representative and open than a similar peace conference called by the Russian church in 1977.

The most notable absences were representatives of the American Jewish community. Protestant church leaders from the States acknowledged uneasiness about that fact. □

—J. Martin Bailey

Special to Religious News Service (He was one of three U.S. Church Journalists at the Conference.)

INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



Baptist Assembly Urges Non-Violence in Falklands

LONDON—The Falklands crisis held the attention and prayers of delegates attending the annual assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

In a strong resolution, which was later delivered personally to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the delegates urged a non-violent solution to the national crisis with Argentina. Their action came just prior to the naval conflict which resulted in the sinking of ships of both countries.

The assembly bid farewell to the Rev. Dr. David S. Russell, Union General Secretary for the past 15 years. A tribute evening, led by Dr. George Beasley-Murray, recognized his service to the Baptist denomination "not for 15 years, but for 40," and underlined his leadership in the Baptist World Alliance, European Baptist Federation, and World Council of Churches as well as in the British Council of Churches, the Free Church Federal Council, and in numerous human rights efforts. (EBPS)

NCCJ States Opposition to Day to Mourn War Dead

TOYKO—The 28th general assembly of the National Christian Council of Japan has voted opposition to a government proposal to set 15 August as an annual day to mourn the country's war dead. It called it "a means of encouraging preparation for war."

Another assembly resolution supports rights of aliens, particularly Koreans, in the country. The assembly approved a peace appeal to its member denominations and church organizations, and establishment of a Centre for Christian Response to Asian Issues.

NCCJ membership includes United, Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist and other denominations and organizations. About one percent of the country's population is considered Christian. (EPS)

Nuclear Weapons, War Believed Morally Wrong

GENEVA—Stockpiling nuclear weapons is evil even if the weapons are not used, says the World Council of Churches.

In a report, "Before It's Too Late," following a council hearing on nuclear

disarmament last November in Amsterdam, a panel of 17 church leaders cited testimony by 38 experts in theology, politics, science and the military.

The report said a crucial ethical difference "derives from the scale of nuclear devastation, a scale out of all proportion to any reasonable war aim. Warfare on such a scale involves a degree of unpredictability humanity cannot afford to risk."

While acknowledging that "there is no Christian consensus on the subject of war as such," the drafters of the report declared that "nuclear war-fighting is morally wrong, whatever the circumstances."

Examining the arguments for nuclear deterrence, the panel noted that some people "argue that the strategy is ethically justifiable precisely because its aim is to prevent war." But the statement said panel members "cannot escape the conclusion that the readiness to do something wrong shares in the wrongness of the action itself."

"It would be an exaggeration to claim that the strategy of nuclear deterrence, and the weapons on which it depends, are as unmitigated an evil as an actual nuclear war would be," they said.

"We believe, however, that they are evil, and that the possession of such weapons and the readiness to use them are wrong in the sight of God and should be treated as such by the churches. . . ."

Amnesty Seeks Accounting For Prisoners in Morocco

LONDON—Amnesty International says that Morocco is holding political prisoners incommunicado and torturing many of them.

In a report on a mission to Morocco in February 1981, the London-based human rights organization said the government of King Hassan II had failed to account for hundreds of other prisoners, some of whom it said had died in "appalling prison conditions."

Amnesty International said it knew of more than 100 Moroccan prisoners of conscience, "people jailed for the non-violent expression of opinion" who had been in prison for at least five years.

Amnesty appealed for information on the fate of some 100 military men arrested about 10 years ago and convicted of involvement in attempts to assassinate King Hassan II.

The report also listed some 90 people whose arrest, it said, has never been acknowledged but who are reported to have been seized by security forces in southern Morocco since 1975, "apparently in connection with the dispute over the Western Sahara between Morocco and the Polisario Front, which seeks independence for the region."

Amnesty said it had sent its findings and recommendations to Moroccan authorities, but had received no reply.

Women, German Churches Disagree over Equal Rights

BONN, West Germany—A new effort to tighten German antidiscrimination laws has widened a rift between feminists, who want stronger enforcement of equal rights, and church hierarchies, which favor non-legislative solutions to the problems of discrimination.

At issue are attempts to improve Article 3 of the 1949 German constitution, which reads in part: "Men and women have equal rights. No one may be favored or discriminated against due to gender. . . ."

With a law like that on the books, American ERA supporters may wonder where the problem lies. But although Article 3 guarantees women equal rights, it does not set standards for enforcement.

Both the Protestant and the Catholic churches have been criticized for their treatment of women by lay groups, notably by the Committee for Christian Justice in the Church, which describes itself as an "ecumenical inner-church movement." The committee, with some 7,000 members, was founded two years ago to support the cause of Tübingen University Professor Hans Kung after he lost his chair on the Catholic faculty there.

SBC Support, Concern Voiced By Baptists in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES—Despite concern about U.S. backing of Britain in the Falkland Islands crisis, Argentine Baptist leaders have expressed their support for Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

The leaders did, however, voice concern at a meeting here that public statements reportedly made by Baptist leaders in the United States about the crisis could have "negative effects" on future Baptist missionary endeavors in Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America.



Thurmon Bryant, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board director for eastern South America, who attended the meeting, said that no specific examples of such statements were offered.

Mr. Bryant said the Argentine Baptist leaders had also affirmed support for Argentina's claim of sovereignty over the disputed islands in the south Atlantic in messages to Argentine authorities.

Judge Upholds Parents In 'Moonie' Dispute

LONDON—A High Court judge has dismissed an application by the Unification Church to order the parents of a missing church member to disclose her whereabouts.

The church says Nicola Raine, 28, failed to return to a church residence in West London where she lived after she went to a subway station on April 6 to meet an old friend.

In dismissing the application, Lord Justice May said the parents of the woman were under no liability or duty to disclose to others, who had no authority to demand it, the whereabouts of members of their family.

The judge also said the parents of a woman of 28 had no right to detain her against her will but they were perfectly entitled "to advise and persuade their children if they think necessary, with emphasis."

Christians in Mexico Question Political Role

MEXICO CITY—Mexican Roman Catholic bishops, constrained by law for a century from speaking out on politics, have begun to express their conflicting opinions about Catholic support for socialist or Marxist parties in an upcoming presidential election.

Times have changed in Mexico and with a presidential election set for July 4, a number of Catholic bishops have begun to speak out. Some have voiced strong disapproval of new Marxist parties that have recently sprung up.

Meanwhile, PESUM, the United Socialist Party formed last October to speak for various socialist forces in the country, has challenged the Catholic church leaders in Mexico City to initiate a Christian-Marxist dialogue.

The party has formally declared that it is willing to eschew traditional identification of Marxism with atheism, that it has not demanded and will not

demand that Christians renounce their faith in joining the party.

It said it saw no reason why Christianity should be an obstacle to the party's struggle for the poor and the underprivileged.

PESUM has even urged the government to enact legislation to allow "the full participation of the church, including its hierarchy, in the electoral process."

"Although the separation of church and state was one of the great accomplishments of the reform espoused by Benito Juarez, it has suffered deformations that have not been recognized," PESUM said.

New Ban on Cleric Imposed By South African Regime

PRETORIA—The government imposed a new three-year "ban" on a top Roman Catholic official the day his first five-year-old banning order expired.

The Rev. Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, the first black secretary of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference, has been under a banning order since 1977. He was served with the new banning order at the headquarters of the conference in Pretoria.

Banning orders are imposed without hearing or trial by the justice minister on people whose actions are deemed a danger to national security.

Montreal Catholic Leader Opposes State School Plan

MONTREAL—Archbishop Paul Gregoire of Montreal says in a pastoral letter that all Catholic parents in his archdiocese should demand a religious education for their children.

The letter coincides with efforts by the Quebec government to draft legislation to revamp the province's public school system, now run along denominational lines.

Although details of the legislation are not yet public, the government hopes to replace the present system of denominational schools run by Catholic and Protestant boards with a regional board system that would allow individual schools to remain Protestant or Catholic if the parents so wished.

Approve Sabbath Air Flight

JERUSALEM—The Israeli Supreme Court has overturned a government decision to shut down El Al flights on the Sabbath and on Jewish holy days

to satisfy demands of Agudat Israel, the ultra-orthodox religious party.

In a petition to the Supreme Court, El Al said the government decision violated a law governing state-owned companies because it was not based on financial reasons.

Reformed Church Urged to Declare Apartheid a Heresy

GENEVA—"Not only is South Africa the most blatantly racist country in the world, it is also the country where the church is most openly identified with the racism and oppression that exists in that society."

So says Dr. Allan Boesak, a leading colored (mixed race) theologian in South Africa, in a study guide being distributed by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) to the delegates to its quadrennial General Council meeting in Ottawa in August.

In his paper, "Racism and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches," Dr. Boesak says the white Dutch Reformed Church has both formulated South Africa's apartheid (racial separation) policy and provided a theological justification for it.

Dr. Boesak urged the WARC to reaffirm that racism is a sin irreconcilable with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "If this is true, and if apartheid is also a denial of the Reformed tradition, then it should be declared a heresy which is to the everlasting shame of the Church of Jesus Christ," he says.

Baptist Peace Resolution Scores 'Absurdity' of War

SANTA SEVERA—The Baptist Union of Italy has denounced the "absurdity of the war between Great Britain and Argentina" and urged the Italian government to work toward a peaceful solution of the conflict.

The peace resolution charged that the war over the Falkland/Malvinas Islands which, "not at all taking into account human life, but to elude their social and political problems and avoid their internal contradictions, preserves anachronistic nationalism and instead demonstrates once again that there can be no true peace without justice."

The action came during the biennial assembly of the Union May 26-30, and formed part of a resolution on World Peace taken just prior to anti-nuclear demonstrations organized in other cities by Baptists among other Italian Christian groups.

CORRESPONDENCE

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.

To the Editors: Gerhard Claas writes in the April issue about the nature and definition of freedom of religion in socialist countries. It was helpful to have him discuss the differing concepts of freedom in the East and West.

There is an urgent need for us to be descriptive in our discussion of circumstances in other countries. The American mind has an urgent need to comprehend all circumstances under manageable generalizations. These generalizations are misleading and we must therefore find a different way of treating the material, especially since there are differing concepts of freedom.

Urbane Peachey
Mennonite Central Committee
Akron, PA.

To the Editors: The students on the two campuses I serve are particularly inquisitive about civil religion and Christian involvement in political matters. *REPORT from the CAPITAL* continually helps keep me updated and informed on pertinent social and political issues.

John D. Pierce
Marietta, GA

To the Editors: I wanted to just take a moment to thank you for the May 1982 issue of *REPORT from the CAPITAL*.

I always read this publication when it hits my desk. This particular issue was especially meaningful to me as I felt it contained some thoughtful articles and useful material. . . . James Dunn's article under "Reflections" gave some of the most useful insights I have seen about the establishment of the First Amendment.

Paul V. Moore
Bacone College
Muskogee, OK

To the Editors: After reading the pamphlets concerning "Religion in the Classroom" I was able to clear up much of the myth that I believed as truth. After this I took it to the Church for discussion with the same results as I had. The concern that you have for this subject is also a concern of this

community, so I would like to order enough pamphlets for at least the church.

Randy Daniels
Clarendon, TX

The Poor from page 7

The 55 signers of the Call, who come from major Protestant as well as Catholic and Hebrew faiths, base the Campaign on a "Love for and loyalty to God and our deep convictions that God demands such justice. The God to whom we belong and to whom we owe allegiance above all else is a God of Justice . . . This God, we are convinced, has demonstrated the quality of the justice demanded in our common life by showing particular concern for the poor, the weak, the needy, the powerless. We seek to be faithful to this God."

Staff of religious offices in Washington have been actively lobbying members of Congress to support the Campaign's positions. Targeted have been the leadership of both Houses, plus moderate northern Republicans and conservative southern Democrats. These groups of Representatives, known as "Gypsy Moths" and "Boll Weevils," respectively, often hold the key to achieving a consensus around key social programs. Visits are proving to be very useful, for while some are still in the mood to continue making reductions in programs for the poor, most are not going to support further rounds of deep cuts as were made last year. The Emergency Campaign is also working with national religious leaders to make their presence known, particularly through Capitol Hill hearings and visits.

Efforts are also being made to mobilize concerned citizens across the nation. Staff of the national religious groups participating in the Campaign will utilize their own denominational networks as well as interreligious and ecumenical networks such as IMPACT and Bread for the World to express concern about proposed budget cuts. The Emergency Campaign is planning to be active in every major debate and vote during this session of Congress, continuing to alert and sound the alarm that, indeed, the poor have suffered enough. As Martin Luther King, Jr., put it: "We should be well beyond the morally primitive state of believing that the basics of human existence—jobs, income, food, shelter and health care—should be provided by individual charity and not by government acting on behalf of a shared community sense of human rights." □

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... the President has deserted principles he claims to love dearly . . . conservatism regarding the Constitution, strict construction in interpreting it and the goal of freedom from government intrusion . . .

REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn
Executive Director



Working for nine brands of Baptists is never dull. It reminds me of the prospective employer who told the young applicant: "We'll have no 'yes' men around here. I cannot tolerate a nay sayer. There's no room for an equivocator. What do you think?"

I'll not equivocate. Mr. Reagan has submitted his prayer amendment (see p. 6). It's unneeded, unwanted, and unworkable.

Unneeded—what kind of conservative would uproot the First Amendment, changing the Bill of Rights for the first time since its adoption in 1791? Robert W. Kastenmeier, a member of the House Judiciary Committee says it's "an attempt to alter the historic interpretation of a key feature of the Bill of Rights."

Most of us believe that the Constitution should be amended only under the most extreme circumstances. Odd, isn't it, how many of the very people using that argument against the ERA suddenly see wisdom in radically altering the First Amendment?

Unwanted—Most major religious bodies have seen the folly of this meddling in religion. Why? Why? Could it be that someone is playing politics with prayer? It's no use to say "what harm can come from prayer in schools?" Ask the parents of dead children in Northern Ireland what harm can come from politicized prayer in schools.

Dr. J.M. Price, dean of religious education in Southern Baptist life, used to say, "We are as responsible for those whose (religious) experiences we bungle as we are for those we never reach at all." How many people do you know who have no use for the church because when they were children they had church crammed down their little craws? Don't tell me there's no harm.

Of course, there have been some overreactions on the part of educators to the present limitations. I heard of one muddleheaded principal who patrolled the lunchroom yelling at students who silently bowed their head to say a blessing. Stupid!

Why, pray tell, does anyone think there'd not be excesses if the so-called "prayer amendment" would pass? We'd have more evangelistic trap services in school assemblies, courses in Christian doctrine would spring up in the flavor of the local majority. Don't tell me there's no harm.

Unworkable—One conservative columnist has suggested, "It's odd to see the same people who don't want sex education, because that isn't the proper role of the public schools, inviting the same secularized educators they distrust to supervise religious observances."¹ Why? Why? Maybe playing politics with prayer?

Practically every constitutional authority to comment has opposed the ill conceived amendment. That includes the present Solicitor General of the United States, Rex E. Lee. When he was dean of the Brigham Young University Law School, shortly before joining the Reagan administration, he asked in one of his books on constitutional law, "What does the Government gain by requiring or authorizing school prayer in the public schools? In most cases, the recital is a sterile exercise, a group exercise to-

tally lacking in individuality, spontaneity, or real expression of conviction. To the extent that any students pay attention to the words, some will believe them, some will find them irrelevant, and to some they will be positively offensive."² Why? Why? Perhaps, playing politics with prayer?

Leo Pfeffer tells about the little boy who after having to repeat the 23rd Psalm wanted to know, "who is the good Mrs. Murphy?" who will follow him the rest of his days. Seems he'd misunderstood "goodness and mercy."

We at the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs know we don't have all the answers. You can make several possible responses.

1. You can tell the Committee we didn't say what we've said. You can tell the Conventions, Boards and Conferences they were wrong, and you can reverse the direction we've headed since E.Y. Mullins, George W. Truett, J.M. Dawson, Louie Newton, C. Emanuel Carlson. (It's not logical but it's parliamentarily possible.)

2. You can call on every Christian school child in America to pray at home and church and even to have a pray-in at school before every exam and at all other testing times. (It would do more good than compelled ritual.)

3. You can give us some practical, constructive advice about how to maintain creative tension toward a healthy separation of church and state. We're still in the business of guarding religious liberty and there are plenty of places that government is meddling in church life.

4. You can help us educate the educators in the positive ways that religion can and should be studied in the public schools. (It was Justice Tom Clark who said in 1963, "It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistent with the First Amendment.")

5. You can tell us how you'd handle group prayer where the teacher is a cult member and now set free to do her wierd thing, or where the majority are active proselytizers, or where you have one emotional upheaval after another. (It's unfair to force little children to act as defense lawyers to defend their religious liberty.)

In a party rally two days before the Rose Garden announcement of the amendment to get government into daily devotionals, the President of the United States suggested that campaign workers use the prayer issue in the 1982 campaign (*Washington Post*, May 5, 1982). Joining the ultra-fundamentalists in this, the President has deserted principles he claims to love dearly. He has forsaken conservatism regarding the Constitution, strict construction in interpreting it and the goal of freedom from government intrusion. Why? Why? Possibly playing politics with prayer?

Continued on page 16

¹ Joseph Sobran, *The Des Moines Register*, Saturday, May 15, 1982, p. 8a; ²Yale Kamisar, "Yet Again, School Prayer," *New York Times*, Op Ed Page, May 17, 1982.

REVIEWS



THE NEW RELIGIOUS/POLITICAL RIGHT IN AMERICA.

By Samuel S. Hill and Dennis E. Owen, 160 pp. Nashville: Abingdon, \$9.95.

The *New Religious/Political right in America* is a provocative effort by Samuel Hill and Dennis Owen, two professors in the Department of Religion at the U. of Florida, to understand the New Religious/Political Right (NRPR) on its own terms.

Hill and Owen identify the NRPR membership as drawn primarily from independent (fundamentalist) Baptist congregations and escorted by ultra-conservative and dissident Methodists, Southern Baptists, with some Roman Catholics and Mormons. Joining these religious folks are not-very-religious but very politically and morally conservative Americans.

Conservative religious bodies which are refusing participation in the NRPR include mainstream Southern Baptists, hard-line fundamentalists such as Bob Jones and Carl McIntyre, and certain evangelicals, Evangelicals for Social Action and the Sojourners community among them.

Consumed with zeal, the NRPR is intent upon building (its vision of) the perfect society, a Christian theocracy. This Christian theocracy will realize the nuclear family, clarify sex roles, acknowledge God's sovereignty, and establish a military which can punish international evil.

The authors contend that NRPR carries a totalitarian philosophy—it knows the Truth and has a divine mandate to impose this Truth. It is governed by an authoritarian leadership which thinks in Messianic terms and advocates an "ethic of right," an ethic of duty, obligation, and obedience to authority.

Both NRPR's goal and philosophy are advanced through its organizations and structures. Most prominent of the organizations are Christian Voice, Roundtable, and Moral Majority; their apparatus is comprised of political action committees, educational foundations and lobby groups.

Hill and Owen also study the relationship between the NRPR and the "civil religion complex," and why the NRPR has emerged.

While the authors have done a splendid job studying this phenome-

non, they possess an almost monolithic view of the NRPR and have focused too narrowly on Jerry Falwell and Moral Majority.

Their conclusion: "The NRPR is neither biblical nor constitutional enough to recommend itself as a constructive element. Rather than recalling us to a putative heritage and destiny, it threatens to divert us by creating a new course, one that does not do profound justice to our religion or to our politics, and in any event, is not edifying. We grant that the NRPR has diagnosed a number of our nation's ills with some acumen. But its supply of understanding is short, and its prescribed cure lacks power to heal." □

—Robert Parham

POLITICAL EXPECTATIONS

By Paul Tillich; Ed. and Intro. by James Luther Adams. Macon, GA: Mercer U. Press. 187 pp., \$13.95.

Here are eight essays by Paul Tillich, each of them bearing a fresh contribution to our understanding of his thought and each adding theological insight into the nature of contemporary economic and political discourse.

For those among us whose study of Tillich took place in the long ago, the book recalls the scope and daring of his perceptions and affirms the enduring quality of his work.

"Political Expectation" finds its context in immediate post World War I Germany when the nation's sense of national humiliation over defeat, aggravated by the economic depression as the price of war and peace, introduced the need for authoritative voices.

Tillich's analysis of what took place in Germany provides some understanding of the global dynamics, in which theological reflection/action is today directed toward an agenda of war and peace, national self-determination, and social and economic justice.

There are similarities to the current world situation, and perhaps in the pursuit of a more just or moral society this observation of Tillich continues to

ring prophetically sound: "If a demon is driven out and the space remains empty, seven new demons come to claim it; if a utopia posits something preliminary as absolute, disillusionment follows. And into this empty space of disillusionment the demons flock . . . we find ourselves struggling with them."

Adams' introduction is particularly helpful in its development of the relationship of Tillich's philosophy to that of other leading theologians and philosophers of that period. The book is one in the series of Reprints of Scholarly Excellence published by Mercer University. (VT) □

SALT OF THE EARTH

When Christ said, "Ye are the salt of the earth" and "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-14), he employed two words rich with meaning. Discovering the meanings of *salt* and *light* can motivate church members to make a profound difference for Christ in their community.

In the Equipping Center module *Salt and Light: How to Influence Your Community for Christ* the implications of being salt and light are explored. Participants in this six-session study will be equipped to confront social problems in the community and will plan specific acts of ministry to ethnics, poor, aging, and handicapped. The module includes a variety of resources for group study.

Available from Materials Services Department, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37234.

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Playing politics with prayer is a sin. This is not a silly grin, dirty tricks issue. Liberty should never be taken lightly. This strikes at the root of the freedom tree; once cut down, it cannot be brought back to life.

It's time for a response from all who care. Stay true. Hold fast. Pray-free. Speak up. Do right. We don't need a government prayer permit. Say so! □

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