

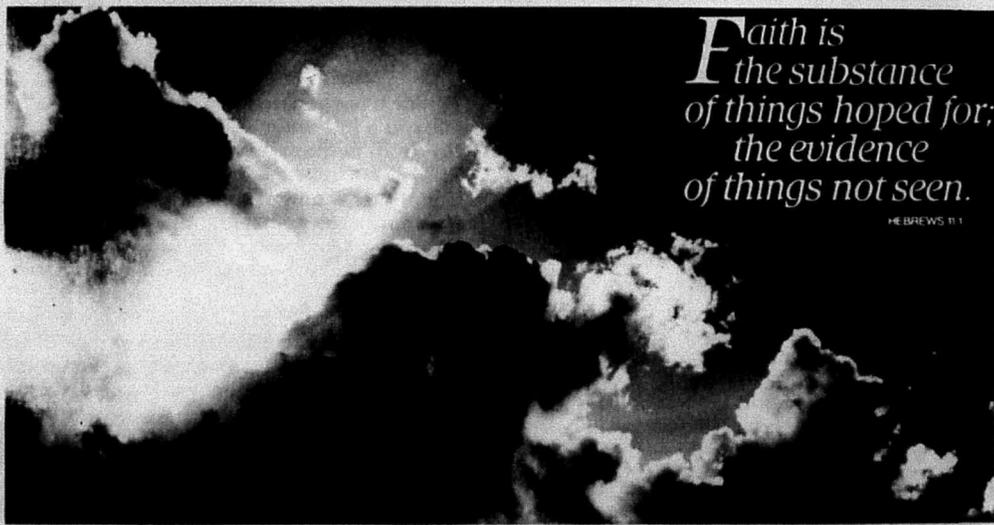
May, 1984

ISSN-0346-0661

# REPORT from the CAPITAL

## MY · FAITH

· VOLUNTARY · AND · OBEDIENT ·



*Faith is  
the substance  
of things hoped for;  
the evidence  
of things not seen.*

HEBREWS 11:1

Observe Religious Liberty Day  
· June 1984 ·

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Nashville, Tennessee

## REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 39, No. 5

May, 1984

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**Cover:** Adapted for use on this cover, this is essentially the poster for the 1984 Religious Liberty Observance. The three-color poster may be obtained by writing our office. Artwork is by William Kreitlow.

Executive Director: James M. Dunn  
Editor: Victor Tupitza

Contributing Editors: John W. Baker, Stan L. Hastey, Larry G. Chesser, Glenn Saul, Kenneth L. Smith, Robert Dilday, Gary McNeil, Jeannette Holt

Circulation Assistant: Gayl Fowler

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BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE  
ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

## Faith is Everything

Annually, Religious Liberty Day presents an occasion for assessing the nature of vital, religious faith. It then becomes apparent that belief is intensely personal, and that in our nation free exercise flourishes upon the consensus that freedom of religion requires the state's role to remain one of neutrality toward all religions.

Baptists have lived through a period when the religious conviction of some citizens became the occasion for state intrusion into the consciences of all citizens. That experience bound Baptists inseparably to another conviction, namely, that if civic freedom is to become a reality, freedom of religion must have its constitutional guarantees.

Far from citing evidence of their disregard for the ideal of one nation, unified in spirit and purpose, Baptist abhorrence of established religion and state interference testifies to their vision of a just and open society. That society was to be free of the coercive power of state in matters of faith, and Religious faith was to be dependent upon its own resources for the propagation of its truths.

That brief word provides but a background for calling attention to the Religious Liberty Day emphasis upon "My Faith—Voluntary and Obedient". Professor James Harris of the North American Baptist Seminary wrote the thematic article on some of the deeply held Baptists beliefs, to explore implications of church-state relations for Biblical faith.



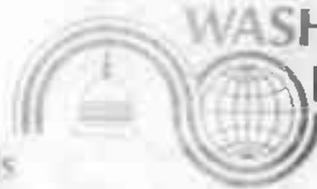
Harris

Staff has prepared a four-page insert that should tell you a lot you may have wondered about this office and perhaps even more. "We Act on Baptist Principles" touches on the work of the Baptist Joint Committee—how it came about, who were its original movers and shakers, and how this office functions as a cooperative venture of nine national Baptist bodies whose combined memberships total about 30-million.

From that piece you'll see we have no identity crisis, even though as James Dunn points out this office has been called all sorts of things. Foremost, this office carries an assignment that clearly resides in the neighborhood of church-state issues and religious liberty concerns. His REFLECTIONS calls to mind some of that activity in the recent past, and the Committee policy that directed it.

Having been exposed to the account of this office, which some might call establishment, we're reminded in Will Campbell's incisive volume, *Cecilia's Sin*, of the penalty for "faithing" it outside the establishment pale. Jeannette Holt meditates over a novel about our antecedents (we can hardly recognize them) and about the joy and the sorrow of obedient faith. Makes one think of the words of another champion, recast to read, "faith isn't everything, it's the only thing." Kind of threatening, isn't it? □

Victor Tupitza



**Equal access bills** - H. R. 5345 and S. 815 - continue growing strength in both the House and Senate. In recent hearings in the House and in markup, following which The House Education and Labor Committee overwhelmingly approved the legislation, serious misconceptions have arisen about the House bill.

. Contrary to what some have charged, the rights of minority religious groups will be protected. All secular and religious non-school-sponsored groups must be given equal access to school premises without any discrimination.

. It is not true that this proposed legislation is a "backdoor" way of getting the results of a prayer amendment without facing the same opposition. There are free exercise/free speech bills which do not alter the establishment clause or would require a prayer amendment. The Baptist Joint Committee, which opposed state required prayer, does not find a similar defect in either of the current bills.

. A school would not be forced to allow religious groups to meet unless it had already agreed to allow other non-curriculum related groups to meet. They also could not discriminate against a group because it used religious speech in its meetings.

**The U.S. Supreme Court** has decided to reopen the 12-year-old debate over the proper place of religion in public school classrooms by ruling on the constitutionality of an Alabama law which provides for a moment of silent prayer or meditation at the beginning of the school day. At the same time the high court affirmed a lower federal court in striking down a separate Alabama law authorizing classroom teachers to led their pupils in oral prayers.

While standing firmly by its 1962 and 1963 decisions banning state-prescribed school prayer, the Court is for the first time willing to consider the silent prayer alternative as enacted by Alabama and 21 other states. Lower federal courts have divided on the matter, one tribunal upholding a Massachusetts silence statute but others striking down similar laws in Tennessee, New Jersey and Alabama. ●

**Housing allowance benefits**, now shared by clergy and by the military, will be continued until January 1, 1986 through an amendment introduced by Senator John W. Warner, R-Va and Jesse Helms, R-N.C. The amendment came in response to a 1983 IRS revenue ruling which prohibited ministers from taking mortgage interest and real estate tax deductions in addition to the tax-exempt housing allowance enjoyed by both clergy and military personnel. For clergy, that benefit was to have expired in June, 1983, but was extended to 1985 for those who occupied or had a contract to purchase their homes as of January 1, 1981. Last month, the Senate Finance Committee agreed to extend the effective date for the same categories of ministers for another year.

A Warner aide told Baptist Press the Virginia Senator will oppose a permanent ban. His intention is "to protect the compensation now received by two of the most dedicated and worthy professional groups in our society, namely, military personnel and clergy." He pointed out that the total revenue gain to the U.S. Treasury is estimated to be relatively small. The amendment of Warner and Helms exempts clergy and military housing from application to Section 265 of the IRS code which bars double tax benefits. Because the House-passed tax package does not deal with clergy-military housing, the matter will have to be resolved by a House-Senate conference committee along with other differences in the two tax bills. ●

# MY FAITH

## VOLUNTARY AND OBEDIENT

**R**eligious Liberty Day allows time for reflecting anew on Baptist historic commitments. Such reflections are extremely important because some of these distinctive concerns are being threatened by recent pressures. Temptations to compromise on church/state separation issues seem to be increasing. Concern for the welfare of the public schools system is pressuring some to support a prayer amendment. Financial needs of private church-related schools tempt supporters to seek tuition tax credits and aid from the government. Desire for a powerful, respected nation may lead others to overlook the appointment of William A. Wilson as Ambassador to the Vatican. The solid front with which Baptists once faced church/state violations is breaking. It is time to consider again the implications of government intrusion into the area of religion.

### **Faith provides the foundation for separation of church and state.**

A basis for concern about government intrusion into the realm of religion comes from the nature of faith itself. Through faith believers freely choose to place their future under the control of God. Such a choice should not be forced and should not be the concern of government. This faith experience sets the groundwork for stability and continuity for the Christian. It may become the dominant constant which then motivates worship and service. Freedom thereby remains very important for the exercise and growth of faith.

James Harris is Professor of Old Testament at the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD. A fourth generation ordained Southern Baptist, he has served various interim pastorates along with his teaching responsibilities. He is a prolific writer, author of a number of books including *A Call to Servanthood: Bible Studies on the Life of Moses*, and a contributor of articles to theological and professional journals.

### **1. Faith relies on divine principles not government policies.**

Faith does not fit into government categories or responsibilities. It operates on principles alien to those of political powers and the world. Divine demands dominate the behavior of the faithful. A text which best expresses the heart of faith is found in Hebrews: Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. According to Hebrews 11:1 Christian experience and beliefs provide assurance for the future and data for analyzing the present. Such convictions encourage a love of freedom which impels believers to respond voluntarily to the voice of God. In other words, faith operates best when it is generated within the sanctity of the "soul liberty" of persons led by the Holy Spirit. People who prize faith should resist strongly any violation of the liberty of conscience. That is why Baptists cherish the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States which insures the option to exercise freely Christian values and ways.

### **2. Faith implies a life of obedience to God's will.**

Believers today would like to be able to follow without interference the examples of faithful heroes who are listed in Chapter Eleven of Hebrews. The deeds of faithful leaders are catalogued there because they follow God's calling to assure for themselves and their family God's favor. Abel and Enoch witness to faith that pleases God. Noah and Abraham demonstrate how to follow the divine Word to accomplish the unexpected and to travel into the unknown. Patriarchs follow the impression of the Spirit to such a degree that they bless the proper heirs even though normal practice would dictate otherwise. True faith does not need coercion to force it to accept the will of God as its groundwork. Faith assumes a voluntary commitment to an unre-

dictable leading of the Holy Spirit.

The deeds of faith listed in Hebrews also inspire Christians because they often break with dominant powers and traditions. Faith is not institutionalized. God's call sometimes leads to a path of self-sacrifice and self-denial. Moses broke with the luxury of Pharaoh's court to identify with the poverty of his oppressed people. Rahab the harlot rejected the Canaanite beliefs of her neighbors in Jericho to protect spies who represented the true faith and power of the world. Baptists fear that intrusion by the state into matters of religion might erode options for dissent. For them the unseen order of God alone must act as the primary evidence for cross examining and evaluating the deeds and principles of the world.

### **Faith encourages defending separation of church and state.**

In light of the nature of faith, it is easy to understand why Baptists defend separation of church and state principles. Faith grows best through voluntary self-commitment to God and through unhindered obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Baptists historically have struggled to obtain the freedom to exercise such a faith and now need to continue the vigil.

### **1. Faith defends the freedom to practice religion.**

Political and economic concerns must never eclipse the values of faith and freedom. Freedom cannot be taken for granted. It must ever be protected or it may be lost. Without constant vigilance erosion of support may undermine its principles. "Forgetful" Baptists need to rediscover the importance of their historic concerns.

### **2. Faith defends the right to voluntary choices in religion.**

Principles of voluntarism remain important for the life of faith. The attitudes and deeds of faith cannot be coerced or forced. Personal choice must never be neglected in matters of wor-

ship or conscience. Faith grows best when its expressions arise out of personal conviction.

3. *Faith defends the convictions of the Holy Spirit.*

Personal conviction operates best when it is sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Faith in God can pro-

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**Faith is**  
*the substance*  
*of things hoped for;*  
*the evidence*  
*of things not seen.*

HEBREWS 11:1

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vide a basis for anticipating the future and examining the present. Freedom from coercion from the state or a civil religion establishes the best environment for God's will to be recognized and followed. Otherwise, American religion might be expected to be the reinforcer of worldly values and powers, and godliness might be institutionalized.

The freedom for self-commitment and obedience to the Holy Spirit are important ingredients that contribute to the strengthening of Christian faith. They are well worth defending. As Baptists support these principles of freedom, they nourish and protect the proper environment for faith. Issues of church and state separation must never be neglected. □

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## Observe Religious Liberty Day

• June 1984 •

### HOW TO PREPARE

Theme:

**My Faith: Voluntary  
and Obedient**

#### PREACH A SERMON

#### PLAN AN EXERCISE

Hold an old-fashioned time of testimony—some call it sharing—to hear how God reaches out into peoples' lives through various means to make them members of the family of God.

#### INVITE A GUEST

Invite a strong advocate of religious liberty and the principle of church-state separation to speak on the theological basis of religious liberty, or the history of Baptists in light of the theme.

#### PLAN AN INTEREST CENTER

Get the congregation to participate by bringing in old photos and newspaper clippings from their homes and add these to the church documents for a display which may give visual reinforcement to the sermon preached. Write us for a free poster.

### ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY

On a Sunday previous, suggest that members look for religious issues as they read their daily newspapers or view TV broadcasting. Is liberty absolute? What is the role government has taken in situations that raise First Amendment issues?

### ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

Religious Liberty Day Observance recognizes that we have this dual responsibility: as Christians, to be faithful to our Lord, and as citizens to participate in government. We can do this by voting for the most competent candidates and through letters of concern to those who serve the nation.

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### SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Call to Worship:

Invocation:

Hymn: God of Grace and God of Glory

Reading of the Word:

Old Testament Psalm 145: 1-7

Gospels Hebrews 12: 1-3

Epistles Galatians 5: 1-8

Prayer:

Sermon:

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## BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS



## We Act On Baptist Principles

Our mandate is highly specific: it is "to act in the field of public affairs whenever the interests or rights of the cooperating conventions call for conference or negotiation with the government of the United States or with any other government, or whenever Baptist principles are involved in, or are jeopardized through governmental action..."

The future in church/state relations is rooted in the past. Even today, we link hands with Baptists of yesteryear—with Roger Williams, Thomas Helwys, Isaac Backus, and John Leland. We join them in resisting any and all temptation to trust matters of faith and conscience to the legislative power of the state. Like them, we, too, reserve for the Church alone the privilege of declaring the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

This enduring commitment to the principle of church and state separation arises out of our conviction that Christian decision must remain voluntary and obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

## BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# Because You Have Invested Your Trust in This Office, Here Are a Few Things You Should Know

### BAPTISTS TOGETHER

## Witness to Religious Liberty

An enthusiastic affirmation greeted the idea of a public affairs office in the nation's capital to function in the interests of Baptists. What began in 1939 as the vision of two denominations grew to become a united and representative presence of nine bodies in the United States and Canada.

The purpose of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is to witness to government—responsibly and credibly—on behalf of religious liberty concerns. The Committee is succeeding, and in doing so has maintained its integrity as a Christian body while at the same time gaining the respect of government leaders as a com-

petent body committed to church-state separation.

Striving together has brought Baptists' jointness. Through the power of the reconciling Gospel, diverse Baptist families have been united to form a recognizable advocate on behalf of religious liberty. Together, we hold high the sacredness of "soul liberty" and the principle of church-state separation. We thereby espouse the relationship which has proved most conducive to the free exercise of religion.

In respect for the autonomy of the nine member bodies, the Constitution adopted by the Committee does not bind any one member to any decisions.

It honors the differences that exist with the occasional need to hold and to articulate another point of view.

The harmony among these groups—with all the diversity implied in their national, regional, racial, ethnic, and theological composition, brings "body" to the Committee and in its witness to government.

Thus, Baptists have put to rest the chimera that we are a reckless lot who prefer our autonomy even at the cost of fellowship and interdependence. Through this Committee we have proved that Baptists are not factions divided by frictions. Regarding public affairs, we stand together with one accord.



The Annuity Board has had a unique and essential relationship with the Baptist Joint Committee. This partnership has resulted in exciting and helpful victories through Congressional action relating to tax, annuity and Social Security matters. The Committee's staff expertise, knowledge of "The Hill" and sense of timing are absolutely essential to us in our work at the Board. **David H. Morgan**  
The Annuity Board  
Southern Baptist Convention



I am grateful for the Baptist Joint Committee. It is an indispensable and highly effective Christian witness in Washington, faithful to the Gospel, expert in advancing the free exercise of religion, trustworthy interpreters of the separation of church and state.

**Mark O. Hatfield**  
U.S. Senate

## A Tapestry of Commitment

The Baptist Joint Committee seeks to serve the general needs of all its member bodies. The specific concerns of the individual groups may vary in their importance at a particular time, but the direction of the agency is set by the Committee.

That is because each denomination chooses its representatives to the 46-member policy-making board. Some are executives, others pastors or la-

ity. At semi-annual meetings, these representatives in essence are the Committee. They share their insights and bring the concerns of their respective bodies.

The healthy balance of grassroots and executive leadership affirms both Baptist polity and the Biblical emphasis upon the priesthood of believers. In these meetings Committee members interpret afresh

and often declare anew, historic Baptist principles in terms of their current relevancy. They bring valued though differing perspectives as they identify implications for religious liberty and public policy in church-state relations. Yet, almost without exception, the warp and woof of these contributions weave a striking tapestry of commitment to the freedom of religious exercise in our nation.

## Public Influence As Stewardship

Baptists make no commitment nor become indebted to partisan political considerations. However, in the best sense, Baptists are engaged in the political process—as a Constitutional right, in response to the Biblical mandate, and in exercise of conscience.

Does this also mean we believe that it is all right to influence government? For some, "lobbying" by a religious body is a questionable practice; they believe it violates both ethical principle and church-state separation.

Lobbying, as we practice it, is little more than communicating concern to government with the intention of registering a point of view, perhaps having it written into proposed legislation. The practice is



an example of good stewardship and is essential to responsible citizenship. It is also imperative to the democratic process. Government needs to hear from you individually, and at times corporately through an office such as the Baptist Joint Committee.

Only after careful accumulation and assessment of facts in light of the First Amendment and Baptist tradition, will this office endeavor to communicate Baptist views. In Washington we maintain cordial re-

lationships with those in government, solely to "enunciate, commend and defend" historic Baptist principles. The State, as Scripture reminds us, is an instrument of God for justice and mercy. Baptists exercise their proper role as an influence upon the State to assure that justice and mercy roll down like living waters.

How can we succinctly describe this relationship of church to state? It is the principle that absolute *organizational* separation is not violated by *functional* interaction. Church can speak with the hope of influencing government; government, as we have experienced in our nation's history, does have occasion to influence religious practices.



We trust the Baptist Joint Committee. They have helped those of us in Congress to stay abreast of religious liberty issues. They have provided us with dependable information and have worked with us in fine-tuning overseas tax and pension plan legislation that has saved churches and pastors millions of dollars.

Jim Wright  
House of Representatives

*If all the souls in the government were saints of God, should they be formed into a society by law, that society would not be a Gospel Church, but a creature of state.*

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS: JAMES M. DUNN

## Eyes, Ears and Feet



America would not be America if conscience had not had a Roger Williams willing to exercise it, nor would Baptists be Baptists if they failed to maintain vigilance on the ramparts against the erosion of religious freedom.

Thank God (literally) for the sentries on the wall... first and foremost, the Baptist Joint Committee, who sound the trumpet for what in truth we are.

Bill Moyers  
TV news analyst

Government relations simply means keeping in touch with officials who are entrusted with the functions of government. The Baptist agenda is clear and clean; the affirmation of soul freedom as the biblical dynamic which requires religious liberty in public life.

Relating to government is an open, direct and sometimes informal working arrangement. Ultimately, it calls for cooperation and trust. There is no mystery to the day-to-day operation of this office. Here is how a great deal of our time is spent.

The Baptist Joint Committee does research, informs, speaks and alerts Baptists to

church-state issues.

- affirm Baptist identity magnifying the commonly-held belief of the 20 million Baptists in 9 conventions and conferences.

- stand by principles even when that means defending unpopular religions or working with a wide range of persons with different degrees of disagreement.

- faithfully alert Baptists eyes, ears, hands and feet in Washington.

The Baptist Joint Committee does not:

- range far and wide on social and moral issues. Other denominational agencies share the concerns of public policy.

- seek special favors or preferential treatment.

- defend interests of Baptists in neglect of the wider religious concerns.

- play party politics.
- spend most of its time and energy "lobbying." Research on church-state issues, and responding to requests from individuals and churches take most of our time.

- operate on staff views. The Baptist Joint Committee sets policy.

Since Colonial times we Baptists have actively safeguarded the principle of church-state separation. For us it represents that "wall" Jefferson wrote of to Baptists in Danbury, Connecticut and the wall we are committed to maintaining for the protection of religious liberty.

## The Law and The Land

A local church telephoned for information on Social Security payments for church staff. A SBC seminary called for counsel when pressed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to supply information on seminary hiring practices. The seminary resisted on the Constitutional basis of church-state separation.

When a committee of Congress holds hearings to shape legislation on a religious freedom issue or a local congregation struggles over a ruling by Internal Revenue Service both often turn to the Baptist Joint Committee for information and understanding.

Reliable answers require research in depth. Stacks of archival data, from Baptist History or legal precedent, perhaps through Constitutional interpretation, may underlie testimony

THE  
BLOVDY TENENT.  
of Persecution, forculat  
Conscience, dilcult, in  
and Conscience letters  
TRVTH and PEACE.

that informs the congressional committee of our religious liberty concern or assists the church through the labyrinth of government bureaucracy.

A church-state issue of crucial, nationwide interest is "Equal Access." The Baptist Joint Committee has already filed a brief in the U.S. Supreme Court supporting the "Equal Access" of student religious groups to college facilities. And the Court agreed with us. We are currently involved in court and Congress to secure the same rights for high school students. The practice would not violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment and yet guar-

antee the student's "free exercise of religion."

Church-state questions are not as easily resolved as one might be led to believe by reading some of the letters to the editor which appear in the newspapers. It takes long hours of digging through massive volumes such as the *U.S. Code Annotated* (Federal law and court decisions), the *U.S. Supreme Court Reporter* and even something as esoteric sounding as *Corpus Juris Secundum* (a 156 volume legal encyclopedia).

The director is an attorney who has been admitted to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court. Thus, through the specialized competence of this office the rights and liberties of Baptists, and consequently of all other religious groups and citizens, find support and protection.



Religious liberty is fundamental to our democracy, free church tradition and Baptist faith. It must be protected against subtle erosion and well-orchestrated attacks. We are grateful to the highly skilled staff of the BJCPA for acting on behalf of Baptists to insure our freedom to exercise our faith without governmental interference...

Robert C. Campbell  
General Secretary  
American Baptist  
Churches, USA

*Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other religions, may establish with the same ease, any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other sects?*

JAMES MADISON

### INFORMATION SERVICES: STAN HASTEY

## Meet The (Baptist) Press



The Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., is committed to support the policy efforts of the Baptist Joint Committee, financially and spiritually. We are proud of its witness and expression for religious liberty in our democratic society. The separation issues involving church and state are profoundly addressed and articulated.

C. J. Malloy, Jr.  
General Secretary  
FNBC, Inc.

Baptist experience has taught us to hold in highest regard the news—accurately reported, fairly interpreted, and broadly disseminated. As a nation, the free flow of information is integral to vigilance on behalf of all of our freedoms.

Press relations and the reporting of church-state news from the nation's capital essentially takes place through Baptist Press (SBC, Washington Bureau) and our own Baptist Public Affairs news releases. The two information specialists are journalists fully accredited—to the White House, to Congress and to the Supreme Court.

The accuracy, balance and integrity of their reporting has been cited in several awards by the Baptist Public Relations Association. Their reliability has also resulted in trusting relationships with other experienced journalists, with those in government, and with observers of the Washington scene.

Reports and analyses written by the pair appeared in newspapers and magazines of all member bodies—by count, 1300 times in SBC papers in one year alone. Their in-depth coverage dealt broadly with religious issues and those that directly affect pastors and churches.

Baptist Press provides continuing coverage of matters such as the proposed constitutional amendments and other legislation on school prayer, the dangers in the use of missionaries by the CIA and the recurrent postal hikes that have plagued our state editors.

We have always believed that the denomination must have this access to the steady flow of reliably reported news information as the basis for informed opinion. Our responsibility as citizens, as well as our faithfulness as Christians, requires it.

## Join the Cause

It doesn't take the threat of a bad law, one that restricts the free exercise of religion. Nor does it take a controversy such as the one over establishing diplomatic relations with the Vatican. What it takes to maintain the interest of Baptists in church-state issues is that continuous reflection over those few words about eternal vigilance as the price of freedom. It is then that we recall our Baptist heritage as the struggling minority we once were.

We believe Scripture in its teaching that government is ordained of God as the authority for ordering society and guaranteeing justice. We respond to that Scripture when it calls us to bear witness, perhaps challenge government, using the highest biblical values.

With that understanding, Baptists direct their efforts in behalf of free conscience to enable religious belief to flourish freely and



openly. Our Churches have prospered, Christian service has multiplied, and the mission of Jesus Christ has taken firm hold here and around the world. Evangelism, the message of God's healing and renewing, has been entrusted to the church and not to the state.

Through the office of denominational services people are alerted to this noble heritage and to the stewardship possibilities in its behalf. Concerned Baptists join the cause by support of this Committee and by participation in its work.

Some steps we take together to preserve precious freedoms appear rather insignificant. Yet, when one church is joined by 3,400 local congregations in the observance of Religious Liberty Day, the impact is broad. When hundreds of seminarians request copies of our news magazine and other literature and find it of value for their future ministries, that's important. When a Boy Scout writes to learn more about his Baptist heritage for Scouting's God and Country Award, we already know how important that can be in his life.

We encourage you to visit our offices in Washington. If that isn't possible, look for us at your annual convention. Meet us there and tell us about your personal interest and involvement. Let's talk about ways we can continue to witness to government under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

## Resources

Literature: **REPORT** from the **CAPITAL**, the monthly newsmagazine, will keep you abreast of developments in church-state relations. Many Baptist pastors, executives and seminary professors are among those called upon to write articles on Baptist heritage, liberty themes, and public policy issues, and to review books in those areas.

Also available are pamphlets and staff reports to further your understanding of these issues.

**Religious Liberty Day:** Baptists set aside this one day in June each year to acknowledge God as the author and finisher of our faith, to whom alone our consciences are irrevocably bound. Write for an attractive poster and other materials to call attention to our heritage and its accent on soul liberty.

**National Religious Liberty Conference:** On alternate years (next in 1985) outstanding interpreters of religious freedom, Baptist history and church-state relations share information and insights. Open to all interested persons, the conference places before us the promise and challenge of our Christian life together. It is a dynamic three-day event.

**Staff:** You can always reach the staff with your particular concerns and requests at the Washington, D.C. office of the Baptist Joint Committee. Telephone (202) 544-4226.

## I Agree

Religious liberty is both God's gift and sacred trust

I encourage your efforts in behalf of:

- Uncoerced conscience, free under God, protected by our nation's Constitution.

- Protecting and preserving our rich heritage of religious and civil liberties for all citizens.
- The separation of Church and state.

### ORDER FORM

I want to participate in this endeavor:

In appreciation, enclosed is my gift to the work of the Committee.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enter my subscription to **REPORT** from the **CAPITAL**

\$6.00, individual, one year; \$5.00, club rate of 10 or more (may be sent to separate addresses); \$2.50 student rate.

Send other literature on church-state issues

Our church observes Religious Liberty Day  
Send the 1984 packet to assist our planning.

•\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Please bill

Baptist Joint Committee  
on Public Affairs  
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_



The First Amendment built "a wall of separation between Church and State."—Thomas Jefferson

## VIEWS OF THE WALL

John W. Baker



On March 20, 1984 the U.S. Senate failed to pass S.J. Res. 73—the President's proposed prayer amendment. Opponents needed 35 votes to keep supporters of the amendment from the two-thirds of the Senate required to approve changing the Constitution. Forty-four votes were cast against S.J. Res. 73—a remarkable number considering that on the morning of the vote the experts on radio and television were saying the vote was too close to call.

The soundness with which S.J. Res. 73 was defeated mitigates against Senate consideration of another prayer amendment this year and probably for the immediate future. It is also highly likely that this vote will effectively reduce the pressure for consideration of a similar proposal by the House of Representatives this year.

Baptists have been divided on this issue. Baptists are nearly unanimous in their support for voluntary prayer in the public schools. They were divided on whether S.J. Res. 73 would provide for that voluntary prayer or whether it would provide for government required, chosen, or structured prayers.

Since there is no immediate danger of Congress passing a prayer amendment, we need to examine existing law on the place of religion in the public schools and look again at pending legislative initiatives.

**1. Existing law:** All of us—parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, citizens—need to educate ourselves on what the Supreme Court said in the constitutionally proper role of religion in the public school classroom.

It is probably asking too much to expect people to read and understand the Court's decisions in *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962), and *Abington School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963), but it is not asking too much for us to understand the narrow range of religious activities which the Court held in violation of the establishment clause and the broad range of activities available to both students and teachers.

In these two landmark cases the Court specifically held that:

- "... it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part of a religious program carried on by government." *Engel* at 425.

- "the State may not establish a 'religion of secularism' in the sense of affirmatively opposing or showing hostility to religion, thus 'preferring those who believe in no religion over those who do believe.'" *Schempp* at 225.
- Religious exercises—such as prayer or reading from the Bible—if they are sponsored or provided for by the state or its agents have no place in the public schools. *Engel* and *Schempp passim*.

In the same two cases the Court stated specifically that the religion clauses permitted the following:

- The Bible may be used as a reference for the teaching of secular subjects. *Schempp* at 225.
- The Bible may be studied for its literary and historic qualities. *Schempp* at 225.
- The study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization has a legitimate role in public education. *Schempp* at 225.
- The recitation of historical documents which contain references to the Deity is permissible. *Engel* at 435.
- Officially approved anthems which include the composer's professions of faith in the Supreme Being may be sung. *Engel* at 435.
- "... It seems clear ... from the opinions in the present and past cases that the Court would recognize the propriety ... of the teaching about religion, as distinguished from the teaching of religion, in the public schools." *Schempp* at 306.

It must be emphasized that this is not an exhaustive list of religious activities which are permitted in public schools. On the other hand, the Court was very specific about which religious activities must be excluded. These flow from the constitutional prohibitions against either the national or state governments playing a role in religion. Thus, the Court held that if government requires or sponsors religious exercises—directly or indirectly—it is violating the establishment clause. But government cannot burden the free exercise of religion unless it can prove that it has a compelling public interest which cannot be served in a less restrictive manner.

It seems clear that among the reli-

gious activities which are available to students in public schools—so long as government and its agents are not involved in prescribing, structuring, or sponsoring those activities—are the following:

1. A student may pray silently at any time or place.
2. A student may pray vocally so long as his or her prayers do not interrupt the educational process or infringe on the religious liberty of fellow students. (The courts would probably hold that the state has a compelling interest in preserving good order and discipline in the schools and, thus, would permit this burdening of vocal religious expression.)
3. Students may give thanks for their meals either silently or vocally as long as the prayer is student initiated and non-school-sponsored.
4. Students may carry their Bibles and use them for devotional reading so long as that reading does not interfere with classroom work.
5. Students may discuss their religious views with fellow students, but they must not depend on either the power of the school or the fact that the state provides a captive audience to carry out evangelization or proselytization.
6. School boards may provide for releasing students from school for religious instruction in off-campus locations.
7. In those cases where a school board permits non-school-sponsored groups of students to meet in school facilities, student religious groups may claim equivalent rights.

**2. Legislative Initiatives:** Immediately after the Senate vote on S.J. Res. 73, Senator Hatfield (R.-OR), Senator Bumpers (D.-AR) and Congressman Bonker (D.-WA) joined with a number of leaders of various faith groups to hold a press conference. The thrust of that conference was that the way was now open for an all out push for the Hatfield/Bonker equal access legislation in both houses of Congress. Hatfield's bill S. 815 and Bonker's bill—renumbered H.R. 5345—have been discussed at length on this page and I do not propose a repeat performance on the merits of those bills.

All that needs to be said is that the purpose of the bills is to codify legal

Continued on page 14

# News in Brief



## Politicizing Vatican hit during Senate hearing

WASHINGTON

The State Department's intention to use the far-flung ecclesiastical network of the Roman Catholic Church as an information gathering source drew sharp criticism at a Senate appropriations panel hearing on funding the U.S. diplomatic mission to the Holy See.

Appropriations Committee chairman Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., said the U.S. decision to establish full diplomatic relations with the Holy See politicized the spiritual role of Pope John Paul II and the Roman Catholic Church.

Hatfield told Secretary of State George P. Shultz "I think the present Pope is basically one of the greatest spiritual leaders of this age, and I feel that we are really denigrating that role by this action because we are, in effect, politicizing the Pope."

Shultz appeared before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary to answer questions on the State Department's fiscal 1985 budget proposal and on a separate request to reprogram fiscal 1984 funds for a full diplomatic mission to the Holy See.

Despite objections raised at the hearing by Hatfield and Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark., panel chairman Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., approved the \$351,000 reprogramming request after a poll of his committee indicated seven members favored the move while only Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, D-S.C. and Sen. Lowell P. Weicker, R-Conn., joined Hatfield and Bumpers in opposition.

Earlier, a House appropriations panel approved the reprogramming request after its chairman, Rep. Neal Smith, D-Iowa, found a majority of his committee members had no objection to the shift of funds.

Explaining why he favored establishment of full diplomatic relations with the Holy See, Shultz said the Vatican, in addition to being a very significant religious organization, "is a worldwide organization that gathers information, takes positions, sponsors all kinds of activities—medical activities, refugee activities" and represents "a valuable diplomatic post as such."

After Shultz described factual data about the Holy See including the

smallness of its size (108 acres) and population (approximately 1,000 residents), Hatfield told the secretary, "obviously you are not relying on the apparatus of the Holy See, which you just defined, for this worldwide information gathering network. You are really relying on the Vatican's ecclesiastical organization."

Shultz admitted the "far-flung network is fundamentally a religious group, all right," but added, "it does all kinds of different things in the course of its work, much of which is done by laymen in various countries that take part in activities that we have an interest in and from which information is gathered."

Hatfield charged that if the U.S. government considers Catholic missions throughout the world "listening posts" and "information-gathering activities" missionaries will be put "under increasing burdens in maintaining their religious missions and not being politicized."

Citing a lack of evidence that the U.S. had to establish diplomatic ties with the Holy See "in order to gain the information that is available there now," Hatfield said the action has "the perception or the appearance of politicizing basically a spiritual organization, as I view the Catholic Church."

Bumpers told Shultz he opposed the move "because I do think it has a constitutional problem, and if it doesn't have a constitutional problem, I think it has an ethical problem in this country." □

Larry Chesser

## Michigan will continue to defend shared time plan

LANSING

Although the state Board of Education has called shared-time arrangements with private schools illegal, Michigan's attorney general plans to defend such programs before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The board voted recently to have nothing to do with the state's defense of courses offered to private school students at taxpayer expense, saying it believes the Michigan Constitution prohibits all shared-time arrangements.

A representative of the attorney general's office said the state is preparing to defend Michigan's shared-time pol-

icy because the legislature enacted it and Michigan courts have held it constitutional.

Although the attorney general's office said the program violates a "parochial" ban enacted by Michigan voters in 1970, Atty. Gen. Frank Kelley said he is bound to defend the favorable rulings of the state's courts, despite having lost at federal district and appeals-court levels. □

## Governor's stand changes on private school bussing

SPRINGFIELD

Illinois Gov. James Thompson twice vetoed bills to provide free bus service for parochial and private school students, but now says he supports such a measure.

Under his proposed legislation, the state would reimburse school districts for 60 percent of the transportation costs beginning in 1985, while local taxpayers would pick up the balance. However, reimbursement would be made the year after costs were incurred.

Current state law requires school districts to transport private and parochial school students who live along their regular bus routes, in effect allowing these students to fill empty seats on public school buses. Gov. Thompson's proposed law would require public school systems to provide free bus service to every parochial and private school student, regardless of residence, as long as the schools they attend are within 1.5 to 10 miles from their homes. □

## Education board faulted in Texas textbook ruling

AUSTIN

Texas Atty. Gen. Jim Mattox says the state education board's requirement that evolution be taught as only one of several explanations of human origins is unconstitutional.

Mr. Mattox said the board's policy "can be explained only as a response to pressure from creationists." In its desire not to offend any religious group, the attorney general added, the board "has injected religious considerations into an area which must be, at least in the public school context, strictly the province of science." □

# INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



## Governments condemn, but many resort to torture

NEW YORK

Despite universal condemnation of torture by the world's governments, more than a third of them have used or condoned the practice thus far in the 1980s, says Amnesty International.

In a new report, "Torture in the Eighties," the human rights agency says that men and women of all social classes, ages, trades and professions are victims of torture. Since 1980, Amnesty has made appeals on behalf of 2,687 torture victims in 45 countries.

Among examples of how torture is practiced in countries of all ideologies, the report notes that prisoners on hunger strike to protest torture have been severely beaten in the Republic of Korea, while medical personnel in the Soviet Union have collaborated with the secret police in administering pain-causing and disorienting drugs to prisoners.

Torture most often occurs during a prisoner's first days in custody when visits by family or lawyers are banned, Amnesty says. The agency notes that government secrecy and intimidation surrounding the practice often make corroboration of torture claims difficult.

The report cites allegations of torture or ill treatment of prisoners in 98 countries, but does not contain a specific "blacklist" of countries, because it would be incomplete and open to political misuse, Amnesty says.

In urging adoption of an international anti-torture convention now being drafted by the United Nations, Amnesty comments that "revulsion at the extermination camps of the Second World War led to a convention outlawing genocide for all time as a crime against humanity. Today's torture chambers demand a similar international response."

Amnesty International has been campaigning for the abolition of torture since 1972. Its new report declares that "torture can be stopped. The international legal framework for its abolition exists, as do the investigative methods to verify and expose it. What is lacking is the political will of governments to stop torturing people. It is simple and as difficult as that." (RNS) □

## Largest Dutch church wants no U.S. missiles

DOORN

The 2.7-million-member Netherlands Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk) says it opposes deployment of U.S. medium-range nuclear missiles in Holland, intensifying pressure on the Dutch government to reject the plan.

By a vote of 37 to 15, the synod of the country's largest Protestant denomination agreed, March 16, to send a letter to parliament and other government officials indicating that the church has repeatedly declared itself "in favor of the removal of all nuclear weapons from Dutch soil" and "against the deployment of any new ones."

As early as 1962, the church condemned the use of nuclear weapons. After a lengthy process of consultation with congregations, in 1980, it condemned the possession of such weapons and called for unilateral steps to disarmament, "since multilateral agreements seem not to be possible."

The National Council of Churches of the Netherlands recently asked member churches to support an NCC-sponsored letter protesting the deployment.

Amsterdam pastor Cees Roos, moderator of the Netherlands Reformed Synod, emphasized that the letter to the government was intended to help the functioning of democracy, not to assume political responsibility. "We do not want to bind consciences, but to sharpen them," he said. □

## Nations pledge \$9 million for Cambodian refugees

UNITED NATIONS

Eleven countries including the United States have donated more than \$9 million in cash and food supplies to the Cambodian refugees along the Thai-Kampuchea border.

The United Nations Border Relief Organization, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, and the International Committee of the Red Cross were recipients for ongoing humanitarian relief efforts.

The United States led the donors' group with a contribution of \$2 million to UNBRO, thus bringing Washington's 1984 contribution to that agency

to \$4 million. The U.S. likewise pledged \$1.5 million to the International Committee for the Red Cross.

American delegate Arthur Dewey stated, "The danger along the Thai-Kampuchean border was real, and each day brought serious concern about the safety of the civilian population." □

## British Christians back WHO's 'health for all' plan

HODDESDON

Sixty British Christian and missionary organizations have urged their members to do everything possible to implement the World Health Organization call for "health for all by the year 2000."

In a statement following a consultation here, the groups urged all Christians to respond positively to the appeal. The WHO plan envisions community-based primary health care services, special resources, training at every level and skills appropriate to community development.

The consultation concluded that services should be developed in close cooperation with national indigenous bodies. □

## Official poses threat to Witnesses in Tanzania

NAIROBI

A Tanzanian government official has ordered the demolition of all Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Halls in Tanzania's western district, the All Africa Conference of Churches reported here.

The conference's All Africa Press Service said Sumbawanga District Commissioner Iddi Mapinda ordered the demolitions following reports that members of the outlawed sect had refused to participate in government-sponsored development activities.

The group, known in Tanzania as the Watchtower Society, was banned there 10 years ago for reportedly being "in conflict with the aims" of the ruling party and the government.

Since the sect's formation in the 1870s, in the United States, it has come into conflict with governments around the world because of its belief in a coming theocracy and its teaching that all political powers are expressions of Satan's power over humanity. □



## Conflict over women clergy intensifies in Sweden

GENEVA

Some bishops of the Church of Sweden may go to court—and one is even willing to go to jail—for ordaining males who refuse to work with female pastors.

The latest development in the controversy over women clergy in the state Lutheran church came, according to the Lutheran World Federation information service here, at a meeting in Stockholm of a new church assembly which declared that bishops should not ordain male pastors who are unwilling to cooperate with female pastors. But seven of the 13 bishops immediately said they would not accept the decision.

The Rev. Ludvig Joensson, pastor of Stockholm's historic Storykyran parish, said any bishop not obeying the decisions could be taken to court. "If there is a conflict between this assembly decision and the bishops, it could become necessary to make it a court case to get a legal precedent," he said. At the same time, he said, "No one, of course, would like to have such an issue put before a civil court."

Church of Sweden Primate Bertil Werkstrom questioned the church council's authority to make such a decision. "There is no moratorium on ordaining these persons," he said. "We must give each other the freedom to act. The goal is that no ordained pastor would oppose female pastors. But not everyone has come that far yet." □

## World's major religious declare apartheid evil

WINDSOR, ENGLAND

Senior representatives of the world's major religions joined in what is believed to be the first inter-faith condemnation of apartheid following a meeting here.

The declaration that "apartheid is evil, deeply, disastrously evil," was endorsed by Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Moslems, Christians, Sikhs and members of African and American Indian traditional religions.

A private two-day colloquium urged boycotts of trade, finance, sport and cultural activities in South Africa and Namibia, and support for political free-

dom and self-determination there. The statement declared that "religious people of all faiths should be prepared to work for and suffer with the victims of apartheid."

The colloquium was organized by Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, former Primate of the Anglican Province of the Indian Ocean, initiated by the World Council of Churches and partly financed by the United Nations. The U.N. has been pressing the world's major religions to take a joint stand on apartheid.

The representatives concluded that the world's main religions were in complete and absolute agreement that all forms of organization—political, social, educational, ecclesiastical—which denied opportunity to people on the basis of race were utterly wrong. □

## Appropriated buildings returned to churches

HAVANA

The "prayers and struggles of more than 20 years have been answered" when at least three Baptist churches in Cuba once again were given the use of buildings which had been appropriated by the state for other purposes.

After 14 years, the Urban Reform authorities have returned to Baptists in Luyano the pastoral house which will become the first phase of a new church building. The congregation of Cueto once more has taken possession of its building, and the Baptist church in historic, national monument city of Bayamo also gained use of an educational building and pastoral house.

Since the nationalization of private schools, when many church buildings were taken over by the state, "greater economic stability has permitted the Ministry of Education to build other facilities for public teaching" and return church properties.

Other Baptist groups are continuing to obtain building permits and materials. The Second Baptist Church at Santiago de Cuba began construction of a project which will house the central offices of the Baptist Convention of Eastern Cuba along with facilities for the church's use. (EBPS) □

## NEWS-SCAN

A coffee-house ministry operated in Sarajevo during the winter Olympics created a flap among government officials but more important led to interest among local residents who want to see the program continued. Pastor Ivan Vlacic was responsible for distributing leaflets inviting Olympians to a coffee-house ministry, not knowing these activities were contrary to law. While volunteer workers had to pick up all announcements, the coffee house ministry went on without a hitch. Now, some of those who visited the ministry have expressed interest in seeing services continued. . . . Sergei Ivanov Antonov, the Bulgarian airline official accused of complicity in the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II, moved back into Rome's Rebibbia prison after three months under house arrest. He was transferred out of prison in December complaining of poor health, suffering from anorexia and headaches. He also said he was unwell when police arrived at his apartment to take him back to prison. Magistrates have yet to set a date for the trial of Antonov, main accuser of Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turkish convict who seriously wounded the pope. . . . Puerto Rican-born professor Orland Costas, professor of missiology at Eastern Baptist Seminary in Philadelphia, told a mission board gathering of Methodists that North American mission boards need to give priority to "unreached people of the world." That, he stressed, includes many persons "found on the doorsteps of the church." He identified them as "those who hold the Bible with one hand and push down their neighbor with the other. Aren't they also unreached?" he asked. Costas also advised that mission boards are failing to mobilize untapped human resources, alluding to racial minorities as the "great absentees." The Methodist Board of Global Ministries on mission philosophy heard critics call for more "evangelical and traditional missionaries", sent to places "where the gospel has not been heard." A new mission society has already been formed by critics of the official agency's philosophy, methods and leadership. □

# CORRESPONDENCE

## Visitors

[Re:] ... briefing and instructional session for the Mars Hill College student group. When a term trip focuses on many aspects of Washington (as this one did), the success of the project is largely determined by the skill of those who "show us their turf and territory." When it is done with obvious care, pointed discussion, critical vision, and enthusiasm, such as we got in our visit with you, students come away with a much greater appreciation for the complexity of issues as well as the work related to them that is so much a part of the nation's capital.

The complexities of public policy, the tricky relationship the church makes toward government, and the compromises all of us are compelled to make are difficult to learn ... students [find it necessary] to reexamine their assumptions and priorities.

George Feery  
Mars Hill, NC

Pine magazine this issue! So let us not be weary in well doing, for God knows and gives grace.

Woodrow Robbins  
Asheboro, NC

## In agreement

The positions you hold are Biblical and sound and are in keeping with historical Baptist views. I agree with your positions and enjoy the editorials in REPORT. Let me wish you success in your quest for truth and your tasks of education.

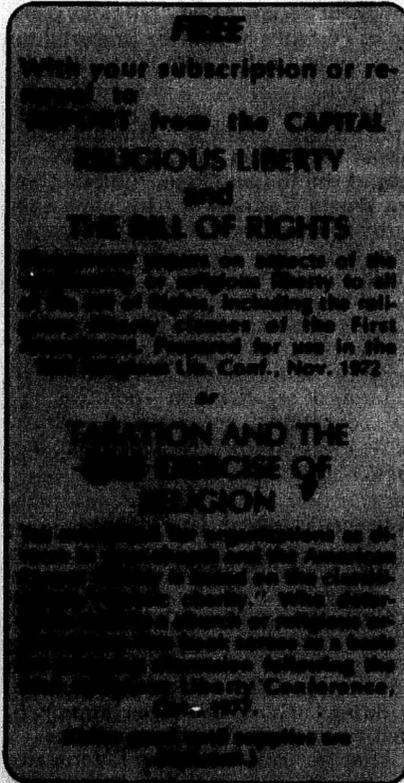
Michael T. Ingram  
Jefferson City, TN

I want to express to you my appreciation and support for what you and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs are doing in Washington to influence legislation on church/state matters and to educate Baptists as to the proper relationship of the government and our responsibilities as Christian citizens.

I was glad to read that the BJCPA had voted to reaffirm its position on prayer

amendments to the Constitution and on equal access legislation. I have written to my Representative and to the Georgia Senators expressing my convictions ... evidence of my support for you and the BJCPA.

Robert P. Allen, Jr.  
Thomson, GA



Continued from page 10  
precedents which guarantee that public school non-school-sponsored, student initiated and controlled religious groups be given rights to meet which are equivalent to those granted to non-school-sponsored secular student groups. These bills, if they remain unchanged, merit support by all who are concerned for basic fairness, the proper role of religion in the public school classroom, and the separation of church and state.

The major push for these bills will come within the next month and letters to your Senators and Representatives would be helpful.

Space forbids going further but it should be clear, in spite of what some have asserted, that prayer and religious expression are, or can be, alive and well in the public schools. □

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... about the only thing cooperative Baptists do together is the Baptist Joint Committee ... a fragile fellowship, held together by trust, goodwill, hard work and a spirit of love.

## REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn  
Executive Director



**W**e've been called all sorts of names: Joint Baptist Committee, Baptist Joint Commission, Baptist Committee on Public Relations, etc. I'm sure there are many more appellations we've never heard and some we'd rather not hear.

Even our friends have trouble keeping this label straight. If one asks, "What in the name?" this organization's name yields some meaning.

**Baptist** We are unashamedly, confessedly, doggedly Baptist. While we work gladly with Christians of all stripes and non-Christians, in the causes that brought together our forebears, we are plainly and unmistakably Baptist-type Christians. Obviously, our particular assignment focuses on a Baptist chore.

Of the nearly 30 million cooperating Baptists in this country the 10 of us who serve as the staff of the BJCPA have a distinctly Baptist job to do: religious liberty and church-state separation. We affirm evangelism and are personally engaged in sharing our faith. We believe in discipleship and everyone on the staff is busy in a local church. We support missions with dollars, prayers and varied involvements. But our distinctive task is to work at issues related to religious freedom.

No other office in any of our supporting conventions and conferences has a more narrowly-targeted or more peculiarly Baptist role. Robert G. Torbet lists among four Baptist principles, that of Religious Liberty and the Separation of Church and State, the one centered upon by the founders of the Joint Committee and J.M. Dawson, its first staff person, in 1946. In the tossed salad of Christian togetherness (that's better than "melting pot," isn't it?) we lose our distinctive contribution if we fail to stick with the religious liberty flavor we've had all along.

**Joint** Our jointness is important. Baptists of various sorts do little together as Baptists. The Baptist World Alliance constitutes an important international forum for fellowship, international communication and a channel for relief and ministry. But in this nation about the only thing cooperative Baptists do together is the Baptist Joint Committee.

It's a fragile fellowship, held together by trust, goodwill, hard work and a spirit of love. With one Convention having about as many church members as all the rest put together only a double dose of applied Christianity can keep us going. There's no room for pettiness or bluster.

We live in a time of economic determinism where money talks and some folks seem to think that everything and everyone are up for sale, so it's an especially difficult and delicate challenge to maintain the "jointness" of the Joint Committee. One Convention (SBC) makes by far the largest contribution of financial support. It should be said, however, that since 75 cents of every Baptist dollar that gets beyond the local Baptist church is given through that Southern Baptist Convention, it is not terribly out of line for Southern Baptists to supply the lion's share of funding. May bigness of spirit exceed bigness of budget.

**Committee** The representatives of the nine conventions and conferences are the Committee. The staff carries out the program, communicates the positions, files the court

cases, reports the news, watches over the governmental process, sounds the warnings and builds relationships. But the Committee sets policy, passes on the position statements, directs the work and employs the staff.

Since 1980 the elected members of the Committee have set out eight specific, carefully worded documents that determine direction for the agency and the day-to-day work of the staff. One may or may not agree with these positions, but the official posture of the BJCPA is at the very least a partnership between staff and Committee (board). As with any other entity in the public or private sector the question to be asked is "how well have the hired hands done what their policy board asked them to do?"

**Public** Fortunately the Christian experience has a public dimension. The board members are their Baptist bodies' spokespersons in their broader testimony to the Nation in terms of evangelism and social morality. Staff, which works in Washington on the program of the BJCPA, have the narrower agenda of dealing with religious liberty, church-state separation and government relations for the cooperating Baptist groups.

**Affairs** The eight specific items addressed in the last 5 years have been spoken to with unanimous votes.

1. "The dangers of civil religion" warning of "efforts to wed religious fundamentalism to right-wing politics," celebrating "religious pluralism," and encouraging "the staff ... to continue monitoring with utmost care any new developments relating to the Religious Right" and "to report their findings and judgments to our Baptist constituencies." (1980)

2. "Prayer in public schools" reasserting opposition to any and all proposed constitutional amendments." (1982)

3. On a "constitutional convention" called attention to the "dangers inherent in a call to a national constitutional convention." (1982)

4. A tuition tax credits position paper opposed "as unconstitutional any tuition tax credit, voucher or direct subsidy which would channel public funds into church-related or other private education." (1983)

5. A statement on free exercise requested "the staff to seek proper legislative and judicial avenues to protect and enhance the free exercise of religion." (1983)

6. Court stripping was decried as "a new attack on (the nation's) constitutional foundations" by limiting "the jurisdiction of federal courts in First Amendment religion cases." (1983)

7. Opposition to an ambassador to the Vatican was based on rejection of "preferential treatment to one particular church" and "adherence to the principle of separation of church and state." (1983)

8. Support for equal access legislation that insists the "no group may be excluded on the basis of the religious content of the speech used in its meetings," with insistence upon student-initiated and student-controlled groups when a school has established a limited open forum. (1984)

So the words Baptist Joint Committee on Public all mean something even if strung together they're mouthful. □

# REVIEWS



## CECELIA'S SIN

By Will D. Campbell, Macon, Georgia:  
Mercer University Press, 82 pp., \$7.95

### What was Cecelia's sin?

For most of this small book one would feel fairly certain that her sin was failure to conform to the constraints on religious freedom imposed by the Dutch government of 16th century Amsterdam. The Anabaptists were, in Campbell's words, a "gentle but tough little band of left-wingers." Most of us 20th Century Baptists would feel more than a little uncomfortable with the lifestyle of that tough little band. Believer's baptism gives us no problem. But what about their insistence on total separation of church and state, a separation that meant no jury service, no oath taking. They were complete pacifists, opposed to military service and the death penalty. And they believed in communal living. Cecelia believed that this aspect was the greatest affront to the authorities and the real reason for governmental and church persecution of their group.

Cecelia's determination to record the stories of belief, faithfulness and subsequent torture became her obsession. She hoped it was also her calling. The cause was just, a firm insistence on believer's baptism. How could she have had any doubts about the rightness of her activity?

In a chapter on Baptist history that precedes Cecelia's story, Eric Gritsch sets the backdrop for Campbell's heroine. He reminds us that reformers have frequently felt an uncomfortable tension with convictions, Baptist reformers no less than those of other religious allegiances. History is replete with religious reformers who showed too little evidence of tension or doubt. The history of the church would be more noble if the discomfort had been greater. One does not have to step back to the 16th century for confirming examples of religious zealotry gone awry. The twentieth century alone provides us with religious divisiveness in Spain, Northern Ireland, Lebanon and Iran. It is far too easy to justify means that are less than honorable. To paraphrase one of Freud's disciples, we can become the disease we purport to cure.

Gritsch reminds us that "the idolatry of 'being like God' lurks everywhere. No place and no time is safe from it, for the acceptance of the separation of human from divine power seems to be as difficult a matter as the notion that lamb and lion will sleep together."

Through the long months of tension, awaiting arrest and torture, Cecelia toiled to record the stories of her brothers and sisters in the faith. Her greatest fear was that their sacrifices would be recorded as "a comic interlude," a minor nuisance. In one of his most beautifully written passages, Campbell says, "... she stitched the worded quilt piece by piece, as if convinced that it would be the one to thaw the icy bed of failure and tyranny upon which they lay." This was a cause for which she was willing to die. When in the end she makes a startling decision about this written record, one might conclude that her mission was a failure. Cecelia prays, "May God the Father forgive me for my sin. Writing the story is not the story."

May we see our task clearly—constantly testing the tension that should exist between goals and methods. In Will Campbell's words, "An act of faithfulness is our only vocation." □

Jeanette Holt

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What mean these

## Testimonies Deut. 6:20

Forty-five years ago, three Baptist conventions set in motion the cooperation which would lead to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. In 1939, the Southern, Northern, and National, U.S.A. Conventions adopted a document entitled, "A Pronouncement upon Religious Liberty." The document called for defending religious liberty "as our forefathers defined it", and each convention formed committees on public relations to implement the pronouncement call.

The Southern Baptist Committee on Public Relations made a report to its Convention meeting in Baltimore June 12-16, 1940, highlighting why a concerted Baptist witness on church-state separation issues is so critical.

The report said there is "a growing need for practical association of all American Baptists in defense of their common distinctive principles... united we can better defend our principles..."

The report went further: a "proposed plan of cooperation" is necessary "to enable American Baptists to speak with one voice and to act as one man in defense of the principles that bind them in an indissoluble spiritual unity."

This joint action marked the beginning of Baptists acting together to promote Baptist religious liberty principles. It is significant that these Baptist principles brought black and white Baptists together at a time when law and custom pulled them unequally apart. It is also noteworthy that these first steps taken by Baptists in 1939 have led to nine Baptist conventions and conferences represented with the Baptist Joint Committee in 1984. Today 30 million Baptists are united behind our principle of religious liberty. □

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