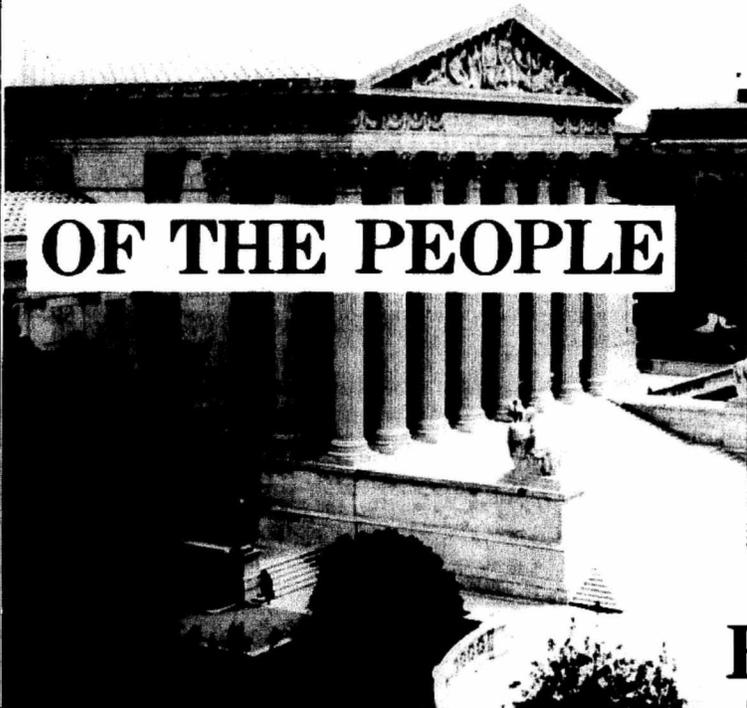


November-December, 1984

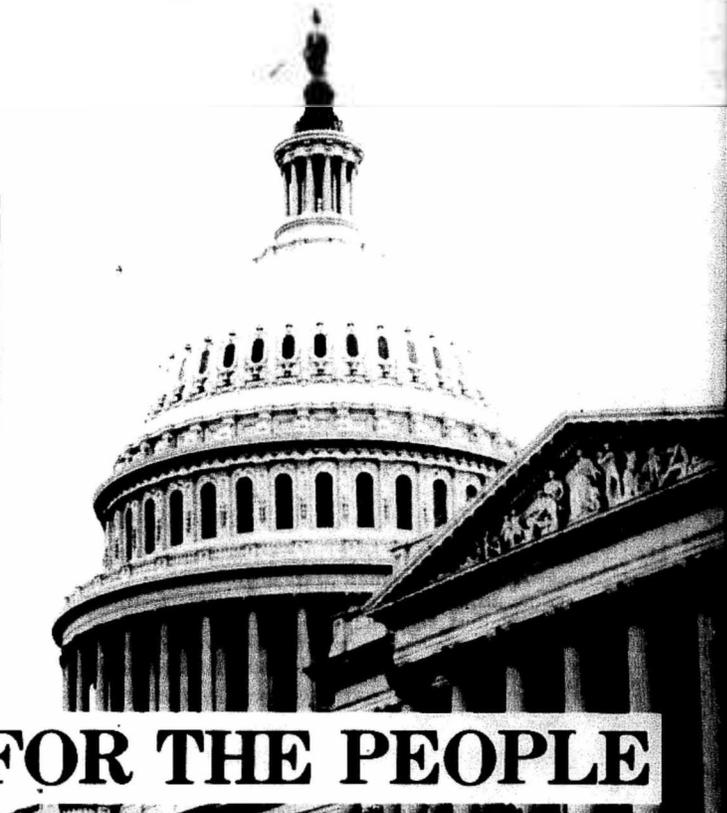
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# **REPORT** from the **CAPITAL**

**... GOVERNMENT**



**OF THE PEOPLE**



**FOR THE PEOPLE**



**BY THE PEOPLE**

## REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 39, No. 10 Nov.-Dec. 1984

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**Cover:** THE PEOPLE have exercised a cherished right of citizenship by electing their peers to government service. These officials will be held accountable for their actions yet must be responsive to the will of all the people. But not even representative government relieves the people of the ultimate responsibility for its conduct.

Executive Director: James M. Dunn  
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## A Heady Mixture

**W**riting before the 1984 elections, one thing appears certain: its legitimacy has been established but now remains the more difficult task of determining how religion finds its place in the political marketplace. There is consensus that biblical faith must impact national and social change. The challenge to those who regard the responsibilities of their faith with utmost seriousness is to recognize equal sincerity in others of differing beliefs and to enter into dialogue in non-combative tones. This rhetorical season of electioneering may not be the best of times to reach conclusions, but by fostering broad interest it surely has confirmed the necessity for taking seriously religion's contributions.

Glen Stassen says it is a distortion to think church-state separation muzzles the church. If churches were silent, church/state separation would be redundant. Constitutional guarantees, however, protect the church's spiritual integrity by restraining government's interference with its message and mandate. While the issue may be the same—war or peace—what the church regards as a moral issue the state views to be political and the difference is not to be neglected. Indeed, Stassen finds that essential to its peacemaking witness is the church's freedom to remind the state that its policies forever stand under God's judgment.

"Harrington has indeed attended a funeral, but he does not know whose God died. The God of the Bible is alive and well and living in the world." That's really the nub of Kenneth Smith's critique of this provoking book in which Harrington eulogizes the end of the God he understands to be the God of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Harrington declares that this God no longer gives sense to our time, and says his is not a "theological" statement about a "transcendent symbol" but a "sociological" description of what is. Smith in his essay ties in references to Harvey Cox's book, *Religion in the Secular City*, in a most timely discussion. God, Smith observes, "is not threatened by secularity at all... [but] by a religiosity that sacralizes institutional social privilege." The funeral of that god (of Constantinian Christianity) has already been held; it's only that Harrington has arrived rather tardily.

Staff adds its usual substantial contribution to this issue. Stan Hasteley writes of religious issues scheduled for deliberation by the Supreme Court, Larry Chesser adds his wrap-up of the 98th Congress, while John Baker reviews a conference on government intervention in religious affairs. He warns churches of the need for vigilance to ensure that in the judicial process their independence is protected. At one point James Dunn refers to his endeavor as "pop theology" but make no mistake about REFLECTIONS' theological gravity or grasp of the theme on human worth, studied in the context of Christ's gift of freedom. Churches are encouraged to PROBE all of these pages; we're interested in your feed-back. □

Victor Tupitza

**Members of the Executive Committee of the Baptist Joint Committee** have commended their Washington staff for its role in the passage of the Equal Access Act and for helping write guidelines for its implementation. At its annual October meeting, the 14-member committee also praised the leading role taken by congressional sponsors of the measure which guarantees secondary school students who wish to meet for religious purposes the same access to school facilities enjoyed by other noncurriculum related, student-initiated groups.

The BJC statement, in addition to singling out for praise U.S. Senator Mark O. Hatfield and Representatives Don Bonker and the late Carl D. Perkins, also commended pastors, editors and other denominational workers who publicized and promoted the bill and called upon Baptist conventions and conferences to participate in the work of the BJC. ●

**Unable to break a procedural logjam** erected by opponents of the Civil Rights Act of 1984, the U.S. Senate killed the measure designed to clarify the scope of federal laws barring discrimination based on age, sex, handicap or minority status. The Civil Rights Act of 1984 was designed to overturn the Supreme Court's 1984 ruling in the Grove City College case which held that only the particular program or activity of an institution receiving federal funds was subject to federal anti-discrimination statutes.

Proponents in the Congress insisted they sought only to restore the law to its pre-Grove City interpretations, while opponents argued that the proposal would represent a major expansion of anti-discrimination coverage. ●

**Citing increased charitable giving** by lower-income Americans, representatives of religious and other voluntary organizations urged a Senate panel to make permanent a 1982 tax change allowing taxpayers who do not itemize deductions to deduct charitable contributions. Despite a significant drop in charitable contributions by upper-income taxpayers since 1981, witnesses told the Subcommittee on Taxation and Debt Management that individual giving climbed 11.1 percent in 1983. They attributed the growth largely to the 1981 change giving "nonitemizers" charitable contribution deductions. The new deduction is scheduled to become fully operative in 1986 but then expires at the end of that year unless extended by Congress or made permanent. ●

**James Dunn, Baptist Joint Committee executive director**, has been elected president of Bread for the World, a Christian citizen's movement focusing solely on global hunger. He joins with 41 other religious leaders who volunteer their time and services. Bread for the World, identifies itself as a "Christian citizen's movement in the U.S.A." It involves itself not in food distribution but in advocacy of national public policies that "give hungry people a chance." ●

**Denouncing nuclear Armageddon theology** as "a perversion of Holy Scripture and a danger to the security of our Republic," more than 100 Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders warned against "the extremist worldview of nuclear Armageddon," the notion that nuclear war in the Middle East associated with the end of history if both imminent and inevitable. "An ideology that would deprive our nation of the will to resist this holocaust is unworthy of America's spiritual and democratic heritage," the leaders declared, adding nuclear Armageddon theology "seems to justify nuclear war as a divine instrument to punish the wicked and complete God's plan for history." ●

## A Free Church as Peacemaker

**I**f Christians are to urge governments toward peacemaking initiatives, they must have some sense of freedom and independence to do so. They must have enough freedom and independence to encourage action the government is not yet prepared to take. Without the freedom and independence to get out ahead of the government, they are merely "yes men." They have no initiative.

Separation of church and state was originally intended to keep the churches independent of the state and free to do and say that with which the government might not agree. Churches must have the religious liberty and independent-mindedness to speak and act consistently with their faith even when they disagree with government policy. Here Timothy George's observation is most pertinent: "The juxtaposition of civil loyalty and religious conviction enabled the Baptists to work for positive change within the political system. Throughout the seventeenth century Baptists were in the vanguard of those who sought greater civil as well as religious liberties."<sup>2</sup>

The understanding of separation of church and state in the minds of many has been distorted. They take it to mean the church should keep silent on all matters that have political dimensions—i.e., on all matters where they differ with the government. But that was the condition of religious unliberty before separation of church and state was achieved. The state hired and fired the pastors, and silenced them on matters where they disagreed with the government. The government considered as political issues the matter of freedom of the press, one established church, a permanent Parliament

not needing reelection, and unjust economic policies. The government advised the churches to keep silent on these issues. If separation of church and state meant churches must keep silent on moral issues whenever they disagreed with the government's position, then separation of church and state wasn't needed; that condition prevailed before separation of church and state was instituted and led to a muzzled church.

Separation of church and state was initially a struggle by Baptists, Congregationalists, and Quakers in England to enable them to advocate changes the government questioned. They wanted freedom of the press, freedom of worship, democratic elections for Parliament, a tax structure that was more fair to the unwealthy, and an end to trading monopolies. They believed these were moral issues. Naturally, the government saw them as political in nature since they contradicted government policies. Separation of church and state was essential to the church's freedom to speak out on moral issues that disputed state policies.

In recent history, a major roadblock to peacemaking initiatives by Christians and churches has been their great reluctance to take a position in advance of the government. There has been a deferential desire to support the government's policies. Many Christians and churches were very slow to oppose segregation policies that were supported by custom and policy. They automatically supported the government's position on the Viet Nam war, and saw the error and the injustices only very reluctantly. Southern Baptists finally passed a resolution supporting the government in its efforts to negotiate a peaceful solution, but

could not move farther ahead of the government than that. They joined a number of Baptist conventions in support of government arms control proposals such as SALT II, which allows more nuclear weapons to be built by both sides. Among these Baptist groups, some have difficulty supporting the bilateral nuclear freeze to halt the testing, production, and deployment of new nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union and the U.S. The freeze, which seems clearly more Christian, was initiated by Christians and is supported by the majority of Christians and churches. But it is a position well ahead of the government.

Christian peacemakers around the world are realizing that the nuclear arms race is a form of captivity, bondage, or slavery. They feel helpless and hopeless as alien forces move them toward destruction. Nothing illustrates more clearly Paul's definition of sin as slavery to unrighteousness, driven by forces not under our control, forces that lead to death, as our deference to the government in policies of destruction. Governments, created for a good purpose, also are captive to forces of unrighteousness. Not totally evil, governments are not wholly good either. Christians must maintain their independence in order to advocate peacemaking initiatives. They must make it clear that governments are often captive to interests, ideologies, and idolatries that conflict with God's will for peacemaking. Therefore separation of church and state is necessary. The principalities and powers crucified Christ—but Christ exposed them and made a mockery of them (Col. 2:15).

Separation of church and state, one of our greatest assets, makes it clear that the church is not the lackey of the government. It may on occasion support government policies but at other times suggest alternative policies, according to what is moral and just. Peacemaking requires transforming initiatives, not massive parroting of Caesar. □

Dr. Stassen is professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Seminary. This article is an excerpt from "A New transformative peacemaking ethic."

<sup>2</sup>Timothy George, "Between Pacifism and Coercion" *The English Baptist Doctrine of Religious Toleration*. (Unpublished manuscript, 1983), p. 26.

## Review Essay KENNETH L. SMITH

### THE POLITICS AT GOD'S FUNERAL:

**The Spiritual Crisis of Western Civilization.** By Michael Harrington New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983.

The God who has served as the source of conceptual meaning, personal identity, political legitimacy and economic incentive has ceased to be operative for both believers and non-believers. So argues Michael Harrington in his most recent book, *The Politics at God's Funeral*. Heir of the socialist tradition of Eugene Debs and Norman Thomas and perhaps best known as the author of *The Other America* (1962), the bible of the Kennedy-Johnson anti-poverty programs, Harrington believes that the traditional God of the Judaeo-Christian tradition no longer provides the worldview (i.e., an explanation of the relationship between God, self and the world) for "the normative integration of Western civilization."

He hastens to add, having reached that sweeping conclusion, that he is not making a "theological" statement: "I make no judgment about the ontological issue of the existence or non-existence of God." The statement rather is a "sociological" description of what is occurring in Western culture: a spiritual crisis manifested in the demise of religious sanction for our personal and social life. God is no longer "the transcendent symbol of the common consciousness" of our culture of "a philosophy for the non-philosophers, including the illiterate." However, it seems, in spite of his disclaimer, that he is raising the so-called "God question" which has been ignored, in the sense that it is assumed, by liberation theology. For this he should be commended by those unwilling "to give up" the apologetic task of contemporary theology.

When Harrington speaks of the cultural crisis he is referring to the bourgeois or liberal worldview of modern Western civilization. The major assumption of that worldview was the belief in "automatic harmony" which informed every major institution of the modern world: in economics, capitalism; in politics, democracy; in international relations, "a balance of power" between sovereign states; in religion, Protestantism. The religious counterpart of automatic harmony was the

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"inner-worldly asceticism" (i.e., Weber's *innerweltliche Askese*) of Calvinism and Puritanism which contributed the cardinal bourgeois virtues of thrift, frugality, honesty and industry. In this way Protestantism provided the religious rationale for and became the religious expression of the bourgeois worldview. The upshot of the belief in automatic harmony and the practice of "inner-worldly asceticism" was that justice and peace would be the by-product of freedom because there would be no conflict between individual self-interest and the common good.

In support of his claim that the modern worldview is disintegrating Harrington points out that not only has justice not been the automatic by-product of freedom (e.g., the top 20 percent of the population own 76 percent of the wealth and the bottom only .02 percent), but also that freedom has produced a pervasive "hedonism" and "consumerism" and "the hum-drum nihilism of everyday life in Western society." Individual self-seeking, contrary to the theory of automatic harmony, has become the ultimate norm of human behavior and thus social values have disappeared. Although this analysis is on the whole accurate, it was anticipated over fifty years ago by Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich. The latter, for example, wrote that the major characteristic of the triumph of the bourgeois worldview has been the displacement of "revolutionary reason" (i.e., the power of truth and justice embodied in humanity) by "technical reason" (i.e., a tool for the perfection of capitalistic society.) "Technical reason," he explained, "provides means for ends, but offers no guidance in the determination of ends... It can be used for any purposes dictated by the will, including those which deny reason in the sense of truth and justice." In short, Harrington's analysis adds little to what some theologians have been predicting for many years.

Although this reviewer has no problem with Harrington's description of the cultural crisis, certainly not that

the bourgeois ethic has degenerated into hedonism and consumerism, his explanation, or better non-explanation, of the cause leaves a great deal to be desired. There seems, in fact, to be a major contradiction in his reasoning at this crucial point. That is, Harrington obviously follows the so-called "normative" theory of secularization commonplace among sociologists: religion should not provide the primary norms for the shape of society or social policy. (Readers of this magazine will recognize this view of secularization as simply a modern statement of the "secular state" conception of proponents of the sectarian interpretation of the separation of church and state.) The contradiction in Harrington's reasoning is that although he extols secularization as the proper response to pluralism, he is unaware that secularization, having no transcendent referent for values, is the source of the loss of the values (e.g., compassion for the poor and oppressed) he laments. "The secularization of public discourse," Cornell West has written, "left us with no overarching conception of the common good or public interest.... Hence, the de facto atheism Harrington denounces is an effect, albeit an unintended one, of the secularization process he cherishes" (*Christianity & Crisis*, Dec. 12, 1983, p. 495.)

As the alternative to the bourgeois or liberal worldview Harrington, believing that persons have the ability to create a new social order by intelligence, moral suasion and political activism, proposes his version of the democratic socialist vision. The goal of this vision is distributive justice and the means will be worker participation (i.e., "the increasing democratization of economic life".) Democratic socialism, viewing consumerism as a distraction from increasing inequality and rejecting the capitalistic assumption that the goal of production is the maximization of profits, will subordinate production to democratically determined public priorities. In other words, democratic socialism will (1) offer moral rather than economic incentives; (2) provide for the fullest democratic participation; (3) assist those persons least able to help themselves; and (4) facilitate community. This is a

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

## VIEWS OF THE WALL

John W. Baker



This fall a conference was held on the subject of Government Intervention in Religious Affairs. Though the papers presented were largely academic in tone, they clearly expressed a concern about present and past intervention by the state in religious affairs and voiced a fear that the future holds prospects of even greater intrusions. Notice this week of two different legal disputes involving Baptist churches gives concrete evidence that those fears are well founded.

### The West Virginia Case

Can a court force a Baptist church to rehire a minister whom it has voted to remove as its pastor? Do not be too quick in the answer you give.

It has been reported that on February 28, 1981 the chairman of the deacons of the Elkins Southern Baptist Church asked the pastor, the Rev. James Gillespie, to resign. Gillespie refused to do so because, he said, no reasons were given why he should resign. On March 15, 1981 the church voted 31-9 to keep the pastor. Reports on that meeting are unclear, but it has been claimed that the meeting was disorderly and that the pastor took control of it from the moderator.

At a called business meeting on Sunday, March 22, 1981 the church voted 31-25 to terminate the pastor. It is the validity of this called business meeting which was in question in the case. The church's by-laws provide that a special business meeting can be called by a majority of the board of deacons. In March, 1981 the church had only two deacons who were active and qualified. Three other men had been elected as deacons but had not yet been ordained and so were not qualified to serve. The question was whether Deacon Shoemaker had conferred with Deacon Morrison about calling the meeting—both having to participate in the calling to provide a majority.

The judge, in camera, in his assessment of the evidence about whether the two deacons called the meeting stated that the primary evidence with which the court could deal "was the testimony of Howard Shoemaker and the plaintiff [Rev. Gillespie] concerning what transpired in his [Rev. Gillespie's] office immediately before the Sunday morning service on March 22, 1981. From that testimony this jury

could conclude that the meeting was called only by Howard Shoemaker." The judge concluded that whether the two deacons acted together or whether Shoemaker acted alone was an issue of fact and not a matter of law and should, therefore, be determined by the jury. The jury, despite Shoemaker's testimony that he had consulted with Morrison, decided that the meeting had been improperly called and, as a result, the action terminating Rev. Gillespie was invalid.

The court ordered the church to pay Rev. Gillespie \$53,000 in back pay and benefits and to reinstate him as pastor. Such a conclusion follows logically from the finding that the termination was illegal. The issue of government intrusion into the affairs of a church does not arise if it is clear that a church has not followed its own rules of procedure. Neutral principles of law can then be applied to a fact pattern. However, in this case the facts were in dispute—Shoemaker claimed the decision to call the church meeting had been made jointly; Rev. Gillespie claimed that the decision was unilateral. When a court—either judge or jury—involves itself in the inner workings of a church and makes a determination of fact from those inner workings, the state is intruding in the internal affairs of that church. The First Amendment forbids it to do so in part because the state, by deciding a fact, is also determining church polity. The instant matter of fact was beyond the legal competence of the court to determine.

The man who has been serving as interim pastor of the church has indicated that the church will appeal the decision.

There are two points which must be made about this case which are applicable to all congregational churches. First, the constitution and by-laws of a church must be followed carefully in any of the church's dealings—whether it is purchasing property, disbursing church funds, or terminating a pastor. Failure to do so leaves open the possibility of a legal challenge which could embarrass or injure the church. Second, when a church is a party to a law suit, its potential best friend is the First Amendment. It is essential that the church employ an attorney who knows that Amendment and how to use its protections to preserve the rights un-

der it for possible appeals.

### The Tennessee Case

Nine churches in Jackson, Tennessee—including seven Baptist churches—made contributions to an organization called Citizens Against Drug Abuse (CADA) to help it to mount a campaign against a liquor-by-the-drink referendum in Jackson. The Tennessee Campaign Financial Disclosure Act of 1980 provides that any corporation, committee, club, association or other group of people which makes contributions to a candidate or regarding a referendum measure must file with the local election commission a statement of all contributions, contributions and expenditures.

CADA filed a campaign financial disclosure statement which reflected the churches' contributions to the campaign, but the churches did not make similar disclosures on the assumption that their contributions were for religious purposes. The District Attorney General queried the State Attorney General as to whether the churches, in turn, were also required to file financial statements telling who had contributed how much to the church. The State Attorney General issued his opinion that the churches, by contributing to the referendum campaign, had become Political Action Committees (PACs) and, therefore, must file the required disclosures.

The churches contend that their position on liquor-by-the-drink is based on their religious beliefs and that their activities with reference to the referendum constituted a carrying out of their religious mission. The churches have gone to court complaining that the State's actions infringe on their rights under the free exercise of religion and the equal protection of the law clauses of the federal constitution, and the due process of the law clauses of both the federal and the Tennessee constitutions. The complaint asked for a temporary injunction against requiring disclosure statements pending the outcome of the case and a declaratory judgment that the Act is unconstitutional as applied to churches. (A declaratory judgment is a court's declaration of the legal rights of parties to a controversy.)

The Chancery Court of Madison

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## 98th Congress wrap-up shows major legislation in church-state area

**T**wo major milestones—passage of “equal access” legislation and lifting of the 117 year ban against U.S. diplomatic relations with the Vatican—highlighted the 98th Congress’ church-state record.

Apart from these actions, the 98th continued the pattern of recent congresses by rejecting numerous controversial proposals on prayer in public schools, tuition tax credits and abortion.

By lopsided margins in both houses, the 98th Congress declared voluntary student religious groups have the same access to before-and-after school meetings as other student-initiated secondary school groups. Through this action, the nation’s lawmakers took their first substantive step toward defining the proper role of religion in public schools since the historic 1962-63 school prayer decisions by the Supreme Court.

Over the two decades since the high court banned state-written and state-sponsored prayer and Bible reading in public schools, Congress considered dozens of proposals to overturn the decisions. But none of these proposals—ranging from constitutional amendments to court-stripping bills—ever cleared both houses. In fact, before the passage of equal access this year, the only measures to clear were meaningless riders on appropriations bills.

The equal access measure, sponsored by Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., and Reps. Don Bonker, D-Wash. and the late Carl D. Perkins, D-Ky., drew broad bipartisan support as well as nearly-uniform backing from the U.S. religious community.

The equal access measure faced earlier competition from President Reagan’s proposed constitutional amendment to restore state-sponsored religious exercises in public schools. But the president’s proposal, after a lengthy struggle to clear the Senate Judiciary Committee and a two-week floor debate, was soundly rejected by the Republican-controlled Senate. The 56-44 vote was 11 short of the two-thirds majority needed for passage as

18 Republicans joined 26 Democrats in opposing the measure.

Late in its first session, the 98th Congress quietly reversed a 117-year ban against U.S. diplomatic ties with the Holy See after Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., attached an amendment to a State Department authorization bill lifting the prohibition. The action occurred without hearings or debate, prompting criticism of the process as well as the action itself.

In efforts to secure Senate confirmation of William A. Wilson as U.S. ambassador to the Vatican as well as funding of the new embassy, administration officials repeatedly insisted the relationship would be with the Vatican city-state rather than with the Roman Catholic Church.

But administration claims were soon contradicted by Wilson’s counterpart, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio (Ambassador) Pio Laghi who charged: “Some mistakenly tried to justify the American government’s action by implying that it was entering into a diplomatic relationship not with the Roman Catholic Church as such, the Holy See, but rather with the sovereign Vatican City-State.” Contrary to administration claims, Laghi asserted in a speech at Catholic University of America that papal diplomacy “rests essentially upon the spiritual sovereignty of the Holy See and not upon dominion over a few acres in the heart of Rome.”

Although the president got his way with Congress on the Vatican ambassador issue, two other Reagan requests—tuition tax credits for parents who send their children to private and parochial schools and a constitutional ban on abortions—were defeated in the Senate.

Near the end of the first session, the Senate easily turned back the president’s tuition tax credit proposal, 59-38, and repeated calls by the president to pass the measure during the second session drew no response from the Republican-controlled Senate.

A constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court’s controversial 1973 abortion ruling came no closer to passage. Sponsored by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, the measure nearly failed to emerge from the Judiciary Committee and was defeated 49-50 during the first session, thereby falling 17 votes short of the necessary two-thirds.

Congress did, however, maintain restrictions on federal funding of abortions except to save the life of mother. At one point, the Senate voted to expand the exception to include rape and incest, but the Senate later yielded to the House position which kept the single exception.

Several tax law changes coming from this session of Congress had implications for churches and clergy.

A nearly two-year effort to overturn by statute the 1983 Internal Revenue Service ruling that reversed longstanding policy of allowing clergy to take normal mortgage interest and real estate deductions in addition to a tax-exempt housing allowance ended short of its goal. However, a delay in implementation of the ruling for clergy who owned or had a contract to purchase their residence by Jan. 3, 1983, was enacted as part of the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984. Congressional opponents of the IRS position vowed to continue legislative efforts in the next Congress.

Early in 1983, Congress made wholesale changes in the Social Security system, sharply raising rates paid by self-employed persons, including clergy who by law participate in the nation’s retirement system as self-employed workers.

The 1983 reform package also for the first time mandated Social Security participation for non-ministerial church employees. But the next year, Congress voted to permit churches who opposed such participation for “religious reasons” to make a one-time, irrevocable decision not to pay into the system on behalf of their employees. Employees of churches taking this election must then participate as self-employed persons.

During both sessions, the 98th Congress held the line on non-profit postal rates, rejecting Reagan administration requests to slash the subsidy which reimburses the Postal Service for reduced rates charged a variety of non-profit mailers.

The Civil Rights Act of 1984 died when the Senate rejected the measure, despite a lopsided 375-37 passage in the House and 63 co-sponsors in the Senate. Reaching the Senate floor during the closing days of the second session, the measure was designed to overturn the Supreme Court’s 1984

*Continued on next page*



## and the Court

### High court's docket lists seven church-state cases

Returning to the bench October 1 for its new term, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review yet another religion case, bringing to four the number of major church-state cases it intends to resolve by next summer.

On the first day of the new term, the high court justices announced they will decide if a Nebraska woman is entitled to a valid driver's license in spite of her refusal on religious grounds to be photographed as required by state law.

Frances J. Quaring, who insists that having her photograph made would violate the second of the ten commandments ("Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing . . ."), was denied a driver's license under provisions of a Nebraska law which, like those in many other states, requires a photograph.

Quaring, who holds no church membership, won her case in a federal court of appeals which ruled that the requirement violated her free exercise of religion (83-1944, *Jensen v. Quaring*).

The high court had agreed earlier this year to review an Alabama law providing for silent prayer in public school classrooms; a Grand Rapids, Mich. practice of sending public school teachers into parochial school classrooms to provide specialized instruction; and a Connecticut law requiring private employers to give their workers a day off each week as requested for religious observances.

In an October 9 notice, the high court announced its intention to review a lower panel's ruling that funneling federal monies to church-related schools through the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act violates the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion. More specifically, the issue in a trio of cases from New York City is whether federal funds may be used to send the public school teachers into parochial schools to provide specialized instruction as authorized in the historic 1965 law. (84-237, *Aguilar v. Felton*; 84-238, *Secretary, U.S. Department of Education v. Felton*; 84-239, *Chancellor, Board of Education of New York v. Felton*)

For the past 17 years, New York City has provided services in the form of remedial instruction and clinical guidance to parochial school children under terms of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The city argues that at no point in its application of the law has the practice had the effect of advancing religion or excessively entangling the government with the church.

Accepted October 15 were cases involving a Christmas nativity display in Scarsdale, N.Y. and application of a federal fair labor law to a religious foundation in Arkansas.

The Christmas creche case reopens a heated debate within the high court over the constitutionality of nativity scenes displayed on public property. Last March the court decided 5-4 that cities and towns may choose to erect such displays on public property without offending the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

Arguing that the town makes its centrally located Boniface Circle available to all kinds of groups, the Scarsdale Creche Committee contends that it may not be singled out for discrimination. The town has denied permission for the creche since 1981, although it had allowed the display each year from 1957 to 1980.

Also accepted for review was a case brought by the Tony and Susan Alamo Foundation of Alma, Ark. against the Department of Labor over the question of whether federal fair labor provisions apply to the group.

Founded in California in 1969 and subsequently moved to the Arkansas town, the Alamo Foundation provides work opportunities for some 300 former drug addicts and criminals who live on foundation property and receive other material benefits for their "volunteer" service.

Among appeals rejected by the justices during the first two weeks in October were several disputes involving religion.

• Clarksdale Baptist Church, of Clarksdale, Miss., lost its bid to have the high court set aside a permanent injunction prohibiting the Internal Revenue Service from granting tax-exempt status to the church's Christian school. Tax exemption has been denied schools that have been judged racially discriminatory in either court or administrative proceedings. But the

schools have argued that the First Amendment free exercise of religion should supercede the government's interest in eradicating race discrimination (83-2110, *Clarksdale Baptist Church v. Green*).

• The justices let stand an Illinois state court ruling that the First Amendment prevented secular courts from enforcing a 1929 property conveyance agreement between a local Lutheran congregation and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. That agreement declared that the denominational body retained the right to repurchase the church property if the congregation departed from church teachings. (83-1771, *Werling v. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of River Forest, Illinois*).

• In a similar case, the high court refused to disturb an Ohio court's finding that a local A.M.E. congregation may retain its property in a dispute with its denomination. The Ohio tribunal found no evidence showing a relationship between the local congregation and the mother church at the time the property in question was deeded (84-14, *Board of Trustees of the Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church v. Grogans*).

• The justices will not review a Miami Beach ordinance prohibiting the establishment of churches and synagogues in single family dwellings, leaving in place a ruling by a federal appeals court that the city's zoning restrictions superceded a Jewish homeowner's free exercise right of establishing a synagogue in his basement (83-1940, *Grosz v. City of Miami Beach*).

• The high court declined an appeal by Massachusetts to review its highest court's decision invalidating a law forbidding charitable organizations from soliciting funds by telephone. The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled earlier that the law infringed on the First Amendment's free speech guarantee and did virtually nothing to promote the state's claimed interest in residential privacy (84-206, *Bellotti v. Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts, Inc.*).

Stan Hastey

98th Congress, from page 7

ruling in the Grove City College case that only the particular program or activity of an institution receiving federal funds, rather than the entire institution, is subject to federal anti-discrimination laws. Larry Chesser

...although he extols secularization as the proper response to pluralism, he is unaware that secularization, having no transcendent referent for values, is the source of the loss of the values he laments.

noble vision and Christians should have no problem with it. However, it is important for Christians and others to realize that the major value of the democratic socialist vision resides not as much in its specific programmatic solutions as in its goal: a more just and humane society for everyone. It is first and foremost asking the right question presently precluded by capitalistic assumptions: does the social system create prosperity and security for the many instead of the few? (See Harrington and Irving Howe, "Voices from the Left," *New York Times Magazine*, June 21, 1984, and Harrington, "A Path for America: Proposals from the Democratic Left," *Dissent*, Fall, 1982, 405ff.)

A positive reaction to the democratic socialist vision should not overlook the deficiency of Harrington's version; he places primary emphasis upon the economic dimension to the neglect of broader social and cultural concerns, such as race, gender, ecology and the nuclear arms race. (The latter is without doubt rooted in his vehement anti-communism, an emphasis he shares with large segments of the Labor Movement with which he has close ties.) Harvey Cox's *Religion in the Secular City* is a welcome addition to Harrington at this point because Cox makes it clear that the democratic socialist vision must not only include the concerns of the economically depressed but also the peculiar problems of blacks and other minorities, women, the threat of ecological disaster and nuclear annihilation.

In spite of these criticisms Christians should not hesitate to join the coalition of believers and non-believers Harrington calls for to work toward the democratic socialist vision. It is significant that such cooperation is already occurring in a small way as a result of the Religion and Socialism Committee of Democratic Socialists of America. Since Harrington is aware of these Christians "on the left," it is strange that he ignores many recent developments, such as liberation theology, the new vitality of Catholicism in the United States and Poland, Evangelicals for Social Action, etc., on the grounds that he aims to study "the dialectic of religion and advanced economic development." This explanation seems inadequate, given his sweeping state-

ments about the decline of the role of religion. Cox's *Religion in the Secular City* (see *REPORT from the CAPITAL*, July-August, 1984) once again provides a much needed corrective. Cox finds evidence for the resurgence of religion in the new initiatives of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, the influence of the Catholic Church in Latin America (e.g., the Christian "base communities") and Poland, the prominence of the Moral Majority and the reawakening of Shi'ite Islam. It is not necessary to agree with everything Cox says, especially since some of these developments may have pernicious consequences, to recognize that Harrington has oversimplified the present role of religion.

Although it is somewhat unclear at the beginning of the service, there is no doubt by the time of the benediction whose God has died: the God of Constantinian Christianity and the white, patriarchal, capitalistic God of Western bourgeois culture. But the truth is that many Christians attended that funeral a long time ago, and Harrington arrived late! Moreover, Harrington, in spite of the fact that he is a former Irish Catholic, is unaware of the pre-Constantinian God of the Bible. "Harrington," Rosemary Ruether has aptly observed, "is unacquainted with a pre-Christendom biblical prophetic God who is not only not dead, but who regains power as the God of Christendom dies. This God was never the God of Western Christendom, but has always been, and still is, the God of the dissidents, the marginalized of the official social systems, the vindicator of the poor and the oppressed. This God has not just lately arrived on the scene in response to the threat of secularity. Indeed, this God is not threatened by secularity at all. Rather, this God is threatened by ... a religiosity that sacralizes institutional social privilege. In the name of the biblical prophetic God, countercultural Christians throughout Christian history have denounced the God of Christendom as an idol who eclipses the vision of the true God of justice" (*Religious Socialism*, Fall, 1982, p. 3.) Harrington has indeed attended a funeral, but he does not know whose God died. The God of the Bible is alive and living in the world. □

Kenneth L. Smith

## Quoting

William C. Clohan, Jr.  
Testimony before the  
Republican Platform Committee

Preoccupation with such legitimate issues as government-promoted versus personal prayer in school, secular humanism versus moral legalism, and evolution versus creationism, will not solve our Nation's educational problems. As a matter of fact, these debates at the national level often tend to obfuscate "real" educational issues.

The United States is a multi-ethnic, -racial, -religious society. Freedoms afforded individuals from many different backgrounds are the very essence of our democracy. Children spend many hours in school during their development years. It is essential that we don't use that learning environment as a tool to impose our value systems on all children.

The concept of separation of church and state is fundamental to our system of government. State involvement in personal religion was one of the prime reasons our country was established. Our society must continue to debate the issues listed above, but in so doing should not ignore the primary purpose of educational institutions—to teach. □

Orlando Costas  
*Christ Outside the Gate*

The idea of a Christian society is not only an illusion as far as the United States is concerned, but anywhere else in the world. All Christendom projects—from the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313) to the present—have been and will always be illusory, because the church has not been called to manage the world but, rather, to bear witness to the kingdom of God in the world. Nor does the gospel envision the establishment of a Christian society. Rather, it announces a new world order that can neither be exhausted by historical structures nor be relegated to the beyond. The fundamental problem which Christendom projects is that they confuse the kingdom of God with the institutional church, the gospel with culture, and the power of the cross with the power of the sword. □

Mary Clare  
The Sabbath Recorder  
(citing Frank Laubach)

Most of us will never enter the White House and offer advice to the President. Probably he will never have time to read our letters. But we can give him what is far more important than advice. We can give him a lift into the presence of God, make him hungry for divine wisdom, which is the grandest thing one man ever does for another. We can visit the White House with prayer as many times a day as we think of it, and every such visit makes us a channel between God and the president.

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## NOW AVAILABLE:

**The Equal Access Act Guidelines**  
 Several religious and civil rights groups—some of which supported the Act and some which opposed it—drew up these guidelines for implementing it in accordance with law. To obtain a copy, send a self-addressed envelope to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, 200 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, D.C. 20002.

## IEWS, from page 6

County, Tennessee noted that the parties had reached an agreement concerning the relief requested by the churches and ordered that the time to file the disclosure statement be stayed until after a declaratory judgment was handed down. The churches, then, were ordered to withdraw their motion for a temporary injunction.

The case has implications which go beyond Tennessee. Can the state require a church to report to it the amounts of contributions each giver has made? May the State determine which of a church's activities are religious and which political? At least lurking in the background is the question which the federal appeals court answered so unsatisfactorily in the Moon case: May the state make the determination of when a church spends its money for religious purposes regardless of the testimony of the church itself?

There is no anti-church conspiracy by the government. Society is becoming more complex and so are the rules that regulate social interactions. The churches must be vigilant in ensuring that their independence is not prejudiced in the process. □

# INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



## Holocaust recognition of 'righteous gentiles' arouses Jewish protest

WASHINGTON

**A**gainst protests by some Jewish death camp survivors, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council turned its spotlight here on Christians, "righteous Gentiles", who risked their lives to save Jews during World War II.

The government-chartered Council in September sponsored the first international gathering ever held, to honor and examine these "righteous Gentiles."

Despite the focus on honoring Christian heroes of that era, the tension that still exists over the silence of Christians in the face of Nazi atrocities surfaced throughout the gathering. And it divided the 500 Holocaust heroes and survivors who attended the meeting, as well as members of the council itself.

"This is a first, because we are exploring the good, and not the evil," said Elie Wiesel, noted writer and human rights activist, who is chairman of the council.

He said the purpose of the gathering was to begin an exploration of what "moved those few men and women" to come to the rescue of Jews, while others turned them away. Dr. Carol Rittner, a Sister of Mercy nun who conceived the idea for the gathering, said it was "important that we examine this behaviour to learn how we should act as human beings."

Nonetheless, the question of Christianity's role during the Holocaust became a source of conflict at the gathering. One workshop involving a Polish Catholic priest who in 1942 took into his single room a 15-year-old Jewish boy, turned into a shouting match between Jewish survivors in the audience and defenders of the priest, the Rev. Stanislaw Falkowski.

Father Falkowski said he acted the way he did because he was a faithful Catholic, but one woman in the group drew loud applause when she shouted at the priest, "If the Church had spoken out, I'm sure that more Jews would have been saved."

At that point, the Jew who was rescued by Father Falkowski 42 years ago, rose to the priest's defense. "This man is here because he is saintly. I beg you

not to burden him with all your frustrations," Dr. Joseph S. Kutrzeba, who now lives in New York, said as a speaker at the workshop. "He is my friend, my saviour, my brother."

In another dispute which surfaced at the conference, held at the State Department, Mr. Wiesel was asked at a news conference about the role of the Vatican during the Holocaust. "Was Pope Pius XII a righteous Gentile?", he asked in reply. "If I were to give out certificates, I wouldn't give him one."

Wiesel declared that the "silence of the pope during those years was horrifying. He was responsible for what he said and what he did not say."

Dr. Robert McAfee Brown, a noted Christian theologian and member of the Holocaust Council, recalled that when he recently asked a Holocaust hero in Poland why she acted in behalf of Jews, she replied: "I don't understand why the rest did not hide Jews. How could we not hide the Jews when the Lord asked us to help our neighbors?"

As to the question of what moved people to rescue Jews despite great personal risk, Mr. Wiesel, who has written many books on the Holocaust, said it may be "in the domain of mystery." Asked if he believed the "righteous" themselves knew the answer, he added, "These people don't have the answers. They are the answers." RNS □

## Italian Baptists delay church-state agreement

SANTA SEVERA

Italian Baptists threaded their way carefully through controversial issues to maintain a mandate for their department of evangelism and approve ongoing peace efforts, but delayed action on a proposed agreement with the government which outlined religious rights.

The Baptists followed an action of Italian Waldensians in their earlier assembly by discussing a communication from two former terrorist activists who are now serving prison sentences. The assembly demonstrated its solidarity with their plea for recognition that churches have failed to influence society to the extent that youth are dissuaded from identifying with terrorist elements.

The 18-point "progetto di intesa" on church-state questions was referred to June 1985, when a special assembly will be called to consider this and a new Union constitution. □

## Protestant clergy give papal trip mixed reviews

MONTREAL

Though a brilliant success in some respects Pope John Paul II's recent record 12-day, cross-Canada tour left many religious spokesmen, particularly non-Roman Catholic, shaking their heads.

While they agreed that the visit did much to capture the country's imagination, many also noted that the pope presented polarizing views on such diverse matters as, for example, sex and human rights.

His apparent extreme conservatism on pre-marital sex, birth control, and ordination of women was offset by his equally-extreme liberalism on the economic life and social rights of workers and native peoples.

As well, the pope came perilously close to advocating an all-out rebellion by Canada's native peoples to press their land claims and self-government.

One observer noted, "If any other world leader went about the country saying what the pope was saying he would be tossed right out on his ear."

The Rev. Ronald Coughlin, director of studies at the United Theological College of McGill University here, told the paper he was gratified with the pope's stand on native rights and poverty, which reflects the church's increasing concern with social and economic matters. "It is not limited to spiritual matters," he said.

"I was also disappointed that he came in the style of an emperor. If I had a criticism of the journey, it would be that it was structured to prevent dialogue with him," he said. □

## Religion observers see changes under Chernenko

LONDON

Keston College, an organization which monitors religious affairs in Communist countries, is more optimistic about the plight of religious people in the Soviet Union than since the days



## NEWS-SCAN

of the late President Leonid Brezhnev.

The college believes that "for believers in the USSR, the replacement of Yuri Andropov's more forceful presidency by what must be naturally a more collective leadership under Chernenko may give cause for a cautious hope for the leveling off of the recent sharp escalation in repression."

This is the verdict of Carolyn Burch, research student at the college, in an article entitled "Religious policy under Andropov and Chernenko," published in the current volume of the *Keston College journal*.

For many years, she wrote, Baptists have made up a large proportion of the imprisoned Christians. "Under Andropov, several Baptists were re-arrested and given fresh sentences, only months after completing a previous term of imprisonment."

Orthodox Christians have also been suffering increasingly over the last two years from the attack on clandestine religious literature, though the brunt of this had fallen on evangelical groups.

The work of the Christian Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights had likewise found increasing difficulties and risks over the last two years. It is also worth noting, she added, that Chernenko appears deliberately to stress in such public reference that the struggle is against religious ideology and not against believers themselves. □

### AI asks China to release prisoners of conscience

WASHINGTON

Amnesty International, the world's largest human rights organization has called on the People's Republic of China to free from its prisons Tibetan Buddhists and Catholic clergy who have remained loyal to Rome.

In its document, titled "Prisoners of Conscience and the Death Penalty in the People's Republic of China," Amnesty International said it was "impossible" to estimate the number of people imprisoned for their beliefs in China, since little information about them is revealed by the government. But the report cited published estimates by officials of several prisons that three percent of the inmates were political prisoners.

In addition to Catholics and Buddhists, the London-based organization also called attention to the continuing imprisonment of young workers and students who participated in a movement for democracy in 1978, as well as critics of human rights violations, people accused of divulging "state secrets," and former government officials stigmatized as "leftists."

Most of the prisoners described in the report have been "adopted" by Amnesty International, which intervenes on behalf of political prisoners around the world. The group has a worldwide membership of 500,000, which includes 3,341 local groups and 13,000 volunteers in the United States. □

### Knesset holds firm on suspected terrorists

Sixty rabbis, including the chief rabbi of Israel, have appealed for the release of more than 20 suspected members of a Jewish terror squad during the Jewish High Holy Days.

The rabbis sent their appeal to Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Police Minister Haim Bar-Lev who, unlike their predecessors in Likud government, have not expressed any understanding of the crimes of the suspected terrorists.

The members of the alleged terror group say they attacked Arab personalities and institutions after the government had been unable to protect Jewish residents of the West Bank from Arab terror attacks.

But in a Knesset debate in September, the government indicated that it would not agree to release the prisoners. Mr. Bar-Lev said he would not change the current practice of holding detainees during trial. He also expressed surprise that the rabbis had made such an appeal, saying there were many observant Jews who could have benefited from a release from prison during the High Holy Days. □

to become Christians, we are just another club or guild preserving the traditions of yesterday." His address focused on "a special dimension in the question of Christian conversion." □

Church leaders are praising the selection of **Arie Brouwer** the Reformed Church clergyman nominated to head the National Council of the Churches of Christ. The seasoned ecumenical administrator is an articulate exponent of Biblical theology and in his most recent ministry has been a persuasive spokesman for the social-action arm of the World Council in Geneva ... An editorial in the Baptist newspaper *London Times* raises the question, "should churches be licensed?" In spite of assurances by Lord Chancellor of England Denning that the main religious bodies of churches would be licensed, the proposal reads ominously like the prohibitions operating under Ministers of Cults in the USSR and other Eastern European countries. Stephen Orchard of the British Council of Churches called it an "Orwellian nightmare," while Heather McConnell of the World Council of Faiths said the antidote to cults "is not in legislation or state intervention." Warns the Baptist editorial, "Certainly, any attempt by the state to determine what is or is not lawful religious belief must be resisted. Let the state ... beware of interfering with legal strictures in the realm of freedom of belief or worship". ... Evangelist **Billy Graham**, following an exhausting preaching mission in the Soviet Union, was lauded by Russian Orthodox Church **Metropolitan Filaret** who expressed complete satisfaction with the visit and said its "greatest importance lay in the realm of relationships between churches and believers of differing backgrounds. Graham said no restrictions had been placed on his message ... Brazilian theologian **Leonardo Boff**, recently summoned to the Vatican for promoting Marxist-oriented liberation theology, in turn accused the Vatican of being too abstract and not offering enough concrete help to the poor. "The great shame of our times is the fact that 40 million people are dying of hunger. What could be more spiritual than giving food to a dying child?" asked Boff ... Conversion and being born again belong," **Emilio Castro**, the next general secretary of the World Council told a Baptist convocation in Rüsclikon. "Unless we invite people

# 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.

[Re: VIEWS, July-Aug.] ... most helpful. My concern was that the "intended reader" actually see it—and that these people know about the publication. I want to emphasize that about 40 percent of this graduating class are women—thus my reference to working "wives" in the memo. [President Greenfield wrote each spring graduate of the Colgate Rochester Divinity School . Bexley Hall . Crozer Theological Seminary calling attention to an attached article which provided information related to tax-deductible expenses. Inadvertently, sexism crept in, the "working wives" Greenfield alludes to.]

Your essays are always beneficial to me and others here at the school. Glad you are performing that ministry.

Larry L. Greenfield  
Rochester, NY

Delighted with your plans to utilize REPORT to provide basic material on our Baptist heritage for use in church publications and meetings. Our church will use them. Thanks!

Edward B. Freeman, Jr.  
Richmond, VA



• Christians must be peacemakers, at times encouraging government to the kinds of actions that it may not be ready to take. If Glen Stassen is correct, what kinds of influences can the church bring to bear on the state; and in a pluralistic society how does the state react to opposing points of view? Does the Catholic bishops' letter overstep church/state boundaries.

• Is there change in God? In his book review, Dr. Kenneth Smith seems to conclude that the spiritual crisis following "God's funeral" is less a crisis than an opportunity to explore the Biblical testimony to the relationship of God to the world. What are some misunderstandings we might be caught up

• I cannot believe the assertion [REFLECTIONS, Sept.] that a person who supports tuition tax credits for private schools is not a "real Baptist." The question is, should the American public be heavily taxed to support an educational system that is clearly failing to educate our children. Should we be forced to send our children into a school system dominated by the religion of humanism with atheistic textbooks ... where discipline has vanished, and drugs, profanity, and violence is the norm?

I am a "real Baptist" and I support tuition tax credits for all private schools, both secular and religious. To say that such a tax credit is supporting religion is the height of hypocrisy.

Dale E. Lawson  
Charleston Heights, SC

I have just finished reading the September issue of REPORT from the CAPITAL. I applaud the new format which attempts to provide more material which can be used directly by churches in their struggle to understand the various issues touching our major concern of the separation of church and state. Education, while a laborious slow method, is the only sure way of protecting liberties.

Thus, for my own reading and study the issue is superb. This would not be the case should I hand this issue to one of my church members. They would sink in the quicksand of academic and theological language. They would be unable to respond to the "Probe" questions simply because they would not understand what was being asked. If we are to be successful in re-educating our Baptist constituency, we

in that diminish our trust and short-change the mission to which Christ calls us?

• A church terminates (fires, actually) its pastor, who then sues the church. Does a pastor have a legal claim against a church? Do the courts overstep their jurisdiction by hearing and issuing judgments in such cases? Do you find yourself in agreement with VIEWS?

• Jesus in a parable speaks of the lost sheep in terms that lead us to believe that every person is of infinite worth. Explore REFLECTIONS' emphasis on freedom as it develops the theme of God's love and human dignity.

• Professor Stanley Hauerwas (Reviews) says that the Christian ethic is a social ethic, and that the church does not have a social ethic but is one. Does he provide convincing testimony to the truth of that statement? Is this to make of Jesus a teacher of ethics rather than the saviour of humankind? □

PEACEABLE from page 16

Locating the hallmark of a Christian ethic in non-violence will also create tension for some. Hauerwas is aware of the tension as shown by his excellent analysis of the Niebuhrs in chapter 8. Hauerwas opts for non-violence over realism and reveals the influence of John Howard Yoder on his thinking. The non-violent perspective will continue to be a fertile field of discussion in the future.

Many evangelicals will be troubled by Hauerwas' seeming lack of conversion theology or stress on individual salvation. The sacraments play a greater role in Hauerwas' thought than many evangelicals will be comfortable with.

These negative aspects of the book are not major enough to detract from its value. *The Peaceable Kingdom* is stimulating and thought provoking. It is to be highly commended for those who seriously desire to live as children of the Father in, but not of, the world. □

Glenn Saul

must direct our material at the mainstream Baptists rather than the few of us who have had the advantage of a sound academic/theological education.

Michael R. Duncan  
Eminence, KY

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Genuine Christianity is fired with a passion for persons, all persons, because of the biblical assessment of their nature and worth . . .



James M. Dunn  
Executive Director

## REFLECTIONS

Imagine the soles of two bare feet turned toward you. The two big toes represent all the human big toes on the face of the earth. Tag each of them.

This graphic game is an attempt to get at a Christian doctrine of persons. The tags for toes are intended to indicate the essence of what it means to be human from a Christian perspective. One label should indicate the contents, should identify, should tell us what it is attached to that helpless appendage.

The other tag should represent the assessment that we all make automatically or deliberately of everything and everyone that we see: a value label, a price tag. It will answer ideally what the creature attached to that toe is worth.

The whole odd venture is designed to see what a basic, no frills Christianity says about personhood. Much more could be said, for certain, in any adequate theological anthropology but much less would not satisfy even as a starting place.

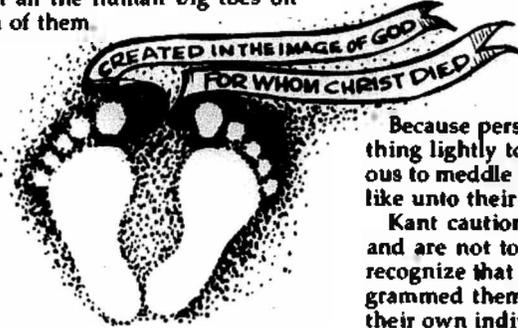
Please don't quibble with this modest effort at pop theology. Realize, instead, that this is an attempt to restate two elements in an elementary theological base for the nature and dignity of human beings. Could the tag on one toe read "made in God's image"? Augustine sang "Thou hadst made us for thyself, Oh God, and our souls are restless 'til they rest in Thee." Pascal saw a "God-shaped" emptiness in the life of every person.

Somehow, in ways one cannot explain, our personhood is defined in the biblical teaching that all humankind is made in the likeness of God. Nicolas Berdyaev insisted that human worth and dignity is "derived" from our being replicas of the Divine. "Where there is no God, there is no man." F.J. Sheed said, "in the Christian view, being a man is itself so vast a thing, that the natural inequalities from one man to the next are a trifle by comparison."

Understanding human beings in that light argues for freedom. There is no room for any of us to lord it over others, to dominate and manipulate them, because all of us are made in the similitude of God. There is certain arrogance when one of God's creatures claims too much control over others who, after all, come from the same mold.

Whatever else the classical teaching of *imago Dei* means, it means at least that persons, made by God are able to respond to their Creator. The roots of freedom are deep in the very personhood of God. All true freedom is in a real sense religious freedom. It is that in all of us which replicates the Divine that makes us *response able*, responsible and free.

And so, free moral agency, both freedom and responsibility are not to be taken lightly. These twin concepts constitute all of humankind's link with the Eternal. Like  
REPORT from the CAPITAL • Nov.-Dec. 1984



breathing in and breathing out freedom and responsibility are two parts of one process. One does not want to choose between them. Like two sides of one coin freedom and responsibility are *indissoluble*.

Because persons are made in God's image it is a terrible thing lightly to tamper with them. It is especially dangerous to meddle with an aspect of one's kindred souls that is like unto their Creator: their power of choice.

Kant cautioned that persons are ends unto themselves and are not to be treated as means to an end. One must recognize that persons are free to choose because God programmed them that way. People are all "wired-up" with their own individual deciders. Even though many of those decisions will be bad ones it's serious business to rob anyone of free choice. Society reserves the right to deprive individuals of their freedom only in exceptional circumstances.

Could the tag on the other toe read "for whom Christ died"? Augustine exclaimed "My soul thrills within me when I think that He died for me as much as if I were the only one for whom he had to die." While being made in God's image is a belief affirmed by all of the religions which share the Genesis account as part of their sacred writings (Islam, Judaism, Christianity), the estimate of human value related to the work of Christ is distinctly Christian.

Whatever else it may mean to accept the label "Christian," to voluntarily bear that name, it means at least seeing other human beings as valuable, possessing infinite worth. The Christian scriptures teach that followers of Jesus Christ are redeemed at great cost.

This specifically Christian belief does not diminish one iota the freedom invested in every individual. In fact, to accept the New Testament message enhances (or ought to) the price tag one puts on others; for if Christ died for me as much as if I were the only one for whom he had to die then He also loved every last human being in history with that same inestimable compassion. "For God so loved the world . . ."

When non-Christians look at the rigid moralism, the cocksure dogmatism, the insensitive certitude of some evangelicals who would deny soul freedom they rightly challenge their basic Christianity. An intensity of respect for others and a dedication to their highest good characterizes Christians.

Jesus himself refused to "zap" anyone into the Kingdom of God. He died rather than call ten thousand angels to coerce. He allowed those he loved to make their own mistakes. He watched sadly as one he wanted to follow him went away when he could have compelled him to stay.

Authentic Christianity is not morbidly obsessed with Jesus' death. No, it is inflamed with a holy zeal for the dignity of persons. Genuine Christianity is fired with a passion for persons, all persons, because of the biblical assessment of their nature and worth. The cross is not an empty symbol but a reminder of the real investment in those "for whom Christ died." □



## REVIEWS

### The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics

By Stanley Hauerwas. Notre Dame, Indiana: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1983, 179 pp., \$17.95, \$7.95 paper.

Professor Hauerwas' latest book shows the creativity that makes him one of the most important ethicists in America today. *The Peaceable Kingdom* will no doubt be surprising to many of his readers in its contention that non-violence is the hallmark of the Christian moral life. The book's value is two-fold. First of all it spells out how character, virtues and narrative are crucial to Christian ethics. Further, *The Peaceable Kingdom* shows how the life and ministry of Jesus are crucial for doing Christian ethics.

Hauerwas contends that the nature of Christian ethics is determined by the fact that Christian convictions take the form of a story that creates and forms a community. It is through understanding the story (narrative) that we come to an understanding of ourselves and God. The study of ethics must begin with Israel, the people of God, and the God who called them and led them. The story continued through the life and ministry of Jesus and the community of believers formed in Jesus' name. We can only know who we are and what gives meaning to our life as we locate ourselves within God's story.

The ongoing narrative helps us to envision our world and shapes our character, according to Hauerwas. Thus God's story is not merely told, it is lived out again by those who are grasped by it. Character is formed through the community of which we are a part. We learn the necessary virtues for the Christian life as we are challenged by the life of the community.

This idea that community and narrative are the keys to understanding Christian ethics makes the Christian faith dynamic. Christians are on a journey that calls for faithfulness to the story. Human life is understood by Hauerwas as a process that portrays growth and development.

#### REVIEWERS

Glenn Seal teaches Christian ethics at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and serves as correspondent for REPORT.

The heart of *The Peaceable Kingdom* is the chapter on the ethical significance of Jesus. Hauerwas insists that Christian ethics demands attention to the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. He rejects the methodology of those who give Christology a more prominent place than the message of the man Jesus. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God was the focus of Jesus' teaching. It was eschatological in that Jesus viewed the world as a story with an end. This was verified by Jesus' resurrection which makes possible a new way of life here and now.

There is an imitation motif in Hauerwas' ethic. Followers of Christ are to situate their lives in relation to Jesus, imitating him. By following the teaching of Jesus one learns to be like God. The key to imitation is to be a part of a community that practices Jesus' virtues. From others in the community, we learn how to live the kingdom life in the world.

Jesus' example of forgiveness and love showed the possibilities of the kingdom present in the world. Non-violence is the foundation on which the kingdom will be built. According to Hauerwas, our possessions are the source of violence. Jesus calls his disciples to make a radical break with the possessions, securities and customs of the world. Only then can they become truly non-violent. The cross is the symbol of Jesus' ultimate dispossession and the act by which God conquered the powers of the world. Peace (non-violence) is a real alternative, because through the resurrection we can have confidence that the world is in God's hands. By locating life within the kingdom of forgiveness and acquiring the virtues of humility and courage, Christians witness to the peaceable kingdom.

Hauerwas makes it clear that the Christian ethic is a social ethic. The church is a demonstration community of a peaceable people in a violent world. Even though the church is often

characterized by unfaithfulness, Hauerwas maintains that God does not allow this to be the last word about the church.

One of Hauerwas' most provocative statements is that the church does not have a social ethic—it is one. The church is where the story is told, heard and enacted. Its life not only demonstrates the peaceable kingdom, but helps the world see itself truthfully. The church is to be a community of virtues. Faithfulness to the Kingdom is its primary task. The use of unjust means by the church is ruled out by Hauerwas. He sees the church as a non-violent community. True justice can never come through violence, nor can it be based on violence. Justice can only come through truth, which has no need of violence to secure its existence. The church is known where the sacraments are celebrated, the word is preached, and where upright lives are encouraged and lived. The people of God are to focus on being a certain kind of people rather than on doing certain things.

In recent years the study of Christian ethics has focused on posing ethical issues in terms of decision making. Hauerwas has approached ethics from the perspective of being rather than doing.

The challenge to focus on the formation of character and virtues is a needed corrective. One has to ask, however, if adequate moral direction can be discerned from Hauerwas' approach. The answer would be yes if the church was indeed the kind of community Hauerwas envisions. Glimpses of the church as a social ethic appear here and there, but the captivity of the churches by their culture makes for pessimism. Hauerwas' contention that virtues are learned by seeing them lived out in the lives of others is difficult to apply. His contention is no doubt correct, but raises the question of how models are chosen. Saints are not often recognized until after they are gone. The saints that I believe are embodying authentic Christian faith may be different than those chosen by others. The subjectivism troubles me, though I am in basic agreement with Hauerwas.

Continued on page 14

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