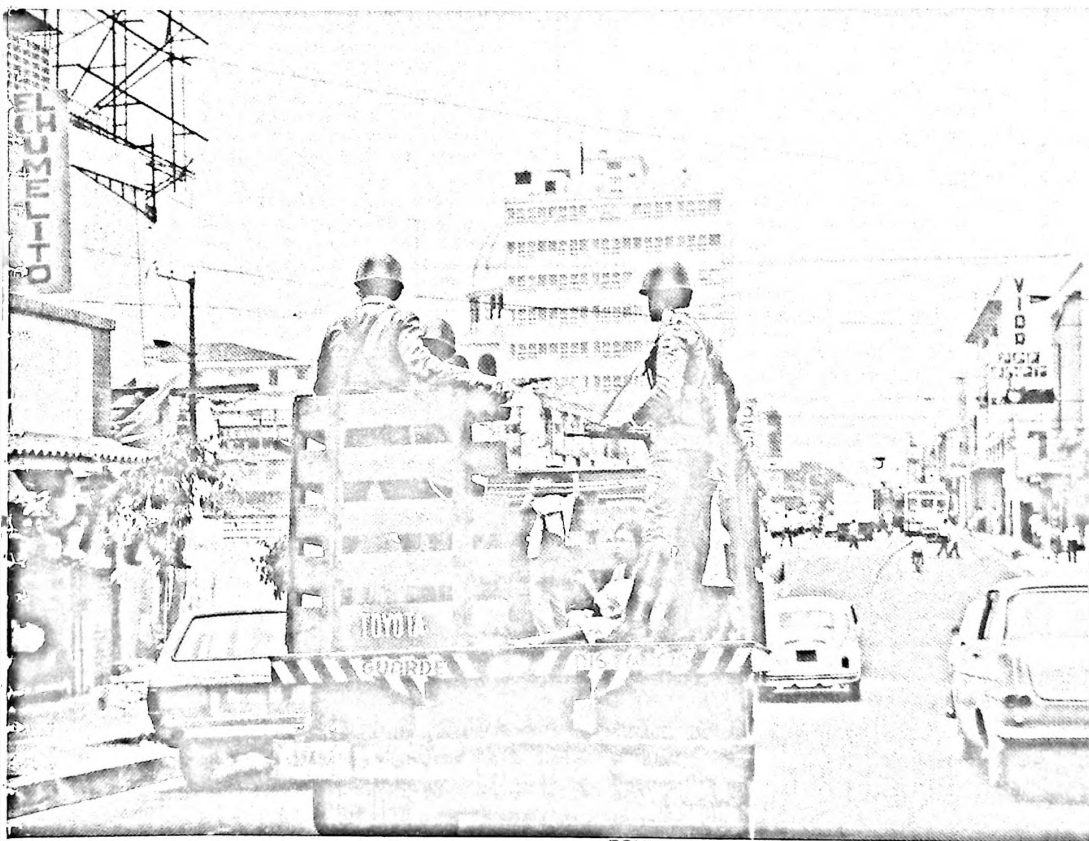


March, 1985

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REPORT from the CAPITAL



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REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 40, No. 3

March, 1985

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Cover: The sanctuary movement among churches in the United States gets much of its impetus from persons like the woman and child in the truck. This graphically reaffirms their claim to be political, not economic refugees.

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Harmony with Liberty

"Sweet harmony", as Isaac Backus perceived it, is presumed to have been the object of all the deliberation over the place of religion and religious values in American life. Yet, the dissonance of conflicting claims by church and state remains to be resolved. Apparently, every generation must struggle to define the relationship anew, allowing these two institutions within the limitation of their competence to contribute to the strengthening of the guarantee of religious liberty.

Stanley Grenz approaches the contemporary brouhaha over prayer in the public schools in the belief that Baptist history may offer a "way through the current impasse." It was the stalwart Backus and not Roger Williams, says Grenz, who actually took the leading steps toward separating church and state.

Surely a product of Enlightenment and Puritan influences, as were so many of his contemporaries, Backus joined the nation's founders in affirming that civil government has a right to expect lofty moral conduct of its citizens. But Backus rejected the notion that prayer fell into this category. Thus, with so many going their separate ways on this issue today, the beat of that elusive "harmony" moves on but the final score is yet to be written.

For many of us, the protest over the war in Vietnam provided the first concrete instance of the use of sanctuary as an instrument of civil disobedience. There remains some confusion over the legal status, although the state still honors sanctuary in the church. The movement today is comprised of some 180 sanctuary churches.

University Baptist church in Seattle, WA, at one time provided care for some 24 Salvadoran refugees. Donovan Cook, pastor, told REPORT there were no arrests through assault on the church, but that refugees living nearby in church housing were "picked off" by authorities as they left that property. The church links this ministry to its Biblical faith and believes it is supported by the Constitution of the U.S. which guarantees sanctuary from persecution to every person within the country, alien as well as citizen. The issue has not as yet been resolved in the courts.

Religious Liberty Day, 1985—"Soul Freedom - Baptists Living their Biblical Faith"

"Now the Lord is Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (II Cor. 3:17)
There you have the theme and the scripture for this year's observance, scheduled for the first week in June. This office provides materials to help your church plan a worship program. Write for your free packet today.

Victor Tupitza

More than two-hundred Christian and Jewish leaders have petitioned for Congressional investigations into the government's arrest of religious sanctuary movement workers and the deportation of Central American refugees.

This first massive challenge by religious leaders opposed to the Administration's refusal to recognize Salvadorans and Guatemalans as refugees seeks to end deportation of these Central Americans. The leaders argue that the refugees are seeking political and not economic asylum and thereby qualify for refugee status. Government raids resulting in deportations and the arrests of sanctuary workers have followed unprecedented electronic surveillance and infiltration of churches involved in the movement.

Baptists who signed the petition include Robert Campbell, General Secretary of the ABC/USA; C. J. Malloy, Jr., General Secretary of the Progressive National Baptist Convention; Vernon Grounds, past president of Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary; Glen Stassen, professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Ron Sider, professor of theology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Larry Greenfield, president, Colgate Rochester Divinity School; and Robert Tiller, director of the Office of Governmental Relations for the board of ABC/USA's National Ministries. ●

The U. S. Supreme Court in a decision that plows significant new ground in the field of criminal law threw out the conviction of a confessed murderer who five years ago killed a prominent Oklahoma Baptist pastor and his wife and severely wounded their two children. Richard and Marilyn Douglass had been Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil.

A new trial was ordered for the triggerman, Glen Burton Ake. Under holdings in the court's decision, the state will be required to provide Ake with psychiatric assistance in the preparation of his defense, a practice in more than 40 states and of the federal government. The Court's 8-1 opinion written by Justice Thurgood Marshall held that when a defendant has made a preliminary showing that his sanity at the time of the crime is likely to be a significant factor in his defense, "the Constitution requires that a state provide access to a psychiatrist's assistance...if the defendant cannot otherwise afford one.." ●

Describing the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement" toward South Africa as "immoral on its face, temporizing as it does with evil", twenty-eight Baptist church leaders, pastors and academics joined an interdenominational group numbering 300 in an open letter to all 535 members of Congress.

The statement called South Africa's system of apartheid—or separation of the races—"a system of institutional racism," and declared "constructive engagement" and its methods of "quiet diplomacy" and "friendly persuasion" have been "disastrous from a moral point of view" and for "practical and political reasons" as well.

Calling South Africa "the only country in the world that constitutionally enshrines white supremacy," the religious leaders said South African blacks are denied freedom of speech, assembly and travel, access to fair trial, and the right to choose where they live or work. Further, blacks are forced by law to carry a passport as a method of controlling their movement. Those signing the letter noted that U.S. investment in that nation is currently \$14.6 billion, and is South Africa's leading trade partner. ●

Isaac Backus and his vision of church-state relationships:

"Sweet Harmony"

Twenty years after the landmark Supreme Court cases of 1962 and 1963, public school prayer has again emerged as a controversial and significant church-state issue. The most recent debate had centered on President Reagan's proposed constitutional amendment to permit voluntary prayer in the nation's classrooms. Congressional discussion of this proposal climaxed in the 1984 Senate vote in which proponents failed to obtain the two-thirds majority needed for passage.

Public school prayer has become an emotion-filled and divisive issue, not only in the political arena, but also within the religious community. Even the Baptists, who have historically stood at the forefront of religious liberty causes in America, have not been able to find agreement on this question. On the one hand, agencies such as the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs support the Supreme Court decisions of the 1960's and oppose the various attempts to reintroduce some form of government-sponsored school prayer. On the other hand, several well-known Baptists are among the most outspoken supporters of the President's amendment, as well as the entire New Right agenda. On the surface at least, this cleavage appears to be a baffling contradiction.

In this situation of internal cleavage, Baptist history can be of great assistance both in gaining an understanding of the current division on the prayer issue and in seeking a way through the current impasse. One period which is highly instructive is eighteenth century New England. Although the efforts of Roger Williams in the seventeenth century had secured a charter for Rhode Island which granted religious freedom to all, the struggle for religious liberty in New England and in the colonies as a whole intensified in the eighteenth century. This later struggle, more so than

Williams' pioneer work, opened the way for the experiment in church-state separation that the American nation came to accept.

The Baptist fight against religious taxation in eighteenth century New England, which in part paved the way for separation of church and state, was spearheaded by a Massachusetts pastor named Isaac Backus. First as a Separate and then as a Baptist, he witnessed the suffering of religious dissenters in New England. By the time of the American Revolution, Backus had concluded that the plight of his co-religionists would be remedied only by total disestablishment of the dominant Congregational churches.

Backus' realization of the necessity of disestablishment presented him with the task of developing a theory of church-state relations that could undergird and explicate the separation of the two spheres which he advocated. In the construction of his theory he drew upon the philosophy of John Locke and the Calvinism mediated to him by the eminent theologian, Jonathan Edwards. Although acquainted with and appreciative of the viewpoints and writings of Baptists in both Old and New England including Roger Williams, Backus utilized these resources sparingly. His theory was more a personal synthesis of the Enlightenment and Puritanism with an eye to the heritage of his adopted denomination than a mere restating of traditional Baptist outlooks.

In the closing decades of the eighteenth century Backus' viewpoint on church-state separation resonated well with the work of certain of his contemporaries. Finally the loose coalition of Baptists and Virginia latitudinarians (e.g., Jefferson, Madison, etc.), prevailed, and the nation as a whole accepted disestablishment. Since he was the leading theorist and spokesman of the New England Baptists, Backus also became an important architect of the church-state system which was employed by the new American nation.

Backus was first and foremost a Christian pastor. Therefore, it is not surpris-

ing that theological conviction lay at the heart of his church-state theory. Specifically, three doctrines formed its foundation. First, his starting point was found in the grand Calvinist emphasis on the sovereignty of God. For Backus, God was the governor of the universe to whom all earthly civil governments must appeal for legitimization.

The second central doctrine in Backus' theory was anthropological. He followed Locke and Edwards in emphasizing the human intellect as the controlling faculty of the individual. Drawing on this emphasis and on Calvinist influences, Backus defined human freedom as the ability to act consistent with reason. Backus combined this basic anthropology with the Biblical stories of creation and fall to produce an elaborate understanding of the human predicament, which was quite similar to that devised by Edwards. The human person was created to be governed by "reason and a well-informed judgment," Backus declared, which would be influenced by the command to love God. But then another "external motive," "the conceit that man could advance either his honor or happiness by disobedience instead of obedience," was injected by "the father of lies." This evil imagination "usurped" the place of a properly informed reason, a usurpation which continues in the history of every human being.

The result of this is depravity, as individual reason is no longer given the position of leadership over personal actions. Liberty consists in the ability to hinder one's own desires from determining one's will until the good and evil of the proposed action have been examined. For this, divine influence is needed, mediated to the individual by the Scriptures, which are designed to act against the "evil imaginations" and to combat ignorance, thereby bringing freedom.

The third central doctrine in Backus' church-state theory was ecclesiological, i.e., the doctrine of the church itself. Although agreeing with his opponents' dichotomy between the visible and invisible churches, Backus conceived of the

Dr. Grenz teaches systematic theology and Christian ethics at North American Baptist Seminary, and frequently reviews for REPORT.

... as civil rulers ought to be men fearing God, and hating covetousness, and to be terrors to evil doers, and a praise to them who do well; and as ministers ought to pray for rulers, and to teach the people to be subject to them, so there may and ought to be a sweet harmony between them ...

visible church as a voluntary society of believers, an idea for which he found precedence in Locke. This voluntary society consists in the local congregation formed by a voluntary covenant of its members, and not in the parish churches which had developed in New England. In this way the stress on the individual found in Backus' anthropology was paralleled by a stress on the individual in the formation of the covenant church community.

Out of these three foundational doctrines grew Backus' theory of church and state. This theory contained three basic theses: *First*, for Backus governmental structure is intrinsic to human existence. His *second* thesis declared that God had instituted two governments, the civil and the ecclesiastical, each with differing tasks and responsibilities. In his understanding, the civil government is to defend its citizens against the hostilities of others and to promote upright living by means of respectable magistrates elected by the entire population regardless of religious persuasion. Distinct from civil government is the ecclesiastical with its jurisdiction over human souls. The *third* thesis in Backus' church-state theory allowed for governmental activity in the moral realm, even though church matters lay beyond its role. Following Locke and the Enlightenment, he held to "a two-fold source of truth, reason and revelation."

Although Backus advocated some form of separation of church and state, the separation he envisioned did not require competition between the two spheres. In fact, since both are God's institutions, a harmonious relationship, a "sweet harmony," ought to exist:

... as civil rulers ought to be men fearing God, and hating covetousness, and to be terrors to evil doers, and a praise to them who do well; and as ministers ought to pray for rulers, and to teach the people to be subject to them, so there may and ought to be a sweet harmony between them ...

This, then, was the program proposed by Backus and adopted to a large extent by the new nation: Government is a legitimate institution derived from God. The civil and religious spheres are distinct entities, separated in function and in fact. Morality, however, falls under the domain of both, being divided into each sphere according to the twofold source of truth. Natural truth of reason is to be legislated, whereas supernatural truth of revelation is to be reserved for ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Backus' theory of church-state separation forms an important background for an understanding of the cleavage among his denominational children over various contemporary church-state questions, including the school prayer issue. The Middleboro minister divided morality into the jurisdiction of church and state. This had the effect of dividing ethics into categories of natural (reason) and supernatural (revelation). Unfortunately, he did not devise an eternally-valid means to delineate clearly where this division ought to fall.

Backus left to his spiritual children a clear theory of church-state separation, yet one which is not unproblematic in specific application. This is seen in various current Baptist debates, which tend to center less on church-state theory (this is generally accepted by all) than on application of theory to specific issues. The discussion of public school prayer, for example, largely revolves around the question of the legitimacy of any governmental role in supporting prayer. In terms of Backus' model the question becomes whether or not prayer is a natural duty, a general good, and therefore within the boundary of the civil government to advance.

That there are no easy answers to this question was evident already in Backus' day. This issue constituted a point of controversy between himself and the seventeenth century pioneer of religious liberty, Roger Williams. Backus quoted approvingly a now famous paragraph from Williams' *History of Providence*:

I affirm that all, the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges, that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship; nor secondly compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any. I further add, that I never denied that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course; yea, and also command that justice, peace and so-

briety to be kept and practiced, both among the seamen and all the passengers. If any of the seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help in person or purse towards the common charges or defense; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders and officers; if any should (shall) preach or write that there ought to be no commanders nor officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters nor officers, no laws nor orders, no corrections nor punishments; I say, I never denied but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel and punish such transgressors, according to their deserts and merits.

In Backus' understanding both he and Williams were in agreement that the civil government has the right to demand that its citizens perform whatever moral duties are taught by natural religion. They differed, however, in the relationship of prayer to human reason. Williams denied that prayer falls under this category. But for Backus,

Daily prayer to God for what we need, and praises for what we receive, are duties taught by reason as well as revelation; and every person is inexcusable that neglects the immediate practice of these duties.

Proponents of school prayer today could well interpret Backus' remarks as favoring their position. According to the New Right, prayer is in some sense subject to government sponsorship. This could be defended by Backus' suggestion that prayer is a common human duty taught by reason itself. Baptist supporters of the Reagan amendment, therefore, rather than being totally at variance with their heritage as some claim, do indeed to some degree stand on the legacy of Isaac Backus, who was himself one of the architects of American church-state theory.

At the same time, however, two additional observations must be considered before simply granting the case to the advocates of public school prayer. First, the unfolding of subsequent history has revealed that Backus had purchased too much from the Enlightenment. In the two hundred years since his day it has been discovered that the "truths of reason" which he relegated to the legislative power of civil government were little more than the moral consensus of the

Continued on page 7

VIEWS OF THE WALL

Stan Haste



"Accommodation" is the word being used to describe the shift taking place in the U.S. Supreme Court's views of the First Amendment's religion clauses. That such a shift is well under way is undeniable, especially in view of decisions over the past two terms, including approval of tuition tax deductions at the state level [*Mueller v. Allen*, 103 S.Ct. 3062 (1983)], paid chaplains in state legislatures [*Marsh v. Chambers*, 103 S.Ct. 3330 (1983)], and municipally owned creches displayed on privately owned property [*Lynch v. Donnelly*, 104 S.Ct. 1355 (1984)].

The degree to which the doctrine of accommodation will be further applied may well be signaled over the next four months as the high court hands down opinions in several church-state cases. (With seven such disputes to be decided, the October 1984 term will go down as the most prolific church-state term in court history.)

Among issues to be decided in these cases are Alabama's silent prayer statute (83-812, *Wallace v. Jaffree*); Grand Rapids, Michigan's practice of leasing classroom space from parochial schools to provide special education programs to nonpublic pupils (83-990, *School District of Grand Rapids v. Ball*); New York City's use of federal elementary and Secondary Education Act funds to send public school teachers into parochial schools for special education classes (84-237, *Aguilar v. Felton*); Scarsdale, New York's refusal to permit a privately owned creche on public property (84-277, *Board of Trustees of the Village of Scarsdale v. McCreary*); Nebraska's law requiring even persons who object for religious reasons to have their photographs displayed on driver's licenses (83-1944, *Jensen v. Quaring*); and Connecticut's statute requiring private employers to give their employees a day off each week as requested for religious observances (83-1158, *Thornton v. Caldor*).

An argument can be made that the heavy volume of such cases in the current term, added to the important rulings in the last two terms mentioned above, indicate fundamental changes in the court's approach to the church-state equation. Something significant must be happening, goes this line of reasoning, or why would the court be tackling all these disputes in such a short span of time.

On the other hand, a case can be built for the view that what is now labeled "accommodation" has been around a long time. Justice William O. Douglas, for example, wrote in *Zorach v. Clauson*, 334 U.S. 306 (1952), that "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." That phrase has been used since its penning more than 30 years ago by some high court justices troubled by what they have considered an overly strict interpretation of the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion.

In fact, Douglas himself—who was indisputably a strict separationist—made the point forcefully in *Zorach*, a 6-3 decision upholding a program of released time for public school students to receive off-campus religious instruction: "There is much talk of the separation of Church and State in the history of the Bill of Rights and in the decisions clustering around the First Amendment. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the First Amendment reflects the philosophy that Church and State should be separated. And so far as interference with the 'free exercise' of religion and an 'establishment' of religion are concerned, the separation must be complete and unequivocal. The First Amendment within the scope of its coverage permits no exception; the prohibition is absolute. The First Amendment, however, does not say that in every and all respects there shall be a separation of Church and State. . . . Otherwise the state and religion would be aliens to each other—hostile, suspicious, and even unfriendly."

In a generalized sense, the question is, how different are those views of the libertarian Douglas from those of current Chief Justice Warren E. Burger as expressed in *Walt v. Tax Commission of the City of New York*, 397 U.S. 664 (1970): "The course of constitutional neutrality in this area cannot be an absolutely straight line; rigidity could well defeat the basic purpose of these provisions, which is to insure that no religion be sponsored or favored, none commanded, and none inhibited. The general principle deducible from the First Amendment and all that has been said by the Court is this: that we will not tolerate either governmentally established religion or governmental interference with religion. Short of those expressly proscribed governmental acts there is

room for play in the joints productive of a benevolent neutrality which will permit religious exercise to exist without sponsorship and without interference."

From Douglas's concern that the state not be hostile to religion to Burger's "benevolent neutrality," the court appears now to be moving to "accommodation." While constitutional scholars and others may debate whether the present majority goes beyond accommodating religion to establishing it, philosophically the doctrine of accommodation does not seem essentially different from its antecedents.

Actually, even the precise concept of accommodation is not new at all. In another passage in *Zorach*, Douglas wrote that whereas in *McCullum v. Board of Education*, 333 U.S. 203 (1948), public school classrooms were used for religious instruction and public schools were used to promote such teaching, the *Zorach* situation was different in that "the public schools do no more than accommodate their schedules to a program of outside religious instruction." He added that the court's striking down of the practice in *McCullum* did not mean the ruling could be expanded to cover the situation in *Zorach* because to do so would mean "that public institutions can make no adjustments of their schedules to accommodate the religious needs of the people."

Thirty-two years after *Zorach*, it was Burger who resurrected the Douglas language, using the idea in a critically important passage of *Lynch*, the case upholding the Pawtucket, R.I. creche: "No significant segment of our society and no institution within it can exist in a vacuum or in total or absolute isolation from all the other parts, much less from government. . . . Nor does the Constitution require complete separation of church and state; it affirmatively mandates accommodation, not merely tolerance, of all religions, and forbids hostility toward any."

In short, although journalists over the next few months may well make much of the accommodation doctrine, it is not new. How far the Supreme Court pushes it, however, remains to be seen. And at what point accommodation of religion becomes establishment of religion will be the focal point of the ongoing church-state debate. □

"Sweet Harmony", from page 5

eighteenth century. Backus was living in a society in which religious doctrines such as the reality of God were widely accepted, and religious duties such as prayer were widely practiced. This caused many, including Backus, to conclude that they were universally taught by human reason.

The contemporary situation is far different. Lying between Backus and late twentieth century American society are two hundred years, which have witnessed the erosion of the religious consensus of his day. For this reason, any attempt to conclude with Backus that prayer is a natural truth taught by human reason and therefore under the jurisdiction of the state is highly questionable. History has shown Williams, not Backus, to have been the more perceptive of the two concerning the relationship between prayer and natural reason.

Secondly, however, Backus is not without insight for the current situation. The main thrust of his church-state theory continues to be helpful even in the present debate. Ultimately, religion is a matter of inward commitment, as Backus concluded from his anthropology and ecclesiology. Therefore, church and state do have fundamentally different tasks in society. Likewise, the inward basis of religious commitment undermines any legislative attempt to secure the benefits of piety for society as a whole.

Backus was surely correct in seeking to limit the role of civil government in religious issues to one of benign neutrality. Its task can only be that of providing a climate in which truth is free to accomplish its mission of convicting human minds. Government itself cannot advance the gospel. Therefore, it ought not to legislate purely religious practices. Backus rightly called on the civil sphere to allow the church, which has been charged by Christ with the mandates of evangelism and nurture, to do its work of teaching religious truth unhindered.

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decisions of the 1960's there have been many occasions in which the Court rulings have been utilized to suggest that all voluntary religious expressions in public schools are illegal. In this way the civil government has been invoked in opposition to religion. Such action is contrary to Backus' understanding of the separation of church and state. According to Backus, civil government has the responsibility to create a climate in which truth is free to carry on its convincing task unhindered. Contemporary Baptists, therefore, do right in calling for the free exchange of ideas in the public schools. But since prayer is a purely reli-

gious exercise and not a truth by natural reason, as history has shown, the way to achieve the goal of creating a climate of freedom is not through the reintroduction of government-sponsored prayer, even of the "voluntary" type advocated by some Baptists today. True religion simply cannot be legislated.

One cannot dogmatically assert exactly how Isaac Backus would view the contemporary prayer question, if he were here today. In a very real sense he laid the theoretical groundwork for the New Right position which advocates prayer in public schools. At the same time his writings indicate that as perceptive a mind as his would have learned the lesson of the intervening years. Subsequent history might well have taught Backus that prayer is a purely religious expression and not a civil duty, a conclusion to which Williams had come a century earlier. This realization would have brought him to see that all government-sanctioned prayer constitutes an overstepping of the "sweet harmony" between the civil and ecclesiastical spheres, which Backus so forcefully advocated. □

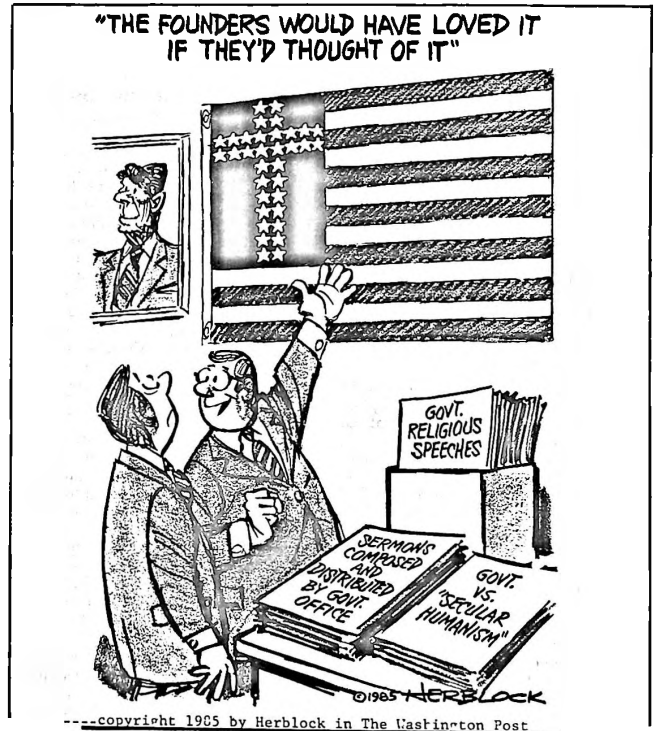
Jews urged to monitor religious groups

NEW YORK

Reform Jewish synagogues are being urged to set up committees to monitor religious activities in their community's public schools.

The suggestion is made in a booklet on the 1984 Equal Access Act published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It says the law poses dangers because it requires schools that permit extracurricular clubs to meet on their premises to permit religious clubs to meet.

The guide suggests that if parents have any problems with student religious clubs, they should complain to the school board, then to the state superintendent of schools, and, finally, bring a lawsuit against the school. □



News in Brief

Kennedy-Falwell 'debate' turns into testimonial

WASHINGTON

U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Moral Majority founder Jerry Falwell presented contrasting views on abortion and Reagan administration policy toward South Africa in a joint appearance before the National Religious Broadcasters convention here Feb. 5.

But what had been billed as a debate instead turned into something of a testimonial and the ideological opposites traded warm compliments before a breakfast throng of 4,000 fundamentalist and evangelical broadcasters.

For the past 18 months Kennedy and Falwell have engaged in a political dialogue that began when a Moral Majority computer by mistake sent the Massachusetts liberal a membership card in the five-year-old conservative organization. As he came to the podium to deliver his speech, Kennedy pulled out the card and told the laughing audience, "I never leave home without it."

Kennedy recalled his highly publicized 1983 visit to Falwell's Liberty Baptist College in Lynchburg, Va. as the starting point of a "remarkable time" during which the pair has nourished a new friendship.

For his part, Falwell told of visiting Kennedy's suburban McLean, Va. home the evening before the debate and paid special tribute to Kennedy's teenage son, Teddy. He commended the younger Kennedy, who several years ago lost a leg to cancer, for the prayer he offered at dinner. "We love Teddy Kennedy," he declared.

In his speech, Kennedy said that while religious values have an important place in public life, "the division is about where and how they should apply." He quoted colonial Baptist leader Roger Williams' warning that "It is impossible for any man or for all men to maintain their Christianity by the sword, and maintain thereby a true Christianity."

Such a standard for interaction between religion and politics, Kennedy continued, "does not seek conformity for the sake of uniformity, but unity based on respect for our diversity; it does not enjoin religion to be silent, but holds only that at times, the proper role of religion is to persuade the individual conscience, not to harness the coercive power of the state."

Although Falwell did not address the religion-in-politics issue directly, he reiterated his longstanding conviction that legalized abortion since 1973 has amounted to the "destruction" of 15,000,000 "innocent human beings" and that its ongoing practice invites "the wrath of Almighty God" on America.

Both men gave over extensive portions of their speeches to U.S. policy toward South Africa and its system of apartheid, or racial separation, with Kennedy assailing and Falwell defending Reagan administration policies.

At the conclusion of the addresses, the debate moderator asked both Kennedy and Falwell what one thing each would change about the other.

"I think Rev. Falwell works too hard," Kennedy replied. After a dramatic pause, he added, "And I suggest he take a sabbatical in 1988."

Falwell's reply: "I think the senator would make a great, great Republican Baptist." □

'Pastoral visit' to Cuba may lead to dialogue

WASHINGTON

A delegation of American Catholic bishops complained recently to Cuban President Fidel Castro about pervasive "discrimination" against Catholics in the Communist country, according to the bishop who led the delegation.

The Americans made a "pastoral visit" to Cuba at the invitation of the Cuban Catholic bishops, from Jan. 21-25. While there, the bishops received an unexpected invitation by Mr. Castro to meet with him.

In a statement released here, Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio said Mr. Castro "seemed open" to the possibility of "an intensive and continuing dialogue" with the Cuban bishops on points of dispute between church and state there. The Castro government has had no official contact with the Catholic hierarchy in the past, church aides said.

"President Castro said pressure against Catholics was not part of government policy. He noted historical circumstances which he suggested might explain individual pressure against Catholics.

Mr. Castro, at the end of the conversations with American prelates, indicated his interest in a meeting with the pope, said Msgr. Daniel Hoyer, general secre-

tary of the bishops' conference, who accompanied the bishops on the visit. □

Human rights abuses reach critical level

WASHINGTON

An overflow crowd of 550 members, concerned citizens, and public figures attended an emergency meeting of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry on human rights abuses against Soviet Jews.

They learned that Soviet Jews are experiencing growing restrictions upon their movements, thinking, and religious freedom. Emigration figures of Jews from the U.S.S.R. show a drastic downward turn, from over 50,000 per year to now under 1,000 per year over the last decade.

In a statement prepared by the Baptist Joint Committee, Marc Mullinax reminded the group that the "widely-known plight of the Soviet Jews can be re-cast with Baptist and Pentecostal accents in the Soviet Union today." He encouraged all who inspect and address human rights abuses in the U.S.S.R. not to stop at the Soviet Jewry issue, but "go all the way and recognize that ... discrimination against Jews, Baptists and Pentecostals are all part of the same fabric." □

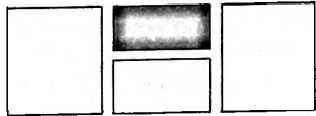
Writing, mailing sermons no business of government

WASHINGTON

The mailing of suggested religious sermons to child-welfare agencies by an office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been described as "inappropriate" but "well-intentioned" by an aide to HHS Secretary Margaret M. Heckler.

United Press International revealed that the sermons written by an HHS employee had been sent to some 500 child-welfare agencies by the department's Office of Human Development Services.

In response to a request for a comment from HHS Secretary Heckler, her chief of staff, C. McClain Haddow, said, "I think it was inappropriate. The message is very, very well-intentioned. I think we have to use better judgment as to what materials are included so it will not offend any particular religious group."



The government agency's distribution of the sermons was criticized by such groups as Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the American Jewish Congress, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and the American Civil Liberties Union. Barry Lynn, of the ACLU, said, "The government cannot be in the sermon-writing business for any or all religious faiths."

In contrast, Gary Jarmin, of the fundamentalist Christian Voice Lobby, said that "as long as they're not forcing these ideas on people against their will or discriminating against one religion, I see no harm." □

Baptist heads join appeal to end poverty in the U.S.

WASHINGTON

Robert C. Campbell, general secretary, American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., and Marshall Lorenzo Shepard Jr., president, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., were among 36 signers to an interfaith statement issued in February to "end poverty in the United States."

"Out of our faith grows the conviction that no one—child or adult—should suffer the debilitation of poverty," the leaders declared. "We must seek justice; we must protect the vulnerable. Poverty in this country can and must end." □

Indiana to consider school prayer bill

INDIANAPOLIS

Public school students in Indiana could pray during brief, voluntary classroom sessions under a bill proposed in the state Senate.

Sen. David L. Nicholson introduced legislation that would allow a brief period of prayer if the teacher recites a prayer for each religion represented by the students in the class.

The bill says that the teacher would not be required to recite a prayer of each denomination of the different religions represented. □

Florida women's group sues school system

ORLANDO

The Seminole County, Fla., school system has been sued by a conservative Christian women's group for what the

News Commentary

II Chronicles 7:14 - A Reagan Exegesis

An apparently minor and all but unnoticed incident during President Reagan's swearing-in for a second term illustrates the main problem advocates of separation of church and state have with his administration.

While the Chief Justice of the United States read the traditional 39-word oath of office, Reagan repeated the words with his hand placed on a Bible opened to 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

That familiar text long ago became the watchword of the movement known as the Religious Right, the coalition put together by largely fundamentalist preachers recruited to the Reagan team in 1979. It is a movement that likes to take a lion's share of credit for electing Reagan in 1980 and for contributing significantly to his huge landslide last November.

The problem with these preachers—and the president's—use of the II Chronicles text is that they apply it directly to the United States. Although it was written for ancient Israel—a people chosen as God's own nation—it is transferred with the greatest of ease to modern America.

In so doing, leaders of the Religious Right also conveniently overlook the entire thrust of Paul's New Testament conviction that the church—not any nation or political entity—is God's new people, the true heirs of the covenant with Israel.

The image of the United States as God's chosen people is not a new one, of course. For more than a century, dating to the days when many Americans thought of the strapping young giant of a country as a nation of "manifest destiny," preachers and politicians alike have availed themselves of the "new Is-

rael" imagery. Ronald Reagan is only the latest of the latter to do so.

Nevertheless, the idea remains theologically and biblically bankrupt and potentially dangerous.

It also creates terrible distortions in the church-state field. If one really believes that God is America's God, it is easy to understand why the president can lament again and again that God has been "expelled" from the nation's public school classrooms. If America is uniquely God's people, why not advocate—as the president does—public money for religious institutions? If the nation is really a church, why not send an ambassador to another church?

Yet this president, whose church-state record is far and away worse than that of any of his 39 predecessors, can still claim to believe in separation of church and state, as do his preacher friends of the Religious Right. But like his, their positions on the critical church-state issues of the day fly in the face of their claims.

For those who have read American history and understand that the nation's founders deliberately separated the two realms, the best hope over the next four years is that President Reagan will concern himself so much with economic and international issues that he will not too radically alter the delicate arrangement between church and state that has served the nation so well.

Perhaps they can even hold out hope that the president will listen to advice from religious leaders other than those of the Religious Right and their distortions of American history. He might listen, for example, to Billy Graham, who five years ago declared: "Now I am grateful for the heritage of our country, and I am thankful for many of its institutions and ideals, in spite of its many faults. But the kingdom of God is not the same as America, and our nation is subject to the judgment of God just as much as any other nation." □ Stan Haste

petitioner called its "aggressive anti-Christian censorship policy."

The Washington-based Concerned Women for America cited two incidents in the suit filed in U.S. District Court here. In the first case, 8-year-old Olivia Myers, of Sanford, was allegedly prohibited from distributing small greeting

cards that included a sticker of Jesus to classmates at Pine Crest Elementary School. The girl later gave out the cards in the hall and on the school bus.

In the second incident, 13-year-old Rebecca Reichert had joined with four friends in preparing a poster depicting a

Continued on page 14.

SANCTUARY

Giving sanctuary . . .
a non-violent and
religious response
to expressions of
institutionalized
violence.

At one point last summer twenty-four Salvadorans lived in "sanctuary" facilities on the third floor of our church building. Each adult in the group, as well as several of the children, told us horrifying and often tragic stories about why they fled El Salvador to seek refuge in the United States. All left to save their lives: "Because of the civil war raging in our country, because of all the bombing and killing, no one feels safe."

Since 1979 more than forty-thousand Salvadoran men, women, and children have been murdered in El Salvador by government forces and para-military groups often directed by Salvadoran military officers. Included in this number is Archbishop Oscar Romero, killed in March 1980 while serving communion to parishioners in a small chapel in San Salvador. More than thirty Roman Catholic priests, nuns, and Christian lay workers, as well as several Protestant religious leaders, who dared to provide assistance to the poor and displaced refugees in the country, have been systematically assassinated, or "disappeared", never to be heard from again.

The giving of "public sanctuary" by North American churches to those who have fled this kind of government-sponsored terror directed against its own population is fundamentally a religious response to a desperate human situation. Public sanctuary is an authentic ex-

pression of a Christian community's obedience to the mandate of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is an act of obedience that is deeply rooted in the historic religious convictions of the Judeo-Christian tradition. It is a moral response by U.S. churches to immoral and illegal actions promulgated by the present administration in Washington.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Christian community in Rome imploring them to express their love of Christ and faithfulness to his gospel in "genuine" ways (Rom. 12:9ff). They were instructed not just to "hate what was evil," but by their actions to provide an alternative to that manifestation of evil they so despised. The giving of public sanctuary in our time is such an expression of the Christian faith. It was the Lord who spoke to Joshua and commanded him to say to the Israelites that they must appoint "cities of refuge" upon occupying the Promised Land (Deut. 4:41-43). And it was the Psalmist who placed this expression of faithfulness in theological perspective saying, it was the Lord God of Israel who was to be seen as the ultimate refuge for the oppressed. God was to be seen as their "stronghold in times of trouble." (Ps. 9:9).

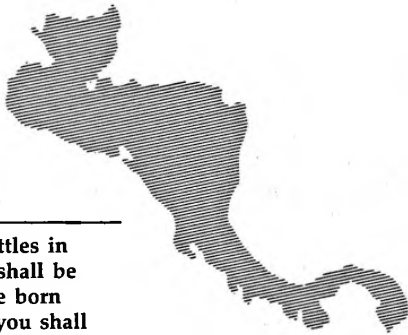
According to our religious tradition, a place of "sanctuary" was a sacred place, a holy place, where a special relationship was established between an individual, or a people, and the God of their faith. Here the persecuted and pursued could find safety, and would be treated in a just manner in the presence of the Lord. First century Christians, therefore, understood their own religious communities to be "places of refuge" for

slaves fleeing the cruel treatment of their masters. Many have seen the caves and catacombs in Rome where Christians hid such individuals from civil authorities and in turn provided the inhabitants with food, shelter, and emotional and spiritual support. Giving sanctuary was a non-violent religious response to expressions of institutionalized violence. A similar analogy can be drawn today with respect to the sanctuary movement in this country.

The United States from its inception was conceived as a "land of sanctuary" for all fleeing various forms of oppression and persecution in their country of origin. The preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, includes the statement: "...no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." This was a guarantee made to every person within the country, to a citizen as well as to an alien who may have fled here and entered the country illegally. Among the founding fathers were those who reflected in their own thinking a respect for the Old Testament admonition which said: "When an alien settles with you in your land, you shall not oppress him. He shall be treated as a native born among you, and you shall love him as you love yourself...." (Lev. 19:33-34).

During this early period of American history the concept of church sanctuary had its own established history. Recognized in biblical tradition, it became an accepted expression of religious faithfulness not only in Roman law, but was codified during the Middle Ages in canon law and incorporated into European civil law prior to the migration of

"Public Sanctuary" for Central American Refugees: Its meaning and Implication. By Donovan J. Cook, minister of the University Baptist Church (ABC/USA), Seattle, WA From the December, 1984 *American Baptist QUARTERLY*, used by permission.



When an alien settles in your land ... he shall be treated as a native born among you, and you shall love him as you love yourself." (Lev. 19:33-34)

Europeans to North America. The problem for the Christian community in our own day is that the present administration in Washington has determined such activity is a federal crime. This is the reason for the crisis of conscience of many who consider themselves Christian and patriotic citizens of the United States. The U.S. government has rejected these established religious and legal traditions in its effort to deny the people fleeing El Salvador and Guatemala have a legitimate claim to be considered political "refugees," in spite of the fact that they are so recognized by the present United Nations High Commissioner on refugees. The callous stand taken by this administration is to label these people "undocumented aliens," [those] who have entered the country illegally "purely for economic reasons." For example, Elliot Abrams, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, has said publicly that these people have come to the United States for no other reason than "to obtain a welfare check and drive a Cadillac."

It is this administration's contention that Section 274 (a) of the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act is to be enforced against...

Any person who willfully or knowingly conceals, harbors or shields from detection...in any place, including any building or means of transportation, any alien not duly admitted by an immigration officer or not lawfully entitled to enter or reside within the United States...shall be guilty of a felony, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine...or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or both, for each alien [in their possession]....

It is the argument of those religious communities participating in the National Sanctuary Movement that Salvadoran and Guatemalan people, above all people who have fled to the United States seeking to escape persecution in their own country, deserve to be granted "refugee" status and receive temporary asylum in this country until it is safe for them to return home. Those who hold this opinion cite the 1983 report of the internationally recognized human rights organization, *America's Watch*, that identified the government of El Salvador, in particular, as having the greatest number of "gross violations of human rights" of any country in the world. [UN Treaty No. 2545 similarly protects refugees against forcible return to the "frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or holding a particular political opinion."] □

It is the total disregard by our government of world opinion and international law pertaining to this issue, that is, in part, responsible for the moral outcry voiced by religious and human rights groups in the U.S. and elsewhere, directed at our government's policies. The granting of sanctuary by churches in a decidedly public and not clandestine way, therefore, is an attempt to draw greater national attention to the inhuman, if not uncivilized, character of policies directed in a totally discriminatory fashion against these people.

The determination of whether this act of Christian discipleship is a legitimate expression of a people's religious convictions remains to be decided within the American judicial system. The giving of

public sanctuary to Central American refugees, however, will continue with an increasing number of U.S. churches joining this national effort. Sanctuary churches will continue to provide protection for those who daily face the threat of arrest by federal authorities and possible deportation. The attempt to provide a voice for those who have been denied the freedom of speech in their own country will also continue. For in order to change policies responsible for these circumstances, it is imperative that the American public know the truth about the policies of the U.S. government as they impact the lives of these particular Central American people. American citizens must know, see, hear, and feel the nature and extent of the human suffering produced because of our lack of sensitivity to the plight of these human beings.

A leader in the national sanctuary movement said "a church that serves the Kingdom of God will oppose organized oppression, and so, too, it will risk persecution. Its members really have no option except to risk imprisonment themselves in order to express the deepest moral convictions of their faith." On the other hand, he observes that those who seek to escape any form of personal sacrifice or possible persecution in the exercise of their faith "will naturally abandon this kind of church."

In a growing number of churches across the country the people have become participants in a "new" reformation within the Christian church. From the midst of the politicized, secularized, assimilated church in North America, a new church is being resurrected—an "insurgent church." It is the Christian community that once again refuses to adhere to the cruel directives of Caesar in order to be faithful to the will of the true God in faith. It is the Church of Jesus Christ that chooses to serve the Kingdom of God rather than continue to support the immoral practices and illegal policies of its own government.

In Jesus' parable of the Kingdom (Matt. 25) those who were identified as being among the righteous in the land, asked the king, when it was that they had behaved in a manner so as to receive his approval and commendation. When I came to you as a stranger, you took me into your home. When I was hungry you fed me. When I was thirsty you gave me something to drink, when naked you clothed me. Those things you did for these brothers whom at first you did not know you did for me. This is the message of God's word to us. The quality and integrity of our faith will be determined by our response to the needs of the stranger, the alien in our land. □

INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



Burned-out church faces conservative harassment

JERUSALEM

The Narkis Street Baptist Church in west Jerusalem has become a target of Yad Lachim, a conservative Jewish organization antagonistic toward Christianity in Israel.

At issue are the congregation's rebuilding plans for its facility, which was destroyed in an October, 1982 fire. arson was suspected.

A January demonstration carried out by Yad Lachim on Narkis Street stirred concern because it was promoted throughout Jerusalem with posters misrepresenting the church's pastor, Robert Lindsey, a Southern Baptist. He has been in Israel since 1944.

The Narkis Street Baptist Church was founded nearly 60 years ago as an international, English-language congregation of about 350 people. Since the fire, the church has met in a tent-like structure on the original site.

The situation involving Lindsey and the church, said Isam Ballenger, point up the "intolerance of other religious groups" by Yad Lachim and similar organizations which use "methods unbefitting of the Jewish people and the state of Israel." Ballenger is the SBC Foreign Mission Board director for Europe and the Middle East. □

Baptist prisoner's appeal gets him harsh treatment

STOCKHOLM

A young Latvian Baptist political prisoner was given added punishment by Soviet prison authorities for describing harsh prisoner transport conditions, according to the *Latvian News Digest*.

Janis Rozkalns was sentenced to five years imprisonment and three years exile for religious and political activities. He said the Court ordered that "all of my Bibles, books of religious nature, all my correspondence as well as my 149 cassettes of religious music and talks be burned."

In an appeal for help, Rozkalns charged Soviet prison officials with deliberately starving and freezing prisoners in labor camps and denying them medical help.

His appeal was smuggled to Latvian

emigres in Europe and submitted at the fourth session of the Stockholm Conference on Security-building Measures and Disarmament. □

Salvadoran pastor seeks visa to enter Canada

MEXICO CITY

Miguel Castro Garcia, a Baptist pastor deported from El Salvador last October for alleged leftist subversion, apparently is living with "church friends" near Mexico City and seeking a visa to enter Canada, according to a Swedish embassy official.

Castro was arrested Oct. 28 near his church in San Salvador and charged with having ties to Marxist guerrillas. The pastor later denied the allegations and said he was blindfolded and forced to sign a statement confessing guerrilla connections. He was deported Oct. 30, reportedly headed to exile in Sweden, but he entered Mexico under the auspices of the Swedish embassy in Mexico City.

The Swedes now say Castro is on his own. "I think he is still here in Mexico but we don't have anything to do with him anymore," said a Swedish embassy officer Jan. 3. "I think he's going to Canada....He is living with some church friends and waiting for his visa to Canada to be ready."

Castro's wife and two children joined him in Mexico in late November, according to Victor Mercado, Latin America director for the American Baptist Board of International Ministries.

Mercado has communicated with the pastor several times since his deportation and said the Salvadoran hoped to enter the United States, where Baptist friends have pledged support for him and his family. Mercado also sent Castro a copy of a cable American Baptist denominational leaders received from U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering in El Salvador indicating Pickering would view "with sympathy" Castro's application to enter the United States. [REPORT has just learned that Castro has been denied an entry visa by the United States government.]

Runcie sees possibility of church-state separation

YORK

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcie, would press for the dis-

establishment of the Church of England if Parliament tries to renege on freedoms won by the church in the Enabling Act of 1919, or if he feels that the church was seriously hampered in its mission by being established.

Dr. Runcie told the *Yorkshire Post* that he did not think the Church of England was at present greatly hampered by being established. However, he added: "If we were greatly hampered and held up in our proper mission—which is to make more Christians and to build them up in their faith and responsibilities as Christians—we should seek disestablishment." □

Bible placement campaign launched in South America

What is being described as the largest Scripture placement project in history has been launched in two South American countries with the cooperation of church and state leaders.

Public schools will serve as key distribution outlets for the 25 million New Testaments that are being sent to Brazil in the next five years. When word of the Brazilian project reached Ecuador, officials there started a campaign to provide 2.5 million New Testaments over a two-year period.

Bible study is a part of the regular public school curriculum in many Latin American countries. In Brazil, religion classes are required for all secondary school students. They may choose to attend Jewish, Catholic, or evangelical Protestant classes. The New Testaments are presently being used in both of the Christian classes. □

Christians petition for greater aid to Africa

WASHINGTON

Nearly a quarter-million Christians are represented on petitions to the Reagan Administration and Congress asking for greater U.S. assistance to Africa in 1985 to prevent starvation. The petitions were presented during a news conference at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington by Bread for the World, the national Christian citizens' lobby against world hunger.

The product of thousands of hours of petitioning by churches, community groups and by members of Bread for the World, the more than 230,000 names collected represent names of mostly Chris-



NEWS-SCAN

tians from all 50 of the United States. The petitions were presented to Senators John Melcher, D-Mont., and Paul Simon, D-Ill. Melcher and Simon are two cosponsors of a Senate bill announced during the news conference that would provide \$769 million in aid to Africa this year.

"While relief organizations have been swamped with private contributions to aid Africa during recent months, we have been deluged with petitions," said Bread for the World Executive Director Arthur Simon. "People have been willing to go the extra mile to help Africans get back on their feet. We were pleasantly surprised and overwhelmed." □

Catholic leaders dispute White House news "digest"

WASHINGTON

A White House "Digest" intended as background material on the Catholic Church in Central America has been strongly criticized by church leaders in El Salvador for completely changing the focus of statements made by Salvadoran bishops, especially Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas.

The Archbishop in a personal letter of protest to the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador offered observations on the document's almost exclusive references "to the provision of arms to our country. The citations...dealing with El Salvador could leave the impression that we are concerned only with the question of military aid and that our position on the matter is as if we believed that the war, and therefore the military aid should continue.

It is absolutely clear that we opposed both the war and the provision of arms from whatever source and that our principal position is that we favor dialogue as the solution to our problems...." □

USSR Baptists pursue reconciliation efforts

KIEV

Leaders of the two major Baptist groups in the Soviet Union have taken another major step in reconciling differences that at times have produced bitter antagonisms.

Fittingly, the groups met at the invitation of Pastor Nikola Velichko and other members of the Puchow Street Baptist Church in a time of worship and

discussions. Representatives of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the European Baptist Federation (EBF) met with them.

The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB), the body registered with the government, and the Council of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches, unregistered, have divided over the issue of compliance with a government decree compelling registration of churches.

Knud Wumpelmann, speaking in behalf of the EBF told some one-thousand worshippers his most grateful experience was "that of a few months ago when I was able to kneel in prayer with your pastor [Rev. Velichko] and other Baptists in Moscow at one of the reconciliation meetings...it was a strong example of oneness in Jesus Christ."

The Puchow Street church, a member of the group opposing registration of congregations but itself a registered church, is associated with the name of Baptist dissident Georgi Vins, who figured as part of a prisoner exchange between the USSR and the USA several years ago.

Vins continues to oppose church registration and from his headquarters in the USA carries on a campaign in behalf of dissidents and religious/political prisoners. □

7th Day body affiliates

BIELSCO-BIATA

The Seventh Day Christian Church in Poland has affiliated with the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation, a Baptist World Alliance member body based in Janesville, Wisconsin, the *Sabbath Recorder* magazine reported.

The Polish organization joins the Baptist Union of Poland in holding membership in the world-wide BWA body. □

Diversion as power ploy

In response to Communist charges that neo-Nazism is appearing in West Germany, Peter M. Maxey of the United Kingdom said in UN Third Committee debate that totalitarian regimes which impose their wills on millions are more deserving of attention than are pockets of neo-Nazism.

Without naming persons or nations, he said that the prime motivation of such regimes is to keep themselves in power, irrespective of the will of their peoples. □

HUMAN RIGHTS: Albanian authorities have imprisoned citizens who listened to foreign radio broadcasts, possessed Bibles, or peacefully exercised their right to criticize government political and economic policy, says a report by Amnesty International. Albanian criminal code rejects the concept of impartial justice and identifies the goals of legal proceedings as primarily political and ideological. It permits persecution for "an action or lack of action intended to weaken or undermine state activity"....The Chilean government has banished without charge or trial almost twice as many citizens since Nov. 1984 as it did during the entire year of 1983. Because state of seige regulations permit unlimited renewal of banishment orders, the period of banishment or "internal exile" may extend indefinitely with no opportunity for appeal. The Chilean ambassador to the U.S. and officials of the Chilean consulates on the West Coast have, for the first time, met with Amnesty USA to discuss in depth reports of arbitrary arrest, torture and banishmentAmnesty has urged the Mozambique government to adopt measures for ending human rights abuses, asking for safeguards to protect political detainees from torture and mistreatment while they are being held without charge or trial....Three prisoners of conscience held in a Soviet "special regime" labor camp have died within the past eight months. They are Oleksa Tykhyy, Valery Marchenko and Yuri Lytvyn, the latter a Ukrainian poet and member of the Ukrainian Helsinki group. All were serving sentences on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda"....The United Nations General Assembly adopted a Convention Against Torture to initiate inquiries or investigations upon receipt of reliable indications that a government systematically practices torture. Provisions include persecution of alleged torturers, protection against extradition to countries in which an individual risks torture, exclusion of "obedience to superior orders" as a defense against charges of torture, and creation of a committee to receive complaints from individuals and nations and to inquire into reports of systematic torture.

Nativity scene. The suit said the poster was removed from the door of a classroom at Jackson Heights Middle School in Ovedo because its religious content violated school policy.

School officials declined to comment on the incidents until they had seen the lawsuit. □

Jewish leader denounces 'Christian nation' speech

NEW YORK

Distribution by the U.S. Education Department of a speech that described the United States as a "Christian nation" has been denounced by Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress.

Siegman said he found it "particularly shocking" that Gary Jones, acting secretary of education, saw nothing wrong with distribution of the speech.

"This is but the latest in a series of administration actions that betray a lack of knowledge of American history and an appalling insensitivity to the pluralist character of American democracy," the American Jewish Congress leader said.

Because the Education Department "has so far expressed no interest in seeing to it that government funds are not used to further the religious beliefs of its employees," Siegman said his agency "is exploring the most effective remedies to this highly inappropriate behavior by members of this administration. □

Carl McIntire, Shelton lose licensing battle

WASHINGTON

A small New Jersey school founded by right-wing radio preacher Carl McIntire lost its final bid to become a degree-granting institution when the U.S. Supreme Court let stand lower rulings upholding state officials' right to license all colleges and universities under their jurisdiction.

Shelton College, of Cape May, N.J., failed to convince the high court that the New Jersey State Board of Higher Education violated its free exercise of religion by first reviewing, then canceling the school's ability to grant B.A. degrees. The revocation came after the state agency determined the college was not meeting minimum educational standards.

Over the past five years, the case has been the subject of seven separate legal proceedings, in each of which the school has lost its basic contention that the state agency is forbidden by the First Amendment religion clauses to regulate it.

Shelton College attorney, church-state specialist William Bentley Ball, of Harrisburg, Pa., argued in a written appeal to the Supreme Court that because the school is pervasively religious state officials have no jurisdiction over its affairs. He asked the justices to recognize the "irrationality" of what he called the "forced destruction of this institution." □

government's accommodation to religion may have crossed a hard-to-define line into the territory of "establishment" of religion. Armed with Herblock and Hasty, build a case showing that government is not allowing accommodation in areas it has previously disqualified itself from acting upon. Now, develop criteria to prove there is intrusive accommodation. Who should decide where the line of demarcation is to be drawn?

• How do James Dunn's warnings about apathy in Christian citizenship bear on the accommodation issue? Show how a lack of Christian citizen involvement in politics could affect, for good and for ill, government perception, congressional action or inaction, and judicial review with respect to accommodation.

• Senator Ted Kennedy (News Briefs) quotes Roger Williams: "It is impossible for any man or for all men to maintain their Christianity by the sword, and maintain thereby a true Christianity." Clearly, he says ends do not justify means. Discuss the implications for evangelism. □

Order Form

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• Christians are advised to be obedient to government, for it is as Paul says, instituted by God. Yet the Bible in equally important passages advocates sanctuary to the oppressed alien, no matter the cause of that oppression. Our government appears to be resisting this practice. Cite the kinds of responses one can make when Biblical faith conflicts with national law. Donovan Cook speaks of "an insurgent church". Is it fair to say the church, to be *Christian*, must always stand in judgment of society and thus be "insurgent"?

• In his cartoon on page 7, Herblock graphically portrays what can be interpreted as government's establishing religion. In *Views of the Wall*, Stan Hasty's analysis gives clues as to how

... justice, peace, compassion, stewardship, freedom and vision. One hears such talk of "traditional values." Can you find values more basic than these?

REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn
Executive Director



"Whatever happens, show yourselves citizens worthy of the good news of the Christ,... standing firm with one spirit, one purpose, fighting side by side for faith in the good news." Philippians 1:27 (Goodspeed)

Goodspeed's translation is correct in making the word *politeusthe* "citizens." From the same root comes politics. The antonym of *politeusthe*, a participating citizen, is a word from the Greek city-state experience: *idiotes*, those who neglect their civic responsibilities. You can identify words from that root: *i-d-i-o-t-e-s*. Our citizenship if it is worthy of the gospel bonds us in opposition to the two-headed monster of ignorance and apathy: idiotic irresponsibility regarding our civic duties.

Challenges to worthy citizenship are lively ignorance and rampant apathy. Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be."

"I don't know and I don't care" are twin threats to Christian citizenship. There is no place in an incarnational living out of the Christ-life for non-involvement. Not to decide is to decide. If we fail to alarm anyone morally we remain morally asleep ourselves. If we stay out of politics we align ourselves with the forces of evil. If we fail to challenge the *status quo* we are saying 1.) we accept things as they are, or 2.) our God is powerless and we are without hope.

The biblical calling to gospel citizenship leaves no room for inaction. The poet laureate of whimsy, Ogden Nash puts it plainly:

People on whom I do not bother to dote
Are people who do not bother to vote
They have such refined and delicate palates
That they can discover no one worthy of their ballots
And then when someone terrible gets elected
They say; There that's just what I expected.

Christians worthy of the good news are called to be one in what we hold together, sharing spirit and purpose. It is not simply that we stand together, not merely reacting to a common enemy, not only because we are on the same team. We are called to be one by Whom we serve, by what we hold together, one spirit and one purpose.

A minimum theology for politics includes certain basic elements, concepts consistent with the gospel message. At the very least the gospel demands a shared commitment to justice, peace, compassion, stewardship, freedom and vision. One hears much talk of "traditional values." Can you find values more basic than these?

A biblical understanding of sin prompts appreciation of Niebuhr's maxim: "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, his inclination toward injustice makes democracy necessary." We cannot get off the hook from the prophet's standard for social responsibility: "Let justice roll down as the waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." Racial justice, economic justice, justice for women are necessarily part of the

Christian's agenda. The newly political fundamentalists are strangely silent on justice issues.

Martin Luther insisted that to preach the gospel in all its aspects save those that apply specifically to our time was not preaching the gospel at all. To fail to preach for peace, to work for peace, to be a peace person in our day is to be an active, aggressive denier of the Prince of Peace. The psalmist who lamented "trust in chariots" would not take more kindly to a trust in laser beam weapons. To use religion and religious institutions to defend and promote the arms race must grieve the Living Lord.

The quality so often missing from the dogmatic certainty of those majoring on moralisms is compassion, even a little glimmer. Whether we're called to weather the winter with homeless street people in Washington or to respond to a starving continent like Africa, it is not enough to piddle with charity. Public policy must be informed and shaped by compassion. Charles Dickens, that keen social critic of another era, chided the wealthy Victorians, saying their attitude was "It's everyone for himself and God for us all said the elephant as she danced among the chickens." That's just the opposite of the plea in Matthew, Chapter 25 to focus on "the least of these," to see life from the vantage point of the victim.

Elemental stewardship demands that those of us who have care for those who have not be good managers of all that is loaned to us for this brief span, that we accept the responsibility that accompanies wealth... not just material wealth, either. A worthy theology for politics accepts Aristotle's view: "Politics is the chief of all the sciences since it alone has the power to allocate the always scarce resources of any society to the various elements of that society." Stewardship of political responsibility, stewardship of natural resources as caretakers not undertakers of the created order, stewardship of the riches that are ours in this land with 6% of the world's people and 40% of the world's wealth: what challenges!

A dedication to freedom must be part or any bare-boned, lowest-common-denominator theology for politics. Christians see the baseline doctrine that all persons are made in the image of God as indicating that freedom and responsibility are basic equipment issued by the Heavenly Creator to all humankind.

Thomas Jefferson was in touch with that theological tap root for the Western view of human dignity when he said "I have sworn on the altar of God eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

Finally, any adequate Christian platform for citizenship includes a forward-looking posture. With no vision the people perish. Contrast the mind-set of Woodrow Wilson who said "my true constituency is the next generation" with the attitude today which asks, betraying a myopic vision and short memory, "are you better off today than you were four years ago?"

We will find a substantial oneness that satisfies our most ecumenical hungers as we respond to the biblical calling to be "citizens worthy of the gospel." □

REVIEWS



CREEDS, SOCIETY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A Study in Three Cultures

By Max L. Stackhouse. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans' Publ. House, 1984, 315 pp.

It was a great pleasure to read this splendid book by my former colleague at Andover Newton Theological School, Max Stackhouse. Cerebral but lucid, scholarly but not intrusively so, the book relates dialectically the reading of the author with his experience in three different cultures (the U.S., East Germany, India) to produce a synthesis of delightful originality. I was so intrigued that I—shame on me—read every word.

To open up the book, we need definitions. "Creed," e.g., a creed "is a doctrine held to be true, embraced with commitment, celebrated . . . with others, and used as a fundamental guide for action." When pervasive, creeds are religious.

Religion is defined in Tillichian terms, but in a much better formulation. "Ultimate concern" becomes "commitments to ultimate [i.e. for the person] meanings and [to] the . . . formation of ritual behaviors, loyalties . . . and relationships." Thus Marxism-Leninism is a religion. What the author intends to explore is what religion—Christianity, Marxism-Leninism, Hinduism (church, party, caste)—best provides the nourishment for universal norms for human rights.

In pursuit of an answer Stackhouse dissects the theory, practice, and history of each culture studied. He feels that one of his own most important contributions to human rights discussion is his insistence on the importance of the institutional aspect of rights. At this level "rights have to do with the basic and fundamental questions of membership—and the social spaces which allow varieties of membership and participation, each with a distinctive view of individuation to be expressed."

The American ethos has been shaped—and continues, though stretched to its limits today—by the Puritan-Liberal synthesis. The exception: the economic sphere.

In turning to East Germany (the G.D.R.) Stackhouse uses one chapter to analyze what is going on today in church and state. His grid here, as throughout, is to cover the areas of education, the cultural/expressive, the legal, voluntary associations, the political, medical, technical and the economic. In the second chapter the author covers the history of Germany from Luther, Machiavelli, and Rousseau through Kant and Hegel, from whom Marx took his point of departure. Church responses to the prevailing civil religion of Marxism are noted.

For India, Stackhouse follows a similar pattern. He notes that for Hinduism, not all are created equal. All rights are the privileges of being what you are in the cosmic scheme of things and in the social scheme of family-subcaste-caste-nation. Structured inequality is foundational in an organic-hierarchical vision.

The author turns, in a final chapter, to evaluating the three creeds as to their ability to ground universal human rights (a redundancy, he noted, since if "human" they must be "universal".) He rejects Marxism-Leninism and Hinduism on the basis of their own presuppositions. This leaves the Christian faith with its stress on the creation of all in the image of God and the seeking of all by God's redemptive grace which demands "justice for all and the reformation of all 'natural' societies" (p. 263). The most important right is freedom of religion and, by extension, of speech and association. He ends by enjoining the clergy, in the spirit of Richard John Neuhaus' *The Naked Public Square*, to get involved in shaping tomorrow's world with Christian insights.

Occasionally, the author may solve too neatly a theological problem. Thus he is sure that God will not condemn devoted Marxists, Hindus, humanists who have seen only corrupted forms of Christianity and so turned away. The lingering question: Was this *really* the reason for their turning away or was this the *excuse* they gave? Only God knows.

Occasionally—but rarely—the need to compress creates a wrong impression. The author makes a marvelous attempt to summarize Kant's first Critique in two sentences (p. 184). The effort misleads because the empirical in Kant's thought is ignored. Kant did say, "Concepts without precepts are empty."

A word about the author's understanding of Marx. In the confusion engendered by liberation theology, it is refreshing to find a man who sees clearly the relation of Marx to religion. Liberationist James Conway errs in claiming that Marx opposed only *alienating* forms of religion. He attacked *all* religions in which man is not the Supreme Being. Stackhouse is right: one can't logically be a Christian and a Marxist or Hindu.

I dissent from Stackhouse's effort to substitute technological determinism for economic determinism in Marx. But the case can't be argued here. This brief review may ruin the book for a prospective reader. A pity, for there are riches galore here.

Culbert G. Rutenber

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Dr. Rutenber, an author, former pastor, seminary professor, and popular lecturer around the country, reviews periodically for REPORT. In retirement he has become a Texan (Austin) and remains as actively engaged in ministry as health permits.