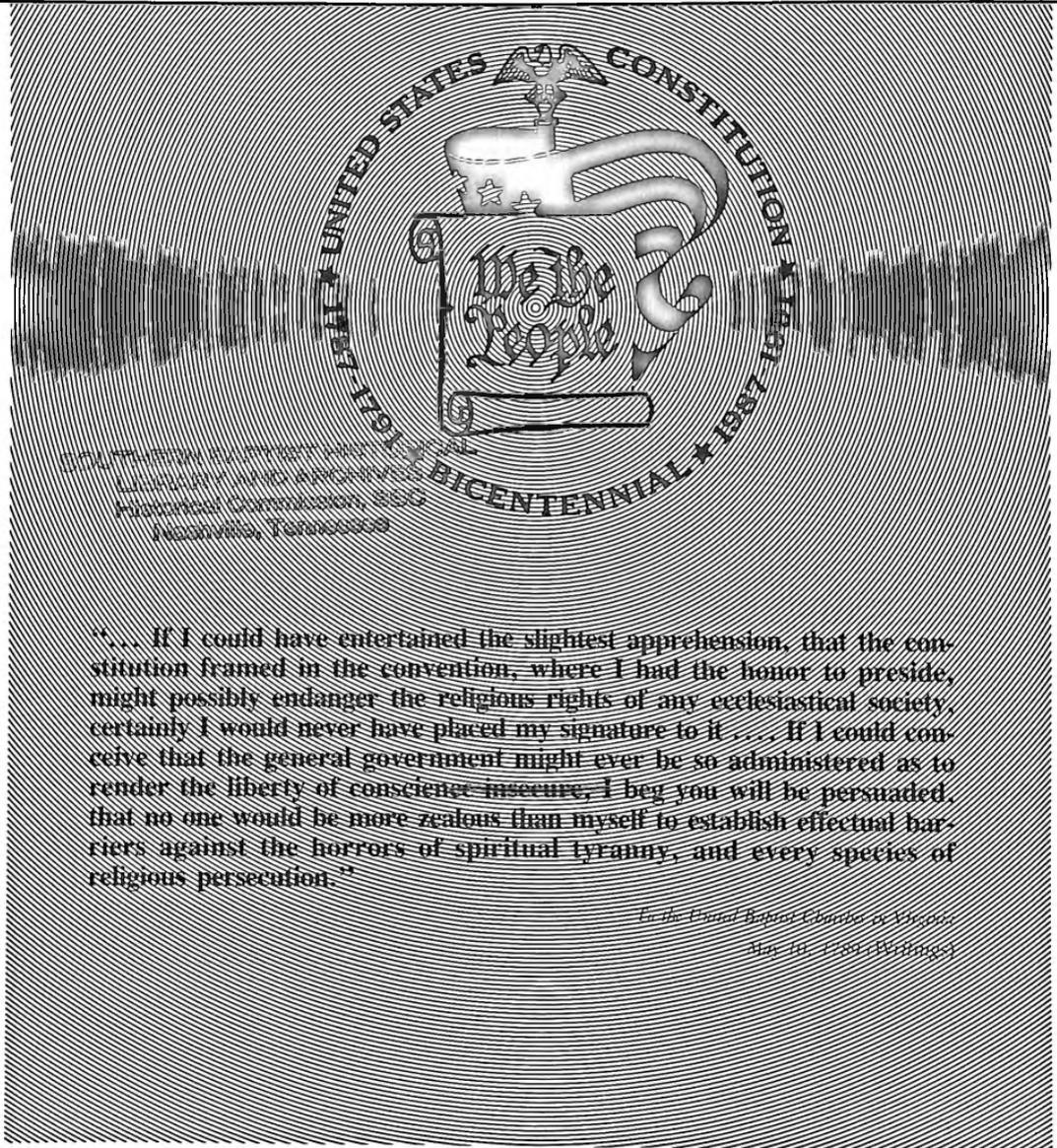


REPORT from the CAPITAL



BY THEODORE H. POPE, JR., PH.D.,
 UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR,
 HISTORICAL COMMISSION, 850
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

"... If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension, that the constitution framed in the convention, where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it If I could conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded, that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny, and every species of religious persecution."

*In the United Baptist Church of Virginia,
 May 10, 1788 (Writings)*

REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

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Cover: This Fourth of July finds the nation in the midst of celebrating the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. For citizens, the Constitution symbolizes the totality of our freedoms. Integral to full freedom, Baptists declare, is that "soul freedom" they have espoused throughout the nation's history.

Executive Director: James M. Dunn
Editor: Victor Tupitza

Contributing Editors: Rosemary Brevard, Susan Hill, Kathy Palen, Oliver S. Thomas (Washington, D.C.); Gary McNeil (Austin, Texas); Glenn Saul, (Mill Valley, California); Kenneth L. Smith (Rochester, New York). Scholar-in-Residence: Bobby E. Adams. Circulation: Gordon L. Northcutt.

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

On this Fourth of July

As the substance of personal independence, mirroring the independence secured by eighteenth-century America, religious liberty and church-state separation have proved indispensable in the nation's advancement toward a democratic society. Religious freedom has been for fifty-two years the mission and purpose of Baptists cooperating in the nation's capital through the Baptist Joint Committee. The success of its mission has rested on the BJC's nonpolitical posture, distancing it from the partisan politics that permeates the nation's capital. Determined forces often attempt to manipulate religious institutions for the purpose of securing their own objectives. The BJC has been known as a solid advocate of unfettered conscience, testifying to an uncompromising Baptist distinctive. Explore the past but focus on evidence visible in Iran, where the marriage of its institutions of religion and government has had pernicious results. And keep a wary eye on the shenanigans taking place in our own country.

Writing on a movement known as Christian Reconstructionism (it seems "Christian," used as an adjective, makes the medicine go down), Dr. Bob Adams asks, "What would a state-church or a church-state do to the Christian faith and to its full expression?" Adams identifies its vision as that of imposing laws once valid for the burgeoning nation Israel upon our own nation without regard for individual conscience or belief. Among other things, he cites Reconstructionism's contempt for democracy and its desire that public school students be subjected to mandated religious exercises. In effect, the movement would bring an end to the democracy Americans cherish.

If taxation of their purses to support state churches posed a great offense to the dignity of minority religious groups in colonial America, the offense of state-initiated prayer in the public schools has become a twentieth-century counterpart. That prayer — as a voluntary experience with God — *has* a place in public schools is a position that Baptists support. James Dunn succinctly summarizes this position in his REFLECTIONS: "Overreaction and hostility toward truly voluntary prayer have no more place in public schools than does the promotion of a sanitized religious expression."

REPORT recognizes that a great deal of what takes place internally among the nine member BJC bodies is out of bounds for discussion in its pages. One scarcely can avoid the exposure in the secular media of issues before the Southern Baptist Convention. One of those issues involves this office and for that reason alone space is given to a representative voice from among the other cooperating BJC denominations who is deeply committed to the concept, values, and experience of "jointness." William Keucher, a past chairman of the BJC, reflects a heart-felt concern over preserving that jointness and the clarity of the unified Baptist voice in behalf of religious liberty for all Americans. □

Victor Tupitza

● **THE SUPREME COURT** has agreed to hear a challenge to the 1984 Equal Access Act -- a law that gives high school religious clubs the same right to meet on school property as other non-academic, extracurricular groups.

In a one-line order, the high court indicated it will review Board of Education of Westside Community Schools v. Mergens.

The dispute arose in 1985 when the principal of Westside High School in Omaha, Nebraska, and the local superintendent of schools refused to grant permission to a group of students to form a "Christian Bible Club" and meet on campus. The students took the school board to court, claiming school officials had violated the Equal Access Act, as well their constitutional rights of free exercise of religion and freedom of speech.

● **THE HIGH COURT** also banned the display of a nativity scene in a county courthouse in Pittsburgh, but upheld the placement of a Hanukkah menorah on public property just one block away.

The high court ruled 5-4 that the creche -- which was located by itself inside the main entrance of the Allegheny County Courthouse and included the proclamation "Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" -- violated the First Amendment's ban on government endorsement of religion.

But a 6-3 majority held the nearby display of the menorah next to a Christmas tree in front of a city-county building did not convey such an endorsement.

Writing for the court, Justice Harry A. Blackman said the setting of the nativity scene sends "an unmistakable message that it supports and promotes the Christian praise to God."

But by displaying the menorah with a Christmas tree and a sign declaring the city's "salute to liberty," the city avoided endorsing either the Christian or Jewish faith, Blackman said. Rather, he added, the city "simply recognizes that both Christmas and Hanukkah are part of the same winter-holiday season, which has attained a secular status in our society."

● **CHILD CARE LEGISLATION** has advanced in both bodies of Congress.

The Senate approved a child care package

that includes direct grants, tax credits, and a church-state compromise.

In addition to the Act for Better Child Care Services bill -- which would authorize \$1.75 billion in annual payments to parents and child care providers -- the package incorporates almost \$2 billion in tax credits that would assist low-income parents with young children.

The Senate measure also attempts to settle a dispute over the use of federal funds for church-related child care services. It would exempt federal funds in the form of certificates or vouchers from the bill's prohibition against using such funds for "any sectarian purpose or activity, including sectarian worship and instruction." The substitute also states funds "shall not be expended in a manner inconsistent with the Constitution."

Meanwhile, the House Education and Labor Committee approved a bill that differs significantly from the Senate measure.

The Child Development and Education Act would authorize \$1.75 billion in fiscal 1990 for:

- An expansion of Head Start.
- School-based child care services.
- Day-care programs for infants, toddlers, and children under age thirteen.
- Grants to help states coordinate services.

The House panel added language that would prohibit any sectarian activity, including sectarian education and worship, in any program receiving financial assistance under the measure.

● **ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES ARRESTED** five members of a Baptist congregation and destroyed a church in May, according to a report by Keston College.

The church members, including the pastor, were released after several days. "All were reportedly beaten during their detention," Keston College said.

Keston also reported authorities blocked off surrounding streets and used heavy machinery to demolish the church building, which was located in Comanesti, about 250 miles northeast of Bucharest.

Whether the congregation had proper government approval to turn a house into a church remains at issue.

Dr. Adams has completed service with our office as scholar-in-residence. A missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention, he is on furlough from his post in Argentina, where he is professor of Christian ethics at International Baptist Seminary, Buenos Aires. We are pleased to note that Bob will become a REPORT corresponding editor.

Constantine Revisited

God is sovereign. He runs the universe. His children, Christians, should run the world.

Those three sentences capture the vision of Christian Reconstructionists. Who are they? What do they mean? How do they intend to actualize their vision? Is what they envision good or bad? How should Baptists react?

Rousas John Rushdoony, his son-in-law, Gary North and Greg Bahnsen head up the movement. Seventy-three-year-old Rushdoony is the latest in a sixteen century long line of Armenian pastors. In the nineteenth century, his forefathers broke from the Old Armenian Church, accepted the Creed of Chalcedon, and became Calvinists. Rushdoony, who holds a doctorate in educational philosophy from Valley Christian University in Clovis, California, has authored more than thirty books. His fifteen-hundred page *Institutes of Biblical Law* interprets Old Testament laws and urges that Christians work for their enactment into civil and criminal legislation today.

Gary North, Rushdoony's son-in-law, earned a doctorate in economics at the University of California, Riverside. He lives in Tyler, Texas, where he heads up the Institute for Christian Economics and works closely with Geneva Ministries, a Reconstructionist organization lead by James Jordan and David Chilton.

Greg Bahnsen holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Southern California.

Although North and Rushdoony are not on good terms personally, they along with Bahnsen are the recognized leaders of the Christian Reconstructionist movement. North is the apologist and

polemicist. Behnsen is the theorist. Annually, a conference is held celebrating, explaining, exhorting fellow Reconstructionists to be loyal to their vision.

Central to this vision is the way they interpret the Bible. Their understanding of the Book gives rise to all their claims. That the Bible is inerrant in all matters, is for them something so basic, so given that it hardly needs stating. Anyone who might hold another view about the Bible is dismissed as virtually if not actually an unbeliever.

The Reconstructionist Vision

The God who authored such a book is indeed sovereign. He rules and He rules by law. The laws He revealed in the Old Testament were not only valid for the Hebrews, they are eternal expressions of God's will for the governing of all mankind. They should be — they must be — the foundation and the superstructure for all human societies. If not, those societies will decay and crumble. All previous ones have. The United States is the contemporary nation that may yet practice all God's law and thus receive his blessing.

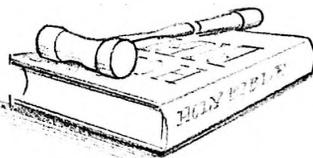
The way may be both long and difficult. Many centuries could conceivably pass before a truly theonomous society is built — one whose law (nomos) comes directly from God (theos) — hence, theonomous. All prior cultures have been autonomous (self-lawed, or self-governed). But the Bible clearly foretells and ordains such a society, which will last for a thousand years and which will then deliver itself and all nations directly into the hands of its returning and triumphant Lord. This is post-millennialism.

The coming theonomous society will have for its foundation "the biblical worldview." A sweeping understanding of all creation will form the framework within which all knowledge — scientific, artistic, religious, philosophical, technological — will be structured.

The sovereign God who gave the inerrant Book clearly intended all this from the very beginning. Adam could have done it, for such was his covenant with God. The second Adam, Jesus the

Christ, renewed the covenant. What happened with Moses and the Israelites simply added the necessary details for raising up a society to live out the covenant.

All the foregoing paints in broad brush the Reconstructionist vision. What are some of the details? First of all, democracy must vanish. Democracy means autonomous (human) rather than theonomous (divine) rule. Christians should rule, for only they can possibly have the biblical worldview. Only they can truly know God's will as it has been revealed in the Bible. Among the laws in the Old Testament that express God's will is the death penalty (death by stoning) for such offenses as murder, striking or cursing a parent, kidnapping, adultery, incest, bestiality, sodomy or homosexuality, unchastity, rape of a betrothed virgin, witchcraft, offering human sacrifice, incorrigible delinquency, blasphemy, propagation of false doctrines, sacrificing to false gods, refusing to



abide by a court decision, failing to restore a pledge. And although the Old Testament included the death penalty for sabbath desecration, that law was superseded in the New Testament.

The public school system must be replaced either by church schools or home schooling. Currency would be based on a gold/silver standard. Most taxes would be abolished. Debts would be limited to six years. Government welfare programs would be abolished and local church congregations would be

responsible for any help given to the needy in their area. Prisons would be limited to inmates awaiting execution. Whipping would be the punishment for some minor offenses. Criminals would be obligated to make restitution to the victims of their crimes — through indentured servanthood, if necessary.

How should Christians transform present political and cultural reality into that which God wants? Not by violence, but through gradual change. Probably the most effective change will be led by tomorrow's adults who have been trained in "the biblical world-view" in private and church-sponsored grade and high schools and universities. They alone can be tomorrow's true leaders.

A Baptist View of the Reconstructionist Vision

No one dares speak for all Baptists: American, Conservative, General Association of Regular, Missionary, Seventh-Day, Southern — to name but a few. However, we do hold some things in common. It is those that I first want to lift up. Many of them we now hold in common with other "Great Commission" Christians.

Baptists have always tried to lift up and emphasize love/grace and justice/law aspects of our beliefs about God. He treats human beings, finite and fallen creatures that we are, in love and with justice. Both grace and law abound in holy history.

My first criticism of Reconstructionism is at this point: justice and law seem to overshadow completely love and grace. I am not saying at this point that in Reconstructionism the Old Testament appear to overshadow New Testament (although I will say this later in another context). Love and grace abound in the Old Testament, while justice and law are to be found also in the New Testament. The God of the Old Testament is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is love, grace, justice, and law. The Reconstructionist view of God is at least unbalanced and truncated and perhaps defective.

The second area to be lifted up concerns the nature of the Christian faith. It is to be both believed and lived. If it were possible, I would like to say and write "believe" and "live" simultaneously. They have simultaneous beginning in a person's life. *Really* believing without living is inconceivable, and *really* living without believing is impossible.

My second criticism of Reconstruction is that it seems to say that living according to its interpretation of biblical norms (ethics) is possible, even desirable, without believing. A fatal division between believing (theology) and living (ethics) is created from the beginning. It is as

though Christian theology (believing) were for Christians and churches, while living according to biblically derived norms (ethics) were for everybody. If this bifurcation truly represented the Bible, then Christians, who supposedly have the biblical worldview, would be the ones who should impose correct living (ethics) on non-Christians. The incapable conclusion of this logic would be either that the church should dictate to the state those laws that accord with God's will or that any separation between church and state would simply disappear and a theocracy would come into being. If I understand what Reconstructionists are about, they envision a theocracy with no possibility of pluralism in the body politic. What Baptists and other Christians might agree are sins would become crimes, punishable by the state.

A republic, a monarchy, or a dictatorship (even of the proletariat), will be composed of inhabitants who may be Christians along with others who are not. To confuse and confound the voluntary groupings of believers (church) with the necessarily coercive power of the state, is to make a mockery of the Christian faith and of the church.

Baptists simply could not continue being Baptists and at the same time buy into any such theocracy. The nature of the Christian faith, as Baptists understand it, means that Christian believing and Christian living are one and the same, and that a person comes to the faith voluntarily, so far as human choices are concerned. A church is made up of people who have freely come to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and have just as freely covenanted together to live out the faith. Believer's baptism, another hallmark of Baptist understanding, comes here to the forefront. Only those who have consciously turned around (repentance) in their believing and living and are now walking together with others who have decided likewise are proper subjects for baptism. Those who have taken this step are to be instructed and to instruct others, to be nurtured

To confuse and confound the voluntary groupings of believers with the necessarily coercive powers of the state, is to make a mockery of the Christian faith and of the church.

and to nurture others, all under the Lordship of Christ.

The third concept that Baptists live up concerns the nature of Christian living, both individually and corporately. In our living (ethics), we stress the Lordship of Christ. This means that, just as in theology, ethics is Christocentric and Christological. All the norms found in the Bible are to be understood in the light of Christ's Lordship. Old Testament laws are subject to Him, and we understand our relation to them through our relationship to Him. "A greater than Moses is here." We Baptists have not always done a good job at working this out, but we have understood the principles of interpretation.

My third criticism of Reconstructionism comes at the point of the ethics of the church. Covenants, in the Bible, have more to do with behavioral norms (ethics, if you please) than with theological teachings. What a prior covenant community (that of Israel, for example) may have been called upon to *do* is not necessarily what a subsequent covenant community (the church, for example) is called upon to *do*. The Bible does not contain a compendium of behavioral norms (laws) that are always and in all times equally binding on the human race. It seems that Reconstructionists on the one hand recognize this (in not accepting Sabbath observance laws as valid) but do not work with this principle of interpretation which they already recognized as valid. The behavioral norms of the churches find their beginning in the New Testament. Granted, there are norms from the Old Testament that the churches in the New Testament seemingly took for granted. Others they explicitly rejected, acting on orders from their Lord. The best example of this kind of interpretation of norms is to be found in Acts 15. Here, the decision for the church in Jerusalem was the following: Gentiles who came to faith in Jesus Christ were *not* first required to become Jews (that is, to accept the behavioral norms of Judaism). They came to him and to new behavioral norms directly from their "gentile-ness." It seems to me that Reconstructionism comes close to repeating the error of the so-called Judaizers, not only for Christians but also for non-Christians.

One other observation. Among Baptists are to be found all three millennial positions. Some are pre-, some post-, and some a-millennialists. Some are pre-millennial dispensationalists, and daily read their Scofield Bible with its notes. Three or four generations ago, many prominent Baptists were post-millennialists. Today, many are a-millennialists.

Continued on page 14

VIEWS OF THE WALL

Oliver S. Thomas
General Counsel



Since the advent of time, Douglas County High School had begun its football games with prayer. As one would expect in a rural Southern community, the flavor was distinctly Protestant. Of the hundreds of prayers offered over the years, only five had deviated from the Protestant lineage.

Then came Doug Jager — a band member whose Native American faith was offended by the invocations to the white man's God at his school's athletic events. Even more offensive was having to recite the Lord's Prayer along with his fellow musicians before each game.

After unsuccessful efforts to convert young Jager to Christianity, the school adopted a plan whereby local ministers would no longer offer the prayers but, instead, the Student Council would select students, faculty, and parents to pray "without regard to religious or the lack of religious beliefs."

Still not satisfied, Jager sued and ultimately won. On May 30, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal in the case. No longer will invocations be offered at Douglas County High.

While the decision in *Douglas County School District v. Jager* is binding only in those states composing the 11th Federal Circuit (Alabama, Florida, and Georgia), the issue is certain to crop up elsewhere. The United States has grown from a nation of several dozen to several thousand different religious sects and denominations. According to the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, half of the world's documented immigrants now enter the State of California. In Los Angeles alone, I am told, Catholic mass is said in more than seventy different

languages. Even the Protestant hegemony of the South is crumbling as Northern industry relocates in the rapidly growing sunbelt. With this ever-expanding pluralism, it is inevitable that the traditional practice of pregame invocations will be challenged in more and more communities.

What should a person, and more specifically a Baptist, think of all this?

Perhaps we should begin by asking ourselves why we have pregame prayers in the first place. Assuming we do not believe that the sovereign God of the universe takes sides in high school athletic events, the only legitimate reasons seem to be: (1) to solemnize a public event and (2) to pray for good sportsmanship and the safety of the athletes.

Turning first to the ceremonial purpose, there is no compelling reason for viewing prayer as the *only* means of solemnizing the occasion. Remember, this is a *public* school, provided to *all* members of the community at taxpayer's expense. It is *not* a private or parochial school where a single religion may dominate. Why risk alienating a substantial, or even an insubstantial, portion of the community when the same purpose can be accomplished through the Pledge of Allegiance or the singing of the National Anthem?

Certainly, prayers for the safety and sportsmanlike conduct of the athletes are appropriate, but why must they be pub-

Presumably, people come to an athletic event to watch the game, not to pray. If we force people to participate in a public prayer, do we further the cause of religion?

lic? Scripture admonishes Christians to refrain from public displays of piety and, instead, to enter into a private place to commune with God. "The prayer of a righteous [person] has great power in its effects," wrote James, the brother of Jesus. I suspect the silent prayers of individual believers would accomplish more than an entire season of pregame invocations.

And what of the coercive nature of the prayers? Presumably, people come to an athletic event to watch the game, not to pray. If we force people to participate in a public prayer, do we further the cause of religion? Jesus taught his disciples that "whosoever will may come" — not whosoever *we* will. Broadening the platform to include non-Protestant, or even nonreligious, prayers as did Douglas County does not solve the problem. The state is still giving the speaker a microphone and a captive audience to do with as he pleases.

A recent decision by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals (governing Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee) underscores perhaps the most fundamental problem with public invocations at school-sponsored events. The court distinguished between "ceremonial, non-denominational prayers," which it ruled constitutional, and prayers that express a particular religious view, which are not.

A prayer that expresses no religious view? How can one call such an exercise "prayer"?

Ours is not a generic God. For Baptists, God is the Lord of history, the Creator of heaven and earth, Who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. The Sixth Circuit's decision leaves us with a prayer that offends no one (i.e. expresses no religious view) and, therefore, says nothing.

As a Baptist, I would not want to defend a pregame invocation if it were challenged. At the same time, I would not be inclined to challenge the practice if no one in the community had objected. It seems to me that these are questions that should be worked out on a case by case basis depending upon the ethnic and religious composition of the particular community and its schools. It is my hope, however, that when such practices are challenged, Baptists will respond with empathy and understanding. We do well to remember that we, like Doug Jager, once were in a religious minority. □

A Fraternal Appeal

Founded in the decade of the thirties as an advocate for religious liberty for persecuted European Baptists, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has amplified the separate voices of Baptists in the USA and Canada into a clear and articulate witness on issues of conscience and religious liberty as unalienable, human rights. As a member of the Committee, representing American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., my respect for Southern Baptist members grew across two decades. Leaders like Porter Routh, Alma Hunt, Foy Valentine — and a host of others shared their faith in salient ways to help shape the work of the Joint Committee.

Southern Baptists had a greater membership than any other Baptist group — and Southern Baptists provided the lion's share of the Baptist Joint Committee budget. But issues were not debated and votes taken on the premise that Southern Baptist money should silence dissent or dictate votes. It was, indeed, a Joint Committee made up of all major Baptist denominations.

Remarkable trust developed across Convention lines. Sometimes, a concern of one group did not win a majority. But, on the main agenda of the Joint Committee, unanimity usually prevailed. Consequently, that's why Congress, on both sides of the aisle, grew to respect the work of the Joint Committee and its staff. The committee was true to its Baptist heritage and did not protect the rights of a free conscience and of religious freedom as a denominational trophy; the Joint Committee was the voice raised in behalf of all Americans on issues of religious voluntarism and soul freedom.

Now, I hear a different sentiment among some Southern Baptists who would like to break covenant with the other founding members of the Joint Committee to establish a separate, competing SBC Religious Liberty Commission in Washington. What a confusing spectacle this would present to Congress and to those working in the network of public affairs. My appeal to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention is to sustain your historic presence and support within the framework of the Joint Committee.

My appeal is based on a substantial biblical principle. "Those who are strong ought to bear the burdens of those less strong." Because of Southern Baptist size and strength — in numbers and in money — your continuing presence within the Joint Committee keeps faith with the stewardship of influence and responsibility entrusted to you. Other members in the Baptist family need you. To neglect that trust would be to let down both others and yourselves.

My appeal also reflects a constitutional principle. The Sixth Amendment prohibits religious tests related to those running for, or holding public offices of elected trust. The Joint Committee process has always made it possible for any Convention to have its views expressed to congressional committees and hearings related to pending legislative matters. I recall occasions when denominational members and staff functioned in such ways. However, the Constitution prohibits government from being a theocracy. Congress cannot adopt legislation on Southern Baptist doctrine or the religious views of any other denomination or religious body.

A separate, sectarian Southern Baptist commission in Washington, D. C., I believe, would diminish rather than increase the likelihood of your concerns being heard without prejudice to your cause. A separate SBC office could not effectively fulfill its role apart from the network already at work in the midst of the church-state complexities. The success of the Baptist Joint Committee rests on the premise that religious liberty issues are not a single denominational concern but form a national agenda of rights to be protected for all citizens.

The success of the Baptist Joint Committee rests on the premise that religious liberty issues are not a single denominational concern but form a national agenda of rights to be protected for all citizens.



Dr. William F. Keucher is a retired American Baptist pastor and denominational executive. He is a past chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee and a member of its board for many years.

We include the following for its informational value for our readers from a representative voice among the other cooperating Baptist national bodies. States.

Our Baptist forebears suffered the pains and penalties of a free conscience. Ultimately, they helped the whole nation understand that rights of a free conscience antedate government and should be recognized as a fundamental human right. Today, we see the constant erosion of that understanding. Baptists, themselves, seem willing to use the coercive powers of the state in support of religious conformity. The Baptist Joint Committee is needed more than ever at full strength. That means Southern Baptists are needed as full partners with other Convention members inside the Committee! □

News in Brief

High court upholds ruling on pregame invocations

WASHINGTON
The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand an appeals court decision that invocations said before public high school football games violate the First Amendment's establishment clause.

In a one-line order, the high court rejected an appeal by the Douglas County, Georgia, School District, which was seeking a review of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that banned the pregame prayers.

The dispute began in 1985 when Doug Jager, a member of the Douglas County High School band, objected to the invocations.

At that time, the prayers were led by ministers — almost all of whom were Protestant — who were selected by the Douglas County Ministerial Association. Many of the invocations opened with the words "let us pray" and invoked the name of Jesus Christ.

Jager wrote a letter of complaint to his school's principal, who asked the school's band director to talk with the student. The director, who led band members in saying the Lord's Prayer before each performance, lectured Jager on Christianity.

In an attempt to settle the matter, school Superintendent Kathryn M. Shehane invited Jager and his father to a meeting during which she and three area ministers presented an alternative "equal access plan" for the invocations. The plan stipulated that no ministers would lead the prayers, but instead the student council would select students, parents, and school staff members to do so. These individuals, according to the plan, would be "selected without regard to religion or the lack of religious beliefs."

The Jagers, who are descended from Native Americans, rejected the plan and filed action in district court to enjoin the school district from continuing the invocations. They also asked the court to hold the practice unconstitutional.

The district court upheld the constitutionality of the school district's equal access plan, ruling the invocations had valid secular purposes.

But in January 1989, the Eleventh Circuit panel ruled the plan violated the establishment clause.

"Protestant Christianity is the majority religious preference in Douglas County," the appeals court wrote. "Therefore, the likely result of the equal access plan will

be the continuation of Protestant Christian invocations, which have been delivered since 1947."

In appealing to the high court, attorneys for the school district argued the appeals court decision would "invalidate years of tradition of opening public events with ceremonial invocations."

But attorneys for the Jagers countered that the case does not involve "presidential inaugurations, sessions of the U.S. Congress, or sessions of the U.S. Supreme Court" but rather "the actions and the motives of one county public school system in the state of Georgia with a troubled history of noncompliance in matters governed by the establishment clause." □

Scientologists' fees not charitable contributions

WASHINGTON
Payments made to the Church of Scientology for "auditing" and "training" sessions may not be deducted as charitable contributions, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled.

In a 5-2 decision, the high court held such payments are not a "contribution or gift" as defined by the federal tax code but rather *quid pro quo* exchanges in which church members receive an identifiable benefit for their money.

The Church of Scientology, which was founded in the 1950s by L. Ron Hubbard, operates through a "mother church" in California and branch churches around the world. Services offered through branch churches include "auditing," which involves one-on-one spiritual counseling between a participant and a church official, and "training," which focuses on the study of church tenets.

The church charges a "fixed donation" for participation in auditing and training sessions. This system of mandatory charges is based on a central tenet of Scientology known as the "doctrine of exchange," which requires a person who receives something to pay something back.

In the dispute before the court, several church members attempted to deduct payments to the Church of Scientology as charitable contributions on their federal income tax returns. But the commissioner of internal revenue disallowed the deductions. The U.S. Tax Court and two federal appeals courts upheld the commissioner's decision.

Writing for the court's majority, Justice

Thurgood Marshall said legislative history shows Congress — in drafting the federal tax code — intended to differentiate between "unrequited payments to qualified recipients and payments made to such recipients in return for goods or services." The payments in question, he added, were inherently reciprocal.

Marshall rejected the church members' claim they were entitled to deductions because the benefit they received was purely religious in nature, as well as their claim that payments made for the right to participate in a religious service should be automatically deductible.

Such a proposal, he said, would expand the charitable contribution deduction far beyond what Congress has provided.

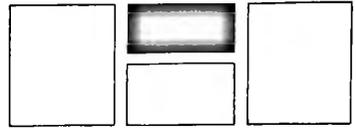
"Numerous forms of payments to eligible donees plausibly could be categorized as providing a religious benefit or as securing access to a religious service," Marshall wrote. "For example, some taxpayers might regard their tuition payments to parochial schools as generating a religious benefit or as securing access to a religious service; such payments, however, have long been held not to be charitable contributions. ... Taxpayers might make similar claims about payments for church-sponsored counseling sessions or for medical care at church-affiliated hospitals that otherwise might not be deductible."

Such a deduction also could raise entanglement problems between church and state, he said, since the Internal Revenue Service and reviewing courts would be forced to differentiate "religious" benefits from "secular" ones.

In addition, Marshall — who was joined by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Byron R. White, Harry A. Blackmun, and John Paul Stevens — rejected the church members' claim that the disallowance of their deductions violated the First Amendment's establishment clause by creating an unconstitutional denominational preference. He also rejected the members' claim that their right to the free exercise of religion had been violated.

But Justice Sandra Day O'Connor — who was joined by Justice Antonin Scalia — dissented, saying the government either must disregard all distinctively religious *quids pro quo* or tax them all.

O'Connor insisted there is no difference between the payments made by Scientologists and those made when Christians rent pews, Jews purchase tickets for High Holy Days, Catholics pay Mass stipends, or Mormons tithe as



a condition for admission into their temple.

"In my view, the IRS has misapplied its longstanding practice of allowing charitable contributions ... in a way that violates the establishment clause," she wrote. "It has unconstitutionally refused to allow payments for the religious service of auditing to be deducted as charitable contributions in the same way it has allowed fixed payments to other religions to be deducted ... the IRS' application of the *quid pro quo* standard here — and only here — discriminates against the Church of Scientology." □

California church loses dispute over employment

CUPERTINO, California

The First Southern Baptist Church here must pay a transient two years' back wages and \$80,000 disability income if a ruling by the California Workers' Compensation Appeals Board stands.

The appeals board ruled Thomas Hoppmann was employed by the church in a funds-for-work relief ministry and is owed compensation for injuries he sustained while working at the church in 1986, said Scott Southard, former pastor of the church and a principle figure in the dispute.

Part of the church's relief ministry allowed transients to do odd jobs at the church in exchange for financial assistance, usually \$5 per hour of work performed. The program was developed on the premise that many people don't want a handout but will take assistance if it can be earned, Southard said.

Hoppmann was working on the roof of the church and fell to the ground below, fracturing his heel and elbow. After he refused transport by ambulance, church leaders took him to a hospital where he was treated for his injuries. But Hoppmann would not let the church pay for any liability or medical claims because he said he was afraid it would jeopardize the public assistance he was receiving, Southard said.

Hoppmann only recently filed a lawsuit against the church, asking for the back wages and disability compensation. The appeals board ruled Hoppmann was a church employee because he kept coming back for work and an hourly rate had been negotiated, Southard said.

The decision is being appealed.

"It has real implications for not only churches, but other nonprofit organiza-

tions, such as the Salvation Army," Southard said, adding ministries to the poor may be severely threatened if the appeal is denied.

"To me, the real tragedy is there is a lot of criticism about the church not doing enough to help the homeless," Southard said. "So now there's a real feeling that you put a hand out to help, and it was bitten." (BP)

Former church members' claim to be heard by jury

WASHINGTON

A jury in California will decide whether two former members of the Unification Church should receive damages for injuries they claim to have suffered as a result of becoming members of the church.

By refusing to review the dispute, the U.S. Supreme Court left in place a decision by the California Supreme Court that the case should go to trial.

David Molko and Tracy Leal, the former church members involved in the dispute, claim they were approached and invited to Unification Church events by members who denied the church's identity or religious nature.

Both say they were at church-run facilities for several weeks before learning the groups in which they were participating were part of the Unification Church. Both joined the church several months later.

Although admitting church members never used actual or threatened physical force or restraint, Molko and Leal said members used "psychological" manipulation — including sincere affection, positive reinforcement, and guilt — to keep them from leaving.

Molko and Leal, who left the Unification Church after being "deprogrammed," filed suit against the church in California Superior Court, claiming fraud, coercive persuasion, and restitution. The court rejected their claims.

In affirming the lower court's ruling, a state appeals court said it would be impossible for a jury to differentiate between brainwashing and religious faith without violating the Constitution by questioning the authenticity of the church's religious teachings.

But the California Supreme Court reserved the decision and ordered the dispute to go to trial.

In appealing to the nation's highest court, Rex E. Lee, counsel for the Unification Church, wrote: "The state's asserted interest in protecting its citizens

from 'overly persuasive' religious speech and conduct designed solely to convert someone to a new religious faith clearly cannot constitute a compelling state interest. Otherwise, the state court will be given the authority to decide for itself what religious conversion experiences are appropriate and which involve an abuse which can be severely curtailed or perhaps even absolutely prohibited.

"Absent physical violence or other tortious conduct, the state cannot leave unorthodox religious organizations to the not-so-tender mercies of a jury to decide whether statements made by church representatives to persuade new members to join the church are acceptable."

But Ford Greene, attorney for Molko, said "when a religion is not chosen freely and voluntarily, the First Amendment should not shield the church from responsibility for its excesses." □

Parents lose final appeal in medical treatment case

WASHINGTON

The Supreme Court has rejected the appeal of an Oklahoma couple who were convicted in the death of their infant son.

Kevin and Jamie Funkhouser were convicted of second-degree manslaughter and sentenced to two years in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary following the death of their three-month-old son from broncho-pneumonia.

The Funkhousers, who are members of the Church of the First Born, did not seek medical treatment for the child but rather relied on prayer for his healing.

The couple's attorney argued the Funkhousers' decision not to seek medical treatment for the child was within state law. He cited a statutory exception for parents who follow good faith religious beliefs for healing.

But a state court found the couple guilty on the manslaughter charges and handed down the two-year prison sentences. The Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals upheld the lower court ruling. □

"... I have often expressed my sentiments, that every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience."

George Washington, to Virginia Baptists

Dr. Wood is the director of the J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University, and Simon and Ethel Bunn Professor of Church-State Studies. He served as executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee from 1972 to 1980. The following article is excerpted from the *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 30, (Spring 1988, 219-225). Used by permission.

The Prophetic Role of Religion in Society

More than thirty years ago, Reinhold Niebuhr wrote a perceptive analysis of the American republic to which he gave the provocative title, *The Irony of American History*. Nowhere is this "irony of American history" more evident than in the role of religion played in a republic conceived and founded as a secular state. On the one hand, the important social and political role played by religion in American society has been widely recognized by both American and European observers throughout this nation's history. On the other hand, the United States has been frequently described as "the oldest secular state" and, indeed, "the most thoroughgoing, if not the only truly secular state." A few years after his book on American history, Niebuhr addressed this particular paradox in a volume of essays published under the title of *Pious and Secular America*, in which he argued that America was more secular than any other nation but also was more religious.

To anyone unacquainted with American history, such affirmations would appear to be in conflict and totally irreconcilable. Any characterization of America as a secular state would suggest to many, in the absence of acquaintance with American history, that religion is in some way limited only to the private sphere and, therefore, isolated from the currents of American public life or the body politic — that the role of churches and synagogues, as well as religion in general, is relegated to the essentially personal and private concerns of American citizens. Such an impression, however, would be completely contrary to the reality of the American experience.

Religion has clearly played a formative role in the shaping of American national and public life. While church-state separation, the institutional independence of church and state, has been both a constitutional and political reality in the

United States, it would be difficult to conceive of a nation in which there has been closer interpenetration of religion and society. Religion has been inextricably intertwined with America's nationhood, its national holidays, and the civil and political liberties guaranteed its citizens. To many, any reference to a "pious and secular America" or the formative role of religion in a nation in which the concept of the secular state is constitutionally guaranteed would seem, at least at first glance, a strange contradiction or an obvious incongruity....

The fact that religion has had and continues to have a major influence on American life ought not to be viewed as incompatible with the American principle of the separation of church and state or the concept of America as a secular state. While the Establishment Clause repeatedly has been declared by the United States Supreme Court to mean the separation of church and state, America has been marked throughout its history by the closest interpenetration of religion and society. Religion in America has never been confined to its institutional expression, namely churches and synagogues, but is enshrined in much of the life of the nation — its documents, its laws, and its institutions. One contemporary American church historian, Sidney Mead, has perceptively written of this interaction of religion and society in America as "the nation with the soul of a church."...

The present tendency to denigrate the concept of America as a secular state and to disparage any reference to the phrase "separation of church and state" is a familiar theme in American history. Some have long maintained that the guarantees of the First Amendment were consciously formulated to limit the federal government's jurisdiction over religion only to protect the right of state establishment of religion and state sovereignty over the free exercise of

... [T]he prophetic role of religion in society is rooted in an authentic and free exercise of religion that necessarily arises independently of the norms of political or social establishment.

religion. In this way, the federal government gave tacit recognition to the pluralism of religion within the states and the respective patterns of church-state relationships among the states.

Unease over the concept of America as a secular state and the denial of any form of religious establishment or identity were met with strong utterances of denunciation. Soon after the ratification of the religion clauses of the First Amendment, numerous voices of dissent lamented that no acknowledgment had been made to God, let alone to Jesus Christ, in the supreme legal document of the land. Rev. John M. Mason of New York in 1793 bemoaned that the Constitution made no reference to God or even claimed a religious foundation of the new nation. "Should the citizens of America be as irreligious as her Constitution," he wrote, "we will have reason to tremble, lest the Governor of the universe, who will not be treated with indignity by a people any more than by individuals, overturn from its foundations the fabric we have been rearing, and crush us to atoms in the wreck."...

While these views of America's theocrats of the nineteenth century did not by any means represent the views of a majority of the citizenry, the view of a Christian America was vigorously defended by a number of America's religious leaders of the period. It should be said, however, that these views were also vehemently denounced by many other religious, as well as political, leaders as incompatible with American as a secular state and a land of religious freedom.

The concept of a Christian America has experienced a resurgence in twentieth-century America, particularly during the eighties, among those citizens who continue to find the view of America as a secular state to be incompatible with their religious faith and their perception of America as a nation. The notion also persists that the secular state with its corollary of the separation of church and state inevitably requires the privatization of religion and a denial of its prophetic role in society. Just how this link is made is difficult to comprehend, since the prophetic role of religion in society is rooted in an authentic and free exercise of religion that necessarily arises independently of the norms of political or social establishment.

The thinking is widespread that the secular state, like the principle of church-state separation, is inherently in conflict with the prophetic or public role of religion in society. All too frequently it is assumed that to be a separationist is to be opposed to the role of religion in public affairs — that separation of church and state necessarily means the noninvolvement of religion in society. Separationists are often charged with holding the view that religion should concern itself with only private and religious affairs. This view of religion is widely shared by Marxists. Some American writers have contributed to this confusion by falsely identifying the separation of church and state with the separation of religion from society and public affairs.

Separation of church and state, it may well be argued, makes possible a genuinely prophetic role of religion by freeing it of institutional alliances with the state that would modify or mute its prophetic voice. In America, the institutional independence or separation of church and state has been a natural ally of the prophetic role of religion in society and, therefore, has contributed enormously to the interpenetration of religion and society. The vast array of social and welfare departments maintained by the churches and synagogues of America and the large network of church offices on public affairs in state capitals and the nation's capital are uniquely American phenomena, the significance of which remains no matter what one's assessment may be of the effectiveness of the involvement of organized religion in the body politic.

Nevertheless, there is a popular assumption that to subscribe to separation of church and state is to embrace the view of religion's noninvolvement in public affairs and the body politic. The American Jewish community, among many others, stands as a refutation of this assumption. While American Jewry has long strongly supported church-state separation in the United States, recent

studies have continued to show that the Jewish community and Jewish organizations are perhaps the most involved of all major communities of faith on matters of political affairs and public policy.

The church that is relatively free of institutional alliances and entanglements with the state is one that is most favored to be able to carry out the prophetic role of religion in society through its free and authentic witness. Far from being a contradiction, the institutional separation of church and state makes possible genuine interaction between communities of faith and political society a living reality. To the degree that a church is allied with the institutions of the state — economic, political, or social — to that degree it is in bondage and its prophetic role is abridged.

As Ronald J. McAllister wrote in the Winter 1988 issue of this journal [Journal of Church and State], "It is a mistake to assume that the separation of church and state will or should imply the separation of church and society." To be sure, the prophetic role of religion in society means far more than mere involvement of religion in society. The prophetic role of religion necessarily calls into question the status quo — society as it is or sees itself to be. The prophetic role of religion is necessarily to be about the business of questioning the established order, refusing to sanctify traditions not in harmony with the norms of one's faith, advancing justice, and promoting the general welfare of society. The prophetic role of religion is not to be found in the advocacy of social traditionalism, economic libertarianism, nuclear arms buildup, American nationalism, or a militant anticommunism. To make religion a tool of social privilege and power, a widespread feature of religion in America, is a denial of the prophetic role of religion in society.

Finally, it must be remembered that religion is almost always accorded recognition and even the blessing of the state, albeit the totalitarian state, as long as religion supports the national interests and public policies of the state, as in the Third Reich or the most atheistic socialist countries today. Religion may be tolerated and even patronized in the totalitarian state as long as religion assumes a subservient role, one that is supportive of the nation's declared interests and stated policies. It is only when the prophetic role of religion that is exercised calls into question the declared interests and policies of the state, that the right of communities of faith to be involved in society is most likely to be challenged and even denounced by the state, whether communist or democratic. The simple truth is that the separation of church and state is the channel by which the prophetic role of religion may be realized and fulfilled. □

Quoting

Jack Brymer
Florida Baptist Witness

During an ecumenical dialogue on religion in American life, a rabbi asked a Baptist pastor what Baptists had contributed to America. "Religious liberty," the pastor responded without hesitation, "which guarantees you the freedom to believe and practice your faith."

Seldom are we reminded that religious liberty and the safeguards against state involvement in religious affairs were not always a part of the American dream.

In fact, this precious freedom had to be added to the U.S. Constitution through an amendment, and that after considerable struggle and persecution. The First Amendment to the new Constitution is unquestionably the greatest Baptist contribution to religious liberty, which is now taken for granted by almost every American, regardless of religious persuasion.

American historian George Bancroft, while acknowledging that many others held similar ideas, wrote, "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was from the first the trophy of the Baptists."

More than at any other time in recent history, however, Baptists face a challenge to their conviction on separation of church and state. There is confusion even among Baptists over this great time-tested principle.

Even the U.S. Supreme Court is questioning the "original intent" of the framers of the Constitution. In fact, Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist has called Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" between church and state a "misleading metaphor." Rehnquist maintains that the Constitution does not require government neutrality "as between religion and irreligion."

Regardless of its current interpretation, the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of separation between church and state is the crowning jewel of persecuted colonists — primarily Baptists — restless with state intervention in matters of conscience and religious faith.

Issues previously settled by the First Amendment, however, are reappearing. Consequently, the theme for Religious Liberty Day is most appropriate. ["Restless for Religious Liberty"] As we seek to resolve the conflicts of the present generation, we must not forget achievements of our restless forebears. □

Rosemary Radford Ruether
National Catholic Reporter

Authentic faith recognizes its limits, its moral and mental fallibility, and thus understands that faith is, finally, trust in God's faithfulness to us. Thought control drives out not only dissent but authentic faith as well. It is fundamentally idolatrous, whether in its papal or its biblicist form, to seek to replace God with absolutist human systems of control. □

INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



Poland restores religious freedom, rights, property

WARSAW

The Polish Parliament has formally ended four decades of struggle with the Roman Catholic Church by adopting legislation to give it legal status and restore property and privileges that were taken away after World War II.

It is the culmination of a year of negotiations and it paves the way for establishing much-sought-after diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

At the same time, however, it raises the question of whether growing Catholic power — in practice, if not in theory — endangers the separation of church and state legislation by the Communists after the War.

Some contemporary evidence of a "state religion": the influence of the church in halting hit-parade music from state-run radio during the Easter holidays; crucifixes still are hung on the walls of many schoolrooms, especially in the countryside; strong promotion of a bill to rescind Poland's relatively liberal 1956 abortion laws and criminalize all abortions.

Vigorously denying any retreat from previous policy, former government spokesman, Jerzy Urban declared that "The separation of church and state is inviolable."

A comprehensive act gives the Catholic Church the right to buy and sell property, operate its own businesses, publish newspapers and establish and operate schools, hospitals and radio and television stations without government interference.

Two other laws passed by Parliament assure freedom of worship to all faiths and grant state society benefits to Polish clergy. □

Socialist states opting out of religious sector

KESTON, England

Two news articles related to the state of governmental church affairs offices in the Soviet Union and in Hungary indicate that change will increasingly come to characterize church-state relations in Eastern Europe.

Persistent rumors from a number of sources received by experts at Keston College, a religious liberty/human rights think tank in Keston, a London suburb, suggest that Konstantin Kharchev,

Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR, is being relieved of his post.

According to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Kharchev has been appointed as ambassador to Mauretania, but another source says the posting may be to Ghana. Kharchev is recovering from surgery and is not available for comment.

Keston College notes that Kharchev has been criticized by the Moscow Patriarchate for pushing them too hard to respond to the new atmosphere of reform. This tallies with complaints from church activists that Orthodox Church leaders are slow to take full advantage of new opportunities.

Kharchev allegedly accused the church leadership of being slow to implement perestroika in the church and also made allegations of financial corruption.

In Hungary, Prime Minister Niklos Nemeth confirmed that the government will in the "near future" decide on the dissolution of the State Office for Church Affairs (SOCA).

The Prime Minister indicated that the government will continue to have a church policy. This policy, he pledged, will be executed mainly by "political means" rather than by "bureaucratic interference which violates the autonomy of the different churches and denominations."

Nemeth explained further that "Relations between Church and State must be based on systematic dialogue and partnership."

Meanwhile, the retirement "at his own request" of the head of the Hungarian SOCA, Imre Miklos, was announced in Budapest, and took effect on May 1. KNS

State church confused over state of atheist churchman

STOCKHOLM

An atheist, who some weeks ago was granted the right by a Swedish court to reenter the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, has now declared his desire to leave the church again, this time for a year.

One year before church elections are held again, however, he would ask to be reinstated in order to qualify as a candidate for his "Atheists-Agnostics" party. Current membership is required for candidacy.

Why does he now wish to leave the church for a year? The reason is simple: he does not want to pay the Church tax. The circus continues. □

British Baptists say 'yes' to Inter-Church Process

LONDON

Baptist delegates gave a strong "yes" to the main question before the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain when seventy-three percent of the fourteen hundred delegates voted to join the "Inter-Church Process" (ICP).

This is the term for the new ecumenical involvement of Christian Churches in Great Britain, scheduled to replace the British Council of Churches (BCC) when that organization dissolves in 1990.

The main distinctions between the two bodies: ICP will provide new "instruments" (structures) for the individual nations — England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland — while the BCC has represented all of Great Britain. In addition, the proposed ICP allows for the full participation of the Roman Catholic Church, a point unacceptable among Baptists opposing participation. Baptist Times

Corporations heed call to social, ethical response

VALLEY FORGE

Shareholder resolutions on South Africa filed by the American Baptist Churches' national boards have achieved more success in 1989 than in any previous year, according to J. Andy Smith, director of program assigned the administration of social and ethical responsibility in investments.

Resolutions at Cummins Engine and Unisys respectively received 28.6 percent and 23 percent of the shareholder votes, unusually high for such proposals, Smith said.

Proposals at four companies were withdrawn when those corporations confirmed they either had terminated ties with South Africa or were planning to withdraw. Mobil Oil, Hewlett Packard and NCR were among that group. ABNS

Romania scored over its assault on free practice

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The co-chairman of the Helsinki Commission, U.S. Representative Steny Hoyer, today expressed deep concern over the Romanian authorities' destruction of the Comanesti Baptist Church and detention of its pastor, Ioan Chivoiu, as well as two church elders.



NEWS-SCAN

"This incident is only the latest Romanian assault on the free practice of religion, as well as the exercise of human rights of all kinds," said Hoyer, a Baptist whose district abuts the nation's capital.

The Comanesti church was demolished on May 31, the day after the arrest of Pastor Chivoiu, and elders Russu and Taranu. It had been the subject of a two-month long struggle between the congregation and local civil authorities.

In the past, dozens of churches have been destroyed in Romania as a result of so-called "zoning violations" or in the process of "modernization" of cities and towns. Over twenty-five religiously and culturally significant Orthodox churches alone have been demolished, as well as a number of churches belonging to minority denominations. □

Mission society decries strife in El Salvador

LEICESTER

Members of the British Baptist Missionary Society at its annual business meeting unanimously approved a strongly worded resolution urging peace in El Salvador.

The resolution notes "with dismay, the continuing strife and tension within El Salvador, and the escalating level of violence throughout the country despite the recent peace initiatives in Central America."

Members of the mission body proclaimed their oneness with the leaders and members of the El Salvador Baptist Association.

The resolution also called upon the El Salvador government to pursue policies of peace and reconciliation, and "to restrain those who openly or covertly resort to violence in attempts to smother the voice of Christian conscience." EBPS

Women present gift

KRYNICA, Poland

The Executive Committee of the European Baptist Women's Union met here in April, when a young people's prayer march through the streets provided fresh evidence of the winds of change blowing throughout the land.

Polish women have for many years maintained and staffed a summer camp for children, and were given a gift of 10,000 DMarks representing the 1988 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer offering for that purpose. □

European Baptists affirm 'Peace with Justice' move

BASEL

Six hundred accredited journalists from Europe and beyond joined the more than seven hundred delegates and the thousands of daytime participants in Switzerland for the European Ecumenical Assembly, "Peace with Justice."

European Baptists from nine countries taking part included Czechoslovakia, Federal Republic of Germany (observer status), German Democratic Republic, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden, and the Soviet Union.

The assembly brought together envoys of most of the European Churches — Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic, who accounted for about half of the delegates.

The value of the meeting should be seen against the background of extensive studies among world Christians under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. A Final Document to be issued will summarize the proceedings. EBPS

Soviets demolish church in registration dispute

Refusal by a Baptist congregation to register with authorities resulted in the demolition of its building in Rostov-on-Don, according to a report of the Friedensstimme mission.

The building had been erected only last August, and stood on land belong to former prisoner Larisa Zaitseva. Two former prisoners serve as pastors of the congregation. □

State interference seen in seminarian selection

All clergy in Czechoslovakia train at theological faculties run by the state, as is true in many western countries, but a document issued by the Initiative for Social Defense (ISO) takes issue with the state's interference in the selection of prospective students.

ISO, an independent association, charged that the state Secretariat for Church Affairs instructs faculties to reject candidates to whom the Secretariat has political objections. As a result, the full complement of students has not been reached, despite the shortage of clergy among all churches. □

An updated version of the Bible in Spanish, being released after ten years in the making, bears the Spanish World label of the Spanish Publishing House, a Texas arm of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The new Bible is a revision of the Reina-Valera translation of the Bible that dates back to 1569 Alexander Kircun, Polish Baptist leader and former vice president of the Baptist World Alliance, died in Warsaw at 84 years of age. President Konstanty Wiazowski observed that "he was virtually the father of the Polish Baptist Union after the war" In a rather bizarre incident Alexei Bichkov, general secretary of the All-Union Council in the Soviet Union, suffered a temporary loss of sight which doctors diagnosed as due to extreme fatigue. Bichkov regained his sight during a month of convalescence More than three hundred churches and a monastery were returned by the government to their religious communities in Moldavia in response to requests from believers. Nineteen Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches and two Evangelical Christian communities were among the number returned; the majority of churches were Russian Orthodox. The relaxation towards religion led to publication of the Bible in Moldavian for the first time since the Second World War The Hungarian State Secretary and Politburo member, Imre Pozsgay, has called on the ruling Socialist Workers Party to drop atheism as a requisite for membership if it is to renew itself. He said further that it must transform itself from an "ideological" to a "platform party" in order to enjoy a mass following. His request is interpreted as signaling the end of the long-standing struggle against religion More than two million copies of a booklet titled "Medical Science and God's Word Give ANSWERS to Questions Related to AIDS," have been distributed in twelve major languages in Uganda. Written by SBC missionary/physician Richard Goodgame, the booklet moves from the medical to the spiritual realm with the concluding question, "How can I live forever if I'm dying from AIDS?" Israeli authorities have been ordered by the High Court to explain their ban on women praying with a Torah scroll or ritual shawls at the Western Wall. A women's group had petitioned the court, which ordered that women be permitted to pray at that site but without shawls and a scroll. □

CORRESPONDENCE

Your response extends the dialogue and contributes to clarifying the issues. Letters must carry both the signature and address of the writer, and should not exceed 250 words. We reserve the right to edit for length.

To the Editors:

I borrowed the pastor's copy of REPORT long enough to read the April REFLECTIONS on Baptists, their identity and integrity. This is worth the price of an annual subscription, so have your folks enter a subscription for me.

Clyde K. Bizzell
Dallas, Texas

God sends along a few good men during the centuries. You seem to be one of them to me. We thank God for you and the job you do.

Howard O. Marsh
Sulphur Springs, Texas

I cherish and thank Our Father for my religious liberty and I pray that all people, everywhere, could have the same blessing. When I saw your ad (for Religious Liberty Day materials) in the Baptist Standard, I knew that here was a way of creating awareness at my church among our members. It causes us to pray more earnestly for our brothers and sisters worldwide, who do not have this precious freedom.

Betty Bunch
Sublime, Texas

Excellent packet of resources for Religious Liberty Day this year!

It seems that you have become more prophetic in pen, the REPORT is a classic journal, with well-rounded articles . . .

James C. Miller
Rochester, New York

founder. Not finding one, it asked a direct male descendant of Williams to pose for a statue which was erected. If the genes were not seriously altered over three hundred years and George Williams at all resembled his great-great-great grandfather (probably there should be some more "greats" in this), his physiognomy was much less rotund and much more angular than that of John Adams.

Your picture of Isaac Backus correctly portrays this eighteenth-century Baptist hero wearing a wig, but he was severely criticized for doing so by most pious rural Baptists in New England.

Do help us keep the lineage of the Baptists straight.

William G. McLoughlin
Professor of History, Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

I was most unhappy to read the article by A. James Rudin which I found printed in your last REPORT from the CAPITAL. I understand that the basic point of the article concerned religious liberty and separation of church and state. I applaud the fact that Southern Baptists came to Rudin's defense on those issues, at least as those issues have been conceived historically.

What I do not understand was why you included in the article, which you adapted for use in the REPORT, the sentence: "Yet despite living in this Southern Baptist sea, I can recall no attempts by any Southern Baptist to convert me to Christianity." Am I to understand that this is the model of religious liberty and church/state separation which you and the BJCPA endorse? If not, why did you not edit that sentence out when you adapted the article for use?

Cecil Taylor, Ph.D.
Independence, Missouri

I would like to note a small, but significant, mistake in the May issue of REPORT from the CAPITAL. The picture of "Roger Williams" on your cover perpetuates a cruel hoax upon Baptists.

There is no extant portrait in any form of Roger Williams. That says something for his modesty. Brown University has tried for many years to find such a portrait, but we are now convinced that none ever existed.

What you have printed (along with many other innocent persons before you) is a portrait of John Adams (one of the implacable foes of the Baptists' efforts for separation of church and state). Some enterprising trickster in the nineteenth century, added a Mark Twain moustache to the engraving of Adams and disseminated the fraud far and wide. Baptists, eager for a portrait of their hero, fell for it. That hoax has gone on far too long. I wish you would do a service to Baptist history and put an end to this monstrosity.

Any historian can tell you that no seventeenth century Puritan or Baptist wore a wig. That was an eighteenth-century figment of popery.

At the tercentenary of the founding of Rhode Island by Williams in 1936, the State searched high and low for a picture of our

Constantine, from page 5

Reconstructionism is openly, avowedly, unashamedly post millennial. One-time pre-millennialists, who were attracted to Reconstructionism, have generally found themselves schizophrenic in their loyalties and understandings, and have had to make some hard choices.

Baptists who feel attracted to Reconstructionism will also have to make some hard and basic choices. Do we want to continue to sing "Amazing Grace," or shall we buy the idea that keeping Old Testament laws will inevitably bring material and spiritual blessings? Will forcing people on pain of punishment to obey those laws really bring the Kingdom of God closer? What would a state-church or a church-state do to the Christian faith and to its free expression? The Constantinian era, in which the state's conscience was the church, was a grave mistake, not because it was a good idea either gone wrong or in the hands of the wrong church, but because it was wrong from the beginning. It did violence to the very nature of the Christian faith. Would we be happy for the state to tell us how to run our churches? Would we be any better Christians if we coerced our unsaved neighbors to live by our Christian norms even though we couldn't win them to the Christian faith? Living something without believing it is much like believing something without living it: hypocrisy, in both cases. □

Bob Adams

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Overreaction and hostility toward truly voluntary prayer have no more place in public schools than does the promotion of a sanitized religious expression.

REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn
Executive Director



Eliminate and do away with redundancy! We should expect more than we do of members of the U.S. Congress in regard to their use of our mother tongue.

One Mr. Dannemeyer of California has successfully tacked an amendment on legislation funding vocational education which would promote/permit/require (?) "voluntary prayer."

The amendment reads "No funds shall be made available under applicable program in this Act to any state or local educational agency which has a policy of denying or which effectively prevents participation in prayer in public schools by individuals on a voluntary basis." But then in debate on the matter, May 9, 1989, the Congressman said, "there is no effort on my part as the author of this amendment to mandate that we have voluntary prayer." Good for him. We don't need mandated voluntary prayer.

For public schools to get into the business of religion. The catch phrase is "voluntary prayer."

There are only two problems with that. What is generally under debate is neither voluntary nor prayer.

Any sort of oral, spoken, group-attended, formal institutionally sanctioned prayer in the public school classroom is not voluntary. It is not voluntary because the hearers are there under mandatory school attendance laws. A captive audience of children has trouble making genuinely voluntary responses. Responses are ordered and structured in the classroom. At least to some degree, I hope. If prayer is "used" as a disciplinary device, (Alright, boys and girls, shut up and pray!) it's hardly voluntary or prayer.

Mr. Justice Stevens speaking to the American Bar Association in 1982 tagged government prescribed religious exercises "required ritual." He was right. The objective sought so sincerely by some is not voluntary.

That settles it. If it's not voluntary, it's not prayer. If it is voluntary, no one under heaven can prevent it.

Public schools *can* teach much *about* prayer/s. No child should get far in public education without knowing that Americans pray in many different ways. Some believe that they must kneel for prayer, humble and sincere. Some make the sign of the cross. Others must pray aloud with lifted hands. Others bow their heads and close their eyes. Still others must face a certain direction. Some earnest prayers prefer a physical aid or symbol to assist their prayers. Some do not believe they can pray in the presence of others.

School children everywhere can be taught that prayer is related to one's own religion and that each of us should honor and respect the right of others to practice his/her faith freely without being made to conform to someone else's prayer. Those of tender age and receptive conscience should certainly not be made to feel odd or different if their family's treasured beliefs do not fit the majority practice. Nor should children be nudged or intimidated to enter into any sort of religious exercise at all in the public school setting.

Further, one of the most important things that public schools can teach about prayer is that the state can not prevent it or permit it. There is more to life than that which falls under government's umbrella. Vital to the American experience is the experiment that keeps church and state separate enough that neither can dominate the other.

What is it then that those who insist upon public school religion really want? Many of them, like me, are from a

regenerate church tradition and believe that faith must be personal. One follows Jesus Christ freely or not really. One prays from the heart or doesn't really pray.

What would be gained by some watered-down exercise that might offend as many as it helps? Most thoughtful promoters of oral prayers in public institutions recognize that the form, context and actual practice would vary widely.

Many problems, some real, some imagined, do exist and fuel the push for public school religion.

One is ignorance of what is constitutional and what is not. Members of Congress in this Year of our Lord 1989 are still standing on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives interpreting "the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1962 (as) saying that we no longer would have voluntary prayer in public schools." Wrong!

Another problem is exaggerated response to the Court decisions of the 1960's in fear and misunderstanding. That response comes from teachers, principals, administrators and schools boards. Much work needs to be done to clarify and keep the delicate balance between no establishment of religion and the free exercise thereof. Stories are told about a teacher who forbade a child to bow his head and silently say a table grace in the school lunchroom. Persons of good will and common sense should find out if a teacher engages in such such bizarre. If one does, it should be stopped.

A third aspect of the problem that allows well-meaning but misled people to push for state-sanctioned prayers is the public focus on what cannot be done.

A disturbed pastor called me from a small town in Louisiana and described how a church of another denomination was taking all the public school children whose parents gave their consent into a church building for religious education two hours each week. It didn't seem right to him. The more we talked the more evident it became that the church was probably properly engaged in a released time program. Churches everywhere have the facilities, the people and the opportunity to do more than a few minutes of teaching religion. My only counsel to this brother and others like him is "Go thou and do likewise." But that takes work.

Another option for significant involvement with the public schools is through volunteers helping in the regular school day or providing directed activities, a study hall, tutoring after the school day. Latch-key kids find a safe, healthy place to hang out if churches are willing to open their doors. But that requires some creativity and planning.

Groups of students in secondary schools may gather before or after the school day for voluntary religious activities if the school permits any limited open forum for other sorts of clubs. The "equal access" legislation of Sen. Mark Hatfield and Rep. Don Bonker simply guarantees religious clubs the same free speech that other groups enjoy. But that demands some initiative on the part of students.

A wide range of religious and educational groups have set out to describe what *can* be done in "Religion in the Public School Curriculum." Order a sample copy from the Baptist Joint Committee. It takes study.

Voluntary required prayer for individual groups who are freely mandatorily assembled is not the answer or the question.

The bill which bears Mr. Dannemeyer's amendment goes now to the Senate. Maybe they have a dictionary. □

REVIEWS



MANY MANSIONS

By Harvey Cox. Boston: Beacon Press, 1988. 212 pages, hardcover.

Harvey Cox, Harvard professor, author of *The Secular City*, *Turning East*, and *Religion in the Secular City*, needs no introduction to literate Baptists. He identifies himself as an American Baptist, among whom his spiritual pilgrimage began. Over the years he has challenged us, inspired us, angered us, and most important he has stimulated our thinking. His current effort, *Many Mansions*, is a clairon call for Christians to engage in honest and legitimate dialogue with the great religions and philosophies of the world.

The title of the book is taken from the words of Jesus in John 14:2: "In my Father's house are many mansions . . ." Cox observes that people with appreciation of other faiths cite this as a proof text that Buddhists and Hindus will dwell alongside Christians in the hereafter. He also finds it fascinating that within a few verses of this "universalist" passage, Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

That "particularist" passage is the favorite proof text of anti-dialogue adherents. The book is based on Cox's premise that both the universalist and the particularist points of view are necessary and inevitable in the religious experience. Second, Cox maintains that Jesus himself encouraged dialogue during his earthly life. Finally, he argues that the uniqueness of Christ is a healthy subject for dialogue with other faiths.

The book divides along the lines of major world religions and thoughts. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism,

Reviewer

Jeffery Scott, pastor and a Ph.D. candidate in American church history, has become a regular contributor to REPORT.

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Russian Orthodoxy, Liberation Theology, and Marxism are examined. Far from being a dry academic exercise in comparative religions, *Many Mansions* is the skillful blending of Cox's personal experiences in dialogue with individuals of other faiths and his depth of knowledge of major world religions history and practices.

Some of the best reading is to be found in the chapter on Russian Orthodoxy, as readers meet character after character with interesting insights into the meaning of faith and religious practice.

Many Mansions would serve as an excellent reading for introductory students of comparative religions. But beyond this audience, Cox has much to say to Baptists and other Christians about the need for greater dialogue with and understanding of the great faiths and philosophies of our interdependent world. □

SBC turns down motion to reconsider budget

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting June 13-15 in Las Vegas, Nevada, rejected a motion to reconsider the convention's 1989-90 budget that would have allowed the convention to vote on reducing its allocation to the Baptist Joint Committee by \$200,000.

Almost fifty-four percent of messengers voting refused to reconsider the budget, which had been approved just twenty-four hours earlier.

Charlie Waller of Bumpass, Virginia, originally introduced a motion to divert \$350,000 from the BJC to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Before messengers could vote on that action, they had to agree to reconsider the budget.

Prior to the vote on reconsideration, Waller announced plans to amend his initial motion. He said he intended to

substitute a motion that had been introduced by another messenger.

That motion — made by Kenneth R. Barnett, a SBC Executive Committee member from Denver — called for removing \$200,000 from the convention's allocation to the BJC and re-allocating it to four other Southern Baptist entities — \$60,000 to the Foreign Mission Board, \$50,000 to the Home Mission Board, \$50,000 to the Public Affairs Committee, and \$40,000 to the Christian Life Commission.

During debate on whether to reconsider the budget, Adrian Rogers, a past SBC president from Memphis, Tennessee, spoke in favor of reconsideration. "We have marched around this issue [funding of the BJC] so many times," he said, "the body now needs to speak."

But Frank Ingraham, a former SBC Executive Committee member from Franklin, Tennessee, urged messengers not to disrupt the convention's "very intricate budget process." To do so, he said, "would be to favor those who are the most winsome at the moment and not those programs the convention has set as priorities."

Messengers rejected the budget reconsideration on a 6,034-5,198 vote, thus leaving the 1989-90 SBC allocation to the BJC at \$391,796.

In other BJC-related business, the SBC Executive Committee voted to delay a proposal to create a Religious Liberty Commission based in Washington until the 1990 SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

In February, the Executive Committee voted to recommend the SBC establish the commission, which would represent Southern Baptists on religious liberty issues.

Establishment of the new agency would have to be approved by messengers to two successive conventions. □

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