

# REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

SEPTEMBER, 1951

## SEMI-ANNUAL SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 25

Much interest centers in the semi-annual session of this Committee, set for September 25. The officers are Dr. E. B. Willingham, Pastor, National Baptist Memorial Church, Washington, D. C., Chairman; and Mr. Harold E. Ingraham, Business Manager, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Secretary.

The Committee will pass upon recommendations coming up from the Executive Committee. On the agenda will be reports from and election of officers, appointment of Committees, adoption of budget for the new year, and recommendations from the following sub-committees: Baptist Cooperation, W. B. Lippard, Chairman; Domestic Situations, D. B. Cloward, Chairman; Religious Liberty, W. P. Binns, Chairman; World Situations, M. T. Rankin, Chairman.

The Joint Committee as presently constituted consists of the following: American Baptist Convention -- G. P. Beers, New York City; H. R. Bowler, New York City; D. B. Cloward, New York City; C. W. Cranford, Washington, D. C.; W. B. Lippard, New York City; Mrs. G. B. Martin, Summit, New Jersey; R. E. Nelson, New York City; Mrs. F. C. Nickels, Washington, D. C.; E. H. Pruden, Washington, D. C.; D. R. Sharpe, Cleveland, Ohio; J. W. Thomas, New York City; Mrs. L. E. Watford, Washington, D. C.; J. R. Wilson, New York City; K. S. Latourette, New Haven, Connecticut. National Baptist Convention of America -- G. L. Prince, Galveston, Texas. National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc. -- W. H. Dinkins, Selma, Alabama; B. E. Mays, Atlanta, Georgia; G. G. Daniels, Georgetown, S. C.; D. V. Jemison, Selma, Alabama; Roland Smith, Little Rock, Arkansas; U. J. Robinson, Mobile, Alabama. Southern Baptist Convention -- W. R. Alexander, Dallas, Texas; M. T. Rankin, Richmond, Virginia; J. B. Lawrence, Atlanta, Georgia; H. A. Brinn, Louisville, Ky.; D. E. McCall, Nashville, Tennessee; S. F. Love, Atlanta, Georgia; J. R. Noffsinger, Gainesville, Fla.; W. P. Binns, Liberty, Missouri; E. F. Campbell, Alexandria, Virginia; R. F. Caverlee, Fredericksburg, Va.; Carroll Hubbard, Ashland, Ky.; E. H. DeGroot, Jr., Washington, D. C.; W. C. Atkins, Baltimore, Md.; H. W. Tribble, Wake Forest, N. C.; E. O. Clark, Washington, D. C.

## THE RIDGECREST CHURCH-STATE CONFERENCE

From August 16-22 the Southern Baptist Social Service Commission and the S.B.C.'s contingent of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs conducted a Conference at Ridgecrest, North Carolina on Church-State Relations. The twice-a-day Seminars were attended by 350 people, and on Friday evening 1,000 in the general assembly heard Dr. Hugh Brinn and Dr. Glenn L. Archer. The Seminars were led by Dr. J. M. Dawson, Dr. T. B. Maston, Dr. J. B. Weatherspoon and others.

The Conference claimed no authority in putting forth its findings. Briefly they were as follows:

Teaching of religion and morals by public schools from their own "distinctive viewpoint" does not constitute a violation of the Church-State separation principle.

The Conference considered it constitutional "if public schools, colleges or universities give credit for academic work completed under sectarian instruction outside of public school buildings."

The Conference recognized, however, that "some dangers are involved and some excesses are possible" when public schools teach religion and morals. It also reiterated that a violation of Church-State separation occurs "when public schools are used for the purposes of sectarian religious instruction."

In dealing with other current Church-State issues these representatives, who came from 17 states and the District of Columbia, said:

(1) "It is our conviction that the State would be within its rights to impose taxes upon any revenue-producing property or holdings of religious institutions, schools, churches, etc....We are not in complete agreement that the State would have the right to tax church property which is used for religious worship or teaching purposes."

(2) "It is, in our belief and conviction, a direct violation of the separation principle for sectarian owned and operated hospitals to receive tax money for new buildings, maintenance costs, salaries and services. Such institutions exist for the purpose of teaching and propagating a distinct religious faith and therefore must not be tax supported."

(3) "In those areas where the State has direct dealings with individual citizens such as chaplains for the armed forces, G. I. beneficiaries, etc., we see no violation of the separation principle."

(4) "The representation of the United States government to the Vatican, through the official channels of an ambassador or by the personal representative of the President, is a positive violation of the principle of separation of church and State."

The Conference awakened wide interest. The Nation sent a staff representative to cover it, and her very interesting article appears in the September 8th issue under the title, "I'm a Baptist, Too". Under the head, "The Week in Religion", Religious News Service, in its syndicated special Sunday newspaper release, placed the Conference in the lead of its treatment of "Schools Open Amid Demands for Greater Religious Emphasis."

#### ON THE MATTER OF CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATION TO DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHURCH HOSPITALS

After the House, following a stiff fight on the floor, passed H.R. 2094, a bill offered by House Majority leader McCormack, the Senate District of Columbia Committee agreed to open hearings on the bill as referred to the Senate for action. This was done largely upon request of the Baptist Joint Committee. Appearing in defense of the bill were: Mr. McCormack; the attorney; chairman of the board; and the chief of staff of the Providence (Roman Catholic) Hospital; and former Senator Danaher. This hospital seeks an initial appropriation of \$4,000,000 for construction. Opposing the bill were: Congressman Miller, Joseph M. Dawson, Glenn L. Archer and others.

In concluding his testimony the Executive Director of FOAU stated his organization was studying the suggestion of possible legal impounding of any funds voted for church hospitals here, with a view to determining the final disposition of such funds in keeping with court decision. He said:

The passage of H.R. 2094 without amendment would inevitably give rise to serious and protracted litigation testing its constitutionality. Such litigation might, to the casual observer, take on the appearance of a contest between religious groups -- but, regardless of appearances, such litigation would actually be a contest between those Americans of many faiths who uphold the separation of church and state and those groups which seek to make that great guarantee of religious liberty a dead letter in American law today. Surely, the increasing frequency with which freedom-loving citizens are forced to resort to the courts for enforcement of the First Amendment is a tragedy of our time.

Meanwhile, in addition to local press notices, newspapers elsewhere in the Nation expressed views. The Christian Century, Chicago, emphasizing its own condemnation, quoted Zions Herald, Boston, a Methodist weekly:

Let's be honest about this whole business. In the first place, despite the arguments of expediency, and the rationalizations that will be forthcoming from Sibley hospital, the fact remains that if this bill passes /It has already passed the House and is expected to pass the Senate/ our Methodism will be smeared. Methodism will be guilty of violating the principle of separation of church and state. In the second place, by doing this, every time federal or state funds are demanded by church-related institutions -- and such demands are increasing -- the proponents can say, "The Methodist accept federal funds for their work; why can't the Roman Catholics? or why can't the Lutherans?" All the rationalizations and impressive excuses couched in the most profound terms will not remove the effectiveness of the "they do it too" argument.

Dr. Louie D. Newton, in The Christian Index, Atlanta, wrote: "This is a very vital matter, and the success of FOAU in Washington, will be closely followed by friends of religious liberty all over the country."

The editor of the Biblical Recorder, Raleigh, wrote:

This is a very important issue from the standpoint of Southern Baptists. Since we have been consistent in refusing to accept federal funds and other religious groups are accepting these funds to the extent of millions of dollars, we face a serious situation. Unless something is done to stop this granting of federal funds to sectarian hospitals, soon Roman Catholics and some other groups will have hundreds of new hospitals built across the nation while Baptists and some other evangelical denominations will be far in the background or practically out of the picture.

The strongest editorial opposing the proposed action in Congress comes from the N. C. Christian Advocate:

If Methodists participate in this unholy business, they need offer no protests when Roman Catholics demand federal money to run their schools and hospitals. More than the camel's nose will be under the tent. Behold, the camel will be inside the tent....We can appreciate the predicament of church-related hospitals and colleges. With overhead mounting all the time, it is apparent that they must have additional funds from some source....The Methodist people have the money and will support our institutions if they are properly informed and properly appealed to....This may be the hard way....never-

theless, it is the Christian way and the American way. To retreat from this high standard is to invite the kind of disaster that has overtaken Europe.

Scottish Rite News Bulletin, in a page article, reproduces much of the testimony of Dr. Dawson. The paper closes thus:

Baptists have endeavored to abide by the Federal Constitution as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court. "It is our understanding", he said, "that, in the final construction of the Constitution's meaning, the Constitution is what the Supreme Court says it is. The Court has said, in the Everson case, and repeated in the McCollum case:

"No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion."

"We submit that this language admits of no misconstruction. It is plain enough for the lawmaker and plain enough for the law-abiding citizen to go by. As to the religious character of the church hospital, there can be no doubt. In our Baptist system of hospitals, we have never apologized for the religious influence. Bishop Alter, of the Roman Church, reminded the Catholic Hospital Association of the United States that, although the majority of the patients were non-Catholic, 'the Catholic hospital appropriately cannot be called a non-sectarian institute', since it 'derives its motivation and inspiration from religion'."

While it is true that in a few instances Protestants have accepted Government funds for their hospitals, the sum total of Government grants to Roman Catholic hospitals has been astounding. The report of the Hospital facilities Division of the Federal Security Agency, as of June 30, 1951, shows all grants under the Hill-Burton program to date. Two years ago when the figures were compiled as of that date it was shown that out of a total of \$43,264,685 granted all church hospitals, the Roman Catholics had received \$35,925,248. Now it will be seen, according to the later report the amazing proportion has steadily increased. In June 1951 apparently out of a total of all church hospital grants amounting to \$82,627,863 the Roman Catholics had received \$72,378,343. This stupendous sum exceeds one-sixth of \$424,199,280, or the entire amount granted to every kind of public and private health project under the Hill-Burton program in the whole country. If these figures are questioned, let the Senate Committee call for verification, project by project, and I predict it will be found they are an understatement. They show that Roman Catholics received more than seven times as much as allotted all other faiths put together.--J.M.D.]

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#### DYNAMIC NEGRO BAPTIST CONVENTIONS

The National Baptist Convention of America, meeting in Cincinnati, adopted ringing declarations in behalf of human rights and equal educational and work opportunities. President G. L. Prince proclaimed: "Christianity is a religion of brotherhood. ...Education as given in many colleges is skeptical and atheistic".

Over 12,000 attended the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., in Oklahoma City. President D. V. Jemison expressed solicitude for the morals of the Nation. "If it does wrong, it takes away the cornerstone." President Mordecai Johnson of Howard University told the Convention that the Negro people should aspire to be the first people in the world to make the Lord's way their way." The next meeting will be in Chicago.

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