

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

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October, 1951

SENATE PASSES OVER DISTRICT HOSPITAL BILL

"Senators Block Grants For 4 Hospitals Here", runs a screaming banner entirely across the front page of a Washington newspaper. This refers to the church hospital amendment to Public Law 648, otherwise known as H.R. 2094, for which the Baptist Joint Committee Director sought a hearing before the Senate District of Columbia Committee and testified against. When it was put on the Consent Calendar and finally came to the floor for vote, several Senators raised questions about it, and Senator Olin C. Johnston of South Carolina objected to it on the ground that its passage would change the entire system of Congressional allocations to hospitals. Immediately the bill was passed over.

The newspapers, in reporting this defeat, made much of the fact that Senator Johnston is a Baptist and "said he had communications with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs". It happens that he was not the only Senator who had such communications, because under the Constitutional right of petition, the Baptist Committee sought to acquaint all the Senators with the Baptist conviction that the Federal Constitution ought not to be violated by voting such a proposal.

The Executive Director of the Baptist Committee, in answer to an editorial in the Washington Post, pointed out that instead of charging Senator Johnston with striking a blow to the health of Washington, the paper should have commendation for the Senator's fidelity to his oath of office, to uphold the Constitution.

Providence Hospital, chiefly to be aided, is a teaching hospital, with a special section dedicated to the teaching of nuns, and is to be located for the purpose of affiliation with the Catholic University of America. It is asking for \$4,000,000 for erection of new buildings. We have to state that H.R. 2094 was written by a Roman Catholic and referred to a Senate Sub-Committee headed by a Roman Catholic. Also it is reported that the entire contingent of Roman Catholics in the Congress has worked for the passage of this bill. To date Roman Catholic hospitals under the Hill-Burton Act have received more than one-sixth of the total government grants to hospitals of every kind -- municipal, county, state, Federal and all others. The Roman Catholics have received more than seven times as much for their hospitals as all other church hospitals have received for theirs. Do they expect the government to continue such favoritism? The question is especially pertinent since the Hill-Burton Act was passed and its administration construed before the Everson decision in 1947 and the McCollum decision in 1948, or no church hospital could ever have qualified for a government grant.

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NEW OFFICERS OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

At the September 25 Semi-Annual meeting, E. B. Willingham was chosen Chairman; W. P. Binns, Vice-Chairman; Hugh A. Brinn, Recording Secretary; and E. H. DeGroot, Jr., Treasurer.

Committee members selected were:

Baptist Cooperation - W. B. Lippard, Chairman, Reuben E. Nelson, K. S. Latourette, D. V. Jemison, Roland Smith

Domestic Situations - D. B. Cloward, Chairman, C. W. Cranford, Mrs. L. K. Watford, Carroll Hubbard, Hugh A. Brinn, G. P. Beers, W. H. Dinkins.

Finance - E. H. DeGroot, Jr., Chairman, H. R. Bowler, E. F. Campbell, E. O. Clark, G. G. Daniels, W. B. Lippard (temporary appointment).

Religious Liberty - W. P. Binns, Chairman, J. W. Thomas, J. B. Lawrence, R. F. Caverlee, D. R. Sharpe, G. L. Prince, W. R. Alexander, S. F. Lowe, Mrs. F. C. Nickels

World Issues - M. T. Rankin, Chairman, E. H. Pruden, J. R. Wileon, W. Clyde Atkins, H. W. Tribble, Benjamin Mays, V. J. Robinson, D. K. McCall, J. R. Noffsinger, Mrs. G. B. Martin.

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EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC SITUATIONS

Donald B. Cloward, Chairman

We call upon Baptists to give serious study to the proposed Public Assistance Act of 1951 (H.R. 4468) as introduced by Congressman Barden. This bill seeks to establish and maintain an adequate program of public education in America, while at the same time affording adequate safeguards to the principle of separation of church and state. This bill, H.R. 4468, clearly confines the use of federal monies to public elementary and public secondary education and rules out use of such monies for so-called auxiliary services such as transportation even when states use their own monies for such purposes. Thus it avoids the use of federal monies for parochial school aid through indirect subsidies for such auxiliary services.

We believe America's greatest strength lies in the maintenance of freedom of worship, press, speech and assembly. We further believe that the best safeguard against such threats is eternal vigilance against the temptation of expediency to abrogate our principles under the influence of fear. We, therefore, deplore and denounce any abridgment of these democratic rights and urge our people vigorously to oppose those who would destroy those freedoms by organized heresy hunts and character assassination, whether undertaken by public officials or self-styled private vigilantes.

The issue of Universal Military Training (UMT) is again before the American people through the approval by Congress on June 19, 1951 of Public Law 51 (S I) which provides for Universal Military Training when a program shall have been approved by Congress. The law calls for the appointment by the President of a National Security Training Commission which must report within four months of the date of their confirmation (June 29) a bill or resolution containing their recommendations for inaugurating such a program. The Committee on Armed Services of the two houses are required to report out such a measure 45 days after its receipt from the Commission. Such legislation shall then be "privileged" to be called up for debate in either house.

There is, therefore, still time for the American public to inquire into the nature of the UMTS legislation. Our conventions in the past have voiced opposition to Universal Military Training. We continue our opposition to UMT as unnecessary, inefficient and contrary to the American way.

We believe one of the underlying causes of corruption in government today is in the public attitude itself. As a people, we have never quite accepted government service as a high and noble calling. Cynicism regarding public office in America reveals serious character defects also in our attitude toward personal morality as well. Recent revelations are but reminders that public officials who betray the public trust usually do so not by direct steals, but by using their influence to grant special privilege to private individuals and corporations, for which such officials are handsomely rewarded by businessmen. Nor will this evil be corrected until private citizens, whether acting alone or through corporations, correct their own business practices. Thus our problem of morality in America today is personal as well as social; private as well as public. We, therefore, call upon churchmen to re-examine both their own attitude toward government and their own departures from simple honesty in everyday living.

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EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON WORLD SITUATIONS

M. T. Rankin, Chairman

Japanese Peace Treaty

It is felt that this forward step in international affairs will go a long way toward relieving many of the tensions which have continued to exist since the conclusion of hostilities in 1945, and will also serve to stabilize and strengthen much of our missionary activity in Japan. Hope is expressed that Japan may soon be received into the United Nations and make some real contribution toward the establishment of peace and goodwill among men of all nations. We urge the early ratification of the Treaty by the Senate.

United Nations Week

Attention should be called to the fact that October 21-27 has been designated as United Nations Week, during which the various churches and civic organizations will be provided an opportunity of informing the people of America generally of the aims and achievements of this international organization.

Communism and Christianity

We should be forever on the alert to correct the impression which some have voiced as to the inability of Protestantism to meet the challenge of Communism. There are those who believe that the Roman Catholic Church is the major stumbling block to the spread of Communism because it is so well organized and its program so thoroughly coordinated. To these individuals we would point out that the very diversity of those who constitute the Protestant forces is in itself a testimony to freedom and liberty. Even with our lack of complete unity and coordination, we are in a more favorable position to combat Communism than if we were under the necessity of conforming to a pattern and being regimented by an oppressive ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The Genocide Treaty

Various groups of Baptists, including the most recent sessions of the Baptist World Alliance in Cleveland, have gone on record as being in favor of the ratification by the United States of the Genocide Treaty which is designed to outlaw mass extermination of

racial and religious groups. Although this bill has been before the 82nd Congress for many months, it still has not been considered by the full Committee on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. More than twenty other nations have already signed it. It is to be hoped that our people in their individual capacities may see fit to offer their encouragement to their representatives in Congress to the end that this Treaty may have the full backing of all of the great nations of the earth.

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EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Walter P. Binns, Chairman

A most serious threat to religious liberty in America is the continued effort of the Roman Catholics, aided by some Protestants, to destroy the traditional and judicial interpretation of the First Amendment in order to secure governmental aid for the support of religion and religious schools. "Church and State: Something Less than Separation" is the title of a significant address delivered at the Law School of the University of Chicago on May 10, 1951 by Leo Pfeffer, Associate General Counsel, American Jewish Congress. Mr. Pfeffer effectively refutes the arguments set forth in the book by James M. O'Neill, Professor of Speech at Brooklyn College, in which Mr. O'Neill in his discussion of the Everson decision, contended that the Constitution did not prohibit non-preferential government aid to all religions. The address of Mr. Pfeffer, which is preprinted for private circulation from The University of Chicago Law Review, Vol. 19, No. 1, Autumn 1951, is well worth reading.

The newspapers have reported in recent weeks that the French Government has granted aid to religious schools in France in direct violation of the Constitutional guarantees of religious liberty.

Equally disturbing reports have come from Italy, where the rights of religious minorities are denied in violation of Constitutional guarantees. It was hoped that an opportunity would be afforded to call this matter to the attention of Premier Gasperi while he was in the United States, but the Italian Embassy has invited Baptists to submit their grievances to Gasperi upon his return to Rome. From our leaders in Italy we learn that the Italian Government tries to enforce literally the fascist laws of 1929 and 1930 in violation of the present Constitution; that the Government is acting as a protector of the religion of the state against the several free groups of Evangelicals, denying these groups the right to conduct meetings and worship open to the public, while article 19 of the present Italian Constitution states that all citizens have the right to profess freely their own religious faith in whatsoever form in private and in public.

CHALLENGING BOOK COMMENDED

INTERPRETERS NEEDED, by Edward Hughes Pruden. The Judson Press. \$2.00.

Dr. Pruden is always an alert, refreshing preacher. This volume has met with an enthusiastic reception. It contains a wide variety of topics, and supplies commanding interpretations. The messages on stewardship and on religious liberty are especially noteworthy.

The sermons on Baptist faith and practice are also challenging. Dr. Pruden is a valued member of the Baptist Joint Committee.

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