

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS EPITOMIZED

AUGUST, 1953

Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, appearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee at his own request on July 21, obtained unanimous pronouncement from the Committee that he was no Communist. The good Bishop seems to have fallen afoul of four vindictive groups: (1) Big business, for his crusade against social injustice (2) Reactionary religious groups, for his liberalism (3) Political racketeers, for his fancied vulnerability (4) Roman Catholics, for his stalwart defense of church-state separation.

The immigration bill, requested by the President and finally passed by Congress, while not completely satisfactory, conforms more nearly to the demand for an all-refugee bill than at first proposed. Those who are working for the relief of DP's will feel that America has in a measure accepted its proportionate responsibility.

Now that the Korean truce has been signed and the United Nations will face making peace terms, more than ordinary interest attaches to the annual observance of UN Day, which has been set for October 24. Every community in the country is expected to afford its citizens an opportunity to be suitably briefed on the United Nations, which is much needed.

It now appears that the dubious, highly controversial Bricker Amendment will not pass in the present session of Congress. This is to be hailed as acceptable, since it will enable the country at large to study more carefully a proposal which has been declared objectionable to the Chief Executive and the Department of State and may be fraught with great injury to the future of the United States.

Congress has declined to designate funds derived from federal undersea oil to the schools. The reason doubtless was constituents' objection to the omission of the word public from schools, which might have allowed government aid to private and parochial schools. Perhaps Senator Lister Hill, et al, who sponsored the defeated proposal, will yet learn to respect the Constitution.

The passing of Senator Tobey is mourned by millions. This crusading, Bible-quoting Baptist stood up valiantly for clean living and honest government. His courageous voice will be sorely missed from the councils of the nation.

Once more a source close to the Vatican has upheld the intolerant position of the Roman Catholic Church that it holds a monopoly on religious truth, that all dissenters are in sinful error and must be restricted in the right to function freely in countries like Spain and Italy. The only hopeful outlook about this is that some American Catholic leaders, like the Jesuit, John Courtney Murray, and the Jesuit Weekly America, protest against such a bigoted and anachronistic position.

The death of Senator Robert Taft marks a great loss to the constructive political forces of the Nation. No matter how strongly men differed with him, they recognized his integrity and ability. The country must ever keep deeply concerned about maintaining high standards of character in filling the gap left by the departure of such leaders as he and Senator Tobey.

The President's revival of a proposal for Universal Military Training has met with earnest opposition from Senator Johnson of Colorado. The foremost advocate for UMT is Dr. Karl Compton, of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Notwithstanding strong favorable recommendation from the former President's Commission on UMT, the churches and other groups defeated its implementation by Congress. It is most regrettable that we must contemplate fighting this battle all over again, but the forces opposed to militarism, conscientiously standing for the preservation of freedom in our land, will never submit without waging a real fight against the proposal.

The Methodist Board of Temperance has again charged that the Nation's Capital exceeds all other cities in the consumption of alcoholic drinks. While a few letters to the editor have attempted to convict other cities of equal dereliction, there has been no serious effort on the part of responsible agencies to refute the charge. Meanwhile the number of assaults and other kinds of crime, attributable to liquor, tend to confirm the Methodist allegation. How long shall we endure the ordeal of liquor legalized which has so conspicuously increased drunkenness?

The bill to improve enforcement of laws against barring indecent literature from the mails, introduced by Representative Edward Rees (R-Kansas) has failed of enactment by Congress, due to objections raised by Representatives Emanuel Celler (D-New York) and George Miller (D-California) which removed it from the consent calendar. The bill might be called up on the floor next year.

In a sermon in St. Patrick's Church, New York, the head of the Roman Catholic Radio and Television Service complained that Protestants had curiously offered no objection to the President's appointment of a Lutheran minister as Ambassador to Ethiopia and one of the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church as Secretary of Agriculture, charging that this departure of the Protestants indicated strange unconcern for professed interest in the maintenance of separation of Church and State. We ask: Did the President make these appointments specifically on grounds of church membership, so stated, or for other reasons? Are we to disregard the Constitutional provision against invoking a religious test for holding public office?

Notwithstanding the fact that the House Un-American Activities Committee continues to investigate clergymen, Senator Harry E. Byrd of Virginia quotes J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to the effect that the chief knows of no minister being proved to be a Communist agent or convicted as one. So far no minister has argued that an ascertained Communist in the clergy should be exempted from penalty. Whence comes this accusation that Protestants harbor guilty preachers?

Baptists, deep in the foundation business, will be keenly interested in the outcome of a House investigation into tax-exemptions now enjoyed by religious foundations. The resolution providing for this, offered by Representative B. Carroll Reece (R-Tenn.), has already met with opposition by Representative Brooks Hays (D-Arkansas) and some newspapers which claim that the investigation will lack competence. There may be occasion for question about Church-State relations connected with certain practices, discovered in the administration of some foundations, but it is hardly likely that any of the foundations could possibly be charged with subversion.

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ALLEGED ESPIONAGE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Dr. Jesse R. Wilson, Home Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, reports that for over a century American Baptists through the Foreign Society have maintained friendly and helpful contacts with the minority groups of Baptists in various European countries. Following World War I, special efforts to relieve distress and to

rebuild Baptist work were put forth. British and American and other Baptists worked directly and also through the Baptist World Alliance to this good end. American (Northern) Baptists alone put into this total effort almost one million dollars between 1918 and 1925.

Czechoslovakia is one of some 10 countries in northern Europe in which American Baptists have given special help to their European brethren. Dr. Edwin A. Bell, the Society's representative for Europe since October, 1943, and actually in Europe since February, 1945, maintained contact with Dr. Prochazka and other Baptists in Czechoslovakia as long as it was possible to do so; i.e. until the iron curtain closed down. Correspondence also passed from time to time between Czechoslovakian Baptists and Dr. Dana M. Albaugh, Secretary (in the New York office) for Europe and his successor to this portfolio, Mr. Marlin D. Farnum, the present Secretary for Europe. Dr. C. Oscar Johnson, Pastor of the Third Baptist Church of St. Louis and President of the Baptist World Alliance from 1947 to 1950, surely included Czechoslovakian Baptists in his field of interest and concern.

It goes without saying, however, that the interest of all of these men has been primarily an interest in the material and spiritual welfare of Czechoslovakian Baptists, and nothing remotely akin to political espionage or conspiracy has entered into their activities. Any money transferred to Czechoslovakia has not been for service rendered but has been given freely for relief and for church support and reconstruction.

Confessions forced out of Dr. Prochazka and his brethren designed to establish their own guilt or the guilt of anyone connected with the Baptist World Alliance or with the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, in the judgment of Dr. Wilson, speaking for the Society, will not be taken seriously by anyone who knows the pattern ruthlessly followed by the Communists in situations of this kind.

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DIRECTOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., August 2
 First Baptist Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, August 16 and 23
 Address, Piedmont Association, Virginia, August 27
 UNESCO, University of Minnesota, September 15-17
 Minneapolis Minister's Luncheon, September 17
 National Conference on Citizenship, September 18-19
 Sermons, Fair Park Church, Alexandria, September 20-27
 Fall Session, Joint Committee on Public Affairs, October 13
 Brotherhood Dinner, First Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, November 4
 Address, D. C. Baptist Convention, November 16

(Subsequent dates not listed)

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TO ALL ORDERING OUR BOOK

Orders continue to pour in for copies of our book, AMERICA'S WAY IN CHURCH, STATE, AND SOCIETY. The book, commended by the American Library Association and enthusiastically approved by reviewers, is priced at \$2.50, but we are requesting that 25¢ be added for postage and protective mailing. All copies mailed from this office will be autographed.

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IMPORTANT BOOKS NOTICED

WRITING FOR CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS. Edith Tiller Osteyee. The Judson Press, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Los Angeles. \$3.00.

In view of the growing circulation of religious literature and insistent demand for competent, trained writers of it, this is a timely book. It should be welcomed by all who are interested in an important phase of Christian service.

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THE RUSSIA WE FACE NOW. Ethan T. Colton. The Public Affairs Institute, 312 Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E., Washington 3, D. C. Case bound, \$1.75. Paper back, \$1.25. Order from the Public Affairs Institute.

The Public Affairs Institute is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, research foundation seeking to promote wider knowledge and appreciation of current problems. Dr. Ethan T. Colton and his collaborators have brought to this presentation a wealth of knowledge and experience. Their insights should materially aid busy readers to understand the current proposals and counterproposals concerning our foreign relations vis-a-vis the Soviet government. Their unswerving allegiance to our Democracy and the free world make their seasoned interpretations of special value to all who seek to promote peace based on realistic appraisal of the Soviet threat.

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APOSTLES OF DISCORD. Ralph Lord Roy. The Beacon Press, Boston. \$3.75.

A difficult subject to handle. Impossible to satisfy all, even the fairest-minded. It is peculiarly unfortunate that the author has listed POAU under the heading "No Popery"--Bigotry's Battlecry, even though he absolves the organization from guilt.

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THE GREAT TRADITION OF THE AMERICAN CHURCHES. Winthrop S. Hudson. Harper and Brothers, New York. \$3.75.

The professor of History of Christianity in the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School writes vigorously in support of Church-State separation and voluntary religion, and the threat to them arising from the New Theology.

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REPORT ON THE AMERICAN COMMUNIST. Morris L. Ernst and David Loth. Henry Holt and Company, New York. \$3.00.

A lawyer and a journalist present most informing results of exhaustive examination of 3,000 former Communists in the United States, showing how slightly are we endangered and pointing a sane method of dealing with Communism here.