



# REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

★ RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ★ BAPTIST PRINCIPLES  
★ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

This monthly newsletter is published by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, 1628 Sutherland Street, N. W., Washington 9, D. C. Subscription price, \$1.00 per year. C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director; W. Berry Garrett, associate director.

October-November 1959

## BJCPA CALLS FOR SPECIAL STUDIES ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION, ADMINISTRATION

Special studies for the information of the Baptist people in the United States were approved by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in semi-annual session here in September.

Religious liberty problems are involved in much legislation on the national scene and in the administration of that legislation. Inquiries will be made into the foreign aid program, double property program, and other aspects of governmental aid to sectarian institutions and agencies. When these studies are completed the findings will be made available through the Baptist Press, the Report From The Capital, and other publications.

Authorization was also given for a special committee of scholars to prepare a basic paper on the historic Baptist principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. Special attention will be given to the application of these principles to present day society and current relations between churches and the state.

## AMERICAN TAX POLICIES AND CHURCHES TO BE NEXT RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONFERENCE SUBJECT

The churches and American tax policy will be the subject of the fourth annual Religious Liberty Conference, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The conference will be held next year.

Previous conferences have dealt with the use of public funds by church-related institutions and the place of religion in education.

### October-November Issues Combined

The October and November issues of the Report From The Capital have been combined with this issue. This monthly newsletter is published from 10 to 12 times a year, and is available at production cost of \$1.00 per year. Information and interpretation on religious liberty and separation of church and state are provided through this channel which are not available through any other single source. Send orders to Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, 1628 - 16th Street, N. W., Washington 9, D. C.

Explaining the need for a conference on American tax policies as related to the churches, C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, BJCPA, pointed out the problems involved in "unrelated business income" and tax exemption for properties owned by churches but not used for worship purposes. He indicated that the whole area of taxation as related to the churches, the ministry, and church institutions would be discussed by the conference.

Other religious liberty conferences may be projected in the future by the BJCPA. The recent Conference on Education made special request for regional conferences in various parts of the nation, and it requested the BJCPA to begin studies and preparations looking forward to a national conference on Baptist churches and higher education.

The extent to which such conferences can be conducted in the states will depend largely on the approval of the cooperating conventions for an expanded program for the BJCPA that will be presented to them in the near future. More funds and an enlarged staff will be necessary to carry out these projects.

## BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS SEEKS LARGER SUPPORT FOR EXPANDED PROGRAM

A far-reaching program of expansion for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs was approved in principle for submission to its cooperating constituencies during the September meeting of the Committee. Clarence W. Cranford, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, is chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee.

The expanded program calls for the establishment of a department of coordination which would work with each cooperating convention in harmony with the established policies of the conventions. The new program calls for \$36,000, or an approximate doubling of the budget. The enlarged service of the BJCPA is now under consideration by its sponsoring conventions and its implementation awaits policy decisions and financial provision.

Last year the BJCPA expanded its program by establishing an enlarged Information Service, which has resulted in an increased flow of information and interpretation of news from the Washington scene to Baptist publications and through the Report From The Capital.

**RELIGION AND EDUCATION IS DISCUSSED AT THIRD  
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON**

Ninety-five Baptist leaders from six national groups searched their hearts and wracked their brains over religious liberty problems involved in the teaching of religion in the public schools of the nation during the recent Religious Liberty Conference in Washington. If anyone thought that the answers were easy or that he had the solutions before he arrived, these thoughts were quickly dispelled by the complexity of the issues and the differing backgrounds from which the participants came.

In spite of many seemingly insurmountable difficulties, a remarkable degree of unanimity was achieved before the Conference ended. All agreed that the discussions were decades overdue and that the Conference contributed to a new level of understanding of the common problems shared by the various Baptist constituencies throughout North America.

**Values In Discussion**

This third annual Religious Liberty Conference, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, like the other two, was not a pronouncement-making body, nor were its findings expressive of "official" Baptist views, nor were its recommendations binding on any Baptist or Baptist group. The values of the Conference are to be found in the full, frank and fraternal discussions of common problems in the light of the best of Baptist insights.

Realizing that it faced one of the burning issues of today, the Conference plunged headlong into the questions of the place of religion in education and the relation of the churches to the public schools. All agreed that the religious education of people is essential to the development of the person and to the welfare of society, but the methods by which this is to be accomplished were subject to debate.

**Unity In Diversity**

Present at the Conference were those who advocated the inclusion of the Bible and religion in the curriculum of the public school system as well as those who thought that all teaching of religion should be completely separated from the public schools. Others shaded in between these two viewpoints and included a few who advocated a system of private religious schools. However, the common faith of these Baptists, their loyalty to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, as well as their open minded search for adequate solutions, enabled them to agree on many important principles relating to religion and education.

Among the Christian insights pertinent to current educational problems the group cited such examples as the competence of the soul to deal with God for himself, the dignity of the individual and the sacredness of all of life. The conferees said that Christians are citizens of two states (the earthly and the heavenly) but supreme loyalty must be given to Jesus Christ, that freedom of conscience must not be violated by either state or church, that basic responsibilities for Christian education rest upon home and church, and that all persons have equal rights both for an education and in the realm of religion.

**General Agreement Reached**

General agreement was reached that sacred Bible reading and that religious teaching with sectarian emphasis had no place in the public schools. Neither should religion be taught in public schools with a view to securing the commitment of the pupil to that religion. On the other hand, there was widespread sentiment expressed that the historical facts of religion and its place and influence in society as well as the basic elements of character formation have a necessary place in the schoolroom.

Likewise most of the conferees felt that the one day a week program of religious instruction as practiced in most Baptist churches provides inadequate religious instruction, and they favored continuation of efforts to develop adequate weekday religious instruction programs. The often expressed opinion heard in the Conference was that the public school system of the nation should be preserved and improved, and that a private religious school system on the part of the churches would be detrimental both to the nation and to the churches. On the other hand, the schools and the churches should continue to explore avenues of cooperation that would enable each to fulfill its distinct educational functions.

**Opposed To Government Aid**

Recent educational trends and legislation occupied one section of the Conference and it was generally agreed that use of public funds for the teaching of theology violates the principle of separation of church and state. This section looked with disfavor upon National Defense Fellowship grants to graduate students in theology as provided in the National Defense Education Act of 1958, especially because of the federal payments to the schools for such teaching. Fringe benefits, such as bus transportation and free textbooks for church-related schools, on the whole were looked upon with disfavor by the conferees.

A problem of special concern to the Conference involved the field of higher education and the relationships of the denominational or religious college both to the state and to the church. Responsibilities in both directions were recognized, but the extent to which such schools should accept governmental aid was left unresolved in the minds of the conferees. The hope was expressed, however, that due to the seriousness of this problem another religious liberty conference on the subject of "Baptists and Higher Education" could be planned within the next few years.

**Wants BJCPA Activities Expanded**

At the conclusion of the Conference expressions of appreciation to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs for its leadership in religious liberty concerns were heard. It was strongly urged that the co-operating conventions make possible an enlargement of the staff and program of the BJCPA. Other suggestions for the cultivation of concern and appropriate Christian action in the area of religious liberty included the formation of state committees similar to the BJCPA, the development of regional religious liberty conferences in order to reach more of the leadership in the churches, the consideration of a scholarly publication devoted to religious liberty, and

an emphasis on religious liberty during the Baptist Jubilee Advance.

### The Baptist Way

Baptists have no authoritarian structure whereby firm positions on issues can be established. Rather, they encourage independent thought and discussion. It is often surprising to those of other fellowships how Baptists can be unified under such an arrangement. However, the Religious Liberty Conference on Education demonstrated the values of this method, and although answers to all the problems were not found, a remarkable degree of unanimity was discovered and basic principles were agreed upon which, when appropriate applications are worked out, will keep both the Baptists and the nation united.

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY PROBLEMS APPEAR IN PLANS TO PROVIDE FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Federal aid to education promises to be one of the sharp issues to come before the second session of the 86th Congress when it convenes in January. And right in the middle of the fight will be the question of whether or not and how to give federal public aid to private and parochial schools.

Aid-to-education measures proposed in 1959 were blocked by three-fold opposition -- the Eisenhower administration, conservative members of Congress and the Roman Catholic Church. The administration seems adamant in its insistence upon long term aid to school construction, and thus far it has been unwilling to compromise on temporary measures that include teachers' salaries.

Southern conservatives, along with other conservatives to the right of Eisenhower, are traditionally opposed to federal aid to schools. These have been joined by Roman Catholics who insist that any aid to education should include parochial as well as public schools, that aid in the form of teachers' salaries is objectionable because of the danger of federal control, and that they will oppose all measures that do not include auxiliary services to non-public school pupils in all states assisted by federal funds.

### Plans For Second Session

During the interim between sessions of the 86th Congress all parties concerned with aid-to-education measures are jockeying for position, seeking compromise proposals, holding both closed and open meetings, and are otherwise trying to come up with a bill that can get through Congress and that also can escape a presidential veto.

When the first session ended in September the Murray-Metcalf Bill (that provides for both school construction aid and help on teachers' salaries and which was favorably reported out of the House Education and Labor Committee) was killed by the House Rules Committee before it could get to the floor.

In the Senate, when it was seen that the House was bogged down in its efforts to pass an education bill, steps were taken to present a bill calling for \$1 billion in federal matching grants over two years for school construction only, not teachers' salaries.

This bill did not reach the Senate floor before adjournment.

### Roman Catholic Plans Published

The position of Roman Catholic educators on public aid to parochial education is outlined in a report of a meeting of the School Superintendents' Department of the National Catholic Educational Association in November of last year but only made public recently in the August, 1959, issue of the Bulletin of the Association. This report was a highly confidential document, intended only for certain Catholic eyes, until its publication in the Bulletin.

The "report" is described as a "brief expression of a general consensus of opinion on a recommended course of action regarding various proposals for federal aid to education which may be debated during the coming Congress." The basis of the recommendations of the members of the Catholic School Superintendents' Department was "their conviction that Catholic schools have a clear right in distributive justice to an equitable share of federal funds appropriated to aid education."

Even though the Catholic educators do not expect to get "full justice" immediately it is their policy to "start with a modest demand for partial justice." Their present plan is to get for Catholic schools and their pupils "as much assistance as can be obtained without violation of federal law as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States." This aid is described in three categories as (a) loans, (b) contractual services, and (c) auxiliary services.

### Catholic Strategy Is Projected

For school construction the Catholic superintendents are seeking "long-term low-interest loans for the construction of non-public school houses." They cite the College Housing Law as a good precedent.

For auxiliary services for non-public schools the report is asking for legislation that makes this possible by means of the "withholding" provision. This means that if the federal government gives a state a certain amount of money for auxiliary services for its schools, a certain percentage of that state's allotment will be withheld by the federal government to be given to the non-public schools of that state. Thus these grants are not affected by state laws prohibiting the use of public funds for parochial schools.

The report recommended to the National Catholic Welfare Conference Education and Legal Departments that "the NWC should insist upon this provision even to the point of defeating the whole bill if that should be necessary."

The report further recommended that, if a bill for federal aid for public school teachers' salaries is proposed to Congress, "an effort be made to tie in some kind of a rider for auxiliary services for non-public school pupils."

### Grass Roots Support For NWC

The Catholic superintendents in their report highly commended the NWC "for its brilliant success during

the last Congress," a reference to the National Defense Education Act of 1958 in which long steps were taken toward federal public aid to parochial schools. Continuing, the report said, "Aware that the NCWC authorities on the scene in Washington are in a position to select prudent means to achieve our objectives, the School Superintendents' Department respectfully suggests that the NCWC continue its quiet effort to work out legislation to help our Catholic schools and their pupils."

Fledging support to the Washington office, the Superintendents advocate strong state organizations of Catholic school administrators, because it will be on a state basis that public funds will be distributed to aid educational programs.

The report concluded by urging Catholic high schools to take advantage of all provisions for non-public schools found in the National Defense Education Act to borrow funds for the purchase of scientific, mathematical and modern language equipment. The reason given for this action was that "failure to borrow this money would set a very unfavorable precedent for future legislation designed to help non-public education."

#### Baptists Want Religious Liberty

On the other hand, there are many groups in Washington and throughout the nation that are insisting that public funds should be reserved for public purposes and that the freedom of the taxpayer and of the churches be fully safeguarded in all legislation. As an example of the opinions being expressed by some of these groups we turn to the reports to the Religious Liberty Conference on Education, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in September of this year.

General agreement on many points was reached by the Baptist leaders and educators at the Conference. Although their opinions are not "official" they are significant in the consideration of proposals for federal aid to education.

The Baptists agreed that the responsibility for religious education rests upon the home and the church and that it is not the responsibility of the state. They also emphasized that freedom of conscience must be respected and that the religious

liberty of all citizens must be safeguarded. They said that government should not support sectarian religion and that no citizen should be coerced into involuntary religious participation.

#### Fringe Services Questioned

A majority report to the Baptist conference from one of the discussion tables said, "We consider all fringe services (to non-public schools) to be a violation of the principle of separation of church and state since they involve the use of tax money to assist the work of private educational institutions."

A minority report, however, moderated this position slightly. This group, although agreeing in the main with the majority, said, "the surplus food and health services should be viewed as being in a different category inasmuch as they carry the interest of helping the individual citizen rather than an educational institution. We would recommend, however, that these welfare services to children be channeled through other than sectarian organizations."

In other reports to their conference the Baptists heard opinions that opposed the provisions of the National Defense Education Act that provided loans to religious schools for scientific equipment and provisions for the teaching of mathematics and foreign languages. Vigorous opposition was expressed to the fellowship grants of the National Defense Education Act that are made available for graduate schools of theology.

#### State Organizations Necessary

Like the Catholic educators, the Baptist conference recognized that since the states are the focal points in the distribution of federal funds for education, organization for influence must be projected on a state basis. The Baptist conference called for state Baptist conventions to activate public affairs committees for the organization of Baptist influence on the local scene and for purposes of cooperating with their national committee.

The entire nation will be watching developments next year in Congress with regard to federal aid to education. What is done may affect the religious liberty of the country for years to come. We cannot forget that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

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