

February 1983

ISSN 0346-0661

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# REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 38, No. 2

February, 1983

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Cover: Lincoln bust, bronze, by Avard Fairbanks, located in the Ford Theatre, Washington, D.C.; photo, page 4, courtesy Illinois Central Railroad; graphics, page 10 by Sarah Helen Shira.

Executive Director: James M. Dunn  
Editor: Victor Tupitza  
Contributing Editors: John W. Baker, Stan L. Hastey,  
Larry G. Chesser  
Circulation Assistant: Gayl Fowler

REPORT from the CAPITAL is published 10 times each year by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a denominational agency maintained in the Nation's capital by its nine member bodies: The American Baptist Churches in the USA, Baptist Federation of Canada, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., North American Baptist Conference, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., Seventh Day Baptist General Conference and Southern Baptist Convention.

Subscriptions: Single, \$6.00 one year, \$11.00 two years; Club Rate (10 or more) \$5.00 per each year; Student Rate \$2.50 single year. Foreign, please add \$2.00 postage.

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



## Civil Religion

We are reminded in REFLECTIONS that February is the birthday month of two pivotal presidents of the United States, both contributing immeasurably to the creation of a strong and just union. There can be no denying the religious consciousness undergirding their sense of nationhood, yet neither Washington nor Lincoln regarded favorably the establishment of state religion.

It might appear anachronistic to make this a threesome by adding the name of Roger Williams. However, also in James Dunn's comments, he cites profoundly appropriate words of that revered Baptist: "The enforced uniformity of religion throughout a state confounds the civil and religious, denies Christianity and civility and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." Williams, writing decades before the two presidents, rejected the notion of civil religion in his vision of a viable state. Civil religion, it turned out, proved neither civil nor religious in its treatment of Williams.

Fred Schwengel has an infinite capacity for engaging in discussions of Lincoln. There is little doubt among those who know the former congressman, a Baptist, that a lot of Lincoln has rubbed off on him. They recall that Schwengel's understanding of true religion led him to oppose religious practices, primarily Christian, in public schools. That commitment to religious liberty was a factor in the loss of his seat in the U.S. Congress.

In Alan Geyer's incisive incursion into peace as a theological issue, you'll discover peacemaking requires going beyond intellectualizing over traditional attitudes toward waging war. It is time, he counsels, to develop an adequate theology for peacemaking, particularly when we are at the point of the "ultimate violence," nuclear war. He gives ten "morally loaded" issue areas to direct those who care enough to a thorough analysis of the dimensions of the involvement and perhaps to a theology of peacemaking motivated solely by loving faith.

Many of us rest more easily knowing that others remain vigilant to every potential abridgment of our liberties. These others, often from among minority groups, deserve gratitude but are scorned for their exercise of caution. In the matter of calls for a Constitutional Convention, George Stevens of the Seventh Day Adventists tells of shady efforts to hobble religious and civil liberties through constitutional amendments. He reminds us of the dangers of a Constitutional Convention.

The media is there to move merchandise, and it really doesn't matter whether it sells potatoes or politicians. Recent experiences that alarmed Spencer Parsons are being shared, with presidential elections only 22 months down the pike, to remind us of what can be nakedly described as the great American hustle.

You will be seeing a lot of the open stocks, symbolizing release from captivity, religious or civil. Faith Freely Exercised, is both a heritage of Baptists and this nation and a challenge. You can help us eliminate unnecessary printing expenses by ordering Religious Liberty Day materials today. □

Victor Tupitza



news/views/trends

## WASHINGTON OBSERVATIONS

**Ministers buying their own houses** will no longer be permitted the double benefit of a tax-exempt housing allowance plus tax deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes under a new Internal Revenue Service ruling. The new ruling will take effect at the end of their current contract year, or no later than June 30.

The new ruling disallows a federal income tax deduction for any portion of mortgage interest and real estate taxes for which clergy have received a tax-exempt housing allowance. Where the housing expenses are greater than the housing allowance involved, a portion of the interest and taxes will remain deductible.

The IRS action revokes a 1962 revenue ruling which specifically permitted such deductions even though the law also entitled ministers to a housing allowance exclusion.

Based on a section of the IRS code designed to prohibit double tax benefits, the new ruling also bars veterans and other students from deducting education expenses when they have received tax-exempt veterans benefits or scholarships to pay those education costs. ●

**Rejecting an appeal from a Texas school district**, the U.S. Supreme Court announced Jan. 17 it will not review a lower court decision striking down a policy permitting students to gather for religious purposes before and after school hours.

At issue in the bitterly disputed case was a 1980 policy of the Lubbock Independent School District permitting students "to gather at the school with supervision either before or after regular school hours on the same basis as other groups as determined by the school administration to meet for any educational, moral, religious or ethical purposes so long as attendance at such meetings is voluntary."

By simply rejecting the appeal, however, the high court avoided setting a legal precedent and left open the possibility that on another occasion a similar case might be accepted for review.

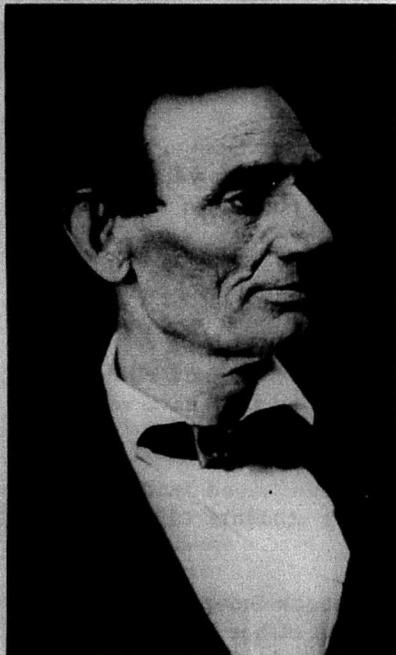
Following the high court's landmark rulings of 1962 and 1963 forbidding state-written prayers and state-enforced Bible readings and prayers in public schools, the Lubbock school district defied the court by continuing practices outlawed by the decisions. ●

**The U.S. Supreme Court** will decide if states may impose limits on fees charged by professional fund raisers to charitable groups or if the charities may exceed a percentage limitation in their own efforts to raise money from the public.

In an action announced here Jan. 10, the high court agreed to accept an appeal by the secretary of state of Maryland to review a decision by the state's highest court striking down a law limiting such payments and expenditures to 25 percent of the total amount raised. Maryland argued that its interest is to protect the contributing public and charitable beneficiaries from fraud and the charities themselves from "the unscrupulous practices of professional fund raisers."

Attorneys for the Indiana-based Joseph H. Munson Co. disagreed, arguing that the Maryland law violated the free speech and freedom of association provisions of the first amendment. ●

Hon. Fred Schwengel



## Lincoln, his Religion and Church

Admirer of President Lincoln, serious scholar of the man and his presidency, and collector of Lincoln memorabilia, Fred Schwengel is President of the U.S. Capitol Historical Society in Washington, D.C. A Baptist, he is a former member of the U.S. Congress, having been elected to office for eight terms from his native state of Iowa.

**T**he controversy over Abraham Lincoln's religious beliefs has been written about and pondered on since people first began writing books and articles on the 16th President. He has been accused of being an atheist, a cautious skeptic, as well as a man who saw the hand of God in every issue confronting the country.

A thorough study of Lincoln confirms that no American president, before or since, had a more profound understanding of the scriptures; he was truly a religious man of God. What is the proof? Where is the evidence? Carl Sandburg often said, "Lincoln interprets himself better than anyone trying to explain him." Lincoln once proclaimed, "I have made a solemn vow before God," and "was convinced of the truth of the Christian religion." Lincoln's confidence in the people had its roots in Biblical reality: he believed that God so guided the conscience of men in history, that the people's verdict was properly their response to his guidance.

Lincoln influenced people's thinking by reflecting his faith in what he read in the Bible. The evidence infuses all his great speeches. No serious student of Lincoln questions his familiarity with Judeo-Christian scriptures. It is obvious that he read the Bible regularly and knew it well, and he never denied the truth of the scriptures. He often called upon the Bible as authority to support his position. A study in depth of the second Inaugural and his other great statements both confirm his great faith and show his ability to use the truths of the Bible. In his second Inaugural he used Bible references and authority twenty-one times, sixteen scripture references from the Old and five from the New Testament. Some are exact quotes, such as "The

judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether" (Psalm 19:9). "Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must need be that offenses come, but woe to the man by whom the offense comes" (Matthew 18:7). The phrase "with charity for all" is found in 1 Peter 4:8. The phrase "a just God" is mentioned a number of times in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 45:21 it reads, "and there is no God else beside me; a just God, and a savior, there is none beside me." Again in Psalm 11:7 it reads, "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness." There are scores of other Biblical quotes in many of his letters, other speeches, and statements.

It is a well known fact that Lincoln never formally joined a church but worshipped in a number of churches. In Washington while he was President, he attended regularly the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. Pheneas Gurley was the pastor. He often attended mid-week prayer meetings at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. His favorite preacher then, however, was Bishop Matthew Simpson, a Methodist leader who understood and appreciated Lincoln's problems in contending with slavery questions. Simpson was the principal speaker at the Foundry Methodist Church in Washington when they met to further the Methodist Missionary Society objectives. Lincoln attended and responded to Simpson's plea for money for Methodist missions by donating \$150.00, and was issued a life membership in the Methodist Missionary Society. His certificate of membership in the Missionary Society is now on display in Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington.

Lincoln had great respect for the church and its program. In an address to voters on July 31, 1846 he said, "That I am not a member of any Chris-

# A Scenario

From the Bible ... he quarried granite to support a religious interpretation of American history and of man's vast future.

tian church is true; but I have never denied the truths of the Scriptures and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular. It is true that in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the 'Doctrine of necessity.' That is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held at rest, by some power, over which the mind itself has no control, and I have sometimes, with one, two or three, but never publicly tried to maintain this opinion in argument. The habit of arguing thus, however, I have left off for more than five years." And, "I add here, I have always understood this opinion to be held by several of the Christian denominations. I do not think I could myself be brought to support a man for office whom I knew to be an open enemy of or scoffer at religion. Leaving the higher matter of eternal consequence between himself and his Maker, I still do not think any man has the right thus to insult the feelings and injure the morals of the community in which he may live."

Lincoln had ideas about the kind of church he would join. He told Newton Bateman, Superintendent of Illinois schools, and later Congressman Henry C. Deming, "When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and Gospel: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and thy neighbor as thyself.' That church will I join with all my heart and all my soul."

Lincoln also had ideas about the policies of government and freedom of religion. In writing to General Custis on January 2, 1863 he said, "The United States government must not—undertake to run the churches. When an individual in a church or out of it becomes dangerous to the public interest, he must be checked; but let the church as such, take care of themselves. It will not do for the United States to appoint trustees, supervisors, or other agents for the church." To O. D. Filley he wrote, "I have never

interferred as to who shall or shall not preach in any church; nor have I knowingly ... tolerated anyone else to so interfere by my authority."

Lincoln's respect for the Bible is reflected in his admonishing Joshua Speed, an old friend, who was a doubter on the Bible, "Take all the Bible you can on reasons and the rest on faith and you will live and die a happier man."

Lincoln was unquestionably our most religious President. Professor Randall concluded the fourth volume of his great study with a chapter entitled "God's Man."

"Lincoln was a man of more intense religiosity than any other President the United States ever had. ... Surely, among successful American politicians, Lincoln is unique in the way he breathed the spirit of Christ while disregarding the letter of Christian doctrine."

Finally I raise the question: Was Lincoln a Christian? By the creedal standards of his day he was not "an orthodox Christian." His wife Mary said that he was not "a technical Christian." Our definition today is a more liberal one. David Mearns, formerly of the Library of Congress and a Lincoln student, called him a "Christian without a creed." This may be the least inadequate phrase. It would, however, be a serious mistake to interpret it to mean that his faith was without specific content.

A better phrase might be "a Biblical Christian." It would at once shift the emphasis from the institutional side of Christianity, in which his religion was defective, to its bedrock foundation in Scripture. From the Bible in quite an independent way he quarried granite to support a religious interpretation of American history and of man's vast future. Any professing Christian or a believer in religion of whatever denomination or sect would have greater respect among his fellow man if he could emulate Lincoln in his understanding of the Bible and apply the lessons as he did in life. □

And it came to pass, as he journeyed, that the prophet Elijah came into the region of Mount Carmel and, with an order from the king, gathered all the children together in one place, even from age six upward unto age eighteen.

And when they and their chosen elders were assembled, he led them to worship the Lord Jehovah and taught them many things about the true God.

And all the people rejoiced and said, Great is Jehovah, the one true God.

When Elijah had finished speaking and was ready to depart, he opened his mouth and said unto them, Tomorrow about this time a prophet of Baal will come unto you, having authority from the king, and will lead you to worship Baal and tell you things also about his god.

If there be any among you who choose not to hear the words of the false prophet, let him be excused. And it was so.

But many of the children, fearing the wrath of certain of their elders, remained and heard the prophet of Baal and some believed and turned to idols.

And not many days after, word of this came unto Elijah and he went and hid himself in a cave. And it came to pass that the Lord God Jehovah appeared to Elijah and said, What is this that thou hast done?

Elijah answered and said unto the Lord, Be not angry with me, Lord, for this is what the people said they wanted and I gave it unto them.

And the Lord said unto Elijah, Hath the Lord as great delight in heeding the voice of the people as in obeying the voice of the Lord?

And Elijah answered and said, Forgive me, Lord; my punishment is greater than I can bear. □

Dr. H. H. Harwell, of Mobile, AL, is a retired Southern Baptist pastor. He remains active in behalf of religious liberty issues, "bombarding" Senators, Congressmen, and even President Reagan with letters opposing any move to amend the Constitution."

## VIEWS OF THE WALL

What started as a political trickle from an isolated cloud-burst here and there has developed into a gigantic constitutional tidal wave that many political experts fear is about to demolish the United States Constitution and end forever the basic freedoms. Americans are so rightly proud of.

The disaster could come as early as this year.

What has started as a simple call for a convention to propose a balanced-budget amendment could end up replacing America's most cherished Constitution.

After the U.S. Senate responded to President Reagan's call for a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, the House of Representatives defeated the legislation. House members argued that the Constitution should not be involved in financial matters that are the responsibility of Congress. Whether the House was right or not, the defeat of the legislation has lighted new concerns which create legitimate fears that the groups who have been clamoring for a constitutional convention to propose a balanced-budget amendment will not be satisfied; they will continue to agitate until a convention is called and then force it to recommend other amendments that will alter America forever.

Here's why so many are so worried.

### What Limits a Convention?

The Founding Fathers who wrote America's Constitution back in the hot summer of 1787 wisely included a provision for amending the document when necessary. Article V says: "The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which in either case shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress."

John V. Stevens, Sr., is the President of the Church-State Council of Seventh-day Adventists. We excerpt from his article which appeared in *Signs of the Times*.

Before George Washington had been president two full years, the original Constitution had been amended by the ten articles called the Bill of Rights. Since then it has been amended 16 times. In every case, the two houses of Congress have proposed the amendment, and in all but one case, sufficient legislatures have voted to concur. The one exception was for the 18th Amendment, repealing Prohibition; it was ratified by state conventions.

The method has worked well; necessary changes have been made, but the basic fabric and framework of the Constitution have been maintained.

But what would happen if a national constitutional convention were to be assembled? Notice that in every case to date, Congress has spelled out to the state legislatures or conventions the precise wording of the amendment they were to consider. Article V requires them to do so, when Congress proposes the amendment. But Article V is not nearly so specified about the powers and procedures of a national constitutional convention.

And this is why so many constitutional experts pale at the thought of a constitutional convention. Who could tell the delegates where to stop amending? Even if Congress or the state legislatures told them exactly what problems they were to address, what authority would they have to force the delegates to comply?

The original Constitutional Convention was called to Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 with instructions to amend the Articles of Confederation—the document that had served as a constitution for the thirteen young states since soon after the end of the Revolution. Instead of merely amending, however, the delegates scrapped the entire Articles and developed a totally new Constitution very, very different from the Articles. With such an example before them, would the delegates to a new constitutional convention proceed to do the same with the present Constitution? If they chose to do so, who could stop them?

### A Real and Present Danger

Under the guise of today's economic problems, more than 60 percent of the state legislatures [31] have already been persuaded to call for a convention that could put our cherished First

Amendment guarantees in jeopardy. Only 67 percent are needed; after just three more votes, will the Constitution crumble?

Former U.S. Senator Birch Bayh, while he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee's constitution subcommittee, assessed the convention drive as threatening "a constitutional crisis." Don Edwards, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee, is alarmed. "There is no assurance," he says, "that a Constitutional Convention could not be a runaway. We've only had one Constitutional Convention, and it tore up the Articles of Confederation." Barber Conable, a conservative New York Republican congressman, warns against what he significantly calls "Constitutional Russian roulette."

Supporters of the convention point out that the resolutions calling for a convention limit the Con-Con (as the constitutional convention is sometimes called) to the single issue of a balanced-budget amendment. But, as we have seen, Article V has such broad language that many constitutional authorities claim no one could limit a convention.

Highly organized, well-financed groups are already seeking to change the Constitution by lobbying Congress to call for amendments that would outlaw freedom of choice on abortion and promote government-mandated prayer in public schools. Other special-interest groups would doubtless press the convention for tax-financing of parochial schools, the teaching of religion (including creation) in public schools, legal protection to kidnap and "deprogram" members of unacceptable religious "cults," a national Sunday law, and further fragmentation of the free exercise of religion.

### Crying Wolf?

Unfortunately, ordinary citizens would have no voice in the approval or rejection of a new national constitution. It would not be subject to ratification by popular vote, but by state legislatures or state conventions, either of which could be easily influenced by special-interest groups.

### Behind the Scenes

Who is pushing for a constitutional convention to create a balanced-budget

amendment? Most of the thrust is coming from the National Taxpayers Union (NTU). Its political-action committee, Taxpayer Action Fund (TAF), has funded only conservative and ultra-conservative candidates, according to their records on file with the Federal Election Commission.

The new right has carefully orchestrated religious-political alliances which have become known as the New Religious Right or New Christian Right. Electronic-media evangelists have been enlisted, along with their cross-country congregations, which annually pour scores of millions of dollars into the coffers of these political preachers.

One thing that has definitely disturbed those who have looked at the movement closely is that while the NTU says it wants a national convention so as to achieve a balanced budget, it is this same NTU that financed a referendum in the District of Columbia a few months ago calling for a tuition tax-credit plan to help finance religious schools. What unannounced agenda items does the NTU plan to spring on the constitutional convention it is lobbying for so eagerly!

#### Wisdom From the Past

When the first constitutional convention failed to include a bill of rights, the people began to clamor for another convention to provide one. James Madison, who had actively participated in the 1787 convention and was well acquainted with what a constitutional convention can do, wrote that "having witnessed the difficulties and dangers experienced by the first Convention which assembled under very propitious circumstances, I should tremble for the result of a second." Heeding his advice, Congress proposed twelve amendments (nine of them written by Madison), and the state legislatures quickly ratified ten of them, improving the Constitution without endangering it, the specter of a constitutional convention assumes a very serious significance, one that we believe all who love freedom should pay careful attention to. □

#### "Register Citizen Opinion"

Updated to reflect changes that have taken place in the 1982 national elections.

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## Media Hype

# Manipulating the Electorate

The votes are now counted; the political volume is down; and the wizards of predictions are silenced. The winners and losers have gone their separate ways, but one thing is certain; the political advertising agencies won and their coffers are full even if those of their client-candidates are empty. That ubiquitous *voice* that championed the candidates is now selling hot dogs, pancakes, nails, and life insurance. The *voice* doesn't care what it sells—potatoes or politicians; they are all the same, because they can all be packaged for TV and radio and turned into dollars.

My ire was kindled when traveling in Maine and Connecticut this past month. My car radio picked up the *voice* supporting the death penalty in one state and decrying it in another. It defended Mr. Reagan and castigated him. It championed the cause of the liberals in Maine and of the conservatives in Massachusetts. It cajoled, insinuated, decried, and sneered at political candidates, not on principle, but on the basis of whose dollars were involved.

During the campaign the *voice* oiled its way into our living rooms. Some citizens declared they wouldn't vote for the candidates because they couldn't stand those commercials; others said the commercials were influential in getting them to vote. Ideas, policies, truth, options, programs and principles were all sacrificed to the political advertiser.

During the primaries I was naive enough to presume that the *voice* was the voice of a candidate supporter. However, after hearing the *voice* in three states supporting nothing and everything, probably taping the various contradictory positions on the same day in the same studio, I realized how bankrupt our politics had become. I longed for a political Chapter 11 which would oversee the reorganization of the system.

It is no wonder that political ad agencies are coming under attack. The media blitz is only a matter of money. The ads turned convictions into charades and sincerity into a hoax. The *voice* represents no point of view, no party, no values—nothing, nothing except money. The emptiness of such political rhetoric breeds political cynicism. No wonder the percentage of votes cast is so low. No wonder people

don't see any differences among the political candidates or the parties they represent. When the media is the message and when style masquerades as substance, truth is assassinated.

As Christians we have a deep concern for the common welfare. We believe that issues are important and that real choices must be made consistent with our vision of justice and peace. We must no longer tolerate the excesses and absurdities we have witnessed during the campaign weeks; there is too much at stake. What is at stake, of course, is the viability of democracy itself.

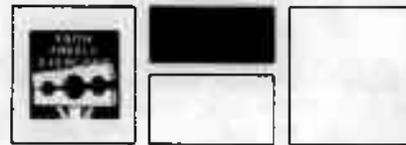
When government becomes only the province of the rich and powerful who can control and maneuver the channels of communication, we are returning to what our forebears fought to destroy—an oligarchy. That ancient form of government in our time has reappeared as fascism, Stalinism, and Nazism. What would its name be in the United States? What would be the early warning signs? What are the symptoms of this disease? How big a lie is its precondition? How much political cynicism is its forerunner? At what point does a public relations officer become a Goebbels? When is information nothing but propaganda, and truth whatever works?

When the political voices we hear are little more than hired guns, we are in trouble. I wish I were wise enough to know what could be done to change the political direction before it is too late. When Jesus said, "Let your yes be yes and your no, no" he was calling for an honest, modest use of language which bore consistency with the facts and required no validation beyond the integrity of the one who spoke.

The secretary to the (Massachusetts) Department of Church and Society, where this [article] first appeared, remarked, "No, we don't need the political equivalent of the French Foreign Legion." The political mercenaries of Madison Avenue are indeed a kind of "Foreign Legion"—accountable to no one. And, unaccountable people are inherently dangerous to the health of any society. □

Spencer Parsons, an American Baptist, until recently taught Christian Ethics at the University of Chicago. Currently, he assists Massachusetts Baptists to ascertain the implications of the Gospel for our world and our lives.

# News in Brief



## Wrap-up: 97th Congress

### Social Issues Derailed

Expectations ran high among advocates of controversial causes such as tuition tax credits, public school prayer and abortion restrictions when the 97th Congress came to town two years ago.

The mix of a new President who promised to push these issues with a Congress expected to be decidedly more conservative following the 1980 elections seemed to spell the best chance yet for legislative movement in these areas.

But in the end, the causes—all pushed by the New Right—fared no better in the 97th Congress than they did in the previous one. They stirred a lot of fury and debate, but there was no significant change in the law of the land.

With the 97th Congress concentrating on President Reagan's budget and tax cuts from the beginning, controversial social issues were consigned to the back burner. When they finally surfaced late in the second session—mostly in the Republican-controlled Senate—they proved so divisive that the heated debates they sparked may well have cost them supporters.

Though numerous tuition tax credit proposals were introduced from day one of the 97th Congress, none went anywhere until President Reagan began pushing a White House version late in the second session.

With this administration push, Senate Finance Committee chairman Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., held together a shaky coalition of tuition tax credit supporters long enough to move a highly-modified and watered-down version of the Reagan proposal out of committee, but it was never considered on the Senate floor.

Opponents of the measure charged that tuition tax credits would be a drain on the federal treasury in a time of mounting budget deficits and that they violate the First Amendment's ban on a government establishment of religion.

Proponents of state-sponsored prayer in public schools moved on two fronts. Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., the veteran champion of New Right causes, pushed legislation to strip the Supreme Court and lower federal

courts of jurisdiction in school prayer cases.

Though no hearings were held on his court-stripping proposal, Helms offered it as an amendment to a debt ceiling bill last September. But the measure failed after numerous unsuccessful efforts to end a filibuster against it.

Early last summer, President Reagan fulfilled a campaign promise by proposing a constitutional amendment on school prayer; it too failed to move.

The Senate Judiciary Committee held three hearings on the Reagan proposal but with time waning in the session, committee chairman Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., told the President he would reintroduce the measure in the 98th Congress, indicating it wouldn't move in the 97th.

Reagan's prayer amendment met with even less success in the House of Representatives where Judiciary Committee leaders kept it bottled up and an effort to discharge the measure from the committee produced less than 60 of the necessary 218 signatures to bring it to the floor for a vote.

Abortion was a similar story in the 97th Congress with anti-abortion forces divided over which legislation to push. Some favored a Helms proposal, a human life bill which would have declared that life begins at conception and barred federal courts and the Supreme Court from striking down anti-abortion legislation.

Others supported a constitutional amendment by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, which would have given Congress and the states authority to restrict or ban abortions.

One conservative cause—a court-curbing amendment designed to end busing—was attached to a Justice Department authorization bill in the Senate but died in the House Judiciary Committee. The House anti-busing rider to a regular appropriations measure for the Justice Department was deleted from the stopgap funding bill Congress eventually passed for that agency.

Congress cleared one important piece of civil rights legislation which sparked heated debate—a 25-year extension of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

### Baptist Executive Urges Repeal of 'Silence' Law

TRENTON—Even though the New Jersey legislature overrode Gov. Thomas Kean's veto to pass a law requiring a daily minute of silence for "private contemplation and introspection" in public schools, Atty. Gen. Irwin I. Kimmelman says he will not enforce it.

"It is my duty not to defend a law that I believe to be unconstitutional," he said.

He denied that politics had played a part in his decision, and commented that "the governor did not instruct me in this."

In vetoing the bill, Gov. Kean cited a recent ruling by a federal judge in Tennessee striking down a similar law in that state. The assembly's vote to override the veto was the first such vote since the governor took office in January.

Supporters of the bill disputed Kimmelman's authority to decide not to enforce a law and said they will continue to defend the moment of silence.

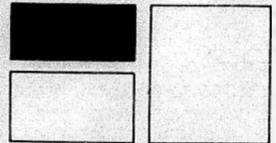
George D. Younger, executive minister, and Joseph J. Sastic, president of the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, have urged pastors and members of affiliated churches in the state to work for the repeal of the law and to support attempts to challenge it in the courts.

The extension applied to the preclearance section of the act which requires nine states and portions of 13 others to get Justice Department approval before making any voting law or policy changes. The Senate also modified one of the permanent sections of the act to make easier proving violations of the act in court.

The 97th Congress also made several tax law changes affecting churches and charitable religious organizations. The large tax cut passed during the first year of the Reagan administration liberalized both the amount and scope of foreign earned income which Americans abroad—including missionaries—can exclude from U.S. taxes.

In the tax hike passed during the second year of the Reagan administration, Congress permitted churches and denominations to provide more adequate tax-sheltered retirement plans for their ministers and lay employees. □

Larry Chesser



## Black Churches Plan March For 'Peace, Freedom, Jobs'

WASHINGTON—Nearly 20 years after the historic march for civil rights on Washington led by the late Martin Luther King Jr., black leaders have called for a march around the issues of "peace, jobs and freedom" next August in the capital.

The leaders—among them Coretta Scott King, Rep. Walter Fauntroy (D-D.C.), the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Bishop John Hurst Adams, head of the Congress of National Black Churches—announced at a press conference the start of a campaign to build a new and broad coalition based on the pursuit of these goals.

They said they will promote throughout 1983 a reconvening of the 1960's Coalition of Conscience, made up of religious, civil rights, labor and student groups, the same groups behind the Aug. 28, 1963 march for "jobs and freedom." Efforts to make Dr. King's Jan. 15 birthday a national holiday will also be a feature of the "new" coalition, which already has an office in the Peace Center in Washington, said the leaders.

## Bread for the World

WASHINGTON—In spite of intense lobbying by the U.S. government's Agency for International Development (AID), the lame duck Congress passed a Bread for the World-initiated measure that would shift more U.S. foreign development aid to help the world's poorest people achieve self-sufficiency.

For the first time, AID must attempt to devote a specific percentage of its budget to directly benefit the "absolute poor", the lowest rung on the World Bank's definition of world living standards, or more than a third of the poorest countries' population.

## Can Pastor Dismiss Deacon, Court Asked to Decide

TRENTON—New Jersey's highest court has been asked to decide whether civil state courts have the power to review the ouster of a deacon of a congregational church.

The Rev. Albert P. Rowe believes the answer is no. In 1977, with his approval, the board of deacons of the Calvary Baptist Church in Patterson defrocked Deacon James Chavis.

In his suit, Chavis argued that the deacons had no authority to take action against a fellow deacon; and since he was elected by the membership, only it can remove him from office.

The argument presented by the deacons and pastor points out that the case is a church dispute and the defrocking followed a policy drawn from the New Testament.

A Passaic County Superior Court jury awarded \$28,000 to Chavis and his wife, who had been released from her job at the church-administered drug abuse center. But the judge in the case reduced the damages and an intermediate appeals court reversed the lower court decision, saying the courts have no jurisdiction in the matter.

## Report on Registration Questions its Value

WASHINGTON—An internal Reagan administration report suggests there is little to be gained by a peacetime registration for a possible draft, say leaders of two groups opposed to the registration.

Barry W. Lynn, head of Draft Action, and American Civil Liberties Union lawyer David Landau released a previously confidential report to President Reagan last December from the Military Manpower Task Force.

They told reporters that the document makes no recommendations but cites four options, ranging from keeping compulsory registration in force to waiting until after declaration of a national emergency requiring mobilization. Mr. Lynn charged that there was no basis for President Reagan's claim that a peacetime registration will save six to eight weeks in mobilizing emergency manpower.

## Dilday, Ratliff Add Support to BJCPA Staff

WASHINGTON—A recent seminary graduate and a Home Mission Board student missions volunteer have joined the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Robert H. Dilday, 27, who graduated in December with an M.Div. degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will assist Executive Director James Dunn in special projects for the Washington-based agency. He will also write for Baptist Press and *Report from the Capital*, the monthly publication of the Baptist Joint Committee.

Gerri Lynn Ratliff, 21, completed work in December for the B.A. in journalism and speech from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She will work with the Baptist Joint Committee and the Washington bureau of Baptist Press as a newswriter for the next several months.

"We are most gratified that two such outstanding Baptists have felt led to accept our invitation to work with us at the Baptist Joint Committee," Dunn said. "They strengthen our staff at a time when demands upon us have never been heavier nor more critical to the future of church-state relations in our country."

## Religion in Congress: Voters Look at Record

WASHINGTON—Voters are more interested in the effectiveness of members of Congress than in their religious label, a Baptist church-state spokesman observed after noting 47 members of the 98th Congress have Baptist affiliation.

"The vast majority of voters do not know their representatives' and senators' religious affiliation," said James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

"The particular denominational alignment of members of Congress is not a critical factor in determining how they vote on issues," he added. "Nor does it reflect a particular political philosophy."

In the 98th Congress, 10 senators and 37 representatives identify as Baptists, compared to 55 members of the previous Congress.

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Alan Geyer

## Theology and Ultimate Violence— A new nuclear agenda for the churches

**T**o discuss violence in international perspective in the 1980s is to lift this whole subject to its ultimate and eschatological levels. It is to vault beyond ethics to theology in its most transcendent sense.

At the level of *individual violence*, we may regard murder as the most immoral act. At the level of *intergroup violence*, we may judge genocide to be the most horrible crime. But at the level of *international violence*, we are increasingly pushing our very species to the edge of extinction. This is the sober theme of Jonathan Schell's book, titled, *The Fate Of The Earth*.

George Kennan, uniquely sensitive historian that he is, has added still another dimension to such questions by asking with terrible poignancy: Who are we of this generation to say to our mothers and fathers and our grandmothers and grandfathers and all past generations: we are prepared to destroy all your personal and cultural achievements—all your moral values, all your religion, all your science and technology, all your art and music and architecture and philosophy?

These are questions which impel us to make some new beginnings in theology: to formulate the profoundest of religious issues which must be addressed on this brink of non-history.

In the years since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there have been the most palpable reasons for wondering whether traditional Christian debates between pacifists and just war theorists retained any validity. I believe they do—but that they do not encompass many important issues. Less obvious has been the fact that traditional distinctions were preoccupied with war itself. Those distinctions have to do with whether, or when, or how to wage a war as a national policy—to participate in war as a matter of indi-

This article is based on presentations before several religious groups, with excerpts from his book, *The Idea of Disarmament! Rethinking the Unthinkable*, and appeared as a *Shalom* paper. It was edited by REPORT for length. Dr. Geyer is the executive director of the Center for Theology and Public Policy in Washington, D.C.

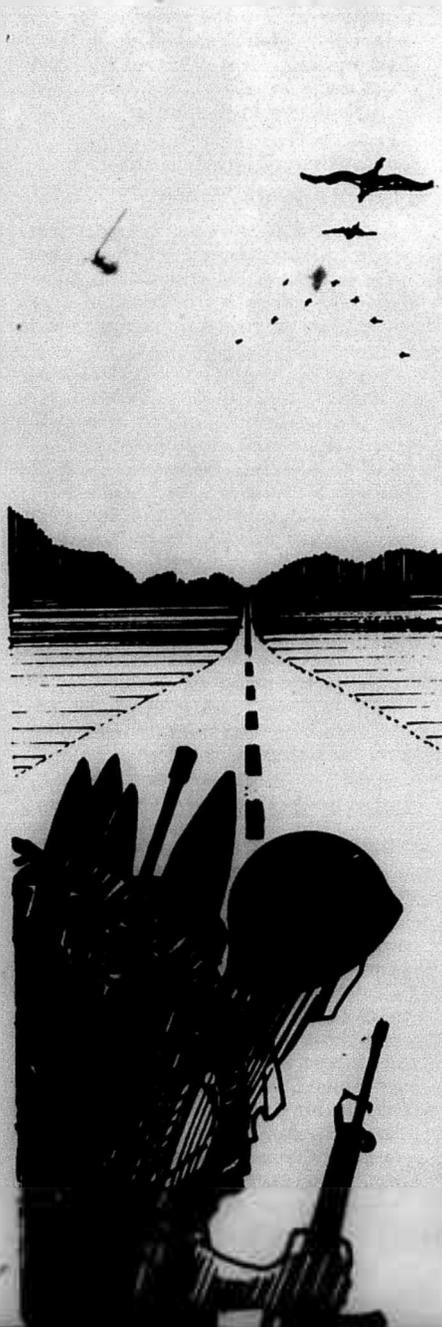
vidual choice. They do not, however, qualify as fully developed theologies of war and peace. This preoccupation with typologies of Christian attitudes toward war has tended to prevent the emergence of alternative approaches to *peacemaking* among pacifists and non-pacifists.

Through all these years, the long twilight struggle of the Cold War, of the nuclear arms race and its mutual terrors, has produced an ambiguous pattern of world politics which is neither war nor peace.

**The churches have yet to develop an adequate theology for this twilight zone in which peacemaking requires the unwinding of a decades-long spiral of hostility and mythology which increasingly threatens the very Death of Earth, even while it has already brutalized and devastated millions of lives in dozens of countries and has led to the uncontrolled spread of both nuclear and conventional weapons.**

Arms control and disarmament is a subject in this twilight zone. As an essential element of national security and of peacemaking, it has therefore been a victim of the most serious theological neglect—let alone a very peripheral priority in the churches' mission. Traditional pacifist-just war and Christian realist alternatives tend not to address the problems of disarmament as such. The lack of a theology of the twilight zone between war and peace means that the churches have largely failed to interpret and legitimize nuclear disarmament as a dynamic religious and historical imperative.

Meanwhile, nuclear deterrence and counterforce have emerged as the great secular theologies of national security. They have sanctified an unprecedented confrontation with the very Creator and Creation. They have elaborated the most speculative dogmas and sophisticated theoretical superstructures. They have made the most absolute claims about human motivation and conduct.



Even a thorough examination of the dogmatics of deterrence and counterforce would fail to address many of the vital questions which rightly demand theological reconstruction. The fact is: history and technology keep running ahead of religious ideas, even as they run ahead of strategic ideas. In short, there is a dynamism in the arms race itself that calls for the most thoroughgoing historical and social analysis—analysis that cannot be provided by the statistics and military mathematics which have tended to dominate the deterrence-counterforce-nuclear pacifist debates. There is a mystifying new elusiveness in the world's power relationships accompanied by the most paradoxical implications for security policy.

At the World Council of Churches International Public Hearing, Edward Schillebeeckx ... [declared] that theologians do not even know what they are talking about theologically unless they join in a fresh encounter with non-theologians. A new "non-theological prior cognition" was required in order to grasp "the autonomous immanent logic of the spiral of armament and the military and economic structure of manufacturing nuclear weapons." Schillebeeckx concluded that "setting all ideology aside, the theologian is obligated to see that humanity's threatening real enemy is the autonomous spiral of armament itself. The theologian must analyze the rationality of this whole field in its structural setting."

**Permit me to suggest ten morally-loaded issue areas which I believe need to be theologically articulated in any rounded view of Christian concern for war and peace and twilight struggle.**

1. The problematical role of nuclear doctrine:—In December 1979, Marshall Shulman, Soviet affairs advisor to President Carter publicly acknowledged that U.S. defense policy had become increasingly irrational. Benjamin Lambeth of RAND Corporation describes U.S. defense policy as "a virtual flea market of conflicting influences and pressures."

It is not at all clear, then, that doctrines produce weapons. The opposite may be more nearly true: technical innovation tends to precede any clear strategic purpose. Ideas are then invoked or concocted to rationalize new weapons systems. ABMs, MIRVs, and cruise missiles—three of the most destabilizing innovations in the arms race—were all "weapons systems in

search of a mission" and rationalized in the most inconsistent and ground-shifting fashion.

James Fallows, in his book, *National Defense*, observed: "The 'best' minds of the defense community have been drawn toward nuclear analysis, but so were the best minds to be found in the monastery arguing the Albigensian heresy, in the fourteenth century. A novel theory about how the Kremlin might respond to nuclear strikes may be advanced, may make the author's name, and may lead to billions in expenditures without entering any further into the domain of fact than did the monks' speculations about the nature of God."

2. The trivialization of nuclear issues: There are various ways of cutting the nerve of nuclear concern. One is to emphasize the terrible fact of millions of casualties in sub-nuclear wars since 1945. Another is to stress that conventional spending is a bigger portion of the Pentagon budget than nuclear spending—a fact which will mean less when all the nuclear weapons programs now developing go into production at enormous cost. Still another way to discount nuclear issues is to forecast a post-nuclear age of laser and space warfare which will make nuclear weapons obsolete—an extremely dubious forecast technologically.

But it is the *linkage* of nuclear disarmament with, and its subordination to, other foreign policy problems that is currently most threatening to U.S. security ... The demise of SALT II (in part because of the Soviet brigade in Cuba) may yet prove to be the most perilous turning-point in the history of the arms race. Now the unhappy and precarious situation in Poland is being used to postpone a resumption of strategic nuclear talks.

3. Issues of demonology:—The arms race has been regularly manipulated by the most primitive and subhuman enemy images, the dogma that military force is "the only thing that the Soviets understand," and the appeal to worst case reasoning. While many Americans have been persuaded that the Soviets never make any meaningful concessions in disarmament negotiations and that they violate any and all treaties, the truth is that the Soviets made the major concessions in SALT II and that their record of compliance with arms control treaties is generally satisfactory.

4. Issues of nuclear equity:—The power of nuclear weapon-states to annihilate each other is also the power to

destroy still other nations. Radioactive fallout and ozone depletion from a major nuclear war could devastate a country with no belligerent status at all. The severity of such injustice is especially acute for 110 nations which have renounced nuclear weapons under a most solemn covenant, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in return for a legal commitment to nuclear disarmament by nuclear-weapon states, a commitment which has yet to be genuinely honored.

5. Issues of constitutional policy:—Nuclear technology has annulled the capacity of nation-states to defend their own citizens. The speed of delivery of nuclear weapons has annulled the capacity of democratic institutions for deliberation and decision-making in a security crisis. The managerial structures of military technology have evolved a new form of government in which industrial, scientific, military and political elites collaborate in setting national priorities and allocating resources. Early bureaucratic decisions about weapons research and development become increasingly inaccessible to the public and even irreversible in the legislative process.

6. Issues of political integrity:—The nuclear arms race has become the severest test of truth in our nation's history. It is zealously promoted with false words, deceptive jargon, pretentious dogmatics, hateful propaganda, and arbitrary bars on access to truth.

**Demythologizing has become the indispensable theological tool of peacemaking: it is the empowerment of people to understand the stratagems by which inhuman and violent speech, violates the Word of God. In short, disarmament is primarily a political issue and only secondarily a technical, diplomatic, or economic issue.**

7. Issues of political initiative:—The failure of the superpowers to contain their own arms race raises the question as to whether they have reached a bilateral deadlock from which neither can or will break free. Yet each continues to make unilateral decisions to escalate the arms race with new weapons systems. Does either superpower have a special responsibility to take independent action to unwind the spiral? Is there a theological basis for unilateral initiatives? Does God's first-loving initiative in Jesus Christ have anything to do with this?

Continued on page 14

# INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



## UN Agency says many Children's Lives Could be Saved through Simple Methods

UNITED NATIONS—The lives of 20,000 children a day could be saved in developing countries within 10 years with the increased use of four simple health procedures, says the annual report of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund which has strong religious support.

The procedures can "revolutionize" the field of child health and are designed to help mothers and children make the best use of the food they have available, said UNICEF director James P. Grant.

The four methods are increased breast-feeding of children, oral rehydration therapy for children with diarrhea, use of growth charts by parents to monitor child growth and thereby detect hidden malnutrition, and universal immunization of children. Mr. Grant underscored the need to focus attention on "hidden hunger" which he said was more widespread than actual starvation.

Church social action crusaders have been at the forefront of efforts to encourage breast-feeding, largely through campaigns against aggressive promotion of infant formula by multinationals such as the Nestle company. Churches have also given high priority to feeding programs for children and mothers, and have campaigned for universal immunization of children.

Religious supporters of UNICEF in-

clude the Baptist World Alliance, Catholic Relief Services of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Church World Service of the National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, World Muslim Congress, World Jewish Congress, and Friends World Committee.

"The Third World's hunger is a hidden hunger," the report said. "Visible malnutrition is rare. And it is time that the skin and bone image of the starving baby—an image which is too often used to represent the developing country—was replaced by a greater international understanding of what child malnutrition really means."

Mr. Grant's report notes that only about 2 percent of child malnutrition in developing countries is clearly visible. "Almost 60 percent of mothers whose children were suffering from malnutrition believed their children were growing normally and developing well." "Invisible malnutrition" today affects some 25 percent of the developing world's young children, the report says.

Meanwhile, the absolute number of children living and growing in malnutrition and ill-health is set to increase, he said. The U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that by the year 2000 the number of malnourished children could grow to some 600 million, representing an increase of 30 percent.

## Plot to kill Pope John Linked to Poland Crisis

ROME—Italian Defense Minister Lelio Lagorio has charged that the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II was an "act of war" and may have been a "precautionary and alternative solution to the invasion of Poland" by Bulgaria's secret service.

Reporting to the Italian parliament, Mr. Lagorio said Italian counterespionage detected a sudden increase in coded messages between Sofia and the Bulgarian embassy in Rome at the time of the shooting of the pope and also when Gen. Dozier was freed by Italian police who stormed the apartment where he was being held.

Bulgaria is generally considered the Soviet Union's closest ally in Eastern Europe, and observers here appear to believe that Russia's KGB, then headed by Yuri Andropov, would have been aware of the Bulgarian activity

going on.

The minister's allegations came two days after another Socialist Party member charged that Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo, a Christian Democrat, had played down the evidence linking the pope's shooting to Bulgaria. However, he made no specific accusations of his own nor did two other Christian Democratic ministers who spoke.

After Mr. Lagorio spoke, Mr. Colombo told parliament there were "grave questions" about whether the Bulgarian government had used its diplomatic immunity as a cover for other activities. He described a press conference recently in Sofia as "an evident effort by the Bulgarian government to direct suspicions from themselves."

The Bulgarian authorities at the press conference denied involvement in the assassination attempt. They also invited Ilario Martello, the Italian pros-

## No. Ireland Future Bleak Following Violent 1982

BELFAST—"We all long for peace, but we are thwarted and frustrated by the actions of those who prefer violence," said the Rt. Rev. John Armstrong, Anglican primate of Ireland in his end-of-year message, summing up the mood of the Irish churches after a difficult and depressing 1982.

There are no signs of a marked improvement in 1983, despite the churches' pleas for peace and statements of concern about unemployment and the political deadlock.

Churchmen have not only denounced violence, they have gone out of their way to symbolize that Christians of all denominations have much in common. In September the Roman Catholic primate, Cardinal Thomas O'Fiaich, and his Anglican counterpart organized a weekend of church services and cultural events in Armagh, the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland, to underline their common heritage.

Many people believe that churchmen have run out of words, and that actions would be a more eloquent means of preaching. Recently a large group of Protestant clergy in Belfast decided to attend the funeral of civilian Catholic victims of violence in witness of their protest. There have been repeated calls for the Catholic Church to excommunicate terrorists, but so far this has been resisted.

Politically, 1983 promises to be a difficult year. In the North the British government is pressing ahead with the assembly at Belfast to try to seek political agreement. So far the representatives of the one million Protestants have taken part, as well as the moderate Alliance Party, which is a minority group from both communities. But the representatives of the 500,000 Catholics, the Social Democratic and Labor Party, have remained aloof because the Protestants won't share power with them. If they continue to refuse to take part, the assembly could wither.

In 1983 the Irish churches will continue literally, in the faith. The Rev. Dr. Eric Gardner, the Presbyterian moderator, in his new year message has exhorted people to try to forget the past and to press on in goodwill.

ecutor heading the papal shooting investigation to come to Sofia to question two men whom Mr. Agca asserts were involved.



## Airlift 69 Tons of Bibles To Uganda Schoolchildren

LONDON—The world's largest ever airlift of Bibles was recently completed by Britain's Bible Society. The society sent 100,000 Bibles—69 tons of them—to Uganda in East Africa.

The shipment was made up of 50,000 Good News Bibles and 50,000 in the Luganda language. Luganda is commonly understood in large parts of Uganda. The English Good News Bibles are mostly needed by the schools, where each child entering the fifth grade is asked to provide himself with a copy of the Good News Bible for study as part of the curriculum.

The Bible Society here stressed that the airlifted Bibles represented "only a drop in the ocean" of Uganda's Bible needs. Some 200,000 pupils enter the fifth grade each year.

## Jewish Survey Discovers Religious Right Fading

NEW YORK—Despite the fears of some of its opponents, the Moral Majority "has not dominated the political scene, nor has it seriously endangered the Jewish community," says a report commissioned for the World Jewish Congress.

Written by Marc Stern of the American Jewish Congress, the report finds that some Jewish concern about the Moral Majority is based on its links with the "religious right." The survey asserts that "the religious right regards the rise of the State of Israel as a fulfillment of biblical prophecies predicting the second coming and therefore the pro-Zionist views of the Moral Majority have a distinctly missionary tinge to them."

It comments that "the heart of Jewish unease with the Moral Majority is that it appears to assume, disclaimers notwithstanding, that there is one single, ascertainable, Christian moral position which must become law." But despite these fears, the survey concludes that the Moral Majority has had a diminishing impact on American political life since 1980.

## Nobel Laureate Warns of 'Cult of Violence' Threat

OSLO, Norway—Both the United States and the Soviet Union have created a "cult of violence" that threatens

global war and breeds urban crime, said Alva Myrdal, 1982 Nobel Peace Prize winner and disarmament crusader.

"There is no doubt that what the superpowers are now planning and in which they are now investing billions, is precisely the preparation for waging war," she said in her Nobel lecture here.

"Many countries persecute their own citizens and intern them in prisons or concentration camps. Oppression is becoming more and more a part of the system, and Lech Walesa's suffering may stand as a symbol for the way in which human rights are being trampled down in one country after another."

## Israeli Peace Activists Set up Tel Aviv Center

LONDON—An Anglican congregation in one of London's red-light districts has moved its services to a nearby sports club because prostitutes and other women occupied the church in a sit-in.

At first, Vicar Trevor Richardson welcomed them. But when the day of the first Sunday service arrived he changed his mind.

Before the service, he said, "While I have some sympathy for some of the things the women are trying to achieve, I also have a great deal of sympathy for local residents who feel justifiably angry about the effects of prostitution in the area. I now wish to express solidarity with my parishioners, though not necessarily with their prejudices against prostitutes."

## Moonie Denied Libel Appeal, May lose 'Charity' Status

LONDON—An appeals court here has denied a new trial for Dennis Orme, head of the Unification Church in Britain, who in March 1981, lost the longest and costliest libel action in English legal history against the *Daily Mail* newspaper.

Mr. Orme, who is officially spiritual director in Britain of the church founded by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, was ordered to pay the costs of the appeal, estimated at over \$200,000.

The trial originated after the *Daily Mail* published an article which Mr. Orme alleged portrayed his church as "a group of sinister people who

brainwashed young people and break up families."

The jury found that the *Daily Mail* was justified in accusing the sect. After the failure of Mr. Orme's appeal the government stated that it was taking action to have the Unification Church removed from the register of charities.

## Parents Held Responsible For Death of Daughter

Cagliari, Sardinia—An Italian appeals court here has upheld a voluntary manslaughter conviction against two Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to provide their ailing infant daughter with blood transfusions that might have saved her life.

The convicted couple, Giuseppe Oneda, 27, and Consiglia Costanzo, 32, were arrested in July 1980, three days after their two-year-old daughter, Isabella, died of Bethalassaemia Major, an incurable blood disease. For the first year of Isabella's life, her parents saw to it that the infant received regular blood transfusions that helped keep her alive, but in May 1979, they converted to the Jehovah's Witnesses and informed the clinic handling the case that they planned to interrupt the treatments.

The Onedas' defense lawyer argued that the public medical service was to blame for the child's death. The Cagliari court, however, ruled that while local medical services may have failed, the primary responsibility for Isabella's death lay with her parents.

## Hookers Wear out Welcome

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## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors: [Re:] the brief review in the November/December issue of the film *The Last Epidemic*.

I sat with an atomic scientist who before retirement had been high in the echelons of the Atomic Energy Commission and watched this film. After it was over he gave me an hour and half lecture on where the film grossly overstated the facts, was misleading, and in general was a highly unreliable source of information as to what would happen with a one megaton bomb over San Francisco.

My scientist friend informed me that all calculations of a scientific nature are based upon the idea of a flat surface with no obstacles. Obviously this is the only way in which a universal statement could be made. When you extrapolate this onto San Francisco, it becomes totally unrealistic. There are not only the bricks, steel and mortar of the buildings, which absorb an amazing amount of energy, but a hill like Nob Hill which would absorb so much that it is not even certain that the blast could get over the hill...

One would never guess from *The Last Epidemic* the fact that even the day after the blast at Hiroshima the bridges were open to traffic and the second day trains

Theology, from page 11

8. Issues of security definition:—In July 1981, Secretary Haig announced that the U.S. would not be ready to conclude any new arms control agreement until a new "position of strength" enabled the U.S. to "demonstrate that we have the will and the capacity" to solve our security problems "without arms control." The churches must ask whether there can be such a thing as security "without arms control" simply by virtue of the will and military prowess of the U.S. acting alone. I do not believe it.

Too many policies which appeal to "national security" have badly undermined security itself. National sovereignty is now at least as dubious a political concept as alternative security systems which point toward an elemental world government. Security requires transnational thinking and transnational institutions. Christianity as a transnational community must formulate a new theology of politics which clearly reflects this radical new indivisibility of security.

9. Issues of social justice:—Have the costs of military policies become so exorbitant that they undermine the very values those policies were supposed to defend? The Brandt Commission noted that one-half of one percent of one year's world military expenditure would pay for all the farm equipment needed to increase food production to the level of self-sufficiency in the

were operating and the third day some streetcars resumed service.

It is exceedingly difficult for laymen to sit in judgment upon things which are extraordinarily complicated.

Culbert G. Rutenber  
Austin, TX

To the Editors: I have followed the Public Affairs Committee from its beginning under the leadership of J.M. Dawson. We need it, in fact we need it desperately and I want to encourage you as you continue to sound the truth even though it may fall on ears that don't want to hear it.

Orba Lee Malone  
El Paso, TX

To the Editors: The American Baptist Churches of Monroe Association (ABC/NY) have concerns and priorities for mission which go beyond parochial limits. We are very pleased to participate in ministry with you...

Carroll A. Turner  
Rochester, NY

To the Editors: I admire and appreciate the vigor and enthusiasm with which you approach the task!

Jim Montgomery  
Austin, TX

world's food deficit countries by 1990. Isn't our's a faith which requires the beating of at least some bombers into plowshares and some missiles into pruning hooks?

10. Issues of mental and spiritual health:—There is literally an absurd contradiction at the heart of nuclear dogmatics: a simultaneous dependence upon absolute terror and absolute reason. The psychological difficulties involved in living with this nuclear contradiction are very great for the average sensitive citizen. ... The contradiction is especially acute for nuclear decision-makers. As Harvard political scientist Karl Deutsch has put it, our security policy assumes that "we should frustrate our opponents by frightening them very badly and that we should then rely on their cool-headed rationality for our survival."

It is this two-way manipulation of terror that dehumanizes the nuclear arms race: our relentless terrorizing of the enemy and the relentless alarmism about the terrible enemy. Which is why the arms race has become our most serious mental health problem, not least for a younger generation which finds it difficult to be confident that it has a future. All of us are caught between the promotion of fear and the repression of fear.

Surely a theology of fear, or better, of the casting out of fear by a loving faith, is somewhere near the center of the Gospel's vision of spirituality. □

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No matter how useful  
civil religion ... is less than  
a particularized, authentic faith ...

## REFLECTIONS

"Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is."

Dwight D. Eisenhower

"The Government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion ..."

George Washington

**T**his month we observe two of the high holy days of American civil religion: the birthdays of Washington, seen as our Abraham, and Lincoln, our Moses. It may be a good time to think about what is often called the American civil religion.

Robert N. Bellah popularized the term and identified it as a "set of beliefs, symbols and rituals." Bob Linder says civil religion is "that generalized form of national faith which mixes religious metaphors with nationalistic aspirations, the state's use of consensus religious sentiments, concepts, and symbols for its own purposes." In *The Reformed Journal*, December, 1982, Dr. Linder writes that civil religion "mixes piety with patriotism and traditional religion with national life until it is impossible to distinguish between them." ("Reagan at Kansas State: civil religion in the service of the New Right," pp. 13-15.)

The shallow, whitewash brand of civil religion, it seems, does have more negative than positive characteristics. A thin veneer of religiosity covering pride, greed, narrow nationalism, short-sightedness and injustice has little in common with the stern stuff of the Judeo-Christian prophetic tradition.

This brand of civil religion identifies the United States of America as uniquely the people of God and enjoys quoting II Chronicles 7:14 as if it were a Heavenly message to the United States Senate. "If my people which are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

The United States is often referred to as a "Christian nation." It is as if it could be proclaimed so, or legislated as such, or by the ingenious revision of our actual history interpreted as a Christian nation. Making it true. It is as if the United States, or any nation, could be made Christian by majority vote. It is as if Christianity or any other spiritual allegiance could be imposed by force from without or above. Fortunately, it does not work that way.

Roger Williams understood. He said "The enforced uniformity of religion throughout a State confounds the civil and religious, denies Christianity and civility and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."

The identification of the United States as peculiarly God's People is a dangerous form of idolatry—nationalism, the misplaced worship of nation, giving the country allegiance that God alone deserves.

The fuzzy merging of Christianity with Americanism confuses the permanent with the temporary, the ultimate with the provisional. The loss of a conscious, deliberate distinction between one's ultimate spiritual commitment and his/her national patriotic loyalty tends to absolutize the relative and at the same time relativize the absolute.

If you get the idea that I don't think that Americanism

James M. Dunn  
Executive Director



(or "God Save the Queen" or "Viva Mexico" nationalism for that matter) is a worthy religion, you're catching on.

This negative, sub-spiritual variety of civil religion is not a conscious choice, personally or corporately. Few, if any folks, I think, say "I think I'll make the President of the United States my High Priest, free enterprise my creed, anti-communism my mission and Americanism my religion." The adherents of this watered-down national theology sort of slide into it.

Some are snookered into civil religion by media manipulators of public piety. Some drift pitifully into nation-worship because there is no more meaningful commitment in their lives. Some foolishly think they can serve two masters and offer God and Caesar dual control. Some civil religionists would rather fight than admit they are practitioners of a diluted faith, yet, their emotional responses are triggered more easily by loyalty to country than fidelity to the Eternal. Some drift gently and unquestioningly with the tide of popular opinion. Alas, some folks seem to offer the same intensity of dedication to the Dallas Cowboys, their brand of beer, the U.S.A. as to their God.

Beyond this negative type of civil religion is a benignly neutral civil religion. While we do not approve of civil religion, we do applaud religion that is civil, ordinarily polite. This neutral version of civil religion may be nothing more than an acknowledgement that religion is vaguely a good thing, that religion has a ceremonial significance in public life, or an admission that religion is neither dead nor irrelevant.

A third sort of civil religion is positive. It is the public faith that seeks and emphasizes shared values in our culture. The common denominator of belief in a Higher Power does not deny a religious dimension in the political realm. A healthy civil religion expects the religious experience of any individual to permeate every aspect of his/her life and respects that bundle of commitments and sensitivities.

This positive understanding includes the recognition that religion can contribute to any culture a world view, a global perspective that avoids the petty and provincial outlook. A civil religion like our Judeo-Christian faith is rooted in time, lives on a dateline and offers a sense of history. The common culture religion called civil religion can add an imaginative, caring capacity to see things from the other person's point of view. And even a civil religion, if it's honest, can reinforce the humble awareness that "no man is an island" but that we belong to one another.

In the best version of civil religion, as Linder says, "the prophetic variety, a transcendent reference point stands outside the nation and the national experience."

No matter how useful civil religion at its best may be it is less than a particularized, authentic faith rooted in history and revealed from above. At its best the modifier "civil" and the modifier "authentic" are mutually incompatible when they precede "religion."

Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's is still good advice, not always easy to apply but good counsel. □

## REVIEWS



### CONTROLLING THE BOMB: NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE 1980's—A Twentieth Century Fund Report

By Lewis A. Dunn, Yale University Press, 1982, paperback \$6.95, cloth \$21.00.

In *Controlling the Bomb*, Lewis Dunn addresses issues surrounding the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons; that is, the factors encouraging or discouraging nations from obtaining nuclear weapons. The book opens with a review of the development and spread of nuclear weapons over the first decades of the nuclear age. One of the significant reasons for slow growth in the number of nuclear weapons states during those first decades was, according to Dunn, the lack of highly compelling reasons for "going nuclear" given the fact that political independence, territorial integrity, and survival could be maintained without nuclear weapons. Along with limited incentives for "going nuclear" there were several disincentives for acquiring nuclear weapons including fear of adverse foreign reaction (West Germany) and fear of domestic opposition (Japan). Dunn suggests that the openness with which France acquired nuclear weapons as compared with the secret way in which India acquired weapons reflected a questioning of the legitimacy of acquiring nuclear weapons by the international community.

The spread of nuclear weapons technology will probably be impossible to head off. Therefore, current efforts should be made to mitigate the proliferation's regional and global consequences. U.S. policy should seek to stabilize regions and defuse potential conflict so nations do not need nuclear weapons to feel secure. The United States after seeing a nation is committed to moving up the nuclear weapons ladder might assist the new nuclear power to develop a safer nuclear force.

The book is at its best in describing the various political reasons for deciding to go nuclear. Mr. Dunn gives various scenarios which help the reader understand why a nation might seek nuclear weapons. □ **Larry Pullen**

One of the organizers of the recent American Baptist Peace Conference held in

Washington, D.C., Mr. Pullen serves as Manager of Peace Concerns Program for the denomination's Board of National Ministries.

### ROOTS OF A BLACK FUTURE: FAMILY AND CHURCH

By J. Deotis Roberts, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1980, \$8.95, paper.

Rejecting the "colonization of the mind as well as the political domination of the West in reference to the rest of humankind," J. Deotis Roberts digs deep into the African heritage of Afro-Americans and views the Black family from the extended family concept cherished in Africa.

He cites much historical evidence of the vitality of Black family life in the midst of slavery traditions and modern economic pressures that were aimed at destruction of all family ties such as the Black community's ability to adopt children of relatives and strangers into the family when economic conditions made it impossible for natural parents to nurture them unaided.

He seeks to dispel the "simple savage" stereotype as he points out that African slaves came with a philosophy, world view and values which enabled them to "endure hardships which broke the white indentured servants and Indian slaves." He attacks the concepts of Christian slave owners who put slavery under the jurisdiction of the state and defined the role of the church as personal, private and spiritual.

The author has done a masterful job of reviewing the works of Black historians and theologians challenging long-held perspectives of the development of the Black church with new documentation. He sees the Black church as a model extended family, the family of God, which has much to offer both its members and in challenge of more privatistic concepts of church through its grasp of *harambee*—the African concept of unity, social solidarity, the importance of the community to

the individual—that has kept the Black Church close to Biblical concepts.

While he lifts up the tremendous healing power available to Black families through the Black church, there is no hint of a healing balm for the cataclysms of racism, only a continued fight against the oppressor. But the enlightened tears which fall in this book may cure some of society's blindness. □

(G.F.)

### FACING NUCLEAR WAR

By Donald B. Kraybill, Herald Press 1982, 307 pp., paperback.

The subtitle of this stimulating book, "A Plea for Christian Witness", explains what the thrust of its purpose is all about. The author, associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown College, PA, has a special purpose in writing this creative study-book: to make plain how the Christian faith "relates to the chief moral issue of our time—the nuclear arms race and the dreadful prospect of a nuclear war." The book is a strong challenge to the individual Christian to be better informed about the present arms race, to become an active follower of the Prince of Peace, and to act daily as a Christian witness for the realization of a peaceful world.

This book impressed me not only by its abundance of factual material on the need of actual disarmament, but also by the Christian motivation which it provides for supporting—through the church and other organizations engaged in peacemaking—a world-wide witness.

This religious undergirding makes for a study-book which has grouped in an easy-to-read style eight chapters with questions for discussion, a set of appendices, scripture and general index, and a "Christian peace shelf" for suggested extra reading. I am enthusiastic about *Facing Nuclear War* and highly commend it as a timely guide for use in local churches of all denominations. □ **Stanley I. Stuber Wyckoff, NJ**

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