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REPORT from the CAPITAL



SENATE HEARS BAPTIST TESTIMONY



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REPORT from the CAPITAL

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

Vol. 39, No. 3

March, 1984

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Cover: James Dunn, BJC executive director (top, r) and James Draper, SBC President (bottom, c) testified before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations at hearings on the nomination of William A. Wilson as ambassador to the Roman Catholic Church.

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Religious Liberty Day, 1984

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

The Hebrews chapter cites examples of faith in motion, people carrying with them into the uncertainties of life the assurances of their past experiences with God and the determination to be led by God into new experiences. This takes place in a world Harvey Cox calls a "lived world, ... the world of human decision and dependencies, the interlocking sphere of hope and frustrations, the social world, the cultural world ... the world as the Bible sees it."

Another religious thinker wrote of this world, "Its redemption comes from God, from the fact of the crucified and sacrificed God." Christ rejected the temptation of the kingdoms of this world, "but Christian people in history have yielded to that temptation." He says "Society has two aims, cooperation, the common effort of men in the struggle, and community, the union of men." We become part of that magnificent Hebrews community through lives that witness to "redemption as first and foremost the reconciliation of man to God the Creator."

James Dunn writes in emphasizing the 1984 Religious Liberty Day observance: "Religious liberty is a gift of God not an accident of the social contract." His comment also aims at the heart of church state relations, the concern of this issue of REPORT.

We seek to contribute to the understanding of what it is to be in God's world, in America at this time in history. We're led to examine church-state relations as an expression of our faith and God's purposes. Questions are raised of those who speak in behalf of a new Christian theocracy in the belief that the "founding fathers" had that in mind when they gave the nation its constitution and the people the protection of the Bill of Rights. Is not the purpose of the First Amendment that of preserving a just political system while protecting sacred freedoms for all citizens?

Alfred Tate points out that religious conviction (its diverse loyalties) contributes to the potential for conflict. Thus, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof ... " But *disestablishment*, he writes, does not mean the nation was not founded on faith; the intended result was not to be a secular system but a *desecularized* one.

There is danger, continues Eugene Crow, in confusing the nation's "founding fathers" of the 17th century (theocratic-minded Puritans) with the "constitutional fathers" of the 18th century (influenced by Enlightenment philosophy and by Biblical truth).

In an extended review/essay, Everett Goodwin examines two books by John Whitehead whose theses question church-state separation as a purpose of the Constitution. He says separation is an "illusion" and issues the call for the "Second American Revolution"—founded upon the Bible to bring about what he believes was in the mind of the Constitutional fathers—states rights, Christian Biblical values, and continuing prosperity. He wants a return to a federal government that observes its "constitutional limit". □

Victor Tupitza

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 9-1 to report favorably the nomination of William A. Wilson as ambassador to the Vatican. Despite that vote, BJCPA executive director James M. Dunn declared that the issue is far from settled.

"The struggle against placing an ambassador at the Holy See has only begun," Dunn said. "The vote in the Foreign Relations Committee did not come as a surprise and constitutes the opening skirmish rather than the main battle."

In addition to the full Senate vote on the nomination, appropriations committees on both sides of Capitol Hill were yet to decide on interim funding for the new Vatican embassy.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., the lone member of the Foreign Relations Committee to vote against the nomination, cited his long-held opposition to such a move. Despite his high regard for Wilson as a "treasured friend," Helms said "I just cannot bring myself to vote for any ambassador to the Holy See." •

A high ranking State Department official's assessment that sending an ambassador to the Vatican would allow the U.S. "to influence the political positions" of the Holy See has drawn sharp criticism from a Baptist church-state specialist.

BJC executive director James M. Dunn took strong exception to remarks by Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth W. Dam before a House appropriations panel considering a request to reprogram fiscal 1984 funds for a full diplomatic mission to the Vatican.

"For the State Department to seek a relationship allowing the U.S. to influence the political positions of the Holy See reflects an arrogant and blatantly violative posture," Dunn charged. "The very idea that we would enter this relationship announcing in advance that we intend to attempt to shape the political positions of the Roman Catholic Church is contrary to everything we mean by separation of church and state." •

As the U. S. Senate neared a long-awaited debate on his proposed constitutional amendment to restore oral prayer to public school classrooms, President Reagan called on lawmakers "to reaffirm that voluntary school prayer is . . . a basic right of our people."

At the outset of a televised news conference Feb. 22, Reagan identified school prayer as one of three issues "at the top of the domestic agenda" for the immediate future. The others were crime and budget deficits.

Noting that the Senate was about to consider school prayer proposals, the president reminded lawmakers that "a huge majority of Americans favor restoring this long-cherished tradition of religious freedom." He continued: "I urge the Senate to reaffirm that voluntary school prayer is, indeed, a basic right of our people, and I hope the House will follow suit."

Besides the president's measure, whose primary Senate sponsor is Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., a separate proposed amendment by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, is also pending on the Senate calendar. And Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr., R-Tenn., long an advocate of school prayer, reportedly is ready to push his own amendment. •

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

Americans find the issue of the proper role of religion in politics perennially troubling. The United States has no established church to place its imprimatur on public policy. This is so much a fact of our national life, that it represents an experiment in governance unique in Western history which is often overlooked. Overlooked in turn is the way religious freedom creates a potential for conflict that each generation of Americans must sustain if government by consent of the governed is to work.

The religious freedom provision in the Constitution of the United States should be seen for the extraordinary innovation it was. The weight of thousands of years of tradition was overturned in the relatively brief span between 1661, when the last Quaker was hung on Boston Common, and November 3, 1791, when the First Amendment went into effect.

Mr. Tate is a member of the editorial board of *Forum*, magazine of the Ripon Society. This article was edited for length and used by permission of *Ripon Forum* and the author.

Four Fundamental Tenets

The disestablishment of religion in the United States is by no means the same as saying this nation was not founded on faith. The system of government devised by the Republic's founders to accommodate both the reality of the religious pluralism prevalent in the Thirteen Colonies and the democratic ideal emergent from these movements in religious and political thought is embodied in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. In these documents may be found the outlines of the very real and positive faith on which the experiment in government of, by and for the people Lincoln called "the last, best hope of earth" is based. While any statement of the essentials of this faith will be inevitably oversimple and reductive, the historian of religion in America, Sidney Mead, has identified four fundamental tenets on which our system rests.

The first is the existence of God. The God in whom the founders professed to believe is one of will and purpose. This God is the maker of heaven and earth, the guide and sustainer of history, and the final judge of the actions of individuals.

Second is belief in "the people." This concept transcends all historical individuals and groups. It stands for the whole of human life understood as the finite medium or vehicle God uses to achieve His infinite purposes. The voice of the people is thus the voice of God, although not in any simple or immediate way. As radical monotheists, the founders insisted no individual or group, majority or minority, politician, preacher or church, could claim to speak for God.

A third tenet of the faith our system is founded on is the belief that the will of the people can provide our surest clue to the will and purpose of God only when all channels of communication and expression are kept open and accessible to all.

Underlying these sentiments is the fourth tenet of the faith on which our system is founded: the acceptance of conflict as not only unavoidable, but as

a necessary part of the democratic process. Jefferson is his "Act for Establishing Religious Freedom" in Virginia said he believed "that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapon, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them."

Two corollaries follow from this notion that the free conflict of opinions is the heart of the democratic process. The first is that each individual has the responsibility to contend for the truth as he or she sees it. The concept of freedom at work here is not a negative one holding that since anyone's opinion is as good as anyone else's all should be permitted free expression. Rather, it is the positive contention that the relative merits of differing positions or options will only emerge if all are openly and candidly debated and compared.

A second corollary is that the conditions which make conflict possible must be preserved if the democratic process is to continue to function. That is to say, in order to maintain the essential conflict itself, the government may find it necessary—as the servant of all the people—to use its power either to ensure the continued existence of a minority threatened with extinction at the hands of the majority, or to preserve the system itself from a minority which would disrupt its functioning. The economic, political and religious rights of minorities must be protected, not only because the majority on any issue may well be in the wrong, but because unless the right to dissent is preserved, the rights of all are jeopardized. "In a free government the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights," Madison wrote in the fifty-first *Federalist* paper. "It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other in the multiplicity of sects."

From this perspective, the system of checks and balances and the distribu-

The economic, political and religious rights of minorities must be protected, not only because the majority on any issue may well be in the wrong, but because unless the right to dissent is preserved, the rights of all are jeopardized.

tion of powers contained in the Constitution may be seen to be intended to ensure that the conflict that is in democracy is both productive of creative compromise and protected from being extinguished by either an overzealous majority or a disruptive minority. To function successfully, this system does not depend on the goodness of all or even a majority of the people. On the contrary, it rests on a realistic evaluation of the limited and selfish nature of each of us.

Democracy's Tension

Religious freedom has been a source of tension in this country from the very beginning. Without an established church in the United States for the first time in Western history the demands of good citizenship can be at odds with the demands of faith. This tension can arise in any area of life at any time. It occurs, to cite an obvious example, when the government's mandate to provide for the common defense is interpreted to require means—the draft or the possession and potential use of nuclear weapons, for example—which run counter to the scruples of certain religious denominations or sects. In an imperfect world no one can reasonably deny the need for an adequate defense establishment. At the same time, neither can anyone reasonably deny the seriousness and sincerity of those who on religious grounds espouse pacifism or object to the development and deployment of certain types of weapons. Good citizens can find themselves on both sides of these questions, as they do with regard to abortion, school prayer and many other issues. The genius in our system lies in its comprising a process by which such

value conflicts can be worked out.

The authors of the Constitution and Bill of Rights devised a government by law rather than men—including themselves—a system the processes of which even their own ideas could not capture. The revolution they effected was from a rule by coercion to a rule by persuasion, and they did it the only way it could have been done, by submitting themselves to that rule. They were democrats, not theocrats or self-proclaimed messiahs.

Similarly, the system of government they devised has been said to be "atheistic," "godless," and more recently attacked as "secular-humanist." It is none of these, but again such charges are beside the point. They confuse the faith stance of the individuals occupying the offices of government, which may be representative of any of the over 1000 organized religious groups in this country, with the democratic process itself, which is neutral to the idiosyncracies and vagaries of these groups. The United States is a republic; it is nobody's version of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Ours is not a secular system, but it is a de-sectarianized one. It is founded on the dual conviction that no individual or group of individuals speaks for God, and, at the same time, that under God truth and right are not matters ultimately decided by majority vote. It is this conviction—this faith—that obligates the majority to protect the right of the minority to be heard while at the same time requiring the minority to respect the integrity of the process to which its voice is essential. Without this faith, democracy degenerates into demagogic mobocracy. □

Establishment by Definition

The First Amendment requires that Congress "make no law respecting an establishment of religion" and the Supreme Court correctly pointed out that it is possible to take actions which are "respecting an establishment of religion" even if the act itself falls short of establishment.

Any definition of "church" by the Congress, at the very least, is an act "respecting" and, in all probability, is in itself an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

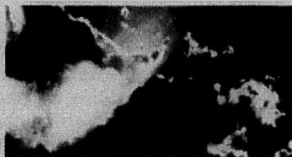
Let me explain. America's religious heritage is one of pluralism. The great diversity of religion in America makes it impossible to devise a definition of "church" which would fit all religious organizations. If, however, Congress attempts to draw up a definition it declares that all religious organizations which do not fit into the confines of the definition are not churches. In other words, Congress would have expressed a preference for a particular form of church. That is establishment of religion pure and simple. The Congress must not be led onto the slippery slope of deliberately violating the plain language of the Constitution.

I would like to suggest that nothing be done that even smacks of establishment. Leave it to the Federal courts to determine on a case-by-case basis whether an organization which claims to be a church is in fact a church. Do not make an unconstitutional attempt to define "church." □

Fred Schwengel

Statement of Fred Schwengel to the staff of the Senate Finance Committee, relative to their proposal to define "church." He is a former U.S. Congressman from Iowa and a member of Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, DC.

MY FAITH
VOLUNTARY AND OBEDIENT



**Observe Religious
Liberty Day • June 1984**

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs
Washington, DC

The First Amendment built "a wall of separation between Church and State."—Thomas Jefferson

VIEWS OF THE WALL

John W. Baker



The Amtrack to Philadelphia moves steadily through empty woods, snow-covered fields, and across frozen rivers. In this gray and white world there is little to see which attracts one's attention. It is a good time for thinking about church-state relations.

At 9:30 this morning oral argument on *Bender, et al. v. Williamsport Area High School, et al.* will be held before a three judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia. How these arguments go will have a major impact on how this court rules on the question of equal access to school facilities for all non-school-sponsored groups of secondary students.

Last month this page was devoted to an equal access "fact sheet" which was drawn up for use in trying to influence Congress to pass the Hatfield/Bonker equal access bill. The case being argued today could make the passage of Hatfield/Bonker either easier or nearly impossible. If this court holds that meetings of student-initiated, student-controlled religious groups in a limited open forum are constitutional, a number of members who have hesitated out of constitutional concern might well vote for Hatfield/Bonker. However, if the court holds that such meetings are forbidden by the establishment clause of the First Amendment, Hatfield/Bonker also probably would be unconstitutional.

In its brief *amicus curiae* in the case, the Baptist Joint Committee argued that *Williamsport* is a free exercise of religion case rather than an establishment clause case. It will be interesting to see what the oral presentations stress. We have received word that the court has permitted an *amicus curiae* supporting the appellants position (opposed to equal access for religious groups) to have fifteen minutes to argue its point of view.

After today's arguments we will have to wait for several months for the decision. In the meantime a multitude of church-state cases are pending.

I wonder why there are so many church-state cases cropping up these days. When I joined the staff of the Joint Committee nearly fifteen years ago, I was called on to draft the first *amicus* brief the Committee had filed in 22 years. Since that time the number of cases we have entered has increased

substantially and the total number of church-state cases which have been filed across the country is staggering.

There is usually no connection between those who file the many cases and there certainly is not any anti-church conspiracy in this country. However, there does seem to be a wave of anti-clericalism washing over us. Is it a reaction to the tremendous degree of exposure that some electronic media preachers have gotten? Is it the result of churches and ministers claiming the rights they have under the Constitution? Are there other explanations? I wish I knew.

However, I do know something about some of the church-state cases which are currently pending in the courts. One of the attorneys who will be arguing for the students in *Williamsport* today was in Los Angeles yesterday arguing before a state appeals court that a minister may not be sued for "clergy malpractice" because one of the people whom he counseled later committed suicide.

Last Sunday I conferred with attorney William B. Ball, who is counsel for one of the Christian Schools in Nebraska which is under fire from the state. Ball is optimistic about the ultimate outcome in Nebraska, but many church dollars will be spent in obtaining a determination the churches can live with. This case could well go to the Supreme Court.

The counsel for the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home has challenged the Internal Revenue Service's regulations which say that the Home is not an integrated auxiliary of the state convention. The IRS so ruled despite the facts that the operation of the Home is a part of the religious ministry of the Baptist state convention and that the home neither directly nor indirectly takes public money in carrying out the ministry. This suit challenges the entire set of IRS regulations dealing with integrated auxiliaries.

These are four different types of plaintiff-respondent cases. In one a private party has sued a minister. In another a group of students has sued a unit of local government to keep it from limiting their religious liberty. In still another a church has gone to court against the State of Nebraska. Finally, a Baptist convention's children's home has had to assert its rights against the

federal government. Religious liberty is at risk from all sides.

The conductor has announced that we will arrive in Philadelphia in three minutes. These musings will continue when the arguments are over and the train has left to get me home.

The Washington-bound train is crowded. The fog is so dense that even the trees along the tracks are hardly visible. The airports from New York to Washington are closed down.

However, there was nothing foggy about the way the court handled the argument in *Williamsport*. The presiding judge, Judge Adams, has written extensively on the First Amendment and sits on most of the Third Circuit cases in which that Amendment is at issue. His questions as well as those of the other two judges showed they had done their homework on the case.

They were particularly interested in the problems of school sponsorship and the ages of the students who would be involved in the religious clubs. Specifically, they asked about the role of the teacher who had to be present when the club met. If the teacher had any active role, that would be an indication of state sponsorship. They appeared to be satisfied with the response that the teacher had served as a monitor and not a sponsor: she had taken the roll and then sat at the rear of the room and graded papers.

The court's questions about the age and maturity of the students involved made clear that if elementary students were involved in religious clubs, they would have found this difficult to approve. It was my impression that the court was perhaps prepared to differentiate between elementary school children and secondary school students on the basis of their maturity.

All in all, things went as well as we could have hoped. It is not wise to second guess a court's decision, but I will do so anyway. I think the free exercise of religion rights of the secondary students will be sustained.

The train is due to arrive in Washington's Union Station in three minutes. It has been a long, foggy, tiring twelve hour day. But it has been a good day. The optimism I feel about *Williamsport* makes me feel very hopeful about the other cases which I mentioned earlier. We will just have to be patient. □

Christian America?

Setting the Record Straight



R. Eugene Crow

American Protestant Christianity has long perpetuated the myth that America began as a Christian nation and had drifted from this pristine position. While this really is a myth, it is more than the product of the imagination of Protestant leaders. It is the result of several factors. First, it was produced by confusing the founding fathers of the early seventeenth century with the constitutional fathers of the late eighteenth century. The founding fathers of New England were Christians who came to set up Christian commonwealths, which are classed as theocracies. The constitutional fathers were quite secular.

Second, Christian thought profoundly affected America in its formative period. Even Thomas Jefferson, who was quite secular, was influenced by Scottish theologians more than by English philosophers as was once supposed. Furthermore, because higher education was a church function until the mid-nineteenth century the country's educational system was influenced in its early stages by Christians. Early public school teachers, when college trained, were trained in Christian schools. Today's secular education is a departure from Protestant dominated and influenced education.

However, though it was greatly influenced by Christians, America never was a Christian nation. The American nation at the time of the end of the Revolution had not more than 10 percent of its citizens enrolled as church members. At the end of World War I this number had swelled to 40 percent. It was not until after World War II that church membership included 66 percent of the population.

What is the point of all this? It is just a reminder that calls to restore our nation to a Christian nation are based upon fantasy not reality. Furthermore,

Dr. Crow is the executive minister of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania-Delaware. This editorial appeared in *American Baptist*—Pennsylvania-Delaware news section.

it should be a reminder that it is our business to live out a Christian witness in a pluralistic society where an effective witness is based upon respect for other people's convictions and their rights to hold them. It is not to be achieved by triumphing over other religious groups.

Last, but not least, it is a reminder that Christian efforts to impose distinctively Christian practices or convictions upon an unwilling society in the name of restoring our Christian heritage are not based upon a sound knowledge of our American history. Such efforts are always counterproductive—they stir resentment and rebellion.

Christians in America have a great stake in the state which protects any religious group from oppression by another and which remains neutral in religious questions so that there is freedom for all. Our Baptist tradition was formed by fighting the oppression of state-supported religion in England, on the European continent, and in colonial America. Our best witness is not made by attempting to use the government in any form to further religion—rather it is made by a loving and courageous ministry of Christian service and outreach in a free society. □

FREE! Religious Liberty Packet

MY FAITH

Religious Liberty Day—June 1984

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What mean these Testimonies Deut. 6:20

BAPTISTS OPPOSE AMBASSADOR: 1951

In December, 1951, the Baptist Joint Committee issued the following statement opposing President Truman's action to appoint a U.S. ambassador to the Vatican.

"... We deplore this proposal, because it will assuredly precipitate throughout the United States an outbreak of strife and bitterness between American Roman Catholics and Protestants ...

We are gravely disturbed, because this proposed appointment has injected a highly controversial, dangerously divisive issue into American life ...

We consider this ... relationship with the Vatican as a repudiation of the historic American principle of separation of church and state.

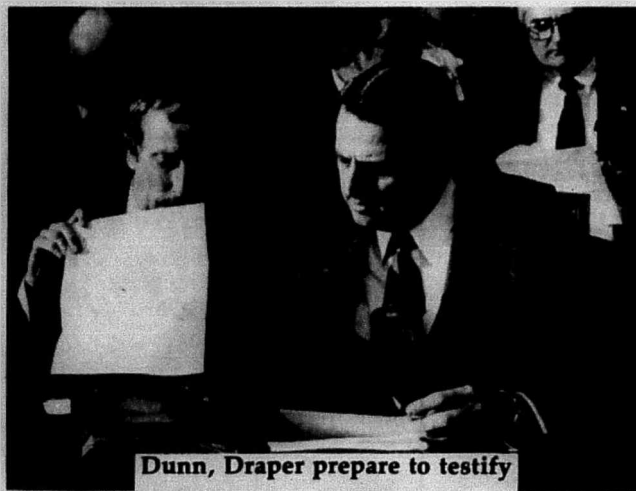
We denounce this proposed appointment as a violation of the American system which guarantees equal treatment of all religions, because it gives a preferential status to one religious group in the United States.

We call upon the President ... to withdraw his appointment of an Ambassador to the Vatican. In the event that he does not withdraw it, we call upon the Senate to preserve the American system and principle of religious liberty for all and to safeguard the equality of all religious groups in the United States by refusing to ratify and confirm such an appointment."

Divisive, preferential, unconstitutional: the same reasons in 1951 are the same answers to the same issue in 1984. President Reagan, like President Truman, should reconsider; the 98th Congress, like the 82nd, should be prepared to reject an ambassador to any church. □

Gary McNeil

News in Brief



Dunn, Draper prepare to testify

Rush to confirm met by stiff Baptist opposition

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs was among the broad range of religious and civil liberties groups protesting what they described as a rush by the Senate to confirm William A. Wilson as ambassador to the Vatican, when a Foreign Relations Committee member pledged to put the brakes on the process, at least temporarily.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., announced at Wilson's confirmation hearing before the Subcommittee on European Affairs he would ask Foreign Relations Committee chairman Charles Percy, R-Ill., to delay an expected Feb. 7 vote by the full committee on the nomination. Helms' action would put off a vote at least until Feb. 21, the next business session of the full committee. Helms indicated he would consider putting an additional hold on the nomination beyond that date if the perception persists that issues involved in the dispute over sending an ambassador to the Vatican have not been adequately aired.

Helms' announcement came as Southern Baptist Convention president James T. Draper Jr. and Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs executive director James M. Dunn joined representatives of virtually every U.S. Protestant group in presenting a unified front against full diplomatic ties with the Vatican. In addition to the religious groups, the American Civil Liberties

Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State also testified at the hearing against the action.

Helms had been listed in September by Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., as a co-sponsor of his legislation passed by the Senate as a rider to a State Department authorization bill which lifted an 1867 ban against funding of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. However, during his remarks at the hearing, Helms declared he had never supported establishment of full diplomatic ties with the Vatican. Also, on Jan. 26, Lugar removed Helms' name from the list of co-sponsors of legislation.

Draper told the panel chaired by Lugar there "are probably few issues on which Southern Baptists are so unified as this one," saying they are "disturbed that a particular church will have a special relationship with our government, that a representative from one denomination will have access to the President in a way that no other religious body does."

The Eules, Texas pastor said Southern Baptists are also "disturbed by the divisive effect this action will have in the country by favoring one religious body over all others."

The SBC president expressed further concern that reversal of the 116-year-old policy against U.S. diplomatic ties with the Vatican had reached the confirmation stage of sending an ambassador to the Holy See and "to this point, no congressional panel has asked to hear from the public on the desirability or even constitutionality of such a move."

Helms acts to continue Vatican debate

The fate of the President's appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican may depend on what Baptists and other groups opposed to the action do in the next few weeks, Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., told Baptist Press.

Draper and the other witnesses "had a good point," Helms said. He added that while he agrees with opponents of sending an ambassador to the Vatican, he emphasized he has no quarrels with Wilson.

His action, Helms said, has already resulted in calls from the White House urging him not to delay the confirmation. But Helms insisted it was "a mistake" for the administration to make the nomination and there is "no urgency" to speed the matter through the Senate without hearing from opponents of the move.

The "bottom line," Helms said, is that "I am going to try to give them (opponents of full diplomatic ties with the Vatican) enough time" to have their constituency contact elected officials. □

Draper cited numerous Southern Baptist Convention and state Baptist convention actions opposing the move.

"I hope the virtually unanimous Baptist opposition to diplomatic relations with the Roman Catholic Church will not go unnoticed by this Committee, and I urge you to postpone confirming any ambassador to the Vatican until there have been full hearings on the constitutionality and necessity of any such move," he concluded.

Appearing on an earlier panel, Dunn underscored Draper's concern over the fast pace of congressional action on the Vatican issue.

The Senate, Dunn charged, "has behaved in a manner unworthy of its sacred trust in its hurry to appoint an ambassador to the Pope."

The Baptist Joint Committee chief executive said the move to establish official relations with a church not only violates separation of church and state mandated by the First Amendment but would be a "burdensome albatross" on American missionaries overseas by raising the possibility that such workers are agents of the U.S. government.

Another Southern Baptist minister, Robert L. Maddox, newly elected head of Americans United, declared the move would violate the no establishment clause of the First Amendment because the Holy See is a religious entity.

While one Catholic organization representative testified in favor of an ambassador to the Vatican, Maddox and ACLU witness John W. Swomley highlighted concerns expressed by other

Catholic leaders that the proposed diplomatic ties could be used by U.S. administrations to influence positions of the U.S. Catholic bishops.

Other witnesses opposing sending an ambassador to the Vatican were Robert P. Dugan Jr. of the National Association of Evangelicals, Bert Beach of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Gaston Gogdell of the Church of Christ, and Dean Kelley of the National Council of Churches.

After the hearing, Dunn urged Baptists to contact their elected representatives.

"We've never had a more clear cut challenge to the principle of separation of church and state," he said. "Only if hundreds of thousands of citizens phone and write their Senators and Congressmen will we have a chance to stop this flagrant violation."

Further consideration of the Vatican issue is scheduled Feb. 9 in the House of Representatives where an appropriations subcommittee will consider the State Department's request to reprogram fiscal 1984 funds to pay for the new Vatican relations. In addition to considering the reprogramming request, the committee is expected to hear from the Baptist Joint Committee and other groups opposed to the establishment of formal diplomatic ties with the Vatican. □

Larry Chesser

Baptist school gets Amish, Mennonite aid

LINCOLN The National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom and the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. have filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Nebraska Supreme Court to support the Bible Baptist Church School in Nebraska in its fight against state regulation.

The school is one of several fundamentalist schools in the state that are opposing regulation by state authorities.

Church-state attorney William Ball of Harrisburg, PA., who is handling the case for Bible Baptist Church, is attempting to persuade the state supreme court that the issue does involve federal constitutional questions and should be heard on that basis.

The joint brief of the Amish and Mennonite groups was submitted by

attorney William O'Connor of Hammond, Ind., who says that "not a single expert of national standing was presented to the trial court on the issue of a compelling state interest in teacher certification" in 1981. □

Churches reject city revenue proposal

WILLIAMSPORT

An ecumenical organization has rejected a proposal by Williamsport, PA officials that churches make contributions to the city in lieu of taxes.

The executive council of the United Churches of Lycoming County rejected by a 16-1 vote the city proposal that churches make a contribution equal to one-eighth of one percent of the taxable value of their properties.

The ecumenical group expressed the fear that "a voluntary service payment can eventually become a mandatory tax and that the power to tax is the power to control and destroy." □

Baker says Senate will consider social agenda

WASHINGTON

President Reagan's early-year push for controversial legislation dealing with school prayer, tuition tax credits and abortion got a boost from senate majority leader Howard H. Baker, Jr. when the Tennessee Republican told reporters all of these issues will come to the floor during this session of Congress.

Baker told reporters the prayer amendment will be the first of a list of measures requested by the White House to be considered by the full Senate, probably late this Spring. Abortion, tuition tax credits and line item veto measures asked for by Reagan will also come to the Senate floor.

With two constitutional amendments on school prayer on the Senate calendar, Baker introduced a third proposal (S.J. Res. 218). His measure would protect "the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer." □

SBC experts disagree with hunger report

ATLANTA

Southern Baptist hunger experts criticized findings of President Reagan's Task Force on Hunger Assistance, labeling the commission's report biased and out of sync with the condition of poor people in America.

"It makes me wonder who they listened to," said Nathan Porter, national domestic hunger consultant for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He added reports from Southern Baptist home missionaries and volunteers who work with the poor "show this committee has not been exposed to what's really happening." □

Interfaith body asks support for displaced

WASHINGTON

Washington-based religious bodies expressed concern over the displacement and uprooting of El Salvadorans and are calling for support of a measure requiring the President to examine security and humanitarian conditions.

The interdenominational Washington Inter-faith Staff Council (WISC) opposes a bill before Congress which also temporarily suspends the deportation of Salvadorans currently in the United States.

An estimated 20 percent of the Salvadoran population alone has been displaced in the past few years, both inside and outside the country. Recent reports by churches, human rights groups and the State Department have indicated that the conditions—physical needs and safety—are among the most compelling in the world. □

Maddox new AU head

SILVER SPRING

Robert L. Maddox, speechwriter and religious liaison for former President Jimmy Carter, has been elected executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Maddox, currently pastor of Mayfield Road Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, assumes his new post on March 1, 1984.

Americans United, founded in 1947, exists to "defend, protect and preserve religious liberty and its corollary, separation of church and state." □

ILLUSION TO REVOLUTION

Restoring: Christian Predominance Moral Principles Continuing Prosperity



John Whitehead has of late become a chief spokesman for the favorite issues of the American religious right. More specifically he is an articulate polemicist for a politically militant portion of the religious right which has been identified as the "Theonomy" movement, or "Christian Reconstruction." One does not read far into his work without discovering both an acknowledged thanks and an intellectual debt to such other reconstructionists as Francis Schaeffer, R. J. Rushdoony and Gary North. Like them, Whitehead sounds the alarm of failed moral foundations in America which will result in judgment and doom for America. Both books call for a "second Revolution" which will restore America to stern moral principles and continuing prosperity.

The first thing any reader should know about both works is that they are books about politics. They use history, constitutional law, theology and economics, but they use these things to describe a political platform and a strategy to accomplish it. Whitehead wants us to know that "secular humanists have declared a war on Christianity in this country—and are making great strides toward victory." (*Revolution*, p. 19) But his concern is not much focused upon a need for spiritual preparedness for eternity. Instead, he fears that victory for secular humanism will lead to the destruction of more tangible rewards: prosperity and freedom. It is this loss (in the manner of the collapse of Rome or the rise of a Hitler from moral confusion) that Whitehead fears, and against which revolution should be mounted.

Dr. Goodwin is pastor of First Baptist Church, Washington, D.C. His book, *The Magistry Rediscovered: Connecticut 1636-1818*, was published in 1981. Articles and book reviews written by him have appeared in religious and university publications.

THE SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By John W. Whitehead, Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1982 and

THE SEPARATION ILLUSION

By John W. Whitehead, Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1983.

The first of the two books, *The Separation Illusion*, was published in 1977, but has been most recently reprinted in 1983. The book is itself an illusion. Its purported thesis is a discussion of the First Amendment in light of the issue of prayer in the public schools. But its real focus is more partisan: the threat of federal government and power to the "Christian" instincts of the local community. In his basic thesis, Whitehead agrees with fellow theonomist Gary North who boldly asserts "We built this country on a biblical law structure and the secularists are stealing it away from us." This lament over lost Christian predominance merges quickly into a diatribe against governmental decision-making, and then into a rather confused discussion about the assumptions involved in the U.S. Constitution. Along the way his villains are: Freud (and Freudian literature), liberationists, Marxists, abolitionists and the Supreme Court.

That is correct: abolitionists! While a lot of elements made up the gradual deterioration of Christian predominance, Whitehead sees the Reconstruction period after the Civil War as the greatest moment of destruction for Christian "civil liberties." It happened as a result of a radical Congress which "at the point of a bayonet" developed a notion of unassailable federal authority which would, henceforth, feel free to dabble in States' politics. By Whitehead's analysis, the Congress had to undo the "agreement with Hell" which was the U.S. Constitution (a "Christian" document!) and to write the Fourteenth Amendment to guarantee

equality for the freed slaves. By substituting due process for states' rights, the federal government "nationalized" the Constitution and deprived states and their citizens of their freedoms. John C. Calhoun still lives!

In short, Whitehead sees a "Golden Era" when the Bill of Rights was a restriction on federal government, and a period of "The Fall" when the Bill of Rights became a restriction on State governments. The result, he argues, is a "highly centralized, octocean bureaucratic system." It is no longer America, but "post-America" we live in. Having thus described our pitiable condition, Whitehead attempts to describe how things were intended to be, and how we should return to them.

One problem he faces is the looming presence of Jefferson in the Constitution. Jefferson was not a Christian. (Indeed, Whitehead's spiritual forebears would happily have run him out on a rail during his Presidency.) But here, not surprisingly, Whitehead shows tolerance. He points out that Jefferson admired Jesus, published a book on Jesus' moral teachings (later known as *The Jefferson Bible*) and that Jefferson's views on religion were established on "overreaction to his aversion to the established Church of England and Puritan theocracy" (*Illusion*, p. 87). Indeed, Whitehead believes Jefferson later rethought his most radical position and in his Second Inaugural Address concluded that religious matters should be left to the "direction and discipline of the church or state authorities acknowledged by the several religious societies." (*Illusion*, p. 89)

Never mind that Jefferson's own record in Virginia was that of erecting a wall between church and state, Whitehead prefers to believe that Jefferson intended for each state to deal with religion as it saw fit. Thus, massive scholarship holds that Jefferson was consistent in his view that there

... Whitehead sees a "Golden Era" when the Bill of Rights was a restriction on federal government, and a period of "The Fall" when the Bill of Rights became a restriction on state governments. The result ... a "highly centralized, octocean bureaucratic system."

should ever be a wall between religion and both the state and federal governments. On the evidence of a single unclear remark in 1805, Whitehead wants to assert that in fact Jefferson would place the wall between the federal and state governments. He concludes, therefore, that the "First Amendment provides freedom for religion, not from religion" (*Illusion*, p. 91). He can then proceed to his ultimate conclusion:

The First Amendment was to ensure non-interference with the Christian religious freedom of the states. The Supreme Court, by ruling that state-directed prayer and Bible reading in the public schools are unconstitutional, has violated that amendment. The Court by patent misinterpretation of the Constitution acted illegally.

The remainder of the book pretends to trace the history of the removal of religion (i.e., Christianity) from the public schools, the removal of important functions for family life and the general turning away from God in American life. We live in a "post-America" and Whitehead believes that the end result is totalitarian trust in the government. He also prophesies the coming punishment of God's judgment. In fact, he suggests God is already judging America, and "little hope of a millenium remains in post-America" unless the system is Christianized once again. "It is," he says, "up to the Christian man to take charge of the cultural direction of the world." (p. 177)

In the *Second American Revolution* Whitehead reviews much of the philosophy presented in *The Separation Illusion*, but states more boldly the particulars of "taking charge of ... the world." Here he launches an assault on secular humanism and its ominous results: abortion, homosexuality, faith in technological progress and its companion, Darwinism, etc. With the future of Christian faith and our basic freedoms at stake, however, the church can no longer be silent, he argues: "it is time to shed the naive idea that the modern humanistic state exists to perpetuate good government."

(*Revolution*, p. 145).

Whitehead has a plan, and it is clearly outlined in a chapter entitled "Plan for Action." First, the power of the federal government must eventually be broken down to its constitutional limit. Here Whitehead calls especially for the services of Christian lawyers to commit themselves to that result. Second, he urges aggressive behavior (including civil suits) by churches. The focus should be issues of recent high visibility: abortion, gay rights, local codes. Third, he believes that "the public education system, which includes the entire educational structure right up through the university level, must be re-instilled with the Judeo-Christian theism." (178) Fourth, he wants the churches to accept responsibility for the sick and the needy. The result would be to do away with the "massive federal government we have today."

Whitehead concludes that "we are at a very similar position to that of the colonists who congregated to declare their independence from Great Britain in 1776. They brought about a revolution." It is now time for another revolution, says the author—"a Second American Revolution founded upon the Bible in its totality."

The trouble with both books is that they are written as sermon-like legal briefs with familiar historical references as main arguments. And, like rhetorical sermons or weak briefs, they express as much opinion as fact. It is not that Whitehead is consistently wrong on all counts, it is that his interpretations are forced and at times irrelevant: The nation was heavily influenced by the "Judeo-Christian theism," but the Constitution was not so much a Christian product as a product of the Enlightenment—secular humanism's most potent example. Jefferson did admire Christ, but scoffed at any claim of divinity. Rome did crumble for want of moral purpose, and Hitler did arise, in part, from a time of moral and sociological disarray. These references serve a powerful rhetorical purpose, but leave a more criti-

cal eye baffled to understand their relevance.

Even in areas of topical concern (for example abortion) Whitehead wastes our time. Thoughtful people know that abortion raises difficult questions concerning our reverence for life; but he raises it as a banner to rally an assault on the evils of federal power. Indeed, it is at this point that Whitehead comes closest to revealing his real agenda: The problem with government is not that it is large. The problem is that it is not Christian. His revolution is not focused upon making America safe for Christians, but upon making America Christian—by law, by habit, and by purpose: "government is an institution divinely given to protect the good and punish the evil. As a ministry of God, government is prophetically to apply the gospel of Christ to its own sphere." (*Illusion*, p. 175) Aquinas could not say it better.

One is tempted to refute Whitehead's arguments legally, historically, and logically. Such an exercise is fruitless, however, because his purpose is not to be faithful to logic, history or the law, but to a concept of a reconstructed nation built on a biblical literalism and sustained by a presumption of holy purpose. It is a familiar theme in the American experience, begun and articulated best by the Puritans, and led down a number of destructive paths including Manifest Destiny, the varied disappointments of utopian communities, and evident especially in such bizarre and diverse charismatic leaders as Billy James Hargis and Jim Jones. It is theism carried to an inconsistent end: inconsistent with both the Bible and the best of American experience.

Ironically, Thomas Jefferson, who Whitehead would desperately like to claim for his cause, feared that left to its own, government would dabble in religion. What he feared even more was that religious leaders would always strive to dabble in government. It is frightening to realize that Whitehead has proved the sage of Monticello right once again. □

INTERNATIONAL DATELINE



Three human-rights groups call U.S. policy a failure

NEW YORK

Three human-rights groups have accused the Reagan administration of violating U.S. laws governing human-rights policy in foreign relations.

In a 107-page report entitled "Failure: The Reagan Administration's Human Rights Policy in 1983," the groups charge that "while acknowledging the legitimacy of the laws in principle, during the past two years the administration has stripped them of all force by violating their terms in practice whenever their application appeared inconsistent with the administration's overall policy objectives."

The three groups are the Helsinki Watch, founded in 1979, to promote compliance with the human-rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords; the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, a public-interest law center founded in 1975; and Americas Watch, founded in 1981 to promote

human rights in all countries of the Americas.

The report examined the administration's policy towards 23 countries "in which serious human-rights abuses have taken place" and concluded that not only did the administration generally fail to promote human rights there, but that "far more frequently, it damaged the human-rights cause."

The administration's policy failures also involve its refugee and asylum policies "which deny that people may be fleeing from persecution by governments of the right as well as the left," the report said. "As a result, according to the State Department, those fleeing El Salvador are seeking 'better jobs' while those leaving Kampuchea are escaping 'mindless brutality.'"

Paula Kuzmich, a State Department representative, said the department "categorically rejects the criticism" contained in the report. She said that "in general, this administration, the department and its Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs have pursued a vigorous human rights policy and placed human rights very much at the center of our endeavors." □

U.S. aides renew call for information on Wallenberg

U.S. diplomatic officials renewed calls on the Soviet Union to provide information on the fate of Raoul Wallenberg on the 39th anniversary of the Swedish diplomat's arrest by Soviet forces in Budapest, Hungary.

During World War II, Mr. Wallenberg was serving the Swedish government as an attaché in the Swedish Embassy in Budapest. He issued protective passports to some 20,000 Jews who claimed even the slightest ties to Sweden, sparing them deportation to Nazi death camps.

When Soviet troops invaded Hungary, they took Mr. Wallenberg into custody. Russian authorities first claimed the diplomat was killed in the invasion. But witnesses claim to have seen Mr. Wallenberg alive in Soviet prison camps as late as 1975. He would now be 71 years old.

Secretary of State George Shultz raised the subject at the Stockholm East-West Conference on Security in Europe, and noted that Congress made Mr. Wallenberg an honorary U.S. citizen in 1981. The Secretary of State declared that the Kremlin has a "moral

obligation to put to rest, once and for all, the questions that continue to arise about Raoul Wallenberg." □

Support for state church on decline in Norway

OSLO

A small majority of Norwegians responding to a recent poll want to keep the Lutheran Church of Norway as a state church, the church's information service here reported.

However, the percentage of those wanting to separate the church from the government has increased from 19 percent in 1979, to 30 percent in 1983, the church said.

During that same period the percentage of those supporting the idea of a state church declined from 59 percent to 54 percent, and those expressing no opinion on the matter declined from 22 percent to 16 percent.

In Norway, as in Sweden, the church is recognized by the state and there is a cabinet-level position for the government's minister of religion. Changes in church laws have to be approved by the Storting, the country's parliament. □

Lebanon church center reports high civilian deaths

METULLA, ISRAEL

Some 1,220 Christian civilians have been killed in inter-communal fighting in the Shouf mountain region since Israel withdrew its forces from the area late last summer, says Lebanon's Catholic Center for Information.

About 100 Lebanese Christian villages have been caught up in the fighting, which has destroyed 17,200 homes, made 185,000 Christians refugees and destroyed 85 religious institutions, including churches, convents and monasteries, the center reported.

The report lists former populations and the number of dead, missing and refugees for individual communities, some of which trace their Christian heritage to the time of the early Christians.

Most Christians in the region are Maronites, a branch of the Catholic Church which recognizes the authority of the pope, but follows its own ancient liturgy. Part of the Maronite Mass is said in Aramaic, the ancient language of the Holy Land. □

Sale of arms undermines U.N. embargo, AFSC charges

The United States has "quietly" permitted the sale of nearly \$30 million in arms technology to South Africa in violation of a United Nations arms embargo, according to a church investigating team.

A report released jointly by the Quaker-sponsored American Friends Service Committee and the church-backed Washington Office on Africa said the technology transfers were undermining the international embargo—adopted in 1977, with the support of the U.S.—on all "arms or related material" to white-ruled South Africa.

"The U.S. is sabotaging the international arms embargo by winking at U.S. companies' military exports to South Africa," said Thomas Conrad, who heads the Quaker agency's research team, called National Action-Research on the Military Industrial Complex. "The volume of this trade is much greater than has ever been reported," he said.

The State Department had no immediate reaction to the report. □



Tutu gets credit for saving lives of white mercenaries

CAPE TOWN

Strongly anti-apartheid Bishop Desmond Tutu saved the lives of five white mercenaries who had been sentenced to die for their involvement in an abortive coup on the Indian Ocean island of Seychelles in 1981.

Bishop Tutu, the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), made a direct plea to the Seychelles president, Albert Rene, to save their lives.

But only one of the five mercenaries, who have since been freed, bothered to thank Bishop Tutu afterwards.

The one exception, Martin Dolincheck, a former member of South Africa's top-secret intelligence service, now says the Anglican churchman played a major role in saving their lives. □

Colombian leftists free American missionary

MINNEAPOLIS

Russell M. Stendal, the Minneapolis-born missionary and farmer who was kidnapped by leftist guerrillas in Colombia on Aug. 14, has been released.

A newspaper in Bogota said the Stendal family paid a large ransom, but a representative of the U.S. Embassy in Bogota said he had no details about the release because of an agreement between the kidnappers and the Stendal family that there would be no publicity concerning it.

Mr. Stendal was released in early January and, according to an embassy representative, was in good condition and had not been harmed. Relatives said they believe he is now in the United States and may be visiting friends in a Christian community in Virginia. □

South African Churches to plan end to apartheid

CAPE TOWN

Churches in South Africa have recently begun preparations for a large-scale convention in 1986 aimed at finding ways to end apartheid peacefully.

A series of church discussions have been held following a call for the conference by the president of the South African Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Denis Hurley.

He pointed out that a number of major denominations, including the Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches, had urged the government to initiate a "national convention of all races to work out a new political dispensation for South Africa."

"But I cannot see the government doing that," Archbishop Hurley said. "Apartheid is a grievous problem for Christians and by and large there is no common approach to the problem. And when peace is broken or threatened by injustice, the Christian has a responsibility to work for peace."

He said the idea behind the proposal could best be described by "those haunting words that Jesus pronounced as he wept over Jerusalem: 'If only you had known the things that make for peace.'" □

Danes rebuff government over freedom to preach

COPENHAGEN

No government action will be taken concerning a Christmas eve sermon preached by a Church of Denmark pastor on national television.

The Rev. Birte Andersen said on Christmas eve that the current "peace" in western Europe is based on the force of arms, with the United States playing the role of the Roman empire.

Pastor Andersen also said that contemporary Europe is based on "hidden control, moral corruption, and hidden violence."

The government's religious affairs minister, Elsebeth Kock-Peterson ordered the pastor's bishop to look into the situation, but Lutheran Bishop Ole Bertelsen declined, saying, "I do not accept the claim of the government minister that she has the competence to decide on whether the limits of freedom of proclamation have been violated." □

NEWS-SCAN

The United States is not alone among nations taking steps toward diplomatic relations with the Vatican. "I cannot say when it will be possible to normalize relations, but I can say that negotiations on the subject are going well," reported **Cardinal Jozef Glemp**, Polish primate. He credits the recent trip of Pope John Paul II for improving the soil, believing the visit's "fruits will become ever more evident in the future." ... The Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms opposes any government regulation of guns. Who, then, should be surprised that their Christmas card to every member of Congress pictured a pistol wielding **Santa Claus** firing a pistol from his sled at a Soviet jet? Inside, the card opens to an exact opposite of the more widely quote Isaiah verse, the verse from Joel (3:10) which advises, "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning forks into spears." Perfectly in tune with the holidays, claimed the gun lobby's director, adding, that Joel was "more relevant to the day in which we're living." **Ron Sider**, noted Christian peace advocate responded with the observation that the "Joel passage is not relevant to us because it came before Christ's 'invitation to love our enemies.'" ... Israeli Druze leader **Zeidan Atashi** has a solution to the Lebanon problem. He is calling on the U.S. to pull its troops out of Lebanon to allow that country to "go on with a bloodbath." He explained his strategy: "So we'll have a bloodbath for one month, and then it will stop." Lebanon's rival factions will be killing each other off the day multinational forces leave the country. ... Defections among Ireland's **Jehovah's Witnesses** have risen to about one-quarter of the total 2215 active members. Witness dissidents frequently charge that the organization demands absolute obedience to the extent that it is damaging to the minds of followers. ... The Church of England's embarrassment over the break-up of clerical marriages has caused many wives to feel total rejection by ecclesiastical authorities. An independent report is suggesting that a full-time office with special responsibility be set up for divorced wives of clergymen. An action group, "broken rites" has been set up in advocacy of divorced clergy wives. □

CORRESPONDENCE

Vatican appointment

I am glad to know that you oppose President Reagan's appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican.

Many conservative churchmen campaigned loudly for Mr. Reagan. I remember one California clergyman in particular who addressed a meeting I attended—made a strong plea for our support, praising Mr. Reagan for picking strong people around him, and trusting their judgment. Well, this is one situation where he needs to listen to some other people!

I have written to my congressman and Senator, stating my position, and asking them to fight confirmation of this terrible move.... Don't forget that there are others like myself who believe in you and your principles.

James H. Lofton
Pineville, LA

I praise God for your stalwart efforts to maintain a constitutional separation of church and state in the U.S.

John V. Stevens, Sr.
Westlake Village, CA

You did an outstanding job in responding to the appointment of the ambassador to the Vatican... How glad I am to have an agency in Washington known for its stand in these kinds of concerns. Just the fact that the news media knows who you are says a great deal about the visibility of the BJC. You let them know of your close observations of the political processes when you carefully detailed how this particular measure had been "shoddily" slipped through Congress.

Robert Randolph
Heath Springs, SC

We in the American Baptist Churches of the Monroe Association want you to know of our continued interest and support in all you do on our behalf. Issues of religious liberty are still paramount in our scale of priorities.

Keep up the pressure on Capitol Hill! Let them know there are a lot of ornery Baptists "out there," who don't like what's happening. Thanks for all your efforts.

Carrol A. Turner
Rochester, NY

BIBLICAL ETHICS, from page 16

bedience within the context of subordination to government.

Is it ever appropriate for a Christian to use arms? Mott thinks so under two circumstances: in support of a just revolution and in an attempt to overcome injustice. However, use of arms must come as a last resort and represents "agonized participation" for a Christian. The final chapter focuses upon the possibilities of reform through politics for a better society. Mott insists

though, that Christians must not expect too much from politics. Essentially, the Christian must address those issues which modify power relations within society so that those without power have more control over their own lives.

The strength of Mott's book is its strong biblical base and its well thought out approach to effecting social change. No simple solutions are offered but a realistic hope prevades the book.

Those given to pacifistic thinking with regard to the use of arms will have trouble with Mott's perspective. No radical love ethic appears here. Rather the author is more in sympathy with Christian realism.

One weakness of the book is its failure to speak to a number of contemporary issues associated with race, sex, and class. It seems hard to justify writing a book on ethics and social change and not confronting today's major issues. Mott, perhaps, wanted to avoid controversy by avoiding these divisive issues. Such a tactic while frustrating, may in the long run give a more lasting quality to the book. This criticism should not take away from the value of the book as a worthy addition to the field of biblical ethics. □

D. Glenn Saul

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If obedience is not voluntary it has the hollow echo of blind submission. If voluntariness is not obedient it prompts the question, "free for what?"

REFLECTIONS

James M. Dunn
Executive Director



We thank Thee, Father, for the freedom to worship and to practice our faith as we see fit in this land."

It may be said more elaborately, contemporarily or theologically. It may come almost any time in the church service and from anyone who leads in prayer. It may slip past us without engaging the gears of our minds because it is so familiar. Yet, nothing is more universally a part of Baptist worship in this land than a sentence like the one at the top of this page.

In that simple prayer we admit that religious liberty is a gift of God not an accident of the social contract. We see the heavenly Father as the source of all good gifts and count freedom among them.

We affirm the goodness of free choice in matters of religion. That's quite a leap. Most folks act as if they want to escape from freedom. We may not realize what we're saying: "free to worship as we see fit," indeed! Retreat to a creedal statement, blind allegiance to an authoritarian preacher or church, unquestioning repetition of someone else's interpretation of scripture may be the easy way out.

Finally, in that plain prayer that pops up almost every time Baptists gather, we accept the responsibility that rides piggyback on every freedom. We may not have thought it through, but the faith that is voluntary is and must be obedient.

"My Faith: Voluntary and Obedient" is the theme for the 1984 observance of Religious Liberty Day in June. Hebrews 11:1 is the scripture: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

We know both sides of the faith kind of religion, the freedom and the faithfulness, the voluntary essential and the obedience necessary. If obedience is not voluntary it has the hollow echo of blind submission. If voluntariness is not obedient it prompts the question "free for what?" A free faith without obedience can be no more than an adolescent insistence on having one's own way.

Freedom and responsibility are set in dynamic, creative tension in the Christian life. We are free to fail but not free to fail to act. We are free to make mistakes because perfection is not our portion.

The vitality, the personality, the individualism, in a phrase the soul freedom in the Christian religion is not a rational capsule easily transferred from one brain to another. Faith is not the subjective experience alone but the very substance of Christianity.

A macho rationalism, a creedal reductionism of Christianity to "beliefs" is a deadening distortion of our Christian faith. Since New Testament times some believers have wanted their religion neatly nailed down and others like Paul have screamed "it is for freedom that Christ set you free." (Gal. 5:1) The struggle between these contradictory approaches is one "evidence of the things not seen." The faithful and the fearful still struggle.

Another evidence of the power of a faith not locked in to things seen is the roll call of the faithful who were willing to risk their lives on that which was hoped for but not realized. Hebrews lists Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Joseph, Moses, Rahab. Baptists today can list Roger Williams, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Martin Luther King, Jr. who perhaps more than any other American religious leaders have been used of God to change history by focusing on freedom. These three Baptist preachers, completely sold out to a faith voluntary and obedient, gave this country the world's first experiment in total religious liberty (Williams), the theological base for a social and economic revolution (Rauschenbusch) and the nation's change of heart about racial justice (King).

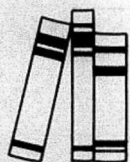
Another evidence of dedication to a faith genuinely voluntary is the way in which Baptists have consistently refused to permit government in any of its expressions to plan, lead, control, authorize or prescribe religious observances. Faith is voluntary. Baptists have also insisted that no tax dollars go to the support of religious institutions, not even our own. Aid to church schools whether direct or through parents develops a dependency on government, but true faith is voluntary.

In matters of secular governance Baptists have fought attempts to rob the federal courts of their power to safeguard civil and religious liberties. Some persons by tampering with the jurisdiction of the courts, court stripping, would allow the political mood of the moment to sweep aside constitutional guarantees. Baptists have also opposed a new constitutional convention which could run wild, toss up for grabs even the Bill of Rights.

Baptists have affirmed church-state separation as the only sensible way for government to recognize that faith is voluntary. One of the obvious results of the separation of church and state is the refusal of government to recognize one church or denomination, meddle in church life or effectively establish one as the favored church by sending an ambassador to one religion, ignoring all others.

A commitment to principle, the principle of faith that is voluntary, has been a golden thread binding together our fellowship. Religious Liberty Day is the time to reaffirm that basic belief. Several ways to do that are clear:

1. Preach on the biblical theme of freedom and responsibility.
2. Mark the day with a special prayer that "our land may long be bright with freedom's holy light."
3. See that the church library features books like J.M. Dawson's *Baptists and the American Republic*.
4. Involve the children in religious liberty explanations that they can understand.
5. Call on church members to register to vote in this election year. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.
6. Study current freedom issues with material provided by the Baptist Joint Committee.
7. Send an offering of letters to legislators at the state and/or national level reaffirming belief in the separation of church and state.
8. Display the poster available from the BJCPA.
9. Listen for someone to pray, "We thank Thee, Our Father, for the freedom that is ours . . ." And say, Amen. □



REVIEWS

BAPTIST LIFE AND THOUGHT: 1600-1980

William H. Brackney, Ed.,
Valley Forge, Penn.: Judson Press,
1983, 448 pp., \$22.50

Baptist *Life and Thought* is not a narrative of Baptist history, but rather is, as the subtitle indicates, "a source book," and this "in the spirit of documentary historians from Thomas Crosby and Morgan Edwards to the present," to quote the editor. Thus, it is not designed to "tell the story" as much as to provide primary sources which are illustrative of Baptist life and thought. In keeping with the purpose of encouraging scholarly research, each section concludes with helpful bibliographic essays by the editor. The format also reflects this, for the introductory and explanatory essays which sprinkle the book are kept brief, so that the bulk of space can be devoted to excerpts from primary documents.

Emphasis is given in each section to the unique or characteristic features of Baptist life during that era. Thus, the colonial period is seen in terms of the evolution of Baptist identity. The nineteenth century was a time of expansion. The years on either side of the turn of the century were characterized by sociological and economic shifts in the nation, which brought prosperity to some and evoked protest from others, both among the entire population and within Baptist ranks. The modern era has been one of increased change and growing diversity. Baptists have dealt with change and pluralism in various ways, becoming thereby diverse among themselves.

In addition to the different emphasis noted during the various eras, *Baptist Life and Thought* also underscores the presence of certain themes throughout American Baptist history. Church/State relations is one significant reoccurring theme. Others include piety, polity, evangelism/mission, and relations beyond denominational boundaries.

When viewed as a whole, the book gives a positive impression. Scholarship and expertise are clearly evident and the editors are to be commended for this significant publication. However, as is often the case with documentary histories, *Baptist Life and Thought* may be unexciting reading for

all but the most devoted Baptist historians. This difficulty is augmented by the use of small print for the various introductory paragraphs and by the choice of the editor not to update the spelling and punctuation of old documents.

Perhaps the biggest weakness of *Baptist Life and Thought*, however, lies in the choice of the title, which is broader than the focus of the contents. With the exception of the first section (England, 1600-1800), the book deals exclusively with the United States. A further narrowing occurs in sections four and five, in which the Northern/American Convention is featured. Passing mention is made of certain other bodies, but generally only in terms of their relationship to the ABC. It is obvious that a work of this type cannot deal with all facets of the Baptist movement, whether worldwide or simply in America, and therefore the editors are to be applauded for wisely avoiding such an endeavor. But given the focus of *Baptist Life and Thought*, the title promises more than the book delivers and the narrowed emphasis contained under the broad title hints at presumption.

Apart from these minor criticisms, *Baptist Life and Thought* is a welcomed addition to the growing body of literature dealing with our common heritage. It deserves a fair hearing and will fulfill its stated purpose of being a catalyst to further study. □

Stanley J. Grenz

BIBLICAL ETHICS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By Stephen Charles Mott, Oxford
University Press, 1982. \$6.95 paper.

Anyone looking for a conservative approach to the social implications of the Bible would do well to consider *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*. Mott, a professor of social ethics at Gordon-Cromwell Seminary, has written a well thought out and challenging

book which synthesizes biblical studies and ethics.

The first part of the book builds a biblical theology for social change with chapters on social evil, grace, love, justice, and the reign of God. Mott is particularly helpful on two fronts. After clearly spelling out the often overlooked reality of social evil, Mott then presents a biblical rationale which calls upon the church to be engaged in the battle against evil within the social structure.

A second valuable discussion shows the relationship between love and justice. Mott forcefully contends that love is the basis of justice and that to know God requires doing justice. Love may be the foundation of Christian ethics but justice is the norm for social behavior. The blending of these two themes helps avoid sentimentalizing the love command and restricting it to personal relationships only. Love is active as justice in the market place, according to Mott.

The second major division of the book deals with methods for bringing about social change. Mott considers methods that range from evangelism to armed revolt. One positive contribution is the call for an evangelism that results in action and compassion.

Another needed emphasis is the call for the church to be the major social structure through which Christians work for social change. In order for this to happen the church must be viewed as a counter community to its culture, and to be effective it must avoid becoming captive to its culture.

Civil disobedience as a strategy for social change is considered under the title of strategic noncooperation. Mott carefully qualifies the use of civil diso-

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Reviewers

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