

July 24, 1959

### Religious Unity Measure Gets Committee Approval

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Religious unity achieved by government sponsorship is aimed at by a Congressional resolution calling for an Interfaith Day the fourth Sunday of September each year. The resolution, introduced by Kenneth B. Keating (R., N. Y.), has been reported favorably without amendment from the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

Senate Joint Resolution 53 declares that "the fomenting of antagonism between Americans on a basis of sectarian creed is contrary to American traditions and to the spirit of the guarantee of freedom of worship embodied in the constitution of the United States."

Asserting that "it ought to be, and is hereby declared to be, the policy of Congress to encourage the mutual understanding of all people of good will," the resolution authorizes the President to call "on the people of the United States to observe such day" and to urge the participation of all Americans and all religious groups.

Commending the ecumenical movement, the resolution says that "the program of the interfaith movement offers a practicable means for encouraging such mutual understanding."

The resolution, when passed by both houses and approved by the President, becomes public law affecting the whole nation.

Since its introduction in the Senate in February, the resolution has been under criticism by several religious leaders. Questions have been raised as to whether or not it is the role of government to serve as "peacemaker among religious bodies." It has also been asked whether or not, in the interest of national unity, the government should attempt to "harness" the churches in its efforts against Communism.

Leon Macon, editor of the Alabama Baptist, expressed the view that such a resolution would be a reprimand of the churches by Congress and that it might "blunt the rights of religious groups to proclaim their message as they see it, and especially, in this case, to defend the principle of separation of church and state."

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### Drool, Man, This New Pool Is Cool!

PINEVILLE, La.--(BP)--Most popular spot on the Louisiana College campus here these hot summer days is the school's new \$30,000 swimming pool, which was opened July 16.

It is 77 feet long by 36 feet wide, making it regulation AAU size. This new swimming pool also includes surrounding concrete, dressing-room walkways; area and underwater lighting, and cyclone fencing.

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### Says RA Camping Part Of Church Recreation

MEMPHIS, Tenn.--(BP)--Frank Black, camping expert and staff member of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, will lead a church recreation conference the week of Aug. 20-26 at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, N. C.

Black, an assistant secretary, will tell ways Royal Ambassador camping can be used in a church recreation program.

Black, a former Mississippi Boy Scout executive, recently introduced a new, modern campcraft program into Southern Baptist work. Various state leaders are putting the camping practices into use among th Royal Ambassadors.

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Miami Beach Assures  
Adequate Hotel Space

MIAMI BEACH, Fla.--(BP)--More than 5500 hotel rooms are available for messengers to the 1960 Southern Baptist Convention here, which should be "adequate," housing officials said.

No reservations requests will be accepted before Dec. 1. The housing bureau will process the applications after Jan. 2. No room deposit will be required.

Application blanks will be published in the state Baptist newspaper and in the Baptist Program magazine during the Fall.

The SBC Housing Bureau will return all applications submitted early with the request that they be re-submitted Dec. 1.

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College Professors  
To Get \$600 More

BOILING SPRINGS, N. C.--(BP)--Teachers at Gardner-Webb College here will receive a raise of \$600 for the coming school year, according to action by the trustees.

The across-the-board raise is given to all administrative personnel and all teachers with the master's degree or higher.

A special incentive program is planned to encourage further study by teachers who do not have the master's degree.

The salary raise boosts top pay to \$5,600 annually for a professor, \$5,100 for an associate professor, and \$4,800 for assistant professor, with special instructors earning up to \$3,300.

The salary increases represent part of a plan by college officials to secure and keep highly qualified teachers.

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Arkansas Temperance  
Body Starts Program

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.--(BP)--Plans for a state-wide alcohol-narcotics program in the high schools and colleges of the state were mapped here by the executive committee of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

William E. Brown, executive director of the Foundation, said that qualified teachers are being enlisted on a voluntary basis to teach high school and college students the evils of alcohol and narcotic addiction. It is hoped that a minimum of 30 teachers can be secured for each of the counties of the state, he said.

Ministers and retired or former teachers will be asked to help with the project, Brown said. It is hoped the foundation can eventually provide a minimum of four one-hour sessions for each grade in high school, as well as special lectures at the various colleges of the state, Brown said.

A recent case study of alcoholics in Arkansas, as reported by Brown, showed that 66 per cent of the alcoholics began drinking in high school, and 26 per cent started from age 18 to 22. Only 8 per cent began drinking at age 22 or above.

Erwin L. McDonald, Little Rock, editor of Arkansas Baptist and a member of the Foundation's executive committee, was elected recording secretary to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation recently of Charles W. Baughman, of Mablevale, who left the state.

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# BAPTIST FEATURES

Baptists Stymied  
in Italian City

PRODUCED BY BAPTIST PRESS  
NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
127 NINTH AVE., N., NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE AL 4-1631

Theo Sommerkamp, *Assistant Director*

Editor's Note: Baptists in the community of Sant'Angelo in Villa, Italy, have for several years been prevented from completing their church building. Each time an Italian court has ruled for the Baptists, municipal officials have evaded or ignored the court's ruling which would have allowed construction. The still only partially-completed building is believed to evidence the bitter opposition of the dominant Roman Catholic Church to Baptist work. A Southern Baptist missionary to Italy describes one of the latest developments.

By Roy F. Starmer

The mayor of Sant'Angelo in Villa has tendered his resignation after having ordered the suspension of work and demolition of the Baptist church for the second time. It seems that his resignation was occasioned by the action of his superior, the Prefect of Frosinone, who annulled the most recent demolition order of the mayor. Recent fast-moving events have developed as follows:

"Oftentimes evangelicals win their cases in the higher courts only to find them denied locally." Thus concluded the recent article announcing that the Baptists of Sant'Angelo in Villa had won the right to continue with the construction of their new church. It proved to be an ominous prophecy of the immediate future, for after having resumed construction on Apr. 21, the mayor issued another injunction a week later ordering the work suspended and directed in addition that the Baptists themselves must demolish the building within five days or that it would be done by the municipality at the expense of the Baptist group.

As the end of the 5-day period drew near the mayor appeared on the scene in person with a group of his followers whom it is said were armed with the necessary tools to tear down the building. People milled around the partly-finished structure and the rumor spread among the crowd that others were arriving to assist in the demolition. Minute by minute the situation became more tense as a group of Baptists surrounded the building with every intention of defending it from destruction at all costs.

Just as it seemed that serious trouble might result a squadron of police and "Carabinieri," special security police, arrived and restored order. Baptist leaders then raced to the town of Frosinone to consult with the Prefect of the Province. Consequently the official annulled the mayor's latest demolition order but also directed the Baptists to suspend construction. Following this development the mayor resigned his post.

The mayor's last order was based on a legal technicality. The high court had annulled the previous suspension and demolition order and had ruled that the mayor had exceeded his authority in issuing the injunction. The mayor stopped work, saying that the pastor was not regularly approved by the Ministry of the Interior and that the local group had not obtained authorization to open a place of worship. But the court, in ruling, had not directed the community of Sant'Angelo in Villa to issue a building license. The court had fully vindicated the position of the Baptists but without fully implementing it.

The question of the building permit is complicated by the fact that the village of Sant'Angelo in Villa is located in a zone subject to earthquakes. In this particular locality it is necessary to secure the approval of the building code office of the capital of the Province, which examines the plans to determine if the calculations for construction in steel re-enforced concrete are sufficient to resist eventual earthquakes. This office duly approved the plans for the church which were submitted through the office municipal government of Sant'Angelo in Villa. In fact an employee of the mayor's office delivered the affirmative reply to the pastor.

Ordinarily the local municipality would have issued a building permit in addition but in practice the approval of the civil engineering office of the capital is generally considered sufficient. In fact, as far as can be ascertained no local building permits were issued for any of the existing buildings in Sant'Angelo in Villa. When the document issued by the provincial building code authorities was delivered to the pastor, he was informed by an employee of the mayor's office that the building could be constructed on the basis of that document and that a local building license was not necessary.

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Baptist Press Feature

Notwithstanding all this, the mayor issued the first suspension and demolition order on the grounds that a local building permit had not been secured. It was only on Apr. 30, 1959, a year after the request for the local permit was filed, that the mayor formally denied the license for technical and esthetic reasons.

In an interview the pastor of the church of S. Angelo placed the blame for obstructing the construction squarely upon ecclesiastical authority which he claims worked through the local municipal government.

Developments in the situation now rest at this point. The building still stands but until the legal question is settled the unfinished structure remains starkly outlined against the skies as the days come and go. Pray that justice will soon triumph and that some day the praises of the triumphant King of Kings and Lord of Lords may resound from the walls of the Italian Baptist church of Sant'Angelo in Villa.

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### Foreign Church Health And Educational Institutions Would Be Given Millions

WASHINGTON--(BP)--"Any nonprofit, charitable, or eleemosynary private organization which carries on health or educational activities" in foreign countries could qualify for free American surplus goods, according to three bills now being considered in the House of Representatives.

At a hearing before a special subcommittee on Donable Property of the House Committee on Government Operations two witnesses testified in favor of the proposals. No opposition was heard. Perkins McGuire, assistant secretary of defense, and Fr. Frederick A. McGuire, executive secretary of the missions secretariat of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, urged passage of the proposal.

The proposed amendment to the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 makes educational and health organizations in foreign countries, as well as foreign nations, eligible for surplus goods under the Donable Property Program. Testimony indicated that goods valued at \$280 million or more would be available in 1959, but that under the present program only \$4 million will be disposed of.

Throughout the testimony it was emphasized that the foreign Donable Property Program should be administered by the Department of State in the interests of American foreign policy, and that distribution in the various countries should be made in the American national interest.

It was made clear by both those who testified in favor of the proposal and by the subcommittee members that missionary agencies, religious institutions, as well as other nonprofit educational and health organizations were the intended recipients of the donated surplus goods. It was felt that such organizations would make the best impression abroad for the United States.

In his testimony the Roman Catholic representative stated that such a program would benefit U. S. foreign policy, would provide aid to both Protestant and Catholic educational programs abroad and would create a reservoir of good will toward America. He said that in some countries for which the United States is responsible the Protestant and Catholic agencies are carrying the educational load and that the donation of surplus goods would thus help these institutions.

Rep. John W. McCormack (D., Mass.) in commenting on the testimony of Fr. McGuire said that it was with the religious missionaries and others in mind that the committee wanted to extend the Donable Property Program to foreign countries.

The present law restricts the donation of foreign excess property to that which has no commercial value or the estimated care and handling of which would exceed the estimated proceeds from its sale.

(Note: The three bills referred to above are H.R. 8202 by Robert R. Barry, R., N.Y.; H.R. 8209 by John W. McCormack, D., Mass., and H.R. 8182 by John S. Monagan, D., Conn. They have been assigned to the House Committee on Government Operations, of which William L. Dawson, D., Ill., is chairman and to the special subcommittee on Donable Property of which John W. McCormack is chairman. Indications are that the proposal will be favorably reported by the Committee.)

Baptist Church To Pay  
For Government Land

WASHINGTON--(BP)--A Baptist church in Tennessee doesn't want something for nothing. It is willing to pay a fair market price for land which it needs and which is owned by the State.

A bill has been introduced in Congress to enable the Bethel Baptist Church, Henderson, Tenn., to purchase six-tenths of an acre from the United States in order to have room to build a pastorium.

The land is a part of the Chickasaw State Park. It was formerly owned by the United States, but was conveyed to Tennessee with the provision that it be used for public purposes or revert back to the United States.

The State of Tennessee has expressed willingness to sell the plot in question to the church but it cannot do so under the present law. The Congressional bill would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell the land to the church at fair market value, provided the State of Tennessee conveys it back to the United States within one year.

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Interfaith Resolution  
Bottled In Committee

WASHINGTON--(BP)--A proposal for a Government sponsored Interfaith Day is bottled up in a House committee, and reliable sources indicate that this may be the end of the matter. However, the cork could be pulled out of the bottle at any time unless public opinion prevents it.

Hardly noticed both by church people and by members of the Senate, the proposal, S.J. Res. 53, which would establish the fourth Sunday in September as Interfaith Day, was whisked through the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and through the Senate itself. It is now pending in the House Committee on the Judiciary of which Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.) is chairman.

This resolution, encouraging religious unity by government sponsorship, has been introduced regularly the past several years by Sen. Kenneth B. Keating (R., N.Y.), but this is the first time it has gotten any attention.

In a letter to Congressman Celler interpreting possible implications of the resolution, W. Barry Garrett, associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, stated that "at first glance this resolution appears to be a harmless move for the promotion of goodwill among the American people, but upon closer observation there are some basic underlying assumptions that could make it offensive to the church people of the nation."

Mr. Garrett raised the question as to whether or not Congress wanted to step out of the proper sphere of government into the area in which the churches should exclusively operate. He pointed out that such a matter as a national Interfaith Day "must be achieved by the churches themselves and as a result of their own initiative rather than through the pressure of governmental sponsorship." He asked, "Should the Government put such pressure on the churches for religious conformity?"

A statement in the resolution that might be offensive to the church people of the nation is the "whereas" that charges that "the fomenting of antagonism between Americans on a basis of sectarian creed is contrary to American traditions and to the spirit of the guarantees of freedom of worship embodied in the Constitution of the United States."

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The resolution would put Congressional approval upon "the program of the interfaith movement" as a "practicable means for encouraging such mutual understanding."

In his letter to the House Judiciary Committee Garrett shared the concern of Congress for national unity and opposition to Communism, but he asked "if it could not be recognized that the churches can best play their role in the nation by functioning in their own way and by making their own contribution to the thinking of the people through their own ministry without outside interference from the Government."

Upon inquiry about how the resolution slipped through the Senate with so little notice, the explanation was given that the resolution had been introduced in February and that no opposition had been expressed by anybody. Hence it was assumed that all were in favor of it.

The Baptist Press reported the resolution when it was introduced and several Baptist editors wrote editorials against the idea. However, apparently no one thought to take the effective step of communicating with the proper authorities in the Senate.

(Note: Those who have an opinion to express on the resolution establishing a legal Interfaith Day may address their communication to The Honorable Emanuel Celler, House Judiciary Committee, House of Representatives Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.)

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#### Religious Discrimination Abroad Debated In Senate

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Discrimination against Protestants in Spain, Italy, Colombia and other parts of the world was ignored in a recent debate in the Senate. The discussion centered around proposed withdrawal of U.S. aid to countries which discriminate against American citizens because of "race or religion." The measure was defeated by a narrow margin.

The current policy of Saudi Arabia excluding Jewish servicemen from American bases prompted the proposed amendment.

Senator Wayne Morse (D., Ore.) introduced the anti-discrimination amendment to the Lehman resolution of 1956. Morse claimed discrimination has continued under the Lehman bill which states that distinctions among U.S. citizens based on their individual religious affiliations is "inconsistent with our principles."

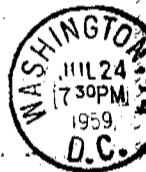
In a notable decision by Judge Epstein of the New York Supreme Court recently, the Arabian American Oil Company was prohibited from trading in the State of New York because of its discriminatory employment policies. Commenting on this action Morse expressed the opinion that the United States ought to take similar action against ARAMCO.

"I do not think we should continue to pour the dollars of American taxpayers into such countries by way of foreign aid assistance when those countries follow a course of action which is an affront to every American citizen," Morse said.

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