

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE
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January 12, 1960

Agitation Continues For Ambassador To Vatican

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Continued agitation in the 86th Congress for formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican is seen in a memorial from the Rhode Island legislature.

The memorial, referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, called attention to the meeting of President Eisenhower with Pope John XXIII at the Vatican on Dec. 6, 1959, pointed out that the U.S.A. has 39 million Catholics, and asserted that the Vatican is "the central information agency of the world."

The Rhode Island legislature said that "the United States and the Vatican are undisputed leaders in a joint effort to attain world peace and to liberate the legions of oppressed people in the world," and that "the mutual objectives of both powers toward the preservation of the free world would be better attained" by permanent diplomatic relations between the two powers.

Last year Rep. Victor L. Anfuso (D., N. Y.) introduced a resolution in the House calling for an ambassador to the Vatican. Later in the year the same proposal was made by a retired foreign service officer in a report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Unless there is an upsurge of public opinion calling for approval of such representation at the Vatican, there is little to indicate that the matter is being considered seriously either by the Congress or by the State Department.

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Resolution Favors Rule Of Law For World Peace

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)-- The rule of law instead of the "delicate balance of terror of armed force" for the world community is advocated in a concurrent resolution submitted by Rep. Thomas J. Lane (D., Mass.) in the House of Representatives here.

The resolution points out that in view of the pending restudy of the Charter of the United Nations the position of the United States should be that the conference for the review take place not later than Dec. 31, 1962 and that member governments should exchange communications on the subject of peace through the rule of law.

If the resolution passes it would request the President to initiate studies "to promote a just and lasting peace through the development of the rule of law in the limited field of war prevention" and to report to the Senate and House committees on foreign relations and affairs within 12 months.

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Fourth Religious Liberty
Conference Set, Sept. 7-9

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- The fourth national Religious Liberty Conference, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has been slated for September 7-9, according to announcement by C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director. The conference will meet in the nation's capital city at the Calvary Baptist Church.

The problem to be discussed this year will be "The Churches and American Tax Policy." Former conferences have discussed the use of public funds for church institutions and the place of religion in education. A future conference will discuss "Baptists and Higher Education."

These religious liberty conferences are not "official" meetings to arrive at policies or to make pronouncements, but they are discussion groups of responsible Baptist leaders in which they discuss their common problems and try to understand how the Baptist insights are related to current church-state issues.

There is a rising demand that similar conferences be projected on regional or state lines in order for larger discussion to take place and for more persons to be made aware of the seriousness and complexity of the problems. The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is seeking ways and means to implement these requests for other conferences.

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Would Create A New
National Peace Agency

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- A National Peace Agency "to deal with problems related to achieving peace" has been proposed by Rep. Charles E. Bennett (D., Fla.) in the House of Representatives.

According to the proposal the Peace Agency would achieve its objectives through arms limitation agreements, through developing international control and inspection systems to enforce such agreements, and by applying scientific and technical resources to promote peace by eliminating or reducing the economic causes of war.

The bill (H.R. 9305) sets up 14 types of programs "among others" to carry out the purpose of the Act. Among these programs are research on educational techniques for underdeveloped countries, research on food production and conservation of natural resources, and research on tensions created by overpopulation in some areas and underpopulation in others.

Possible church-state complications could develop in the administration of the Peace Agency because it would be authorized to accomplish its objectives (among other ways) "by contracts, leases, cooperative agreements or other transactions" with educational institutions and to use, with their consent, the services, equipment, personnel and facilities of private agencies and instrumentalities.

Under the proposal the Agency would be authorized to appoint an advisory committee and to coordinate its activities with related activities being carried on by other public and private agencies and organizations.

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Asks Congress To Greet
Catholic War Veterans

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Congratulations to the Catholic War Veterans of the U.S.A. by the House of Representatives have been proposed by Rep. Albert H. Bosch (R., N. Y.). The occasion will be the silver jubilee anniversary of the organization of the Queens County Chapter (N. Y.) during its annual convention, Jan. 20-23.

The resolution cites the patriotism of Catholic servicemen, their opposition to "the political heresy of Communism," and the desire to give these servicemen "an organized voice in national matters concerning God, country and home."

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Proposes \$5 Million More
For Special Milk Program

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Extension of the special milk program for children has been proposed by Rep. Earl Hogan (D., Ind.) and Rep. Gracie Pfost (D., Idaho) in an amendment that would increase the federal funds from \$85 million to \$90 million for the fiscal years 1960 and 1961. A similar bill has been introduced in the Senate by Sens. Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) and Eugene J. McCarthy (D., Minn.).

Rep. Albert H. Quie (R., Minn.) is asking that the "special" milk program now become "permanent."

Funds for this program come from the Commodity Credit Corporation and are used "to increase the consumption of fluid milk by children in nonprofit schools of high school grade and under and in nonprofit nursery schools, child-care centers, settlement houses, summer camps, and similar nonprofit institutions devoted to the care and training of children."

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Deplores Desecration
Of Places Of Worship

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Congress is being asked to express "its profound sense of indignation and shock" at the epidemic of desecration of places of worship throughout the nations of Europe and in the United States.

Rep. Daniel J. Flood (D., Pa.) in a concurrent resolution in the House of Representatives declares that "the conscience of the world has been shocked by these events" and that "this system of moral deterioration if left unchecked will endanger the true spirit of the brotherhood of man."

The resolution calls upon all persons to exert all of their energies to the end that these shameful events shall not occur.

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D. C. Baptists Develop
Social Service Program

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Steps have been taken by District of Columbia Baptists to advance their institutional life and to increase cooperation with their Negro Baptist brethren, according to M. Chandler Stith, executive secretary.

At a meeting of the D. C. convention's executive board dedication services for the new Anna B. Johanning Baptist Center were announced for January 31. The Baptist Center is a joint enterprise between the D. C. convention and the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Courts Redford, executive secretary of the HMB, will be the speaker for the occasion.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the Baptist Home, a million dollar project to provide for senior citizens in their golden years, will take place March 20. When finished the Baptist Home will provide for 80 people. The building will be so arranged to provide for additional space later.

In response to an appeal by the convention's immediate past president, S. Lewis Morgan, Jr., the executive committee authorized a committee of three persons to meet with a similar committee from the Baptist Convention of Washington, D. C., and Vicinity (Negro) to explore areas of cooperation between the two groups. The Negro population of the nation's capital now exceeds 50 per cent.

Previously the two conventions have cooperated in simultaneous evangelistic crusades, and this year plans are in the making for an Evangelistic Conference for the Negro Baptists in the Capital area. Personnel from the D. C. convention will help in the plans for the conference.

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The new Baptist Center in the District of Columbia is named for Mrs. Anna B. Johenning, who for 30 years has engaged in Christian center work under the direction of the Woman's Baptist Missionary Union. Miss Edna Woofter is the director. Glen A. Kirsch is the superintendent of the Baptist Home for the aged.

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Baptist Journalism In
Nation's Capital Grows

(1-12-60)

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Significant advances in Baptist journalism in the nation's capital marked the opening of 1960. A new Baptist news service was inaugurated and two Baptist magazines offered enlarged services.

Baptist Public Affairs (BPA), a Baptist news service out of the office of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, will serve the Baptist conventions of America with a coverage similar to the Baptist Press of the Southern Baptist Convention. W. Barry Garrett is the editor.

The Baptist World, a monthly Baptist world magazine, published by the Baptist World Alliance, enlarged from pocket size to an 8½ by 11 inch page format. Circulated in 82 countries, the Baptist World is edited by C. E. Bryant.

The Capital Baptist, weekly publication of the D. C. Baptist Convention, started the year with its first full time editor, James O. Duncan, and with more complete coverage of the D. C. convention activities and of religious news in general. A special feature of the Capital Baptist is the bi-monthly interview of prominent people on subjects of interest to Baptists.

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Catholics, Protestants
Discuss Religious Tests

By W. Barry Garrett*

WASHINGTON--Roman Catholic publications seem to be giving more attention to the problem of "religious tests" in politics than are the Protestants.

The Catholic attitude seems to be "nervous" and "jittery" out of fear that a strong anti-Catholic sentiment break out in the nation and thus their candidates for public office may fare badly at the polls. On the other hand, although there is an occasional outburst, the predominant Protestant attitude seems to be "wait and see" what will develop along the political lines.

The Pilot, official weekly publication of the Archdiocese of Boston, in its January 9, 1960 issue carried a full page of features debunking the so-called religious tests in politics. The lead article was a summary of Al Smith's 1928 answer to criticism of his candidacy for President because he was a Roman Catholic. Another article reviewed the history of religious "tests" in U. S. history.

Elsewhere in the same issue of The Pilot, other articles denied the charge that Catholics follow the Catholic line in politics and reported Sen. John F. Kennedy's views that the question of a candidate's religion is unimportant as long as he believes in the U. S. Constitution, the First Amendment, and in separation of church and state. Other Catholic publications are giving similar prominence to this line of propaganda.

Protestant and Baptist publications seem to be proceeding cautiously, lest they appear to be in opposition to the Constitution which says that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States," and lest they give reason for the charge of being religious bigots.

At the same time Protestant discussion of the question of a Catholic president is proceeding along positive and constructive lines. Episcopal Bishop Pike's discussion in the Dec. 21, 1959, issue of Life Magazine is a sample of the high level discussion that is taking place.

Similarly, C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has a constructive article in the forthcoming issue of the Brotherhood Journal of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. He discusses "The Religious Role of the President" without castigating any candidate or making inferences about the probable course of action of any official of any particular denomination.

On the national radio and television news interviews it is the Roman Catholic politicians and commentators who most frequently bring out the discussion of religious questions in politics. The facts that Roman Catholicism now claims 22 per cent of the American population and that Catholics are seeking a larger voice in public affairs are forcing the religious discussion, whether the nation as a whole wants it or not.

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* W. Barry Garrett is editor of the Washington, D. C., office of the Baptist Press.