

February 22, 1961

Separationists Fight
New York State Plan

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)--The executive director of a nationwide religious organization has committed it to all-out opposition of a New York state plan to provide \$200 grants to students attending private colleges.

"This is nothing but a back-door subsidy to church institutions," said Glenn L. Archer of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (POAU) in public rally which closed the annual conference here.

Archer said he hopes President Kennedy "will continue to stand by his magnificent pledges to protect church-state separation."

Forrest C. Feezor, Dallas, who recently retired as executive secretary of Texas Baptists, told this rally "one of the great dangers" to religious liberty is indifference, indecision, and inconsistency" which are "within the ranks of the friends of freedom."

In an earlier conference, Foy Valentine, Nashville, executive secretary of Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, placed a "conservative estimate" of \$100 million that the Roman Catholic church has received through salaries paid nuns as teachers in public schools in last 10 years. He said the nuns, having taken the vows of poverty, turn the salary checks over to the Roman Church and escape all tax charges.

C. Emanuel Carlson, Washington, executive director of Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, appealed to church leaders to "think our way through to the point of principle" on whether religious property should be taxed. He added, "We should believe in them enough to pay the costs" if it should be decided tax exemption is an indirect state subsidy for the church.

John J. Hurt, Atlanta, editor of the Christian Index, deplored the practice of "the church offering itself as the funnel through which the government may pour its welfare into the hands of the populace" both at home and abroad.

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Seminary Restricts
Graduate Students

(2-22-61)

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here won't admit more graduate students at least until September, 1962.

Theology faculty at the seminary took the action. Seminary officials said this complies with a report in 1959 from the American Association of Theological Schools (AATS).

In companion action, the trustee executive committee voted to pay a full year's salary to 12 professors who resigned after differences in 1958.

Graduate degrees affected are the master and doctor of theology.

"This will permit completion of the work of an accumulation of graduate students and facilitate the establishment of a proper ratio of the number of faculty and graduate students," a seminary statement read.

This means there will be no effect on graduate students now enrolled. The action applies to new applicants.

"The recent temporary suspension of admissions to the graduate program on the part of the faculty of the school of theology is one such step" taken to comply with accrediting recommendations, according to the statement.

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Jesus Used Hidden
Persuasion Method

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Jesus, too, was a hidden persuader who "never made a frontal attack upon man," a Baptist theologian said here.

William E. Hull, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, told editors the science of hidden persuasion had become widely-known because of a book written by Vance Packard. Its title: "Hidden Persuaders."

Published in 1957, this best-seller described advertising efforts to capture the American consumer by appealing to hidden desires.

The Bible long ago revealed what motivation research is just learning--that man is swayed by "hidden forces (that) incessantly play upon him," Hull declared. (Motivation research is study done to find out what compels, or motivates, a man to do certain things.)

Hidden persuasion "seeks to shape modern man into a 'receptive' character and cast him in the role of the perpetual consumer," according to Hull. "Consumerism is inevitably leads to captivity."

There is no way modern man can answer back these mass media of hidden persuasion--TV, newspaper, radio, billboard--which bombard him daily. "The engineered decision replaces spontaneous initiative, producing custom-made men with pre-packed souls. . .," he added. *Packard*

"What can the Christian faith say to this threat of social control which is potentially more foreboding than the problems of nuclear control?" he asked. "With profound insight the Bible locates the crucial conflict at this deeper level and points the way to Christian victory."

Hull said sin is a hidden persuader; in disguise it moves "stealthily upon mankind."

Jesus used hidden persuasion, probing deeper than surface physical hunger. "Never content to fill their stomachs, startle their eyes, or hypnotize their imaginations," Jesus "demanded faith in the substructure . . . of the soul," Hull reported.

God's Holy Spirit today, through His "inner wooing . . . is the gospel's answer to the hidden persuaders of the secular world," he concluded.

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Jones, Stith Preside
Over Baptist Groups

(2-22-61)

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Samuel H. Jones and M. Chandler Stith have been chosen to head two Baptist groups.

Jones of Greenville, S. C., is new president of the Southern Baptist Press Association. Stith of Washington, D. C., is new head of the state executive secretaries group among Southern Baptists. Both were elected at simultaneous meetings of the two groups in Louisville.

Jones serves as editor of the Baptist Courier, Stith as executive secretary of District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

Other editors officers are Chauncy R. Daley of Louisville, host editor, vice-president and Erwin L. McDonald of Little Rock, re-elected secretary-treasurer.

Other officers of the state secretaries group are E. Harmon Moore of Plainfield, Ind., vice-president and Ray E. Roberts of Columbus, Ohio, secretary.

The groups voted to hold their simultaneous mid-winter meetings in 1962 at Phoenix, Ariz., from Feb. 13-15.

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Liberty Conference
Sets Time, Place

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)--Protestants and Other Americans United (POAU) will hold its annual conference next year in Chicago instead of Dallas. Trustees authorized change to avoid conflict with other meetings.

It also fixed dates as Feb. 5-6. This was off-year for election of officers, president Louie D. Newton of Atlanta and others having been elected last year for two-year terms.

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Survey Finds Atlanta
30 Per Cent Unchurched

(2-22-61)

ATLANTA (BP)--Atlanta long known as the city of churches, found that it is not much better than the national average in percentage of Christians and unaffiliated church members.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, which directed the largest religious survey in the history of metropolitan Atlanta, said that about 70 per cent of the persons surveyed are church members.

Of this number, about 12 per cent are unaffiliated church members, with their membership in a place other than greater Atlanta.

About 25 per cent of the approximately 555,000 persons surveyed said they were not Christians and another five per cent said they are Christians but have never joined any church. Of the 151,552 unchurched persons surveyed, about 54,000 are above nine years of age.

Billy T. Hargrove, Atlanta, director of surveys and special studies for the Home Mission Board, said the Atlanta area survey resulted in the lowest percentage of information refusals--about 1.5 per cent--of any survey his department has ever conducted.

The survey covered all of Fulton (Atlanta) and DeKalb (Decatur) Counties and parts of Clayton and Gwinnett Counties. About 10,500 workers from all Protestant denominations were used.

Cobb County, bordering Fulton County to the north, was to conduct a similar survey.

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Circulation Goal

(2-22-61)

LOUISVILLE (DP)--Editors of Baptist state papers have set a circulation goal of 1-3/4 million by the end of 1964. It will require a 17 per cent increase over their present combined total of 1,465,000. The editors here said they hope to reach 2 million circulation by 1980. There are 28 papers involved, most of them weeklies.

Halsell Firm Trying
To Comply With Law

NASHVILLE (BP)--Baptist Building Savings, Inc., of Memphis, which earlier was ordered to stop taking money on deposit, is moving toward full compliance with the directive of the Tennessee state superintendent of banks.

Supt. M. A. Bryan said the firm has "already returned a large part" of the funds and would make efforts to have it all back in the hands of the depositors within about two weeks.

When the order went out, Bryan said the Memphis concern, whose president is Aubrey C. Halsell Sr., had been taking deposits and therefore performing a banking function, but was not otherwise operating under state banking laws and was not chartered as a bank.

The company, he added, is not in any way affiliated with any Baptist church or Baptist convention but apparently took its name from the fact it invests in church bonds.

Total amount of the deposit money taken in by the firm, the superintendent said, came to \$258,000. The state did not allege fraud and so Halsell thought he was operating under the law.

Actually, Bryan said, the firm is composed of two corporations: Baptist Building Savings, Inc., an organization chartered for profit, and the Savings Corporation, chartered as a non-profit institution. The state action was aimed only at the Savings Corporation. The bank superintendent said his ruling did not apply to bond sales.

Halsell has held Baptist pastorates in Memphis and West Memphis, and later held the rank of lieutenant-colonel as an Air Force chaplain. He served Arizona Baptists as director of bond service for their convention at one time.

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Nashville Tax Effort
Ruled Out By Court

(2-22-61)

NASHVILLE (BP)--The City of Nashville has lost another round in its persistent effort to tax the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here.

Chancery Court dismissed the city's appeal of a state tax board ruling. The state tax board held Sunday School Board property to be tax-exempt because of its being used in church-related work.

The city attorney for Nashville was quoted as saying the city would consider appealing to a still higher court.

Nashville city government assessed the board's properties at about \$4.8 million. This included the entire sphere of the board's activities within the city limits.

Later the city dropped its efforts to tax most of this property, limiting itself to the cafeteria, snack bar, and parking lots for board employees. The assessment for these was set at \$725,000. The state board overruled this city claim.

Chancellor Ned Lentz upheld the state tax board, ruling that taxing of these three phases of Sunday School Board operation was not valid.

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