

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE
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March 14, 1960

Claims Religious Motives
For Many Congressmen

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- How much God is there in Government? This question is raised by Rep. Walter H. Moeller (D., Ohio) in an article inserted in the Congressional Record by Rep. James G. Fulton (R., Pa.). Originally the article appeared in "This Day" magazine. Moeller is a Lutheran clergyman.

"There is as much God in government as there is God in the hearts of the American people," Moeller said.

The government of the United States is as near being a government of the people, by the people and for the people as has ever existed, Moeller continued. "Thus it is fair to say that where God is concerned, He moves the man in government to about the same extent that He moves the man in the street."

Pointing out that there is no electronic computer to measure the extent to which the people in government are motivated by the Spirit of God, Moeller said that "we must turn to the external evidences" to find the moral qualities of the men and women in the government of the United States.

As an illustration Moeller used legislation formulated to control corruption and racketeering which has dominated certain aspects of the American labor movement. He said that Congressmen were besieged by the most powerful forces in the nation seeking to influence their decision, but that many of them "devoted themselves to prayerful thought and to close examination of the social and moral issues involved."

As members of Congress face issues of real importance, "the moral stature of the individual grows with few exceptions," Moeller wrote. "From my personal experiences up to this time, I am convinced that there is a basic structure composed of deeply honest and sincerely devout religious-minded people upon which the frivolous and the at times sinful is only a facade, more evident to the indiscriminating eye than the solid foundation to which it has attached itself."

Other evidences of religion in the government were pointed out by Moeller. There are regular prayer breakfasts at which groups discuss their responsibilities and the issues of the day in terms of religious values. The Prayer Room just off the rotunda of the U. S. Capitol is visited frequently for prayer and meditation. Each House of Congress has a chaplain and every session is opened with prayer.

Moeller said in conclusion that in Government, as elsewhere, the number of people who seek for God's will is all too few. This "raises the challenge for Christian men and women to make service in the government their ambition. For true it remains that 'evil triumphs when good men fail to speak.'"

National Baptists Pledge
Faith In Freedom For All

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Negro Baptists believe in the American principles of freedom and democracy, according to a statement inserted in the Congressional Record by Sen. Paul H. Douglas (D., Ill.).

The statement entitled "Reaffirmation of Our Faith in the Nation" was adopted by the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., which has a constituency of five million, or about a third of the Negro population in the United States.

Reaffirming their faith in separation of church and state, the Negro Baptists said that they also believed that the "Christian Church" should be "a redemptive influence and a vital part of the soul of the Nation."

The statement called on the Negro press and organizations to recognize the "vast number of white people who are dedicated to the laws of the land, who are ashamed of the sins being committed against the soul of the Nation, who are working for the growth of democracy and who are suffering for the fulfillment of America's dream of freedom."

Expressing the historic Baptist faith the Negroes said, "We believe that the battle for freedom is not only America's battle but also the battle of all humanity supported by the moral laws of the universe and by the God who made out of one blood all races of men to dwell in peace on the face of the earth. And the struggle must move forward to victory since right is right and God is God."

In an appeal for first-class citizenship the Negroes said that this concept "is essential for the realization of a first-class democracy and that a first-class democracy will give first-class freedom in which will be developed first-class personalities, first-class people, first-class thinkers, and first-class statesmen; all of these working together will build a first-class social order of good will, justice, understanding, and peace."

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Congressman Cites God's
Law To Justify Lottery

3-14-60

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Rep. Paul A. Fino (R., N. Y.) says that there is no condemnation of gambling in the law of God, and he is using this false assertion to try to convince Congress to establish a national lottery.

In another of a series of brief speeches before the House of Representatives Fino called for a combination of the gambling spirit of our people together with the ever-growing need for more revenue. He says that the only thing wrong with gambling in this country is that "we permit it to go on unchecked and uncontrolled."

Fino has cited gambling revenues from 27 foreign countries to prove that it would be a good thing financially for the United States to legalize a national lottery. He claims that the United States government can raise \$10 billion a year through a national lottery.

Although leaders in the churches, business and government oppose legalized gambling, Fino continues his campaign to get the matter considered by Congress.

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Nine More Congressmen
Report Catholic Meeting

3-14-60

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Nine more Congressmen have joined 19 of their colleagues in reporting additional sections of the Civil Rights Conference at Notre Dame Law School, Feb. 14, 1960. The new insertions were made in the Congressional Record for March 8. The previous insertions were made on Feb. 29.

The complete transcript of the Catholic civil rights conference has now been reported in 28 sections by as many Congressmen. The entire report consumed 42 pages of six point type in the Congressional Record and added up to 97,000 words.

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FOAU Denies Attack On
Denominational Leaders

WASHINGTON ---(BP)--- Denominational programs of study and conference are necessary for a proper understanding of religious liberty and the problems of church-state relations, according to Glenn L. Archer, executive director of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

The statement was made in the wake of widespread misapprehension about an editorial in the March, 1960 issue of Church and State, monthly review published by FOAU, in which it appeared that an attack was being made on the programs of denominational leaders for conferences and dialogue on religious liberty issues.

"We did not have in mind the work of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs nor the work of the other denominational agencies of the Protestant groups when we published the editorial," Archer said.

Denominational leaders of several fellowships in the field of church-state relations were stunned by the FOAU editorial which was being interpreted as a caricature of Protestant efforts to be conscientious and consistent in the practices of their churches and institutions.

Many denominational groups in America, including most of the national and state conventions of Baptists, have set up special public affairs or religious liberty committees to make a serious restudy of the problems of church-state relations that have developed because of the vast expansion of church institutions and the extension of the interests of the government into the total welfare and educational life of the Nation.

Vastly significant work is being done by the denominations to bear their witness in the area of religious liberty. Through the practice of their own institutions and through the lives of their members the proper stewardship of Christian influence exercises a profound effect on public life and church-state relations in all its aspects.

Illustrative of the denominational programs of study of religious liberty are the national religious liberty conferences sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the special study on taxation approved by the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, the special committee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to study their own institutions in the light of Baptist principles, and the J. M. Dawson Studies in Church and State at Baylor University.

Virginia Baptists and North Carolina Baptists have maintained active study committees for the past several years to consider special problems within their own states. The Baptist World Alliance maintains a Religious Liberty Commission that makes a significant contribution around the world.

Non-Baptist programs that are contributing to the "dialogue" among the denominations are illustrated by the special conferences among the Methodists, the study committee of the Missouri Synod (Lutheran), the Religious Liberty commissions of both the National and World Councils of Churches, and the studies of the Fund for the Republic.

This rising tide of interest among the denominations is perhaps the most significant development in the field of religious liberty in the past generation. They believe that the time has come to sit down together and talk in a friendly atmosphere about the common problems and what can be done for the preservation of religious liberty for every person and group in the world.

The Baptists of Kentucky in their annual convention last fall called for conferences in which Protestants and Catholics could discuss their common problems. In the recent annual meeting of FOAU in Boston, Bishop Richard C. Raines of the Methodist Church also called for "dialogue" between Protestants and Catholics on church-state relations.

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Angels On A Needle Point

(Editorial)

The scholastic's passion for endless academic debate has its counterpart in current Protestant-inspired discussions of church-state separation. Aware of the enormous grass-roots concern, denominational leaders have sought to minister to it by interminable "dialogue" on the subject. This, indeed, has been their strategy for coping with the many clamant church-state problems.

So leaders meet, sit all day and solemnly discuss church-state separation. They talk of some Protestant groups who have taken Hill-Burton money for their hospitals. They talk of a Protestant seminary that has accepted federal fellowships for the training of clergymen, and of denominational colleges that have negotiated federal loans for dormitory construction. They talk of a load of gravel dumped free of charge on the parking lot of a Protestant church. They talk of this and they talk of that.

Confusion Confounded

The chances are that they go home from these discussions more confused than when they came. They reach the conclusion that the whole matter of separation is in a fog, that nobody honestly knows what it is all about and why bother. Paralysis by analysis.

Dialogue can serve a good purpose. But dialogue which consistently ignores basic issues and devotes its energy to the creation of confusion is no help. Any dialogue worth the talk will disclose this basic issue -- that one church is marching in massive stride toward government subsidy and officially favored status. Others are nibbling around the edges; this one is driving straight to the heart. It is doing here just what it is doing in France, Britain, Belgium, Mexico, Spain, Haiti -- almost any country one can name. It is driving for the kind of large-scale subsidy that will make its oppressive apparatus strong and secure. Where it has this it holds to it. Where it lacks this it strives to get it.

Medieval Futility

To spend time and energy counting the theoretical or actual angels on the point of the needle and to ignore the hay in which the needle is all but engulfed, is a dubious tactic. Protestants have failed to deal adequately with church-state separation until they discover among all the problems the problem.

And while I was musing
the fire raged.

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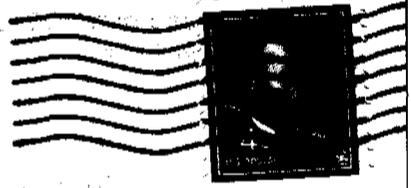
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