

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE  
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July 12, 1962

Hobbs Praises Ban On  
Governmental Prayers

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)-- The Southern Baptist Convention president has endorsed the Supreme Court rule banning "official" prayers in public schools.

"The Supreme Court of the United States in its decision has struck one of the most powerful blows in our lifetime, maybe since the Constitution was adopted, for the freedom of religion in our Nation," he declared. "And we should be eternally grateful to them," he added.

Herschel H. Hobbs, pastor, First Baptist Church here, expressed his views in a sermon, "What Did The Supreme Court Mean?"

The Court in *Engel v. Vitale* ruled that the so-called Regents' Prayer in New York State required for recitation in public schools violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

Hobbs explained to his congregation that the newspapers "did not fully convey the intent of this highest legal tribunal in our Nation." After studying carefully a reliable analysis of the Court's decision and extensive quotes from the opinions, the Convention president concluded that the Court acted "for the protection of religion and to guarantee its free exercise."

"What appeared to be a tragedy is now clear to me to be one of the greatest blessings that could come to those of us who believe in the absolute separation of church and state," he said.

Hobbs pointed out the issue in the case. It was, "Is it legal or illegal for a governmental agency to compose a prayer and require that that prayer be said in a public school room." He said that other problems, such as Bible reading and voluntary prayers, were not under consideration. These will be considered in later decisions.

The historic Baptist role in such matters was explained by the Oklahoma City pastor. "Our Baptist people have always fought for the absolute separation of church and state.... Our insistence on religious liberty is not for Baptists alone, but for all religions," he said.

"If this disturbance that has come throughout our country regarding this decision does not do anything else, it ought to point up to us the fact that prayer is a vital, personal experience," Hobbs declared.

He concluded, "This decision means that you and I cannot throw the responsibility for moral and spiritual training of our children upon the school or even upon the church. It is a responsibility that belongs primarily in the home. This decision means that you and I should give more thought to what prayer really is."

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Church Institutions  
Ask for \$6,887,000

(7-12-62)

WASHINGTON (BP)-- Ten out of 34 colleges and hospitals applying for College Housing loans in June were church-related institutions. The church agencies asked for \$6,887,000.

Two American Baptist schools were in the list released by Commissioner Sidney H.

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Woolner of the Community Facilities Administration. They are Keuka College, Keuka Park, N. Y., and Spelman College, Atlanta, Ga.

Other church institutions included Methodist (4), Lutheran (2), and Catholic (2).

According to Commissioner Woolner such applications are made public so that private lenders may negotiate with the institutions if they wish to make the loans.

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Baptist Leaders Favor  
Court Prayer Ruling

(7-12-62)

CHICAGO (BP)-- Thirteen out of twenty-three prominent national religious leaders signing a statement approving the Supreme Court decision against "official" prayers in public schools are Baptists.

The statement prepared by the Christian Century, an undenominational weekly, declares that the Court's ruling "protects the integrity of the religious conscience and the proper function of religious and governmental institutions."

In an editorial the Christian Century said that earlier condemnations of the Court ruling were "not representative of sober protestant thought." The danger of hasty judgments such as were expressed by some, the editorial pointed out, is that "church leaders are tempted to speak without thought, to appraise without study."

"The unhurried views of protestant leaders" were sought by the Christian Century. The result was wide approval of the action taken by the Supreme Court.

The statement signed by the 23 leaders is as follows:

"We are in agreement with the Supreme Court that 'It is neither sacrilegious nor antireligious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance.'

"We call upon the American people to study this decision prayerfully and without political emotion. We believe the Court's ruling against officially written and officially prescribed prayers protects the integrity of the religious conscience and the proper function of religious and governmental institutions."

The Baptists who signed the statement are:

Theodore F. Adams, pastor, First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., past president, Baptist World Alliance; Herschel H. Hobbs, pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, president, Southern Baptist Convention; Edwin A. Tuller, general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.;

C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C.; Edwin T. Dahlberg, pastor, Delmar Baptist Church, St. Louis, former president, National Council of Churches; Frank E. Johnston, associate general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.;

Samuel Miller, dean, Harvard University Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.; Kyle Haselden, managing editor, The Christian Century, Chicago; Carlyle Marney, pastor, Myers Park Baptist Church, Charlotte, N. C.; W. Hubert Porter, associate general secretary, American Baptist Convention, Valley Forge, Pa.;

J. H. Jackson, president, National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc.; Frank H. Woyke, executive secretary, North American Baptist General Conference; and W. Barry Garrett, associate director, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C.

Others who signed the statement are:

Hampton Adams, pastor, Park Avenue Christian Church (Disciples), New York City; George C. Bonnell, pastor, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City; Aubrey N. Brown, Jr., editor, Presbyterian Outlook, Richmond, Va.; Truman B. Douglas, executive vice president, Board of Homeland Ministries, United Church of Christ, New York City;

Harold E. Fey, editor, The Christian Century, Chicago; A. Raymond Grant, Bishop,

Oregon Methodist Area, Portland; Dwight E. Loder, president, Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill.;

Malvin H. Lundeen, secretary, Lutheran Church in America, Minneapolis; Edward O. Miller, rector, St. George's Episcopal Church, New York City; and Richard H. Raines, Bishop, Indiana Methodist Area, Indianapolis.

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Religion Is Taught  
In 'Secular' Texts

(7-12-62)

WASHINGTON (BP)-- Sectarian religion is taught in "secular" textbooks in parochial schools, according to an analysis in "Report From The Capital", a monthly bulletin published by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The analysis was based on findings of a special study sponsored by the Religious Liberty Department of the National Council of Churches, Dean Kelly, executive director. The department study was done by George R. LaNoue, a graduate student in political science at Yale University.

The study was done as a reply to Rep. Roman C. Pucinski (D., Ill.), a champion of federal aid to parochial schools. At a hearing before a House committee on education last year he asked a witness, "Would you be good enough to tell me how you perpetuate a religious faith in an algebraic formula?"

The Chicago Congressman was defending the practice of giving aid to any school for specific purposes in the national interest. He claims that such courses are "totally unrelated to religious teaching."

In his study Mr. LaNoue examined over 100 textbooks used in Roman Catholic, Seventh-day Adventist, Christian Reformed, and Missouri Synod Lutheran church schools. His findings are in a 192-page report that includes over 40 pages of quotations from the books surveyed and 120 photostats.

LaNoue listed seven ways in which religion is included in science, mathematics and language courses, and he cited specific examples in each case. The seven are:

1. Religious symbols and subjects used in examples for arithmetic and grammar drill.
2. Specific sectarian doctrines taught where controversial matter appears in the text.
3. A general theistic Christian approach to all matters.
4. Request that the children concern themselves with specific church goals.
5. Appeals to church authority for proof of a point.
6. Selective emphasis on Catholic institutions and contributions to the culture and on facts favorable to the Church and omissions of institutions and contributions to the culture by non-Catholics and of facts unfavorable to the Church.
7. Defense of church social ideas and regulations.

Here is one example of an arithmetic problem to teach religion cited by LaNoue. "In millions of homes Our Lady's challenge has been accepted, but she wants billions throughout the world to join the Family Rosary for Peace. Do you know how to write in figures the numbers such as those just mentioned?"

LaNoue pointed out in his findings that public support for "secular" subjects in parochial schools violates both the educational philosophy that calls for such schools and the Constitution of the United States. He also said that such subsidies to parochial schools would be poor public policy because of the supervision needed to administer such a program, and because of the general undermining of the principle of separation of church and state that would result.

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Washington, D.C.

July 12, 1966

Dear Mr. Somerkamp:

Thank you for your letter of July 8, 1966, regarding the Baptist Press credit line.

The Baptist Press credit line is a service provided to our members and is not available to non-members. We are sorry that we cannot provide this service to you.

Sincerely,

John H. ...

John H. ...  
Executive Director

Washington, D.C.

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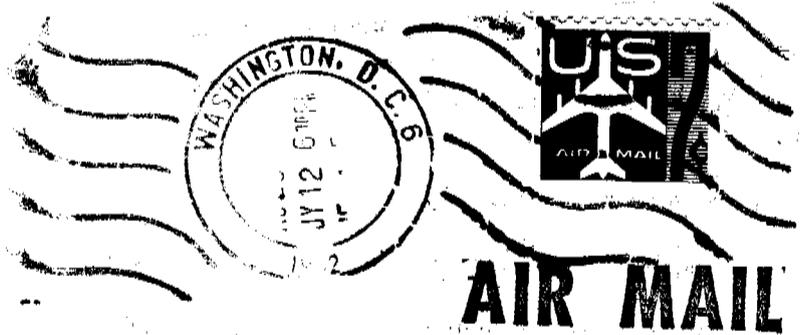
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WATCH FOR THE (BP) CREDIT LINE