

August 31, 1962

Vatican Observer  
Appears Unlikely

OSLO, Norway (BP)--The prospect of an official Baptist observer at the forthcoming Vatican council is unlikely.

Meeting here, the executive committee of the Baptist World Alliance said it could not agree to encourage an invitation for Baptists to send an observer to the Second Vatican Council.

Several sessions were devoted to discussing the advisability of sending an observer to the Vatican council, a parley of Roman Catholic Church hierarchy to which will come several Protestant clergymen from around the world as non-participating observers.

Josef Nordenhaug of Washington, D. C., Alliance general secretary, called attention to a letter he had from the Vatican secretariat. The letter suggested if Baptists wanted to send an observer, the invitation would be forthcoming.

This is the procedure which has been followed with other non-Catholic groups.

The committee assured authorities of the Roman Catholic Church of their "hopes and prayers that the forthcoming council will contribute to an understanding of the will of God and the unity of his people."

The Second Vatican Council will open Oct. 11. Pope John XXIII has said he hoped to decree the beatification of Pope Pius IX during the council. Non-Catholic groups have hoped for a stand by the Catholic hierarchy in favor of more religious liberty, especially in countries where the Roman Church is the dominant church.

The full statement of the Baptist World Alliance executive committee:

"The executive committee of the Baptist World Alliance in session at Stabekk, Oslo, August 20-24, 1962 asked the general secretary to thank Monsignor J. G. M. Willebrands, secretary of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, for his courteous communication of April 18, 1962, and to state that after careful discussion of the issues involved it is not agreed that it would be desirable for the Baptist World Alliance to encourage a formal invitation to the forthcoming Second Vatican Council, but would assure the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church of its hopes and prayers that the forthcoming council will contribute to an increasing understanding of the will of God and the unity of his people."

Twenty-seven speakers took part in the discussion at Oslo. Brooks Hays of Washington, special assistant to President Kennedy and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was one of them. He described the debate as an "historic dialogue."

Hays expressed satisfaction at the "extent of support for continuing and more efficient communication" with the other church group.

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Indiana Committee  
Approves New Site

(8-31-62)

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Approval has been given to buy 4.72 acres on the west side of Indianapolis to relocate offices of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana.

The convention presently has offices at Plainfield, a small community about 15 miles southwest of the Indiana capital.

The new site, which cost under \$26,000 according to convention leaders, is on Interstate Highway 465, making the location accessible to visitors from all parts of the state.

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Approval came from the executive committee of the convention's executive board. A few dozen sites had been under consideration, the committee said. An attempt to buy a different site several months ago fell through when the owners said adjacent property might be sold for a cocktail lounge.

The purchase is subject to securing proper zoning and roadway access. Convention leaders said it is possible the Baptist Book Store may be housed with the state offices.

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Panacea For Communism  
Not Painless, Simple

(8-31-62)

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)--There is no simple and painless panacea for communism, those attending a Baptist Christian Life Conference here were told.

According to Foy Valentine of Nashville, "those who offer a simple and painless panacea...are either ignorant or charlatans or both." Valentine is executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, sponsor of the conference.

He urged conference participants to "seek to penetrate the heavy fog of emotionalism that surrounds much of the current talk and activity concerning communism. Let us come to a better understanding of the foe we face."

He confronted his hearers with their own failure to apply the gospel in daily life. He said that because of this failure, there was a vacuum into which Marxism moved.

"The mosquitos of communism have bred in the swamps of poverty, ignorance, oppression, prejudice and materialism," Valentine stated. "Wherever Christians apply the gospel in draining these very swamps, communism can gain no foothold."

The week-long conference centered on a discussion of communism.

Ross Coggins, associate to Valentine, warned against exaggeration. "Every communist is not 10 feet tall, nor is every free man a dupe," he said. He cited an abundance of facts which he said demonstrate the moral bankruptcy of communism.

He called attention to a worldwide disenchantment with communism, during which the Christian, he said, should seize the initiative for a bold and new proclamation of the gospel.

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Folks and Facts.....

(8-31-62)

....Mrs. John Connett, widow of an attorney, left nearly 45 per cent of an estate estimated at \$239,000 to William Jewell College at Liberty, Mo. The will provides that \$5,000 of the amount be used as a John Connett Memorial scholarship endowment. Mrs. Connett also left a bequest of \$1,000 to the First Baptist Church here. (BP)

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....Paul R. Conner, a graduate of the University of Tennessee with a master's degree in guidance, is the new dean of students at Bethel College (Baptist), junior college at Hopkinsville, Ky. Conner succeeds Wayne E. Keith, now on the faculty of Tyler (Tex.) Junior College. (BP)

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August 31, 1962

### Foreign Agency Cancels Church Aid Statement

WASHINGTON (BP)-- The Agency for International Development (AID) has withdrawn its "Policy Determination" on the use of religious organizations in United States foreign aid programs.

Administrator Fowler Hamilton said that due to "misconceptions concerning the policy of the agency...it is hereby withdrawn and has no further force and effect."

The Administrator explained, "henceforth the agency will continue to pursue the same policies that it and predecessor agencies have pursued in this regard during the past period of more than 10 years."

"In view of the confusion that has arisen I wish to make perfectly clear that the agency in administering the funds for which it is responsible will do so in full accord with the traditional constitutional principles that are applicable to this area," he concluded.

President Kennedy in a standard reply to inquiries on the subject says that "Mr. Hamilton is in complete agreement with the necessity of conforming AID policies and procedures with the Constitutional principles which you and I support most strongly."

The President further says that "the problem of extending our foreign assistance through private institutions abroad is complex, but I share your view that in utilizing such facilities we must exercise the most vigilant care in respecting our own Constitutional tradition."

Commenting on the issuance and withdrawal of the "policy determination" C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said that this "opens for church-state analysis the whole policy field as developed in recent Administrations."

Donald B. Easum, executive secretary of the Agency for International Development explained the short-lived "policy determination" to a representative of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. He said that it was a pulling together and putting in written form policies that had governed the foreign aid programs of the United States for a number of years.

The extent to which the new "policy determination" expanded the policies already in existence is not known at the present time. Extensive research of the policies for the past dozen years will be necessary before this can be known.

The "Policy Determination No. 10" was formulated on July 16, but it was not generally known by the public until August 15 when United Press International and Baptist Press released stories about it. Copies of the policy had previously been sent to denominational agencies that maintain overseas programs that might be used to implement U. S. foreign aid programs. On August 21 the new policy statement was withdrawn.

Says School Religion  
Not Unconstitutional

WASHINGTON (BP)-- The Supreme Court decision banning "official" prayers in New York schools does not apply to Bible reading and recitation of the Lord's Prayer, according to legal opinion in the District of Columbia.

Corporation Counsel Chester H. Gray expressed this view in a formal opinion requested by District School Superintendent Carl F. Hansen.

Gray found that the Supreme Court's June 25 prayer decision says only that government officials may not compose a prayer for classroom use and require children to recite it.

It has been the custom of the District of Columbia schools to begin each day with a Bible reading, the Lord's Prayer and pledge of allegiance to the United States. This practice will continue this fall.

Hansen also had asked Gray whether the Supreme Court ruling invalidated School Board recitation of the flag salute, prayers said by a civic group meeting in a school, silent prayer and school programs observing religious holidays.

None of these was outlawed, Gray replied.

Earlier in the year the Jewish Community Council of Washington had asked the School Board to eliminate all religious observances from the D. C. school system. This move was resisted by Superintendent Hansen.

However, the Council of Churches of the Greater Washington Area in a position statement agreed with the Jews that the public schools should not be used for religious purposes.

In Gray's legal opinion he pointed out that the Supreme Court would have an opportunity to clarify the constitutionality of the District school practices if the Court decides to review two cases from Maryland and Pennsylvania.

In the Maryland case, the State Court of Appeals held last April 6 that Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer are not unconstitutional. In Pennsylvania, a 3-judge Federal Court decided last Feb. 1 that required reading of 10 verses from the Bible without comment is unconstitutional.

The District School Board is divided in its opinion on what the Supreme Court may decide in the Maryland and Pennsylvania cases. It appears that until the issue is settled by the Court the District will continue its present practices.

The Supreme Court opinion in the New York Regents' prayer case was delivered by Justice Hugo L. Black for the 6 to 1 majority. It said that constitutional prohibitions against laws respecting an establishment of religion "must at least mean that in this country it is not part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as part of a religious program carried on by Government."