

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE
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Religious Objection To
Draft Defined By Court

WASHINGTON (BP)--Freedom for conscientious objectors won strong support in a U. S. Supreme Court opinion which gave broad interpretation of the draft law provision for exemption from military service.

The draft law exempts from combatant training and service persons who oppose participation in war because of their religious training and belief.

The law defines religious training and belief as "an individual's belief in a relation to a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation." It excludes political, sociological, or philosophical views or "merely personal moral code" as bases for exemption.

In a unanimous opinion for the Court, Justice Tom C. Clark said that a test of belief "in a relation to a Supreme Being" is whether a "belief that is sincere and meaningful occupies a place in the life of its possessor parallel to that filled by the orthodox belief in God of one who clearly qualifies for the exemption."

Applying this test the Court ruled that the beliefs of three men involved in the cases before it entitled them to exemption. The three objectors were Daniel Andrew Seeger and Arno Sascha Jakobson of New York City, and Forest Britt Peter of Hayward, Calif.

Jakobson claimed belief in a "Supreme Reality" as an obligation superior to those resulting from man's relationship to his fellowman. Peter said his opposition to war came from his acceptance of the existence of a universal power beyond that of man and that this constitutes belief in a Supreme Being.

Seeger expressed "belief in and devotion to goodness and virtue for their own sakes, and a religious faith in a purely ethical creed." He preferred to leave the question of his belief in a Supreme Being open, saying that his "skepticism or disbelief in the existence of God" did "not necessarily mean lack of faith in anything whatsoever."

The Court pointed out that the three cases did not involve atheists, that the question was not one between theistic and atheistic beliefs. The question, it said, is whether the term "Supreme Being" means the "orthodox God or the broader concept of a power or being, or a faith, 'to which all else is subordinate or upon which all else is ultimately dependent'."

It referred to the variety of spiritual life in this country with over 250 religious sects. The broad interpretation of the "religious training and belief," the Court said, avoids classifying different religious beliefs, exempting some and excluding others.

In a separate concurring opinion, Justice William O. Douglas said to read the draft law differently would mean that "those who embraced one religious faith rather than another would be subject to penalties." That kind of discrimination, he said, would violate the free exercise of religion guaranteed in the First Amendment to the Constitution.

"It would also result in a denial of equal protection by preferring some religions over others," Justice Douglas stated.

2 Commission Officers
Send Wallace Petitions

By The Baptist Press

The chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission and one of the Commission's staff officers have sent telegrams to Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace concerning racial tension in Selma over Negro voting rights.

The chairman, John R. Claypool, pastor, Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., sent the following telegram to Wallace:

"We are praying for you in this critical hour that God may give you the wisdom and courage to be the governor of all and not just some of the citizens of Alabama and that you will act in this present moment in a way that will help and not hurt the future of your state and our nation. You have a right to demand of the Negro everything you demand of any citizen in Alabama; however, you should also grant to the Negro what you are willing to grant to any citizen of Alabama--specifically the privilege to vote and to express his opinion in an orderly fashion."

William M. Dyal, Nashville, the Commission's director of organization, sent this message to Gov. Wallace:

"Expressing deep Christian concern over brutal treatment of Alabama Negroes in Sunday's attempted march. Urge immediate execution and legal action to provide full citizenship rights including voter registration regardless of race. Praying for wisdom dictated by justice on your part."

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Third Of Rapid City
Residents Non-Churched

(3-12-65)

RAPID CITY, S. D. (BP)--One third of the more than 43,000 residents of South Dakota's second largest city, Rapid City, are non-churched.

This fact became known following an area religious survey conducted by some 800 workers from most of the city's churches.

Don Mabry of Cheyenne, Wyo., an approved survey specialist of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, released figures from the house-to-house canvass.

Technical direction of the survey was given by Mabry and by John Allen, Southern Baptist area missionary from Huron, S. D.

Mabry said though 75 per cent of the people indicated church membership (the national average is 64 per cent), six per cent do not have local membership, and another seven per cent do not attend as often as once a month.

Thus surveyors compiled a book of the non-churched which equals 38 per cent of the population.

More than 8,000 children under nine years of age were canvassed and 62 per cent are neither church members or do not attend Sunday school.

The survey revealed the denominational strength of the churches as follows: Catholic 29.9 per cent, Lutheran 23.4, Methodist 13.3, Presbyterian 10.3, Baptist 5.1, and Episcopal 4.4. All others were less than 2 per cent.

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This/the second area religious survey directed by the Department of Survey and Special Studies of the Home Mission Board in South Dakota. Pierre was surveyed in 1962.

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Stetson To Build
\$600,000 Men's Dorm

(3-12-65)

DELAND, Fla. (BP)--A men's residence hall, costing approximately \$600,000, will be built on the campus of Stetson University (Baptist) here in the coming year.

A firm of architects in Jacksonville, Fla., has been employed to make working drawings for the new dormitory which will house approximately 150 men. The building is to be available for occupancy when the university opens for the fall term in 1966.

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500 SBC Churches
Pray For Brazilians

By The Baptist Press

More than 500 Southern Baptist churches have asked for the name of some Brazilian Baptist church to pray for during the next three months when the South American churches are engaged in an evangelistic crusade.

The prayer support project--called "Operation Prayerlift"--is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission. "Operation Prayerlift" was arranged after the Brazilian Baptist Convention requested Southern Baptists to pray for their nationwide Brazilian evangelistic crusade continuing through May.

Goals of the crusade are 300 new churches and 250,000 converts to Christ. Participating are the 2,000 Baptist churches and preaching points in Brazil, where the membership is currently 250,000.

Southern Baptist churches are receiving names of Brazilian churches through the SBC Brotherhood Commission office in Memphis, according to George W. Schroeder, Commission executive secretary.

When the Commission sends out the name of a Brazilian church, it also includes suggestions for conducting various types of prayer periods.

One of the 500 Southern Baptist churches praying for a Brazilian church is the First Baptist Church of Jackson, Tenn., where SBC President Wayne Dehoney is pastor. The Tennessee church has used the month of March to remember the Coldwater Baptist Church, a small church in Sao Paulo.

Dehoney said the Jackson church was combining the Brazilian prayer need with a prayer program already planned. "We can't think of America without thinking of the Americas...to join hands with Brazilian Baptists now in prayer," he said.

Schroeder said all Brazilian Baptist churches would have Southern Baptist prayer partners before the Brazilian crusade ended. (BP)

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Texas Board Asks
Church-State Study

(3-12-65)

WACO, Tex. (BP)--The Texas Baptist executive board meeting at Baylor University here voted to ask a committee to re-study the convention's policy on church-state separation and elected four new employees to fill staff vacancies.

Meeting at Baylor in conjunction with the school's Ministers Day, the state Baptist board asked board chairman J. Carroll Chadwick to appoint a 15-member committee to re-study the convention's 1961 statement on church-state separation.

The board elected Harold Bennett, Metropolitan Missions Department secretary for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, to a top position.

Bennett will become director of the State Baptist Missions Division on May 15, succeeding Charles McLaughlin who was promoted recently to state Missions Commission secretary.

Ralph Neighbour, Jr., area missions superintendent in eastern Pennsylvania for the Home Mission Board, was elected associate in the Evangelism Division; William R. Cox, minister of education for Union Avenue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., was named associate in the Sunday School Department; and R. Clyde Hall, Jr., minister of education for Gambrell Street Baptist Church in Fort Worth, was elected Training Union associate.

Resolutions opposing Texas legislation that would legalize race track gambling and liquor by the drink were adopted by the board, and a committee's interpretation of complex changes in the state Baptist constitution were approved.

The meeting at Baylor was the first time Texas Baptist leaders could recall the board's meeting away from Dallas, site of state convention offices, except for sessions during an annual convention.

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Maryland Paper Gives
Ecumenical Information

BALTIMORE, Md. (BP)--The Maryland Baptist, denominational weekly newspaper published here, has announced editorially it will begin to inform its readers on the ecumenical dialogue now going on in Baltimore and elsewhere.

The paper carried a news account by editor Gainer E. Bryan, Jr. of an address on ecumenism delivered by Lutheran pastor Martin Niemoller of Germany to an interfaith audience at a Baltimore Catholic parochial school.

Explaining a break in precedent, the editorial in the weekly state paper reviewed the traditional aloofness of the Southern Baptist Convention toward the ecumenical movement.

This convention is the largest non-Roman Catholic religious body in America, with over 10- $\frac{1}{2}$ million members, and notable for non-participation in the national and world councils of churches.

Three reasons for this non-participation are given in the Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists, the editorial stated. They are "(1) a distinctive doctrinal position, (2) a strong congregational ecclesiology, and (3) practical considerations."

The editorial cited the invitation to the World Council leader, Niemoller, by the Archdiocese of Baltimore Commission on Ecumenism as "a sign of good faith" on the part of the Catholics. Heretofore, it stated, most of the news about Lawrence Joseph Cardinal Shehan's involvement in the ecumenical movement has seemed to be about his appearing before Protestant groups to explain his faith.

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Reeves, MacGorman Named
Baptist Hour Speakers

(3-12-65)

FORT WORTH (BP)--A Southern Baptist foreign missionary and a seminary professor will serve as speakers on "The Baptist Hour," Southern Baptists' weekly radio worship service during June, July and August.

They are Harold P. Reeves, Baptist missionary to Thailand now on furlough in the United States, and John W. MacGorman, professor of New Testament at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Reeves will preach on the weekly radio program from June 6 through July 11, and MacGorman will speak the second six weeks, July 18-August 22, announced Paul M. Stevens, director of the SBC Radio and Television Commission here which produces "The Baptist Hour."

The two men will serve as summer replacements for Herschel H. Hobbs, regular "Baptist Hour" speaker who will return to the program on August 29.

Reeves, a native of Shreveport, La., has been instrumental in initiating Christian radio and television programs in Thailand. He was a Baptist pastor in Texas before entering mission service.

MacGorman has taught at the seminary since 1948, and is a native of Nova Scotia, Canada.

Both Reeves and MacGorman earned the doctor of theology degree from Southwestern Seminary.

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Mary Hardin-Baylor
Plans New Chapel

(3-12-65)

BELTON, Tex. (BP)--Plans for a new chapel building at Mary Hardin-Baylor College here have been approved by the planning committee of the school's board of trustees.

The building is tentatively slated for completion by Feb. 1, 1966.

The chapel, with seating capacity of about 1,200, will also provide office space for the Bell County Baptist Association and two conference rooms.

A \$50,000 grant from the First Baptist Church of Bartlett, Tex., will be used to help finance construction of the chapel. Total cost is estimated at \$150,000.

The new building will replace Alma Reeves Chapel which was totally destroyed by fire last year.

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