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March 31, 1967

Religion Is Subject Of
Congressional Proposal

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Members of the 90th Congress have introduced a wide variety of bills and resolutions dealing with religion.

Leading them all, but fewer than in previous years, are resolutions calling for a constitutional prayer amendment.

In the House of Representatives, 37 Congressmen have introduced several versions of proposed prayer amendments. In the Senate, 43 have joined Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen (R., Ill.) in sponsoring an amendment that has been radically revised from its 1966 version.

Many observers in Washington think that few, if any, of these proposals will win final approval.

A perennial proposal on the congressional scene is the so-called Christian amendment. It proposes that "this nation devoutly recognizes the authority and law of Jesus Christ, saviour and ruler of nations, through whom are bestowed the blessing of almighty God."

Another resolution that has appeared in recent Congresses has again been introduced. It proposes that the Eastern Orthodox Church be recognized as one of the major faiths of the nation.

Thus, the major faiths would be Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Eastern Orthodox. It is reported that more than half the states have through their legislatures recognized Eastern Orthodoxy as a major faith. The United States has not recognized any religious group as a major faith.

One House bill would provide for a special canceling stamp or postmarking die for the Post Office bearing the words "For God and Country."

Another would inscribe the motto "In God We Trust" in the courtroom of the United States Supreme Court. It specifies that the motto would be "in gold letters of sufficient size to make the phrase legible throughout the courtroom."

On the negative side, another bill would prohibit the Postmaster General from issuing stamps depicting religious subjects.

Disregarding the fact that the Supreme Court has said that ceremonial references to God and religion do not violate the First Amendment, one resolution wants such a provision written into the Constitution.

This amendment would provide that "reference to belief in or reliance upon God or a divine being may be made in any governmental or public document, proceeding, ceremony, or institution, or upon any coinage, currency, or obligation of the United States."

Yet another bill would "provide time off duty for government employees to comply with religious obligations prescribed by religious denominations of which such employees are bona fide members." Such time off would have to be made up "under appropriate regulations of the authority concerned."

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Texas Baptist Couple Hit
By Car; Both Hospitalized

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CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP)--Mr. and Mrs. Ross Sams of Waco, Tex., were hospitalized here after being struck by an aut mobile while in Charleston to attend the Association of Baptist Foundation Executives.

Sams, chairman of the board of L. L. Sams and Sons of Waco, and a director of the Baptist Foundation of Texas, received back injuries and numerous cuts and bruises.

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His wife suffered a broken pelvis, broken wrist, and multiple lacerations.

Driver of the car, which hit the couple as they crossed the street, was charged with "failure to use due care and caution." He is Joseph C. Richardson of Charleston.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Sams will be hospitalized in Charleston for several days, said George Shearin, associate secretary of the Texas Baptist Foundation.

Sams, also a trustee of Baylor University in Waco, is head of the corporation which is reportedly the world's largest manufacturer of church furniture.

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Civil Rights Act Stirs
With Signs of New Life

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By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--Signs that the Civil Rights Act of 1967 is beginning to take on new life are beginning to appear in the 90th Congress, according to a report from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

The new Civil Rights Act has languished in Senate committee with no action on it for more than a month. Advocates of the bill, however, have adopted new tactics to force consideration.

The original omnibus bill is a package of six proposals. Its supporters are now introducing each of the six parts as separate bills and in some cases are getting them assigned to new committees.

The omnibus bill is in the hands of the Senate Judiciary Committee of which Sen. James O. Eastland (D., Miss.) is chairman. He is a deadly foe of civil rights legislation and blocks all action until he is forced to move either by his colleagues or by pressure of public opinion.

The Leadership Conference, an organization of over 100 groups interested in civil rights, points out the problem this year: "Apathy in Congress and in the nation." It reports that "mail on the bill is terribly low."

Title I of the bill would prohibit discrimination in the selection of federal juries. Title II extends similar prohibitions to the selection of juries in state courts.

Both these titles have been introduced as separate bills, but have been referred to the Eastland judiciary committee.

Title III is designed to strengthen the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. As a separate bill it has been referred to the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee of which Sen. Lister Hill (D., Ala.) is chairman.

Title IV would eventually prohibit discrimination in the sale and rental of all housing. As a separate bill it has been referred to the Senate Banking and Currency Committee of which Sen. John J. Sparkman (D., Ala.) is chairman.

Titles V and VI as separate bills have been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. The first one would make any interference with constitutional rights a criminal offense. The other would extend the life of the U. S. Civil Rights Commission for five years. It is now scheduled to end January 31, 1968.

The new strategy is to attempt to get these various committees to hold hearings, get a bill reported out to the floor of the Senate, and then the other parts can be added as amendments until the omnibus bill is reassembled on the floor.

It is common knowledge in Washington that civil rights this year is low on the legislative priority list. Congress is anxious to adjourn early with August 1 or September 1 as target dates.

In comparison to civil rights bills in 1963 and 1965, these too were low on the priority list until "public indignation compelled Congress to deal with the issues," according to the Leadership Conference.

The same will continue to be true of the Civil Rights Act of 1967. This is why the Leadership Conference is trying to get all its member organizations to stir up public interest to force Congress to act.

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Chaplaincy Seeks Data
On Ministries To GI's

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's division of chaplaincy has issued an appeal for information on church ministries to servicemen and women.

"We would like for churches involved in some type of ministry to military people and their families to communicate with us and share the facts of that ministry," Willis A. Brown, assistant director in charge of military personnel ministries, said.

Brown said the information will be compiled in a mimeographed report and then sent to churches that express an interest in what other churches are doing.

"We're particularly interested in any unusual or especially effective programs carried on at the local church level," he said.

He said the division was interested in church ministries to young people away in the service or to military people in the community.

"One church 'commissions' members who are leaving for military duty as military missionaries," Brown said. "They give a certificate to an individual that indicates to churches that this individual wants to be more than just an ordinary witness--he wants to serve."

Other churches operate service personnel centers, which provide activities for servicemen and women and their families, and some hold special services for families of military men and women.

"One Georgia church held a special service, gave the mother or wife or servicemen a corsage, and took color pictures of the families to send to sons and husbands overseas," Brown said.

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Youth Temperance Week
Proclaimed By Johnson

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WASHINGTON (BP)--President Lyndon B. Johnson has proclaimed April 23-29, 1967 as Youth Temperance Education Week.

The purpose of the week, according to a joint resolution approved by Congress, is to alert young people to the dangers of intemperance and to assist them in the development of moral strength, physical fitness, and civic responsibility.

The President called on the nation to consider during this week how to help young people develop the moral and spiritual strength to accept the challenge to build a better world for all mankind.

Acknowledging that our society is one of "unprecedented affluence," the President said:

"If our children are to be enriched and not despoiled by the abundance of our material life, we must search our own hearts and minds, our own values and priorities, to be sure that moral and spiritual qualities are not submerged or blunted in the selfish quest for personal security, comfort and luxury.

The President urged Americans to accept material abundance gratefully, as a "condition which liberates our spirits and frees our minds for the great and beneficent conquests of human sorrow, suffering and weakness."

"Human experience illustrates," the President also said, "that liberty and discipline are not in opposition; that, in fact, liberty finds its roots in discipline. For the wider goals, the larger dreams, the nobler hopes belong to those who have learned to discipline their impulses and desires, to direct them toward the constructive purpose and the creative challenge.

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Blackwell Says Baptist
Schools Need Outside Aid

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By John Roberts

CHARLESTON, S. C. (BP)--A Baptist college president told the Association of Baptist Foundation Executives meeting here that church related schools must have support from beyond denominational sources if they are to survive.

"In Christian higher education we must go after money," said Gordon W. Blackwell, president of Furman University, Greenville, S. C. "We must go after it hard and constantly. We must look for it any place we can get it. We must broaden our basis of support."

The educator said the key word for Baptists is "quality." He said Baptists must stress quality even if it must mean elimination of some programs and the closing of some schools.

Blackwell strongly implied a desire to see Baptist colleges receive federal grants for construction purposes. He said most corporations and other major donors would give more readily to agencies that receive benefit of their tax dollars.

He decried "ambiguities and paradoxes" among Southern Baptists in the matter of cooperation with the federal government in higher education. "The trustees of five of the stronger Southern Baptist colleges believe that federal aid does not violate our time honored principle of religious liberty," he said.

He pointed to substantial government grants to Baptist medical schools in North Carolina and Texas and to various federal loans and study grants.

"Furman University received \$285,000 in federal grants and \$2.8 million in federal loans from June to November, 1966," he reported, adding that the school counts \$9.4 million in federal support over a longer period.

Blackwell pointed out that Furman's two-year moratorium for federal grants for construction would end in November. This represents an agreement between Furman and South Carolina Baptist Convention, with the time devoted to studying the situation.

Blackwell was keynote speaker for the annual meeting of Baptist Foundation executives.

New president of the organization is W. C. Ribble of New Mexico, executive secretary of the New Mexico Baptist Foundation. He succeeds Carl G. Campbell, former executive secretary of Alabama Baptist Foundation.

H. C. Croslin of Illinois, executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist Foundation, is the newly elected vice-president succeeding Gordon Maddrey, director of the North Carolina Baptist Foundation. Re-elected secretary-treasurer was Ed F. McDonald, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

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Fort Worth Trio To Sing
During Indonesia Effort

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FORT WORTH (BP)--A trio of youthful Baptist music directors, who call themselves "The Embellishments," have accepted an invitation to appear in Indonesia in connection with nation-wide evangelistic crusades beginning in early April.

The trio is composed of Jerry Jones, student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here and minister of music at Halton Road Baptist Church here; Paul Paschall, minister of music and youth at North Richland Hills Baptist Church, Fort Worth; and Don Blackley, minister of music and youth at Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church, Dallas.

Traveling under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, they will appear on radio and television, in churches, schools, and civic-type meetings.

Their repertoire includes folk tunes, comedy numbers, and sacred selections. Jones plays the string bass, Paschall the guitar and piano, and Blackley the guitar and banjo.

While in Indonesia they will perform in 12 different cities, and afterwards will visit SBC missionaries in Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Thailand.

The group has been together for four years and has appeared in about 100 programs yearly. Last year they visited Hawaii for the Baptist Student Union Convention, and also appeared at the University of Hawaii.

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Second Mississippi Baptist School Signs Compliance

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BLUE MOUNTAIN, Miss. (BP)--The board of trustees of Blue Mountain College (Baptist) has voted to sign the Federal assurance of compliance, it was announced by Joe Jack Hurst, Jackson attorney and president of the trustees of the Baptist girls' school here.

"It will not be the purpose of the college to utilize any federal funds but simply to make the National Defense Education Act loans available to students at Blue Mountain College," said Hurst in making the announcement.

He further said that the board had acted after long, detailed and prayerful consideration of the needs of the students and felt that it was necessary for the continued growth and welfare of the college.

He said that a number of the college's best students had found it necessary to drop out of college or transfer to other institutions of higher learning during the semester beginning with February 1967 because they were unable to obtain loans to continue their education at Blue Mountain.

"It is the desire and intention of the board of trustees of Blue Mountain College to fully comply with the resolution adopted by the Mississippi Baptist Convention in 1966 regarding the use of federal funds," Hurst continued.

"The board feels that the signing of the compliance will not violate the resolution of the convention since it is not contemplated that any federal funds will be utilized by the college itself.

"The Mississippi Baptist Convention has placed in the hands of the board of trustees the responsibility of managing the affairs of the college and the board of trustees must use its best judgment after considering all of the relative facts."

The resolution adopted by the state convention in 1966 reaffirmed "our belief in the New Testament and historical principle of separation of church and state," and suggested "that our institutions not make application for nor accept any federal money."

In taking this action, the college becomes the second of the four schools maintained by the Mississippi Baptist Convention to take this step.

William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss., is the other college that has already signed. Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., and Clarke College, Newton, Miss., a junior college, have not signed the compliance form.

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McLemore Postpones Retirement As Mississippi College Head

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CLINTON, Miss. (BP)--The president of Mississippi College (Baptist) here, R. A. McLemore, has decided to continue to serve as president of the Baptist school until he reaches retirement age on June 30, 1968.

The college's board of trustees, in a unanimous decision, extended his retirement date until 1968, the board's chairman announced.

McLemore had resigned following a meeting of the trustees earlier this year, effective in August of 1967, asking for an early retirement.

He did not give a reason for his decision at the time, but the resignation came just following a decision by the board not to sign the Civil Rights Compliance Act and to shift funds from the school's operating budget to a student loan program so students would not obtain federal loans.

McLemore's decision to reconsider his early retirement plans was announced by B. C. Rogers of Morton, Miss., chairman of the board of trustees.

Rogers expressed gratification of the trustees over the progress the college is making and the prospects that the school year of 1967-68 will be the most successful in McLemore's career.

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CUTLINES

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CLOTHING SENT TO VIETNAM CHILDREN: Members of the Bayview Baptist Church in Columbia, S.C., sent five boxes of clothing recently to the children of Bau Ou, a village in Vietnam, where a member of the church serves in the U. S. Army. Captian Thomas L. Taylor (left with back to camera) opens one of the five boxes while an interpreter talks to the village priest (background with hat). When the clothes were given to the children, they "laughed with happiness", and "sang and danced to entertain the soldiers," reported one soldier who was present. (BP PHOTO)

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