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June 1, 1973

**Abortion Ruling Hit on
Two Fronts in Congress**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Congressional forces seeking to overturn the abortion decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court moved on two fronts on capitol hill.

The House of Representatives passed overwhelmingly an amendment that would allow tax-supported institutions to prohibit the performance of abortions and sterilizations. A similar measure was approved by the Senate in late March, also with a lopsided vote.

The amendments in both houses were part of an extension for the Public Health Services Act.

On the second front six senators introduced a constitutional amendment to protect "the right to life" at every stage of biological development.

Sen. James L. Buckley (R., N.Y.), chief sponsor of the measure, said the terms of the amendment would specifically establish that "unborn children are persons" within the meaning of the U.S. Constitution.

Under such terms abortions would be illegal, except as the proposed amendment allows, when the woman's life is in danger.

At a press conference called by Buckley and Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R., Ore.), a co-sponsor, Buckley said a fetus should be considered a "person" from the moment of conception. The central purpose of the proposal, Buckley said, "is to create... (and) restore a constitutionally compelling identity between the biological category 'human being' and the legal category 'person.'"

The Buckley amendment reads as follows:

Section 1. "With respect to the right to life, the word 'person,' as used in this article and in the Fifth and Fourteenth Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, applies to all human beings, including their unborn offspring at every state of their biological development, irrespective of age, health, function or condition of dependency."

Section 2. "This article shall not apply in an emergency when a reasonable medical certainty exists that continuation of the pregnancy will cause the death of the mother."

If such an amendment passes Congress, it would become valid after ratification by the legislatures of three-fourth of the states within seven years.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, noted serious church-state issues in the legislation now approved in both Houses of Congress.

In a statement released to Baptist Press, Wood said the "unprecedented" legislation raises serious questions concerning "the viability of the First Amendment as it applies to the separation of church and state and free exercise of religion on the part of those who find these medical services completely harmonious with their religious beliefs or moral convictions."

Regardless of one's own moral or religious views on abortion, Wood continued, "this legislation must be viewed as incompatible with the American tradition of public control and public interest as a necessary accompaniment to public funds."

By this action, the Baptist spokesman asserted, Congress "has ignored neutrality in matters pertaining to religious beliefs and has, in effect, given full sanction to the right of federally funded hospitals to determine the medical care that will be provided based solely upon the policy of the hospital."

Several bills have been introduced earlier in Congress aimed at overturning the abortion decision handed down by the court in January of this year. These bills have created little interest thus far.

The Buckley amendment was introduced with fanfare by him and Hatfield with a press conference and major speeches on the Senate floor. The measure is sponsored also by Sens. Harold Hughes (D., Iowa), Wallace Bennett (R., Utah), Carl Curtis (R., Neb.) and Dewey F. Bartlett (R., Okla).

The House measure concerning allowing tax-supported institutions to prohibit abortions and sterilizations was described by most congressmen speaking for it as a "freedom of conscience" provision.

The amendment, included in the Public Health Services Act extension, provides that courts cannot consider receipt of federal funds as a basis for requiring hospitals or other institutions to allow the performance of abortions or sterilizations within the institution.

In further action on an amendment from the floor, the House approved language that would prohibit hospitals or other "entities" discriminating against staff persons who participate in abortions or sterilizations in other facilities, or refuse participation on the basis of religious beliefs or moral convictions.

The House vote was 372 to 1. In March, when the Senate approved similar legislation, the vote was 72 to 19. The bill now goes to a Senate-House Conference Committee to work out differences.

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D.C. Convention Editor
Resigns After 19 Years

6/1/73

WASHINGTON (BP)--James O. Duncan, for the past 19 years editor of the Capital Baptist, weekly publication of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, has resigned, effective August 31 to enter private business.

Duncan is the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

In his letter of resignation to James A. Langley, executive secretary of the D.C. Convention, Duncan explained that some private enterprises are going to require his special attention for the next 12 to 18 months. He said that he plans for some additional studies during the next several months.

A native of Chapel Hill, N.C., Duncan graduated from American University, Washington, D.C., and from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Prior to his connection with the D.C. Convention, Duncan was pastor for eight years of the Hillandale Baptist Church in the suburbs of Washington.

In addition to his duties as editor of the Capital Baptist, Duncan was also director of the department of promotion, stewardship and public relations, and for seven years has been director of the department of evangelism for the convention.

In his wider responsibilities Duncan has served for six years on the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and a trustee of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Duncan states that he will continue to reside in his Washington suburban home where his wife is engaged in the practice of medicine.

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Baptist Leader Points
Out Watergate Lessons

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Baptist leader in the nation's capital declared that the greatest lesson of the "Watergate affair" may be that "without political morality there is neither law nor order and national decay is assured."

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, in the June issue of Report from the Capital, monthly bulletin of the committee, wrote on "Lessons from Watergate."

"Never before in American politics have so many high-ranking presidential assistants and men of cabinet rank been charmed with so much political scandal as now faces those from the present administration," Wood said.

He pointed out that the present scandal far exceeds others that occurred in the administrations of Warren G. Harding, Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

"Unlike the Watergate scandal," Wood said, "each of the scandals of these earlier administrators arose from allegations having to do with acts of bribery or the exercise of political influence for economic gain on the part of the persons accused."

On the other hand, he continued, "the charges growing out of the Watergate case are far more serious, not only in terms of the felonies committed, but also in that Watergate suggests acts of political sabotage and the use of raw political power to influence a presidential election, including the exercise of political power by undemocratic, unethical, and illegal means for political ends."

Among the lessons learned from Watergate, Wood said that "public knowledge of the Watergate scandal was made possible by the guarantees of the American Bill of Rights, specifically freedom of the press." He praised "the dogged determination carried out by the free press" as it made known the Watergate scandal to the public.

"For this meritorious service, all Americans of whatever political persuasion, who prize democracy and the free society, must be profoundly grateful. Without the guarantees of the First Amendment, the Watergate scandal most likely would never have become known to the electorate," he asserted.

Other lessons learned from Watergate, which Wood called "an American tragedy," are, according to Wood:

1. "Democracy, as long as it is able to sustain itself, demonstrably provides a check on the absolutizing of political power.
2. "The problem of evil is no respecter of nations, political parties, or persons.
3. "Democracy is rule by law--justice for all--not by men.
4. "Finally, Watergate underscores that the need for political morality is as great today as at any time in American history."

Wood observed: "No greater irony may be found in the Watergate affair than that it should have occurred during an administration that had used the theme of 'law and order' as one of its major means of gaining public confidence and political power. This disregard for personal compliance to a slogan used for the electorate is manifestly symptomatic of a lack of political morality in government."

Tackle Moral Problems, Commission Urges SBC

PORTLAND (BP)--Southern Baptists' social action leader called on 8,600 messengers here to communicate a gospel which reconciles separated families, distrusting classes, suspicious nations, conflicting races and alienated neighbors.

Speaking to the annual report of the Christian Life Commission, Foy Valentine, executive secretary, emphasized the critical need for Christians to express the moral word in the gospel.

Valentine's address followed the presentation of a 1,500-word statement urging Southern Baptists to tackle problems of racism, become involved in creative Christian citizenship, and face their responsibilities in other areas of social and moral concern as ways "to share the Word."

Presented by Cecil Sherman of Asheville, N.C., president of the board of directors of the social action agency, the statement challenged Baptists to resist flight from race problems, shun private schools which use religion as a camouflage for segregation, and relate to other races in their homes, communities, and churches.

Contending that many working for racial justice have been demoralized by the "benign neglect of political leaders and the sinful silence of religious leaders," the commission statement pointed out that "The Word of God stands in judgment of the contribution Southern Baptists have made to the white racism which is tragically entwined in the American way of life."

In the statement the commission urged Southern Baptists to preach the gospel to all people without respect to barriers of race, to resist white flight from race problems, to shun those private schools which use religion as a camouflage for segregation, to reject simplistic answers to complex racial issues, and to "cross racial barriers in sharing hospitality in our homes, housing in the communities where we live, and fellowship in our churches."

The statement alluded to Watergate activities in Washington while dealing with Christian citizenship needs.

"In a period when government seems to have grown too large, too powerful, and too arrogant to be influenced and when citizens' trust in government has been so severely shaken by the Watergate crisis as to attempt many to equate politics with corruption, responsibly active Christian citizens are needed."

The social action agency protested the use of "immoral means for the accomplishment of partisan, or even national, objectives." It decried the "absurd stockpiling of weapons" and "tragic junkpiling of welfare programs."

The commission denounced civil religion which mixes Christianity and Americanism and opposed "attempts to use religion for partisan purposes."

Family life, special moral concerns, and economics and daily work were other areas of concern dealt with in the statement.

In his address Valentine said, "There are some dread diseases that are now plaguing us with a vengeance. Without our full acceptance of the moral word in the gospel, they can be expected to rage out of all control."

The Baptist leader identified these diseases as Thompsonism, Skinnerism, Hefnerism, and Gamalielism and explained them this way:

Thompsonism takes its names from advertising and "is actually a reoccurrence of the old plague of Madison Avenueism.

"It has brought poison to our present political pot. It substitutes form for substance, image for ideals, charisma for character. It believes that ends justify means. It is not so much against the law as it is arrogantly above the law."

Valentine described the issue of Thompsonism as compromise and corruption in the church and shattering scandal in government, citing such aberrations as the "muddy Watergate affair."

Skinnerism was described as a sickness characterized by a delusion that man is not created in God's image, but is "environmentally determined and beyond personal accountability and moral responsibility."

Persons with Skinnerism "naively believe that for every human problem there is some technological or scientific fix."

In describing Hefnerism, Valentine said the malady was really old fashioned hedonism with pleasure as its supreme god.

Gamalielism, named for the ancient Pharisee, leads church victims to evade rather than evangelize, parrot rather than preach, and "wrap themselves in the flag of love while burning the flag of justice."

"The moral word in the gospel everlastingly challenges the status quo, focusing attention on the world that is to make it into the world that it ought to be," Valentine said.



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