



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 18, 1978

78-79

Quaker Loses Last Appeal In Tax Fight With IRS

WASHINGTON (BP)--The long legal battle of a conscientious objector who sought to escape paying some of his federal income taxes during the Vietnam war came to an end when the Supreme Court refused to review his appeal.

Robert L. Anthony, a Quaker and opponent of the war in Indochina, claimed what he called "war crime deductions" on his income tax returns for the years 1969-72. The Internal Revenue Service brought him to court.

The U. S. Tax Court disallowed Anthony's motion to present testimony in his case and summarily ruled against him. On appeal to a federal circuit court, Anthony again lost. That court held that his religious beliefs did not "alter his obligation to share the common burden" of paying taxes for military purposes.

The Court of Appeals went on to declare that "Nothing in the First Amendment grants immunity from otherwise valid legislation of general applicability merely because an individual disagrees, on religious grounds, with government policy."

Attorneys for Anthony asked the Supreme Court to review his conviction, arguing that he could not pay taxes for the waging of war "without effectively losing his freedom to exercise his religion."

Anthony converted from the Episcopalian faith to the Quakers during World War II because of the latter group's historic opposition to war. He argued through his attorney that "the history of Quaker peace testimony supports not only the withholding of one's body as a weapon of war, but also one's money."

The high court's unanimous rejection of those arguments has the effect of letting stand the decision of the Court of Appeals and of forcing Anthony to pay back taxes and interest.

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Battle Begins Against Contagious Diseases

WASHINGTON (BP)--Dr. Robert A. Hingson and six colleagues fired their one-pound "guns of peace" 125,000 times in St. Georges, Grenada, during one week in May to launch a mass immunization effort that the World Health Organization believes may rid the world of contagious childhood diseases.

Grenada, a Caribbean island of 110,000 persons, was the first of four pilot areas where Dr. Hingson tested the effectiveness of his jet immunization gun and vaccines in a beginning of what may be the greatest mass immunization effort in history.

Dr. Hingson, a Baptist layman and director of the Brother's Brother Foundation of Pittsburg, Pa., and his colleagues will move to Liberia, West Africa, on July 1, and to the Caribbean island of Haiti on October 15 in other pilot projects. A fourth pilot area, somewhere in Southeast Pacific, will be recommended later.

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The Grenada project began on a Sunday morning in the Baptist Church at St. George's. Dr. Hingson had hoped to vaccinate 200--the final total was 383. Before the end of the week, the guns had shot 125,000 doses of protective medicines into the arms of 41,000 persons ranging in age from three months to 76 years. Some had walked as far as 17 miles. Dr. Hingson said that 26,000 were children under 10 years old.

When Dr. Hingson announced he would give tetanus vaccine to pregnant mothers to protect them and their offspring, 200 mothers and five pregnant grandmothers showed up.

Dr. Hingson has been involved in mass immunization efforts since he developed an injection instrument that used compressed air to blow vaccine into a patient's flesh without the use of a needle. In 1962 he led an immunization team that successfully wiped out smallpox in Liberia.

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State Sodomy Laws Upheld
In Supreme Court Action

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press
5/18/78

WASHINGTON (BP)--States may continue to enforce their laws against sodomy, the Supreme Court has said in effect by refusing, 7 to 2, to hear the appeal of a North Carolina homosexual convicted of violating the statute.

Eugene Enslin of Jacksonville, N. C., was convicted four years ago of engaging in oral sex with a 17-year-old marine in the back room of a combination massage parlor, pornographic bookstore, bar, and sporting goods store. Both sides acknowledged at the trial that detective Sam Hudson of the Jacksonville Police Department set up Enslin in order "to run (him) out of town." Enslin was nevertheless convicted and sentenced to one year in prison.

Enslin's attorney argued in a written brief that "private consensual adult sexual behavior" should not be regulated by statute. He also held that the U. S. Constitution guarantees personal privacy "from unwarranted governmental interference."

He argued that North Carolina's anti-sodomy law violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment, although he failed in the legal brief to explain.

Commenting on that argument for the state, North Carolina Attorney General Rufus Edmisten said that the law does not "impose a rule of conduct on citizens for basically religious objectives." The law, he said, was enacted for the protection of public decency, not for specifically religious reasons.

The case has been in both state and federal courts for the past four years. Earlier, two North Carolina courts, including the state Supreme Court, as well as a federal district court and federal court of appeals had declined to review the conviction.

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Gay Rights Activists
Plan Bryant Picketing

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press
5/18/78

ATLANTA (BP)--Gay rights activists plan to demonstrate against the June 11 appearance of Anita Bryant during the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

The demonstration--which will feature a rally, march and picket--will be coordinated by a newly created organization, Atlanta Coalition for Human Rights, which promotes "civil rights for all people, including lesbians and gay men."

"We are not objecting to her coming and speaking," said Victor Host, coordinator of the Atlanta Gay Rights Alliance. "We are not picketing the Southern Baptist Convention. What we are demonstrating and picketing against is what she stands for; not her visit and not the convention."

Miss Bryant has become a focus on the gay rights issue following a successful campaign in Dade County, Fla., for repeal of a gay rights ordinance last June and subsequent endorsement of other anti-gay rights efforts.

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Organizers of the coalition and demonstration--many of whom did not want their names used--said the event is a "peaceful, legal action" which "is geared toward civil rights for all people, including lesbians and gay men...and not against Anita Bryant. This is a human rights issue and not a religious people-versus-the gays issue."

An estimated 2,000 persons are expected to take part in the demonstration, which will feature a 6 p.m. rally on June 11 in the Central City Park, a march to the Georgia World Congress Center where the Pastors' Conference will be held, and a two-hour picket.

Host said the demonstration will be non-violent. "We will not attempt to get into the Pastors' Conference," he said. "We don't belong in there and we're not going to try to get in." He said if there's any trouble, "it won't come from us."

According to James Moore, spokesman for the coalition, the group is endorsed by the American Civil Liberties Union, Gay Rights Alliance, Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party, several ministers and rabbis, and others.

One minister--Don Jacobsen of the Unitarian Universalist congregation of Atlanta--said he will support the demonstration because "it's a human rights issue. To me the measure of a democracy is the degree to which it protects minority rights. These are people and they have rights, rights which should be protected along with everybody else's."

Gene Guerrero, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia, said: "We're not saying that Baptists do not have the right to invite her. What we're supporting is an individual's right to live his or her own life regardless of whether others feel it is right or wrong morally."

Guerrero, a former Southern Baptist, added that he "is surprised that Baptists as a denomination are not more sensitive to the question of separation of church and state in this matter. The question is an individual decision, not whether the state ought to regulate a person's individual conduct."

"Baptists might believe this is a sin against God, but for them to say the state ought to regulate it is, to me, a violation of the notion of the separation of church and state."

Tim Hedquist, assistant to the treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee and convention manager, said: "We have made normal security precautions. I don't anticipate any unusual problem. My concern is that individual Southern Baptists do not precipitate anything. Many times the reaction to something like this (the demonstration) is worse than the action. We could make it worse than it is. "

"As long as they (the gays) picket on public grounds, that's their right unless they violate some local statute. If they do, that's the responsibility of the local police."

Atlanta police officials said extra lawmen have been alerted for the demonstration.

Bailey Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla., and president of the Pastors' Conference, called on Southern Baptists attending the Sunday night meeting to "behave like Christians." He has issued an appeal to Southern Baptist churches of Atlanta to dismiss services that Sunday night and "come down to the World Congress Center for a revival meeting."

He added: "We don't want the Sunday night session to look like an anti-gay rally. What we want to spread in Atlanta is the love of Christ, not anger. I hope there is no violence on either side. I don't want anybody to be unkind to a homosexual. We have got to love them and try to win them to Christ. We want the Sunday night meeting to be a rallying together and standing up for what is right and what is decent."

Smith said when he was told of the proposed demonstration, his "first reaction was to call Anita and cancel. But I thought if her own people will not stand up for her, who will? I think we ought to give her this opportunity to speak... to show Atlanta and the nation Christian standards.

"I think this is the time to get behind this courageous Christian who is bucking the tide of immorality."

Smith added Miss Bryant will be under guard, both by Atlanta police and her own bodyguards. "Her life has been threatened," he said. "That shows, to me, the bad attitude of the people who oppose her. They talk about their freedom, but won't let her have hers."

He said he hopes if the homosexuals come into the meeting "they will come to know Christ. If that would happen, I'd let them all in..."

But he added: "I don't want them to disrupt our meeting. It is a private meeting. The homosexuals are not paying for the hall, we are. We don't want trouble. We want love and peace. They've brought gay speakers into our area and we have never put up a protest. Why do they have to protest our meeting?"

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Involvement in Children's
Crises Urged By Speakers

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
5/18/78

NASHVILLE (BP)--Church workers with children must understand the crises many children face and be willing to become involved, speakers told participants in a seminar at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Death and divorce, child abuse, television, and drugs were cited as four critical issues by four speakers in a training seminar attended by 52 professional and lay workers from 13 states.

Guilt and anger are common responses of children to death of a family member or the divorce of their parents, said Norma Stevens, professor of education at Belmont College, Nashville.

"Our part in the program (of a church) is to accept the child, know where he is, and deal with him there," Dr. Stevens said. She said adults cannot relate effectively with a child about death or divorce unless they have worked through their own feelings and convictions about the issue.

"We tend to shelter children because we don't want to face our own feelings," she said.

Children cannot understand the irreversibility of death until they are 12 or 13, Dr. Stevens said. Consequently, a child is not being unrealistic in his mind when he says about a loved one who has died, "He would come back if he really loved me."

To relate with children in times of death or divorce, Dr. Stevens said workers should first help the child identify the hurt and remove any guilt he may be feeling.

Second, she said, the child must be encouraged to accept the reality of the hurt. A worker may help by sharing his own feelings and helping the child to see that it is okay to feel pain and to cry.

Third, a worker should encourage the child to express his feelings. "We need to help the child to mourn a loss," she said. Finally, the worker should continue to communicate long after he may feel there's a need to communicate.

Both individual and group action by churches is needed to combat child abuse, said Jere Ledsinger, executive director of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth. "As big and as powerful as Southern Baptists are, there's no reason why we can't do more about child abuse and other social issues," he said. "If it takes having a social worker on a church staff, so be it."

He said church members could get involved in foster care and that churches should support organizations like Parents Anonymous (a self-help organization for child abusers) by offering their facilities free of charge for meetings.

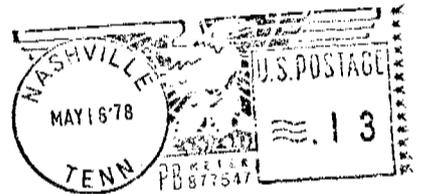
Mrs. Stanley Lis, president of the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, said that television programming causes children to develop a strong tolerance to violence. She said Christians must be more vocal in speaking out against television violence.

"Causing the deadening of children's feelings of respect for human life is the ultimate indecency," she said.



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