

September 24, 1958

Committee Opposes Two Federal Programs

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs opposes a federal civil defense program involving the nation's churches and also opposes any question about religious affiliation being asked during the 1960 federal census.

The stand of the committee was announced at its semi-annual meeting here.

In taking its stand concerning a feature of the government's civil defense program, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs reaffirmed its earlier position taken in 1957.

According to the committee, the office of religious affairs under the Civil Defense Administration has developed a theory of civil defense which includes enlistment of the churches and the denominations in combatting communism.

The Baptist committee contends that the churches have been and are engaged in the battle against materialism and atheism, and there is no need nor promise in plans which asks the churches to fit into a government program of ideological instruction.

"The committee's action is significant in view of the fact that the Civil Defense Administration has ignored the earlier protest of this Baptist group and is proceeding with its plans for enlisting the churches," C. Emmanuel Carlson of Washington, the committee's executive director, said.

"For instance, on Nov. 4-5, 1958, at Battle Creek, Mich., there will be a 'civil defense briefing for church editors' which will include ideological and spiritual phases, clergy organization and operation, psychological problems, and inter-faith ministrations under emergency situations," Carlson added.

The Baptist Joint Committee said there is a "continued possibility" the question of religious affiliation will be included in the official nationwide census year after next.

"For the government to include this question in a census which it is making is to raise serious questions about religious liberty, the freedom of the conscience, and invasion into the privacy of American citizens," the committee stated.

The committee asked Carlson to contact both the Civil Defense Administration and Bureau of the Census, conveying the committee's feelings.

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Observance Of Human Rights Day Requested

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has called on churches of its six supporting Baptist bodies to "appropriately observe" a special human rights day on Dec. 10.

That date marks the 10th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights by the United Nations.

The committee, in semi-annual session here, noted that "religious liberty is a fundamental human right and is recognized and included in the universal declaration on human rights."

"Because of this attention to religious liberty, the committee continued, the declaration of human rights is "of major concern to Baptists all over the world."

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The statement of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs will be presented to the Baptist World Alliance, which also maintains its administrative office here, "for such communication with Baptists in other lands as may be advisable."

Southern Baptists are among the six supporting groups.

The full text of the committee's statement:

"Whereas Dec. 10, 1958, marks the 10th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

"Whereas religious liberty is a fundamental human right and is recognized and included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which makes this declaration of major concern to Baptists all over the world; therefore as your committee on World Issues, we recommend that;

"The Committee on Public Affairs urge its constituent conventions in the United States to communicate with their churches in affiliation with these conventions and urge upon them the importance of appropriately observing this significant anniversary on December 10, 1958, in their own churches and in cooperation with such community and interdenominational observances as might be locally arranged;

"That the Committee on Public Affairs send a copy of this recommendation to the Baptist World Alliance for such communication with Baptists in other lands as may be advisable."

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Joint Committee Elects Cranford As Chairman

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Clarence W. Cranford of Washington, immediate past president of the American Baptist Convention, has been elected chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Cranford, pastor of the capital's Calvary Baptist Church, succeeds Eldon W. Koch, pastor of Berwyn Baptist Church, College Park, Md.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has its offices here. It is supported by six Baptist groups in the United States to maintain a Baptist representation in the nation's capital.

The committee's administrative staff reports to Baptists on developments concerning religious liberty and other affairs affecting church-state relations.

Other officers of the committee, elected here, include Walter Pope Binns, president of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., vice-chairman; A. C. Miller of Nashville, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission, recording secretary; Frank Brasington, pastor of First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md., treasurer, and Ralph Cole, Washington layman, assistant treasurer.

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Baptists In Indiana To Organize Convention

INDIANAPOLIS--(BP)--Southern Baptist churches in Indiana will send messengers here Oct. 3-4 to organize a state Baptist convention.

The meeting will be held at First Southern Baptist Church, Gordon W. Paschall pastor.

Southern Baptist churches in the state presently are affiliated with the Illinois Baptist State Association or with the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky.

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The new convention is expected to declare itself in co-operation with the work of the Southern Baptist Convention, in a manner similar to that of 25 other independent state Baptist organizations in the United States.

Representatives from agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention and from the Illinois and Kentucky state associations will attend, with many taking part on the program.

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Rights Of Clergymen
Subject Of Research

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The right of clergymen to protect confidences when called on to testify in court has been the subject of "extensive research" by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs here, committee officers reported.

Called in legal language "privileged communications," the question of whether ministers can refuse to testify about confidences was brought to public light recently in west Tennessee.

A young Baptist student minister was fined and given a suspended jail sentence when he refused to testify when called to the witness stand during a divorce proceeding. He had counselled with the parties suing for divorce, and said information received during these counselling sessions must be kept private.

The governor of Tennessee later pardoned the minister, declaring that the rights of ministers to privileged communications (or communications which they can keep secret) should be recognized.

Tennessee and most other states, it was pointed out, have not enacted laws granting this immunity to ministers although it is granted to attorneys and certain others.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs said it has taken no position on the matter of privileged communication, but said that its staff has been instructed to prepare information for general distribution to Baptist leaders and others.

This information will be provided "with the hope that proper statutes can be enacted in the states that will clarify the issue," the committee said. Its study of the issue resulted in some "remarkable findings," according to the committee.

The Baptist Joint Committee announced that it will conduct its third annual religious liberty conference in the fall of 1959 on the theme "Religion and the Public Schools." 95 persons attended the 1958 conference which closed here recently.

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BP Folks and Facts.....

.....Wade B. East, superintendent of Illinois Baptist Children's Home, Carmi, Ill., resigned effective Oct. 1 to become superintendent of Moor Children's Home, El Paso, Tex. Moor Home, a new institution, is privately endowed and named in honor of its chief benefactor, a Baptist layman.

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The Deep Freeze
Has Ended An Era

OKLAHOMA CITY--(BP)--The deep freeze has killed off the food truck for the Oklahoma Baptist Children's Home here.

"Times have changed since 1930," the child care department of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma acknowledged in its latest bulletin.

"It was in the trying, pinching years of 1930, with a great group of children in the Baptist Home, that Supt. E. A. Howard started a movement which kept them from going hungry. There was little money but there was food.

"Dan Curb was employed to drive a two-ton truck over Oklahoma to gather food for the Home. At very little expense, except for gas and oil, he covered the state for 16 years (receiving) generous contributions of foodstuff from Baptist people and friends, and the day was saved," the bulletin said.

Then the depression years began to wane. "People had quit canning large amounts and deep freezers and locker plants were all the go. Soon only a half-ton truck was needed to carry the food . . ."

In 1949, Baptists in Oklahoma started a "One Day's Pay" cash offering for their children's home.

The food truck, a few years behind the steam locomotive, is making its last run. "The food truck of the past 28 years has served its purpose. With the decline of the food gifts from the churches, and with the opportunity of increased giving of money through the Thanksgiving Offering, we are terminating the scheduled trips of the food truck," the department bulletin continued.

Thus ended an era.

CUTLINES:

WORLD PEACE COMMITTEE---These are the members of the Committee on World Peace of the Southern Baptist Convention. Appointed at Houston during the 1958 session, the committee has the responsibility for finding ways in which Southern Baptists may help bring about world peace. Seated from left, A. C. Miller of Nashville, executive secretary, Christian Life Commission; Walter Pope Binns, chairman, president of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.; Convention President Brooks Hays, who called for appointment of a committee. Standing from left, E. H. Westmoreland, Houston minister; Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary, Foreign Mission Board, Richmond; Porter Routh, Nashville, executive secretary, Executive Committee; Chester L. Quarles, Jackson, Miss., executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention, and first vice-president of the SBC. They are standing beneath a portrait of the late Dr. George W. Truett, Dallas, former Convention president. Members of the committee not present are Joe Culpepper, Kansas City, Mo., layman, and Sen. Albert Gore (D., Tenn.)--Baptist Press Photo.