

BAPTIST PRESS

A BAPTIST NEWS SERVICE

Concise, thorough, accurate, and current news reports about Baptists or of special concern to the Baptist people.

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE
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November 21, 1958

Religion And Education
To Be Conference Theme

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The relation of the churches to the public schools and the place of religion in education will be the theme of the third religious liberty conference here Sept. 15-17, 1959, according to C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

At a meeting of the executive committee of the Public Affairs Committee it was agreed that the discussion sessions be limited to Baptists but that th participation be expanded to provide for as many as 200 persons. (The two previous religious liberty conferences were limited to about 100 people and the problems discussed had to do with the use of public funds by church agencies and institutions.)

"These conferences are not for the purpose of arriving at an 'official' Baptist position," Carlson declares, "but they are for exchange of ideas and discussion of the principles involved. As a result of the conferences it is hoped that Baptist thinking and convictions will be stimulated and that Christian answers can be found to the rising complexity of problems that confront the nation in the area of religious liberty."

Participants in the conference will be representatives from public affairs committees, Baptist educators, public school administrators, executive secretaries, editors, pastors and parents.

Four major areas of discussion have been tentatively agreed upon for the next conference. They are:

1. What precautionary policies are needed, in view of national policies, to safeguard the freedom and independence of the institutions of higher learning on which our Baptist movement depends for leadership?

2. What institutional patterns can be approved or created for giving the rising generation a more adequate Christian instruction than the one-day-per-week programs can achieve?

3. What can and should be done by way of adult church education to enable our Baptist people to respond to public issues as Christians and as Baptists with a realistic appreciation of the insights that give us coherence and consensus?

4. What principles and procedures must be recognized in the public schools in order to properly safeguard the religious freedom of all families in the community, and in order for us to have a consistent Baptist witness in all parts of our nation?

Church-State Problems
Arise In Education Act

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Church-state problems in the National Defense Education Act of 1958 are beginning to emerge into sharper focus, according to C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The church-state problems are arising from the provisions of the bill making possible loans and grants to educational institutions, both public and private, both for higher education and elementary and secondary schools, the fellowship program, and the testing, counseling and guidance programs.

In reference to the administration of the Education Act Carlson said, "While the policies being formulated pertain to public educational interests, nonetheless many of them will seek those public objectives through agreements with church-related institutions." He then asked, "When the policies have been made and the use of the formula has been enlarged, will these schools be church institutions or will they be public institutions?"

Calling attention to the future role of the United States Government in the processes of vocational guidance, Carlson said, "there is no concept that is more vital to church interest than that of 'vocation' in the broad sense of life stewardship. Churchmen will do well to keep in close contact with this program."

During the formulation and debate period of the Education Act, Carlson warned, "These cooperative arrangements for 'national defense' and 'to meet critical national needs' may present problems for schools which seek to remain church agencies. How much government supervision will be necessary in order to carry out the 'conditions of agreements,' as specified in the bill and as they will be developed in the administration of the bill, is difficult to conjecture, but the door is open."

Expressing the opinion that having a Washington office is not the whole answer in such problem situations, Carlson said that "unless Baptist voters out in the states see the problems and act on them, Baptists do not have a voice in the making of public policy."

BAPTIST FEATURES

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November 21, 1958

Church-State Separation
A Look At The North Carolina Report

By C. Emanuel Carlson*

progress

An important/report on church-state policies, prepared by a special committee of 25, has been approved by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The Committee was appointed in 1956. They took their assignment seriously and worked intensively on the issues. Their report is important both because of what it says and because of the questions left unanswered. Their report should be the occasion for wide discussion of the principles.

The Committee's assignment was a difficult one. The comments which follow are in no sense an attack on nor a critique of their work. Nonetheless, the conclusions reached by one area bear so heavily on the work of all areas that we must spare no effort to maintain nation-wide communications on these problems. In this spirit we urge careful study of the North Carolina Convention action.

The Committee's statement that there is no such thing as "absolute separation of church and state" is a call for more precise language. It is obviously true that these institutional patterns are not "absolute." But this statement also admits that we must be prepared to show what separation means and why we favor that policy. At this point there is a large gap in the report.

When one proceeds to study church-state relations one soon finds that churches get title to their property from the Register of Deeds, that the church building is erected according to a building code, beside a road built by a local government department, enjoying the protection of the police and of the fire department. These, and the Committee's list, may compel us to discard some ill-chosen vocabulary, but it does not alter the importance of "separation of church and state."

There are at least six facets that have given shape to our Baptist concept in this matter. These are not explored by the Committee's report but are in the background. In discussing the issues we must keep these fully in view.

1. Separation means that the church has its own reasons for being and that these reasons are distinct from those of the state. Both church and state may desire law and order, defense against foreign enemies, an orderly and just economy, the protection of the person, etc., but these are basically functions of the state and not of the churches. The New Testament presents a church that deals in the gospel, in a fellowship of faith, and in love to all mankind. Its members go out to participate as nobler citizens, but the institutions still have separate *raison d'etre*.

2. Separation also means that each has its own "public." A person is born into the state, and the political community therefore normally includes all the people. Not all, however, accept the gospel, cultivate Christian faith, or seek to nurture the distinctive Christian way of life. The two "publics" overlap, and the churches should strive to win all. Nonetheless, the two publics are and must be "separate." If the church is a fellowship of faith it must of necessity be a voluntary group.

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3. Furthermore, the methods of the church must be distinct from those of the state. Military action, police methods, and tax powers are all appropriate and usable toward the objectives of the state. These do not work as means by which to reach spiritual objectives. In contrast, the churches must rely on instruction, worship, prayer, love, to the end that their members may "put on the whole armor of God," including truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the Word, and the many other spiritual graces.

4. Separation in the above matters requires that there be separate administrations of the two institutions. The church cannot be a "department of ecclesiastical affairs" in the government, and the government cannot be the "action department" of the church. History is replete with evidence that the "use of the churches" for the "moral and spiritual" purposes of government makes them something less than the church of which Christ is Lord. Likewise, when the churches try to reach their objectives by political action they still have not done their job.

5. It follows that the two must have their own separate sources of revenue. The control of the purse represents final control of policy in the life of institutions. Accordingly, institutions that depend on tax funds are basically dependent on government regardless of how the Boards may be chosen. And further, payment of one's taxes involves an experience which is not even similar to Christian stewardship. The qualities of character which are developed by voluntary stewardship cannot be mistaken for those nurtured by the tax collector.

6. If the above distinctions are valid, it also follows that church and state must each have their own appropriate educational programs. The churches cannot delegate the education of their members and of their leaders to the state. Neither is it in order for the churches to attempt to monopolize the channels of knowledge so as to limit the political and economic order to the scope of the church programs. The former arrangement has always paralyzed the church and the latter arrangement has stagnated the state.

The importance of these broad principles is not difficult to see. The problems arise when we try to show what they mean in practice. Such practical issues as government loans to sectarian dormitories and hospitals, government grants to religiously sponsored medical research, and government aid to the dependent people who are cared for by denominational agencies.

In the face of these problems the North Carolina Committee recommended a procedure instead of a position.

"I. The Convention shall require its agencies and institutions to present any programs for government grants or any form of government aid not already authorized in kind by Convention action to the General Board of the Convention for review before agreements are made;

"II. Acceptance of such grants or aid shall be based upon approval of both Trustees of the institution or agency involved and the General Board.

"III. All institutions or agencies operating in cooperation with government as above shall report annually upon such operations to the General Board."

For guidance in this procedure three principles were proposed:

"1. There shall be no element of control by the other, either actual or implied.

"2. The Convention will enter no cooperative enterprise with government for the sole purpose of advancing its own interest.

"3. The Convention and/or its institutions and agencies may accept assistance from government only in such cases as will enable it or them to render services commensurate with that assistance."

North Carolina has probably not found the formula that answers the vexing questions how to practice religious liberty in a "welfare state." Nevertheless, they have contributed valuable materials for our denomination-wide discussion.

Kentuckians Kill Education Proposal

ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky.--(BP)--The General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, after a day-long discussion and debate among messengers, rejected a proposed new program of Christian higher education.

The action, in effect, reaffirmed the status quo. Kentucky association operates seven schools, including one senior college, three junior colleges, two academies, and a Bible school. A junior college in Louisville will open in 1960 as a branch of the senior college.

The association's survey committee had recommended the establishment of a Kentucky Baptist University in Louisville and called for the association to withdraw allocations of operating and capital needs funds from its academies and Bible school.

Trustees of the remaining four institutions--the senior college and three junior colleges---interpreted the survey recommendations, however, as leading sooner or later to the abolishment of their schools. This was because of a "priority of funds" clause of the survey report, setting forth the way in which educational funds from the association would be distributed.

The proposed educational changes were attacked openly for several weeks prior to the annual session of the general association. However, support for the proposals was expected from Baptists in the city of Louisville. Opponents said the new set up was contrary to the association's policy of meeting regional needs in Christian education in the state.

But when Rollin S. Burhans, pastor of Louisville's Crescent Hill Baptist Church, moved that the present program be retained it was almost immediately apparent that the new proposals were doomed.

A number of other recommendations were contained in the survey committee report, prepared with counsel from Booz, Allen, and Hamilton of Chicago, management consultant firm. These dealt with phases of the general association activity other than Christian education.

These additional recommendations were referred to the association's executive board for a year of further study. The executive board, at its Dec. 2 meeting in Middletown, is expected to have this business on its agenda.

In further action regarding its education program, the general association voted to dissolve its department of Christian education and establish instead a Christian education committee. The department of Christian education had carried an executive secretary in an administrative capacity, but the office had been vacant in recent months.

The new Christian education committee will be composed of four trustees from Georgetown College, the senior college; two trustees from each of the three junior colleges, a single trustee from each of the academies and the Bible school, and 10 members at large.

Presidents of the seven schools will also serve on the committee but in a non-voting capacity.

The education committee was instructed to use the survey report on education in considering future Christian education proposals for the general association. However, it appears unlikely that there will be any change in the present Christian education program in the near future, an observer pointed out.

Burhans was later elected moderator of the association succeeding a fellow Louisville pastor, W. R. Pettigrew of Walnut St. Baptist Church.

Christmas For Christ
Gets National Attention

WASHINGTON -- "Christmas for Christ" will again be emphasized by the National Temperance League, according to Clayton M. Wallace, executive director. A special stamp with an effective religious theme but with the liquor bottle and cocktail glass, symbols of Christmas revelry, X-ed out, is being made available by the League.

The promotion of these stamps began six years ago as a part of the Christmas safety campaign. They are used in many states where an emphasis is being made on "spiritsless" Christmas parties. The League has also worked with national and state governments to encourage them to keep Christmas office parties free from alcoholic beverages.

Special emphasis is made by the League on highway safety, especially at Christmas time when the fatality figures show that 40 per cent or more of the drivers have been drinking.

The "Christmas For Christ" stamps are available in sheets of 50 each from the National Temperance League, 131 Independence Ave., S. E., Washington 3, D. C. The price is four sheets for \$1.00 (less in larger quantities).

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(Note to Baptist State Papers: Enclosed you will find a glossy print of the stamp "Christmas for Christ" which you may use in any way you wish or in connection with the above story. -- WBG)