

AUTHORIZED ADVANCE EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS OF HAROLD E. STASSEN OF MINNESOTA TO MINNESOTA TO THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI AT 3:30 P. M., MAY 9th, 1947. ADDRESS TO BE DELIVERED WITHOUT MANUSCRIPT.

Mr. President, Delegates and Guests of the Southern Baptist Convention:

I count it an honor to respond to your invitation to meet with you today and to discuss with you the subject "Baptists and World Peace." I bring informal greetings to you from my home church, The Riverview Baptist Church of Saint Paul, Minnesota, and from three of the Baptist churches of Europe at which I had the privilege of worshiping during my recent journey, the Avenue du Maine Baptist Church in Paris, the Moscow Baptist Church of Moscow, and the Bloomsbury Baptist Church of London.

Before proceeding with our discussion, in order that my view may not be misunderstood by inference, I wish to state simply and directly that I do not agree with the two resolutions which the press reports that you have passed on the questions of diplomatic representation at the Vatican and the Supreme Court decision on school busses. I do adhere to the basic American principle of the separation of church and state.

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I return from my recent journey with a sober optimism that we can win peace in the world if our America remains strong and follows policies that are wise and just and humanitarian.

I do not underestimate the difficulties. But I do have a reasoned measure of confidence that they can and will be overcome without war.

The sum total of human misery and suffering continuing in the wake of war is beyond adequate description. Peoples of all nations know the colossal cost of war and they have a determined yearning for peace that will be a powerful restraint upon the leaders of all countries, notwithstanding the variations in forms of government.

I hope and trust that the members of this great Christian denomination, and the members and friends of the other churches of our land will never surrender to the insidious whisper of the inevitability of war; that they give steadfast support to the social, economic and cultural objectives of the United Nations; that they will unceasingly build the moral foundations upon which this nation and world peace depend; that they vigorously uphold individual freedom, social, economic, political and religious; that they recognize and support the need of strength but never worship that strength; that they avoid internal and destructive dissension and narrowness, and practice tolerance; that they never embrace an attitude of smugly wrapping the cloak of our rich resources about us and "passing by on the other side" but practice the humanitarian principles which are an essential part of the morality which makes a man or a nation truly great.

Through such a course, interpreted into definite action on specific measures by free and open discussion in our civil lives, Baptists, and other churches, can contribute toward, and be optimistic of, a just and lasting world peace.

I close with an incident of a Greek shepherd lad on the mountainside of Mt. Hermes to the northeast of Athens. He was tending his uncle's goats in the afternoon sun. He had been a guerilla patriot in the mountains during the war in the bitter struggle against the Nazi Occupation. His own family's flocks had been destroyed. He was wearing tattered army clothing. His face was a strong, clear face. I asked him what his future hope and ambition was, and he replied, "I pray God that America will lead us to a lasting peace. Then we can rebuild our herds and replant our orchards and I will be a shepherd of my own flock."

WESTERN UNION

(Message)

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HON HAROLD STASSEN  
ST PAUL MINN

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NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST PASTORS CONFERENCE VIGOROUSLY PROTESTS YOUR USING SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION PROGRAM AS POLITICAL FORUM TO EXPOUND AS MATTER OF POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY YOUR VIEWS PERTAINING TO THE TIME HONORED AMERICAN PRINCIPLE OF COMPLETE SEPARATION CHURCH AND STATE.

YOU ARE ENTITLED TO YOUR OWN VIEWS BUT YOUR UTTERANCES AS OUR GUEST SPEAKER IN OPPOSITION TO EXPRESSED CONVICTION OF THE CONVENTION WE HOLD MOST REPREHENSIBLE.

TO PROFESS A BELIEF IN SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE AND AT THE SAME TIME TO UPHOLD AS YOU DID THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL RETENTION OF UNAUTHORIZED REPRESENTATION AT THE VATICAN AND THE SUBSIDIZING OF PARHOCHIA EDUCATION WITH PUBLIC FUNDS IS INCONSISTENT AND UNTHINKABLE.

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST PASTORS CONFERENCE D HOYLE HAIRE  
PRESIDENT

June 2, 1947

Mrs. George Hurtt  
335 So. 23rd Place  
Decatur, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Hurtt:

Thank you for your frank letter of May 22nd.

I appreciate your writing to me setting forth your views, and I am enclosing herewith a copy of my letter to the New Orleans Baptist Pastors Conference in response to a wire from them, which points up my position in the matter and the misunderstanding which arose.

I am, and was, fully aware that my statement results in a definite loss of political support - but I have never decided my stands of principle on this basis. I am as firm in support of the great principle of separation of church and state as any man.

I assure you it was with a sad heart that I found myself in the position where in good conscience it was necessary to state my position before the Southern Baptist Convention because of the wide and unexpected publication of their resolutions before my address.

There is so much division and bitterness and dissention in the world today that it makes my heart heavy to see our own Baptist denomination adding to it with this attack on Catholics. No one believes more fundamentally in the separation of church and state than I do, but I am certain that this action of the convention does not promote that separation but only increases bitterness and reduces our effectiveness in the great work the Lord has set before us.

I feel very deeply that there is so much to be done in reaching the millions of children and of adults without religious education, and in strengthening the moral foundation of world civilization, that it is indeed sad to have this diversion of task.

I trust you will respect my views and excuse my very frank answer to your letter.

Sincerely,

HES/vc  
enc.



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