

R E L I G I O N

Battle of Jonesboro

An airplane bearing tear-gas bombs zoomed down upon small Jonesboro, Ark. one day last week. The National Guard stood ready with machine guns and fixed bayonets. Would there be martial law? Arkansas' Governor Harvey Parnell sent ten State Highway policemen. Local police were practically of no use; they wanted to take sides and get in the battle themselves. For of Jonesboro's 10,000-odd inhabitants, fully 7,000 were enjoying a breath-taking series of revival-meetings, near-riots, brawls and courtroom scenes.

Rev. Joe Jeffers, 33, Baptist evangelist, had arrived in Jonesboro for a series of meetings. Short, bespectacled, he was a rousing, tingling exhorter. It was known that he had been shot at twice last spring when he was lambasting St. Louis in a campaign to clean up gambling. Jonesboro was glad to have him back, especially when he went at once to shout defiance at his rival, Rev. Dow H. Heard, 35, red haired, rangy, lantern-jawed, pastor of the First Baptist Church. Evangelist Jeffers, Jonesboro believed, was trying to oust Mr. Heard from his pastorate. He had accused Mr. Heard of immorality in Big Spring, Tex. Some of Evangelist Jeffers' men started in an automobile to Big Spring to obtain affidavits substantiating the charge. Quickly two friends of Mr. Heard flew to Big Spring, returned with affidavits declaring the charges untrue.

That night a meeting was held in the First Baptist Church. Quietly began the whitewashing of Mr. Heard. A quarrel broke out. George Cox, his son George Cox Jr., strapping football player of the University of Arkansas, and J. W. Cox, a chiropractor, jumped on Dr. Henry Lile, a dentist. At once Footballer Cox was arrested, dragged off to jail.

Evangelist Jeffers and 500 of his supporters followed to the courthouse. There they began singing hymns. Mayor Herbert J. Bosler ordered them to stop. "Then let us pray for a minute!" cried Evangelist Jeffers. He knelt on the courthouse steps, prayed for four minutes. Time was up, said the Mayor. "May God strike the Mayor dead!" shouted the Evangelist, as his followers rained blows on Mayor Bosler and Chief of Police W. C. Craig. Deputies broke up the meeting.

Sputtering, outraged, Mayor Bosler sent a telegram to the Governor, asking for troops. Capt. Harry E. Eldridge of the R. O. T. C. of the State Agricultural College at Jonesboro and Blytheville National Guard mustered 75 guardsmen, telegraphed the Governor: "Thousands of lives are endangered. . . . Declare martial law now or shoot down 1,000 church members with machine guns." The Governor sent his personal secretary. Came 150 more National Guardsmen.

Into Evangelist Jeffers' big tent crowded 5,000 excited people. Guardsmen trained

machine guns upon them. Capt. Eldridge warned Evangelist Jeffers to cease his "slandrous attacks." Retorted Evangelist Jeffers: "I take orders from no one except God." Perspiring, Capt. Eldridge waited. "If the Rev. Joe Jeffers makes any more dirty cracks . . ." he said, "we'll take him and his tent out of town." Trembling with excitement the town waited.

Troops assembled next day at the courthouse. Followers of Evangelist Jeffers waved Bibles, sang hymns. Footballer Cox, his father, and Dentist Lile were tried for assault. The case against Father Cox was dismissed. The other two were fined \$5 each. Evangelist Jeffers was not present, but reiterated that he would stay in town until "the church gets a real pastor." Glumly, Jonesboro went about its accustomed work, wondered what it had been so excited about.

Comforting Coadjutor

Being Bishop Coadjutor of a diocese in the Protestant Episcopal Church means lots of work, little money, little kudos—unless you are an astute politician. In seclusion last week the rector of a rich, socialite church was trying to decide whether he wanted to be a Bishop Coadjutor. The diocese of Connecticut had none; since 1928 Bishop Edward Campion Acheson had been his own Coadjutor. Now he had found he needed an assistant. A diocesan convention was held in Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford. Chief candidates were High Churchman Rev. Dr. Samuel Smith Drury, rector of St. Paul's School (Concord, N. H.); Low Churchman Rev. Dr. Howard Chandler Robbins, onetime dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine who a week before had been belaboring his oldtime superior, Bishop William Thomas Manning of New York (TIME, Sept. 14); and Middle Churchman Rev. Dr. Frederick Grady Budlong, rector of Christ Church, Greenwich, just returned from junketing in Paris. Soon as balloting began, the race was between Dr. Robbins and Dr. Budlong. On the fourth ballot Dr. Budlong was elected, subject to ratification by this week's General Convention in Denver. He thanked his electors, said he would seek release from his Greenwich parish before accepting definitely.

Born 50 years ago in Camden, N. Y., Dr. Budlong did missionary work in southern Minnesota, held parishes in St. Paul, Winnetka, Ill., Chicago and Pittsburgh before going to Greenwich in 1925. He is grey-haired, affable, plays a fair game of golf at Round Hill Club. For Independent Syndicate Inc. he writes a daily "Word of Comfort" to be used at the head of obituary notices in newspapers of 30 States. Sample: "Do you feel that your life is in complete disarray and that you are a victim of hopeless bewilderment? Lay hold upon certain pivotal facts: God loves you; the earthly life is preparation for a richer life beyond"; etc., etc.

Friends of Dr. Budlong thought he would accept the Bishop Coadjutorship. If he does so he will give up a pleasantly middle-of-the-road-ish parish; a salary of \$12,000 a year; a large residence; an automobile; an impressive socialite congregation. As Bishop Coadjutor he would get \$7,000 a year and \$5,000 for his



As refreshing as a northwest breeze, and just as lively—White Rock, the Leading Mineral Water, and White Rock Pale Dry Ginger Ale.