

October 16, 1960

'Churches Wide Open' Cuba Baptist Reports

ATLANTA--(BP)--"Churches of all denominations are wide open and hold all the services they have ever held," Herbert Caudill of Havana, Cuba, declared in a mimeographed statement received here.

Caudill, director of Southern Baptist Home Mission Board activities on the western half of the island, prepared the paper to "keep the record straight."

It was dated Sept. 15 and was more than a month late in reaching home mission offices in Atlanta.

"We have not been persecuted nor has anyone else as far as I know," he said. "Cuba is more orderly than in 1933 when the Machado government was overthrown." The Caudills have been in Cuba for 30 years.

A statement by out-spoken Editor John Hurt of the Georgia Christian Index triggered the Caudill paper. Hurt had commended Roman Catholics in condemning the Communistic regime in Cuba.

"Baptists can sympathize with Roman Catholics in Cuba for we have experienced the cruel lash of persecution under Roman Catholicism as well as under Communism," Hurt wrote in a backhanded editorial of sympathy.

However, Caudill did not appreciate the double meaning of the Index editor's satire, since he did not feel The Catholic Church has fought Communism in Cuba but it is simply "a case of (wanting to get) back the subsidies that it received" from the previous government.

"I have been very close to the situation and have yet to hear of one specific case of anyone being persecuted for being a Catholic," Caudill wrote.

He admitted there had been some trouble in Catholic churches, but said it was "between Catholics, some believing one thing and some another. Pastoral letters by some of the Catholic bishops were not well-received by some of their members."

"I am not trying to defend Fidel Castro or the Cuban revolution," he added. "My only purpose is to clarify the present situation in Cuba. . . . The religious situation in Cuba is not identical with that in Colombia or Spain. No properties used for churches, Catholic, Protestant, or Baptist, have been touched.

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Kentucky Woman Wills
Denomination \$47,000

(10-16-60)

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--A Kentucky school teacher left \$47,000 in her will to the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program.

Miss S. Lillard Witherspoon, who died in Lawrenceburg, Ky., had an estate of about \$100,000, according to court officials where her will was filed for probate.

A member of Lawrenceburg Baptist Church, she taught in the beginner department of the church for 38 years. She also taught at Girls' High School in Louisville.

Officers of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky met with executors of the will and with court officials.

The Cooperative Program is a financial plan jointly used by state Baptist groups and the Southern Baptist Convention to support all types of Baptist education, benevolent, and mission work.

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Northeastern Association
 Expects To Double Growth

NEW YORK CITY--(BP)--Northeastern Baptist Association, meeting at Manhattan Baptist Church in New York City, announced plans to more than double the number of churches and chapels in the area next year.

There are presently five churches, 11 chapels, and seven fellowship groups. New goals call for 10 additional churches and 30 chapels.

This was the first annual meeting of the association, which was organized in the spring. It is not to be confused with the Northeastern Baptist Fellowship, which met recently in New York City. The association is composed of churches in or near greater New York City. The fellowship covers of 10-state area and includes the association.

Don Miller, pastor of the Farmingdale Baptist Chapel on Long Island and newly-elected chairman of the association's missions committee, reported 350 separate municipalities on Long Island, ranging from 25,000 to 150,000 in population, with only 60 Baptist churches.

Work in greater New York City, started in 1957, is directed by Paul S. James, pastor of Manhattan Baptist Church. He was also re-elected moderator of the association. Howard Hovde, pastor at Madison, N. J., was elected vice-moderator.

The association reported a Sunday school enrollment of 1,256, with 773 in Training Union, and total membership of 1,100.

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South Carolina Acts
 On Building Proposal

(10-16-60)

COLUMBIA, S. C.--(BP)--The South Carolina Baptist Convention will act next month on detailed proposals for a new \$584,000 state headquarters building.

Also before the convention will be plans to create a separate state missions department and to enlarge the headquarters staff.

The convention's general board will also propose a budget goal of \$3,350,000, an increase of \$100,000 over the 1960 goal.

Another issue facing the Nov. 15-17 convention sessions in Charleston will be the giving of more definite status to a proposed new junior college in the low-country area.

The organizational changes were suggested by a committee set up to plan the new headquarters building. The project was authorized by the convention in 1959.

The committee's mandate was enlarged later to include charting future organizational needs for which provision should be made in the new building.

The separate missions department, under a full-time director, should bring together functions now scattered in several departments.

Its director would be superintendent of associational missions and promoter of schools of missions and the 30,000 Movement. He would also work with other key leaders in recommending church building and pastors' salary aid.

A parallel recommendation would set up a separate evangelism department, also under a full-time director.

Three new headquarters staff members would be a general business manager, a public relations director, and a program service leader.

In making these plans, the committee rejected the idea of engaging professional management consultants. But members considered studies made in several other states.

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The general board will ask the convention to approve the committee's building plan. It calls for a three-story structure incorporating an auditorium seating 150 persons. Book store quarters would occupy nearly one-fourth of the 36,000 square feet of space.

Convention approval would pave the way for ground-breaking next summer, a spokesman said.

Cooperative Program receipts during the first nine months of the year totaled \$2,607,000, an increase of \$50,000 over the same period last year.

It appears unlikely, however, that the increase is sufficient to meet fully the year's \$3,250,000 goal. Failure to meet the goal could trim capital needs and advance programs somewhat.

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Presidential Nominees
Differ On Parochial Aid

(10-16-60)

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The Presidential candidates of both the Democratic and Republican Parties have clarified their stand on federal aid to parochial schools.

Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, Republican, says that he favors letting the states decide whether or not parochial schools should share in federal funds. Sen. John F. Kennedy, Democrat, is opposed to such aid as "unconstitutional."

Henry Cabot Lodge, Republican candidate for the vice presidency, advocates federal aid to parochial schools. His opponent, Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson, has declined comment on Lodge's stand.

A questionnaire by "Scholastic Teacher," a magazine for educators, has been made public with the answers of the Presidential candidates to the question: "Do you believe that federal aid should go to public schools only?"

Massachusetts Sen. Kennedy answered: "Yes."

Vice-President Nixon said: "Traditionally, federal funds have been provided in the field of higher education without regard to whether the aided schools were public or private. In the field of elementary and secondary education, such limited federal aid as has been voted in the past has not gone to private schools because of our tradition of free public elementary and secondary education.

"In connection with the major program of assistance that I have proposed, this money would go to the states for distribution as they see fit.

"Hence, it would be up to each state to decide whether federal funds given to each state should be used for both public and private schools."

In a national telecast of the program, "Face the Nation," Lodge recalled that while he was a member of the Senate he voted for a school construction bill which would have permitted use of federal money for purchase of textbooks and bus service in parochial and other private schools.

Lodge said he would vote the same way again, adding that the United States should not "draw a line between a private school boy and a public school boy.

Commenting on Lodge's position, Arthur S. Flemming, secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, said that the proposal of federal aid to parochial schools "makes no sense." He said the proposal is an idle gesture, because Congress would not approve it.

Meanwhile, Roman Catholic educators and parents' groups continue their drive to create a public sentiment that will allow the government to provide public tax aid for their parochial schools.

Conversely, Protestant and other groups throughout the nation are reminding both the candidates and the public of the guarantees of the Constitution for religious freedom and the dangers to separation of church and state if public funds are used for sectarian institutions.

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Commission Appeals
For Training Site

MEMPHIS--(BP)--Members of the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission here called the Convention's attention to the "pressing need" for a training center for men and boys.

In a resolution, they expressed hope the Convention will soon provide such a center. The center would train leaders of Brotherhood (laymen) and Royal Ambassadors (boys).

A budget of \$338,500 was approved, largest in the history of the commission.

Officers chosen for the coming year were Plaford Davis, investment counselor of Effingham, Ill., chairman; Doyle E. Carlton, Jr., cattleman (recent unsuccessful candidate for governor of Florida), vice-chairman; and Joe Burnette, education director of First Baptist Church Columbia, S. C., recording secretary. George W. Schroeder, Memphis, was re-elected executive secretary-treasurer.

Davis succeeds R. L. Sherrick, former insurance executive of Memphis, who recently became circulation-merchandising manager for the Brotherhood Commission.

Schroeder presented to the commission a comprehensive statement of a suggested program of work for the Brotherhood Commission based on responsibilities assigned to the commission by the Southern Baptist Convention.

The program, under two headings, "Development of Men" and "Boys' Work," was approved by commission members with the suggestion that it be given to the program committee of the S B C Executive Committee for consideration.

Reports on the new Brotherhood organization, which became effective recently, indicated it is being enthusiastically received, and that Brotherhoods throughout the Convention were converting to the new plan according to schedule.

An enlarged Royal Ambassador program will be ready for use by October, 1961.

The commissioners received a report on the recent mission tour of 56 laymen to Mexico, and plans were revealed for a medical team of five doctors to visit the San Blas Islands off Panama early in 1961. These doctors will travel at their own expense and work under the direction of the S B C Home Mission Board missionaries of that area.

The San Blas project is part of a co-operative plan being worked out by the Brotherhood Commission and the Home Mission Board to use laymen in mission work in various ways. The agencies hope to use at least 400 men in mission work in the United States next year. They will go at their own expense, principally to pioneer areas and serve under the direction of the Home Mission Board.

Dr. David Fried, Oklahoma member of the commission, reported on his recent journey to Nigeria where he spent 15 weeks working with Southern Baptist medical missionaries in hospitals there. Dr. Fried, who went under the direction of the S B C Foreign Mission Board, traveled at his own expense. He left his medical practice in Bethany, Okla., to render this significant service.

"Serving as a missionary and with our Southern Baptist missionaries was the greatest thrill of my life," reported Dr. Fried. "I only wish I were young enough to qualify for permanent appointment," he declared. He is 47.

Latest official statistics (1959) reveal 397,000 men are enrolled in church Brotherhoods and 225,000 boys in Royal Ambassador chapters. This was a net increase of 36,000 men and boys in one year. Another upsurge in membership is expected when statistics are compiled for 1960.

Growth in membership is being matched by circulation increases in the commission's major publications, the commissioners were told. The Brotherhood Journal has this year averaged a circulation of 102,000 per quarter; Ambassador Life, 94,000 per month, and Ambassador Leader, 16,700.

Folks & facts.....

.....The new chapel at Howard College, Birmingham, Ala., will be named for Baptist leader A. Hamilton Reid, Montgomery, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist state executive board. Dedication ceremony will be held in the chapel Nov. 15 during the annual Baptist state convention in Birmingham. (BP)

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.....P. P. W. Ziemann, general secretary of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, died in Toronto Oct. 9 of a heart attack. (BP)

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Tennessee Tax Board
Sustains Exemption

(10-16-60)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The Tennessee State Board of Equalization ruled here that religious and education groups won't have to pay taxes on \$6 million worth of property assessments.

The tax board upheld the exempt status of the lands, for which the city of Nashville has been seeking taxes. The decree knocked from the rolls a city assessment of \$4.7 million against holdings of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The board would have had to pay city taxes amounting to about \$140,000 had the city tax levy been valid. Other taxes, which would probably have followed, would have increased this to perhaps \$250,000 a year or more.

There was no immediate indication if the city has the right to appeal, or if it would appeal even if it can. Next in the sequence of appeals are the state courts of Tennessee.

The tax levy, which caught the Sunday School Board by surprise 10 months ago, had been fought by the Baptist agency on grounds that "the power to tax is the power to destroy."

Agency leaders have expressed willingness to discuss with city officials a voluntary payment for city services, such as fire and police protection, but they flatly rejected the idea of a mandatory tax.

The city of Nashville's tax effort created a chain of reactions within Southern Baptist life. It prompted that Executive Committee of the S B C to consider moving its offices from Nashville, although the tax issue was not a major factor in the reasons offered for considering the move.

The city's tax levy also led to a study of the tax-exempt status of all church and denominationally-owned lands. The study was conducted in September by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D. C., at its annual religious liberty conference.

Statement of Sunday School Board Executive Secretary James L. Sullivan: "The Baptist Sunday School Board is, of course, pleased that the State Board of Equalization has found that 'all of the properties of this organization are used either purely and exclusively for religious purposes or for purposes so close thereto as to come clearly within the purview of the exemption provided for in the Tennessee statute.' This holding vindicates the stand which the Sunday School Board has taken from the start--that it has always been a religious institution and that its activities are wholly and simply an extension of the Baptist churches which it serves.

"The Sunday School Board is proud to be a religious institution located in Nashville. It is for just such religious purposes that the exemption statute has been in effect in Tennessee for more than a hundred years. The Sunday School Board has not requested any special favors but only its rights under the applicable laws. This position the State Board of Equalization has upheld.

"But more than this, the Baptist Sunday School Board and the churches it serves are aware of its responsibility to be a good citizen and to carry its share of the civic load. It would be easy to prove the economic values of the Baptist Sunday School Board to Nashville but its much more important values are to be measured in terms of its spiritual, moral, cultural, and educational contributions to the community." -30-

Hansen Sees 'Interest'
In Southward Appeal

NEW YORK--(BP)--Clifford G. Hansen, newly-appointed general missionary in the South for the American Baptist (Convention) Home Mission Societies, indicates that "general interest" in his work has been expressed by persons in the North and in the South.

Reporting here to the societies' board of managers, Hansen said that 35 groups in seven states already want to further explore affiliation with the American Baptist Convention.

Hansen sent a letter to every American Convention pastor recently requesting the names and present addresses of members and friends of the church who now live in the South. The information received is being collated to determine those areas in the South where there are sufficient nucleus groups for beginning American Convention churches. Contacts will then be made to explore such possibilities.