

July 16, 1961

Ask For Rehearing
Of Sunday Laws

WASHINGTON (BP)--Appellants who lost their appeals against the enforcement of the Sunday laws of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts have asked the United States Supreme Court for a rehearing on those cases in its next term.

Attorneys for Orthodox Jewish merchants in Philadelphia, Pa., and Springfield, Mass., and for the chair store, "Two Guys From Harrison," Harrison, N. J., told the high court it erred in finding that laws requiring closing of business establishments on Sunday are intended for a secular rather than a religious purpose.

The Supreme Court rarely grants an appeal for a rehearing of a case it has already decided. Principal effect of the petition for rehearing will be to delay collection of fines from the merchants in question and to discourage local law enforcement authorities from taking any new cases to court until the Supreme Court has had its final word.

Since the Supreme Court is in its summer recess, a formal ruling will not be made until October on the petition for rehearing.

Meanwhile, in more than a score of state legislatures efforts are being made to bring Sunday laws up-to-date in line with the Supreme Court decision.

Efforts to amend Sunday laws had been held in abeyance in the past year, pending the high court's ruling. Now many states are considering the problem of bringing their laws into line with the court's dictum that states have the authority to set Sunday aside as a day of rest and recreation but not a day of worship.

So many exceptions have been made to Sunday laws in some states that businessmen are continuing to take cases to court claiming that the classifications are too vague or discriminatory and bear no reasonable relation to the purpose of the law.

In Cleveland, a state court has declared Ohio's Sunday law unconstitutional on this basis. A similar decision was made by a court in Toledo. These cases are expected to make their way to the Ohio State Supreme Court and eventually to the United States Supreme Court.

Leo Pfeffer, general counsel of the American Jewish Congress, predicts a nationwide campaign will be launched to repeal all Sunday laws through legislative action, contending they are archaic and out of keeping with the modern age.

Supermarkets which have been open on Sundays in various areas not enforcing Sunday laws report that their sales on that day amount to as much as 35 per cent of their weekly volume of business, indicating the competitive advantage of being open seven days a week.

Many business groups representing merchants who want to have a day off on Sunday from the demands of trade and store management, and the Retail Clerks International Federation (AFL-CIO) whose 600,000 members want Sunday off to spend with their families, are allied on the side of church groups in trying to preserve Sunday as a traditional day of rest.

The battle, however, in the 50 state legislatures is far from won.

North Carolina Opposes
'Backdoor' Loan Aid

SOUTHPORT, N. C. (BP)--The general board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina urged the state's 917,000 Baptists to protest a bill before Congress giving 'backdoor' aid to parochial schools.

Meeting at the state Baptist assembly grounds near here, the board asked Douglas M. Branch of Raleigh, the state's general secretary, to wire North Carolina members of Congress. He would inform them of the board's position.

The bill before Congress would amend the National Defense Education Act of 1958 to provide long-term, low-interest building loans to private and parochial schools. Loan funds would build facilities to teach science, mathematics and modern foreign languages, as well as gymnasiums and cafeterias.

"Such aid is being proposed through camouflage of special purpose loans for national defense," Henry B. Stokes of Tryon, N. C., said. He is chairman of the state convention's public affairs committee.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, representing Baptists nationwide, has called this loan approach "a backdoor method" of amending the 1958 defense education act, Stokes said.

North Carolina thus joined Texas and Virginia Baptists in opposing federal loans to sectarian schools. Baptist college administrations, however, have given almost unanimous endorsement to such loan provisions.

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A. Harold Cole Picked
For Education Post

(7-16-61)

SOUTHPORT, N. C. (BP)--A. Harold Cole of Raleigh is the new executive secretary of the council of Christian education for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Cole, secretary of Baptist student work in North Carolina until his recent election, succeeds Claude F. Gaddy. Gaddy is retiring.

Jack R. Bagwell of Raleigh, another state convention officer, was selected to be the new secretary of the convention's building and planning department. He will succeed Leonard L. Morgan, retiring Oct. 1.

Morgan has been connected with the convention for 35 years. He has been in the present post seven years. Bagwell has, for the past six years, been associate secretary of the Sunday school department. He has been in charge of associational promotions.

Gaddy had announced he would retire Aug. 1.

Cole and Bagwell were elected by the state convention's general board here.

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History Group Renames
R. N. Owen President

(7-16-61)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Richard N. Owen of Nashville, editor of the Baptist and Reflector, has been reelected president of the Southern Baptist Historical Society.

The society held its annual meeting in Nashville, following the annual meeting of the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Mrs. Ollin J. (Minnie Belle) Owens of Greenville, S. C., was elected vice-president. The society retained H. I. Hester of Kansas City, Mo., as secretary. It elected Davis C. Woolley of Nashville, executive secretary of the Historical Commission, treasurer.

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The society announced it has 53 life members and 77 regular members. All are Baptists interested in preserving their denominational history. The society has no official bearing on the Southern Baptist Convention, although the Historical Commission is a Convention agency.

The society recognized J. L. Boyd of Clinton, Miss., long-time leader in Baptist history circles in that state, for his contribution. Boyd recently reached his 80th birthday. He is active in society affairs.

Various states reported Baptist history events in their areas. Arkansas held a Baptist history clinic. Oklahoma staged another tour of Baptist history points of interest. Illinois is marking its Baptist history sites.

Kentucky is preparing a map of Baptist history places in that state. In South Carolina, historians are indexing historical collections.

Special emphasis will be given to securing new members for the society during the coming year, especially among seminary graduates and college teachers.

July 16-18, 1962 will be the next annual meeting of the society. The dates coincide, as usual, with the meeting dates of the Historical Commission.

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History Says Baptists
Paid Price For Liberty

(7-16-61)

NASHVILLE (BP)--A study of history reveals how Baptists paid dearly for the truths they now hold, the chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Historical Commission said here.

W. Fred Kendall of Nashville told the commissioners at their annual meeting:

"It is through the study of beginnings and the origin of movements that we can understand our proper place in history and the price for the great truths Baptists hold so dear."

He said the commission has a two-fold program: (1) "a program of recording, procuring and preserving Baptist historical materials, and (2) a program of utilizing Baptist historical materials in serving the history interests of Southern Baptists."

The commission reelected Kendall as chairman for another year. Kendall is executive secretary of Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Two other Nashvillians were reelected to office--James M. Gregg, a pastor, as vice-chairman, and Gene Kerr, administrative assistant to Kendall, as recording secretary.

The commission voted to meet in Nashville again in 1962. The dates will be July 16-18.

C. C. Warren of Charlotte, director of the Convention's movement to organize 30,000 new churches or missions, told the Baptist historians it is important what happens during the remainder of the Baptist Jubilee Advance.

The advance, a cooperative effort of seven Baptist groups in North America, lasts through 1964.

He described 1959-64 as a "period of testing our survival plan."

He reminded the group 1954 was a year of awakening, 1955 a year of vision, 1956 a year of decision, 1957 a year of inventory, 1958 a year of prayer and preparation. He said the most important years are yet to come.

Porter Routh of Nashville, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, pointed out "a real and vital contribution can be made to Southern Baptist life by helping to reconstruct the history."

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Groups Seek Peaceful
Atlanta Integration

ATLANTA (BP)--Christian and civic groups have taken steps here to avoid difficulties which have troubled other Southern cities in school integration.

Atlanta has been placed under Federal Court order to integrate this September. Georgia Tech, located in the city, will accept Negroes this fall for the first time.

Baptists of this deep South city were asked to make school integration a model for the world by Editor John J. Hurt Jr. of the Christian Index, official publication here of Georgia Baptists.

The Atlanta Baptist Pastors Conference has called for "orderly procedure" during desegregation of the schools.

A resolution passed by the pastors said in part, "We will pray, and work for orderly procedure as we approach this test of Christian citizenship. We earnestly and fraternally urge the members of our churches and all other citizens to observe the law and support in every way the child."

The Society of Friends (Quakers) has sponsored meetings between the 10 Negroes who will launch desegregation here next fall and some of their white prospective schoolmates.

Student government leaders at Brown High School have decided to arrange their own meetings between students there and the Negroes slated to attend Brown.

Hurt said in his editorial, "There is danger in Atlanta, because of evil men, that Negro students will suffer the jeers and taunts of little groups. There is danger that disciples of the devil will plant dynamite under cover of darkness. Little men, defeated in the courts of justice, find comfort in destruction and violence.

"Integration of Atlanta schools must be a model for the world. Atlanta is a city of churches. Christianity came to Atlanta in its early days...

"If Atlanta fails in September, then the churches have failed and Christians have failed.

"The danger of the moment is that so many are doing so little for the month of crisis. A few ministers have spoken. A few churches have added their voice through resolutions and the like. The few need to become the many--quickly.

"Discussion may be controversial but discussion is the only avenue to unity in a democracy. Silence stimulates the rabble."

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Brotherhood Chairman
Injured In Accident

(7-16-61)

MEMPHIS (BP)--John W. McCall, chairman of the executive committee of the Baptist Brotherhood Commission and a prominent Memphis attorney, was injured here when the automobile in which he was riding struck a utility pole.

McCall was taken to Baptist Memorial Hospital for treatment of head cuts and abrasions. He was thrown into the windshield. However, his condition was not serious, attendants reported.

Riding with McCall were Mrs. Ralph Bethea Sr., who was driving the car, and Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Lawrenson of New South Wales, Australia, guests of McCall.

Mrs. Bethea, the mother of Dr. Ralph Bethea Jr., a medical missionary to Indonesia, was treated for shock and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrenson for minor cuts and bruises. All three have been released from the hospital.

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W. C. Fields, *Director*

Theo Sommerkamp, *Assistant Director*

July 16, 1961

3 Economic Forces
Squeeze Michigan Work

(Picture to come later)

By Theo Sommerkamp

DETROIT (BP)--Has the time ever come when you didn't have enough money to go around?

If so, you can sympathize with Michigan Baptists. They are squeezed by three economic forces.

One is the large debts most cooperating churches have because of their building programs. The 104 churches and 19 missions of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan have issued \$1-3/4 million of church bonds.

It isn't unusual for a church to have a bonded indebtedness three times its annual budgets. Some are in for debts seven, eight times their annual budgets.

Land is high. They figure it by the front inch, not the front foot in some downtown areas where Southern Baptists have looked. The church site fund of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board is helping, but even the need in Michigan would overwhelm it if it had no commitments to 49 other states.

One church takes in \$200 a week in offerings. It used a \$55,000 bond issue to get money for a site and building. Its debt is five times, roughly, its annual collections.

The second part of the squeeze is applied by the recession which hit the auto industry and other Detroit industries. Detroit pretty well sets the pace of Michigan. Why? Because it has 2-1/2 million of the state's 7-1/2 million people. The southern third of Michigan is densely populated.

Car manufacturers have steel mills of their own in Detroit and environs to furnish their steel. Large chemical manufacturers are located along Detroit River, said to be one of the world's busiest waterways. I saw as many as a dozen ore boats in one short run along the waterfront.

When the recession hits, or a strike is called, people are out of work.

Most members of Southern Baptist churches in Michigan come from hourly wage group of workers. The recessions and strikes hit them first. A few pack up and return South, since many call Tennessee or Kentucky "home." They stay South till it's all over.

To be sure, John Baker, sales executive of the nation's leading truck trailer company, is a member of a suburban Detroit Southern Baptist church. He lives in Grosse Point Woods, one of the fashionable residential areas.

This is the exception, although more and more professional men are joining Southern Baptist churches in the state.

When workers are laid off, church contributions can go down, down, down. The deadlines for bond payoffs roll around relentlessly. Churches face a financial crisis.

The third economic force is the urge to do greater things. Churches and the state convention would like to have larger budgets...to sponsor more missions, to step up Cooperative Program donations to worldwide Baptist missionary objectives.

However, the pressure of the bond payments causes many to curtail Cooperative Program income.

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One state Baptist leader told me, "There isn't any pat answer to the problem, but we do hate to cut Cooperative Program income. Even though we are a pioneer area, where our convention is committed to establishing new churches, we do not feel justified in cutting the Cooperative Program.

"Churches issue large amounts of bonds, hoping to be able to pay them off. Not unlike the family which obtains new appliances hoping to meet monthly installments. Let sickness come to the family, or a recession to the members of the churches and the margin of money is wiped out.

"Churches will stay more healthy if they play a strong part in the whole program of the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program."

Should Baptist churches think in smaller terms?

What would you tell the First Baptist Church of Trenton, Mich., meeting in the local high school's audio-visual room in the morning and in the pastor's basement for Sunday night Training Union and preaching? That it shouldn't try to raise another \$4000 for property and not complete its skeleton building?

What would you do in Midland, Mich., one of America's monied small towns? Home of the mammoth Dow Chemical Corp. (Saran Wrap, Dowgard), Midland is probably one of the outstanding cities in the country in church design.

Rich donors enabled the Memorial Presbyterian Church to interweave gold in its drapes. First Methodist Church, of modern architecture, has a lily pool just outside the righthand, floor-to-ceiling windows of the auditorium. It, as other Midland churches, is newly-built (1949).

The Lutheran church is five-sided. A viewer from the air may call it star-shaped. The preacher has folks on five sides of him in the pronged sanctuary.

The Episcopal church is also of modern design. Even the Church of God falls into the same pattern. Its uniqueness is in its divided chancel, if that term fits. The pulpit on the right balances the baptistry on the left of the altar where new converts are immersed.

In building their 20th Century dream church, should the struggling congregation of Southern Baptists in Midland think in small terms if they wish to become a leading spiritual force in the community?

Michigan Baptists aren't giving up, not in the face of some surveys showing 60 per cent of the state unchurched. They have tightened their belts for trying days ahead, yes. But they are going forward to win the Northerner as well as the transplanted Southerner (many such Baptists are "underground" as far as church affiliation). There are 17,000 Southern Baptists now; the goal is for 25,000 in 1964.

A pastor like Hubert G. Keefer of First Baptist Church, St. Clair Shores, uses his personal background to reach both groups.

As the apostle Paul, he is all things to all men, that by all means he might win some. To the Northerner and Easterner, he is a native of Washington, D. C.

To the Southerner, his mother came from Alabama. To the Southwesterner, he is a graduate of Baylor University.

Robert Wilson of Clio, Mich., attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville. He returned to Clio in the face of a community census which showed no Baptist prospects. (In his boyhood days, he attended the nearest Baptist church, eight miles from Clio.)

Knocking on doors looking for the unchurched, Wilson cultivated a Southern Baptist church in Clio while his family sometimes forewent new clothes so Wilson would not have to take secular employment.

Now Wilson is area missionary for the upper two-thirds of Michigan, including the arm stretching out above the Mackinac Straits.