BAPTIST FEATURES

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Theo Sommerkamp, *Assistant Director*

September 4, 1959

Association Symbol
Of Baptists' Unity

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The association of churches is a symbol of the togetherness of Baptists, the executive secretary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina declared here.

Speaking to nearly 450 associational superintendents of missions, Douglas M. Branch of Raleigh said, "The association represents the fulfillment of spiritual oneness."

He added that "togetherness our Baptist people is a necessity because of the Holy Spirit, and for our existence."

Branch, chairman of the committee which recently surveyed the program of Southern Baptist Convention agencies, gave special emphasis to:

The "strategic nature" of the association in Baptist life.

The possibilities of the associational program, and

The mutual concerns of the association and the state Baptist convention.

Superintendents of missions were here for the first Conference on Associational Activities sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board. They came from states from Alaska to Florida.

There are 1111 associations of churches co-operating with Southern Baptists, and 680 superintendents of missions---some of whom serve more than one association. Too, some associations have no superintendent of missions.

"The Baptist association grew out of churches discovering other churches of like faith and order," according to Branch.

The association is unique, he continued, because "it is the only body which the local Baptist church ever joins. Your churches don't join the state convention or the Southern Baptist Convention."

Also, the association is the only unit of Southern Baptists that secures a "first-hand roll call" of the churches.

"The development of the missionary program in the association is of great significance," the North Carolina Baptist leader said. "The association is the most vital link between the church and other aspects of Baptist life."

Among the areas of "mutual concern" between state Baptist bodies and the associations of churches mentioned by Branch are:

A. The development of the local church. "The association can enlist the co-operation of the local churches as one else."

B. Locating sites and building Baptist churches and missions. "But for exceptional cases, the state convention is limited to opportunities opened by the local churches and associations."

C. Getting churches and pastors together. "We have had a system (of getting them together) which I suppose amounted to no system at all," Branch stated. "The associational missionaries understand the pastors and their needs better than anyone else." He said superintendents of missions could be of service to state convention leaders by informing them of churches needing pastors and of pastors needing churches.

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Sunday School Board
To File Labor Brief

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The Baptist Sunday School Board is preparing to submit briefs to a federal agency telling why it does not feel that the Teamsters Union should represent any of its employees.

A hearing before National Labor Relations Board examiner was held in Nashville, at which representatives of the Teamsters Union and the Sunday School Board appeared.

James L. Sullivan, executive secretary, and Leonard E. Wedel, personnel director, were among Baptist board officials present.

Two questions must be decided by the National Labor Relations Board after receiving briefs and the examiner's minutes of the hearing. First, shall an election be held among Baptist board employees for Teamster Union representation, and second, if an election is called, who will take part in voting?

It is expected that it will be 30 to 60 days before these questions are answered by the federal agency.

The Teamsters Union recently asked for an election among Baptist Sunday School Board employees. The union wishes to represent approximately 94 out of 1500 persons employed by the board in Nashville.

The Teamster organization effort to organize board employees was launched while staff officers were at Glorieta Baptist Assembly, N. M., for the Sunday School Board's summer session.

An effort a few weeks ago to organize a group of Methodist Publishing House employees in Nashville for Teamster representation was defeated in an employee election. Union efforts are counting among Methodist employees, however.

Sullivan emphasized that the Sunday School Board is not opposed to unions as such. Union labor has been used in the board's large operations building now being completed here. It was also used in recent construction at Glorieta.

The board, he added, is opposed to Teamster Union organization because of testimony brought before Congressional committees about criminal and gangster connections.

Affecting the decision by the NLRB on whether a vote will be called is the requirement that 30 per cent of the appropriate unit of employees to be represented shall have petitioned for an election.

While the Teamsters claim voting should be held among 94 employees, the Baptist agency maintains that there are at least 338 employees having the "same community of interest" who should take part in the election.

The statement issued by Sullivan after the examinar's hearing follows:

"The Teamsters' Union filed a petition asking for an election by a small group of our employees which the union estimated at approximately 94 out of a total of 1500 employees.

"The Baptist Sunday School Board does not agree that the Teamster's Union should represent any group of its employees.

"The hearing by the National Labor Relations Board was primarily to hear evidence so that the Labor Board in Washington could determine just which employees of our Board should be allowed to vote in such an election.

"On this point, it is the position of our Board that if any election at all is to be held it should include at least 338 of our employees who actually do have the same community of interest. For any matter which shall so vitally concern their interest, we believe that all these employees are entitled to a voice and to vote in any election.

"This is for the National Labor Relations Board to decide. Any futher comments should be reserved until the Labor Board has acted."

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Progress Reports Made
On 30,000 Movement

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Southern Baptists are moving forward toward their goal of establishing 10,000 new churches and 20,000 new missions or preaching stations by 1964. Here are some brief progress reports on the 30,000 Movement from the lips of associational superintendents of missions.

San Diego, Calif.--"On Oct. 3 we plan a unique meeting in our association, with three missions being constituted into churches at once. We will launch a campaign for 10 new Sunday schools Nov. 1."

Cullman, Ala.---"We constituted a mission into a church three weeks ago and baptized 12 into its fellowship after constituting it. Other work includes a mission preaching in a jail."

Alaska--"Three new missions were started this summer, one having eight attending the first Sunday and 35 persons the second Sunday. Another with five at the first service now has 35 members, but we still need pastors for new churches and missions."

Denver, Colo.--"We have a goal of 64 churches and missions by 1964."

Wyoming---"We recently organized the only Baptist church in Rock River, Wyo., with 39 enroled in Sunday school the first Sunday. Five adults and twin 16-year-olds were baptized into membership of the church.

Western Nebraska---"The three churches organized recently in western Nebraska all have pastors. They have a full program of church activities."

Los Angeles--"We organized churches on each of the last two Sundays. We have a goal of 60 for 1960."

Louisville, Ky.---"We reached our 1959 goal of 10 missions last year, and adopted a goal of 10 more. We gave 10 of our units across the river in Indiana to the new Indiana convention when it was organized last fall."

Duck River, Tenn.---"We started two new missions and constituted two new churches. Two more will be constituted."

Montana---"Since Jan. 1 our record is 10 new missions, five new churches."

Knoxville, Tenn.---"We are sponsoring missions in the West. 21 Knoxville pastors will go to Montana to hold revivals there."

Norfolk, Va.---"The first Sunday in October we will organize a mission into a church. The parent of this mission is itself a product of the 30,000 Movement, and it owns three organs but doesn't own a building."

Mississippi Gulf Coast---"I visited a prison in Pascagoula and saw a trusty that Baptists there had led to Christ. He would soon be sent to the penitentiary. but was looking forward to his opportunity to witness for Christ to other prisoners. It looks as if we sent a missionary to the penitentiary rather than a criminal."

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

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE
W. BARRY GARRETT, REGIONAL EDITOR
1628—16th St., N. W., Washington, 9, D. C.
Telephone: ADams 2-1760

September 4, 1959

Baptists Discuss Education
At National Conference

WASHINGTON--(BP)--One hundred Baptist leaders from six of the nation's Baptist fellowships will meet for a conference on religion and education, Sept. 15-17, here. This is the third annual religious liberty conference sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, of which C. Emanuel Carlson is the executive director.

Recognizing many of the critical problems arising in American education, the BJCPA is calling for a discussion of the relation of the churches to the public schools and the place of religion in education. Previous conferences have dealt with the use of public funds by church institutions.

In the belief that the churches have a vital stake in the decisions that will be made in the years immediately ahead in the area of education, the BJCPA is calling together these Baptist leaders in order to stimulate study and discussion among Baptist circles, to discover the church-state problems that may be involved and to pull together pertinent Baptist insights and principles that might apply to solutions.

Although the conference has no authority to make pronouncements that will be binding on Baptists or on Baptist churches it is hoped that a larger consensus of opinion can be developed. Eventually the Baptist viewpoint could take on greater significance in the formulation of educational policies in the nation. An immediate outcome to be sought by the conference will be that state consultations will clarify the church-state issues in education before the national White House Conference on Education and Youth in the Spring of 1960.

It is hoped that during the next two years similar state conferences can be arranged and that by 1962 a large national conference of 1,000 participants can be arranged. One of the objectives of this larger conference will be to encourage church members to participate in the educational process of the nation through community leadership, teaching and research.

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*News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention. Albert McClellan, director; Theo Sommerkamp, assistant director; 127 Ninth Ave. No., Nashville 3, Tenn.

Education Conference Will
Study Church-State Problems

WASHINGTON-(BP)--Religious liberty problems in the American educational processes will be examined in the third annual Religious Liberty Conference here, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Sept. 15-17. C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the BJCPA, announces the subject of the conference to be "The Relation of the Churches to the Public Schools and the Place of Religion in Education."

One hundred Baptist leaders from the United States and Canada will seek to (1) identify the problems in the field of education which involve either church-state relations or some aspect of the practice of religious liberty, (2) pull together pertinent Baptist insights and principles which must be kept for the solutions of these problems, and (3) recommend procedures for answers to the problems discovered.

The Baptists will take a look at Bible reading and Bible courses in public schools, observance of religious holidays, religious qualifications for teachers, church-operated schools for general education, weekday religious instruction, recent education trends and legislation as related to the freedom of the conscience or freedom of the churches, fringe services in private schools such as surplus food, bus transportation and health services, and many other kindred problems.

It is hoped that as a result of this meeting similar conferences will be conducted in the states, that the church-state issues in education can be clarified before the 1960 White House Conferences on Education and Youth. It is also hoped that by 1962 a national conference of 1,000 or more Baptists can be held to coordinate Baptist thinking on religion and education.

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Senator Fulbright Clarifies
Report on Vatican Mission

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Senator J. W. Fulbright (D., Ark.), chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, has confirmed the accuracy of a recent Baptist Press story concerning a recommendation for a Charge d'Affaires to the Vatican. But due to a misunderstanding of the BP report Mr. Fulbright has issued a clarifying statement.

The recommendation of a United States representative to the Vatican was made by a retired foreign service officer to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Many people thought that the recommendation had been made by the Committee itself. The BP story was based on a publication, "Summary of Views of Retired Foreign Service Officers," made to the Foreign Relations Committee. Those who wrote the report were kept annonymous by the Committee.

Mr. Fulbright's position is made clear by the following statement which he has used in answering mail on the subject and which he requests to be published by the Baptist Press to clarify the misunderstandings that have arisen:

"The introduction to the Committee's publication entitled 'Summary of Views of Retired Foreign Service Officers' points out that these are the views of a distinguished group of private citizens obtained in response to a request by the Committee for their opinions. The statements contained in the pamphlet, of course, do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Indeed, there are comments in the collection which are quite critical of certain activities of the Foreign Relations Committee itself. I am sure you will agree, however, that one of the great strengths of a democracy is found in its capacity freely to debate ideas and concepts on their merits. I hope the views of the retired foreign service officers which the Committee has published will serve to stimulate such constructive debate and discussion."

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Interfaith Day Resolution
Tabled By House Committee

WASHINGTON--(BP)--A resolution to establish by congressional action a national Interfaith Day, the fourth Sunday in September, has been tabled by the House Committee on the Judiciary of which Rep. Emanuel Celler (D., N. Y.) is chairman.

The measure, introduced by Sen. Kenneth B. Keating (R., N. Y.), was passed by the Senate almost unnoticed by church groups. When it was discovered that church leaders in the nation had not been consulted about the Interfaith Day proposal, and when it appeared that the denominations might even be opposed to the effort toward religious conformity under government pressure, the House committee decided not to consider the matter further.

Questions about the Interfaith Day were beginning to arise from various quarters. Is it a function of government to establish such a day for the churches? Does freedom to hold and express divergent religious views constitute a threat to national unity? To what extent should the churches be harnessed for nationalistic purposes? Should religious conformity be achieved by governmental action?

The above decision by the House committee would make it appear that the issue is dead, at least for the first session of the 86th Congress. However, under certain circumstances pressures could develop to have the resolution taken from the table during the second session in 1960.

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Baptist Ministers Preach
In Air Force Missions

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Four Baptist ministers are among 12 civilian Protestant clergymen for the 10th annual series of overseas Missions and Convocations for Air Force personnel beginning in September and continuing through April, 1960.

J. D. Grey, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of the First Baptist Church, New Orleans, La., and Paul M. Stevens, director of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, have been sel cted by the Air Force to participate.

Two American Baptist participants will be Paul O. Madsen, associate executive secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and Arthur S. Dodgson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Moorestown, N. J.

The series will include 48 Missions for Protestant personnel, 44 Missions for Catholic personnel, and 10 Torah Convocations for Jewish personnel.

The Missions are a projection of the spiritual life program of the Air Force and they are under the direct supervision of the base chaplains. A "Mission" in common church language is a revival meeting at a military installation. Preaching services will be conducted once or twice daily for five days. The visiting ministers will be available for conferences and for speaking engagements before various organized groups on the bases.

It is reported by the Air Force Chaplaincy that Stevens is taking along some of his radio recording equipment for interviews with prominent Christians abroad. These transcriptions will be used later by the Baptist Radio and Television Commission in programs aired throughout the United States.

Transportation and other expenses involved in these spiritual life Missions is provided by the Air Force as part of the services provided for Air Force personnel and their families.

The Protestant Missions will extend from October 11 through November 5 and they will be held at USAF installations in Great Britain, Europe, North Africa and Turkey.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mr. Theo Sommerkamp
127 Ninth Avenue, N.
Nashville 3, Tenn.

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