

March 16, 1962

Oklahoma City Group Weighs 'Current Crisis'

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--An informal group of Baptist pastors, denominational workers and laymen, estimated at more than 50 persons in all, met at Capitol Hill Baptist Church here for a two-day discussion of what they consider "the current theological crisis within the denomination."

Specifically, the group, coming from eight states, centered its discussion around "The Message of Genesis," written by Ralph H. Elliott, professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

In talking with five persons who attended, Baptist Press learned the group included N. J. Westmoreland, Wichita, executive secretary, Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists; Jack L. Gritz, Oklahoma City, editor, *Baptist Messenger*.

W. Ross Edwards, Kansas City minister and secretary of Midwestern trustees, who was one of the seven minority voting against giving confidence to Elliott at a trustee meeting during the Christmas holidays; M. E. Ramay, Edmond, Okla., editor of a new independent Baptist paper.

K. Owen White, Houston minister who has written an article attacking Elliott's historical viewpoint on Genesis as being too liberal, and Mack R. Douglas, St. Louis pastor and member of the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, which published the book.

Several other pastors from Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Missouri were present. The group included about 10 or 15 Oklahoma City ministers, according to Robert A. Mowrey of Nashville, Tenn., one of the ministers present.

A formal release from the group after their adjournment said:

"Coming at their own expense, men from leading churches spent several hours sharing information concerning the infiltration of liberalism within the denomination's theological life. Particular attention was given to the recently published controversial book, 'The Message of Genesis'..."

"No permanent organization was contemplated or projected by the group.

"The meeting was bathed with a spirit of humility and concern over resolving the difficulties within the denomination's organizational framework. It closed with these men on their knees in prayers of dedication," the group's formal statement concluded.

Beyond the formal release, Baptist Press encountered reluctance on the part of most members to talk.

One said there were "more than three or four men" present; two refused to give any estimate, one of them referring all questions to Ross Edwards whom he said was convenor; another said from "50 to 100" attended, and one pinpointed the number at "52."

Westmoreland said he was "really concerned about the liberalism which is creating some problems for us here in Kansas. I invited some from Kansas (to the meeting)."

The meeting's apparent immediate objective is to secure the election of what the group considers theologically conservative men to the trustees of the Kansas City seminary.

This could include the naming of a conservative slate to oppose the recommendation of the Convention's Committee on Boards at San Francisco. "That will only be done if the Committee on Boards fails to put in conservative men," Mowrey said.

One who refused to be quoted by name said he feared the Convention could split over the issue of doctrinal liberalism, or "that men in the heart of our Convention might take their churches out of it" because of liberalism.

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Maryland Moves Out
To Suburban Site

(3-16-62)

BALTIMORE (BP)--The State Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland voted here to buy 1-1/2 acres of land in a Baltimore suburb for its new Baptist office building.

The present offices will move out, at an undecided future date, to the new location in Towson, north of the present office building which is near the downtown area.

Maryland Baptists bought the land from Goucher College at an unannounced figure.

The Towson location is closer to a highway encircling the city, giving access to Baptists of the state coming from different directions.

The changing business pattern of the downtown area and limited space in the present downtown building, owned by Maryland Baptists for several years, were reasons offered for the future relocation.

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Folks and Facts.....

(3-16-62)

....The Extension Department of Southern Baptist Seminaries, from its yearly staff meeting at Jackson, Miss., reported centers operating in 22 states, and in Labrador. The 136 centers enroled 3085 persons, under guidance of 268 teachers. There are 471 correspondence students. (BP)

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Women To Observe
Two Anniversaries

(3-16-62)

SAN FRANCISCO (BP)--Phases of the Girls' Auxiliary hymn, "We've a Story to Tell," will be the focal point of the annual meeting of Woman's Missionary Union here June 4-5. The general theme is "To the Nations."

Woman's Missionary Union is auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, and immediately precedes Convention sessions in Civic Auditorium.

The 50th anniversary of the girls' missionary group is being celebrated in 1962-63 and will be commemorated with a pageant on Monday evening. More than 300 members of Girls' Auxiliaries in the San Francisco area will participate.

Miss Alma Hunt, Birmingham, union executive secretary, will present plans to observe the 75th anniversary of Woman's Missionary Union. Promotional staff from Birmingham will assist.

Mrs. R. L. Mathis of Waco, Tex., union president, will also address the group.

Featured soloist throughout the women's sessions will be Miss Irene Jordan, soprano, who has won acclaim with the Metropolitan Opera and on the concert stage.

Originally from a Baptist family in Birmingham, Miss Jordan has a sister serving on a Baptist mission field. Dr. Martha (W. McKinley) Gilliland, a missionary surgeon in Ogbomosho, Nigeria, is her sister.

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Home mission work among the language groups of California will be featured at each session through choirs and testimonies. Home missionaries speaking are E. Jack Combs of Fresno, Calif., and language group workers from other cities.

Foreign missionaries to speak are Mrs. S. Dan Sprinkle Jr. from Argentina, Miss Virginia Wingo from Italy, William M. Dyal Jr. now with the headquarters staff in Richmond, Mrs. Charles L. Martin Jr. from Japan, Dr. J. Edwin Low from Nigeria, Mrs. Marvin L. Garrett from Southern Rhodesia, and Miss Bertha Smith, emeritus, who served in China.

Concluding the meeting, John H. Haldeman of Miami will tell the women about work with the vast number of Cuban refugees arriving in the Florida city. Haldeman is pastor of Allapattah Baptist Church and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

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GLOBE-TROTTING With GINNY

4 Languages Heard In Ruschlikon Chapel

By Virginia Harris Hendricks

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--The newest building at the International Baptist Seminary here is the Chapel. It also serves as auditorium for the student body and on Sunday becomes the church building for the local Baptist church.

During the summer, the seminary becomes the retreat or conference grounds for European Baptists. People from up to 23 national Baptist conventions come for women's conference, ministers' week and other sessions.

I had told our children about my week at the conference for the European Baptist Women's Federation. They wondered how the women could all understand the speakers.

They were fascinated by my description of the translation system: we could choose one of four different languages, and plug in our earphones to the pew slots to hear simultaneous translation into our own tongue.

"And on this Sunday," I told them, "perhaps the church pastor, Dr. Johannes Arndt, will preach in German in the morning service. We will listen over the earphones to the English. Tonight, he will preach in English, and the German members must listen to the translation!"

Our trip was to land us in Zurich-Ruschlikon on Sunday morning. Our boys were looking forward to visiting this "Baptist U. N." building. They would listen to a sermon through earphones.

Alas! This was the alternate Sunday when his morning sermon was delivered in beautiful English. Our boys looked at one another for an instant, dismayed. Then, not to be frustrated, they reached for the earphones. Our non-German-speaking sons listened attentively to the message translated in German!

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Cutline: Listening to the translations.

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OHIO EDITOR--Lynn M. Davis Jr., soon to graduate from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, is the new editor of the Ohio Baptist Messenger, semi-monthly published at Columbus by the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio. (BP) Photo