

February 23, 1963

**Sullivan Predicts SBC
Greatest Growth Ahead**

NASHVILLE (BP)--James L. Sullivan said here the Southern Baptist Convention "is on the verge of its greatest growth and prosperity in its history."

The executive secretary of the SBC Sunday School Board continued, "I'm not afraid of its future, nor of its present." The audience consisted of the SBC Executive Committee, SBC agency heads and state Baptist convention executive secretaries, and their associates.

Two days before, a former Convention president drew several rounds of "Amen" support from some of the same leaders when he said the SBC has reached the end of its much-discussed declines.

C. C. Warren of Charlotte, N. C., at a meeting to plan 1964 Baptist Jubilee Advance events, declared:

"We've hit the bottom of the declines and are on our way up again."

A chorus of "Amen."

"Let's quit writing and talking about them," the 1956-57 president said.

More amens.

Sullivan said Southern Baptists will preserve their fellowship "through absolute honesty. We have now more open discussion and we have the highest morale among agencies since I can remember."

Warren, chairman of the Convention's current church extension drive, said the goal of 30,000 new churches and missions still is possible. The eight-year effort winds up in 1964. He reported the latest count at close to 20,000.

The Baptist Jubilee Advance, of which Warren is also an officer, celebrates the 150th birthday of organized Baptist work on a national scale in North America. The participating Baptist groups in the United States and Canada will have an anniversary celebration in May, 1964 in Atlantic City, N. J.

Warren urged that attendance be promoted so that 15,000 Baptists won't rattle around in a convention hall designed to seat 40,000. He said the attendance should fill the auditorium.

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**James Says President
Backs Baptist Views**

(2-23-63)

DALLAS (BP)--A Southern Baptist editor who opposed with great vigor the election of a Roman Catholic as the nation's President in 1960 returned from a personal audience with that President voicing a changed opinion.

E. S. James, editor of the Baptist Standard, said on his return from the White House that President John F. Kennedy shares Baptists' views on separation of church and state.

James further declared in an editorial following his visit with the President that at least one Roman Catholic has proved he could conduct his office without religious bias.

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The Baptist editor said his opposition to the election of a Catholic President in 1960 was based "on a sincere belief that no member of the Roman Catholic Church would be free to think and act independently."

Editor James said it was a pleasure to tell the President he "has disillusioned many of us who feared that a Roman Catholic could not make a good President."

James said he praised the President on his fairness in making political appointments, his strict adherence to a preelection promise to defend the principle of church-state separation, and his actions during the Cuban crisis.

"He has sometimes stood very tall when the country was bowed low," said Editor James, "and perhaps he stood tallest when he quarantined Cuba and defied the Communist world."

James told the Dallas Morning News he felt a great many Catholic people who voted for the President before may not do so again.

"But vast numbers of others who hold a more strict interpretation of church and state separation would no doubt support him even though they didn't in 1960," said James.

"We are convinced," said James in his editorial following the visit, "that our President is a man of faith who is characterized by faith, great intelligence, much ability, strong convictions and profound courage."

For 40 minutes the Baptist editor talked alone with the nation's chief executive. James said he did not solicit the visit, but was glad to accept the President's personal invitation.

The outspoken editor, who is perhaps best known for his views on church-state separation, said he feels the President is just as opposed to federal aid for parochial schools as when he entered office.

However, the editor noted both of the administration's education bills provide for some aid to church-related schools on the college and university level.

"While some Baptists do not hold with us on what constitutes subsidies, we believe Baptists at the grassroots level are solidly against government aid to them or any other church group," James said.

Editor James pointed out to the President, with his permission, other areas where the principle of church-state separation seems most often endangered.

They are: the disposition of surplus government property, distribution through church agencies of food for peace in foreign countries, use of Peace Corps personnel as teachers in sectarian schools in other lands, and use of foreign aid for building public schools in countries where the system is under domination of a religious group.

James, who is currently second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, told President Kennedy generally what Baptists believe, but "made it plain that no person is spokesman for them and that the observations were my very own."

The editor said he was impressed by the President's definite concern "about the vast numbers in other lands who know nothing of the Christian faith." James interpreted the President's thinking as, "he is much more concerned about their knowing God than he is about what church tells them about him."

Said James, "We know he has made some mistakes, and that being human, he will make some more. We are convinced, however, that he will not knowingly err when the welfare of the nation is at stake."

He said he "was remarkably impressed with the President's apparent sincerity, his gracious and understanding spirit, and his eagerness to be President of all the American people."

"We have prayed for him many times, but we will do it more often now that we realize more fully the weight of the load a President carries," James said.

SBC Building Honors
Crouch And Truett

NASHVILLE (BP)--Two Convention leaders of another generation have been honored in the newly opened Southern Baptist Convention Building here.

The auditorium in the new structure was named in memory of Austin Crouch, who died in 1957. Crouch was first executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee. He served from its start in 1927 till he retired in 1946.

His portrait and that of the late George W. Truett will hang in the building. Truett was president of the SBC in 1927, 1928 and 1929. He was first chairman of the Executive Committee.

Herschel H. Hobbs, Oklahoma City, 1963 Convention president, preached the sermon of dedication for the new building. He called for the agencies it houses, and their employees, to follow God's will.

Tennessee Gov. Frank Clement came from the Capitol, only a short walk up the hill from the new Baptist building, to give a welcome to the new office building.

The dedication came during the winter meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, whose staff will occupy first floor of the new building. The octagon, or eight-sided structure, will also house the SBC Education Commission, Stewardship Commission and Christian Life Commission, Southern Baptist Foundation, and Extension Department of Southern Baptist Seminaries.

All but the Seminary Extension Department had occupied space in SBC Sunday School Board buildings at 127 Ninth Ave. No. and 161 Eighth Ave. No., a mile and a half away. The new three-story Southern Baptist Convention Building is located at 460 James Robertson Parkway. It is one of several new office buildings in the neighborhood. The Seminary Extension Department has been located in Jackson, Miss.

The Sunday School Board put up \$1.2 million for its construction. Porter Routh, executive secretary, Executive Committee, said this had not been fully needed.

The property cost \$147,900 and the buildings \$992,000, he announced.

The Sunday School Board and another agency, the SBC Historical Commission, remain at 127 Ninth Ave. No.

John H. Haldeman, Miami, chairman of the Executive Committee, presided over the dedication service. Kendall Berry, Blytheville, Ark., layman who formerly was chairman, told how the new building progressed from an idea to reality.

Edward H. Tuller of Valley Forge, Pa., executive secretary, American Baptist Convention, read the scripture during the dedication. He used the same passages Porter Routh used a year ago at Valley Forge when he read scripture at the American Convention's dedication of its circular office building.

James L. Sullivan, Sunday School Board executive secretary, joined in the service. Having roles too were Rabun L. Brantley, SBC Education Commission; J. W. Storer, Foundation; Foy Valentine, Christian Life Commission, and Merrill D. Moore, Stewardship Commission. They are executive secretaries of their agencies.

Charles E. Curry, Kansas City, Mo., layman member of the Executive Committee, received the keys to the new building from the architect. He was chairman of the new building subcommittee.

Mrs. H. H. Grooms of Birmingham, wife of an Executive Committee member, sang a solo preceding Hobbs' dedication message. W. Hines Sims, secretary of church music for the Sunday School Board, led congregational singing.

Josef Nordenhaug, Washington, general secretary, Baptist World Alliance, offered the invocation.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendall Berry donated furniture located in a basement parlor and conference room. Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the SBC, will present the occupants with a large globe for the lobby.

Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, gave the piano for the auditorium. Harold W. Seever, its pastor, is a member of the Executive Committee.

Carr P. Collins, Dallas, former member of the Executive Committee, presented the portrait of Truett.

Mr. and Mrs. William Fleming of Fort Worth donated the books for the reference library. John H. Haldeman gave the furniture and equipment for the library.

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Cooperation Asked
In Religious Census

(2-23-63)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention churches may be asked to cooperate with the United States Census Bureau in a census of religious groups.

The Executive Committee of the SBC in its winter meeting here called attention to the stand of the 1947 session of the Convention. This stated "that we recommend to the churches that they cooperate with the Census Bureau in taking this (religious) census and then an effort be made to reach every church." It recommended this 1947 action be reaffirmed at the 1963 Convention.

Martin B. Bradley, Nashville, secretary-elect of research and statistics, SBC Sunday School Board, said the census would be patterned after one taken in 1936.

He said it would help show the strength and location of religious bodies in America geographically. The census would be conducted by mail to the churches of all denominations.

Unlike the regular censuses of population every decade, this census would not be through individual contacts, according to Bradley. It would not be required by law that churches respond to the census query.

Some religious bodies and civil liberties groups objected to having any question on personal religious beliefs in the 1960 population census. The fact that persons are required by law to answer the census-taker's questions at these times meant a possible violation of their religious liberty if the religious preference questions were included, they claimed.

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