

February 24, 1965

Student Directors
Pick Phil T. Card

BAGDAD, Ky. (BP)--Phillip T. (Phil) Card, student director for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, Denver, has been elected president of the State Baptist Student Directors' Association.

The student directors, holding their annual meeting at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly here, elected Clyde Clayton of Oklahoma City as secretary of their association. He is director of student work for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

John H. Boyle, Louisville, chaplain of Louisville General Hospital, spoke to student directors on the topic, "Relationships of the Christian Worker." Boyle, who also teaches at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said "to reach professional educators, we must demonstrate competence in our profession. They will accept us as they see what we can do for the students to whom we minister."

The youth work in the Baptist General Conference of America was explained by Gunnar Hoglund, Forest Park, Ill., secretary of youth work for this Baptist group.

The Baptist General Conference has no organized student work at college level. There are 630 cooperating churches in the conference, with a total of about 85,000 church members. The largest church has 1500 members, Hoglund said.

Their conference youth fellowship includes ages nine to 30. It meets usually late Sunday afternoon in the churches.

The student directors will meet in Washington next year, Feb. 14-16.

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Baptist TV Film Team Makes Movies In Africa

FORT WORTH (BP)--The continent of Africa is the site for two documentary films being produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission on the general subject of missions and missionaries.

A movie production team is now at work in Egypt and Nigeria on filming the two movies--one on Baptist missions in Egypt and another on the African's response to Christianity as presented by Southern Baptists.

The Egypt film will show the life and work of Seddik Girgis, native-born Egyptian who for some years has been the only Baptist worker in the entire nation of Egypt. Girgis is a native-born, Southern Baptist missionary.

The other film will be shot primarily in Lagos, Nigeria, and will feature Southern Baptist foreign missionary Josephine Scaggs of Fayetteville, Ark., as representative of a different approach to missions: A white, non-African Christian witnessing in a newly awakened African culture.

Writer-producer for both films is John Stevens, Fort Worth, commission television writer, and photographer for the African location shooting is Marshall R. Young, Dallas free-lance photographer.

W. Truett Myers, head of the commission's television department here, is providing technical direction to the early stages of the shooting. Myers will travel on to Jordan, Turkey and Greece for additional stock film to be used in another documentary film on the New Testament being produced by the commission.

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Stevens cited a contrast between the missions film being produced in Egypt and the one in Nigeria.

The Egyptian film will portray the seemingly impossible task of one man seeking single-handed to bring the gospel of **Christ** to an entire nation. It will show Girgis in his busy schedule of conducting services in the streets of Fayum and Cairo, of leading his own family devotions and of relaxing with his family like fathers everywhere.

The Nigerian film will seek to determine what place the white man has in the future of the African's nation, his religion and his personal development. Although Miss Scaggs will serve as the Southern Baptist example in this film, less emphasis will be placed on her as an individual missionary than what she represents, Stevens said.

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Praise, Criticism Greet
Race Relations Sunday

2-24-65

By the Baptist Press

Some said "Praise the Lord" but others regarded it as evil when the Southern Baptist Convention observed its first Race Relations Sunday Feb. 14.

Reaction ranged from thankfulness for an opportunity to consider Christian obligations in race matters, to sentiment for abolishing the Christian Life Commission of the SBC for helping foster the observance.

One angry member stalked from an Atlanta church as the pastor preached on "doctrines" supporting a Christian approach to race relations.

The pastor, in his sermon, said, "If God does not exclude men, we cannot exclude men. If God does not draw a distinction, we must not draw one. If God does not reject, we must not reject. He has accepted me! And so, praise God, I will accept my brother!"

To help churches observe the Sunday, the SBC Home Mission Board and Christian Life Commission sent out a packet of materials throughout the Convention.

The packet contained a joint letter from Arthur B. Rutledge, Atlanta, executive secretary of the mission board, and Foy Valentine, Nashville, executive secretary of the commission.

There was a poster for the church bulletin board or library window. Suggestions for specially emphasizing the Sunday, and a list of resource materials were in the packet too. The Christian Life Commission tract, "The Bible Speaks on Race," and a pamphlet supplied by the SBC Foreign Mission Board, "Your Missionaries Speak," were also in the packet.

One Birmingham pastor wrote a six-page letter when he sent back the packet. "I am also happy to say that, 'We do not want any of your literature, or mailouts regarding this evil promotion which I recieved this week and I am taking great pleasure of returning it to your office.'" Most of the words were in capital letters for emphasis.

The writer attacked both the Christian Life Commission and Home Missions Magazine, monthly periodical of the Home Mission Board.

Another Alabama church rejected Baptist Bulletin Service bulletins for Feb. 14. The picture on the front of the bulletin showed a group of people, seen from the back, kneeling at the foot of a large cross. Written material on the back page of the bulletin called attention to Race Relations Sunday.

This same church secretary had returned bulletins for Dec. 6 during a time when Southern Baptists were receiving their annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. The picuure on the cover was of a white missionary and a group of African children. The back cover article was on "Malnutrition and Missions."

Churches normally use the inside two pages of the bulletin for their local announcements and order of worship for services. The Baptist Bulletin Service is edited by the SBC Executive Committee and produced and distributed by the Sunday School Board.

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In a Georgia city, the bulletins got a warmer reception. "Please permit me to congratulate and thank you for using the bulletin for February 14 in connection with Race Relations Sunday," the pastor wrote.

An associational leader in Alabama wrote, "Let me add my voice to the perhaps small, group that says 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow' in response to your race relations Sunday material. . . . It has afforded me the opportunity to speak to some (church officers) and help them to get a new and fresh viewpoint on the matter of race and Christian responsibility!"

A Tulsa, Okla., church invited the choral group and pastor of a Negro Baptist Church to lead the evening worship service Feb. 14.

In one south Georgia community, a critic declared, "You do not seem to know the attitude of the vast majority of Southern Baptist (sic), and as far as I can learn only a few of you fellows holding responsible places on our convention want to force (sic) the mixing the races which if successful (sic) will lead to no race at all, but a bad mixture. . . ."

And in South Carolina, one response was "The Bible does not say that even the Southern Baptist Convention, or its agencies, can abrogate the purpose and plan of God . . . of creating men in different colors. . . (and) in determining the times and bounds of their habitation. . . ."

"Facts are that our social habits and customs have changed so much that now anything is the norm. Family deterioration, divorce, drinking, sex looseness, illegitimacy has become regular routine. Social (sic) unlimited intergration (sic), as you are advocating is the final step to miscegenation," this critic continued.

Nothing in the packet of material on Race Relations Sunday observance advocated intermarriage of the races, Valentine pointed out.

Two Louisiana pastors responded unfavorably to the packet. One, somewhat apologetically, asked that no more material be sent to him from the commission. The second said, "I am joining a group which I think will be a large one, to abolish the so called 'Christian Life Commission,' as far as I am concerned it is no longer a 'Christian' commission."

Yet in one Southern city once beset by demonstrations and violence, a pastor wrote Valentine: "Keep in mind that (name of city) is one of those famous (or infamous) places in the South where racial tensions have existed. I considered Race Relations Sunday as my opportunity to get something presented to my people."

This church displayed "The Bible Speaks on Race" prominently in its tract rack, according to the pastor. It distributed to members the Baptist Bulletin Service bulletin for Feb. 14 which some other churches had rejected and returned to the publisher.

"Frankly," said the pastor, "I expected some comment, perhaps adverse. However, so far no one has lambasted me about the bulletin, the tracts, or interest-center. True, I wasn't praised for my efforts, but I didn't expect to be even thanked. I consider it progress to even do what I did without being raked over the coals for it."

A Woman's Missionary Union president in Kentucky wrote the Home Mission Board saying, "As WMU president I have tried to lead our women to respond to the suggestions sent out on Race Relations Sunday (which is not being noted in our church proper)." She commended the same Home Missions Magazine issue which the Birmingham pastor criticized, for its articles on race.

One of the women's societies in the church "took the (for us) unprecedented step of inviting the women of a local Negro Baptist church to meet with us at our regular program meeting this week. . . ."

Stories of favorable reception to observance of the Sunday have come in from churches in Winston-Salem, N. C.; several other cities in North Carolina; Lubbock, Tex; Louisville, New Orleans, and a Virginia community among others. (BP)

Speakers Say SBC
Has Duty On Race

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists need to put aside provincialism and narrow thinking and consider their contribution to solving the nation's race problem.

This was stated here by Arthur B. Rutledge, Atlanta, who this year became executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board.

Rutledge told the annual meeting of the Advisory Council of Southern Baptists for Work with Negroes that Baptists "are a significant group in the life of the nation (and) have a very heavy responsibility."

"Do we really mean it when we say our objective is to win men to Jesus Christ?" Rutledge asked. He cited an instance where, during a revival, a church did not consider unsaved among the large Latin American population in the city to be prospects. He also called attention to failures to include Negro areas in a community census.

At the same council meeting, a retired seminary professor of Christian ethics said that attention on success, the democratic process in church government and the prevalence of lower income classes in Southern Baptist churches are among reasons why the denomination has a problem on the race issue.

T. B. Maston of Fort Worth said the Southern Baptist Convention still retains "a greater percentage of the lower income classes than any other of the larger Protestant groups. These are the very people, who, because of the economic threat of the Negro and their own insecurity, are generally the most prejudiced against the Negro."

Speaking of Baptist democracy in church affairs, Maston added, "A different type of ecclesiology might enable us to make more progress in a shorter period of time."

"Obsession with success" has made the denomination, "to a distressing degree, more concerned with our prestige in the world than in our impact on the world," Maston went on.

"Men with administrative responsibility in local churches and in the denomination . . . seem to want peace and quiet at any price, fearful of the effect of any difference of opinion or disturbance on the growth in numbers or the increase in financial support of the church or agency," the former professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary said.

The regional nature of the SBC also is a factor. Maston declared, "The prejudice of many of our people is regional as much as racial. For many of them, no good thing can come from north of the Mason-Dixon Line."

As signs of progress in race relations in the SBC, Maston pointed to the 1954 action of the Southern Baptist Convention "commending the Supreme Court for its decision" that year on public school segregation. He pointed to actions at subsequent Convention sessions

"Another area where Southern Baptists have made a considerable contribution to race relations has been in the field of literature," he said. He pointed to material published by several Convention agencies.

Another evidence of progress has been the challenge from missionaries to Southern Baptists in the United States "to change their attitudes toward and their relationships with Negroes," according to Maston.

He referred to associations of churches in the SBC which have extended fellowship to Negro Baptist churches. "The ultimate test in the area of race is on the local church level. The victory will not have been won until it is won there." He mentioned "real victories" and defeats in actions by churches on the race issue.

Summing up, Maston said, "Real progress has been made and is being made, but when we compare what we have done with what we should have done it seems mighty little. Entirely too many of our people who claim to be 'a people of the Book' continue to show partiality as they 'hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

He said Southern Baptists seem to have done a small amount on race when compared with other religious groups.

Rutledge said the Home Mission Board office in Atlanta has employed two Negro secretarial workers and is looking for others.

"One of our most difficult problems is ascertaining where wisdom ends and cowardice begins," he continued. "As leaders we will try to bring out people along as fast as they can be led."

The Advisory Council of Southern Baptists for Work with Negroes elected Ross Coggins, Nashville, communications director of the SBC Christian Life Commission, as chairman. Harold G. Basden, Richmond, associate secretary for promotion, Foreign Mission Board, is vice-chairman, and Roy Jennings, Memphis, curriculum coordinator for the Brotherhood Commission, is secretary.

The council meets annually in Nashville and is attended by representatives of SBC agencies and by state Baptist directors of Negro work.

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Dr. W. F. Yarborough Dies

2-24-65

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--Dr. W. Forbes Yarborough, distinguished service professor of religious education at Oklahoma Baptist University here died Feb. 20 at Broadway Hospital, Shawnee, following a stroke suffered three days earlier. He was 67. Dr. Yarborough had been on the school's faculty since 1925, serving first as professor of religious education and later as head of that department.

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES--W. Fred Kendall, Nashvill , center, has been elected president of the association of executive secretaries of state Baptist conventions which cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention. Roy D. Gresham, Baltimore, at right, is vice-president, and Fred D. Hubbs, Detroit, is secretary. Kendall is with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Gresham with the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Hubbs with the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. (BP) Photo.

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PRESS ASSOCIATION--New officers elected by the Southern Baptist Press Association include from left Erwin L. McDonald, Little Rock, president; Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Columbus, Ohio, vice-president; James O. Duncan, Washington, representative to Southern Baptist Interagency Council, and Richard N. Owen, Nashville, representative to Advisory Council of Southern Baptists for Work with Negroes. Each edits the weekly Baptist paper serving the state from which he comes. Not pictured is Gainer E. Bryan Jr., Baltimore, secretary-treasurer. (BP) Photo

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