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D. C. Baptists, Catholics
Discuss "Common Witness"

WASHINGTON (BP)--Fifty-one Baptists and Roman Catholics from the Washington metropolitan area met together here in a historic fellowship dinner and discussion of their common Christian witness.

The group prayed the Lord's Prayer together, sang "Faith of Our Fathers," and read passages from the New Testament.

Two speakers talked about "our common Christian witness--in our lives, our communities, and in the world."

The meeting took place in the First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md., affiliated with the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. James M. Windham is the pastor.

It was sponsored by the leadership of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, and the Ecumenical Commission of the (Catholic) Archdiocese of Washington. M. Chandler Stith is executive secretary of the convention, and Bishop John S. Spence, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Washington, is chairman of the Catholic Ecumenical Commission.

The District of Columbia Baptist Convention which co-sponsored the meeting is dually aligned with both the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Convention.

This is the first such meeting between Baptists and Catholics in the Washington area. Although no plans were announced for future meetings, it is expected that others will follow.

The meeting was composed of clergy and laity from both groups.

Speakers were Adam J. Kostick, assistant at Saint Mary's Catholic Church here, and Clarence W. Cranford, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church.

Kostick said that "a group like this meets together, not to debate, but to understand. Years ago when Baptists and Catholics got together, we hoped for tolerance. Now we seek understanding."

The Catholic spokesman defined witnessing as (1) "the way we live," (2) "the words we speak," and (3) "the faith we hold." He pointed out areas of common concern in each of these areas.

He concluded that the common Christian witness is to imitate Christ, to serve and not to be served.

Both Kostick and Cranford emphasized the place of the Bible in arriving at common understanding among Christians.

The Catholic quoted a Baptist declaration of faith concerning the Bible, and said, "We can accept that." The Baptist proposed that the two groups could profit by developing Bible study classes in which both would participate.

Cranford declared that one force that is driving Christians of all groups closer together is the increasing cynicism against the Christian church.

"If our message is to be relevant to the modern world," he said, "we must learn from each other, because we are all in the same boat."

The Baptist speaker said that the increasing dialogue between Baptists and Catholics is the work of the Holy Spirit. "No mere human could bring about the understanding that is now developing," he said.

Following the speakers, Bishop Spence told the group that they had just heard "two technicians of the Holy Spirit." He said that the Holy Spirit is setting in motion an "unpredictable plan for speeding the day when Christian unity will take place."

The Bishop continued, 'We don't know how it will be. We don't have a formula. We all back away from the concept of 'returning to Rome.'"

He expressed the belief that someday "in God's own good time" the Christian world will achieve unity.

One Baptist pastor was overheard to say, "Ten years ago I could not even have imagined that such a meeting as this could take place."

One of the Catholic participants reported that both the clergy and the laity present were greatly impressed with the Christian spirit that prevailed.

A number of persons referred to their strong conviction that the Holy Spirit was present and leading in the fellowship.

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San Diego Pastor Named
Foundation Executive

9/16/66

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)--Cecil J. Pearson of San Diego, Calif., was elected executive secretary-treasurer of the California Baptist Foundation by its board of directors meeting here.

The 51-year-old minister is currently pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church of San Diego where he has served two different times as pastor since 1952. For 1½ years during that period, he was missions director for the Colorado Baptist General Convention.

In addition to his years in the ministry, Pearson has had considerable training in law, business and investments.

The foundation, an organization of the California Southern Baptist Convention procures and manages trust and endowment funds for the benefit of Baptist causes in the state.

Before coming to California, Pearson served as pastor of churches in Rocksprings, Brownwood, and Monahans, all in Texas, and was an Army chaplain during World War II.

He is a graduate of Howard Payne College (Baptist), Brownwood, Tex.; has studied at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland; and received law training at the University of Texas, Austin.

He assumes the position, which has been vacant since March, on Nov. 1.

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Surplus Property Used
For Health, Education

9/16/66

WASHINGTON (BP)--Surplus property for which the federal government paid \$222.2 million was made available to the states for distribution during the first half of 1966, according to an announcement made by the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).

Real property accounted for \$41 million and personal property for \$180.4 million. The totals were contained in the department's semi-annual report to Congress on the surplus property program.

No information was available on how many, and to what extent, Baptist agencies have benefitted by the program.

Property transferred includes such items as school and hospital building sites; buildings suitable for college dormitory or faculty housing; motor vehicles; hospital, school, and office furniture; hand and machine tools, motion picture projectors; laboratory equipment; and school and office supplies.

According to regulations issued by HEW, surplus real property must be for a fundamental educational or public health purpose. An applicant's plan of operation shall not be approved unless it includes a provision that the applicant will not discriminate because of race, color, creed, or national origin in the use of any portions of the property.

The regional offices of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and various state agencies receive and channel the surplus property to the institutions.

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Utah Baptists Seek 400
Baptist Home Fellowships

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (BP)--In an effort to penetrate the predominately Mormon towns and villages which have no Baptist churches, the Executive Board of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention here set a goal of establishing 400 home fellowships in the two states.

The home fellowships would provide Bible-study emphases in the homes of Baptist people living in the communities.

Charles H. Ashcraft, executive secretary-treasurer of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention said that the "early church did such a thing, and it worked."

The home fellowship approach was recommended after studies and depth surveys conducted here recently by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Wake Forest Adds
Degree In Sociology

9/16/66

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C. (BP)--Wake Forest College moved closer to university status this fall with addition to the master's degree work in the department of sociology and anthropology.

This raises to eight the number of departments at the Baptist school here offering graduate work in the school of arts and sciences.

Graduate work, including the doctor of philosophy degree in some departments, is also being offered in the Bowman Gray School of Medicine in the college.

Enrollment this fall may be slightly higher than last year, about 3,000. School officials explained that marked increases in enrollments during the next few years is unlikely until there are additional dormitories.

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Christians' Stake
In Strike Studied

9/16/66

NASHVILLE (BP)--Christians have a stake in the problems highlighted by a recent Texas farm workers' strike because Christians, and Southern Baptists in particular, include both farmers and farm laborers.

This is the opinion of Weston W. Ware, former associate secretary of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, as stated in an article in the Sept. 15 issue of the Baptist Standard, Texas Baptist newspaper published in Dallas.

Ware, who spent four days in South Texas studying the migrant farm workers' strike, compared the strike in the Rio Grande City area of South Texas to a similar strike in Delano, Calif.

"The key to the strike in California was turned by the church," Ware wrote. "Churches and Christians in Texas may be faced with the responsibility of deciding what to do with that key."

He said he believed the churches' place in the modern world is neither in leading nor in fighting strikes.

"I do not believe churches should be marching, although many Christians may be driven by conscience to march."

But churches certainly should not be silent, although some Christians want them to be silent, he said.

Ware wrote that it is not advisable to picture one group in the economic conflict as villains and the other group as the "good guys."

He emphasized that "the issue of economic justice is complex, but the rights and needs of every group involved must be given full attention."

(more)

The strike occurred in the area of Rio Grande City, Tex. in June when farm laborers there set up picket lines against local melon growers. The stated issue was a demand to raise wages for farm labor from 85 cents to \$1.25 an hour.

The strike has received wide news treatment with religious overtones brought about by the participation of Catholic priests in demonstrations supporting the strikers, along with the other ministers, and at least one Baptist pastor.

A co-chairman of a march of strikers and demonstrators from Rio Grande City to the state capitol in Austin was James L. Navarro, pastor of the Kashmere Baptist Temple in Houston. The other co-chairman was a Catholic priest, Antonio Gonzalez also of Houston.

Ware said some decisions concerning the attitude of Christians are essential.

He said the importance of the response by Christians is revealed by the statement of the leader of the California grape pickers' strike who declared the strikers' move there would not have been successful without the support of the churches in California.

Ware's article formulated these positions:

Strikers should not forget social responsibility.

Owners should not forget the obligations of private property.

Since private property is a stewardship of God, it is reasonable to ask farmers to recognize responsibility to God to provide laborers a reasonable return from their labors.

Citizens should accept responsibility to the broader neighborhood.

"Churches are to stimulate men to see the vision of love for others that included concern for their economic needs. They are to sensitize conscience so that men work for economic justice," he concluded.

Ware, a graduate of Baylor University (Baptist), Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, resigned his position recently to accept an administrative post with the Peace Corps. He will be associate director of the Peace Corps efforts in Panama.