



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 21, 1966

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**Pastor Fired Over Race
Named To Mercer Staff**

MACON, Ga. (BP)--The Baptist minister ousted as pastor of Tattnell Square Baptist Church here because he urged the church to seat Negroes in worship services has now been named assistant to the president for public relations at Mercer University here.

Thomas J. Holmes will assume the position with offices only a few blocks from the church that fired him. The church is located on the corner of the Baptist school's campus.

Meanwhile, reaction from around the world has poured into Macon decriing the action of the church, which voted Sept. 25 to fire Holmes, associate pastor Douglas Johnson, and music director Jack Jones. Vote on the ouster was 250-189.

On the Sunday the vote was taken, a Mercer student from Ghana who said he was a product of Southern Baptist missions work in Africa was turned away from the church by ushers and held by police until after the service. He tried again to attend the service the next Sunday, but was rebuffed again.

Holmes said he had received more than 200 communications, including cablegrams from missionaries around the world. Almost all of them said that what happened at Tattnell Square hurts the Christian cause everywhere.

Editorial comments in Southern Baptist publications echoed the same theme, one even suggesting that the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board should return all missions money that the Tattnell Square church has given to foreign missions.

In the wake of all the reaction, the church has apparently split over the issue and the controversy that has resulted.

About 100 members of the church have begun holding informal services at other locations in Macon. Holmes and Johnson have each addressed the group, but have had no official connection with it.

Services were held Sunday, Oct. 16, at the St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Macon by the group, which calls itself the Christian Fellowship. It has, however, no official name or formal plans for constituting as a church.

The outgoing chairman of deacons at Tattnell Square, Jerry Rogers, said that about 35 former members have requested letters of dismissal from the troubled church since the staff was fired.

A member of the Christian Fellowship group, Gary Hinabaugh, said that Negroes have been meeting with the group. One Negro sang in the choir Sunday, and four others were in the congregation when they met at the Episcopal church.

All involved seem deeply concerned about the world-wide reaction to the vote to fire the staff, the refusal to seat the Negro student from Ghana, and the earlier vote this summer to establish a policy refusing to allow Negroes to attend worship services.

Most published reports have lauded the staff, some almost making a martyr of Holmes, and have chided the church members for being "un-Christian."

A strong editorial in the Capital Baptist, weekly newspaper of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, urged either the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention or the SBC Foreign Mission Board draw a check to be presented on the steps of the church to the chairman of deacons.

"We think that Southern Baptists ought, in a dramatic way, say that we disapprove of such action by giving back to the church all that they have given to foreign missions," wrote editor James O. Duncan.

"The Southern Baptist foreign mission cause cannot afford the luxury of the support of churches that behave in such a way," Duncan said. "Cut down on the mission program, if we must, but let those who go forth not be destroyed by those who stay here."

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"The Southern Baptist foreign mission cause cannot afford the luxury of the support of churches that behave in such a way," Duncan said. "Cut down on the mission program, if we must, but let those who go forth not be destroyed by those who stay here."

He said, however, that since each Baptist church is autonomous and no one controls their actions, little can be done for the church except to love them and pray for them.

Other editorials in state Baptist papers have voiced similar concerns about the effect of the incidents on Southern Baptist foreign missions.

"The tragedy of Tattnell Square," said an editorial in the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine "is that its policy is not a rare instance but the overwhelming pattern of practice among Southern Baptist churches. The big question among us Baptists continues to be whether or not any people but whites will be permitted to darken the doors of our churches."

The California Southern Baptist said that "the devil must have rejoiced" when the church voted to fire its staff. "For the church the best we can do is quote the words of Jesus as he died upon the cross, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'"

Praising Thomas Holmes for "sacrificing self for the gospel's sake," the Western Recorder in Kentucky said editorially that the record of most Southern Baptists in the racial revolution is sad and dark.

"The cries of the oppressed have been met by silence, and the struggle for freedom has brought non-involvement and pious rationalization by most Baptist preachers," wrote Kentucky Baptist Editor C. R. Daley.

In North Carolina, two Baptist papers compared the contrast between the welcome an African student received as a new member of a Baptist church in Winston-Salem, N.C., on the very same day that the student from Ghana was turned away from Tattnell Square.

The Biblical Recorder in Raleigh, N.C., said editorially that missions money sent from the Foreign Mission Board to Ghana could better be spent by sending "home" missionaries to many churches in the deep South. "In view of incidents like this, it is time for the Foreign Mission Board to revise its strategy in African countries," said the editorial.

Charity and Children, a publication of the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes, called for Baptists to pray for the church. "The Georgia church will probably be the brunt of enough criticism as it is; so, suffice it to say that they need our prayers more than our judgements."

In Georgia, the Christian Index, official publication of the Georgia Baptist Convention expressed "sympathy for the church in the rupture of its fellowship, and for the ministers whose hearts have been burdened and their work interrupted."

Interim Editor Searcy S. Garrison, executive secretary of the convention, wrote: "With concern for our brethren in trouble, and for the effectiveness of our Baptist witness, may we pray for increased wisdom, for a fuller measure of compassion, and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in dealing with problems which defy solution until resolved in the spirit of the Lord Jesus."

In addition to the editorials in state Baptist papers, numerous Baptist pastors conferences and ministers' organizations have expressed concern and adopted resolutions, including groups in Abilene, Tex., Memphis, Tenn., Atlanta, and Macon.

The Atlanta Baptist Pastors' Conference, the Macon Ministerial Association, and also the Negro Baptist Pastor's Conference in Macon, each adopted resolutions praising the three men and expressing concern over the issue.

How has Holmes reacted, both to the incidents at the church and to the world-wide response?

Speaking at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., Holmes said that the experience "has strengthened my faith and has made me more aware of the urgent need of prophetic preaching."

"I have not sought to be a martyr," he said. "But I am unwilling to sacrifice convictions which I cannot compromise. I count it a privilege to have the opportunity to witness to what God is trying to do in our world today."

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Retired Cuban
Missionary Dies

10/21/66

HAMPTON, Va. (BP)--Dr. Antonio Martinez, for 38 years a missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, died of cancer in Hampton, Va., on Oct. 14.

Since his retirement in 1963, he had served as missionary to the Spanish-speaking for the Peninsula Baptist Association in Virginia.

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For five years he was a missionary in Guanabacoa and pastor of the Guanabacoa Baptist Church in Cuba. He served the Cardenas Baptist Church in the Matanzas Province of Cuba for 34 years before leaving Cuba in 1963 on a Red Cross boat.

A medical doctor, Martinez had also earned a doctor of theology degree.

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Hughes Elected New
California Executive

10/21/66

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)--New executive secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California is Robert D. Hughes of Long Beach, Calif.

Hughes, pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church of Long Beach since 1958, was elected to the state's top Baptist post during a called meeting of the convention's Executive Board here.

The position has been vacant for six months following the resignation of Grady C. Cothen to become president of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla.

The committee which recommended Hughes reported that 51 individuals had been recommended to them, and that all had been given both careful and prayerful consideration.

Hughes will assume the position effective on or before Dec. 1.

He has been a pastor in California since 1948 when he became pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church in Ventura, Calif. Previously he was pastor of churches in Arkansas and Texas.

Hughes served as president of the California Southern Baptist Convention during 1953-54, and had been chairman of the convention's Executive Board for two terms.

A current member of the Southern Baptist Hospital board, Hughes is a former member of two other major SBC-wide boards--the Foreign Mission Board and the board of trustees for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

A native of Arkansas, he was pastor of the Good Hope Baptist Church, McCrory; the South Fort Smith Baptist Church near Arkadelphia; and the Oak Grove Baptist Church near Pine Bluff, all in Arkansas. He also has been pastor of two churches in Texas.

He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College (now University), Arkadelphia, Ark., and received the master of theology degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Hughes and his wife have three children, the oldest son John now studying at Golden Gate Seminary and pastoring the First Baptist Church in Loomis, Calif. A daughter, Peggy Jean, is a senior at California Baptist College, and the youngest son, Robert Don, is a high school senior in Long Beach.

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BP HOTOT TO BE MAILED TO STATE BAPTIST PAPERS
Michigan Thaw in # # # # # #
ABC-SBC Relationships

10/21/66

DETROIT, Mich. (BP)--Two Southern Baptists were major speakers for the first time on the program of the Michigan Baptist Convention (American Baptist) here recently, when plans were announced for an American Baptist leader to bring a major address at the forthcoming Baptist State Convention of Michigan (Southern Baptist) in Royal Oak, Mich.

Major speeches were delivered during the Michigan Baptist Convention here by Fred D. Hubbs, executive secretary of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, and by Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Nashville.

Valentine called the new development "a welcome thaw in the relationships between American and Southern Baptists in Michigan."

Hubbs announced that the executive secretary of the American Baptist State body in Michigan, Arthur L. Farrell of Detroit, would deliver a major address to the annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan in Royal Oak.

Hubbs and Valentine credited Farrell with the idea for initiating the exchange of conventions pulpits.

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Hubbs commented that he received the warmest reception he could recall at any Baptist meeting. He spoke twice--once at a dinner for the convention's board of managers and guests and again during a panel discussion on the ecumenical movement and Baptist unity.

Valentine spoke three times during the convention, at a family banquet for the Michigan Baptist family, at a luncheon for men and pastors, and during a workshop on social revolution.

"When we get to know one another, we make significant progress in understanding and appreciating each other," Valentine said.

The ABC-affiliated Michigan Baptist Convention met at the Redford Baptist Church in Detroit.

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Criswell Says Christianity
May Be Doomed by 2,000

10/21/66

TULSA, Okla. (BP)--The pastor of the largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention predicted here that Christianity will be practically non-existence by the year 2,000.

W. A. Criswell of Dallas, speaking to the annual Sunday School Convention of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, declared here that "our church and denomination is beginning to die."

Tracing the decline of Christianity through history, Criswell stated that 180 years ago one-fourth of the world's population was evangelical Christian. "Today, eight per cent of the people in the world are Christian."

The pastor of the 13,000-member First Baptist Church of Dallas paralleled the decline of Christianity with the shift of population from rural to urban areas, and with the rise of elaborate church buildings and "vast cathedrals."

Unless we find some way to reach the people in the big cities of America, evangelical Christianity may be doomed, he said.

"It is yet to be demonstrated that any Protestant church can grow and survive in the big cities," he said.

Using his own church as an example, Criswell said that the big Dallas church is really not reaching the unsaved people of Dallas, but only the people who were already Christians who have moved to Dallas. He said that when the great influx of country people moving to the city ceases, the churches of the city will die.

The prominent Baptist pastor said it is a "colossal indictment that among our millions of churches, there are only six congregations who baptize as many as 300 persons a year."

Comparing the problem to the medical search for a cure for cancer, Criswell said he did not know the answer to the problem of the decline in growth of churches.

"Maybe I ought not to share these things," he said. "But I believe it is time for every pastor and church member to call upon God to intervene on behalf of His church."

"If there is not an intervention from heaven, our generation will be lost to Christianity," he declared.

Criswell also called for churches to be willing to change their methods. "Approaches and methods that worked a hundred years ago will not find success today," he said.

Referring to the growth of the early church, Criswell said that "evangelism was done on the outside, in the marketplace, up and down the streets and from house to house,"

"For almost 300 years the Christian churches had no buildings in which to work," he recalled. Criswell said the church must go where the people are and expose to public view the message of redemption.

The prominent pastor spoke twice during the annual Oklahoma Baptist Sunday School Convention at Sequoyah Hills Baptist Church in Tulsa.

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CUTLINES, with story mailed 10/21/66 BP PHOTO(10/24/66)

NEW CALIFORNIA EXECUTIVE: Robert D. Hughes, pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church of Long Beach, Calif., since 1958, is the new executive secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California. (BP PHOTO)

CUTLINES with BP Feature mailed 10/25/66 BP PHOTO(10/24/66)

ARCHAEOLOGY "DIG" NEAR THE JORDAN: Professor Joseph Callaway directs an archeological expedition at the ancient city of Ai, plus an additional "dig" which uncovered an early Byzantine church not far from the Jordan River. (BP PHOTO)

CUTLINES, with Feature mailed 10/24/66 BP PHOTO(10/24/66)

EDITOR RETIRES: Looking back over 12 years as editor of the Texas Baptist Standard, retiring editor E. S. James doffs his hat and packs his briefcase for one of his last trips home from the office. During his 12 years as editor, James wrote more than 2,000 editorials and answered more than 6,000 letters to the Editor. (BP PHOTO)