



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 21, 1967

Judge Tosses Out Case
Against Arkansas Vote

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--An effort to nullify the vote of the Arkansas Baptist Convention to release ownership of the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center was tossed out of a chancery court here.

Chancellor Kay L. Matthews ruled that the convention had not violated its constitution in determining by a majority vote last November to relinquish the hospital to a private corporation.

Three Arkansas Baptist pastors had filed the suit, claiming that the convention did not vote to amend its constitution to provide for transfer of the hospital property, and that the convention action was thus null and void.

The convention voted 601 to 435 to release control and ownership of the hospital to a private corporation, with common knowledge that the hospital would seek government grants and loans once the ownership transfer had been completed.

The three plaintiffs in the case did not immediately indicate if they would appeal the chancery court ruling. If they do not appeal, the ruling is final.

Plaintiffs in the case were J. T. Summers, pastor of Denison Street Baptist Church in Little Rock; R. F. Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Conway, Ark.; and Ralph Cadwell, pastor of Cole Ridge Baptist Church, Blytheville, Ark.

One month before Chancellor Matthews ruled in favor of the defendants, he had overruled motions from the defendants' attorneys asking for dismissal of the case on the grounds that the medical center and the convention are both corporations and any suit against them would have to be filed against the corporations, not against individuals connected with the corporations.

Named as defendants by the plaintiffs in their complaint were three officers of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention: Don Hook of Little Rock, president; Thomas Hinson of West Memphis, president of the convention's Executive Board; and S. A. Whitlow of Little Rock, executive secretary of the convention.

Also named as defendants were officials of the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center: W. M. Freeze Jr., president of the hospital's board of trustees; James Linder and R. A. Lile, members of the board; and John Gilbreath, administrator.

Chancellor Matthews ruled earlier that Gilbreath could be dropped from the list of defendants, and also admitted a list of ten intervenors who wanted to intervene in the suit "in order that the will of the majority might be represented."

The convention in November had not only voted to release the hospital, but had tabled one effort to rescind the action, and had rejected a second effort to rescind the vote by a margin of 272-197.

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It's No Sleeper: Baptist
Campus Pet Stars in Drama

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MURFREESBORO, N.C. (BP)--A campus pet named Charley, who last year made headlines because he sleeps through classes at a Baptist school here, now is the star performer for the Chowan Players.

It is believed to be the first time that a dog has played the starring role in children's theaters on a troupe of college dramatists.

"Chowan Charley," the campus pet who lives at Chowan College (Baptist) here, plays the lead role, and supporting roles are performed by sophomore college students, said Mrs. Edith Larson, director of the Chowan Players.

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They are performing the three-act drama, "Mr. Dooley, Jr.," before elementary school children in schools and children's theaters in northeastern North Carolina and southeastern Virginia.

Last year Charley gained national prominence for his habit of going to sleep on the classroom floor during lectures at Chowan. If the classroom is quiet, Charley leaves and seeks a room where he can sleep through a lecture.

But when Charley walks on the stage, he isn't a sleeper. Now he's top dog.

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Atlanta Church Burns;
\$500,000 Damage Estimated

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ATLANTA (BP)--A four-alarm fire severely damaged the sanctuary and educational building of West End Baptist Church here. Pastor Hugh Brooks estimated the damage at about \$500,000.

The blaze is believed to have started in an auxiliary kitchen near the choir room. Eight firemen were overcome by smoke inhalation during the five-hour battle to contain the flames.

Flames gutted much of the education building. Smoke, heat, and water damage was extensive throughout the entire facilities. The church was in the midst of a major expansion and renovation program.

Brooks said he believed the church had adequate insurance to cover most of the fire damage.

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Church Where SBC Started
Observes 150th Anniversary

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AUGUSTA, Ga. (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham will speak here during a week-long celebration in observance of the 150th anniversary of First Baptist Church, Augusta, Ga.

The historic church, organized on March 25, 1817, is where the Southern Baptist Convention was organized in 1845.

Dates for the 150th anniversary celebration are March 24-April 2. R. Jack Robinson is pastor of the 3,600-member church, which was started as the Baptist Praying Society of Augusta with 18 charter members.

Robinson said the sesquicentennial celebration will begin March 25 when deacons of the church, dressed in costumes of the 1817 era, will ride horses from Kiokee to Augusta, simulating rides of Daniel Marshall. Kiokee is the oldest Baptist church in the state and Marshall was the first Baptist preacher in Georgia.

They will arrive at the church in time for a period of prayer and presentation of a new history of the church and a fellowship hour honoring senior members.

Robinson will speak at morning services on March 26. The evening service that day will feature a musical presentation, "Hymn of Praise."

On March 27, H. Franklin Paschall, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will speak at a special service honoring former pastors and staff members, plus missionaries who have gone out from the church.

On March 29, a historical pageant entitled, "Establish Thou the Work of Thy Hands," will be presented at Bell Auditorium. Over 400 people will be involved in the production.

On March 31, Graham will speak at Bell Auditorium in a special service of consecration. Also on the program will be Cliff Barrows and Grady Wilson. A 300-voice choir will sing.

On Sunday morning, April 2, the church's first homecoming will be held at Bell Auditorium. An old-fashioned dinner on the ground will be served and a note representing termination of all church indebtedness will be burned at an afternoon service.

That night, a special "Dedication to the Future" service will conclude the week. Robert C. Norman, chairman of the long-range planning committee, will present proposals for the future.

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ADVANCE FOR PM'S OF TUESDAY
February 21, 1967

Please observe release date

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SBC Membership Approaches
11 Million; Enrollments Drop

NASHVILLE (BP)--Membership in Southern Baptist Convention churches pressed toward the 11 million mark during 1966, but enrollments in most church organizations recorded decreases during the year.

A year-end statistical summary from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's research and statistics department disclosed that total membership in SBC churches reached 10,952,463 during 1966, an increase of 179,751 members over the 1965 report.

The statistics were based on reports from 33,949 churches affiliated with the nation's largest Protestant denomination. The number of churches was up 152 from the number reported last year.

Only church organization to show increases in enrollment was the music ministry of SBC-affiliated churches. The number of Baptists enrolled in church choirs and other music programs increased 72,818 (8.3 per cent) to a total of 945,004 during 1966.

Decreases were reported in Sunday School enrollment, Training Union enrollment, Men's Brotherhood enrollment, Royal Ambassador enrollment, and Woman's Missionary Union organization enrollment.

The number of baptisms of new converts, considered by some denominational leaders to be a barometer of the denomination's spiritual state, decreased only slightly compared to the previous year.

The convention's churches reported 360,959 baptisms during 1966, a decrease of 675 when compared to the number of new converts in 1965.

Sunday School enrollment was off 55,953, with a total of 7,603,685 reported enrolled in the denomination's weekly Bible classes. It was a decrease of .7 per cent.

Training Union enrollment dropped 58,114 or 2.2 per cent, to a total of 2,552,073. Training Union is the Sunday evening study group program of Baptist churches.

Woman's Missionary Union, a missions organization for women, girls and children, reported an enrollment drop of 9,911 to a total of 1,459,828, with the same .7 per cent decrease reported by Sunday School.

Enrollment in the Baptist Men's (Brotherhood) organizations dropped 14,220, to a total of 282,199, a decrease of 4.8 per cent.

Royal Ambassadors, a missions organization for boys, reported enrollment decreases of 5,446, to a 1966 total of 181,354. It was a 2.9 per cent drop.

Enrollment in Vacation Bible Schools, the weekday Bible ministry of Baptist churches, also recorded a decrease for the first time, dropping 6,029 to a total of 3,388,924.

An all-time record, however, was reported in SBC missions giving and value of church property.

Financially, Southern Baptists gave a total of nearly \$670 million through their churches for all causes during 1966, up \$31.8 million over total gifts last year.

Contributions for missions topped the \$115 million mark, an increase of \$8.4 million over missions gifts of 1965.

Property value of churches continued to climb, exceeding the \$3½ billion mark. Churches reported spending \$168,786,080 for construction during 1966 of new buildings, including a figure of \$5,063,534 for local mission buildings.

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On an average, the per-member total gifts were \$61.15 during 1966, while the average gift per member for missions was \$10.52.

Kindergartens were reported by 1,466 churches.

Included in the 33,949 churches reported were 284 classified as "inactive." They are churches which are still affiliated with the denomination in some way but have not submitted a report within the past three years. The statistics reflected only figures actually reported by the churches, with no adjustments made for incomplete reports.

Following is the tabulated statistical summary as prepared by the SBC research and statistics department:

	1966	1965	Numerical Change	Percent Change
Associations	1,188	1,184	4	.3
Churches	33,949	33,797	152	.4
Baptisms	360,959	361,634	-675	-.2
Additions by letter	546,427	547,316	-889	-.2
Total membership	10,952,463	10,772,712	179,751	1.7
Sunday School				
Enrollment	7,603,685	7,659,638	-55,953	-.7
Training Union				
Enrollment	2,552,073	2,610,187	-58,114	-2.2
W.M.U. Enrollment	1,459,828	1,469,739	-9,911	-.7
Men's Brotherhood				
Enrollment	282,199	296,419	-14,220	-4.8
R.A. Enrollment	181,354	186,800	-5,446	-2.9
Music Ministry				
Enrollment	945,004	872,186	72,818	8.3
Vacation Bible School				
Enrollment	3,388,924	3,394,953	-6,029	-.2
Value Church				
Property	\$3,273,868,971	\$3,080,663,120	\$193,205,851	6.3
Total Gifts	\$ 669,779,972	\$ 637,958,846	\$ 31,821,126	5.0
Mission Gifts	\$ 115,197,437	\$ 106,743,944	\$ 8,453,493	7.9

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~~123~~ Kelley Named Assistant For Georgia Convention 123

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ATLANTA (BP)--Ernest J. Kelley Jr., of Atlanta, has been elected administrative assistant to the executive secretary-treasurer of the Georgia Baptist Convention here.

Kelley has been associate secretary of the Georgia Baptist Sunday School department for the past two years. In his new post, he will be assistant to Executive Secretary Searcy Garrison in the areas of associational missions and liaison with Southern Baptist mission agencies.

Kelley is a native of Sewanee, Tenn., a graduate of Cumberland University, Cumberland, Tenn., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

He has served as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dunlap, Tenn., and Fairview Baptist Church, Rossville, Ga.

Kelley succeeds W. L. Rainwater, recently-elected administrator of the Peachtree-on-Peachtree Inn, a new Baptist home for the aged in downtown Atlanta.

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~~124~~ Baptist Children's Home Given Cemetery, Mausoleum 124

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AUSTIN, Tex. (BP)--The 18-acre Memorial Hill Park Cemetery and Mausoleum here has been donated to a Baptist children's home in Round Rock, Tex.

The gift, from friends of the home who wish to remain anonymous, was made to the Texas Baptist Children's Home at Round Rock.

An option to purchase 50 additional acres adjacent to the cemetery tract also was part of the donation.

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Mrs. Gilbert Riley of Belton, Tex., chairman of the home's board of trustees, said income from Memorial Hill Park and Mausoleum will directly benefit the children's home.

A perpetual care cemetery, the large tract has many unsold plots, she disclosed. Those who purchase space in the cemetery or mausoleum will be, at the same time, supporting Texas Baptist Children's Home in its ministry to children.

The cemetery is located five miles north of Austin off inter-regional Highway 35 with access roads.

Announcement of the anonymous gift was made jointly by Mrs. Riley and by Charles Wright, administrator of Texas Baptist Children's Home.

The home, located about 15 miles North of Austin, cares for more than 250 children each year, and is one of four Texas Baptist children's homes.

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ADVANCE FOR PM'S OF TUESDAY
February 21, 1967

2/17/67

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SBC Leaders List Factors
In Statistical Declines

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By the Baptist Press

Why did Southern Baptist Convention churches report enrollment decreases in Sunday School, Training Union, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood (laymen's) organizations during 1966?

Top leaders responsible for promotion of these Baptist church program organizations listed about 20 different factors contributing to the statistical decline when Baptist Press, news service of the SBC, asked them "Why?"

The 1966 SBC statistics, compiled by the research and statistics department of the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville, disclosed that 1966 enrollment figures in these four church organizations dropped below 1965 enrollment figures, and that baptisms for 1966 were 675 less than the number of new converts baptized in 1965.

In Atlanta, the director of the division of evangelism for the SBC Home Mission Board, C. E. Autrey, said that the statistics revealed that Southern Baptist "about held our own" in the field of evangelism during the year. SBC churches reported baptizing 360,959 new converts during 1966.

Autrey said he was encouraged by this, adding that the denomination had no special emphasis on evangelism during the year. Autrey predicted increases for the next three years as the SBC becomes involved in the Crusade of Americas, an evangelistic campaign involving North, Central and South America in 1969.

In Nashville, the secretary of the Sunday School department for the SBC Sunday School Board listed in an interview about 10 factors contributing to a decline of nearly 56,000 in Sunday School enrollment during 1966. Enrollment for the year was 7.6 million.

"Any one of these factors is bad enough," said A. W. Washburn of Nashville, "but now we have a convergence of many different factors hitting us at once."

Five of the ten factors dealt with problems within Baptist churches, and five concerned conditions of the world and nation.

Washburn cited (1) a climate in the world of criticism of churches and institutional Christianity, (2) the preoccupation of Americans with material concerns, (3) social unrest characterized by lack of love and mutual appreciation of the races, (4) the mobility of the American people, and (5) the often overlooked factor that more than 4 million men are in the armed forces, including many Southern Baptists, who become "displaced persons to whom we are not ministering very effectively."

"In our churches," Washburn said, "there is an atmosphere of lack of deep concern for reaching and meeting the needs of persons."

Washburn listed four basic actions Baptist churches are neglecting: (1) knowing the individuals to be reached--knowing them as persons with needs to be met; (2) having an adequate number of concerned trained workers who will cultivate through regular personal contacts these unreached persons; (3) providing effective Bible teaching that meets individual needs; and (4) providing adequate physical facilities.

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The secretary of the board's Training Union department, Phillip B. Harris, listed five factors contributing to a drop of 58,000 in Training Union enrollment, the SBC Sunday evening membership training program with about 2.5 million members.

Harris listed three outside influencing factors: (1) the trend toward the use of Sunday as a day of recreation, (2) increased competition from television on Sunday night, and (3) the neglect of working men and women to leave time for the church and its program.

Harris said that two factors within Baptist churches contributed to the decline. He observed that 1966 was a period of transition in many churches from the traditional concept of Training Union to an enlarged concept of Training Union. Another factor is a lack of motivation of church members to develop skills in themselves.

In Birmingham, the executive secretary of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), Miss Alma Hunt, attributed a drop of nearly 10,000 in WMU enrollment to poor reporting and to failure to compete well for the time and interest of women and young people. There are more than 1.4 million members enrolled in the WMU organizations.

"The church is becoming less and less a center of a woman's life outside the home," said Miss Hunt. She added that more women have careers, go to school, and work in civic activities. "While these are worthwhile activities, they woo some women away from week-day church programs," she said.

Miss Hunt also said that the WMU reports formerly were handled separately from other church organizations, but are now handled through church letters to the denomination. "Although the new system of reporting is fair and potentially more accurate, many churches have not learned that WMU reports through it, and we therefore may not have an accurate account of WMU enrollment this year."

In Memphis, the executive secretary of the SBC Brotherhood Commission, George W. Schroeder, cited the newness of a program emphasis on missions, and a method of keeping enrollment figures as factors in a 14,000 decrease in Brotherhood enrollments of men, young men and boys.

The 282,199 reported enrolled during 1966 are for the period just following the convention's program assignment of missionary education for men to the Brotherhood, Schroeder pointed out. He said men normally like to examine such a change for a period of time before they fully endorse and support it.

Another factor, he said, is that church Brotherhood units in recent years have cleared their records at the end of each church year, and re-enrolled all persons completely as they continued activity in this phase of church work.

While such a procedure doesn't encourage high enrollment figures, it does provide a true picture of work being done, he explained. He said that circulation of Brotherhood periodicals, a yardstick for actual missions study and involvement, climbed almost 5 per cent for the same period.

Although enrollments in Sunday School, Training Union, Brotherhood, and WMU organizations recorded decreases, enrollments in church music organizations and choirs increased by nearly 73,000, up to a total of 945,000.

W. Hines Sims, secretary of the church music department of the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville, attributed the increase to the growing involvement of all areas of the church in music, swelling interest in youth choirs, an emphasis on music leadership training, a surge of interest in music in areas where Southern Baptist work is new, and state music leadership and the development of aids in organizing choirs for all age groups.

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~~Speakers Urge Baptist Cooperation With Others~~ 126

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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--Four major speakers at the Southern Baptist Press Association meeting here urged Southern Baptists to find ways to cooperate with other Christians in the ecumenical movement.

"We are under God required, in every way we can without compromising our beliefs and principles, to develop closer relationships with other Christians," declared Wayne Ward, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

"And I do not draw the line at Roman Catholics," Ward quickly added. He was one of four major speakers at the annual meeting of state Baptist paper editors advocating similar ideas.

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None, however, said he approved of Southern Baptist membership in the World of National Council of Churches.

Ward said he rejected SBC affiliation with the councils of churches because Southern Baptists would have to join as an authoritarian church structure, which he said is directly opposed to what most Baptists believe concerning the meaning of "the church."

The seminary professor said an invitation many years ago to join the World Council of Churches was addressed to "The Southern Baptist Church" rather than to the "Southern Baptist Convention," and it was rejected because Baptists believe that "the church" is a local congregation or fellowship, not a national denomination.

Ward strongly advocated, however, Southern Baptist participation in the ecumenical movement as "observers" or "fraternal Christian participants," so that Baptists can have fellowship and theological debate with other Christians.

In a later address, the executive secretary of the SBC Home Mission Board, Arthur Rutledge of Atlanta, presented statistics showing the magnitude of the task Southern Baptists face in seeking to reach a changing America, and concluded by saying that the task is too large for any one religious body to handle it alone.

Rutledge said that the Home Mission Board in December adopted 14 long-range guidelines including two which said that the board would welcome and initiate communication and cooperation with other denominations, when there is "no sacrifice of principles or weakening of basic beliefs and practices."

Rutledge said that several SBC Home Mission Board staff members had attended, and will attend, as unofficial observers a number of National Council of Churches sponsored meetings.

"If 10 million Southern Baptists were the only Christians in the nation, we would be in a terrible state," Rutledge said.

In another address, W. Barry Garrett of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told the editors that Baptists cannot afford to be ignorant, misinformed, or prejudiced against the ecumenical movement and developments in the Christian world.

"Whether Baptists participate or refuse to participate in the ecumenical movement, they cannot remain unaffected by it," Garrett said.

"We rejoice," Garrett observed, "that Southern Baptists are now emerging into a time when we can discuss openly among ourselves the ecumenical movement and what our responsibilities and opportunities might be in this area.

"We have a long way to go before we arrive at solutions to the many issues that arise out of these problems, but one thing is certain: we cannot find answers when we refuse to talk about them intelligently in the spirit of Christ, and with deep respect for the religious convictions of others."

Garrett also reviewed the elements in a revolutionary age, the Protestant ecumenical movement, and the emergence of participation of Roman Catholics in the ecumenical movement.

He said that a new attitude, a new spirit, and a new freedom was generated in the Roman Catholic Church as a result of Vatican Council II, which he covered as an accredited news reporter for Baptist Press.

Earlier, during a joint banquet for the Baptist editors and the executive secretaries of state Baptist conventions, Southern Seminary President Duke K. McCall said that the younger generation of Baptists believes Christian unity is more important than the differences between denominations.

McCall predicted that by 1970 more than half of the American population will be under 25 years of age, and that a great tidal wave of these young people are coming into our churches, believing that Christian unity is more important than denominational differences.

"We can't assume that the way we've been thinking in the past is the way we are going to keep on thinking," McCall said.

State Baptist Executives
Elect Harding President

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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--The executive secretaries of 29 state Baptist conventions meeting here elected Earl O. Harding of Jefferson City, Mo., as president of their informal organization.

Harding, executive secretary of the Missouri Baptist Convention, succeeds N. J. Westmoreland, executive secretary of the neighboring Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists.

E. Harmon Moore, executive secretary of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, was elected vice president, and Glen E. Braswell of the Colorado Baptist General Convention, was re-elected secretary.

During the fellowship meeting here in which the executives discussed matters of mutual concern, a resolution was adopted commending the contributions of three state convention executive secretaries who are planning to retire this year following a combined total of 65 years' service.

The three executives are Harry P. Stagg of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, John Maguire of the Florida Baptist Convention, and Lucius M. Polhill of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

The executive secretaries voted to meet next year in Honolulu, Hawaii, Feb. 12-15. Meeting simultaneously will be the Southern Baptist Press Association.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist papers

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Editors Elect
Cole President

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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Press Association elected Editor James Cole of The Baptist Message in Louisiana as new president of the organization composed of state Baptist paper editors and six other Southern Baptist publications.

Named vice president was O. L. Bayless, editor of the Rocky Mountain Baptist published in Colorado; and re-elected secretary was Don McGregor, associate editor of the Baptist Standard, published in Texas.

The editors voted to meet simultaneously with the state Baptist executive secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, Feb. 12-15, 1968.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist papers

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Court Reporter Wills
Seminary Scholarship

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2/17/67

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FORT WORTH (BP)--A check for \$5000 has been received from the estate of Mrs. Eva J. Durham of Fort Worth for the establishing of the Eva J. Durham Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Earnings will be used for scholarship grants for single women.

Mrs. Durham was a court reporter for many years and was a member of the Broadway Baptist Church here. She died last year at 86.

Earlier Mrs. Durham had created the Ellen Clark Durham Memorial Fund at the seminary in memory of her mother.

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Baptists Urged To Start
Their Own War On Poverty

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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--A former Baptist editor now with the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) urged Southern Baptists to start their own war on poverty.

Gainer E. Bryan Jr., deputy director of public affairs for the Southeast Region of the OEO, told Southern Baptist editors here that the "seed idea" for the government's War on Poverty is a biblical concept, and said that churches have a responsibility to start a war on poverty of their own.

Bryan, former editor of The Maryland Baptist, told the editors: "We (Baptists) remember the poor at Thanksgiving and Christmas when we take them baskets of food or clothing, but we do not do much to deal with the root causes of poverty."

Bryan said he realized that Southern Baptists remain aloof from any programs that bring federal government programs under church control, or church programs under federal control, as some have charged that the War on Poverty might do.

He said he did not know of any Southern Baptist churches in the Southeastern region of OEO which were cooperating with the War on Poverty programs.

Earlier, an official of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington told the Southern Baptist Press Association here that where the functions of government and church overlap, there will be some interaction between church and state whether there is financial aid from the government or not.

Walfred Peterson, director of research services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said that he is highly optimistic that religious freedom is being well preserved and protected in the United States.

Peterson traced the tremendous expansion of government programs in recent years, saying that more than 300 different programs could be interpreted as aiding church-related institutions.

Despite this, Peterson said that the United States system of checks and balances in government offers optimistic hope that religious freedom will be preserved in the future.

The legislative branch, he said, is very cautious against financial aid to church organizations. "We've done about as well legislatively as we could hope," he added.

When Congress has enacted bills, written on a broad basis, which might aid church organizations, the administration often has interpreted the bills in carrying them out to prevent any loss of religious liberty.

Of the judicial system, Peterson said there seems to be a very significant level of understanding of church-state separation and religious freedom in the minds of the Supreme Court judges.

"I don't see any grave cause to be alarmed," Peterson said. "Instead, I'm rather optimistic, and that's not my nature. When you try to preserve a principle of freedom, the American system of checks and balances is very important."