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March 9, 1967

Miller Presented Award  
For Distinguished Service

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NASHVILLE (BP)--A distinguished service award for outstanding leadership in Christian social ethics was presented here to A. C. Miller, the first executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The award was given to Miller by the 34-member commission, which he headed for seven years until his retirement in 1960.

An engraved plaque praised Miller for "unique and outstanding contributions to Southern Baptists and to the Kingdom of God through exemplary Christian character, undauntable spirit, prophetic denominational leadership, and faithful proclamation of the ethical imperatives of the Christian gospel."

John Claypool, chairman of the commission and pastor of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., and Foy Valentine, current executive secretary of the commission, presented the award.

Valentine was Miller's successor, both as executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission here, and as executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas.

Miller was the first executive leader of a state Christian Life Commission, serving in Texas in this capacity from 1944-53, and in the SBC commission position from 1953-60.

Since his retirement, Miller was for six years pastor of the First Baptist Church, Sedona, Ariz., and currently is professor at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute, Hendersonville, N. C.

Valentine, in presenting the award, told the commission it would not have considered "the consequential matters we have dealt with here today in this meeting if it were not for Dr. Miller. We are where we are tonight," said Valentine, "because of Dr. A. C. Miller."

In response, Miller said there is no possibility of any one man achieving the things Valentine had suggested without the "sacrificial help of those on the commission and its friends." He praised Valentine for bringing the commission to its present level of effectiveness.

Special tribute was also paid to Miller's wife and his four children, all of whom were present.

Before the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission was organized and Miller named as its first executive, Miller was director of Texas Baptists' work with servicemen during World War II, 1941-44.

Previously, he was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Belton, Tex., Cisco, Tex., and Cleveland, Okla.

He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and Simmons College (now Hardin-Simmons University), a Baptist school in Abilene, Tex. Hardin-Simmons conferred upon him an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1942.

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BP PHOTO to be mailed to state Baptist papers

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Arkansas Hospital Baptist  
Ties Now Officially Severed

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--The corporate structure of the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center was reorganized here recently, officially severing ties with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

The Little Rock hospital now is owned by a 50-member private association composed of the former board of trustees and several others, all members of Southern Baptist churches in Arkansas.

From the 50-member association, an 18-member board of trustees was elected with A. James Linder, an attorney from Little Rock, as president of the board.

Reorganization of the hospital follows a series of developments within the last six months beginning with a vote of the hospital trustees asking that its ties with the Baptist convention be severed so that the medical center could accept federal grants.

Meeting in Little Rock last November, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention approved the request by a vote of 488-327.

Within a few weeks after the convention, three Baptist pastors filed suit challenging the vote of the convention, charging it violated the convention's constitution. In February, however, Chancellor Kay Matthews of Little Rock upheld the vote of the convention and tossed out the suit.

The new corporate structure of the medical center is similar to any non-profit Arkansas corporation.

The medical center will maintain its Baptist name, and all of the association members are Southern Baptists. But it is not an institution of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Trustees are planning to build an \$8 million satellite hospital on property in West Little Rock to be affiliated with the Medical Center. Current value of the Medical Center is about \$14 million.

The board, which plans to meet quarterly, also elected R. H. Dorris, pastor of Pike Avenue Baptist Church in North Little Rock, and Kenneth Price, a Little Rock Baptist deacon, as vice presidents of the trustees. Elected secretary-treasurer of the board was B. J. Daugherty of Little Rock, also a Baptist deacon.

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Board Okays Step  
In Border Missions

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DALLAS (BP)--Plans for a "massive missionary thrust" along the entire Texas-Mexico border area, purchase of two hospitals and approval of a statement against liquor-by-the-drink legislation were voted here by the Executive Board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The 192-member board gave authorization for the State Missions Commission of the 1.8 million-member convention to join with the Texas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in promotion of a state offering which would be used partly for the huge border missions endeavor.

The board members, by a voice vote, opposed proposed legislation in Texas which would legalize liquor by-the-drink and racetrack gambling.

An open letter to Texas Gov. John Connally from T. A. Patterson, executive secretary of the convention was read to the board.

Patterson's open letter said he was surprised and disturbed to learn that the Texas governor had proposed the liquor-by-the-drink legislation.

The letter said such legislation would mean the return to the open saloon, and that children taken by their parents to restaurants where liquor is served will be conditioned to its consumption long before they can buy it.

"To argue that greater availability of intoxicating beverages will decrease drinking is to contradict everything we know about human behavior and alcohol," Patterson said.

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"It seems tragic to me for an administration as farsighted and progressive as yours should be marred with this determined effort to bring Texas a means of promotion of liquor consumption which can and will result in a marked increase not only in liquor consumed but in traffic deaths.

"I hope you will consider the damage to human lives involved in this proposal. I hope also you will offer solutions to the problems facing Texas which will be geared to control without promotion of alcoholic beverages," Patterson's letter said.

A recommendation by the convention's Human Welfare Commission that Memorial Baptist Hospital system, Houston, be authorized to purchase two satellite hospitals in the Southeast and Southwest sections of the city also was approved.

In other action, the executive body named persons to boards and committees of the convention, voted to employ a press representative in the public relations department, and gave approval for the University of Corpus Christi to negotiate for the construction of a \$675,000 men's dormitory.

A former Texas pastor and newsman, Alston A. Morgan, currently city editor of The Daily News in Whittier, Calif., and pastor of a Baptist church there, was elected by the board to the position of press representative in the public relations department. Effective date of his employment will be March 22.

A native of Dallas, the 33-year-old Morgan is a graduate of Southern Methodist University, Dallas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has held editorial posts with the Dallas Morning News, Oak Cliff Tribune, East Texas Motor Freight and U. S. Army Information.

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Rules For Baptist-Catholic  
Encounter Recommended

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ATLANTA (BP)--A Southern Baptist denominational leader cites the growing Baptist-Catholic dialogue in the nation and offers 10 guidelines for such relationships in an article published in the April issue of Home Missions magazine here.

"Like it or not, we are seeing more of our churches, preachers, and laymen engaging in worship and special services with Roman Catholics," writes Joseph R. Estes, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of work related to non-evangelicals.

"This calls for serious and candid thinking on our part," he said. "Neither wholesale condemnation nor naive optimism will be acceptable."

Estes discusses Roman Catholic renewal, Vatican Council II, and the question of infallibility of doctrine.

The belief that all Christians must become Baptists is just as dangerous as the belief that all Christians must "return" to the Roman Church, Estes said.

The encounter with other faiths can be meaningful, the writer states.

"If the faith of our Baptist people is so fragile that it cannot stand exposure to the reasoned presentations of those of other persuasions, we may well wonder if those of such fragile faith would or ought to 'remain with us' in any case."

Here are Estes' ground rules for such encounters, in abbreviated form:

1. The purpose of meetings between Baptists and Catholics should be clearly stated ahead of time.
2. Equal respect for each other must be shown.
3. The leader of such a dialogue must be informed on his faith.
4. Each participant must overcome stereotype concepts and desire a fuller and clearer understanding of the other's faith.
5. Each participant must be prepared to deal frankly with his own faith, weaknesses as well as strengths.
6. Each participant must be willing to agree and to disagree in all candor. "The possibility of disagreement must not destroy the relationship," Estes warns.

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7. Each participant must seek honestly to face the issues that divide Christians, even if they are an indictment of his own group.
8. Each participant must avoid judging the other. "Only God judges who is 'saved' and who is not."
9. Each participant must believe that the other is sincere in his faith.
10. Each participant must be motivated by love for the other.

Home Missions magazine is a monthly publication of the SBC Home Mission Board here. Walker L. Knight is editor.

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Social Action Urged As Part  
Of Crusade of the Americas

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists were urged here to enthusiastically enter into the proposed 1969 Crusade of the Americas, "embracing a total evangelism which refuses to allow irrelevant barriers like race, class and nationality to close the doors of the church."

Speaking to the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Ross Coggins of Nashville urged Southern Baptists to accompany the crusade with support of civil rights legislation, open housing, and anti-poverty efforts.

"Let it be understood that it is not contended here that open housing should be supported simply as a means to evangelistic success," said Coggins. "We should work for a truly open society simply because it is right."

Coggins, director of communication for the commission, told the 34-member group that opposing the sin of segregation may, at least on the short-run, cost the convention some members.

"Let us never be so naive as to assume, however, that love is merely something to declare," he said. "Love is never understood until it is demonstrated."

He added that a growing number of Southern Baptists recognize that racial segregation in the cities where Baptists are strongest, and even worse within the churches themselves, is "a painful negation of the gospel."

He urged evangelists participating in the crusade to preach a total evangelism, spelling out the practical implications of the ancient Baptist distinctive--the worth and dignity of every individual.

He also urged Southern Baptists at the grassroots level to give massive support to legislation to eliminate racial discrimination in housing.

"Will Southern Baptists...give this legislation the massive support it deserves, or will we retreat into familiar postures of evasion, pious rationalization, or outright obstruction?" Coggins asked.

Opposition to such legislation would "make the Crusade of the Americas seem a hollow mockery," said Coggins. Those who honestly disagree have an obligation to devise alternative proposals which offer better prospects for those whose right to buy a house is restricted.

Coggins also urged Baptists to use their buying power to encourage the elimination of racial discrimination in education, housing and employment. "Last year Southern Baptists contributed nearly \$670 million to their churches. Think how much might be accomplished for racial justice if enlightened Christian conscience prevailed in the spending and investing of such a sum!"

"Hopefully, the Crusade of the Americas will find Baptists throughout the hemisphere proclaiming with the prophets of old that God is not interested in rituals, offerings and sacrifices, but in justice rolling down as a mighty stream. He is the God who is active in the very midst of the struggle of the bruised, the captive, and the poor.

"We must be careful not to preach about a God who is concerned with man's soul but not with the slums in which he lives; a God who is interested in a man's prayers, but not in the possibility of his owning a piece of land; a God who is interested in man's personal piety but not in oppressive economic and social structures which make a hell of his earthly existence," Coggins said.

"Effective evangelism must have great moral power in this age," he concluded. "The challenge of the Crusade of the Americas is...to rediscover and then to demonstrate the comprehensiveness of Christian conversion."

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CUTLINES

BAPTIST PRESS PHOTO

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CRAIG ELECTED: The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has elected Floyd Craig of Oklahoma City as its director of public relations. Craig, director of communications for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma for the past five years, assumes the SBC agency position effective May 1. (BP PHOTO)

Cutlines

BAPTIST PRESS PHOTO

A.C. MILLER HONORED: A distinguished service award from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission was presented to A. C. Miller of Hendersonville, N. C., the ~~past~~ <sup>present</sup> executive secretary of the SBC Christian Life Commission. Miller, now retired but teaching at Fruitdale Baptist Bible Institute in Hendersonville, was honored for outstanding leadership in Christian social ethics. Presenting the award (left) was John Claypool of Louisville, Ky., chairman of the commission, and Foy Valentine, current executive secretary of the commission and Miller's successor. (BP PHOTO)

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