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Secular City Challenges
Baptists To New Strategy

WASHINGTON (BP)--Baptists must look toward a new denominational strategy for an effective ministry to the "secular city," according to the findings of a Southern Baptist Seminar on Urban Studies here.

In the final session of the seminar, it was stated that old methods, procedures and strategies are inadequate for serving in the modern urbanized society.

"Our denomination needs to come to terms with the city," declared Thomas A. Bland, professor of ethics of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

"We need to break away from our survival and success-oriented goals" in dealing with the problems of the inner city and of the high rise apartment, he said.

Baptists must get over "our preoccupation with individualistic pietism that assumes that to straighten out the man straightens out society," Bland continued.

In pointing the direction of a new denominational strategy, Bland said that Baptists must come to grips with the causes of poverty and become involved in the structures of society that apply political and economic power.

Another teacher in the seminar, C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, cautioned that "our Baptist genius and that of the Christian faith is focused on concern for the person."

"The end result of our efforts," he said, "is the person. The question is how to get to these results."

Carlson called for Baptists to adjust to the larger role of government, to come to a new awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit and to combine their preaching with action as they seek to minister to the new urban society.

Looking toward a prophetic ministry in the new day, Carlson said, "I am optimistic about the Baptist movement. Our regionalism, our ruralism and our dogmatism are melting down."

He pointed out that Baptists are "entering a creative day in our methods and structures in inter-agency cooperation. He said that there is a new kind of openness and a new sense of group dynamics that will help Baptists develop their ministry to the new urban society.

A third teacher, E. Luther Copeland, professor of missions at Southeastern Baptist Seminary, said that there are "three necessary recognitions in our denomination for communicating the gospel in our time."

They are, according to Copeland, recognition of (1) the city as the locus of a redemptive and reconciling ministry, (2) dialogue as the most effective means of Christian communication, and (3) cooperation with other religious groups.

"Christians must take seriously the other segments of our society and learn to listen as well as to talk," Copeland said. Groups with views other than our own, he continued, can no longer be ignored.

Raising the question of inter-faith relations, Copeland asked, "What are the most adequate structures for the unity of the body of Christ?"

Without making specific recommendations he continued, "I think the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches are important." He then asked, "How long can Southern Baptists accept the benefits of the Councils of Churches without accepting responsibility?"

The four-week seminar on Urban Studies was a joint project by the Southeastern Baptist Seminary, the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. Thirty-one persons enrolled for the seminar.

Three courses were taught: (1) Christian dialogue within the international and inter-faith community, (2) The church in the secular city, and (3) resources for the church's community ministry.

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Alaska Church Dedicates
New \$1.2 Million Building

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)--First Baptist Church here has dedicated a new \$1.2 million church plant which will seat 1,250 people and provide space for 21 Sunday School departments.

Special guest speakers for the week-long dedication were Anchorage Mayor Elmer E. Rasmuson, Attorney Stanley McCutcheon, Alaska Senator Ernest Gruening, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board pioneer secretary Wendell Belew, and Alaska Baptist Convention Executive Secretary E. W. Hunke Jr.

The church was organized in 1943.

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Louie D. Newton Improves
From Mild Heart Attack

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ATLANTA (BP)--Louie D. Newton, pastor of the Druid Hills Baptist Church here, is improving from a mild coronary occlusion suffered June 5, and will be able to return to his pulpit about Sept. 1, doctors told the prominent Baptist pastor.

Newton, after three weeks in Georgia Baptist Hospital here, said he received about 3,000 messages. "We are abidingly grateful for the concern of so many Christian friends."

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Motels Request Prayer
For Johnson-Kosygin Meet

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--President Lyndon Johnson's recent meeting with Russian Premier Alexei Kosygin was placed on an unusual prayer list by a well-known Baptist here.

"Please pray for Kosygin and Johnson" was the message on the advertising marquees of about 850 Holiday Inns throughout the nation.

The idea was initiated by Wallace E. Johnson, president of Holiday Inns of America, a well-known Baptist layman.

Johnson has served as a member of the board of directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and is an active churchman.

Johnson has long advocated publicly the need for prayer among Christian people, and has practiced daily prayer himself. "Every day, my wife Alma and I read the Scripture together and pray about our mutual concerns," Johnson wrote recently.

In an article published recently by Guideposts magazine, Johnson said his personal dependence on prayer started in 1939 when he asked God to help him be a successful salesman.

From that position earning \$37.50 a week, he has become one of the nation's leading contractors and business executives. By 1945 he was building 3,000 homes a year, and has built an average of 1,000 homes every year since. His firm built the first Holiday Inn in 1952.

"As the Lord helped us to prosper, He obviously had many ideas of His own as to where the money was to go," Johnson wrote. "The tithing of our time and money to churches and charities was a beginning.

"Today, whether in Memphis or San Francisco or Rome, I still use a paper and pencil to write down concerns for prayer. The list may be long, but Alma and I do not want to overlook anything.

"We are grateful that God honors our prayers by reaching into our minds with His guidance and using us as instruments for His work," Johnson wrote.

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Education Funds Benefit
The 'Forgotten American'

WASHINGTON (BP)--Thousands of children of migratory agricultural workers are getting a better education because of a change in a major federal education program according to Acting Secretary Wilbur J. Cohen of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) here.

Some 97,000 migrant youngsters in 40 states will benefit from new educational projects made possible under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).

"This billion-dollar program to improve educational opportunities for poor children was amended last year to include migrant children who were being by-passed by regular education services because they moved around so much," Cohen said.

"President Johnson has said migrant farm workers are among the "forgotten Americans," Cohen continued. "This has certainly been true of their children who have one of the highest school dropout rates in the nation," he added.

The HEW spokesman said education projects "comprehensive in scope" and "innovative in nature" are now under way for migrant children in 40 states.

According to the HEW report, Texas has the largest migrant program under the new ESEA amendment with a \$2.2 million commitment. California is second, with \$1.4 million in new services. Florida is next with \$1.1 million.

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Historic Church Sells
Property In Atlanta

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ATLANTA (BP)--Inman Park Baptist Church, one of Atlanta's most historic churches, has voted to sell its buildings and property to the state Highway Department for \$757,300 to enable the state to build a connector road between new interstate highways being planned.

The church has until Dec. 31 to vacate the property. A new location is being sought in Southeast Atlanta, and there is a possibility of a merger with another church, said Pastor J. Broadus Marlowe.

From a peak of 3,000 members, church membership has dropped to about 1,200 because of the declining nature of the community.

The Southern Baptist Convention Radio-Television Commission was started in the church when Sam Lowe, first director of the commission, was pastor there.

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