

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director**REGIONAL OFFICES**

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593

DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAUBAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 234-1631

July 25, 1967 637

**Support Is Growing For
Uniform Monday Holidays**

434

WASHINGTON (BP)--A proposal to set five national holidays on Mondays, giving three-day long weekends is picking up support in the Congress.

Seven members of the House of Representatives and one member of the Senate have introduced bills to make the changes.

Although the bills are not identical, the most comprehensive one that includes most of the provisions of the others was introduced by Sen. George A. Smathers (D., Fla.).

According to the Smathers bill the holidays and their dates would be:

1. Presidents' Day (replacing George Washington's birthday), the third Monday in February
2. Memorial Day, the last Monday in May;
3. Independence Day, the first Monday in July;
4. Veterans Day, the last Monday in October;
5. Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Monday in November.

Hearings were scheduled on the Smathers bill for Aug. 2.

Congressmen who have introduced similar bills are: Robert McClory (R., Ill.), James Cleveland (R., N.H.), Louis C. Wyman (R., N.H.), Sam Gibbons (D., Fla.), Samuel S. Stratton (D., N.Y.), E. S. Johnny Walker (D., N. M.) and Richard Fulton (D., Tenn.).

The chief advocate of the Monday national holiday idea is the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. Widespread support is claimed from a wide variety of business interests.

Two surveys report extensive popular support. In a national poll nearly 10,000 members of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce responded with 85 per cent approval, 14 per cent opposed and 1 per cent no opinion.

This Week magazine asked its readers to return a ballot indicating their views. In the returns 180,061 balloted in favor and 10,094 opposed, or a supporting vote of 95 per cent.

The chief argument in favor of Monday holidays is economic in nature. Businessmen seem to think that it would improve sales, especially in businesses that deal in travel, sports and related enterprises.

Then, too, many businessmen claim that it would reduce absenteeism that occurs when holidays come in the middle of the week. Many stores say they never recover from sales drop when holidays occur in the middle of the week, but that losses from Monday holidays can always be made up.

Some opposition has been expressed because of the fear that traffic accidents would climb if there were five "long weekends" in the year. But statistics from several sources indicate that the percentage of highway accidents on long weekends does not increase significantly. Some even claim that they are reduced because people are not in such a hurry.

Other opposition may be expressed by churchmen who fear what five long weekends a year will do to church attendance.

Since all the holidays involved are civic or national in nature, there seems to be no church-state issue raised by the proposals.

Those who are pushing the uniform Monday holiday idea recognize that the states determine what holidays they will observe and when. However, they say that federal legislation which controls the District of Columbia and federal employees, will set a pattern and will encourage the states to follow suit.

637

Mammoth Bible Project
Set For Atlanta In Fall

638

560

ATLANTA (BP)--An intense Bible saturation campaign here next fall may signal a breakthrough in modern Christianity's confrontation with the nation's burgeoning metropolitan centers.

Most of the city's 200 churches are organizing now under the guidance of the American Bible Society to distribute a million modern translations of the New Testament in the five-county metropolitan area. Civic and social organizations, and government officials also are being given an opportunity to support the project.

Anticipating success in this pilot run, the American Bible Society already is mapping similar plans for a half-dozen other U.S. cities.

"This may be the breakthrough that Christians have been praying for," said L. O. Griffith of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board here, who will head the city-wide advisory committee for the project.

"I have a deep conviction from my experience in missions work that if there is anything wrong in Atlanta, it can be corrected if this Bible reading plan is successful," he said.

Apart from churches, Griffith said many individuals, as well as groups such as Youth for Christ, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and some civic and social organizations, have contacted his committee to pledge support to the effort, a first in the nation.

A runaway bestseller--the American Bible Society's Good News for Modern Man translation--will be offered for 25 cents (printing costs) at virtually every home in the area. It has sold more than four million copies since publication last September.

One million copies of the easy-to-read New Testament already have been ordered for the Atlanta project, which tentatively is scheduled to coincide with National Bible Reading Week Oct. 15-22 and run through Thanksgiving.

Strategy for the project will be similar to that of a city-wide survey in which all Christian groups participate, Griffith said.

The Atlanta metropolitan area will be blocked off into sections and teams of churches and other groups will be assigned responsibility for a section. Each church or groups probably will be called on to provide a number of volunteers, he said.

The volunteers will make door-to-door contacts, urging the reading of the Bible and offering a copy of Good News for Modern Man for only 25 cents.

"We hope to give each Christian an opportunity to witness and to get God's word to every person and this is a mammoth undertaking," Griffith said. "If it is successful, it will serve as a model for similar programs in our country in the years to come."

Both the project and the translation have been received enthusiastically by virtually every Christian group in the city Griffith said.

'Good News for Modern Man is a New Testament in modern English that was translated by Southern Baptist Robert G. Bratcher.

Bratcher's object in the American Bible Society translation was to recapture the New Testament again in the plain, everyday language of the man in the street, as it originally was written. His translation uses current words and verbs, as well as contractions such as "can't."

Many technical words also are changed for better communication with those unfamiliar with the Bible. "Synagogue," for example, gives way to "meeting house," and "a sabbath day's journey" becomes "about a half a mile."

About 200 modern line drawings by Swiss Artist Annie Vallotton also accompany the contemporary text.

The American Bible Society's initial contact for the idea was the Atlanta Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta, an organization of local Protestant churches. All Christian groups, including Roman Catholics, have been invited to participate, as well as many civic and social organizations.

An orientation session for executives in all denominations and Christian groups, and an organizational meeting already have been held in preparation for the mammoth project, which has caught the attention of the national press as well as local media.