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October 6, 1967

Vice President Would
Escalate Poverty War

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey told the Baptist Religious Liberty Conference in its annual session here that the United States can afford both the war in Vietnam and the War on Poverty at home.

We are presently paying more for the War on Poverty, he said, explaining that total poverty expenditure is \$26 billion while the war in Vietnam is costing us \$22½ billion.

"This country is rich enough and strong enough to keep its international commitment and still take care of the people back home," the Vice President said.

Humphrey spoke to the 200 Baptists from the United States and Canada who studies "The Role of the Christian Through Church and State in Human Welfare" during the three-day meeting.

This was the 11th annual conference sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

In an hour and ten minute session with the Baptists, the Vice President defined poverty as a "cancer of the spirit." He discussed the administration's objective in the various domestic aid programs and described the role of the church in the nation's battle with poverty.

Humphrey said the Judeo-Christian concept of man created in the image of God is basic to his political philosophy. It is within this context of the value of the individual that the poverty war must be waged, he stressed.

One of the curses of America today is "slumism," Humphrey said. "And I don't mean just broken down buildings and dirty streets, but broken people. The real poverty of a man is the poverty of the spirit," he declared.

The poverty that affects America today is not just poverty of income, Humphrey continued. Rather, it is "Frustration, not being needed, feeling unwanted, shunted aside...the poverty of bitterness, of hatred which breaks out into violence," he described.

This is the poverty that will take time to cure, he said, because in this "We are fighting cancer of the spirit." This is where the church comes in, he challenged.

Humphrey explained that the church frequently has an entree with the people and can give the individual attention that a government agency cannot do.

The church can "add the dimension of volunteerism, of people to people, of personality, of individual attention that an impersonalized, impersonal agency cannot do," he said.

"It's good for churches, too!" he added, "And good for church people--you get a little closer to people."

The Vice President defined his philosophy of welfare for institutions, including the church, as one of "removing obstacles" from the path of man, "so he can walk to his own objective."

Our philosophy of welfare must not be "to carry him, but to clear the road," he cautioned.

The government is not interested in just handing out money, Humphrey said, but in "the improvement of people's lives."

Federal programs of poverty, health, education and training are not "just to hand out goodies," he emphasized. If that is the case, they are not worth it, he added.

Humphrey criticized the attitude of government and some families in thinking they can write out a check when a need arises and solve the problem. We have had "too many check book families and too much check book compassion," he declared.

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"Opportunity," he told the Baptist conference, "is the best kind of compassion."

The Vice President said that the President and he would like for this administration to be known as one that "opened the gates of opportunity for as many people as possible."

Our objective, he said, is "to give every man a chance to make something out of himself."

He reminded the conference that the door of opportunity has been "padlocked" for a lot of people for a long time. We are still in the process of "emancipation," he declared.

"Education is the key to unlock the door of opportunity," Humphrey emphasized.

Throughout his address to the Religious Liberty Conference, the Vice President praised the "tremendous influence" of the church in the realm of social concern. He told the group that the deciding force in passing the 1964 Civil Rights Bill "was the churches, the church leaders and church laymen."

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Chicago Association Marks
Tenth Year, Adds Ten Churches

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TINLEY PARK, Ill. (BP)--The Chicago Southern Baptist Association observed its tenth anniversary here by receiving ten new churches into its fellowship.

The association, formed in 1957 with eleven churches, now numbers 74. It is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Messengers (delegates) to the annual meeting heard reports that the decade had seen church membership grow from less than 2,000 to more than 10,000.

Property value was reported to be \$4,250,000.

The Chicago Southern Association is one of eleven associations to come out of the Great Lakes Baptist Association formed in 1942.

Preston N. Denton, superintendent, reported that a search is on for qualified men to serve as pastors of new churches which are expected to be formed as a result of "Project 500," an expansion plan for the area.

Claude Kelly, pastor, Northwest Missionary Baptist Church, Chicago, was elected association moderator.

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OEO Official: 'Poverty
War Needs Church Help'

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Philip D. Hardberger, special assistant to Sargent Shriver, director of Office of Economic Opportunity, told a Baptist conference here that the War On Poverty cannot be won without the help of churches.

"You know the need, you have the expertise, and you have the resources" to help win the battle against poverty, he said.

Hardberger, a Baylor University graduate addressed the annual Religious Liberty Conference of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in its 11th annual meeting.

Participants, from seven Baptist groups in the United States and Canada, studied the theme of "The Role of the Christian Through Church and State in Human Welfare."

Hardberger, a former public relations employee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, praised a Texas Baptist program of work with migrant farm laborers along the Rio Grande River.

He also commended a recent issue of Home Missions magazine (SBC) that gave an in-depth look at the poverty program of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

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The OEO spokesman said the government was striving for three things in waging the War On Poverty:

1. Education and training
2. Opportunity to work
3. Opportunity to live in decency and dignity

"It is at the point of education and training that the poverty circle is broken," he said.

The nation's War On Poverty "can be licked with work and money," the poverty program specialist emphasized.

Churches can help do this if "theology is practiced on the streets as well as preached from the pulpits," Hardberger told his fellow Baptists.

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C O R R E C T I O N

In the story (October 4), "Baptists, Others Consider Evangelical Ecumenicalism," graph 8, substitute "Reformed" instead of "Mormon" Church in America.