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October 12, 1967

New Testament Translation
Was "Surprise" Best Seller

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ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist Robert Bratcher, translator of the best-selling "Good News For Modern Man" translation of the New Testament, revealed here that the translation "was accomplished originally to be used as an evangelistic tool overseas where English is spoken as a second language.

"We never expected it to go over as it has in this country," Bratcher said.

"Good News For Modern Man," or the Today's English Version of the New Testament as it is sometimes known, has sold more than 5 million copies in the first year of its existence. Most of the 5 million copies were in paper-back form selling now for 35 cents each from the American Bible Society.

Bratcher spoke during a press conference prior to the Oct. 15 official kickoff of an intensive Bible saturation campaign. It originally was scheduled for the metropolitan Atlanta area, but it has grown to include all of Georgia.

A 10-year veteran in the translation department of the American Bible Society in New York, he explained that the Old Testament already is being translated by a committee, including himself. "The Old Testament is just too much for one man to tackle," he said.

"This New Testament contains a 3,000-word common language vocabulary, words that are that part of the total language which is spoken by nearly everyone who uses that language."

Bratcher listed as an asset the book's paragraphs or "chunks" of material, headed with boldface captions, such as "True Happiness." One of these "chunks" can be read comprehensively in a minute's time.

The translator also accounted 50 percent of the translation's success to the "eye-catching and revealing" line drawings of Annie Vallotton.

He listed a need for three kinds of translations of the Bible: the traditional (such as the Revised Standard Version) for faithful readers of the Bible; the expanded scientific translation for pastors and students; and the common language translation.

"The first duty of a translator is to be faithful to the original, even though no translation can carry through in the same manner as the original." Bratcher referred to one popular translation as a work he feels "departs far too much from the original."

The intensive Bible saturation campaign in Georgia is a \$10,000 pilot project of the American Bible Society which made initial contacts to the Atlanta Christian Council.

The project grew to include among the participants 1,500 churches and other Christian groups, business and civic organizations and individuals.

L. O. Griffith, secretary of the division of communication of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, was named project chairman.

According to Warner Hutchinson, executive secretary for the Bible society's eastern region, Atlanta was selected "because of its strategic location and demonstrated deep spiritual concern by outstanding leaders."

Volunteers in Atlanta during National Bible Reading Week, Oct. 15-22, and through Thanksgiving are making door-to-door contacts, urging the reading of the Bible and offering a copy of "Good News For Modern Man" for 25 cents (printing cost).

Of the seven million from the initial press run, one million copies are in Atlanta for distribution.

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Progressive National Baptists
Vote 1969 Crusade Participation

CINCINNATI, Ohio (BP)--The Progressive National Baptist Convention meeting here recently voted to participate in the Crusade of the Americas, becoming the 38th nation-wide Baptist group in 28 countries to participate.

The action of the Progressive National Baptists brings to seven the number of nation-wide Baptist bodies in the United States which have voted to participate in the 1969 evangelistic campaign covering North, Central and South America. Numerous state-wide Baptist groups are also participating.

Other United States groups include the Baptist General Conference (Swedish), the Southern Baptist Convention, the North American General Conference (German), the General Association of General Baptists (Arminian), the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

There are 39 different Baptist bodies in the United States with a total membership of about 24 million. The seven Baptist groups participating in the Crusade of the Americas have a total membership of about 17 million.

The Progressive National Baptist Convention has 516,400 members. Gardner C. Taylor is president of the convention and L. Venchael Booth is executive secretary.

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Men's Group, Reorganization
Proposed To Texas Convention

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DALLAS (BP)--A new men's organization, higher status for three convention departments, and a statement concerning the convention's Church Loan Association and Corporation will be included in a report by a special "Committee of 100" to the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Lubbock, Nov. 1.

The special committee will recommend an auxiliary organization for men similar to the Texas and SBC Woman's Missionary Union auxiliaries. The new group would replace the present Brotherhood department of the convention's State Missions Commission.

The proposal would also evaluate the convention's Sunday School, Training Union and church music departments to division status parallel to the missions, stewardship and evangelism divisions. The departments are now under the church services division directed by R. Hooper Dilday.

The statement concerning the convention's Church Loan Association and Corporation will be in lieu of recommendations which had previously been drafted but not adopted. The statement indicates that a complete reorganization of the Church Loan Board had been recommended by a subcommittee.

The report is being held in abeyance, the subcommittee said, until a management group established by the convention's Executive Board has completed a study and made its report. Real estate investment practices in California and New Mexico were listed as a major area of the subcommittee's concern.

The new men's organization, to be known as Texas Baptist Men if approved by the state convention, would have its own executive board but would continue to receive its operating funds from Cooperative Program sources. The Woman's Missionary Union is financed from the annual state missions offering.

The "Committee of 100" was authorized by the 1966 state convention after Dallas Layman Carr P. Collins Sr. had called for establishment of a separate organization of laymen to make recommendations on convention activity to the state Executive Board and convention.

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Florida Baptist College
May Yield To Graham School

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WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP)--Plans for the proposed Florida Baptist College near here have been "put on ice" until Evangelist Billy Graham decides whether or not he will build a major university here.

Graham said recently he was considering 17 sites for such a university, and that his board would make a decision "before Christmas."

The trustees of Florida Baptist College have voted to recommend that the Baptist institution be dissolved if Graham decides to build a university near here.

In Dallas recently, Graham said he was considering establishing a university that would be "the West Point of Christian education" to train ministers and other religion specialists.

Graham said that such a school would cost in the neighborhood of \$50 million, but that the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association had no funds for such a college. Graham said his role would be to raise funds for the school, help enlist faculty and administration, and perhaps serve as chairman of the board.

In a press conference here, the chairman of the board of the proposed Florida Baptist College, Jess Moody of West Palm Beach, said that Graham had authorized him to announce that Palm Beach Gardens, about 10 miles from West Palm Beach, was one of the 17 sites Graham was considering.

Moody told the Baptist Press that he believed Graham would ultimately select the Palm Beach Gardens site, but that the decision had not yet been made.

A 1,000-acre site adjacent to the Professional Golfer's Association (P.G.A.) course in Palm Beach Gardens would be offered to Graham.

It includes the same property which Palm Beach Gardens developer John D. MacArthur has offered to Florida Baptist College.

Moody said that more than \$837,000 has been pledged to the proposed Baptist college, and that the contributors would be given the opportunity to transfer their gifts to the Graham university or have the money returned.

If the Graham school is not located in Palm Beach Gardens, the trustees of Florida Baptist College have an alternate plan, Moody said.

In this case, the Baptist college would become a two-year institution offering courses on the junior and senior level.

Moody said that such a school would be able to draw students from other junior colleges, including a proposed Palm Beach Junior College, and offer them a degree from a Baptist institution.

In a special called session last year, the Florida Baptist Convention approved the charter for the new Baptist college by a vote of 242-197. Included in the charter was a doctrinal statement, but a description of the property was deleted because the deed was still held by MacArthur.

Moody said here that the trustees of the school and Florida Baptist leadership were "quite happy about" the prospects of the Graham university in Palm Beach Gardens and that they had "found no opposition anywhere" to the proposal.

Final decision on the matter, after Graham and his board have made their decision, would have to be made by the Florida Baptist Convention.

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