



# BAPTIST PRESS

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1138

People-To-People Approach  
Used To Overcome Prejudice

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By Jim Newton

FLORENCE, S.C. (BP)--This all American city, with the help of some key Southern Baptists, staged a People-to-People Week which has resulted in breaking down deep-rooted prejudices and stereotypes among hundreds of people, according to the week's leaders.

An Interdenominational venture coordinated by the local ministerial alliance, the unique People-to-People Week featured addresses by some of the top religious leaders in the nation, especially in the area of race relations.

But the heart of the week was not the speeches, good as they were, but nightly small group sessions called "People Experiencing Persons" (PEP), said two of the Baptist leaders who helped direct the conference.

Each night the 500 persons from throughout the community split into 21 small groups where they shared their experiences in human relationships. The groups were divided to maintain a broad cross-section of the community, with an attendance ratio of about 6-4 between whites and Negroes, the same ratio as within the community.

For the first time, many of the white Southerners had an opportunity to hear a Negro bare his soul in honesty, telling how it feels to be a Negro in a Southern community.

The PEP sessions were directed by Chaplain L. L. McGee, assistant director of the department of pastoral care for North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C.; and by a group of other counselors trained in clinical pastoral counseling.

The overall program was planned by Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Nashville, who served as dean, enlisting the speakers and program personalities.

The speakers scheduled on the program were such persons as Benjamin F. Payton, president of Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., and a Negro who formerly worked with the National Council of Churches Commission on Race and Religion; Kyle Haselden, editor of Christian Century magazine; Carlyle Marney, former pastor of Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., who now heads the Interpreters' House in Lake Junaluska, N.C.; Samuel D. Proctor, Negro president of the Institute for Services to Education, Washington, and former Peace Corps official; South Carolina Lieutenant Governor John West; and James Jeffrey, executive director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Kansas City.

A \$10,000 grant from Florence businessman J. Boone Aiken, a member of the First Baptist Church of Florence, financed the week-long program. Aiken has been credited with sponsoring other meetings here which led to naming Florence as an All American city.

Valentine and McGee, in evaluating the sessions, said they were overwhelmed with the response of the people. "It was great," observed Valentine. "I just never expected such a marvelous, open spirit on the subject of race."

He told of one businessman in Florence who said he had been in business there for 32 years and never before had an opportunity to get to know people of other races and social classes.

Not only did it break down racial stereotypes, but the sessions also overcame some religious prejudices towards people of other denominations, Valentine added. One Catholic priest shared his prejudices towards Baptists, who greatly outnumber Catholics here. But when Catholic and Baptist came to know one another, stereotypes were broken down, Valentine said.

McGee said that for perhaps the first time, many persons entered into real dialogue with one another, seeing individual as individual. They learned a new method of dealing with community problems, he said.

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A Negro woman told what it feels like to try to teach her children what they could do and couldn't do because of their race, and a white woman in the same group expressed her own shame for contributing to such a social structure, McGee said.

"Individuals became involved with each other personally, and they became more open to one another," McGee said. "They experienced each other as persons, regardless of race or class."

As a result of the meeting, several recommendations were made to the city power structure in an effort to improve human relations, McGee added. The recommendations included such things as the need for paved streets in some areas; and especially a policy of non-discrimination in department stores which in some cases have prevented Negro ladies from trying on dresses or hats before they make their purchase, or have waited on white customers first when a Negro arrived at the counter earlier.

Overall, observed both Baptist leaders who planned the program, the People-to-People Week had a tremendous effect on the community which seems very much concerned about human relations on a person-to-person basis.

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Atlanta Baptist College *1139*  
Seeks Federal Loans

12/6/67 *252*

ATLANTA (BP)--Trustees of the Atlanta Baptist College have initiated plans to seek federal loans for buildings and equipment for the neophyte school, which plans to open here for classes next September.

The trustees, by a 28-3 vote, approved a resolution which would authorize its executive officers to use their discretion to obtain federal loans for construction and equipment, "provided that no such action shall be taken which in any wise limits the freedom of the college in the conduct of its operation in respect to faculty, curriculum, or any other matters."

The resolution also said that "adequate financing of higher education in privately-supported institutions of learning in America is in grave peril."

Monroe F. Swilley Jr., chairman of trustees and pastor of Second-Ponce de Leon church in Atlanta, said the matter of federal loans will be presented to the Atlanta Baptist Association, which owns the school.

Roy W. Hinchey, moderator of the association, will be asked to call a special session of the association, hopefully in January, to consider the federal loans request.

The Atlanta school is not officially connected with the Georgia Baptist Convention, which for the past two years has voted against federal loans for Mercer University.

Legally, trustees could seek federal loans without associational approval, but the approval will be sought since the school is related to the association.

The Atlanta Baptist College owns 562 acres of land on the northeast expressway here and four major buildings are nearing completion there now.

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David K. Alexander To *1140*  
Leave Student Work Post

12/6/67 *340*

NASHVILLE (BP)--David K. Alexander, secretary of the student department of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, has announced plans to resign his position, to do special studies in higher education.

Alexander's study leave will begin Feb. 1 at the end of which he plans to return to the board in another capacity or enter a new field of service.

When asked why he was leaving the post, Alexander said, "I feel that a fresh voice is needed to lead the department, state and campus directors into the full potential and demands of the 1970's."

Alexander also reviewed the accomplishments of the department during the sixties. He stated that department goals and plans for their accomplishments would soon be established for the next five years.

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The director of the board's education division, W. L. Howse, who supervises the work of the student department, stated that he does not have immediate plans for filling the post Alexander is vacating.

"I am grateful for the spirit in which Mr. Alexander has carried out his responsibilities as secretary of the department," said Howse, "and deeply appreciate the remarkable Christian spirit he has shown in reaching this decision."

During his study leave Alexander also plans to complete a book manuscript on the devotional life.

As head of the student department for six years, Alexander also served as editor-in-chief of the Baptist Student, a Christian collegiate magazine. Before becoming the department's secretary, he served as editor of this publication for six years.

He is co-author of the Baptist Student Union Manual and co-editor of What Can You Believe? and has written many articles for religious journals.

Currently a member of the administrative committee of the youth department of the Baptist World Alliance, Alexander is a frequent program personality at religious emphasis weeks and religious programs on campuses throughout the nation.

He was selected as Outstanding Churchman of the Year from his Alma Mater, the University of New Mexico, and has been the recipient of a Danforth grant for special studies.

Alexander holds the bachelor of business administration degree and studied an additional year at Harvard Business School. He received the master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, and has completed course requirements for the doctor of philosophy degree at Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

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Evangelical Ecumenists  
Meet Again In Washington

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Evangelical ecumenism took another step at a second meeting here to discuss the "possibilities of more tangible evangelical witness and unity in American life."

The meeting was a follow-up on an earlier fall ecumenical gathering of 40 churchmen to discuss evangelical cooperation.

At the December meeting a committee of 12 churchmen "agreed on the general feasibility of a multi-faceted continental evangelistic drive cresting in 1973, subject to favorable conditions," according to a press release issued by the magazine Christianity Today.

The report further said, "the latest conference produced the concept of a non-organizational 'Evangelical Christian Coalition' to advance cooperative efforts."

"It also will seek to present a full understanding of what it means to be evangelical and relevant in the contemporary situation," the release stated.

The next meeting of the planning group will be March 9-10, 1968. A spokesman at Christianity Today said that probably 25 persons would be present at the March meeting.

Neither of the meetings in Washington have been open to the press. No announcement for press coverage of the March meeting has been made.

Christianity Today, Carl F. H. Henry, editor, has taken the initiative in this new evangelical ecumenical endeavor. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association also is supporting evangelical cooperation, according to the Christianity Today spokesman.

The Christianity Today release said of the December meeting, "Participants came from nine major denominations but as individuals and not as official representatives of their communions. They constituted a trans-denominational dialogue that reached far beyond existing patterns of cooperation."

Two Southern Baptists were present, John F. Havlik and Harold Lindsey, both associate directors in the division of evangelism of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Others present were: George A. Fallon, General Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church; Leighton Ford, associate in the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; Carl F.H. Henry, editor of Christianity Today; Rufus Jones, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; David E. Kucharsky, associate editor of Christianity Today.

Also, John A. MacKay, former president of Princeton; T.A. Raedeke, secretary for evangelism for the Board of Missions of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church; J. Sherrard Rice, secretary for Christian witness in the Board of National Ministries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.; Edward H. Rockey, minister of the Westchester Church of Christ, White Plains, N.Y.; and Carl W. Tiller, former president of the American Baptist Convention.

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CUTLINES

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BAPTIST PRESS PHOTO

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**MASSES FLOCK TO CHRIST IN INDONESIA:** The greatest spiritual awakening in the history of the country is in progress in Indonesia, according to reports from Southern Baptist Evangelist John Haggai (standing left). Haggai, surrounded by Indonesian children who came to a service at 6:00 a.m. in the largest Chinese Christian church in Djakarta, was on a fact-finding mission in Indonesia to discover the extent of the revival. Shown with him are (left to right) H. F. Tan, pastor of the church; Gay Juban, a Baptist layman from Baton Rouge, La.; and Felix Snipes, music director for the Haggai Evangelistic Association, Atlanta. (BP) Photo by Gainer Bryan Jr.

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