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December 19, 1967

Despair In Ghetto Demands
'Time To Listen, Time To Act'

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By Beth Hayworth

WASHINGTON (BP)--What is it like to live in the slums of a large American city and to feel that because of your color or your income you cannot escape?

A report that provides insight into the thoughts and feelings of slum residents regarding the conditions in which they live has been released by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Citizens across the country in hearings before state advisory committees of the commission said that ghetto living is "like a trap...a treadmill...a quagmire, a big quicksand... like being in a cage...it's one big nothing...."

Such expressions of isolation and despair are recurrent themes in the 133-page book, "A Time To Listen...A Time To Act," published by the U.S. Government Printing Office.

Based on a year and a half investigation of slums in 20 cities, the report is a summary of testimony gathered by the commission. The story of the ghetto is told by residents themselves and persons who work with them.

William L. Taylor, staff director, said the commission was prompted to use this unusual approach in giving this report to the nation because "Most Americans just don't understand the situation in the ghetto."

He explained that most Americans are aware of the tangible facts of ghetto life--the deteriorated housing, the rats, the unemployment, the vice and crime. What apparently is not generally understood, he continued, is the feeling of many Negro residents that the ghetto is a "trap" from which there is no escape.

The story of the ghetto, as told by the residents, is one of frustration, despair and hopelessness. Permeating the transcript of ghetto voices is a sense of powerlessness and a feeling of inability to do anything that will change the situation.

"Outside time marches on," a mother in Gary, Ind., said. "They build better and they have better but you come down here and you see the same thing year after year after year. People struggling, people wanting, people needing, and nobody to give anyone help."

"All we can see is darkness ahead," a Negro youth in San Francisco said. "One minute we are looking ahead and we think we see something and we turn around and again all we can see is darkness ahead. And sometimes at a time like this all they can do is strike out into the night. They don't know what they are reaching for out there."

Many of the witnesses at committee hearings referred to the "invisible wall" that they feel exists between the slum and the rest of the city. Another recurring theme was that "no one listens to them, no one consults them, no one considers their need."

The image of the white community from inside the ghetto is that of impersonal, hostile and exploitative persons.

The symbols of the white business community are the merchants who sell shoddy merchandise at high prices and the absentee landlord who reduces services and allows property to deteriorate when Negroes move in.

White authority is embodied in the policeman who, slum dwellers feel, isn't there to protect the neighborhood residents but "to keep Negroes in line." The commission heard many complaints that "the police do not treat Negroes with dignity and respect."

Police tend to accept vice and crime as normal in slum areas, many witnesses said. One who made such a charge said morally-decayed persons from all over the city are attracted to the slums "to do their dirt."

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The view of local government is exemplified by the inadequacy or the lack of public services which most people take for granted. Health, recreation and transportation facilities in some cities were described as inadequate or unavailable. Many witnesses charged that street and sanitation services are curtailed when a neighborhood changes from white to Negro.

The commission recorded statements about increasing militancy among racial groups. Leaders in Mexican and Chinese communities in California who testified at hearings contended that our society is crisis-oriented and will deal with racial problems only when they erupt in violent conflict.

One Negro spokesman warned that white people should not ask "why" when disorders occurred in the cities because "all the time we're telling you why."

In a summary chapter, the commission said the problems of the ghetto will not be resolved by a "search for culprits or conspirators" in the recent riots, or by searching for solutions which do not cost money or effort.

The commission further warned against deferring remedial action in the ghettos on the ground that to do otherwise would be to reward violence.

"It is in the context of great frustrations, of laws and programs which promise but do not deliver, of continued deprivation, discrimination and prejudice in a society increasingly prosperous, that the increasing alienation and the disorders of recent months must be viewed," it stated.

Also, the commission labeled "misleading and dangerous" the idea that the Negroes' situation is like that of earlier immigrants from Eastern Europe who lived in ghettos but were able to move out.

Escape from the ghetto is much more difficult in a technological age than it was a few generations ago, it explained. Poor education, inadequate training in skills, the movement of private industry to the suburbs and a lack of open housing for minority groups were cited as blocks to escaping the ghetto.

The government document, "A Time To Listen...A Time To Act," contains no specific recommendations for legislation, but calls on the nation to make the problems of race and poverty its first priority.

"We must make the commitment which will redeem our promises and ideals by opening the doors of the ghetto so that Negroes and other minority groups can become full participants in American society, with a truly equal opportunity for all," the report concluded.

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Ministers' Security Voted, 119/
Judicial Review Killed

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Two bills of special church interest were enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives during the frantic last days before adjournment of the first session of the 90th Congress.

A judicial review rider was eliminated from the education bill and compulsory participation in Social Security by ministers was approved.

The Senate earlier almost unanimously attached the judicial review bill as a rider to the Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments Act of 1967. In the conference committee between the Senate and House this rider was killed. Hence it was not brought to a vote in the House.

In the extensive Social Security Amendments Bill a modified provision was included making participation by ministers mandatory with two exceptions.

The first exception is the minister who is a conscientious objector to participation in government insurance programs. On the other hand, excluded from participation are ministers or members of religious orders who have taken vows of poverty.

The \$3.6 billion Social Security bill finally approved by Congress carried a 13 per cent increase in benefits for 24 million Americans.

So comprehensive was the bill that the Senate proposed 295 amendments to the House version. Rep. Wilbur Mills (D., Ark.) chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, explained the complexity of the bill. He said, "This bill includes far too many matters to be discussed even within the one hour that we have."

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Prior to this bill a minister could participate in Social Security as a self-employed person if he signed a waiver of exemption. Now he is required to participate unless he signs a waiver of participation on grounds of conscience. Obviously, a minister who has participated in a government insurance program cannot now claim "conscientious objection."

The death of the judicial review rider was the result of a number of factors, including a reported direct personal intervention by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Other elements include:

1. Opposition by the Roman Catholic hierarchy because they feared a cut off of certain aids that go to pupils in parochial schools;
2. Opposition by the Justice Department on grounds that authorization for judicial review of federal spending by individual taxpayers is unconstitutional;
3. Fear that such constitutional lawsuits would disrupt much of the current education program of the federal government and that old feuds between religious groups would break out anew; and
4. Opposition by an unidentified AFL-CIO lobbyist who joined others in trying to reduce the threat to the education program.

Senate sources reported to the press that President Johnson personally called both Senators Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D., N.C.) and Wayne Morse (D., Ore.) and possibly Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D., Mont.). The President is reported to have promised early hearings in the House Judiciary Committee next session if the Senators dropped the judicial review rider from the education bill.

Judicial review was stalled during the entire first session of the 90th Congress in the House Judiciary Committee. Chairman Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.) had promised all year to hold hearings at a convenient time. But always there was more pressing business.

In the meantime, the Supreme Court may take steps of its own to solve the judicial review problem in taxpayer's suits about federal spending. The court has agreed to hear arguments in a New York case (*Flast v. Gardner*) on the question of "standing to sue." A decision by the court on this matter is expected sometime next spring.

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Dot Weeks Leaves WMU,
Goes To Friendship Press

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BRIMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Miss Dorothy Weeks, an editor for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union here since 1953, has resigned to become children's book editor at Friendship Press in New York City, effective Dec. 27.

Miss Weeks has been editor of *Tell* magazine and other Girls' Auxiliary materials for 14½ years. She joined the SBC Woman's Missionary Union staff after graduation from Oklahoma Baptist University.

She also studied at Carver School of Missions (now part of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary), Louisville.

A native of Florida, she previously was pastor's secretary at First Baptist Church, Lakeland, Fla., and a reporter for the *Shawnee* (Okla.) *News Star*.

Tell, the magazine she edits at Woman's Missionary Union, is a monthly missions magazine for girls and has more than 300,000 subscribers. She has also edited other materials related to Girls' Auxiliary and Woman's Missionary Union.

Miss Weeks is the author of *Ten Bright Eyes*, book in the 1958 Foreign Missions Graded Series, and of numerous magazine articles.

Miss Weeks will be working under the direction of William C. Walzer, executive director of the department of education for mission for the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., with offices in the Inter-Church Center in New York.

"We announce Miss Week's departure with regret," said Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of the Woman's Missionary Union... she has proven her editorial ability and has been a creative conference leader.

"We congratulate Friendship Press on selecting Miss Weeks, and we wish her success," Miss Hunt stated.

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SBC Reaches \$24.2 Million
1967 World Missions Budget

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NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention reached its basic \$24.2 million Cooperative Program budget here on Dec. 19, with all funds contributed after that date going to Southern Baptist foreign and home mission efforts.

Southern Baptist Executive Committee Executive-Secretary Porter W. Routh, who made the announcement, estimated that slightly more than \$1 million was expected to come in over the basic budget.

Under established convention procedure, once the basic budget is reached, all remaining funds are divided two-thirds to foreign missions and one third to home missions.

SBC leaders in the past have intentionally set the basic budget goal at slightly less than the anticipated contributions to allow one final push for funds in the year to go to home and foreign missions.

On the day the budget was met, the SBC Executive Committee here made its final distribution of funds to all 21 different Southern Baptist agencies and organizations which receive support through the Cooperative Program, the unified budget plan of the convention. All remaining allocations in 1967 go to the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, and the SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

Routh said that the two mission boards each year have the greatest unmet needs, and the "advance section" of the budget makes it possible to meet some of these needs both in the United States and across the world.

Of the \$24.2 million budget, nearly one-half (48.68 per cent) goes to foreign missions and about one-fifth goes to home missions efforts in the United States.

The SBC Foreign Mission Board, as of Dec. 19 when the budget was met, had received \$11,780,300 through the Cooperative Program unified budget plan; and the SBC Home Mission Board had received \$4,930,450.

Other Southern Baptist Convention agencies and organizations receiving Cooperative Program budget support from the convention, and the amounts received through the budget are:

Six SBC seminaries; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, \$1,203,495; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, \$904,394; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, \$982,054; Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., \$611,069; Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; \$608,848; and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., \$348,390.

Another seminary jointly supported by National (Negro) and Southern Baptists, American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, received \$90,600.

Others are: The SBC Annuity Board, Dallas, \$250,000; Southern Baptist Foundation, Nashville, \$61,800; Southern Baptist Hospital (New Orleans and Jacksonville, Fla.) \$36,000; the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Memphis, \$266,100; SBC Christian Life Commission, Nashville, \$100,000; SBC Education Commission, Nashville, \$94,000; SBC Historical Commission, Nashville, \$90,500; and SBC Stewardship Commission, Nashville, \$83,000.

The SBC Radio-Television Commission in Fort Worth received \$1,185,000; the Convention Operating Fund, \$200,000; and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, \$104,000 plus \$270,000 for capital needs deposited with the SBC Foundation.

The amounts listed include only funds contributed through the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget plan, and do not include designated contributions to specific SBC agencies. As of Nov. 30, 1967, a total of \$42.9 million in both Cooperative Program and designated gifts, had been contributed, with \$19.7 million in designations.