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March 6, 1968

Christian Life Commission  
Urges Study of Riot Report

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention urged Southern Baptist churches to adopt "a basic program to help alleviate civil unrest" in the wake of the lengthy report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.

The 36-member commission meeting here also urged Baptists to study the report of the President's commission, but it did not endorse the lengthy report.

"We feel that the people of God need to have a special response to this report," said Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission.

The chairman of the committee which made the recommendation, Robert Seymour of Chapel Hill, N. C., added that the commission felt compelled to say a positive word about the civil disorders report, but was reluctant to be too specific since none of the commission members or staff had read the entire 250,000-word volume.

"Apparently, the lengthy report makes no reference to the role of the Christian churches," said Seymour, pastor of Binkley Memorial Baptist Church in Chapel Hill.

The report, released four days before the commission meeting, said that "white racism" was "essentially responsible for the explosive mixture" that led to the long hot summer of riots in 1967.

"What white Americans have never fully understood--but what the Negro can never forget ---is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto," the report said. "White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

The President's commission warned that "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white---separate and unequal. . . This deepening racial division is not inevitable," it added. "The movement apart can be reversed. Our principal task is to define that choice and to press for a national resolution."

The report outlined in detail a national plan for action, calling for such things as the creation of 2 million new jobs, a minimum guaranteed wage, initiation of on-the-job training subsidies, improved housing programs including 6 million new buildings, etc.

The brief motion by the Christian Life Commission here "recommended that the churches be advised of the report on the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders and that they be encouraged to adopt a basic program to help alleviate the civil unrest." The commission did not suggest what the proposed "basic program" might be.

As a matter of information, one of the commission's subcommittees reported to the full commission that it had "encouraged our staff to participate in all ecumenical dialogue that would be beneficial in understanding others and being understood by them in matters of social concern and application of Christian ethics."

The program subcommittee also told the full commission it had encouraged the commission staff, or some appropriate SBC agency, to devise and make available a curriculum of sex education that could be used in local churches and the home.

In other action, the commission voted to "endorse the Crusade of the Americas and pursue vigorously all available opportunities to implement the third purpose of the crusade: 'To establish true moral and spiritual bases for the betterment of mankind's economic, social and physical welfare.'"

A summer intern, Ken McNeil of Nashville, was employed to study the work of the commission and prepare articles and manuscripts on subjects of Christian social concerns. McNeil is a graduate student in sociology at Vanderbilt University here, and a former assistant Baptist Student Union director at Baylor University, Waco, Tex.

Two resolutions on obscene literature and television programs referred to the commission by the Southern Baptist Convention resolutions committee in Miami Beach were "received" for study, and "appropriately incorporated into our regular programs in these areas."

The commission also voted to hold an orientation period for new commission members, to project an editorial cartoon or photograph series for Baptist state papers, and to approve a set of objectives for the commission's public relations work.

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Vietnam Missionaries Said  
Facing Extreme Difficulties

3/6/68

DALLAS (BP)--An official of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board told Texas Baptist Men here that missionaries in war-torn Vietnam "are working under extremely difficult circumstances in Saigon."

Harold G. Basden of Richmond, associate secretary of the promotion division for the SEC Foreign Mission Board, told about 100 laymen that eight Baptist men missionaries remain in Saigon, and two couples remain in the Da Nang area.

Seven wives and families and two Missionary Journeymen have been evacuated, he reported to the Texas Baptist Men's executive board, holding its first meeting March 4 since formal organization in mid-January.

Named the first executive secretary of the new Texas Baptist Men's unit is W. L. (Wingy) Smith. The organization replaces the Texas Baptist Brotherhood and is an affiliate of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Smith has been serving for the past 3½ years as secretary of the Texas Baptist Brotherhood Department.

Two associates were named to assist Smith in the Dallas office of the organization. They include Robert B. Chapman, director of missions education and Robert E. Dixon, director of Royal Ambassadors. Both Chapman and Dixon were serving on the brotherhood staff of the convention.

In other highlights, the board:

---Heard an outline of the Pan American Baptist Laymen's Evangelism Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil next July. More than 100 Texas Baptist laymen will be invited to tour South America in preparation of the conference, Smith reported.

---Approved general plans for the Texas Baptist Men's convention in Fort Worth, Nov. 11-12.

---Okayed appointment of three committees and chairmen. Heading the committees will be A. D. Pratt of Dallas, personnel; Paul Cates of Lubbock, finance; and Bruno Morgan of Corpus Christi, policy.

---Heard a plea from Wade Freeman, Texas Baptist evangelism secretary, for additional laymen to assist with the "Encounter California Crusade", April 28-May 5.

---Heard Dixon report that the state Royal Ambassador Congress will be held in Abilene, Tex., April 11-12 at Hardin-Simmons University, with a track meet to be one of the highlights.

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Howard Payne Drama  
Slated In Uruguay

3/6/68

BROWNWOOD, Tex. (BP)--Howard Payne College, which attracted international attention in 1959 with a Texas version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" which played several engagements in England, has been invited to represent the United States in an International Drama Festival.

The college has been invited to present the "Dream" in the International Festival of University Theatre in Montevideo, Uruguay, in August.

The invitation came from the Delphic Institute, whose president saw the 1959 performance in Bristol, England.

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A new version of the "Dream" has been devised by director Alex Reeve, the new version will include musical numbers and choreography. The production will be a joint presentation of the drama and music departments of the college.

The Howard Payne group will be hosted by the city of Montevideo, but travel expenses must be raised by the students and by contributions in a campaign which has already been started.

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Striking Florida  
Teachers Hear Moody

3/6/68

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP)--Jess Moody, pastor of the First Baptist Church here, went before Palm Beach County's 1,600 striking school teachers and told them:

"You have a right to walk out. My children have a right to an education. I find it exceedingly difficult to sacrifice my children upon the altar of your right to walk out."

That wasn't all he said, but that is the portion of his speech one local television station picked up and quoted on the news that evening. Moody said the news report was accurate but incomplete.

The striking teachers, however, were incensed. Moody also had blasted the sour apathy that had put the teachers in a position of feeling they had to protest, and they thought it unjust for the news media to ignore that part of the speech.

To get out "the whole story," the teachers bought a full page of space in the West Palm Beach Post-Times and in large, bold type claimed Moody as a "friend," labeled the TV station's choice of quotations from the speech as "callous treatment of the doctor (Moody)," and printed the entire text of Moody's speech.

Moody said the strike was so unpopular that no one would go before the striking group. He and a Jewish Rabbi finally responded.

The speech indicated Moody's sympathy with the teachers, although it also left the impression he disagreed with their method of and timing for the strike protest.

However, perhaps the strongest part of the speech was aimed at apathetic parents.

"Everytime something is said about lack of parental support, the wrong parents get upset," Moody said.

"The good ones become offended. The bad ones just sit in the easy chair, beer can in hand, watching the news, and mumbling, 'They oughta throw them teachers out of the state. Besides, the Communists are behind this whole thing.'"

"The gut issue," he said, "is American apathy, that new sickness which has seized and makes us all, not teachers only, want to quit."

Moody said that perhaps the striking teachers were trying to say, "America, get your values straight."

"All these things point up the reality of the current spiritual poverty," he told the teachers. "Perhaps the old time preachers were right when they said America needs a revival. Maybe your action will stab us awake."

About 20,000 classroom teachers across the state of Florida still are out in the unprecedented strike, protesting low salaries, poor facilities and equipment and heavy workloads.

About 600 of the striking teachers in Palm Beach County have returned to work, Moody said, but about 1,000 have received "acceptance of resignation, with prejudice" from the local school board, which means that they cannot teach anywhere in the state of Florida for one year (unless the state overrules).

Moody said he and Samuel Lindsay, pastor of a local interdenominational congregation, offered to serve as mediators and set up a "quiet meeting" between the governor, local school board authorities and the striking teachers.

However, the offer was publicized and the idea was squelched.

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Moody said about 75 people in his congregation were serving as substitute teachers during the strike, and that he had set up special noonday prayer meetings and counseling sessions with individual teachers to help deal with the crisis.

Moody had some problem with his own 15-year-old son, who skipped school one day and went surfing. He told his father, "the teachers are playing hookey, why can't I?"

"I admonished him as a Christian brother," Moody said. "I told him his involvement in the answer to this problem was to go back to class. He went, grudgingly."

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Texas Executive Board  
Hears Loan Group Report

3/6/68

DALLAS (BP)--"No evidence of any kind or character has been found which would indicate dishonesty or any action not made in good faith" by the Texas Baptist Church Loan Board and Corp., the Texas Baptist Executive Board was told here.

A six-page report on work of the Church Loan organization was presented to the 192-member Texas Baptist Executive Board following an investigation of its work by a subcommittee of the convention's Committee of 100.

The Texas Baptist Church Loan Board and the Church Loan Corp., had both received criticism since the study was initiated in early 1967 because of alleged mismanagement of investment practices.

Citing an audit by the firm Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co., a member of the investigating committee, Joe Weldon Bailey of Waco, Tex., told the board there was no evidence whatsoever of dishonesty or actions not made in good faith.

Bailey added the audit was digested by the agencies involved as well as the subcommittee of the Committee of 100 studying the agencies and the special five-member committee which had been appointed by the Executive Board when a rift developed between the Church Loan Board and the subcommittee.

Bailey also reported a harmony now existing between all committees and board involved, adding that "we have had magnificent cooperation from every person or organization we have contacted." Since September, Bailey pointed out that his committee had made over 600 telephone calls and had more than 70 meetings and conferences.

In a reshuffling of responsibilities in February, James Semple of Paris, Tex., was elected chairman of the Church Loan Board; Ralph Lee, Houston attorney, became vice chairman; and D. J. Singletary of Fort Worth was elected president and executive officer of the Church Loan Board.

All properties owned by the Church Loan Board in California have now been listed with Coldwell-Banker and Co., for sale on a five percent commission basis, added Bailey. He also expressed confidence that the California properties would be sold "this year, each for an amount in excess of its cost to the Church Loan Board."

The special committee made the following recommendations to the agencies who approved them:

That the Church Loan Board authorize Singletary to appoint a five-man executive committee; that the Church Loan Board have two regular meetings each year; and that Singletary be instructed to keep the Church Loan Board informed of his activities and those of his executive committee.

That the Church Loan Board retain A. B. White at his present salary until he reaches 65 years of age, in about a year.

That the Church Loan Board authorize the special committee of the Executive Board to dispose of real estate in California and New Mexico in an orderly manner so they can take advantage of markets and other developments to obtain maximum dollars for the properties. That the board be informed of all activities in this respect and that the board approve all sales along with the special committee.

That the Church Loan Association and the Church Loan Board agree to study the possibility of merging.

That the Church Loan Board receive the audit report of Peat, Marwick and Mitchell and adopt the recommendations contained in their management letter as soon as possible.

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That the Church Loan Board confine its activities to church loans and loans on church related properties.

That the Church Loan Board make arrangements to have an annual audit by a national audit firm.

That the by-laws be re-written to authorize all of the officers named. That this group (By-law committee) make any other revisions necessary to accomplish a more workable organization.

Executive Board members voted to let the Church Loan Board operate as outlined by its special committee with an auditor's financial statement to be made available to the Executive Board in June.

"We believe that substantial progress can be shown," said Bailey, who pointed to the accomplishments of the church loan organizations. He added that the organizations have loaned over \$30 million to 815 churches and at present have 15 commitments outstanding for loans totaling in excess of \$1 million.

Bailey also added that outstanding balances on loans made churches exceed \$8 million.

"They have served a wonderful need in our Texas Baptist churches and Southern Baptist churches of other states," said Bailey. "We trust that the criticism in the past, present and future will have constructive results."

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Texas Executive Board  
Again Opposes Gambling

3/6/68

DALLAS (BP)--Opposition to pari-mutuel gambling in the primary elections May 4 drew the unanimous approval of the 192-member Executive Board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas meeting here:

A statement on gambling by Bill Austin urged people to defeat legalized gambling at the election polls. Austin is pastor of the First Baptist Church of Mt. Vernon, Tex., and chairman of the convention's Christian Life Commission.

"Legalized gambling always means a substantial increase in illegal gambling. Illegal gambling is nationally recognized as the treasure chest for organized crime.

"This state's previous experience with such gambling has indicated the detrimental effect on the consumer economy. Income for the state would be negligible by any standards," Austin's statement said.

Executive Board members agreed that racetracks "are not a prime attraction to tourism" and pointed out that the few seasonal jobs offered by racetracks "do not begin to compensate for the great damage caused to the state."

Board members also approved the selection of James Dunn as new secretary of the Christian Life Commission. The commission is the public affairs unit of Texas Baptists and has made recent recommendations on enforcement of Texas liquor laws.

In other highlights, board members agreed to appoint a special committee to study possible relocation of the convention headquarters presently located in downtown Dallas.

Board members voted to permit distribution of \$175,000 in surplus funds in 1967 over budget requirements to various causes, including \$77,500 to the convention's colleges, hospitals and children's homes.

In other action, board members:

---Announced the selection of Elmin K. Howell Jr., minister of activities at First Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., as Rio Grande Ministry coordinator. Howell will provide coordination services between the churches and Baptist associations along the Rio Grande River.

---Chose James E. Frost of Nashville as new secretary of the Texas Baptist Sunday School department.

---Filled other staff positions, including John M. Smith of Albany, Tex., as associate secretary of the church stewardship department; James E. Hester, former Southern Baptist missionary to Italy, Lybia and North Africa as coordinator of evangelism crusades in the evangelism division of the convention; and Phil Strickland, formerly of Abilene and Fort Worth, as associate secretary of the Christian Life Commission.