



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593

DALLAS Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAU

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631

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**Feasibility Study Proposed
For Baptist Computer Center**

NASHVILLE (BP)--An executive of the Southern Baptist Convention proposed in a speech here that Southern Baptists explore the possibility of establishing a computer center with a network of consoles in every state convention and every SBC agency.

Albert McClellan, program planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee here, made the suggestion during one of three presentations to the SBC Inter-Agency Council on the use of computers in society today and Southern Baptist life.

McClellan specifically proposed that a study group from the Inter-Agency Council Administrative Committee join with a group of state convention executives "to explore over a long period of time computer possibilities."

Almost immediately after his speech, a motion was made and passed unanimously by the Inter-Agency Council of the SBC asking its chairman, Merrill D. Moore, to appoint such a committee, and its administrative committee to set forth its duties and functions.

McClellan made it clear in his speech that he was not saying that such a Baptist computer center with console units at every SBC agency and state convention should be established, but rather that the possibility should be studied. "This is not a problem that can be faced in an afternoon of empty-headed brainstorming," he said.

The idea, he added, might sound far-fetched, "but there was a day when a telephone in every office was far-fetched," he added.

Earlier during the entire morning devoted to computer studies, a representative of Honeywell Corp., Kenneth Inman, showed films depicting creative uses of computers by industries, and a Baptist news editor, Jim Newton of Nashville, presented a report on what Southern Baptists are now doing in computer applications.

"Southern Baptist agencies seem to be at least five years, and perhaps in some cases as much as 10 years behind business and industry in computer useage," said Newton, assistant director of the Baptist Press, news service of the SBC.

There are only six agencies of the convention that are now using computers, Newton said, and most of these are only for accounting functions and subscription fulfillment. Thirteen agencies are not using computers in any way, the report indicated.

Of a total of 23 Baptist state conventions and 23 Baptist state papers replying to a survey, seven conventions and four weekly papers are using computers for accounting and subscription list maintenance, the report indicated.

State conventions using computers for accounting functions include Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Maryland, California, and Hawaii; while state papers using computers include Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and Illinois.

Newton concluded on the basis of his study that there already is some overlapping at SBC agencies using computers, that there needs to be more correlation among agencies using computers, that there is a general lack of knowledge concerning capabilities of the computer, that some Baptists seem to have a basic fear of the computer, and that professional studies were needed on the feasibility of a computer center, and on what state Baptist hospitals and colleges were doing in computer applications.

"Whether Southern Baptists like it or not, society will more and more be shaped by the computer," Newton concluded. "If we are five to ten years behind already, we'd better begin now trying to catch up, else we will find society shaping Southern Baptists, instead of Christianity shaping society."

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McClellan amplified this theme, saying that the computer is reshaping today's society, and that it is the basis of most of the important decisions affecting the world today. "They have reshaped basic human communication and problem-solving processes to give man an entirely new environment," he added.

He described in detail what computers were doing in the fields of commerce, industrial management, medicine, transportation, income taxes, national security, dress making, design, printing, inventory, libraries, politics, and education.

"They have become so much a part of the American way of life that if they were to quit working, air traffic would be hopelessly snarled, commerce would come to a halt with banks and stock exchanges buried under mountains of unprocessed paper, automobile factories and steel mills would shut down for months, chemical plants would close and hospitals and department stores would fall into impossible confusion," McClellan said.

As one of many examples citing the fantastic capabilities of computers, McClellan said that "all the calculations it took one year for a group of scientists to accomplish at Los Alamos in 1945, a college undergraduate can do in one afternoon while sharing the computer with 30 other people."

He declared that the Christian must not be blind to the new kind of world the computer is creating, but rather the Christian must help men being shaped by the computer to understand what is happening. "They (Christians) must show the new man the way to find himself."

McClellan listed 13 perplexing problems that the computer forces man to face, including such things as destruction of past landmarks, disturbance people face when they have to retrain for two or three careers eliminated by computers, shifts in society, etc.

"Somehow," he observed, "Southern Baptists must come alive to these questions, not merely in the seminaries, but in these halls, and in the halls of the churches. Somehow our pastors must be pulled into the new times with all its computer-bred problems.

"We can't kick the computer, for it will kick back. We've got to realize that the computer world is here and get on with our job of spiritual understanding and spiritual leadership."

McClellan maintained that Baptists can better do this job with the help of the computer as a tool.

He cited creative ways Baptists could use the computer in the areas of bookkeeping, statistics, research, pastoral placement, long-range planning, program evaluation, church-related vocations, program planning, long-range forecasting, assistance to churches, compatibility with other denominations' computers, and the computer center idea.

He offered six specific suggestions, after warning against "burying our heads in the sand," against being overwhelmed by the whole problem, and against "rushing out and buying a computer tomorrow."

His suggestions were to find out what the computer world is all about, confer with computer experts, learn as much as possible, realize the computer will force different ways of working and thinking, realize the computer may call for soul-searching organization and personnel readjustments, and come to see that a computer doesn't cost, but pays.

He also made three specific proposals to the Inter-Agency Council, not in motion form, but as ideas for action: (1) designate a study group to delve into the Christian's response to the new world of technology and its impact on persons, (2) designate a study group of SBC agency heads and state convention executives to explore computer possibilities and (3) designate a committee of the council to discuss changes "we will have to make as we adopt our programming procedures to computers."

"It is my frank, honest opinion that here is an opportunity for Southern Baptists to become alive to the demands of the new times in taking hold of a problem meaningfully and in depth," he concluded.

Baptist Students Get
\$789,960 Federal Aid

DALLAS (BP)--Students attending Texas Baptists' nine institutions of higher learning will receive up to \$789,960 in federal aid in the 1968-69 school year.

U. S. Sen. Ralph Yarborough disclosed that more than \$7-million in federal aid to 15,341 needy college students will be distributed by 81 Texas schools during the next school year.

Here is a breakdown of funds allocated to students at Texas Baptist related institutions:

Baylor University, Waco, \$251,230; Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, \$142,850; East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, \$98,850; Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, \$75,280; Houston Baptist College, \$56,610; University of Corpus Christi, Corpus Christi, \$56,480; Dallas Baptist College, Dallas, \$53,700; Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton, \$36,200; Howard Payne College, Brownwood, \$18,760.

The aid is in the form of "educational opportunity grants" awarded to schools under the 1965 Higher Education Act. The funds are matched by local contributions, then distributed by the schools to students with exceptional financial need.

Grants range from \$200 to \$800 per school year.

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Biracial Task Force Urged
By South Carolina Baptists

3/22/68

COLUMBIA, S. C. (BP)--Concern over "the growing racial crisis in the state" has prompted the South Carolina Baptist Public Affairs and Christian Life Committee to urge establishment of a biracial task force in every South Carolina community.

The Baptist committee also endorsed the work of the State Task Force on Community Uplift in calling for "improved communication between the races on the local as well as the state-wide level."

"We express our deep concern over the growing racial crisis in our state and nation," declared the statement from the Baptist committee.

The committee urged Baptist people in the state "to support and provide leadership in the efforts being made to establish a biracial task force in each community as a means of making sure that the communities:

"(1) recognize the needs of all segments of its population, (2) identify the trouble centers which might provoke racial disturbance, and (3) initiate the actions needed to show good faith towards the achievement of full opportunities for all citizens."

The South Carolina Baptist Convention's Christian Life and Public Affairs committee also said it was arranging for a series of regional meetings for leaders of Baptist churches to implement this call and provide a forum for discussion of the issues.

-30-

Jewish Group Gives Baptist
Seminary Prof Fellowship

3/22/68

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--B. Elmo Scoggin, professor of Old Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been awarded a post-doctoral fellowship for study at the Hebrew Union College Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem.

Valued at \$4,500, the award was made by the Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion.

The study for the academic year 1968-69 will be Scoggin's second at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He studied there in 1962-63 and participated in archaeological excavations. Last summer he and a group of Southeastern students worked with one of the university's professors in excavations at Tel Arad.

The award will enable Scoggin to engage in two seasons of digging at Tel Gezer and at Tel Lachish. These two digs will bring to 14 the total number of archaeological expeditions in which he has participated.

Scoggin is a native of Harris, N. C., and a graduate of Furman University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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