

**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

May 28, 1968

National Agencies Plan
For '70 Youth Conference**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

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

WASHINGTON (BP)--Public and private agencies are now in the process of preparing for the seventh White House conference on children and youth to be held in mid-February, 1970.

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has announced the appointment of Joseph H. Douglas as the staff director for the 1970 conference.

The conference is the oldest continuing national meeting convened by the White House. The first was called by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1909. It has been held every 10 years since.

The purpose of the White House conference on children and youth has been, traditionally, to review the progress of children and youth over the past decade. On the basis of the information received and the discussions throughout the nation and at the conference, new goals are set for the coming decade based on changing national conditions and advancements in knowledge.

Although the national committee for the 1970 conference has not yet been appointed, the Johnson administration has asked the governors of the various states to stimulate their state committees to begin preparations.

Already many private organizations concerned with children and youth have begun their preparations, are making their studies and are deciding what objectives they will seek.

An example of these studies is a national institute on the effects of discrimination upon children and youth held recently in Las Cruces, N. M., under the sponsorship of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

This institute drew up a set of recommendations for the White House planning committee. A basic thrust of these proposals will be toward the removal of basic causes of social unrest rather than setting up temporary relief programs.

The White House conferences are composed of representatives from federal, state and local governments and many private agencies concerned with children and youth.

About 550 national voluntary organizations participated in the 1960 conference. Of these, one-third represented churches, synagogues and organizations related to them. Other interests represented were related to health, education, recreation, correction, human relations, labor and community organization.

Church agencies working in the fields related to children and youth will have opportunity to influence national policy through participation in local and state conferences, through conferences of their own, and through discussions at the White House conference itself.

The White House conferences on children and youth have been dramatic in their impact on national policy. Some of the major accomplishments are:

1909 - On the care of dependent children: resulted in enactment of child labor laws, establishment of the U. S. Children's Bureau and organization of the Child Welfare League of America.

1919 - On child welfare standards: established national responsibility in setting minimum health and welfare standards for mothers and children.

1930 - On child health and protection: produced the Children's Charter and the most comprehensive collection of data on the health and welfare of children ever assembled.

1940 - On children in a democracy: led to strengthening of personnel and training standards in equipping American children "for the successful practice of democracy."

-more-

DARGAN-CARVER LIBRARY
S. D. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

1950 - Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth: developed machinery for continuing activity between conferences, including the Council of National Organizations on Children and Youth and organizations of governmental agencies.

1960 - Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth: promoted opportunities for children and youth to realize their full potential for a creative life in freedom and dignity.

1970 - The theme and goals have not yet been set.

-30-

Government Leaders Clash
Over Feeding Poor People

5/28/68

WASHINGTON (EP)--Committees in both the Senate and the House of Representatives have opened extensive hearings into the scope of hunger and malnutrition in the nation. At the center of the investigation is an effort to find out why government programs are not doing a better job feeding the estimated 10 million hungry Americans.

The star witness in an all-day debate with the House Education and Labor Committee during its first week of hearings was Agriculture Secretary Orville L. Freeman. Carl D. Perkins (D., Ky.) is chairman of this committee.

Several persons from the Poor People's Campaign crowded into the hearing room and listened as Democrats and Republicans alike blamed Freeman and the policies of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the failures of government food programs to provide a better diet for the needy.

Freeman, in turn, blamed Congress for failing to appropriate sufficient funds for the food programs they had enacted. He pointed out, for example, that only about half the funds requested for child nutrition programs for 1968 had been appropriated.

In addition, he also pointed a straight finger of blame at local officials in many states who "refuse" to cooperate with the department's efforts to provide assistance to feed the poor.

Freeman, who admitted that there are "starving Americans," criticized the middle class for "complacency and lack of motivation" in urging the creation of food programs in local communities. Many times, he said, the battle to gain legislative tools and the money to attack hunger "has been fought against a backdrop of public indifference and just plain disbelief that hunger existed."

According to USDA statistics, of the 29.9 million persons classified as "poor," only 5.9 million benefit from the surplus commodities and the food stamp programs. The majority of those participating in these two programs are not the poorest of the poor, according to recent studies.

Of the six million school children from poor families, only 2½ million received free or reduced-price lunches in 1967. Freeman said the worst problem in the school lunch program is in big city slums where many schools have no lunch rooms and no equipment.

Many schools refuse to cooperate with the school lunch program and the provision to feed poor children because they say that "to do this takes away from other children," Freeman explained.

Twice the agriculture secretary told the committee that he would like to recommend an extreme measure and say to the states that "if you don't feed needy children, you get no funds."

"I have gone the last mile, hoping local authorities will go along," he said, "now I am willing to go in and do the job myself."

One of the big clashes between Freeman and some members of the committee came over the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture to go over the heads of county officials to institute federal programs if the local leaders don't want to bother with the food distribution programs.

Freeman feels the authority is limited; some members of the committee feel that it is not. Rep. Charles E. Goodell (R., N. Y.) and Rep. Roman C. Pucinski (D., Ill.) both argued with the secretary that he has more power to do this than he has used.

-more-

In the case of the food stamp program, the law specifically rests on a cooperative federal-state-local structure. The act spells out in detail the responsibility of the state and local governments and thus limits the power of the federal government to operate the food stamp program directly.

Freeman said he would like to get a new law that would make it possible for the secretary to go into a needy county and establish a food stamp program when local and state officials refuse to have one.

The commodity distribution program has no specific congressional mandate that limits the power of the secretary. Foods in this program are given to state welfare agencies to distribute. Even though counties and states can choose to participate and must pay storage and administrative costs, the government can go in and distribute directly and pay the bill for storage and administration.

While Secretary Freeman was appearing before the committee, letters were mailed from his department to officials of 59 counties in 10 states saying that unless they create programs to distribute surplus foods, the federal government will come in and do the job by itself.

The letters went to officials of counties in Georgia, Louisiana, Tennessee, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, Virginia, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota.

A particular point of debate in the House hearing was the secretary's choice to return \$227 million to the U. S. Treasury during the present fiscal year that could have been used, in part, to buy surplus commodities to distribute to the needy.

These funds, which have been called to the public's attention through TV newscasts, the daily press and special telecasts on hunger in America, are from U. S. customs receipts and are earmarked for several purposes.

According to the law, the secretary can use a portion of these funds to buy foods that are surplus on the market and donate them to school lunch programs, needy families and welfare institutions. This year, \$47 million has already been used from this source.

Over the past seven years \$654 million from these funds has been passed back to the Treasury. Freeman's choice not to use more of the money to feed the poor has been strongly criticized by several members of Congress as well as by many private citizens.

Freeman told the committee that these funds can be used for direct distribution only where federal programs for food assistance are already operating. Also, the funds cannot be used to buy food for poor children only, according to Freeman's interpretation of the law.

Rep. Pucinski pleaded with Freeman to find some way to use the \$227 million that has been turned back to the Treasury this year. "There is no way," Freeman said, "but I will continue looking."

Soon thereafter, he found a way. In a meeting with 200 representatives of the Poor People's Campaign, Freeman announced that \$60 million worth of commodities would be added to programs providing food directly to the poor. The money would be taken from the special funds from custom receipts and would be in addition to the \$47 million already used.

This announcement by Freeman represents one of the first tangible gains made by the Poor People's Campaign in their lobbying for the poor. It also represents \$6 per person per year for the estimated 10 million hungry Americans.

-30-

ABC News Executive
To Receive Award

3/28/68

FORT WORTH (BP)--Wiley Hance, manager of ABC News Public Affairs Department, has been named to receive the Religious Heritage of America's annual Faith and Freedom Awards for two TV programs produced by ABC in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Written by John Stevens, Commission script writer, the winning films are "I, John" and "Seven Cities."

"I, John," filmed on the Greek island of Patmos, is a study of the locale in which John the Evangelist wrote the New Testament book of "Revelation."

-more-

May 28, 1968

4

Baptist Press

"Seven Cities" is a documentary of the cities of the seven churches for which "Revelation" had special messages.

The two films were presented on ABC's "Directions" series.

Faith and Freedom Awards are presented for what the Religious Heritage organization considers "the greatest contribution to increasing religious understanding and tolerance."

-30-



BAPTIST PRESS

*460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 NINTH AVE. N.
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203

RECEIVED
MAY 22 1968

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC