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THE CHRISTIAN AND POLITICS
(Sixth in a Series)

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BLACK POWER'S MANY FACES

By Daniel R. Grant

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What should be the attitude of the Christian toward the new term, "black power?" Although the mention of black power immediately calls forth an image of violence and the burning down of cities, it is important to consider the term more calmly and objectively.

Any meaningful answer to the question requires recognition that there is no single accepted definition of black power. Here are just a few of them:

1. **Black Power As the Quest for Self Respect.** For 300 years the American Negro, directly and indirectly, was taught that he was racially inferior to the white man. Much of what has come to be called black power is simply a natural reaction against this long history of being taught that blackness means inferiority. Few can fault the Negro for this quest for self respect for his "black being." Many contend that this new self image must precede any integration of blacks and whites in American society on a genuinely equal basis.

2. **Black Power As the Legitimate Political Strength of Negroes in a Democracy.** Negroes have perfectly proper political interests as Negroes in working for elimination of the last vestiges of racial discrimination. But only since they have begun to vote in large numbers have we seen them flex their political muscles and demonstrate what might be called black power.

This was the dominant force in electing Negro mayors of the cities of Cleveland, Ohio, and Gary, Ind. It has led increasingly to the election of Negro members of state legislatures and city councils as well as other Negro officeholders throughout the South.

Although this could lead to an undesirable racist dead-end, it is difficult to criticize organized Negro political activity so long as they continue to have legitimate interests as Negroes to pursue. Certainly bloc voting is nothing new after decades of white bloc voting.

3. **Black Power As Negro Violence, Organized and Unorganized.** Stokely Carmichael has been quoted as saying that "black power cannot mean the power of the ballot box because the vote has never been and never will be beneficial to the survival of black men in this country." He added that he agreed with Mao Tse-tung that "the vote means nothing unless you've got the gun behind it."

Many Negroes are convinced that this is the only language white people understand. They cite the sudden attention Watts began to receive after its riot, when previous efforts to secure a convenient hospital and a transportation system were repeatedly rebuffed. Yet most Negro leaders still speak of violence as misdirected use of black power "leading our people down a suicidal road."

4. **Black Power As Separatism and a Black National State.** Many black power leaders claim to have given up all hope that the American society, after 300 years of failing to do so, could bring justice to the Negro. It is said that the only alternative is to establish all-black communities and ultimately an all-black nation somewhere within the present boundaries of the United States. This, too, has received sharp criticism from other Negro leaders who call instead for a sense of black togetherness without the "myth of black separatism."

Other variations on the black power theme could be mentioned, including the idea of racial superiority for Negroes. It is sad but true that Negroes have developed some leaders who use demagoguery in racial matters approaches that of some of the classic white supremacists who used to preach white superiority. Fortunately, most of these are no longer a part of the mainstream of southern life. The development of their Negro counterparts is natural and understandable in a historical sense, but still must be branded as just as evil in Negroes as it has been in whites.



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THE CHRISTIAN AND POLITICS
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THE URBAN CRISIS: WHAT IS THE CURE?
By Daniel R. Grant
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We do not lack for proposed remedies for the crisis in American cities. In fact, part of our problem is our tendency to be overwhelmed by the great range and variety of proposals, many of them actually dealing with only one small aspect of the total problem. The Kerner Commission's report is full of many excellent recommendations, but the practical danger is that we may be staggered by its comprehensiveness.

We are much like the little boy who wanted to help the 300-pound woman who slipped and fell on the icy sidewalk. He simply didn't know where to start picking up. The Christian's obligation is not waived because of the difficulty of knowing where to begin, however.

It boils down to the two-fold necessity of changing the inner city and the inner man--- a rebirth for the inner city and rebirth for the inner man.

We should not delude ourselves into thinking that there is some solution for the urban crisis that does not involve massive public and private expenditures for improved housing, jobs, education, recreation, and other important needs of urban living. Nelson Rockefeller, hardly a wild-eyed radical, has asserted that it would cost at least \$150 billion in public and private investment over the next decade to save and rebuild the cities of our nation.

If \$150 billion in ten years seems too great a price to pay, it should be remembered that the urban crisis is also costly. Ignorance, disease, blight, and the other slum conditions of the ghetto are far more costly than we realize. One estimate of the cost of joblessness and underemployment--the loss to the nation from persons not having a productive role in the economy--is \$28 billion per year.

An important part of changing the inner city is an attack on rural problems which add to the explosive pressures in the cities. Another part of the cure is helping "black power" to mature and develop into responsible, effective political action. Still another part is modernizing and improving state and local government, especially so that residents of suburbs and core cities are encouraged by the structure of local government to work together in solving the problems we call the urban crisis.

As important as the foregoing changes are, changing the inner city is not enough. Ultimately, the inner man must be changed, and the only way this can be done is through personal encounter with Christ. When Jesus said, "Ye must be born again," he was referring to an individual person and his relationship to God. Unfortunately, those who stress this the most as being relevant to the urban crisis are often the strongest opponents of any Christian responsibility for meeting economic and social needs in the inner city.

This either-or dichotomy in Christian churches, especially in the South, has been one of the most serious handicaps in mobilizing Christian manpower and resources in the fight against slums, poverty, and racial discrimination.

Similarly, this dichotomy is a deterrent to leading men to Christ. Many young people who come to college with a commitment to win souls to Christ soon learn that experts in social reform tend to look down their noses at this aspect of organized Christianity.

Within the past year or two there have been encouraging signs of shift away from the either-or heresy to the both-and view. Kyle Haselden, editor of Christian Century, speaks of the death of the old type of one-sided social gospel movement because it had no solid theological roots. Billy Graham often speaks of the importance of regenerated Christians making an impact on the social structure of the nation and of a proper balance between evangelism and social concern. And W. A. Criswell, shortly after his election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, stated on a national radio broadcast that Southern Baptists have definitely turned away from racism and segregation.

The whole gospel is the answer for the urban crisis, and it involves a strong commitment to changing both the inner man and the inner city.



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**New Program Gives Hope
To Handicapped Children**

WASHINGTON (BP)--A new program for handicapped children, known as "First Chance," has been approved enthusiastically by Congress. It is now on the President's desk awaiting his signature.

The legislation provides funds for public and private agencies to develop experimental and demonstration programs to meet the unique needs of the pre-school child who is handicapped.

In reporting the bill, the House Education and Labor Committee pointed out that fewer than one-third of the six million handicapped youngsters in America receive special educational services to help them overcome the problems created by their handicaps.

Committee chairman Carl D. Perkins (D., Ky.), in urging quick action on the measure, stressed the necessity for early educational assistance. He told the House that if the handicapped child does not get special help from birth to six years of age his problems are likely to multiply and become irreversible.

Perkins called the bill, which provides only \$1 million to be spent during its first year, "A modest but significant" program. The funds are authorized to be given to both public and private agencies to plan and implement some 75 to 100 model programs in every state in both rural and urban areas.

The "First Chance" programs must be designed to develop successful approaches in assisting the pre-school-aged handicapped child. In turn, these experimental and model programs will offer basic guides for future efforts for a broader ministry to handicapped youngsters, Perkins explained.

After the first year, the legislation calls for expenditures of \$10 and \$12 million over the next two years.

The "First Chance" program has three major purposes: to encourage the development of all facets of the handicapped child's abilities; to involve the parents of the handicapped child in the planning and operation of the projects; and to acquaint the community with both the problems and the potential of the handicapped children.

Parents will be provided with counseling and guidance on how they can effectively respond to the special needs of their handicapped child.

"Few parents are prepared to take care of a child who looks differently, behaves in grossly unacceptable ways or fails to respond even to the sound of a mother's voice," the report stated.

The parents' help will be enlisted as "allies and associates" of the educators who develop the special ministries for the handicapped children.

Rep. Albert H. Quie (Minn.), a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, told the House that the legislation was vital because the problems of handicapped children "will not disappear with wishful thinking."

"The deaf will always have problems in understanding other people. The blind will not develop new eyes. The crippled may learn to walk but not without many lost years. The mentally retarded will always be slow in learning to read.

"These problems will not disappear but they can be softened," Quie continued.

"The deaf can be helped to communicate better, the blind can learn to work and play without ears, the crippled may learn to walk, to play, to read and write without the lost years between hospital, school and home; the mentally retarded can learn new approaches to learning to read which will minimize the difference between him and his more fortunate peers."

The sponsors of the bill pointed out that less than one-half of the nation's school districts have special classes for handicapped children. In the overwhelming number of situations, according to their reports, these programs are not designed for pre-schoolers with handicaps.

September 20, 1968

Baptist Press

Theme Picked For SBC
Meeting In New Orleans

NASHVILLE (BP)--"Christ in Faith and Work" will be the theme for the 1969 Southern Baptist Convention when it meets in New Orleans, June 10-13.

The theme was selected here during a meeting of the Committee on Order of Business, which outlines the program for the convention. Richard Kay, director of the church services division for the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, Fresno, is chairman.

The committee also named Lee Roy Till, minister of music for the First Baptist Church of Dallas where SBC President W. A. Criswell is pastor, as director of music for the New Orleans meeting. Till was also director of music for the 1964 convention in Atlantic City.

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Euting Takes Virginia
College Development Post

(9-20-68)

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--George L. Euting, assistant executive secretary of the Brotherhood Commission, has resigned to become vice president of Bluefield College at Bluefield, Va.

A program director at the Brotherhood Commission for more than four years, Euting will become responsible for promotion and development at the two-year, 500 student Baptist institution. He will establish an office in Richmond about Oct. 15.

"The new position is one of the most challenging of my career," Euting said. "The president, Charles Harmon, is an outstanding administrator with a forward look."

Before his Brotherhood Commission assignment, Euting served as Brotherhood director for Virginia Baptists for eight years.

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Baptist Standard Names
New Editorial Assistant

(9-20-68)

DALLAS (BP)--Larry Jerden, former assistant editor of Baptist Men's Journal, a Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission publication, has joined the editorial staff of the Baptist Standard as editorial assistant.

Jerden, 24, is a graduate of Texas A&M University with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism. He has worked on a weekly newspaper and in the Little Rock bureau of United Press International, and was news writer for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board before joining the Brotherhood Commission.

The new staff member comes from a military family and attended high school at military base schools in Japan. His father is in the Air Force and is nearing retirement, and now lives in Austin, Tex.

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Seminary Names New Assistant
To President, News Director

(9-20-68)

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here has named both a new assistant to the president and its first full-time news director.

Robert D. Meade, pastor of McCarthy Baptist Church in St. Joseph, Mo., is the new assistant to the president, succeeding John Goodwin who resigned to return to the pastorage. Meade is a graduate of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., and Midwestern Seminary.

Timothy J. Fields of Salina, Kan., fills the newly-created position of news director, and will be responsible for news dissemination; associate editor of The Spire, and campus photographer.

A graduate of Kansas State University in journalism, Fields has been photographer and reporter for several Kansas newspapers. He is also enrolled currently as a student in the seminary's master of religious education program.

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