



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, 1350 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, 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

February 5, 1969

**Dirksen Continues Push
For A Prayer Amendment**

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sen. Everett M. Dirksen (R., Ill.) will push again in the 91st Congress for the approval of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States for the right of people, lawfully assembled, to engage in "nondenominational prayer" in public buildings.

Dirksen told a press conference that this is one of his first concerns in the new Congress. He said that he is seeking for early consideration of his proposal by the Senate.

The Dirksen prayer proposal is identical with the one he introduced in the 90th Congress.

Senate hearings were conducted in 1966 on a different prayer amendment by Sen. Dirksen. This first proposal was never acted upon by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The current proposed prayer amendment is now under active consideration by the subcommittee on constitutional amendments of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Sen. Birch Bayh (D., Ind.) is chairman of the subcommittee.

Currently, the subcommittee has scheduled hearings on proposals for reform in procedures for electing a President of the United States. Another priority item for the subcommittee is a proposal to lower the voting age.

After these two matters are considered, the subcommittee may schedule hearings on the Dirksen prayer amendment. Some word on this will be forthcoming probably in March.

The staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, issued a special report on the revised Dirksen proposal in July 1967. Since the current version is identical, the observations of the Baptist staff continue to be pertinent, Carlson said.

"The staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs remains convinced of the adequacy in law of the First Amendment to maintain free religion," the report said in 1967. "This view has not changed," Carlson said as he responded to the new effort for a prayer amendment.

The Dirksen prayer amendment says:

"Nothing contained in this Constitution shall abridge the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer."

The earlier version which was abandoned by Dirksen sought to empower government to have certain authority in school prayers. It said:

"Nothing in this Constitution shall prohibit the authority administering any school... or public building supported...through the expenditure of public funds from providing for or permitting the voluntary participation by students or others in prayer."

The Baptist Joint Committee staff in its report on the new Dirksen amendment said that it could be viewed as "meaningless." It might be argued, the staff pointed out, that the proposal does nothing more than the First Amendment already guarantees.

However, the new wording on lawful assembly, public buildings and nondenominational prayer raises serious questions, the report pointed out.

The staff asked, "Would the phrase, 'in any public building,' possibly erode the present rights in other public places? That is, does the inclusion of one thing mean the exclusion of another? For some legal purposes it does."

On the phrase, "lawfully assembled," the Baptist staff said that the need for it "is not apparent." Then it observed, "Perhaps the phrase is only intended to quiet fears that the proposal might be used as a means to protect an unlawfully assembled group from expulsion from a public building."

The provision for the right to participate in "nondenominational prayer" raises more serious questions for the Baptist Committee staff. It observed:

"The proposed amendment ties the right of persons to 'nondenominational' prayers only. Would this mean that if a group of Baptist students got together at lunch in a public school to pray, the location of their prayer would determine that it had to be 'nondenominational'? That is, does the proposal limit present rights?"

-30-

Jackson Named Consultant
In Church Recreation

(2-5-69)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Neil Jackson of Nashville has been named administration consultant in the church recreation department, Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A native of Cedar Lake, Ind., Jackson has a bachelor of arts in Bible degree from Bob Jones University, Greenville, S. C., and a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Jackson has served as minister of education at the First Baptist Church, New Orleans, and minister of music at Meadowbrook Baptist Church, Fort Worth.

He has also been audiovisual consultant for Broadman Films, for the board.

Jackson will work with local church recreation committees in establishing leadership for local churches.

-30-

Whatley Joins College, Was
Kansas Loan, Foundation Head

(2-5-69)

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--H. H. Whatley, executive secretary-treasurer of the Kansas Southern Baptist Foundation since 1952 and head of the convention's church loan association since 1957, has resigned to accept a position with Friends University here.

Whatley will work in the development office of the Quaker-owned university, serving as a "living endowment" officer.

His resignation was effective April 1. He has served the Kansas convention for 17 years, first assuming responsibility for the foundation in 1952, becoming executive vice president of the loan association when it was created in 1957, and directing the convention's church architecture department beginning in 1960.

He was executive vice president of the convention's Church Loan Association at the time it faced a financial crisis last November when the convention asked the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to take over the loan association's operation to help save it from "a hopeless and insolvent condition."

-30-

Get Involved in Christian
Revolution, Youth Urged

(2-5-69)

By Larry Storer

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--More than 300 college-age youth were urged here to quit complaining about failure by adults to do much about revolutions sweeping the nation, and to get involved in the Christian revolution.

"Youth people, get out of your pious pews and quit blaming the adults in your church of sitting around apathetically when you yourself are guilty of the same thing," declared Ron Willis, pastor of Golden Gate Baptist Church in Oakland, Calif.

-more-

Willis, who has worked for several years with hippies in the Haight-Ashbury area of San Francisco, was one of the major speakers for the ninth annual World Mission Conference at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Theme for the conference was "Mission in a Revolutionary Age." Willis and several other speakers spoke of both the revolutionary gospel of Christianity, and the revolutions that have been sweeping the country.

Willis mused that the sad reason some youth are involved in revolution is the stagnation of the past generation that has been characterized by the love of things and the use of people.

The church, with its fundamental, set program simply will not and is not affecting revolutionary youth, Willis said. "They are dropping out and turning it off, and if the church is going to change this and affect these youth, it will have to offer what revolution is offering.

"Revolution is offering action," Willis said. "It is getting up and doing, it is involvement and direction. But revolution is not something that can be added to Christianity, it is what Christianity is."

The revolution is against physical anguish, for the deliberate and pointed instruction of Jesus Christ was that his followers feed the poor, heal the sick, clothe the naked and visit the imprisoned, Willis added. "He did not tell us to pay a professional Christian to do this for us, he told us to do it."

Another major speaker, Nathan Porter of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, said that the Christian's revolutionary mission is one that is characterized by compassion. "Compassion means being sensitive to the heart of the world and responding to the misery around us," he said. "This in our day is revolutionary."

"This revolutionary mission is one that is aimed at you and men," Porter said. "We are to be a servant and minister to the other guy, just as Christ did when he washed the feet of his disciples."

Porter concluded with the warning that the Christian revolutionary mission will cost the involved and committed their life. It takes courage and a lack of selfishness to give up everything for what God wants us to become and be in the name of Jesus Christ, he said.

A Negro Baptist pastor from the Watts area of Los Angeles told the students, "Segregation is simply not in God's master plan."

Edward V. Hill, pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, asked the students to look around at the beautiful landscape. "Tall trees, short bushes, dark green trees, light green trees, brown trees, and red trees all growing together complement the beauty of the One who created them."

"But when you take men who are a little different, you want to separate them into like groups," Hill observed. "That just is not the way it is done in any other area of life."

Hill asked the assembled students what kind of housing and wage and health laws they would legislate for their "blood brother" if they were governor of the state. "If we are brothers in Christ, why would you legislate laws any differently for us?" he asked.

As an example, Hill told of a chartered plan trip to the Holy Land by a group of Negro and Southern Baptists. When the plane took off, the Negroes sat on one side and the Southern Baptists on the other. This seating arrangement over-balanced the plane, and the pilot had to re-arrange the seating. The people realized, Hill said, that their attitudes almost cost them their lives.

"Could it be that this racial crisis (in America) and the war in Vietnam is God shaking America as he did that plane?" Hill asked. "Will we wake up to our folly before it is too late?"

The students interrupted Hill five times with applause, and gave him a standing ovation when he completed his message.

The closing address was brought by Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, who issued a challenge for the youth to get involved at home and around the world.

"The great physical needs and hunger of the peoples of the world...can be alleviated to an extent by people like yourselves, caring enough to get involved and become committed," Cauthen said.

During a dramatic moment at the conference, a popular song by Dion entitled "Abraham, Martin and John" was played while slides depicting the life of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy were flashed before the audience. At the conclusion of the song while the auditorium was in total darkness, a gun shot broke the silence.

Much of the three-day meeting was devoted to seminar sessions dealing with the questions of urban revolution, human rights revolution, moral revolution, revolution in ministry, communications revolution, revolution of nationalism, revolution in interdenominational relations, and youth revolution.



BAPTIST PRESS

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

RECEIVED
FEB 6 1989
HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

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