



**BAPTIST PRESS**

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March 24, 1969

**Maryland Sells College Land,  
Reaffirms Planned City Policy**

LUTHERVILLE, Md. (BP)--The State Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland here commended the sale of property for the proposed Maryland Baptist College campus, and reaffirmed its policy on participation in religious development of the planned city in Columbia.

The property for the college in Walkersville, Md., was sold to four individuals in nearby Frederick, Md., for the sum of about \$500,000. The individuals will use the land for housing development.

The board heard a report from its executive committee on the sale of the property, which enabled the convention to pay off most of a note to the Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Co., in Baltimore. It is expected that an additional \$28,000 to \$30,000 will be required by Jan. 1, 1970 to liquidate the principal and interest, the committee reported.

The board officially commended convention executive secretary Roy Gresham for his work in the sale of the property.

Liveliest action of the board meeting was prompted by an inquiry from Bethel Baptist Church in Ellicott City, Md., concerning the board's policy for participating in religious development of the planned city of Columbia between Baltimore and Washington, D. C.

The Bethel Baptist Church challenged the board's decision to participate in the Inter-Faith Planning Council and work through the Religious Facilities Corp., of the planned city in Columbia.

Instead, the church adopted a resolution asking other churches in Maryland to join them "in establishing a church or churches in the new city of Columbia, Md."

Under the current policy of the board, Maryland Baptists would lease facilities through the Columbia Religious Facilities Corp., on a cooperative basis with other denominations.

At the board meeting, James DiVirgilio, a member of the Bethel Baptist Church, argued that land could be purchased apart from entering into an agreement on the shared facilities approach. He called for a distinctive Baptist witness, unencumbered by the use of facilities by other groups.

The chairman of the board's committee on Columbia religious life, W. Barry Garrett, contended that Southern Baptists should be willing to make special approaches because "Columbia is a different city...a city not of our own making, a situation not of our own choosing, but a planned city in which we are seeking ways to make our Southern Baptist witness effective.

"This arrangement means we can go into Columbia, full scale ahead, with the full resources of our money dedicated to programming and reaching people, without spending these thousands and thousands of dollars for land and facilities. We can invest our funds in people and programs," He said.

Adding that the integrity and honor of the Southern Baptist witness is at stake, Garrett said, "We have worked with them, we have pledged our honor. You cannot, you cannot, on your sacred honor, go back on your word tonight," he stated.

After discussion by several other board members, the board voted to reaffirm its previous policy, with the understanding that the board could not tell any church what it could or could not do.

The board received as information the statement from the Bethel Baptist Church understanding that the church states what it intends to do and its invitation for other churches to join it in the effort.

In other actions, the board dedicated a new piano for the state convention's chapel, authorized salary increases for convention secretarial employees, and authorized letters to all members of the state legislature opposing legislation which provides state tax money for parochial school education.

The board also authorized Gresham to write to President Richard M. Nixon opposing the appointment of a special representative from the White House to the Vatican, and endorsing recent statements on this subject by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

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Annuity Board Promotes  
Fox; Adds New Director

(3-24-69)

DALLAS (BP)--The development division of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board here will be enlarged April 1, with the promotion of a long-time employe and the addition of a new one.

Baynard F. Fox will assume new duties as director of promotion, and Ransome Swords will join the Annuity Board as director of insurance services, according to R. Alton Reed, the board's executive secretary.

Reed said the changes are being made to improve the services and promotional work of the retirement and insurance programs.

Fox has been employed by the Annuity Board for 23 years, 18 of them as a field representative working directly with ministers, churches and agencies. Five years ago, he set up the life, health and group insurance programs which the Annuity Board offers.

He will work directly with Floyd B. Chaffin, associate secretary in charge of development (primarily in the churches), and will promote and enlist new members in the Southern Baptist Protection Program, the retirement program the board administers for ministers and lay employes.

Reed said the insurance services which Swords will direct was formerly known as the life and health department. It is being shifted to the development division under the supervision of L. Taylor Daniel, associate secretary in charge of agency programs.

Swords will continue the insurance programs now being offered and will emphasize improving coverage at minimum costs. He has an extensive background in insurance. For almost 12 years, he directed the insurance program for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

Reed said Annuity Board trustees and staff are in a long range study of the board's programs and organization which may result in more changes in the future.

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Home Missions Staffer  
Hurt In Auto Accident

(3-24-69)

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)--Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staffer Bill Updike was injured in a four-car collision here that also resulted in the death of a 58-year-old woman.

Apparently the woman's car jumped a median and collided head-on with a rent-a-car being driven by Updike. Two other cars traveling behind Updike on the freeway piled into the wreckage.

The woman was killed. Updike suffered a broken shoulder, a cracked bone in the lower part of his right leg and lacerations.

Updike, an associate in the division of church loans, had just arrive in Riverside to consult with a number of newer congregations in that area that had applied for a building or site loan from the Home Mission Board.

He was expected to be in the hospital for about five days and away from his job for about three weeks, according to church loans director Robert H. Kilgore of Atlanta.

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Pari-Mutuel Gambling Bill  
Hit By Tennessee Baptists

NASHVILLE (BP)--An editorial in the Baptist and Reflector, weekly publication of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and a resolution adopted by the public affairs committee of the Nashville Baptist Association, opposed legislation which would legalize pari-mutuel gambling in Tennessee.

The front page editorial in the Baptist and Reflector urged 850,000 Baptists in Tennessee "to go to our representatives and express strong disapproval of the proposal, and voice our earnest desire that it be defeated--resoundingly!"

The resolution adopted by the Nashville Baptist Association public affairs committee listed arguments against legalized gambling and urged Baptist churches in the state to institute educational programs on the harm of gambling. "Furthermore, we would strongly discourage any move of the General Assembly to bring pari-mutuel gambling to Tennessee," the resolution added.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Jack Comer and Rep. Borter Booker, both of Knoxville, Tenn., in the state legislature, prompted the editorial and resolution.

The proposed bill, which would create a state racing commission and permit the lawful establishment of race tracks, has cleared the House State and Local Government Committee, and is before the House Calendar Committee in the state legislature awaiting scheduling for House consideration.

The preamble to the bill declares that horse, dog and harness racing with established pari-mutuel wagering pools "is a bona fide business found to be in the best interest of the citizens of the state."

The editorial in the Baptist and Reflector, by Editor James A. Lester, declared that "Tennessee does not now or at anytime in the future need any type of pari-mutuel betting system.

"It is time," added the editorial, "for Tennessee Baptist churches and associations to petition, by signature, in order that these petitions might be influential. It is time, in our judgment, for stands to be taken by churches in conference, and these stands relayed through appropriate channels to members of the General Assembly."

The Nashville Baptist Association committee statement argued that gambling violates Biblical principles, that gambling contributes to crime, that gambling disrupts the economy, and that gambling hurts innocent persons.

"Profits from gambling go to support the many interests of America's underworld," said the resolution. "Narcotic addiction, prostitution, murder, intimidation, and bribery go hand in hand with gambling."

The resolution encouraged Baptist churches to educate people to the effect that (1) you cannot get something for nothing, (2) that in gambling, somebody always gets hurt, (3) that individuals should refuse to participate personally in even small or occasional gambling ventures, and (4) that gambling is the life blood of organized crime, and that any move to legalize gambling is an open invitation to organized crime.

The resolution also encouraged churches to provide programs for seeking out and helping the compulsive gambler.

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Illinois Governor Given  
Special Bible in Crusade

(3-24-69)

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--Two Negro and three white ministers, representing the Baptists of Illinois, presented to Illinois Gov. Richard Ogilvie a special edition of the 'Good News for Modern Man' New Testament.

The presentation was made by Ralph Hopkins, pastor of the St. Andrews Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, E. V. Jones, pastor of the 1st Community Baptist Church in Chicago, and James H. Smith, James A. Ponder, and Robert J. Hastings of the Illinois Baptist State Association in Carbondale.

The Bible, bound in red with the governor's name imprinted in gold, was one of 100 provided by the American Bible Society for presentation to key government figures throughout the nation during the Crusade of the Americas.

Ponder and Hopkins explained to the governor the nature of the Crusade, which is listed as one of the official events of the Sesquicentennial Year in Illinois. Ogilvie, a Presbyterian, expressed appreciation for the contribution of Baptists in Illinois.

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