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**Deal With Generation Gap,
Baptist Churches Urged**

CHICAGO (BP)--Southern Baptists must deal honestly with the problem of the generation gap instead of just asking, "What's the matter with kids today?", a Southern Baptist conference on "The Church's Mission in the National Crisis" was told here.

A half dozen speakers during the three-day conference at the University of Chicago, site of recent student uprisings, touched on the problem, and two students and a Baptist pastor offered solutions to it.

"Churches which are at least attempting to involve their people in social concerns and social action are more likely to communicate with and involve the thinking young," said Jack Noffsinger, pastor of Knollwood Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N. C.

Noffsinger said that if the church only talks and never does anything about the real problems of injustice and racial oppression, then the thinking young become "church drop-outs." He added that this factor may account for a large exodus of many young people from Baptist ranks to other denominations which express more social concern.

"Frankly," he said, "I doubt seriously if many Baptist churches are much concerned about bridging this gap. Noffsinger added that little has been done to reach young church "drop-outs", and that the vast majority of churches are probably going their way as they have for several generations believing that it is the young who should change, not the church.

He gave, however, a half-dozen examples or more of churches that are creatively seeking solutions to the generation gap, saying one church has a coffee house with dancing as a part of the program because it is a natural part of the life of the teenagers.

When the deacons made the decision, every one of them said they allowed their sons and daughters to dance at school, and they were not going to be hypocrites and say they could not dance at the coffee house.

In response, youth for the first time said "we feel the church is seeking to contact us where we are," Noffsinger said.

"Those who may attempt this approach should be prepared to pick up scores of beer cans from the church parking lot," he added. "These cans may well be saying, 'Do you really want us young ones as we are or is this place only for the dedicated?' Stick with it," Noffsinger said, "and you may well see those cans disappear."

In a discussion period, Noffsinger said that there had been some interracial dating at the coffee house, and that some opposition had been prompted. But on a biblical basis, "it's difficult to find passages opposing the relation of a Child of God to a Child of God," he said.

Following Noffsinger's major address, two students gave their own views on the generation gap. Both David Meriwether, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Miss Janice Glass of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla., said they agreed with Noffsinger and were reacting with him, not to him.

Miss Glass said there were four churches in her hometown, and not one of them met her need for spiritual renewal.

Saying that the church is a body of believers who gather for worship and spiritual renewal so they can go out into the world as the church after they have been renewed, Miss Glass quipped, "I do not feel I am coming and worshipping with this body of believers, and I do not feel this church is going out after they are not being renewed."

She added that she receives her own spiritual renewal at an unusual late night mass on Wednesdays at a Catholic church where youth sit around on the floor, sing relevant songs to guitar, and discuss with complete honesty and candor the critical issues of the Christian life.

Miss Glass said, however, that she is still actively involved in her own church, and is serving as a Girl's Auxiliary worker because she wants other young girls to have the depth of Christian experience she has had, and not have to wait as long for it as she did.

In an earlier address, Daniel R. Grant, professor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, said that young people make a strategic mistake when they leave the church to go "where the action is", for change will never come in the church unless they stay within the structure of the church and seek change from within.

Gibson Winter, professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School, said that the generation gap was complicated by rejection by youth of the technological society that adults have created.

Winter said that student demonstrations often express a cry of protest against the sweep of technology in society, and the control adults have over this society.

He added that it appeared quite obvious during the Chicago demonstrations during the Democratic National Convention that some parents identified with the rioting police, feeling the police should "get those young people into line."

Winter also said that some youth show their protest against the older generation simply by walking away from home and never returning. "There is no more cruel thing they could do to their parents," said Winter.

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Black Leader Tells Baptists
They Must Deal With Racism

(4-3-69)

CHICAGO (BP)--Jesse Jackson of Chicago, 27-year-old black leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Operation Breadbasket, implored 250 Southern Baptist leaders here to deal with the problem of racism in the church.

"You've got to deal with it (racism). I can't anymore," said Jackson, who was with Martin Luther King Jr., when he was shot in Memphis one year ago that week. "I'm liable to get shot," Jackson added.

Speaking to a Southern Baptist conference on "The Church's Mission in the National Crisis," Jackson called racism a sickness that is plaguing the nation.

"It is an idolatry, a worship of pink skin, loving it and protecting it," he said. "It is a sick belief that people who are white are congenitally superior to black people, and that black people are congenitally inferior.

"Racism is an attempt to kill the black people," he said. "It kills black people by locking them out of respect, and making them feel inferior, and killing their spirit.

"You've got a crisis in your church," he said. "Some of you are going to have to deal with that (racism) at the Judgment Bar." Later he quipped that "some of you have planes to catch, but there's a judgment day coming."

Jackson, a Baptist preacher who uses a semi-worship service at the Mount Pisgah Baptist Church here as a major vehicle in his work with Operation Breadbasket, drew a standing ovation from the predominately white Baptist group following his sermon.

He started out by saying, "I know you cats. I wish I could have joined one of your Southern Baptist churches back in South Carolina. But I couldn't have even walked in the door if I weren't a janitor or if I didn't want to get kicked out and maybe arrested."

Now most black people don't want to be part of a white church, but the white church must rid itself of the sickness of racism, he added.

He urged Baptists to follow the example of Jesus. "He got kicked out of the traditional church because he went where he was needed, to minister to the outcasts."

If Jesus the Christ came to town today, Jackson added, he would not go to the traditional white church, but would go to the ghetto, to the jails, and seek out the downtrodden and outcast. "And where would you be if Jesus came today?" he asked.

He said that Jesus hung around the corner with prostitutes and outcasts and was a wine-maker, but he fought for justice. "Some of you are so clean that you are nasty," he added.

Saying society is sick, the outspoken young minister declared that there is corruption in the land, and God is not pleased.

He said there were 400 million people starving in this nation, while the government pays thousands of farmers not to plant their crops, "while worms are eating up the bellies of black people."

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He warned that too many white churches are implying that the white American way of life and Christianity are the same thing, adding that the churches "allow the flag to fly so much higher than the cross."

Jackson claimed that the nation was founded on a history of racism by corrupt crooks that passed laws saying Black people were only three-fifths human. "Luther and Calvin debated whether Black men had a soul and were even worth saving," he added.

He asked if Baptists are really following Jesus the Christ of Nazereth, or Jesus of white America. "The fact is," he answered, "you are not really following him, you are just admiring him. You're making a living out of hustling the gospel."

On a deeper level, Jackson compared Christianity to the philosophy of Socrates, saying that in Christianity, all of us operate on grace, and all people are equal in the sight of God. "Justice begins at the level of potentiality, for at the creative core of all men is God."

Christ wants us to be "everybody's brother and nobody's master, and nobody's slave," he said.

"I just want to be a servant in His Kingdom, and a servant of peace and justice," he added. "I want to love everybody. The question is, do I have the capacity to love you?"

Jackson, who was about 30 minutes late, apologized to the group, saying it was the worst of all seasons for him. "It is the week of the assassination and crucifixion of Dr. King, and the week of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ," he said.

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Mercer Told To Explain Grant Action To Convention

(4-3-69)

TOCCOA, Ga. (BP)--Trustees of Mercer University have been mildly chided for voting to seek three federal construction grants, and were advised to "be prepared to report" to the Georgia Baptist Convention in November on the historic action.

The decisions on the Mercer federal grants issue were made by the Georgia Baptist Convention Executive Committee, in session at the Georgia Baptist Assembly here.

Mercer trustees had voted on Feb. 7 to seek three federal grants, totalling \$570,000, to aid in construction of an infirmary, a fine arts auditorium and a swimming pool.

The action was taken despite convention votes in 1965, 1966 and 1968 forbidding Georgia Baptist institutions from seeking or accepting government tax monies.

In the 1965 and 1966 votes, the anti-federal-money votes were a direct "no" to Mercer trustees who were seeking federal loans for a science center. The 1968 vote prohibited Georgia Baptist educational institutions from getting government tax monies of any sort.

The Executive Committee vote was made in the form of a lengthy "position paper" and recommendations from the convention's administration committee, which had been reviewing the matter since the Mercer action.

The paper traced the history of recent convention votes on tax funds; reviewed constitutional provisions about control of denominational institutions; and reaffirmed previous statements about Mercer's rights and responsibilities in the Georgia Baptist Convention family.

A key phrase in the review said: "Should the convention take action which would interfere in the management of Mercer University, it would endanger the accreditation of the university, and perhaps would make continued accreditation more difficult for the other institutions supported by the Georgia Baptist Convention."

Also reviewed was a clause in the Convention Constitution which says "...that nothing in this article shall be construed as giving the Executive Committee authority over any matters already committed by the convention to any of its boards of trustees, unless such boards decline to act."

Turning to "conclusions," the statement said: "The circumstances in which Georgia Baptists find themselves require patience, thoughtful consideration, prayer and restraint on the part of all responsible persons, boards and committees."

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The rebuke came in the "conclusion" which said: "The action of the board of trustees of Mercer University in voting to accept grants in light of the convention's action in opposition to receiving such grants is not considered to be in the best interests of the fellowship, interests and total program of the work of the Georgia Baptist Convention."

The final recommendation stated that "since the board of trustees of Mercer University is responsible to the Georgia Baptist Convention for its stewardship of the university, it is recommended that the board be prepared to report to the convention at its annual meeting in November, 1969, concerning actions taken in making application for grants from agencies of the United States Government, and that the committee on order of business be requested to make provision for adequate time on the convention program for this order."

The Georgia Baptist Convention meets at Atlanta's Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, Nov. 10-12.

The entire administration committee statement and recommendations on Mercer were adopted unanimously without debate.

In other actions, the Georgia Baptist Executive Committee authorized Tift College to secure a franchise for a motel on a federal highway adjacent to the campus of the Baptist girls' school at Forsyth, Ga.

President Carey T. Vinzant of Tift explained that the motel would pay taxes as would any other commercial venture, and would be financed through a private or commercial lending agency.

Thomas G. Renfro, president of Norman College in Norman Park, Ga., reported that the school has raised just \$42,000 since the convention last November gave them approval for crash fund-raising campaigns to stave off possible bankruptcy.

He said Norman trustees meet April 11 and a decision on continuation of the South Georgia Baptist school beyond June 1 will likely be made at that meeting.

The Executive Committee gave 15 per cent increases in base salary of state mission employees, with another 15 per cent increase possible next year.

A. Judson Burrell, pastor of Rose Hill Baptist Church in Columbus, Ga., was elected secretary of stewardship promotion, effective June 1. He will also assume Annuity Board duties in Georgia when Arthur Hinson retires Dec. 31, 1969.

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Ghetto Pastor Says Christ
At Work in Black Movement

(4-3-69)

CHICAGO (BP)--The pastor of First Presbyterian Church in the midst of the South Side ghetto here told Southern Baptist leaders that Christ is at work today in the movement toward full freedom for Black Americans.

John Fry, who has gained national publicity for his involvement in the community surrounding the church, said that because his church has sought to help the downtrodden, it has begun to suffer the indignities that are heaped upon outcasts.

The indignities have come in the form of notoriety, and extremely grave and ridiculous charges, said Fry, who was called before the McClellan Senate investigating committee last year because of a War on Poverty grant going to aid the Blackstone Rangers gang in South Chicago.

When asked in a discussion period if he and the church had confronted Mayor Richard Daley and the Chicago power structure on the issue, Fry said, "We are hoping to knock off Mayor Daley in 1971, and we are hoping to do that by enlisting 500,000 black votes he used to get.

He said he was convinced that the only way to help the oppressed people was through political action "from the bottom up."

"There you are, held face down in the mud with a boot on the back of your neck," he said in describing the plight of the poor. "The only way to stand up is to get that boot off your neck."

Fry explained that his church was deeply involved in political action from the precinct level up, and even had the name of one candidate spread across the bell tower of the church recently. "It is impossible to take political action without taking sides," he said.

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He told the 250 Baptist leaders attending the conference, which moved from the nearby University of Chicago campus by bus to the Presbyterian church, that First Presbyterian was trying to play the role of the prophet by speaking in behalf of those so lowly that they cannot be heard with justice.

Saying Christ is concerned with the poor and oppressed, Fry countered that "Christ surely is not a part of the contemporary oppressive system or among the club swingers or city politicians who allow clubs to be swung, but Christ is among those upon whom clubs are swung."

He said his church operates on the presupposition that love without justice is not really love, and that justice without love is only a caricature of justice and no real justice at all.

"A Church which holds love in position of norm will overflow, not in an emotional way, but in its resources offered to the outcasts," Fry said. "The great issues of public justice will then emerge and the church will find itself prosecuting matters of public justice on behalf of the outcasts."

Fry criticized the Billy Graham type of evangelism that, he said, is aimed at an audience that thinks only in terms of the pre-1954 Supreme Court ruling, but added "there is a big market for that kind of stuff, and what they are really selling is love without justice."

When asked about his own church's role in evangelism, Fry replied that the church seeks to proclaim the word in preaching and action. "Keeping the Word alive is the business of the speaker of the Word, and the work of the Spirit," he said, adding he did not believe the Word would stand or fall on whether he was in the pulpit of his successor, or his predecessors.

Fry explained his church's involvement with the Blackstone Rangers saying that the Rangers have brought peace and order to the community.

He said the Rangers organized in 1960 because they couldn't get off their block alone without being mugged or beaten. They went both South and North in a group and talked to neighboring gangs. They suggested that all merge into one gang and thus have a much larger territory where they could safely go.

As their power grew, some people in the community felt threatened by what the Rangers could do with their power, and the police sought to break up the Rangers so they would not be threatening, Fry added.

The church threw its doors open to the Rangers in 1965 and said to them, "here are our rules. You have your leaders, you enforce them. Blackstone Rangers do their stuff, First Church does its stuff," Fry said.

Every week, nearly 5,000 people used the facilities of the church, he added. They used the sanctuary as a place for a "nation meeting." We did this because, Fry said, "here was an enormously powerful organization that was taking itself seriously, taking its blackness seriously, and it had no place to meet. That's the least we could do.

"The church made an association with the Rangers to provide options they did not have so they would not resort to violence," Fry added. "I might say in modesty that we have succeeded sensationally."

He explained that they now have political, social and economic options they did not have before 1965, and they have the finest law firm in town and wealthy men who give them support "because they have been a very impressive young group."

The Blackstone Rangers have rejected the options the white power structure have given them: "to submit and go our way, or die," Fry said.

"Baby, we are not going to submit and we are not going to die," Fry said in interpreting what the Rangers are saying. "We're going to go our own black way and you are not going to box us in," he continued.

About half of the 250 Baptist leaders attending the session walked back to the University of Chicago Center for Continuing Education, taking a close look at the ghetto area. The words, "Blackstone Rangers Territory" were scrawled on many of the walls.

At one point during the walk, police sirens wailed and Negro children ran after the squad car. One small girl, carrying a stick, yelled to a friend, "What happened." The boy replied, "They got Harry."



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