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July 10, 1969

North American Baptist
Leader Directory Ready

WASHINGTON (BP)--A directory listing top leadership of nine nation-wide Baptist bodies in North America has been produced by the North American Baptist Fellowship.

The directory lists Baptist leaders who direct 16 areas of work for the nine conventions which are participants in the North American Fellowship, a committee of the Baptist World Alliance.

Purpose of the directory is to provide a listing of names of person assigned to specific areas of work so "that they might exchange information concerning their program and plans."

The directory list Baptist leaders who work with Baptist laymen, Bible colleges, and institutions, Christian social service, convention executives, editors, foreign missions, higher education historical agencies, home missions, ministers fellowships, retirement agencies, stewardship and finance, Sunday School or Christian education, theological seminaries, Women's Missionary Unions, and youth work.

The North American Baptist Fellowship Committee, in a resolution adopted previously, requested the secretary of the fellowship, Frank Woyke, of the Baptist World Alliance staff here, to compile the directory.

Woyke said in the introduction to the directory that because the various member groups of the fellowship differ widely in their organization structures, it was necessary to determine an arbitrary list of categories that does not contain all of the categories of leaders of the nine Baptist groups. Baptist groups with leaders listed in the directory include the American Baptist Convention, the Baptist Federation of Canada, the General Association of General Baptists, the National Baptist Convention of America, the National Baptist Convention of Mexico, the North American Baptist General Conference, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Church Leaders Take "Hardline"
Position on Death Penalty

7/10/69

NASHVILLE (BP)--Many pastors and teachers of Sunday School in Southern Baptist churches approve of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder according to the latest Viewpolls.

Pastors in the Baptist Viewpoll panel, selected to be representative of all Southern Baptist pasors, recorded 65.2 percent approval of the death penalty. This percentage is higher than the total for Sunday School teachers and considerably higher than the general public approval recorded by the Gallup Poll one month prior to the Baptist VIEWpoll survey. However, the percentage for pastors in more comparable to a 60 percent approval on the part of male Americans in the Gallup study.

Along with five other current questions, panel members were asked, "Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?"

"Yes" was the opinion of 65.2 percent of the pastors and 58.8 percent of the Sunday School teachers.

"No" was expressed by 29.2 percent of the pastors and 34.5 percent of the Sunday School teachers.

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"No opinion" was the choice of 5.2 percent of the pastors and 5.8 percent of the Sunday School teachers.

In the Gallup Poll's 1969 survey of this item, 51 percent of the adult general public expressed approval of the death penalty, while 40 percent disapproved of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder and 9 percent indicated "No Opinion."

In a 1953 Gallup Poll, level of approval stood at 68 percent, then dropped regularly to a level of 42 percent in 1966, and is now on the upswing. The recent rise is consistent with, and perhaps associated with, the increase in unrest, riots, and general disregard for laws in the country.

It may be somewhat surprising that the religious background of these active church leaders does not result in a softer position concerning the death penalty. Even after allowance for differing viewpoints associated with sex, both pastors and Sunday School teachers are significantly stronger in their approval of the death penalty than the general public. This does not necessarily mean that the stronger "hardline" position is due to religious background. It does raise interesting questions.

The findings are based upon a 92 percent response by the 600 Baptist VIEWpoll panel members.

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Greenfield Sees "Generation Gap"
As Youth's Search For Identity

7/10/69

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--"American society of the 60's has been experiencing neither a 'teenage tyranny' nor a massive 'generation gap,'" Guy Greenfield told Southern Baptist young people and their church leaders at Glorieta Baptist Assembly.

Speaking to the second week's sessions of "Confrontation '69," a young people's Sunday School leadership conference, the associate professor of sociology at Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex., said that Americans have been observing the development of a unique youth subculture. Young People are trying to discover their identity in the midst of changing standards, goals, and guidelines," Greenfield said.

He characterized youth in search for new guidelines as being irreverent toward sacred things of the past. This irreverence is felt by religion, parents and nationalism.

Today's young generation is humanistic, stressing the humanity of Jesus rather than seeing only the deity that former generations have emphasized. Young people reject war and the structure of society as it tends to dehumanize people.

"They deal with religious issues in a secular fashion, not committing themselves to religious organizations," Greenfield said. "They are not 'churchy' as are their parents, but they seriously seek for answers to ultimate questions.

"Today's youth refuses to be the victim of the growing impersonalness and competitiveness of a computerized world. He refuses to be simply a Social Security number, a Zip code number, an auto license tag number, a credit card number or just a number on a payroll sheet. He wants to be a real person, but he must find out for himself what that means.

"The modern leader and teacher of youth in the church is challenged as never before to discover how to relate the Biblical revelation of God in Jesus Christ to this unique search for identity by today's youth," Greenfield said. "They need to be led to discover the answer to their basic question, 'Who am I?' in the context of a meaningful Christian experience."

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