



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 18, 1970

Baptist Layman Urges End
To South African Discrimination

by Charles M. Bunce

ST. LOUIS (BP)--A Southern Baptist layman just returned from a fact-finding tour of South Africa has urged American churches to invite South African clergymen to the United States because he believes American churchmen can be instrumental in encouraging the South Africans to change their attitude toward racial problems.

Lisle H. Ramsey, a member of Lanley Road Baptist Church here and former president of Religious Heritage of America, made the proposal at the end of a 29-day personally financed fact-finding tour of South Africa.

He and his son, Max, a senior in Clayton High School here, studied racial tensions in South Africa, and came to the conclusion that it would help South African clergymen to come to America and see what has been done in many areas to eliminate racial discrimination.

The Baptist layman, president of Lisle M. Ramsey Portraits, a photographic franchise operation, suggested that the National Council of Churches sponsor an exchange tour for South African clergymen.

He also suggested that Americans could profit from a study of South Africa's complex racial problems, especially the matter of housing for 15 million Bantu tribesmen.

"You have to see the Bantus to understand the monumental task involved in bringing them into the twentieth century," Ramsey said. "I doubt if Americans can understand the tribal customs and life where wives are bought in exchange for cows and large families are considered the greatest of all blessings."

A group of Southern Baptists who visited South Africa several years ago created much good will among the Baptists of that nation, Ramsey said.

"That visit probably helped sow some of the seeds that are bringing about changes in South Africa today."

The group to which Ramsey referred was in South Africa for an evangelistic campaign led by Southern Baptist ministers in 1967. The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board first planned to sponsor the crusade, but cancelled its participation when Negro evangelists were not given equal treatment. About 30 Southern Baptist ministers went on the crusade anyway.

There are no Southern Baptist missionaries in South Africa. Baptists in that country are organized under the Baptist Union of South Africa.

Ramsey said that generally South Africa is still out of step with most of the rest of the world in its discriminatory practices, but the leaders in that country are changing their attitudes.

"Racial discrimination in South Africa is slowly waning. While it may not be diminishing at a rate people in other areas might wish, it is occurring faster than conservative politicians and most citizens anticipated."

The father and son left New York January 22, and returned to St. Louis February 13.

While in South Africa, they met with government officials, business, professional and church leaders. They also made a brief visit to Nigeria, to observe conditions there.

It was the third visit to Africa for Ramsey, and the second for his son. The father attended the eighty-fifth birthday celebration for Dr. Albert Schweitzer in 1960. He visited the famed missionary doctor again in 1963, and was accompanied by his son.

Wherever they went in South Africa, they heard pleas for "understanding our problems," Ramsey said.

"I replied that South Africans can expect Americans to understand their social challenges if they welcome visitors of all colors and creeds with the same courtesy, friendliness and hospitality we received," he said.

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His response was a shock to some people, but not to as many as he had expected, Ramsey said.

"Most of the people with whom we talked are expecting change."

He would encourage Americans to learn more about South Africa and develop an understanding of its problems without compromising on the issue that "discrimination is degrading and an insult to human dignity," Ramsey said.

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Baptist Colleges Report More
Christian Service Volunteers

2/18/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Baptist students volunteering for Christian service are seeking training from Baptist colleges more often than from non-Baptist institutions, according to a recent survey.

Figures released by the program of vocational guidance of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board indicate that of 174 schools responding to a survey for the 1969-70 school year, the 33 Baptist schools included have approximately four-fifths of the reported volunteers.

Survey forms were mailed to 41 Baptist colleges and 263 non-Baptist colleges. Responses from non-Baptist institutions were prepared by directors of Baptist Student Unions on each of the campuses.

Of the total students reported as volunteers, 1,544 are classified in pastoral ministry, 215 in religious education, 411 in church music, 271 in home and foreign missions and 325 in miscellaneous church vocations.

Students from Baptist colleges numbered 1,289 preparing for pastoral ministry, 154 for religious education, 312 for church music, 213 for home and foreign missions and 229 for miscellaneous church vocations.

Non-Baptist schools reported 255 students studying for pastoral ministry, 61 for religious education, 99 for church music, 53 for home and foreign missions and 96 for miscellaneous church vocations.

William P. Clemmons, director of the board's program of vocational guidance, said, "An indication that 2,766 Baptist college youth are still preparing for a ministry in the church is encouraging. This means that for this group both the church and church vocations are still relevant means of ministry in today's world," Clemmons said.

"Those who are responsible for guiding these youth, however, must give them the tools that will be relevant for a church that needs renewing in its mission and ministry in society, and will continue to be adequate for the demands of the 70's," he said.

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Godwin Named Youth
Sunday School Editor

2/18/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Johnnie Godwin, pastor of Hewitt Baptist Church, Hewitt, Tex., has been named editor of uniform lesson materials in the youth section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday School department, effective Feb. 18.

Godwin, a native of Texas, is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, and holds a bachelor of divinity and master of divinity degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

He formerly served as pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Midland, Tex., and Cayuga (Tex.) Baptist Church and as minister of visitation of First Baptist Church, Midland.

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Assemblies Open
During Off-Season

2/18/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, Ridgecrest, N.C., and Glorieta Baptist Assembly, Glorieta, N.M., both owned and operated by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, have opened their facilities for off-season use by Southern Baptist groups.

"The assemblies have been used primarily during the twelve weeks of summer. But with heated facilities, we are now able to make facilities available year around for religious programs," Hubert Smothers, director of the service division, Sunday School Board, said.

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Interested persons may contact Smothers; Mark Short, manager, Glorieta Baptist Assembly; or Ken McAnear, manager, Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly for information.

"Glorieta can accommodate up to 1,000 persons weekly during the off-season, while Ridgecrest has a weekly capacity of 1,500."

"The facilities can be used for Baptist student conventions, church retreats, mission conferences, drama festivals, choir festivals, or any agency program," Smothers said.

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C O R R E C T I O N

On BP story mailed 2/17/70 headlined, "SBC Executive Committee Proposes Hospital Divesture," graph 6 line 1 should read: Cooper said, however, that only about \$1½ million of the hospital's \$50 million assets in 1970, etc. (insert figure \$50 before word "million.")
Thanks

--Baptist Press



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FEB 25 1970

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

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