



BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1330 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-1631
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Acting Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

March 10, 1970

**Catholic Priest To Lead
Baptist Renewal Emphasis**

BIRMINGHAM (BP)--A Roman Catholic priest has been invited to preach for a spiritual renewal emphasis at Vestavia Hills Baptist Church here.

It is believed to be the first time that a Catholic priest has been asked to lead such a series of meetings at a Southern Baptist church.

Duane Stenzel, a Franciscan priest who leads renewal work with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville, will preach both worship services at the Vestavia Hills Baptist Church here (March 15), and will lead renewal discussions with groups at the church.

The pastor of the Birmingham church, Otis Brooks, said the idea of inviting Stenzel came when he and several church laymen attended a renewal seminar at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, last fall.

It was at this seminar that Brooks, the church's chairman of deacons, Training Union director and Brotherhood president met Stenzel.

"We were very impressed by Father Stenzel," said Brooks. "We realized we needed to bring back the spirit of the conference and decided to invite him to our church."

The three laymen took the matter to the church's deacons, who endorsed it. Then the congregation, in a business session, voted to extend the invitation.

In the Louisville archdiocese, Stenzel is a key leader in a Catholic lay renewal movement called "Cursillo," (Spanish for little course). During a Cursillo a group of 35 or 40 persons will gather for a 48-hour period to study the Bible together, pray and share personal accounts of experiences with Christ.

"This experience is basically an encounter with Christ as a group as well as individually," said Brooks.

At Vestavia Hills, Stenzel will meet with men of the church on Saturday night, preach Sunday and then meet with the church women Monday morning.

Friends of members of Vestavia Hills have been asking why the church would invite a Roman Catholic priest to lead a spiritual renewal emphasis.

"The Catholic Church has been pretty much an institutional church," explained Brooks. "Father Stenzel expressed in such a vital way the need of a personal experience with Christ for religion to be transforming," he said.

"I know this is unusual, but this is an unusual man who is a resource person for many spiritual renewal groups," continued Brooks.

"There is a new stirring of life in the Roman Catholic Church. If there is a genuine revival in the Roman Church, all Christians should rejoice, because the hope of winning the world to Christ is that much closer.

"Baptists have suffered at the hands of Roman Catholics. But a good bit of it could have been prevented if we had talked out our feelings and attitudes," said Brooks.

"Jesus called us to be peacemakers, and we can make peace without fighting through this kind of encounter. And Jesus also told us that those not against us are for us," he said.

Brooks became pastor of Vestavia Hills last September. Previously, he had been pastor at Parkview Baptist Church, Monroe, La.

Swedish Youth Urged To Wage
Guerrilla War on Beer, Dope

BORLANGE, Sweden (BP)--More than 125 Baptist youth staged a protest march through the streets of this city of 30,000 in central Sweden, demonstrating against the effect of alcohol, narcotics and pornography on young people.

The silent march ended in a vocal speech at a small public park, when one speaker urged the youth to launch guerrilla warfare against these three social evils.

The youth, parading in bitter winter cold, carried torches and signs that said, "Beer Advertising Is A Form of Rape," "No to Narcotics, Yes to Christ," and "Pornography is Degrading."

When they reached the park, the youth burned a beer barrel, beer advertisements and girlie magazines, according to a report from European Baptist Press Service.

One speaker told the Baptist youth what effect open beer sales is having. Some 12-year-olds are drinking enough beer to fall into drunken stupors, and to cause disturbances on the streets and at meetings, the speaker said.

After the march, the youth distributed tracts attacking salacious literature, alcohol and narcotics. They then returned to a local Baptist church to plan other active protests during a national crosscountry ski race near Borlange.

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Swedish Authorities Drop
Plan To Tax Church Gifts

3/10/70

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (BP)--A Swedish finance commission's proposal to tax individual voluntary gifts, including contributions to churches, appears to be dead, according to a report from European Baptist Press Service.

The finance commission had proposed that a tax be imposed on donations totaling over \$800 a year, but the tax had met with strong opposition from Baptist and other free church leaders in Sweden.

The tax would have hit numerous political, social and cultural groups, as well as the churches and independent charities.

After the proposal was made public, Erik Ruden, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Sweden and chairman of the Swedish Free Church Council, led a delegation of council representatives to present Prime Minister Olof Palme with a formal protest.

They contended that the Swedish proposal was the most far-reaching ever made in the western world. They objected to the state, in effect, reaching its hand into the church offering plates.

The Swedish minister of finance, Gunnar Strang, announced here that the commission's proposal would not be presented to parliament for enactment.

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Dutch Editor Attacks
Government Church Aid

3/10/70

SNEEK, The Netherlands (BP)--The editor of the Dutch Baptist weekly newspaper has editorially attacked a plan by the Netherland's government to divide about \$14 million (50 million guilders) a year among major religious groups in Holland.

J. van Dam, editor of De Christen and pastor in this city of about 20,000 located about 60 miles northeast of Amsterdam, urged Baptists to turn the government money down, if it is offered.

The proposal, which still awaits final action by government authorities, would allocate the funds among 16 major religious groups on the basis of membership. Under the proposal, Baptists would receive about \$27,000 (95,500 guilders) each year.

The government agency which proposed the financial aid to religious groups said the churches are an important asset to society, and are thus entitled to government aid.

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Van Dam rejects the idea, and wrote that he abhors this government money. He argued that if unchurched citizens are forced to pay taxes to support the churches, they will lose respect for the churches.

The Dutch editor proposed instead that every member of the 16 church groups add \$2.80 (10 guilders) a year to his present church gifts, to offset the proposed government subsidy. He questioned if church members are not willing to increase their support by so modest a sum, are the churches really so important after all?

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Baptist VIEWpoll
Martin B. Bradley, director

No SBC Consensus On Leaving
SBC on Doctrine, Poll Reveals

3.10/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--If a Southern Baptist church member cannot completely agree with the denomination's articles of faith, 56.5 per cent of Southern Baptist pastors feel he should leave his church and either join a church whose doctrine he more nearly accepts or try to find one whose doctrine he can completely accept.

In contrast, only 35.7 per cent of a representative group of Sunday School teachers in the denomination take this position.

Both groups of Southern Baptist leaders were polled by Baptist VIEWpoll following a statement dealing with the controversial issue by Southern Baptist Convention President W. A. Criswell of Dallas.

During a session of the convention's Executive Committee in September, 1969, Criswell asked how long the denomination could stay together, saying: "There are among us liberals, conservatives, fundamentalists; open communionists, closed communionists; alien immersionists; persons who would emphasize the social application of the gospel, those who would emphasize evangelism."

He also stated, "If we have men who do not believe in our articles of faith, why don't these people leave us and join denominations where they would be happy?...In my humble judgment, I think we ought to take those articles of faith (1925 and 1963) and say: 'This is what it is, being a Baptist. If you don't believe that, you are not a Baptist.'"

The Baptist VIEWpoll item, due to brevity, could not exactly capture the many dimensions of the issue discussed by Criswell, said Martin B. Bradley, director of the Baptist VIEWpoll and secretary of the research and statistics department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Nevertheless, Bradley pointed out, the item would appear to embody a sufficiently parallel hypothetical situation. The response should be carefully evaluated in light of the precise wording used in the item and the four alternatives present:

"If a member of a Southern Baptist church finds he cannot completely agree with the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925, and again in 1963, should he remain in a Baptist church or leave it? (Check one!)"

<u>Pastors</u>	<u>S.S. Teachers</u>	
27.3%	39.3%	Remain, on basis of things with which he agrees
10.5%	20.6%	Remain, actively trying to influence the Convention to change
34.7%	19.5%	Leave, and join a church whose doctrine he more nearly accepts
21.8%	16.2%	Leave, and try to find a church whose doctrine he can completely accept
5.7%	4.4%	(Answer not indicated)
<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	

Many leaders volunteered comments relating to their position, thus adding depth to the response. A sizable number, most of whom answered "remain," stated that complete agreement is not very likely nor is it necessary. Many of them said that there should be no creed but the Bible, no head but Christ and that the right to differ is basic to being a Baptist.

One comment: "Most could find something to disagree with. If we left, there would be no SBC." Another: "I doubt that 10 per cent of the SBC membership agrees 100 per cent with the articles of faith." One candidly stated: "I don't always agree with my wife but I do not go looking for another one!"

Another large group, in contrast, took a firm position of "leave." They said that a person either is, or isn't, a Baptist, and should leave if he can't agree with Baptists. There must be basic unity or agreement, they said. Trouble should be avoided; a church should not be torn up over disagreement.

One person said, "If he is not one of us, he is against us. It has been my sad privilege to follow a man of this type." Another: "I feel that there can be areas of disagreement within the church but the articles of faith are so basic no member can be effective unless he agrees upon them."

A view expressed by a strong segment of respondents was that any action (leaving or remaining) should depend on the nature, extent and effect of failure to agree. One person put it this way: "He should remain as long as he agrees on the major issues. Otherwise, he should find a doctrine he more nearly accepts."

Some persons declared that a person should leave simply if he could believe some other doctrine better. This comment illustrated such an emphasis: "If there could be another denomination found which is more sound scripturally, I would join it if I didn't agree with the articles of faith."

A minority group of respondents said something like, "stay and seek further understanding" or "stay--he might change his mind and come to agreement." A similar number shared the view that a person should remain and make reasonable efforts to influence change in articles of faith toward his convictions.

Two comments seemed to epitomize the divided opinion which seems to prevail among the Baptist leaders surveyed: "This (articles of faith) is no creed but a majority opinion. What's happened to the Baptist concept of religious freedom contained in these articles? Who is going to be the bishop or pope?"

The other said: "Baptist churches are becoming weaker in the faith because far too many members are only Baptist by name and do not believe in Baptist doctrine based on the Scriptures."

And, between these two stands the person who maintains that no simple, hard-and-fast rule applies--"it all depends."

The above information is based on 90 per cent response from a VIEWpoll leader panel representative of Southern Baptist churches in convention states and of all size groups.

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C O R R E C T I O N

On BP story mailed 3/9/70 headlined: "Blessitt Reaches Halfway Mark on Trek to Washington," please change graph 1 line 3 to read: 2,600 miles instead of 3,600 miles as sent. Correct byline of same story to read: by Bob liathevs, not Matthews, as sent. Thanks

Baptist Press

Southwestern Students Go
To 14 "Pioneer" States

FORT WORTH (BP)--For the 12th consecutive year, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will involve more than 50 students in an evangelistic program called "Pioneer Penetration" in 14 states.

During the last four years, more than 1,000 professions of faith have been recorded in services conducted by the students participating in "Pioneer Penetration," according to Roy Fish, seminary professor of evangelism and director of the project.

The program will involve students in such states as Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island.

The project is underwritten financially by the Panhandle Baptist Foundation, Inc., an organization formed by West Texas laymen headed by C. J. Humphrey of Amarillo, Tex.

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Nixon's Education Commission
To Study Parochial School Aid

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Richard Nixon has established "the President's Commission on School Finance," which will study ways parochial and other non-public schools can be aided by public agencies.

The new education commission is to be composed of not more than 16 members to be named by the President. The final report is to be made to the President no later than March 3, 1972. In the meantime, interim reports will be made.

Chairman of the commission will be Neil H. McElroy, former secretary of defense, according to an announcement by Daniel P. Moynihan, counsellor to the President. The other members of the commission will be announced by the White House in the near future.

President Nixon, in his executive order creating the commission, stated that "it shall be the function of the commission to study, and report to the President on, future revenue needs and resources of the nation's public and non-public elementary and secondary schools."

The President then listed 18 functions of the commission, nine of which are directly related to non-public and parochial schools.

About three weeks prior to the creation of the President's Commission on School Finance, Nixon conferred with representatives of the National Catholic Education Association. He pledged to them that he would support extended aid to parochial schools and called on the Catholic educators to cooperate with the new Commission on School Finance.

In his "message on education reform" which the President sent to Congress he followed through on his call on the nation to aid parochial schools.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which was in semi-annual session when the President's message was sent to Congress, commended Nixon's expression of concern for quality education for every American child, but refused to go along with the President's intent to aid parochial schools.

The Baptist agency raised a number of church-state and public policy questions about the President's proposals and instructed the Baptist Joint Committee staff to work for the principle that "public tax funds should be regarded as a public trust to be administered by public agencies for the public good."

The nine functions for the President's Commission which relate directly to non-public and parochial schools are as follows:

1. "The implications of the levelling-off in school enrollments for fiscal and educational planning on all levels of government and for non-public schools.
2. "The fiscal status of non-public elementary and secondary schools, and attendant implications for public schools and public policy.
3. "A review of the financial structure of elementary and secondary education and an assessment of future trends in the public and private sectors.
4. "An assessment of the potential of non-public schools to contribute more effectively to the nation's educational progress, of the present and future needs and problems of non-public schools, and of ways and means by which non-public schools can be assisted, within the limits of the law, in carrying out their educational responsibilities.
5. "An assessment of present public programs which aid non-public schools and comparison with programs aiding public schools.
6. "Recommendations for achieving greater cooperation between public and non-public schools in furthering the education of all children.
7. "The implications of federal revenue for the financing of public and non-public education.
8. "The implications of possible changes in the public welfare system and in the program of aid to federally-impacted areas for school services and for the financing of public and non-public education.
9. "Ways of altering the distribution of federal education funds so as to simplify and improve their usefulness for state, local and non-public education agencies."



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*460 James Robertson Parkway
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DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 NINTH AVE. N.
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203

"THE PAGANS" AND THE PASTOR MAKE THEIR POINTS: When nine members of a motorcycle club called "The Pagans" were arrested during a "Peace Convention" at Lafayette, La., on "vagrancy" charges, the Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lafayette, Perry R. Sanders (left) visited the group in the Lafayette Parish Jail, ~~and~~ asked them about their beliefs, and shared his own faith with them. "G. G." (which stands for Galloping Guinea) ~~member~~ pictured in the center) told Sanders they were "drawn to the Pagans because of Brotherhood." Another ~~member~~ man called by the group "Jesus" said that "freedom" is their primary motivation. Sanders told the group that true freedom and real brotherhood is found in the Christian faith. (BP) Photo

"THE PAGANS" AND THE PASTOR MAKE THEIR POINTS: When nine members of a motorcycle club were arrested during a "Peace Convention" at ~~in~~ Lafayette, La.,