

July 15, 1970

Spanish Baptist Church Charges Valencia Police Violated Rights

By Theo Sommerkamp
Director, European Baptist Press Service

VALENCIA, Spain (BP)--"These Protestants are filling up Cabanal with their posters. Do something about it!"

With this demand to the police, Second Baptist Church here has set in motion the first court test of the rights of a Baptist church registered under the 1967 religious liberty law in Spain.

The Valencia police reacted swiftly, tearing down more than 250 revival announcement posters which had been pasted to walls in the Cabanal sector of Valencia where the Second Baptist Church is located. The posters were similar to those used nationwide in Baptist evangelism campaigns.

Since the church had obtained official permission to put up the posters--authorization direct from the appropriate government agency in Madrid, the capital--it has filed a legal complaint in the city's lower court charging violation of its rights under the registration law.

The police are named as defendants in the church's complaint. Apparently the next document to be filed with the court will be the police's answer as to why they tore the posters down.

Jose Ortega, pastor of the 104-member church, believes the police reacted to complaints without recalling that since 1967 the law gives certain rights to registered Protestant churches.

In a recent edition, Ecumenical Press Service explored conditions in Spain and observed: "On the part of the huge majority of Roman Catholics there is an unwillingness, indeed an inability, to change the thinking of so many years."

This same observation could be applied to the police's reaction in tearing down the posters--they were simply doing what they have been conditioned to do for years.

The case will set a precedent. If the church's rights are upheld in court, Protestant churches across Spain will see that the law means what it says.

Most Baptist churches, as well as some other Protestant churches, have not registered so far because they are wary of the law. Some even think of it as a "restriction law" rather than a "liberty law."

The government has put increasingly intensive pressure on unregistered, non-Catholic congregations to sign up.

If the Valencia church's legal complaint is dismissed or ignored, unregistered churches will be able to reply to the government pressure that the law doesn't mean what it says because the rights of a registered church are not protected.

Events developed this way.

Second Baptist Church registered last November after contemplating the law for some time. Ortega said the congregation did not consider the law perfect, but felt that it did mark "a step forward."

The church felt it should take advantage of any progress. "We can fight for religious liberty better within the law (registered) than outside it," Ortega added.

The church began exploring ways to take advantage of its rights under the law, following registration. One opportunity came this spring with the nationwide Baptist evangelism emphasis.

The local office of tourism and information, the government agency which authorizes the public display of posters of all sorts, denied the church's petition to put up signs advertising their revival meeting.

The church then appealed to the nationwide secretariat for the ministry of tourism and information in Madrid, which overruled the district office in Valencia.

The church next paid the necessary fee of 690 pesetas (\$10), which anyone putting up posters must pay, and glued 280 posters to walls around their sector of the city. (Some still remain that the policemen missed.)

The day after the posters went up, the police received demands to remove them. They reportedly tore down the posters without making any attempt to contact Ortega, even though as pastor of a registered church his name, address, and telephone number are officially recorded. The police were to later claim they "didn't know how to reach him."

Eventually the police did contact Ortega, but the posters had been stripped away by then. The Baptist pastor showed them his letter of authorization from Madrid. He explained that his congregation is registered and was acting within its rights under the 1967 law.

Police replied that Ortega should have come to them to show the letter of authorization before putting up the posters. Ortega countered that the police should have contacted him before removing the posters.

The police refused to say who the complainants were by name but admitted they included both Roman Catholic priests and lay people. He believes the Catholics who demanded that police tear down the posters cannot conceive of the Protestants having such rights.

The posters, produced en masse for Baptist churches throughout Spain, portrayed a cross and a world globe in flames. The campaign theme, "Cristo Unica Esperanza" (Christ, The Only Hope), was evident in large letters.

Underneath each large poster, the church affixed a smaller strip on which it listed its name, address, and dates and hours of special services.



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July 15, 1970

Portuguese Parliament
 Consider Religious Liberty Law

LISBON, Portugal (BP)--The Portuguese parliament reportedly will consider a religious liberty law during its fall session this year.

European Baptist Press Service (EBPS) reports that a terse announcement in the Lisbon press did not elaborate on the contents of the proposed law.

Speculation, however, centers on whether the Portuguese law will be patterned after the Spanish religious liberty law enacted in 1967, EBPS reports.

The Roman Catholic Church is the dominant church in both countries. Non Catholics form only a tiny part of the population.

Protestants hope the proposed Portuguese law will ease some of the restrictions, such as those involved when a church wants to incorporate to own property, according to EBPS.

Six Baptist churches around Lisbon reportedly have been waiting for almost 18 months for an answer to their applications for incorporation, while incorporation applications for sports clubs and other such groups are processed fairly readily.

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Selective Service Issues New
 Rules for CO Classification

7/15/70

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--Selective service Director Curtis W. Tarr has issued a list of criteria for the classification of conscientious objectors to war.

The new regulations are for the use of local boards as they implement Section 6(j) of the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 and the recent rulings of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has been broadening progressively the interpretation of "religion" as used in the Selective Service Act. Section 6(j) of the act reads as follows:

"Nothing contained in this title shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the armed forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form.

"Religious training and belief in this connection means an individual's belief in a relation to a supreme being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation, but does not include essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code."

In United States v. Seegar (1965), the Supreme Court expanded the concept of religion beyond the traditional theistic views. Recently in Welsh v. United States (1970) the court expanded qualification for conscientious objection even further. A key paragraph in this decision is as follows:

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"If an individual deeply and sincerely holds beliefs which are purely ethical or moral in source and content but which nevertheless impose upon him a duty of conscience to refrain from participating in any war at any time, those beliefs certainly occupy in the life of that individual 'a place parallel to that filled by...God' in traditionally religious persons. Because his beliefs function as a religion in his life, such an individual is as much entitled to a 'religious' conscientious objector exemption under Section 6(j) as is someone who derives his conscientious opposition to war from traditional religious convictions."

In his July 6 memorandum to local boards, Tarr pointed out that "compulsory military service legislation in the United States has always recognized conscientious objection."

He then stated that in order for a person to be classified 1-O or 1-A-O he must meet three basic conditions:

"(A) That a registrant be opposed to participation in war in any form;

"(B) That his objection be founded on religious training and belief; and

"(C) That his position be something other than 'essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views, or a merely personal moral code.'"

Tarr further explained that the objection must be to all wars and that it must be to war within the meaning of the Selective Service law, not a theocratic or spiritual war between the powers of good and evil.

"The primary test that must be used," Tarr told the local boards, "is the test of sincerity with which the belief is held."

He said that "the board should be convinced by information presented to it that the registrant's personal history reveals views and actions strong enough to demonstrate that expedience is not the basis of his claim."

Selected portions of the new criteria for conscientious objection follow:

"The term 'religious training and belief' as used in the law may include solely moral or ethical beliefs, even though the registrant himself may not characterize these beliefs as 'religious' in the traditional sense, or may expressly characterize them as not 'religious.'"

"The registrant's conscientious objection to war must stem from his moral, ethical, or religious beliefs about what is right and should be done and what is wrong and should be shunned, and he must hold these beliefs with the strength of traditional religious conviction."

"The registrant must demonstrate that his ethical or moral convictions were gained through training, study, contemplation, or other activity, comparable in rigor and dedication to the processes by which traditional religious convictions are formulated. The registrant must show that these moral and ethical convictions, once acquired, have directed his life in the way traditional religious convictions, of equal strength, depth, and duration have directed the lives of those whose beliefs are clearly founded in traditional conviction."

"The law does not require that a registrant claiming conscientious objection be a member of a 'peace church' or any church, religious organization, or religious sect, nor does the law require affiliation with any particular group in order to be classified as a conscientious objector."

"Beliefs which are real and valid to some may be incomprehensible to others. Boards are not free to reject beliefs because they consider

them 'incomprehensible.' Their task is to decide whether the beliefs professed by a registrant are sincerely held and whether they govern his actions both in word and deed."

The complete text of the "Criteria for Classification of Conscientious Objectors" should be available from local boards or from the national headquarters of the Selective Service System in Washington, D.C. It is based on "Local Memorandum No. 107" issued on July 6, 1970.

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Assembly Will Not Close Despite Rock Festival

7/15/70

ARDMORE, Okla. (BP)--Falls Creek Baptist Assembly will not close early, Oklahoma Baptist official said, despite a rock music festival planned nearby that could draw 100,000 people.

The fourth week of the summer assembly will be in its final days as the rock festival begins Aug. 8 at a Turner Falls Amusement Park about two miles away.

Early press accounts about the festival prompted a report that the Baptist assembly might be closed a day or two early. Convention officials said they have received a number of letters opposing early closing of the assembly.

"We are going to conduct Falls Creek Assembly as near normal as possible and not let anything going on at Turner Falls disrupt our services and activities," said Joe L. Ingram, assistant executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

"We don't know what to expect, since we've never had a rock festival nearby," admitted Ingram.

He said experiences at festivals elsewhere indicate the possibility there could be some problems although the convention has been assured that police will enforce laws strictly.

The main concern, said Ingram, is the traffic problem as 7,000 people move out of the assembly grounds on Saturday, down a road that passes near the rock festival site.

Ingram and Encampment Manager J. T. Roberts knew of no churches which had been motivated by the rock festival to change plans for having groups at the assembly.

Convention officials anticipate no mingling of assembly goers with those at the rock festival. Outside the assembly, an Oklahoma City church's minister of music was planning to "infiltrate" the festival with a 20-member religious folk music group which will also hand out gospel tracts.

Residents in the Ardmore-Davis area have expressed concern about an influx of thousands of young people, many of whom may be dope-users. Ardmore district attorney Burke Mordy said nothing could be done legally to prevent the festival, but he announced plans for a round-the-clock judge to be on the scene for "instant arraignment" of law breakers.

The Turner Falls park manager, Max Sulcer, said he is giving the district attorney's office a free hand during the festival, but expressed concern at overenforcement. He said that extra security personnel would be on duty during the festival.

Oklahoma Governor Dewey Bartlett was quoted as saying that events at the festival will be fully documented for possible use in preventing future similar events.

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HMB Staffer Elected
To State Convention Post

ATLANTA (BP)--E. C. Watson, staff member of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's division of missions, has been elected director of Baptist missions efforts in South Carolina, effective September 1.

Watson will direct the varied mission ministries, including Baptist centers, ministries to the deaf, Christian social ministries and migrant missions.

He will also serve as liaison between the Home Mission Board and the South Carolina convention.

A native of Lumberton, N.C., Watson served as a consultant on associational administration for four years at the Home Mission Board.

He came to the board from the North Carolina Baptist State Convention where he was associate secretary of the Sunday School department.

He is a graduate of Wake Forest, N.C., University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Previously he had served as superintendent of missions in the New South River and Cabarrus Baptist Associations of South Carolina.

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Wife of Baptist College
Vice President Dies

7/15/70

HOUSTON (BP)--Mrs. Virginia Henderson Smith, wife of H. B. Smith, vice president for academic affairs at Houston Baptist College, died here July 9.

A native of Martinsville, Va., she and her husband played an influential role in the opening and development of Houston Baptist College in 1962. She had served for many years as a school teacher.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: The following story should replace or may be used as a followup to a report carried 7/13/70, page 3, first section, headlined, "Missionaries Seek Missing Daughter." If not too late, please kill that story and use the following report, which includes new developments. Thanks.

---Baptist Press

Missionaries' Daughter
Safe in California

7/15/70

RICHMOND (BP)--Janelyn McTyre, 15-year-old daughter of furloughing Southern Baptist missionaries to Chile, is "safe and well" according to her father who talked with her by telephone 27 days after she disappeared from a Colorado campground where the family was staying.

John H. McTyre told the Baptist Press bureau here that Janelyn turned up in Pomona, Calif., working at a place called The Open Door, which he described as a social project for youth. Its board of directors is made up of leaders of social organizations in the area, he added.

McTyre, who said he believes his daughter "is in good hands," said he doesn't yet know the full details of her departure for California.

Janelyn, who needed parental consent to continue working at The Open Door, tried to telephone her parents at their furlough home in Tampa, Fla. They had remained in Colorado, however, to be available to authorities and others assisting in the search for Janelyn.

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Unable to reach her parents in Tampa, she talked to another relative there who called the McTyres. They contacted Janelyn by phone on July 14. She had disappeared June 18.

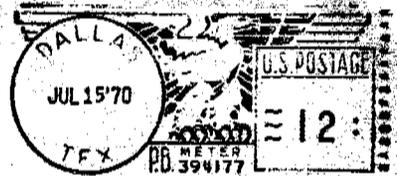
McTyre had appeared on four TV stations in Denver and made appeals by radio. He had offered \$1,000 reward for information as to her whereabouts.

The McTyres will see Janelyn during a speaking engagement at a Baptist camp near Pomona, which had been scheduled coincidentally before her disappearance. The Pomona engagement is part of a heavy schedule of appearances set up for the McTyres in western states."



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