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HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SRC

**Relation Of Anti-Social Acts
To Obscenity Denied in Report**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Exposure to pornographic materials does not alter conduct or attitudes relative to sexual morality or crime, the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography has concluded.

In a report due to be released soon, the commission will recommend that laws be repealed which restrict the availability of such materials for adults.

Laws protecting the young from obscene materials should be kept, according to a draft of the commission's final report. The recommendations, however, are reportedly not unanimous.

The copy of the commission's findings and recommendations, which was leaked to the press, reportedly has been approved by the commission. The report has been received here amid criticism of the commission itself, the staff preparing the report, the methodology of its research as well as some of its conclusions.

President Nixon, through his press secretary, Ronald Ziegler, has washed his hands of any responsibility for the report. Ziegler, in a regular press briefing here, said the commission's recommendations "are not those of this administration."

Ziegler also pointed out that the commission members, except for one, were appointed by former President Lyndon B. Johnson, and that "this is not Nixon's commission."

According to a spokesman for the House Subcommittee on postal operations, however, President Nixon was warned last fall and early this year by the one member he did appoint of the direction the commission's report was headed. He was urged by his appointee, Charles H. Keating Jr., to replace several of the commission members.

Last spring President Nixon sent Congress a message asking for curbs on unsolicited smut sent through the mails. The President also declared that the ultimate answer for the problems of obscenity "lies not with the government but with the people."

Nixon, according to Ziegler "believes that pornography and obscenity relate to adverse social conduct." Nixon has called for a Citizens' Crusade against Pornography.

"When indecent books no longer find a market, when pornographic films can no longer draw an audience, when obscene plays open to empty houses, then the tide will turn. Government can maintain the dikes against obscenity but only people can turn back the tides," the President declared in his message to Congress last May.

The commission members agreed that a citizens' crusade is needed. They urged in the report that "citizens should organize" at the local and national levels to fight the floods of smut that are available.

But, the commission warned in its recommendations, "it is exceedingly unwise for government to attempt to legislate individual moral values and standards especially by restrictions upon consensual communications.

"Sound moral values are of the greatest importance," the report reads, "but they must be based upon deep personal commitment flowing from values instilled in the home, in education, in religious training and through individual resolutions of personal confrontations with human experience."

In an earlier testimony before the commission, a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission staff member, Harry N. Hollis Jr., of Nashville, urged a coordinated effort by the home, school and church to provide a "positive" education program as the best way to oppose obscenity.

"In the long run the most effective way to check pornography will be for churches and synagogues to teach a wholesome appreciation of sexuality as a good gift of God, for schools to offer correct information about sexuality, for businesses to reject erotic exploitation in advertising, and for citizens to use pocketbook power to oppose the obscene," Hollis declared.

The Baptist leader also asked that the commission consider "common sense arguments" in reaching conclusions about the problem, and appealed for more stringent obscenity laws which would not abridge freedom but provide a stable moral climate in which freedom can be enjoyed.

Hollis observed that the ultimate solutions to the problems of pornography "will be found not in laws but in people." The best way to handle this is "through the home, the schools and the churches," Hollis urged.

He told the commission that though it is difficult to provide documentation of a causal relation between pornography and anti-social behavior, he personally believed that "pornography can serve as a trigger to set off acts in troubled individuals."

In its report the commission calls for an extensive program of sex education that will require the joint efforts of parents, churches and schools.

"A pivotal findings," the report stated, is "widespread voluntary covert exposure to explicit sexual materials, especially among young people."

The commission blamed some of this on "the conspiracy of silence about sex" on the part of adults. It also maintained that such curiosity about sexual materials "is a usual part of the process of growing up in our society."

In denying a relationship between pornography and anti-social behavior, the report stated that, according to studies, "sex offenders are generally less experienced and less interested in erotic materials during both adolescence and adulthood."

"There is no evidence," the report continued, "that exposure to sexual stimuli operates as a cause of misconduct in either youth or adults." Such exposure "has no detrimental impact upon moral character, sexual orientation or attitudes about sexuality among youth," it concluded.

Actually, the report noted, continued or repeated exposure to erotic stimuli results in a "satiation of sexual arousal and interest" in such materials. A study made on a group of college students at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill was cited as a part of the data leading to this conclusion.

One of the recommendations of the commission asks for continued open discussion of the issues surrounding the availability of explicit pornographic materials. This discussion should be "based on facts rather than fears," the commission said. In the past, such discussion has been "in an almost total vacuum of information," it declared.

The commission also noted its own limitations in making the report called for by Congress. It said it was "limited by time, financial resources and the paucity of existing research."

In an "overview of findings," the report stated that American public opinion in 1970 indicates that pornography generally is not regarded as one of the country's most serious problems.

Also, the report continued, "public opinion in America does not demand that legal prohibition be imposed upon the the distribution of explicit sexual materials to adults."

The commission, however, did declare that legislation should be enacted to prevent indiscriminate mailing of sex-oriented materials to people who have not requested them.

"We affirmatively recommend adoption of legislation to protect the young," the commission declared, "but this should not be achieved at the expense of totally denying adults the right to obtain material of their choice."

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Williams, Retired Mississippi
Sunday School Leader, Dies

8/17/70

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--E. C. Williams, 78, former Mississippi Baptist Convention Sunday School secretary for 20 years, died here Aug. 13, after collapsing while working on his lawn.

A heart patient for several years, he had survived numerous severe heart attacks to return to near normalcy, a convention spokesman said.

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Funeral services were scheduled at First Baptist Church, Jackson, on Saturday, July 15. He was a deacon, Sunday School teacher and member of the church for nearly 50 years.

Williams became state Sunday School secretary for Mississippi Baptists in 1938 after 13 years as an associate, and retired in 1958. He is also a former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

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Money Not Matching Plans
Of Vietnam Missionaries

8/17/70

SAIGON (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries in Vietnam, during the 10th annual business meeting of the Southern Baptist Mission in Vietnam, struggled to comply with instructions from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to hold the line on last year's budget, according to a report from one of the missionaries, Mrs. Rondal D. Merrell.

The meeting came, according to Mrs. Merrell, "at a time when missionaries in Vietnam feel keenly the urgent need to press forward rapidly in training national Christians due to anticipated results of de-Americanization, expect to affect the efforts of 'American' missionaries in the near future."

After "soul-searching and thought-provoking discussions on helping Vietnamese churches develop as indigenous bodies more rapidly," the missionaries decided to emphasize stewardship in Vietnamese churches during the year, she reported.

In addition to budgetary problems, the missionaries "wrestled with fantastic inflation in Vietnam, newly imposed government 'severity' taxes making it almost impossible to purchase automobiles, and exorbitant costs of housing and property rentals or purchases," Mrs. Merrell said.

On the plus side, there were reports of many new conversions to Christianity in Vietnam, including those in the cities of Cantho and Quinhon where Southern Baptist missionaries began working last year. The Baptist churches in Saigon reported 172 new converts resulting from the 1970 Asian Baptist evangelistic campaigns held this summer.

Missionaries Walter A. Routh Jr., and James M. Gayle, who work in the Camranh area, reported that it is impossible for them to meet all the requests they get to preach in villages around Camranh.

The group also heard about the conversions of two Montagnard tribesmen who have asked that a missionary go to their village and preach. Baptists presently have no work among the tribal people in Vietnam, Mrs. Merrell noted.

Anticipating "new and encouraging aspects of Baptist work in Vietnam," the missionaries voted to begin work among students in the University area of Saigon in September, to help organize a new church for Chinese people living in the country, and to train workers for a Baptist day care and kindergarten ministry in Vietnam.

Also, plans are underway for regular broadcasts of Baptist radio programs, and there are prospects for television broadcasts. Publications and social ministries are expected to expand considerably, Baptist work in the city of Hue is planned to begin in 1971, and Mrs. Merrell and her husband will be the first couple assigned to full-time evangelism in Saigon.

Twenty-five career missionaries, four journeymen and two summer missionaries met for most of a week in Saigon. They held their morning sessions at the English-language Trinity Baptist Church and evening sessions at the Baptist Theological Seminary.

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August 17, 1970

NEW SBC STEWARDSHIP LEADER: James V. Lackey, director of Cooperative Program Promotion for the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, Nashville, has been named executive director-treasurer elect for the commission. Lackey will take the top SBC stewardship position effective Feb. 1, 1971, following the retirement of Merrill D. Moore. (BP) Photo.