



BAPTIST PRESS
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August 31, 1970

Baptist Leader Urges Nixon: Conduct New Pornography Study

NASHVILLE (BP)--In a letter to President Richard M. Nixon, the executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission urged the President to appoint a new commission or task force to give the problem of obscenity and pornography additional study.

Foy D. Valentine of Nashville expressed disappointment in the letter to the President to the published accounts of the direction that the final report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography appointed by the previous administration is likely to take.

"I am concerned about its adverse impact upon current efforts to curb pornography," said Valentine in the letter to the President.

Though the commission's report has not yet been released, published accounts based on documents "leaked" to the press have indicated that the commission will recommend that laws be repealed which restrict the availability of pornographic materials to adults. The leaked reports also indicate the commission concluded that exposure to pornography does not alter conduct or attitudes relative to sexual morality or crime.

"If the final report is indeed as soft on pornography as some reports have indicated," Valentine wrote to the president, "I encourage you to give consideration to countering the report of the present commission by announcing that you yourself will appoint a task force or commission to give this problem additional study."

All but one of the members of the current committee were appointed during the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson. Press accounts have indicated that the commission was not unanimous in its findings.

Valentine told the president that the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in New Orleans, had "urgently requested" the convention's social action agency to "unite, organize, and mobilize to correct and overcome the abuses of pornography now being perpetrated against the citizenry, young, and old, in our nation."

Valentine said he was convinced that appointment of a new commission or task force by President Nixon to deal further with the problem of pornography "would be strongly supported by Southern Baptists and by the majority of other citizens as well,

"Not only would such a move be extremely well received by the general public, but it could also be extremely useful in halting the harmful spread of pornography throughout our land," Valentine continued.

He commended the President for calling for a citizen's crusade against pornography, and stated he was "confident that Southern Baptists will respond with strong support."

"In your efforts to encourage a citizen's crusade against pornography, you may count on the Christian Life Commission for continued support," Valentine added. "Moreover, we gladly offer you our services."

He recommended that the President consider for possible appointment to the new commission a member of the Baptist social action agency's staff, Harry N. Hollis Jr., director of special moral concerns for the commission.

Hollis delivered testimony before the current commission earlier this year, advocating more stringent laws against the sale of pornography, and a concerted effort on the part of the home, church, school and nation to curb pornography through a positive education program.

In his letter to the President, Valentine quoted a member of the pornography commission, Methodist Minister W. C. Link of Nashville, who called Hollis' testimony "the most thought-provoking and helpful that we received."

Valentine said that Hollis is "uniquely qualified to serve on a task force if you should decide to move in that direction," and said he "would bring to the assignment strong moral convictions, a superior intellectual endowment, and excellent training in the field."

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Mission Agency Takes Steps
To Meet Crisis in the Nation

8/31/70

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, meeting here for its semi-annual session, took further steps to respond to the national crisis in America.

The steps came on the promptings of the agency's crisis committee established to lead the Home Mission Board in implementation of the denomination's Statement Concerning the Crisis in the Nation.

Financial assistance was given to two groups working in crisis areas, and the release of a filmstrip designed to guide Baptists in relating to crisis was announced.

The agency voted to give \$10,000 to a national group, Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), which works at training the unemployed and the under-employed. OIC was founded in Philadelphia by Leon H. Sullivan, pastor of the Zion Baptist Church there.

The Christian social ministries department of the board, at the encouragement of the crisis committee, will give \$1,000 to a non-profit, tax exempt corporation in New York composed of Baptist ministers and laymen.

This organization, Total Operation for Neighborhood Environment (TONE), seeks to work in developing four areas of a person's life: church, jobs, homes and community. Already planned is the rehabilitation of eight houses in Brooklyn which will include a day-care center, a neighborhood association, and training of construction workers.

The filmstrip "Nation Crisis: Patterns of Response," will be released within a month and is designed to inform Baptists of steps taken, outline suggested areas of assistance, and provide patterns which will guide groups in responding to crises in their areas.

These actions by the board follow others taken earlier, such as investing \$100,000 of reserve funds with a black-owned bank initiating plans to extend church loans to minority groups not affiliated with Southern Baptists, and concentrating workers in crisis areas.

Of the recent steps taken, only the action on OIC required approval by the full board. The proposal ran into opposition from some board members because "its Christian witness was not apparent."

However, Chairman Harper Shannon of the crisis committee said the relationship "will eventually open more doors than we can imagine."

He indicated the step was recommended because it meets human needs, it encourages a self-help program that is locally controlled, and it opens further opportunities to witness for Christ.

Tommy Jones of Brunswick, Ga., however, thought this set a "dangerous precedent of giving to structures outside our programs."

William H. Geren of Atlanta said he felt the SBC had directed the agency to meet crises in these areas and some innovation was necessary.

The directors approved the action by an approximate three to one vote.

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Two Board Staffers
Accept New Posts

8/31/70

ATLANTA (BP)--Joseph R. Estes and Travis Lipscomb, both staff members of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board with offices here, have accepted new positions, effective Sept. 30.

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Estes will be pastor of First Baptist Church, DeLand, Fla., and Lipscomb will be a public social worker in California.

Estes has headed the department of work related to nonevangelicals since 1965. This department seeks to lead Southern Baptists in relating to Jews, Catholics, and persons of other world religions and sects.

Before coming to the board, Estes was assistant to the president of Kentucky Southern College, Louisville. He has also been Christian Education Association secretary for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, professor of religion at Kentucky Southern College and professor of systematic theology at the Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

A native of Louisville, he is a graduate of Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned the doctor of theology degree.

Lipscomb has been a consultant in the department of Christian social ministries for two years, specializing in Baptist child care and youth ministries. A native of Franklin, Tex., he is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., Southern Seminary, and Fresno.

He formerly was a field consultant in juvenile rehabilitation work in western United States and director of juvenile rehabilitation for the Fresno Association.

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Suburban Church Commissions
"Missionary to the Inner City"

8/31/70

ATLANTA (BP)--In a unique service here, a suburban, predominately middle class Baptist church has commissioned its own "missionary to the inner city" to help provide leadership at a Baptist center which ministers to needy people in a transitional section of Southwest Atlanta.

Mrs. Jane Stone, a top civilian executive at Fort McPherson near here, was commissioned by Headland Heights Baptist Church in East Point as she made plans to work at the Lucille Avenue Baptist Center in Southwest Atlanta.

Gene Tyre, pastor of the suburban Headland Heights church, led the commissioning service, described as possibly a "first" of its type among Georgia Baptist churches.

James O. Beck, director of the Lucille Avenue Baptist Center, also shared in the commission rites, to officially welcome Mrs. Stone to the leadership of the Baptist Center.

Behind the commissioning service lay a heartwarming story of commitment and unselfishness on the part of a Christian and her church, the Baptist leaders observed.

Mrs. Stone, described by her pastor as "one of the finest teachers I have ever know," had led in Sunday School and Woman's Missionary Union work at the suburban church for the past seven years.

But in recent months, she said she has grown increasingly restless, feeling a growing commitment to be more directly involved in trying to minister to more needy people than those found in the middle-class Headland Heights neighborhood.

A unique series of experiences with low-income acquaintances, both white and Negro, led Mrs. Stone to seek out Lucille Avenue Baptist Center as the place where she wanted to serve low-income people of all races in Sunday and weekday activities.

She shared her desire with her pastor, and Tyre asked the church to commission her as "our missionary to the inner city." The church unanimously agreed.

A feature of the commissioning service was presentation of a check from Headland Heights Baptist Church to Lucille Avenue Baptist Center for financial support of its ministries.

In explaining her decision to leave the comfortable suburban church to work in a transitional neighborhood, Mrs. Stone said: "The government doesn't have the answer to our modern problems--the church holds the answer.

"I am convinced that if every Christian will put his shoulder to the wheel of history, the chain of events will change quickly," she declared.

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The suburban church pastor observed that her testimony has "added a new dimension of concern and compassion in our church membership for all mankind."

"If we are going to reach people in the inner city," he added, "churches in the suburbs must begin to provide leadership, both personal and financial."

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Broadman Films Names
New Sales Consultant

8/31/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Wert Campbell Jr., ministers of music for Twelfth Street Baptist Church, Gadsden, Ala., has joined the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board as an audio-visual sales consultant in the Broadman films department.

A native of Tennessee, Campbell is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Prior to serving Gadsden church, Campbell held similar positions at Miami (Fla.) Shores Baptist Church and Northwood Baptist Church, West Palm Beach, Fla.

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Baptists Begin Counseling
Service for Ministers

8/31/70

ATLANTA (BP)--A counseling service for Georgia Baptist minister and their families has been initiated at the Georgia Baptist Hospital here.

The experimental program has been established by the hospital commission of the convention's Executive Committee for a one-year period, according to Searcy S. Garrison, executive secretary-treasurer of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

E. A. Verdery, director of pastoral care at the hospital, will direct the counseling service. He will involve members of the chaplains' staff and other professional workers at the hospital as needed.

The program will be evaluated by responsible convention committees to determine whether it will be continued beyond the experimental period, Garrison said.

Ministers who receive the counseling will pay a fee for the service, he added.

In 1969, the convention's Executive Committee recommended the counseling service to the convention. As an outgrowth of an earlier resolution presented to the convention.

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