



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 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

October 2, 1970

**Pornography Panel Asks
Sex Education Programs**

WASHINGTON (BP)--The major recommendation in the final, official report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography calls for a "massive sex education effort" aimed at all segments of the society, adults as well as children and adolescents.

In a report that has been under attack for several weeks before its official release, the commission said that such a sex education program "would provide a powerful positive approach" to the problems of obscenity and pornography.

"By providing accurate and reliable sex information through legitimate sources, it would reduce interest in and dependence upon clandestine and less legitimate sources," the commission declared.

In its 1050 page report, the commission called for the cooperation of parents, schools and churches in helping to form within the individual "a set of positive values and attitudes toward sexuality."

Healthy attitudes and orientations toward sexual relationships "would provide better protection for the individual against distorted or warped ideas he may encounter regarding sex," the commission report read.

In spelling out characteristics for a comprehensive program of sex education, the commission said it should encompass "social, psychological and religious information" as well as biological and physiological information.

Also, it continued, special attention should be given to training those in "legitimate communication channels--parents, teachers, physicians, clergy, social workers, etc."

Other recommendations, which were endorsed by two-thirds of the 18-member panel, called for "continued open discussion based on factual information" and the development of "additional factual information" on the issues regarding obscenity and pornography.

The commission said in its report that in the past discussion "has been carried on with few facts available and the debate has necessarily reflected, to a large extent, prejudices and fears."

It was noted in the report that some of the facts developed by the commission "are contrary to widely held assumptions." These findings provide "new perspectives on the issues," the commission said.

It urged, as a part of its recommendations, that the information developed by the commission be given wide distribution, "so that it may sharpen the issues and focus the discussion."

One of the "facts" developed in the report that is "contrary to widely held assumptions" concerns the relationship between pornography and anti-social behavior.

The commission said, concerning adults, that "extensive empirical investigation, both by the commission and by others, provides no evidence that exposure to or use of explicit sexual materials play a significant role in the causation or social or individual harms such as crime, delinquency, sexual or nonsexual deviancy or severe emotional disturbances."

The report continued that studies show that a number of factors, "such as disorganized family relationships and unfavorable peer influences, are intimately related to harmful sexual behavior or adverse character development.

"Exposure to sexually explicit materials, however, cannot be counted as among these determinative factors," the commission declared.

In several paragraphs the commission dealt with the concern of many citizens about the "moral climate" in America as a whole. This concern, it said, "appears to flow from a belief that exposure to explicit materials may cause moral confusion which, in turn, may induce antisocial or criminal behavior."

In reiterating the contention that it found "no evidence" to support such as fear, the commission said it believes that the "availability of explicit sexual materials is not one of the important influences on sexual morality."

"The existence of sound moral standards is of vital importance to individuals and society," the commission declared. But, for these to be effective and meaningful, it continued, they "must be based upon deep personal commitment, flowing from values instilled in the home, on educational and religious training, and through individual resolutions of personal confrontations with human experience."

Another recommendation called for citizens to organize themselves at local, regional and national levels for discussion of information and for action in implementing sex education programs. The aim of such groups should be, the commission said, "to provide a forum whereby all views may be presented for thoughtful consideration."

"We live in a free, pluralistic society which places its trust in the competition of ideas in a free market place," the report continued. "Persuasion is a preferred technique. Coercion, repression and censorship in order to promote a given set of views are not tolerable in our society."

In the legislative realm the commission recommended that federal, state and local legislation should not seek to interfere with the right of adults who wish to read, obtain, or view explicit sexual materials.

However, the commission did strongly recommend legislative bans on sale of sexual materials to young persons who do not have the consent of their parents. It also endorsed recent laws passed by Congress to protect persons from having sexual materials thrust upon them without their consent through the mails. The commission also supported laws to prohibit public displays of sexual materials.

Three of the commission members submitted minority statements that were extremely critical of the methodology and the conclusions of the majority. Calling it a "Magna Carta" for the pornographer, the three dissenters urged that the commission's report "be filed in the congressional wastebaskets."

The three dissenters were Fr. Morton A. Hill, S. J., one of the founders of morality in media; Winfrey C. Link, a Methodist minister from Tennessee; and Charles H. Keating, Jr., a lawyer from Cincinnati, Ohio.

The commission was accused by these three dissenters of being "slanted and biased in favor of protecting the business of obscenity and pornography." In their view, they said, both the conclusions and recommendations of the majority were "fraudulent."

In support of this latter accusation, they said the report was based on "scanty and manipulated evidence" which is "wholly inadequate" to support the conclusions and sustain the recommendations.

"Sex education," the minority report said, "is the panacea for those who advocate license in media."

As for the call for a massive program of sex education, the dissenters questioned if instructors would bring hard-core pornography into grammar schools. Also, they wondered if it would be possible to assure that the moral or ethical code of the instructor would not be communicated to children.

In a separate dissenting report, numbering 179 pages, Keating decried the value of "presidential" commissions as an effective arm of government and called for a congressional investigation of the way this commission has done its work and spent the \$2 million appropriated to it by Congress.

Keating labeled as "shocking and anarchistic" the recommendation of the majority to repeal the laws concerning adults having freedom of choice to read, obtain or view explicit sexual materials.

"For those who believe in God, in his absolute supremacy as the creator and lawgiver of life, in the dignity and destiny which he has conferred upon the human person, in the moral code that governs sexual activity--for those who believe in these 'things,' no argument against pornography should be necessary," Keating declared.

Keating was the only member of the commission appointed by President Nixon. At the press conference releasing the report, he said that the conclusions "would be different" if Mr. Nixon has appointed the other 17 members.

"His (Mr. Nixon's) administration has indicated a propensity for decency and morality and this commission has been for permissiveness," Keating declared.



BAPTIST PRESS

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 NINTH AVE. N.
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203

RECEIVED
MAY 5 1970

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC