



**BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 8, 1970

**Baptist College Allowing  
Dancing Urges State Study**

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)--Trustees of Carson-Newman College, a Baptist school here which has been strongly criticized by churches in the state for allowing social dancing on the campus, has asked the Tennessee Baptist Convention "to study the social program" of all Baptist schools in the state.

Trustees at Carson-Newman have been under fire from Baptists in the state ever since they voted seven months ago to approve social dancing "as a part of the total social program scheduled on campus."

Since then, the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention has voted to request the Carson-Newman trustees to reconsider their decision, about 100 churches in the state have requested that their share of Cooperative Program budget funds allocated to Carson-Newman be withheld so long as the dancing policy is in effect, and about 17 Baptist associations of churches have adopted resolutions critical of the school's policy.

Some Baptist observers here say that the matter is almost sure to come up in some form during the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Jackson, Tenn., Nov. 10-12.

The resolution adopted by the Carson-Newman trustees here requested Tennessee Baptist Convention President Jerry Glisson, pastor of Leawood Baptist Church in Memphis, to appoint a committee "to study the social program of our Baptist school and propose guidelines which would apply to all."

The convention owns and operates three colleges--Carson-Newman, Belmont College, Nashville, and Union University in Jackson, where the state convention will meet.

In Nashville shortly after the Carson-Newman trustees adopted the resolution, the Executive Board of the convention met in quarterly session, but took no action on the request of the college trustees. Part of the meeting was in "executive session."

The resolution adopted by the trustees acknowledged that the school had complied with the request of the state Baptist Executive Board of May 12 by not scheduling dances on campus since that meeting.

The trustees, however, defended their earlier decision by saying they "have always sought to act in the best interest of the college and the decision on March 5 to permit dancing as a part of the social program on the campus was considered as such...."

Carson-Newman President John Albert Fincher, commenting on the trustees action, noted that the request for a complete study of the social program at all Baptist schools would, hopefully, provide answers to a larger problem of which dancing is a part, and provide guidelines which could be used by all three schools.

At the time of the action by the board approving dancing on campus, Fincher issued a statement explaining the reasons for the action. In part, his statement read:

"Carson-Newman college believes that most young people in this generation view dancing as a social rather than moral issue. The college does not feel that the principles upon which it was founded or its quality of education have been sacrificed or impaired by permitting social dancing on campus.

"The decision," Fincher continued, "to permit this social activity was based primarily on the fact that sincere Christian families who are sending their children to Carson-Newman vary in their attitudes toward the propriety of dancing. The faculty, administration and board of trustees sought to reflect this disparity of opinion by calling on each student to make his decision in the light of his own background and conviction...."

The vice president of the Student Government Association at Carson-Newman, Steve Petty, wrote a letter to the editor published by the Baptist and Reflector, the convention's weekly newspaper, saying that 92 per cent of the students favored dancing on campus.

Petty said that most young people had "risen to a higher plane of concern than to constantly babble over whether or not Christ would have us to dance." Adding that the Bible says nothing against dancing, Petty said Jesus placed more emphasis on making disciples and loving your neighbor. "The students of Carson-Newman have continuously tried to meet these commandments," he said.

In a letter to the editor the next week, a Baptist woman from Oak Ridge, Tenn., Mrs. James G. Kelly, responded to Petty's remarks, saying "the reason Baptists don't believe in dancing" is that "one good Baptist preacher got his head cut off at a shindig once."

She referred to a passage in Matthew 14:1-11, which tells of the beheading of John the Baptist after Salome danced before Herod, who promised to give her anything she desired. She asked for John the Baptist's head on a platter.

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Black Baptists To Work With  
Public Affairs Committee

10/8/70

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in semiannual session here, received the Progressive National Baptist Convention into its membership.

This brings to nine the number of Baptist conventions and conferences in North America which are a part of the Baptist Joint Committee.

The Progressive National Baptist Convention, a predominantly black group, was organized in 1961. It has a membership of about 800 churches with more than 750,000 members.

Other black Baptist bodies affiliated with the Baptist Joint Committee are the National Baptist Convention of America and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. For more than a decade, however, these two bodies have been largely inactive in the work of the committee, observers said.

Homer J. Tucker, chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee, a black Baptist from the American Baptist Convention, said that the action of the Progressive Baptists is an indication of improving black-white relations in the country.

"As far as I know," Tucker said, "this is the first time in recent years when a significant black group has moved actively to participate in an organization composed mostly of white people."

"This is symbolic," Tucker continued, "not only of better relations between black and white Baptists but between black and white people in general throughout the nation."

S. S. Hodges, a native of South Carolina, is the new, fulltime executive secretary for the Progressive Baptist group. Hodges began his work in April of this year, opening the convention's first permanent headquarters here in the nation's capital. A graduate of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Hodges formerly was pastor of the Sardis Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

The Progressive Baptist executive expressed pleasure that the Progressive National Baptist Convention will have a part in the work of the Baptist Joint Committee. He pledged that his group planned to be an active "dues paying" member. The committee in turn named Hodges second vice chairman.

Hodges explained that the Progressive National Baptist Convention originally was particularly strong in northern, urban centers, but that it is now picking up strength in the south.

Many of the churches, he said, are dually aligned with the American Baptist Convention and a few are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The other conventions which are members of the Baptist Joint Committee are the Southern Baptist Convention, American Baptist Convention, Baptist Federation of Canada, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., North America Baptist General Conference and the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

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Public Affairs Committee  
Selects Magnuson Chairman

WASHINGTON (BP)--Warren R. Magnuson of Chicago, general secretary of the Baptist General Conference, is the new chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Public Affairs Committee, in Semiannual session here, also named Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, as first vice chairman. S. S. Hodges, executive secretary of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, was chosen as second vice chairman. Miss Elizabeth J. Miller, head of the American Baptist Division of Christian Social Concern, was selected secretary.

Magnuson succeeds Homer J. Tucker, an American Baptist, who has been chairman for the last two years.

The Baptist Joint Committee is made up of representatives from nine Baptist denominations, including the Southern Baptist Convention.

Magnuson, a native of Minnesota, was elected general secretary of the Baptist General Conference in 1969. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, where he was pastor of the Central Baptist Church for 15 years.

Magnuson's convention, with headquarters in Chicago, has 687 congregations and more than 105,000 members. Originally the Baptist General Conference was composed of Swedish Baptist immigrants and their descendants. However, in recent years the conference has not emphasized its ethnic character, observers said.

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Scottish Baptist Denies Union  
Turning Away From Americans

10/8/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Scottish Baptists are not turning away from America, a Baptist Union of Scotland leader said here, but definitely are working hard at encouraging cooperation between their organization and the European Baptist Federation.

The statements by James W. McLeod, the director of Christian education and youth for the Scottish union, came in response to a story in the Texas "Baptist Standard," as reported by European Baptist Press Service.

In the earlier story on a column by James Taylor in the "Scottish Baptist Magazine," it was reported that Scottish Baptists are turning away from America as a source of help because America's domestic problems are causing hesitation and doubts among the Scottish Baptists.

McLeod, a close friend of Taylor, said the article from which the report was drawn is a monthly column called "Outlook." He said the articles in that column highlight events or issues "at fairly provocative level" and "tend to be of a controversial nature."

"Jim writes with his tongue in his cheek," McLeod said.

"We're not so much turning away from with a view of never looking back to America, but we are encouraging our contacts with Europe."

"While grasping the opportunities in Europe, we also must consolidate our links with America," McLeod said.

The Scottish Baptist leader, who visited the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board for a week, also said, "Why should the Baptist Union of Scotland send me over here for a one month tour if there were no benefit in it."

He cited many examples of areas in Christian education where he felt the Scottish Baptists could learn from Southern Baptists and other Baptists in the United States.

McLeod said he came to the board primarily to study grouping-grading programs and materials.

"Christian Education in Scotland tends to be Sunday School for children," he related.

"We need to go to an all-level program, he said.

He said he also had been studying the "whole outlook" of the board including its methods, planning, procedures and administration.

"We cannot take your system lock, stock and barrel and apply it in our situation," he said, adding that he would evaluate ideas conceived while in America and implement where possible. There are about 18,000 Scottish Baptists with about 150 churches. The Baptist Union of Scotland was founded in 1869.



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