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October 14, 1970

**Four Baptist Churches Get
Federal Loans For Repairs**

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tex. (BP)--Four Baptist churches here, three affiliated with Southern Baptists through the Baptist General Convention to Texas, have been awarded sizeable Small Business Administration loans to repair damage suffered during hurricane Gelia.

The long-term, low interest federal loans total almost three quarters of a million dollars.

Acceptance by the four churches raises to five the number of Baptist organizations which have received such government loans.

As reported earlier, the heavily-damaged University of Corpus Christi received a \$500,000 Small Business Administration loan over a 30-year period at three per cent interest.

Tuloso-Midway Baptist Church will receive the largest loan--\$400,000. First Mexican Baptist Church will receive \$250,000 and St. John Baptist Church, a predominantly Negro congregation, will receive \$60,000.

West Haven Baptist Church, which cooperates with the Corpus Christi Baptist Association but is affiliated with the National Baptist Convention (Negro), received \$17,500 loan.

The Small Business Administration has already made loans in the Corpus Christi area totaling more than \$89 million as the result of the hurricane. Loans were made to a wide range of organizations and institutions to repair hurricane damage not covered by insurance.

As a federal agency, the Small Business Administration may make loans to churches or religious institutions only in the case of physical damage to property caused by a disaster, according to J. R. Woodall, regional director of a five-state area.

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**84-Year-Old Church
Calls Pastor, 84**

10/14/70

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (BP)--An 84-year-old Baptist church has called as its pastor an 84-year-old minister, and neither is considering retirement.

A. E. Price, 84, is the new pastor of Water Tower Baptist Church here.

He assumed the pastorate Oct. 4, for the second time in his life. Price was pastor of the church here from 1966-68.

Writing a letter to the editor of the Illinois Baptist, a state where Price has served previously as pastor, the new pastor observed:

"When a dog bites a man, that is not news. When a man bites a dog, that is news. In these days, when churches are seeking pastors under 35 to 40 years of age, it is news when an 84-year-old church calls an 84-year-old man as pastor.

"This is even more interesting when he has been pastor there before," Price observed.

Price has had a colorful career as Baptist pastor, evangelist, educator and author.

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Blacks Shun Revival At White
Church Featuring Negro Preacher

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The bold efforts of an all-white Southern Baptist church located in a predominately black area of the city met with little success, as Negroes in the area shunned a revival held by the church featuring sermons by a Negro preacher.

The church, University Heights Baptist, invited W. Taft Watts, the black director of the Baptist Education Center, here as the evangelist for the revival.

The church is located in an integrated area which includes the Wildewood and Musgrave housing additions in Oklahoma City.

It was the first time in Oklahoma City that a black minister had held a revival in an all-white Baptist church, according to Jerry Rodgers, pastor of the church.

No blacks showed up until the revival's fifth night, and none attended again until the last night of the week-long meeting.

A Negro pastor and a teenage girl attended on the fifth night, and the girl was the first person to make a profession of faith during the meeting.

Both Watts and Rodgers expressed disappointment that a few black people in the area had accepted the revival's open invitation to attend.

Rodgers said that since he became the church's pastor a year ago, only one or two Negroes had attended the church. "This has been disturbing," he said.

He explained that the nearest black Baptist church is "four or five miles away--and here we are, six blocks from them. I feel they are afraid they wouldn't be welcomed."

The pastor noted that news coverage of actions by First Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., in rejecting for membership two Negro applicants who were reached through the church's ministries might prompt some people to think all Southern Baptist churches are dominated by racists.

He acknowledged that there are some congregations within the SBC that might be classified as "racist," but quickly added: "We at University Heights feel this is not true, and in most Southern Baptist churches in Oklahoma City, it is not so."

Rodgers began his personal friendship with Watts six years ago when he was the only white student at Langston University, Langston, Okla., where Watts was a professor.

The pastor said he had received some criticism from inside and outside his congregation for inviting a Negro preacher as the revival's evangelist, but nobody has left the church.

Watts is both a Southern Baptist and a National Baptist, and is the director of the Baptist Education Center of Oklahoma City.

The Negro minister said that preaching to a white congregation has a different "feel," noting that white Baptists are not as emotional as blacks. "They're more reserved, and do not shout, but they are good people, fine people," he said.

Watts said he believes that the revival, despite the poor response from the black community, is one small step in creating closer ties between Oklahoma's black and white Baptists.

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Vocational Guidance Consultant
Joins Sunday School Board

10/14/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--John G. Mitchell, a native of Kentucky, has joined the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board as a consultant in vocational guidance.

Mitchell will be responsible for consultation, counseling, and training services in vocational guidance," Bill Clemmons, director, Southern Baptist program of vocational guidance said.

Mitchell earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green. He also holds a bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Mitchell has served as pastor of Cave Spring Baptist Church, Auburn; Lafayette and Sanders Baptist churches, all in Kentucky.

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News Analysis

Political Manipulations
Mix Religion, Politics

by W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a political maneuver that may give some Senators voter appeal to their constituents, the U.S. Senate finally approved (50 to 20) a constitutional prayer amendment which none of them can reasonably expect to pass the full Congress.

Sen. Howard H. Baker (R., Tenn.), son-in-law of the late Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen, attached the so-called "Dirksen Amendment" to the Women's Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. This was done two days before recess for the election campaign. The vote was taken one day before the recess with almost no debate.

Prior to that the Senate approved another amendment to the women's equal rights proposal which would guarantee that nothing in the women's rights measure would require drafting of women into the armed forces if Congress does not choose to draft them.

Both actions of the Senate virtually killed the women's equal rights amendment, according to many Washington observers. Here is the way it works.

The House of Representatives passed by a two-thirds vote a proposed constitutional amendment that says: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The proposal then went to the Senate for hearings, debate and vote.

It is important to remember that the women's equal rights amendment is opposed both by Rep. Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.) chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and by Sen. Sam J. Ervin, (D., N.C.), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional rights. The amendment was bottled up in the House Judiciary committee by its chairman until it was forced to the floor of the House of Representatives by the rarely used discharge petition. This procedure almost always incurs the hostility of the committee chairman involved.

The procedure in the Senate was different. After reaching the Senate floor the women's equal rights amendment was attacked by attaching other amendments to it. This forces the revised amendment to a conference committee composed of representatives of both houses of Congress, to iron out differences between versions of similar bills before sending back an identical bill to be voted upon by both houses.

It is inevitable that strong opponents both to the women's equal rights amendment and to the prayer amendment will be appointed to serve on the conference committee. This committee in turn will either keep the entire proposal bottled up until Congress adjourns for the session or until a compromise is reached that is acceptable to all parties.

In the event that the proposal is kept in committee until adjournment, then the entire legislative process must be started over again with the new Congress in 1971. In the event a compromise is reached, it is likely that all extraneous amendments will be shucked off and the original simplified version would prevail, but this is an unlikely event.

In either case the Dirksen Prayer Amendment would most likely be the first victim of the delay or side-tracking procedure and would not see the light of day again in this session of Congress. At the same time the politicians can appear before the voters and tell how they supported the Prayer Amendment to the Constitution. Politicians always do their best to appear to be on the side of God, of righteousness and of religion so as not to offend the good people who send them back to Congress.

Little does Mr. Average Voter realize that his emotions are being appealed to, rather than his good judgment. Little does he realize that religion is being used as a political tool for political purposes in such maneuverings.

In the process, truth goes out the window and the voter hears what the politician thinks he wants to hear. For instance, Sen. Baker in a press release after the Dirksen Amendment was approved said: "A majority of the Supreme Court held in 1961 that voluntary nondenominational prayer in public schools was a violation of the ban against 'the establishment of religion' contained in the First Amendment to the Constitution."

The direct opposite to this is pointed out by Sen. Ervin in his speech to the Senate opposing the Dirksen Amendment. Ervin said: "I think the present amendment is wholly unnecessary, because there is nothing in the school prayer cases which holds that the First Amendment outlaws voluntary prayers in the schools; and therefore we

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are attempting to circumvent a decision of the Supreme Court which has never been rendered."

Ervin further says: "there is no Supreme Court case, and I venture to guess, no case in any American court, which bans prayer in public buildings."

The Dirksen Amendment that was approved by the Senate would provide: "Nothing contained in this Constitution shall abridge the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer."

Sen. Ralph Yarborough (D., Tex.) opposed the Dirksen Amendment and said that it "poses a major threat to religious freedom in America."

Yarborough said that "this amendment would seemingly limit prayers in public buildings to 'nondenominational prayers'" He then pointed out ~~that~~ it would be necessary for the government to determine which would be a denominational or nondenominational prayer.

This, Yarborough continued, would put the government in the business of determining what would be acceptable prayer or unacceptable prayer in public schools. Thus, he concluded, the Dirksen Amendment would abridge and limit the board religious freedom of the Bill of Rights.



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