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February 5, 1971

Baptist-Catholic Dialogue Sees Better Relations

DAYTONA BEACH (BP)--The First Baptist-Catholic regional conference featuring pastors and parish priests ended on a note of community here with priests and preachers alike evidencing a commitment to continue dialogue on a local level.

The 50 Baptist and 50 Catholic participants met for three days at Daytona Beach's Marco Polo Inn to discuss topics ranging from salvation to civic righteousness. In the process many seemed to learn from each other and learn about each other, according to observers.

The meeting was sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of interfaith witness and the Bishop's Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It was unique in that the majority of participants have direct contact with local congregations.

The body passed a resolution, suggested by the Arkansas-Louisiana joint delegation that during the week immediately following the conference each participant contact a person of the opposite persuasion and share his experiences at the meeting.

Msgr. Bernard Law, director of the Bishops Committee said of the meeting: "I'm filled with anticipation of what this is going to mean in terms of future Roman Catholic-Southern Baptist cooperative efforts. Time and again it has been pointed out that we represent the two largest Christian bodies in the United States. Please God, we will begin to act more together in facing the many issues changing the Christian conscience in the United States today."

M. Thomas Starkes, head of the Baptist department of interfaith witness, had expressed similar feelings in his closing remarks to the group.

"This has been a quest," Starkes said. "Our task now is to go and permeate a Southern culture and be willing to accept the tentativeness of our theological concepts, together."

Members of both bodies gave suggestions as to positive steps can be taken by Catholics and Baptist on the local level. C. Brownlow Hastings, assistant secretary of the interfaith witness department suggested that priests and pastors seek ways for lay people to have wholesome opportunities for genuine dialogue. He suggested living room dialogues, speaker exchanges and retreats in which participants did the inviting and the conducting. "Let us do our utmost to build bridges of understanding at the lay level," he said.

Claude Broach, pastor of St. John's Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C., suggested the group not be disappointed "if we don't go anywhere from here. The meeting is in itself a message," Broach stated.

The North Carolina pastor suggested that ministers cultivate a personal friendship with a clergyman of the other persuasion and develop the kind of openness which allows for growing together. "If we feel this is important we will have to make the time. It will not happen accidentally."

The participants had three small group sessions in which they examined salvation and evangelism, church-state relations and civic righteousness.

The Mississippi-Alabama delegation in its report on civic righteousness stated, "many young people are grappling with the problems of the relation of christianity to social responsibility and are acting positively to resolve social issues. Unless we can show that institutional religion is concerned with terminal values we shall lose these youth."

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The delegation suggested that Christians encourage other Christians to run for public office, work to examine political issues, utilize the mass media and bring political candidates into contact with voters whom they normally would not meet. They also suggested that Christians support men who actively are involved in Christian endeavors and are seeking office, both morally and financially.

Msgr. Law commended former SBC President Brooks Hayes for his work in Baptist-Catholic relations. "The history of our relationship can never assess the good this man has done," Law said.

From the pulpit came not only humorous barbs but apologies and pleas for forgiveness for past misunderstandings. Bishop Durick of Nashville, Tenn., Catholic liaison leader with the Southern Baptist Convention urged the group to be united "in the following godly ways: forgiveness for past failure; prayer; work for common unity; becoming more articulate in the knowledge of each other; readiness to do the will of Christ, and openness and seriousness that will avoid easy evasion and will bring us to new understanding and a new commitment."

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Annuity Board Trustees
Pick Layman As Chairman

2/5/71

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DALLAS (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board elected a layman as their chairman, endorsed several benefit increases and honored three executive officers who retired.

Elected as chairman of the board was Donald E. Bowles, a Dallas insurance executive and the first layman to hold the top trustee post in the 53-year history of the Annuity Board.

Bowles succeeds Darold H. Morgan, pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas, who joins the Annuity Board staff March 1.

The trustees also approved the issuance of the fifth consecutive "13th Check" and the continuation of the four per cent increase in benefits to annuitants henceforth on a guaranteed basis.

R. Alton Reed, President and chief executive officer of the board, said the "13th Check" amounts to 8.33 per cent of the annual benefit paid to annuitants during 1970, except those getting benefits for education, fixed period and variable.

Reed said the four per cent increase in benefits for annuitants is a guaranteed amount as of January 1, 1971. The increase was given for the first time a year ago, Reed said.

The trustees also recognized three officers who retired March 1. The trio are Mrs. Pierc (Mable H.) McCartney, Floyd B. Chaffin and Fred W. Noe. Each was given special employe service plaques and a letterbound book recording secretary.

Chaffin ended 16 years and retired as senior vice president and assistant to the president. During 1971, Chaffin will serve in an "ambassador-at-large" status, calling on persons who get benefits from the board.

Chaffin joined the board in 1955. He has held the associate secretary and senior associate secretary posts in the area of development prior to the re-organization of the board in 1970. Before moving to the board, Chaffin served as executive secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Noe finished 17 years, retiring as senior vice president and assistant to the president. He was in charge of the mortgage loan and real estate area in the investment division. Before joining the board, Noe worked as business officer for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He and his wife plan to return to Tennessee to make their home.

In the annual president's report, Reed summarized the work which had been recommended and by the long range planning committee and approved by the trustees last year.

Reed said all staff positions recommended by the committee have been filled. Morgan, who was elected as senior vice president and assistant to the president starts work March 1. He is expected to succeed Reed, when the latter retires in 1972.

Other officers completing the staff included Frank Durham, who assumed his duties as senior vice president and director of investments. Gene P. Daniel, joined the development division in 1970 as vice president in charge of agency services.

Reed also presented statistics covering 1970 activities.

He said 38,965 persons were participating in the protection program as of December 31, 1970. Of this total, 24,526 are in Plan A, the basic part of the program which includes all family benefits; 10,541 in Plan B; and 3,898 in Plan C, the variable benefit.

Reed said that another 16,374 persons were participating in the health benefit plan while 21,200 are in the life insurance programs.

Reed said benefits paid to annuitants reached a record \$8,404,306, an increase of \$1,140,455 over 1969. The 1970 record is larger than was paid in both relief and benefits during the initial 28 years of the board's existence, Reed said.

He said funds held in trust for persons participating in the protection program reached an all time high of \$249,510,412, representing an increase of \$19,461,176 over 1969.

Reed said persons who began to get benefits during 1970 included 373 for age retirement, 159 for widow and 50 for disability. In addition, 84 children received child benefits; 142 education; and 48 variable benefits.

The trustees also elected to serve with Bowles, three vice chairmen, who are H. Gordon Hobgood, Jr., Ken Boren, both bank executives from Dallas, and John Basco, Odessa, Tex., pastor.

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CORRECTIONS TO FOLLOW ON ANNUITY BOARD STORY OF FEB 5.

IN SEVENTH GRAPH, CORRECT LAST SENTENCE TO READ: SERVICE PLAQUES AND
A LEATHERBOUND BOOK CONTAINING LETTERS OF CONGRATULATIONS.

BETWEEN SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRAPHS, INSERT THE FOLLOWING GRAPH:

MRS. MCCARTNEY COMPLETED 36 YEARS WITH THE BOARD, RETIRING AS
SECRETARY OF THE CORPORATION. SHE PREVIOUSLY HAD SERVED AS REGISTRAR
AND RECORDING SECRETARY.

BLASKAS AND J. D. WOULD REALLY LIKE TO SEE THAT GRAPH INCLUDED.
IT WAS OMITTED WHEN YOU EDITED COPY IN NASHVILLE. SHE'S THE ONLY RETIRING
OFFICER WHO WAS OMITTED.

O'BRIEN

2-8-71

END OR GA

MIN PLS OK END JIM IS NOT HERE TODAY...I DON'T THINK WE WILL HAVE
A MAILING BUT IT WILL GO IN THE FIRST MAILING OK END
BYE AND THANKS