



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, 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

March 5, 1971

**Carlson Honored On Retirement
From Baptist Joint Committee**

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs during its semi-annual meeting here honored C. Emanuel Carlson on the occasion of his retirement after 17 years as executive director of the public affairs agency. Carlson's retirement begins April 1.

A successor to Carlson has not been named. Until one is chosen, John W. Baker, associate executive director, will continue to serve as acting director. Other executive staff members of the public affairs office are W. Barry Garrett, director of information services, and James M. Sapp, director of correlation services and editor of Report From the Capital.

Carlson, a native of Canada where he was born to Swedish immigrant parents, came to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in January 1954 from Bethel College, St. Paul, Minn. For a number of years he had taught at the four-year liberal arts college and was dean of the school when he was named successor to J. M. Dawson as head of the public affairs agency.

Porter W. Routh, secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention and a member of the Public Affairs Committee, represented Southern Baptists at the banquet honoring Carlson. Routh presented Carlson with a Distinguished Service Award plaque and a copy of a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee at its September 1970 meeting.

In the resolution from the SBC Executive Committee, Carlson was praised for his "sterling quality of Christian statesmanship."

"His scholarship and skill have opened the way for enlightenment and new understanding in the complex area of church-state relations," the resolution continued. "His leadership and diplomacy have been major factors in maintaining a high level of prestige for the Baptist witness in this field," declared the Executive Committee in its resolution.

Praise for Carlson's work in church-state relations came also from a spokesman from the Lutheran Council in the USA. Robert E. Van Deusen, representing other denominational groups involved in public affairs here in the nation's capital, paid tribute to Carlson's effectiveness in getting other denominations with similar goals to work together. Van Deusen is director of the office of public affairs for the Lutheran Council, an agency similar to the Baptist Joint Committee.

In addition to tributes from the staff and the committee, and the presentation of a gift of appreciation, the March 1971 issue of Report from the Capital was dedicated to Carlson. In it Editor James M. Sapp described Carlson as "a superb Baptist statesman."

In a profile of the retiring Baptist executive, Sapp said in Report From the Capital that "Baptist denominational leaders would agree almost to a man" that Carlson has helped, as much as any among them, "to focus in on the biblical basis of Baptist concern for religious liberty, the meaning of Baptist insights for public policies today and the analysis of Baptist institutional policies in the light of theological premises."

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is made up of nine Baptist denominations in North America. In addition to the Southern Baptist Convention, these are: The American Baptist Convention, Baptist federation of Canada, Baptist General Conference, National Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, Inc., North American Baptist General Conference, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., and the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

Ethiopian Officials Attend
Baptist Dedication Services

ADDIS ARABA (BP)--Baptist Work in Ethiopia was formally launched in dedication services in this capital and the rural district of Menz-Gishe 200 miles to the north.

The service here celebrated the completion of two residences, an office, warehouse and guest house on a site near the city's outskirts. Program speakers included U.S. Ambassador William Hall and the vice-mayor of the city, Ato Asibe.

For the ceremonies in Menz-Gishe, some guests arrived in small planes at the grass airstrip near Tsai-Tsina, location of a mission clinic and handcraft school.

"One expected result was that the guests bought many rugs and knitted articles from the school," reported Mrs. Raymond V. Lindholm, wife of the school director.

Emperor Haile Selassie has contributed clothes to the handcraft school students and blankets and baby clothes to mothers who come to the clinic for prenatal care, Mrs. Lindholm said.

The main part of the rural celebration was held in Mehal Meda, site of a Baptist-led community development program. There the missionaries turned over a newly completed health center to the government. Dr. Sam Cannata Jr. will continue to serve at the health center in an advisory capacity, however.

The 10-mile ride to Mehal Meda in Land Rovers over a rough road so impressed Ras Mesfin, the province governor, that he contributed \$2,000 (Ethiopian) for road repair and ordered that work begin as soon as possible, Mrs. Lindholm said. "This announcement was greeted with cheers and trumpeting, especially by the missionaries."

Five small planes flew to Mehal Meda, a five-minute trip, and landed on the newly prepared strip. The missionaries had provided diesel fuel for the heavy machinery that graded the landing strip.

The group ate lunch in a large tent set up for the occasion, "and it was a feast in true Ethiopian style," Mrs. Lindholm said. "Guests enjoyed 'injera,' a spongy bread, and 'wot,' various sauces with ground raw meat and chunks of raw beef and fried lamb."

She said that "the significance of these dedications can hardly be over-estimated. Ministers of many government departments were present and are now acquainted with us and our work. We feel sure they will help us in many ways."

Representatives of radio, television and the press were also present. "Our mission has received much publicity," Mrs. Lindholm continued. "Previously we had heard rumors that some important officials were skeptical about our work, but after they visited us we heard nothing but hearty endorsement of our presence in the area."

On Sunday morning following the dedication ceremonies a group of 20 priests of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church arrived at the Lindholm residence for Bible study. Priests had never come for Bible study before, Mrs. Lindholm said, although students and farmers regularly attend Sunday afternoon study meetings.

Southern Baptist missionaries began work in Ethiopia in 1968 after a year's study of the Amharic language in Addis Ababa. Currently eight couples are under assignment to Ethiopia by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

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Houston Church Tops
1,000-Mark In Baptisms

3/5/71

by Robert O'Brien

HOUSTON (BP)--Spurred by a "Spireno" youth revival which has produced 4,200 professions of faith and 775 baptisms through Feb. 28, First Baptist Church here has baptized 1,069 persons during the first five months of the church year, which began Oct. 1, 1970.

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Although the research and statistics department of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville does not keep running statistics on the record number of baptisms for a single church in a church year, SBC and Texas Baptist Convention evangelism leaders can recall no church in SBC history with more baptisms in a church year.

During the three years (1966-68) that John Bisagno, current pastor of the Houston church, led the SBC in baptisms as pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., his totals ranged from 324 to 413. The highest number of baptisms for an SBC church in the decade of the '60s was 576 at Beth Haven Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., in 1969.

Research further back than that would involve months of searching SBC annuals, records and microfilm, according to the research and statistics department.

During the four-phase, three-month main thrust of Spireno--an acronym for "spiritual revolution now"--the church recorded 4,011 professions of faith and 639 baptisms, practically all among teenagers.

Two weeks later, Evangelist Richard Hogue, who led the main thrust, came back for a three night follow-up campaign at the church which attracted 800 to 1,200 teenagers each night and resulted in 189 professions of faith and 101 baptisms.

Bisagno emphasizes that numbers are important only as a yardstick for gauging the quality of a church's program of evangelistic outreach. "I'm not one of those who sneers at statistics as being shallow," he says. "Statistics aren't shallow in themselves. However, if a person's goals become number oriented alone, then statistics are shallow and self-defeating in their applications"

After an extensive period of follow-up, First Baptist Church will provide lists to other Houston-area Baptist churches in Spireno converts who do not wish to seek baptism and church membership there or in a church of another denomination.

Already, Bisagno says, Spireno converts have begun turning up at other churches, Baptist and non-Baptists. "A conservative estimate is that more than 400 have already been baptized by other churches," he said.

Bisagno notes that the converts have exerted great impact on their schools and communities. "For example, a local junior high teacher wrote to say that 45 members of her history class, who were saved, have had a great impact on that school," he says. "Kids have been carrying their Bibles to school and witnessing."

The undercurrent of excitement at Spireno, punctuated by explosive outbursts of applause and spontaneous cheers, reminiscent of a championship basketball final, shattered stereotypes observers may have had about teenagers.

Minister of Evangelism Ben Loring, who organized Spireno's thrust into 45 pre-revival assemblies in Houston area schools and the comprehensive follow-up program, was impressed by this "discovery:" young people did not "turn off" the church because it was an institution but embraced it in what might be called the "institutional phase" of the Jesus movement.

"Kids may have turned off the facade some churches have created, but they are not turning off the church of Jesus Christ," Bisagno adds. "We accepted them as they were and presented Christ to them--and we held the banner of the church high."

"Old time religion has not failed," Bisagno says, "it just has not been tried."

Just about the only difference between Spireno and an old-time Charles Finney Revival, he points out, were: 1. The congregation was young rather than adults; 2. the music had an up-beat; 3. It was not called 'revival' and 4. The evangelist's hair was three inches long.

The youngsters enthusiastically sang old standard hymns from the Baptist Hymnal and heard sermons based on hell, salvation and commitment of daily life to Christ. Invitations were tied strongly to discipleship--not just winning converts.

First Baptist Church spent \$53,500 on the Spireno campaign. All but \$1,000 of that figure was raised from men in the church or from Spireno offerings. About \$9,000 was spent on buses alone.

"Buses," says Loring, "were the lifeline of Spireno. They got the kids there. The church ran 10 bus routes within a 40-mile radius of the church. Plans are underway to purchase up to 20 buses and provide transportation for every Spireno convert who wants to come to church, as well as others."

During the follow-up phase, which has run concurrently with all other phases, First Baptist Church staffers and a trained corps of 200 laymen have visited in about 3,700 homes.

"We have been amazed," Loring says, "that we have run into no opposition from parents."

"Every parent, including Unitarians, Jews, Atheists and many other non-Baptists, has commented that they are pleased and amazed at changes they have occurred in the lives of their children," Bisagno points out. "That makes us certain that this movement is under the influence of the holy spirit."

Noting the spiritual movement which has been breaking out across the country, Bisagno says, "If churches are going to do anything to reach young people they should do it now."

"There's a spiritual atmosphere now that makes evangelism more effective than it's ever been."

Hogue, 24-year-old former minister of youth for Bisagno at Del City, adds, "it's imperative that the church be flexible enough to adapt to the kids swept up in the Jesus movement or we may lose an entire generation to heretical sects."

"The Jesus movement is a great opportunity for churches, which can accept kids as they are and present them Christ, to ground these youngsters in the word of God and provide a stabilized spiritual force that will have an impact for generations to come," Hogue adds.

"The Jesus movement," he continues, "has invaded the churches as well as other aspects of life. I think we have ample evidence of that."

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Public Affairs Committee
Eyes IRS Church Probes

3/5/71

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs took action on two matters of concern to churches and maintaining religious liberty during its semi-annual meeting here.

Authority was given to John W. Baker, acting executive secretary of the Baptist Joint Committee, to represent the committee at any hearings the Internal Revenue Service may call concerning federal guidelines on IRS examination of church books.

The committee also expressed its approval of the "spirit" of a bill presently before Congress on certain procedures to be followed in calling for a Constitutional Convention.

In taking such actions, the Baptist Joint Committee did not speak for the nine Baptist denominations that make up the committee, but only for itself.

In December the federal government released proposed regulations concerning limiting IRS examination of the taxable unrelated business income of churches. The regulations are proposed to carry out the new tax reform bill signed into law by President Richard Nixon.

The newly proposed regulations provide for no examination of the books of churches, conventions or associations of churches to determine whether or not they are engaged in unrelated trade or business.

An exception for such an examination, however, is provided for in the event that the secretary of the treasury or his delegate "believes that such organization may be so engaged (in unrelated trade or business) and so notifies the organization in advance of the examination."

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Evenso, the proposed regulation says that no examination shall be made "except to the extent necessary to determine whether such organization is a church or a convention or association of churches." Further, the regulations says, "no examination of the books of account... shall be made other than to the extent necessary to determine the amount of tax imposed" on the unrelated business income.

Some denomination executives representing Protestant, Jewish and the Catholic faiths, see the proposed regulations as "an open invitation to harassment" if the government wants this. Their concern has been communicated to a top official of the Treasury Department who said the proposed guidelines will not go into effect without a public hearing.

In other action, the Baptist Joint Committee echoed its concern about the numerous calls from state legislatures and some national figures for a Constitutional Convention to rewrite certain parts of the constitution or to add amendments. Many religious leaders, civil libertarians and constitutional lawyers see the possibility of an "open" Constitutional Convention putting "up for grabs" some of the basic freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.

The Baptist Joint Committee action did not oppose the idea of calling for a Constitutional Convention. The committee did, however, endorse the idea of requiring that the purpose of calls for a Constitutional Convention be determined in advance.

Sen. Sam. J. Ervin Jr., (D., N.C.) is sponsoring a bill in the Senate to define the procedures for calling a Constitutional Convention and to limit the number of issues to come before such a convention. The Joint Committee action approved the "spirit" of Sen. Ervin's bill.

Although the present constitution allows the calling of a convention to consider amendments to it, many spokesmen here fear that the entire Constitution could be "junked" by certain interest groups if they were in control of such a convention. It is within the context of preventing the potential loss of basic rights concerning religious liberty and the inalienable rights of individuals that the Baptist action must be viewed, a spokesman for the committee said.

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Jaworski Takes Stand Against
Civil Disobedience, For Law

3/5/71

NEW YORK (BP)--Divergent views were presented on civil disobedience as a method of bringing about social change during a Southern Baptist conference on "National Priorities and Christian Responsibilities" here.

Leon Jaworski of Houston, president-elect of the American Bar Association, took a strong stand against civil disobedience in favor of the "rule of the law," but his views were countered in discussion and a latter speech.

Gardner Taylor, black pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, expressed black frustration with the law of the land, saying that "blacks have never known a time when they were trusted and honored in the land of their slavery."

Jaworski, speaking at the conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, called American leadership, including the church, to a recommitment to compliance with the rule of the law.

A member of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, Jaworski cited that commission's report in saying that the democratic society cannot afford to justify violence on the grounds of individual belief.

He cited civil rights as one area in which "flagrant violations of court decrees" have taken place.

He urged churches to "take a leading role in reestablishing throughout our land a dedication to the acceptance of the rule of law and firmly denounce the concept that the individual has a right to choose which law to obey and which to defy.

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During a discussion period, his views were challenged by Ross Shearer, an attorney from Arlington, Va., and his wife, and by several students.

Mrs. Shearer pointed out that institutions maintained slavery and later segregation in her state until the process was broken through civil disobedience. She charged that the "American Bar Association is out of touch."

Shearer and several youth urged Jaworski to lead the bar association in "challenging the tyranny by which an illegal war is being carried on in Vietnam." He added that he is a member of the board, but could not associate himself with Jaworski's position.

In response to a question from a student from Louisiana who asked if there was any place in his thinking for non-violent civil disobedience, Jaworski replied, "No, absolutely none."

Later, following the address by Taylor, the black Baptist minister was asked to respond to Jaworski's opposition to civil disobedience. Taylor said he could only be biblical. "We ought to obey God rather than men," he asserted.

Taylor said the black presence in America tests the honesty and integrity of the political and religious pronouncements of the nation.

"Because of the black presence, Christians in America have not yet been able to prove that they or Christians or that Jesus Christ can really change people in their basic and ultimate life styles," Taylor said.

"It seems to me that the Christian responsibility of those who are white in this country and who claim Jesus Christ as Lord is to confess openly that a great wrong has been done and to renounce as failure the notion that all that is needed is to win men to Jesus Christ and then saved men will save society," Taylor said.

"The truth is," he added, "that where evangelical Christians, even Baptists, have been strongest, the fiercest patterns of racism have prevailed most openly."

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SBC Cooperative Program
Gifts For 1971 Up 9.4%

3/5/71

NASHVILLE (BP)--Contributions through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program for the first two months of 1971 increased by 9.4 per cent over gifts for the same period in 1970, a financial report from the denomination's Executive Committee here disclosed.

Porter W. Routh, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee, called the increase "very encouraging."

For the first two months of the year, Cooperative Program contributions totalled \$5.4 million compared to \$4.9 million in 1970, an increase of \$464,508 or 9.4 per cent.

During the month of February, Cooperative Program contributions were \$2.4 million, an increase of \$123,512, or 5.3 per cent. In January, the increase was about 13 per cent.

Routh said, however, that to get a realistic picture, the January and February increases should be combined with a decrease of six per cent during December of 1970.

"The fact that the average increase for December, January and February shows a 4.7 per cent increase indicates a decided upswing in stewardship and continued confidence in programs made possible through the Cooperative Program," Routh said.

In order to meet the total operating and capital needs for 1970 and 1971, an increase of 11.48 per cent in giving will be required, Routh said.

To meet the total operating budget for 1971 will require a 4.37 per cent increase Routh explained. To meet the 1971 operating budget plus the balance due on 1970 capital funds held over until 1971 would require a 7.72 per cent increase, and to meet the total operating, 1970 and 1971 capital needs budget allocations will require a 11.48 per cent increase, he said.

In addition to the \$5.4 million in Cooperative Program funds, \$11.8 million has been given in 1971 to designated world mission causes, most of it through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, the financial report indicated.

Designated gifts for 1971 increased \$911,507, or 8.32 per cent, for 1971 compared to the first two months of 1970.

The combined Cooperative Program and designated receipts totalled \$17.2 million, an increase of \$1.3 million or 8.65 per cent over the combined world missions gifts for the first two months of 1970. The financial report includes only amounts given to national SBC mission causes and does not reflect contributions to state and local Baptist mission efforts.

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BAPTIST PRESS

*460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

LYNN MAY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE. NO.
NASHVILLE TN 37203

1971

MAYOR SPEAKS TO BAPTISTS: Mayor John Lindsay of New York City (right) confers with a staff aide while Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission Executive Secretary Foy Valentine (Center) introduces the mayor for a major address at a seminar on "National Priorities and Christian Responsibility" in New York. (BP) PHOTO by Steve Wall.

SEMINAR DISCUSSES NATIONAL PRIORITIES: More than 400 Southern Baptists discuss "National Priorities and Christian Responsibility" during a seminar in New York sponsored by the SBC Christian Life Commission. Mayor John Lindsay (right), one of the principal speakers, and Foy Valentine (at podium), executive secretary of the SBC Christian Life Commission, field questions during the discussions. (BP) Photo