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April 1, 1971

**Baptists Urged To Shape  
1970's, Not Just Survive**

CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP)--Saying the dominant characteristic of the decade of the Seventies is "fragmentation," a Southern Baptist theologian predicted here that polarization would be the greatest danger facing Southern Baptist life during this decade.

William E. Hull, dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, urged Baptists to respond to the decade by seeking to shape the Seventies, not just survive them.

Speaking to the Baptist Public Relations Association here, Hull urged Baptists to follow the pattern of early Christians who in the decade of the Seventies in the first century not only survived but shaped the world by adapting their religious practice under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

"It is my contention that the Bible, when properly understood, is a trustworthy guide to make the authentic adaptations which are needed to shape the Seventies and not merely survive them," Hull said.

"Only if we base our strategy on the Bible will these changes represent divine creativity rather than human compromise at work in our midst," Hull said.

Comparing the 1970's to the Seventies of the first century, Hull said both were characterized by turbulence and the threat of the possible destruction of the church. But the church in the first century responded not with a strategy of mere survival, but by seizing the initiative in bold and daring ways, Hull said.

Examples of this creativity, he said were such things as dropping circumcision in favor of an emphasis on baptism, adopting Sunday as the day of worship rather than the Sabbath, (Saturday), and its rigid religious tradition, and worshipping in house churches and even the catacombs rather than in the temples. Of greatest importance was the writing of the four major Gospels during the Seventies, Hull observed.

Rather than attributing this burst of creativity to their own ingenuity, the early Christians pointed to the Holy Spirit as the only adequate explanation for the strange moving of God in their midst, Hull said.

"Under the guidance of the Spirit" in the 1970's, Southern Baptists should "devise new organizational forms, new patterns, of leadership, new strategies of presentation," Hull declared.

"If we stay true to the intention of the Book, while at the same time following the inspiration of the spirit, it is my contention that we may indeed shape--and not just survive--the Seventies for Christ," he stated.

Warning against increased polarization, Hull observed, that "it seems inevitable that our denominational fellowship will become 'layered' by our multiple life styles which, sociologists would tell us, are largely incompatible.

"This does not necessarily mean, however, that the convention must splinter into several groups or that we must develop a public relations consensus," he said. "Rather it raises the question of whether we can mobilize a theological reality great enough to transcend the sociological polarization already well advanced in our midst."

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Hull said that the most common terms used to describe this polarization were the words "conservative" and "liberal" but later, in the discussion period, observed that Baptists need to "mint some new words" because Baptists have come to feel "liberal" is a bad word and "conservative" is a good one.

Baptists, Hull argued, are being polarized by those committed primarily to a preservation of our heritage and to those open to the hope of something better; by traditionalists oriented toward the past and innovators oriented toward the future, and by those who cling to a few simple absolutes and fundamentals and those determined to be critically reflective about the complexity of religious life.

Christians, however, cannot choose between these emphasis, because each has its place and its worthwhile points. "We want the best of both and the worst of neither," he declared. Baptists should be concerned both with the day before yesterday and the day after tomorrow, he said.

During the discussion period, Hull called for a new and deeper sense of love among Baptists for those of differing points of view.

He urged "action based on love and reconciliation." Hull said he personally had determined to "bear a clear witness to what I believe and yet to love those who disagree when I am up close to them."

"We must agree that we transcend these polarities and go on to more significant things," he said. "I am trying to reach out for a style that is not liberal, not conservative, not past, not future; but a sense of freedom to be loose and relaxed about more possibilities under the leadership of God's spirit than we normally are willing to pursue."

Three members of the public relations organization responded to Hull's remarks in the dialogue session.

Walker Knight, editor of Home Missions Magazine who had just returned from an investigative reporting trip to California to study the "Jesus movement" among youth, said Hull's remarks about polarization between generations and cultures were more prophetic than he might have realized.

Knight said the polarization of the Seventies will most likely be over whether to be open to this (Jesus) movement or not, and the theological questions it will raise.

Briefly, he described the movement as one of "phenominal power that is awesome to behold" with a strong evangelistic zeal, a puritan ethic, literalism in scripture interpretation, new theology of fundamentalism, a celebration of life, leadership of the Holy Spirit, and an intense emotionalism. One of the main messages of the movements is that Jesus is coming again, soon," he emphasized.

Catherine Allen, public relations consultant for the Woman's Missionary Union of the SBC, commented on Hull's plea for innovation in the Seventies by observing that when SBC leaders made an attempt to be adaptive and creative with new approaches in curriculum for the 1970's, they discovered that most Baptist people were not sure they wanted this.

John Roberts, editor of the Baptist Courier, the South Carolina Baptist state paper, questioned whether or not the Southern Baptist umbrella is large enough to cover all the differing points of view Hull mentioned.

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House Continues Military  
Exemption For Seminarians

4/1/71

WASHINGTON (BP)--The House of Representatives here voted by 114 to 29 to continue military draft exemption for students preparing for the ministry under the direction of recognized churches or religious organizations.

The House action over-rode a recommendation of the House Committee on Armed Services which would have made divinity students subject to the Selective Service draft by repealing their former exemption. Rep. F. E. Herbert (D., La.) is chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

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The amendment to restore draft exemption for divinity students was offered by Rep. J. A. Byrne (D., Pa.). He charged that no Protestant, Catholic or Jewish church organizations were consulted by the Selective Service about the effect of drafting seminarians on the supply of ministers.

In the debate on the floor of the House of Representatives both sides used the separation of church and state argument to make their points.

Rep. Lester L. Wolff (D., N.Y.) said, "Any action by the government to draft divinity students would constitute an interference of government into spiritual ground and would, in a sense, violate our traditional separation of church and state."

Wolff further pointed out that by repeal of the draft exemption for divinity students the government might be setting standards in religious education due to the different procedures by various denominations in selecting and training their ministers.

On the other hand, Rep. William G. Bray (R., Ind.) contended that "Congress could not continue exemptions for divinity students as an aid to religion because that would be a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

Bray further charged that many students had stayed in college as a means of gaining a draft deferment. He said if the exemption were lifted for other college students but continued for divinity students, "the theology school would be the only remaining draft haven and a great number of draft evaders would be seeking entry into such schools."

The Indiana congressman cited the General Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel as supporting the repeal of draft exemption for divinity students.

Rep. Abner J. Mikva (D., Ill.) retorted that, since a minister must be a seminary graduate before he can become a chaplain, "it seems to me that the chaplains are very anxious to preserve their monopolistic position and I do not see where that is an entirely Christian or Jewish approach."

Rep. John Buchanan (R., Ala.), a Southern Baptist minister, took the House floor to defend draft exemption for divinity students. He deplored the attempt to Congress to divert young people who have been called to God's service and had begun their training.

He said that such action might force some divinity students to claim conscientious objection, "which some of them may not be able to do in good conscience."

Washington observers seem to think that draft exemption for divinity students will face no further serious attack during action on the Selective Service Act, either in the House or the Senate.

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New Church Developing In  
Seventies, Reporter Says

4/1/71

CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP)--Describing the religious trends of the 1960's and projecting them to the decade of the Seventies, the religion editor of Newsweek magazine told the Baptist Public Relations Association here he sees a new church developing.

Kenneth L. Woodward, in the closing speech to the association, said that this emerging new church would be composed of "Concerned, committed Christians of all faiths who, without turning their backs on their own traditions have put themselves in God's hands, asking him to lead them toward a unity forged out of common concerns, common risks, mutual efforts arrived at by different paths..."

Woodard told the Baptist group he felt the seventies would be a good decade for Southern Baptists.

"There is no reason why Baptists, with their penchant for autonomy, ought to fear the blessings of diversity," he said. "Indeed, the Seventies could be the decade in which Southern Baptists, finally come out from under the basket to share the risks and joys of faith with their fellow Christians."

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Of the Seventies, Woodward said denominational life would go on, though not as usual, and that each denomination will experience its own crucifixion. "Those that don't will surely be the worse off," he observed.

He predicted the fascination with Jesus in the next decade will increase and become a major focus of interest. "There will be a lot of 'Jesus' around<sup>in</sup> the Seventies," he said.

Many will turn to the old-time religion in an effort to fight off future shock, but the more creative will reach out for new forms of faith, and many will continue to abandon altogether a religion that refuses to wrestle with the hard knots of modern experience, he observed.

Earlier, Woodward had traced the issues and trends of the 1960's that would affect the Seventies, including such things as Vatican II, the Consultation on Church Union, civil and cultural religion, the "Death of God" theology, the theology of hope, the theology of revolution, secular theology, situation ethics, the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, counter culture, etc.

Woodward said he could almost hear some of the nearly 100 Baptist public relations workers asking what these issues have to do with religion, or feeling that the issues don't touch the people they are concerned about.

"My only answer is, if these issues haven't touched your life already, lucky you. But they will. If not you, then your children. Even Carl McIntire's son is a dove on Vietnam," Woodward said.

In another major address, the dean of the Theology School at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, William E. Hull, issued a challenge for Baptists to shape, not just survive, the Seventies by adapting religious practices along the patterns of first century Christians.

Hull said that during the decade of the Seventies in the first century, Christians were faced with a crucial period when the future of the church was threatened, yet they responded by adapting and changing such things as circumcision, meeting in temples, worship on the Sabbath, and with creativity by writing the four Gospels.

"It is my contention that the Bible, when properly understood, is a trustworthy guide to make the authentic adaptations which are needed to shape the Seventies and not merely survive them," Hull said.

Earlier, the president of the organization, W. C. Fields of Nashville, told the association that "for better or worse, the people in this room this morning can have a significant role in what is happening and what will happen among Southern Baptists. As Christian communicators, our Baptist future is partly in your hands."

Fields, public relations secretary for the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, said the central function of the people attending is "to convey information--significant, useful, meaningful information--to persuade, to secure understanding and support for the cause we serve."

Unfortunately, Fields said, many people, including some churchmen, view the public relations role as that of neutralizing or eliminating the voices of dissent. "But public relations is not really capable of brain-washing and it ought not be capable of whitewashing," he said.

He added that one Baptist administrator had recently proposed in a speech that the denomination's news service be eliminated. "When administrators threaten the information media of the denomination with a lynching because they report the truth--including the truth that is embarrassing--then some changes ought to be made somewhere," he said.

During major business sessions, the association elected Mrs. Lee N. Allen, public relations consultant for the Woman's Missionary Union of the SBC, as president, and Tom Brannon, public relations director for the South Carolina Baptist Convention as president-elect.

Other officers elected were program vice president Ed Shipman of the SBC Radio-TV Commission; membership vice president Jesse Fletcher of the SBC Foreign Mission Board; newsletter editor William Nunnally of Samford University; secretary-treasurer Agnes Ford of Nashville; and an Inter-Agency Council representative, Lucy Hoskins of the SBC Sunday School Board.

The association presented a total of 89 awards for public relations achievements and projects to members representing 29 different agencies. The public relations office of the Baptist General Convention of Texas won 18 of the awards.

In the opening address, Emmanuel L. McCall, associate director of the department of work with National Baptists for the SBC Home Mission Board, traced the role of the black church in the quest for social justice in America, saying the civil rights movement got its start in the black church.

"I would hope that the black church will help the white church to understand what it means to be prophetic," said McCall, one of the few black executives employed by a Southern Baptist agency.

McCall said he sees a trend in the black church toward evangelizing white people, particularly those who live in the inner-city areas deserted by white churches that have moved to the suburbs.

In another opening session address, Richard Brannon, former South Carolina Baptist minister who is now special assistant to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, outlined the needs of the nation's poor.

"To those who say that welfare is a waste of money," said Brannon, "I would say that the failure to help the poor is a much greater waste of manpower, human resources and money.

Brannon, former Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) aide, said that the myth that most poor are black needs to be exploded, since 69 per cent of the poor are white and the remaining 31 per cent includes all ethnic groups.

During a dialogue session, Brannon hedged on several of the questions from the floor and from three reactors--Robert O'Brien of the Texas convention staff, Al Shackelford of the Indiana convention, and Tom Miller of Virginia's Religious Herald.

On the proposed education voucher system funded by OEO, Brannon said he did not see anything wrong with experimenting in an effort to make public and private school education competitive.

Asked what churches could do to fight poverty, Brannon urged good citizenship. Miller expressed frustration, saying "surely to God, there must be something more than just being good citizens," adding that Baptists "are going to have to get our soft little hands dirty."

Brannon said that as a former Baptist minister, he knew Baptist churches, and there are not many of them willing to get their hands dirty.

Most of the second day of the conference was spent in workshop-type sessions seeking to solve public relations problems, and in general sessions with speeches by Ralph E. Frede, director of development for Baylor College of Medicine, Houston; Worth McDougald, professor of journalism at the University of Georgia, Athens; and John Stuart McKenzie, vice president of an Atlanta graphic arts firm.

McDougald summarized much of the tenor of the conference saying, "If we don't start communicating in the church, we're going to find there won't be any church in the 21st century."

Next year, the association will meet in San Antonio, Tex., April 4-6. Future meetings were scheduled in New Orleans in 1973, San Francisco in 1974, Williamsburg, Va., in 1975 and Orlando, Fla., in 1976.

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