

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Schools Urged To More
Action in Baptist Affairs**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Baptist higher education institutions and their leaders were challenged here to put their influence more fully into the mainstream of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In the closing address to the annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools, W. C. Fields, public relations secretary of the SBC Executive Committee, issued a plea for Baptist school personnel to "enter more forcefully and constructively into the affairs of the denomination."

Fields told the educators their background and skills uniquely qualify them to help the denomination to carry on the convention approved theme for this year, "Living the Spirit of Christ in Openness and Freedom."

He also urged them to help Baptists to conduct "a searching analysis of the faith we profess."

"There is a lot of counterfeit religion which needs replacing with the real thing," Fields said.

"In our land there is a lot of self-reliance posing as faith, a lot of shrewdness labeled as wisdom, a lot of anthropology going under the name of ethics, and a lot of conscience which is construed to be God," he said.

"Our malady in this country today is partly too much religion and too little faith, and not enough wisdom to know the difference," Fields said.

He called for Baptists to work together as the churches "face harder times ahead."

With regard to the future, Fields identified the denomination's biggest problem as a reluctance to change.

During the two-day meeting the Baptist educators heard addresses by the board of education directors for the states of North Carolina and Illinois on enrollment and financial trends, and spent one afternoon discussing student recruitment.

The association is made up of 72 schools enrolling 109,098 students in the school term just closed.

Ben C. Fisher, executive secretary of the SBC Education Commission, announced enrollments of 83,993 for senior colleges, 10,130 for junior colleges, 10,992 for seminaries, 3,112 for academies, and 871 for Bible schools.

Association officers for the coming year elected here are: President Gordon W. Blackwell, president of Furman University, Greenville, S.C.; Vice President James E. Southerland, president of Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla.; and Secretary-Treasurer H. I. Hester, retired Baptist educator, Liberty, Mo.

In a related meeting, the Southern Baptist Education Commission re-elected its current officers.

These include Chairman William K. Weaver, Jr., president of Mobile College, Mobile, Ala.; Vice Chairman Randall H. Minor, president of Shorter College, Rome, Ga.; and Secretary James E. Tanner, professor of English, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee.

Baptist-Jewish Dialogue
Asks Freedom, Understanding

CINCINNATI, Ohio (BP)--Approximately 40 Jewish and Baptist scholars closed a four-day dialogue at Hebrew Union College here with a call for religious freedom for citizens of the Soviet Union.

The adopted statement noted the conferees' deep concern over the "denial of fundamental human rights of Baptists, other Christians and Jewish persons in the Soviet Union."

Specifically mentioned was Ruth Aleksanderozich who is confined to a labor camp. The statement called for amnesty for her and "other dissenters of conscience who have been repressed."

The scholars called on President Nixon and other government officials to intercede on behalf of these persons in order to bring about their releases and restoration of their full human rights.

The dialogue participants also asked the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Jewish Committee "to carry forward vigorously a joint effort of intercession in behalf of their persecuted brothers in the Soviet Union."

The dialogue was the second such event between Baptists and Jews jointly sponsored by the Department of Interfaith Witness of the SBC Home Mission Board and the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee.

In introductory remarks, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, national director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee, stated, "the symbolism of Baptists and Jews meeting together annually in fellowship and mutual respect in itself is as meaningful as the subject matter we choose to discuss."

He continued, "In the past we have denied one another, negating the value of one another as religious beings. Now we are attempting to foster mutual understanding and mutual affirmation."

In a major address, Rabbi Samuel Sandmel, professor of Bible and Hellenistic literature at the host college said, "Two hundred years ago when a Christian persecuted a Jew he did so because he was a Christian. If he does also in our times, it is despite him being a Christian. Such Christian persecution, as distinct from hostility or discrimination, has disappeared almost entirely from the modern western world."

Sandmel recalled the persecution his father has known in Eastern Europe from Christians. "His (the fathers') misfortune was that his encounter was with ignorance, not with Christianity," the noted scholar declared. "My encounter has been what has seemed to me authentic Christians--men who have been gentle --and because they were Christians."

Jewish historian Ellis Ridkin, Hebrew Union College, noted that while certain Christian scriptures have hostile indications for Jews, they do not have to have hostile consequences.

On the Baptist side, seminary professors present stated that courses in Old Testament and New Testament help produce a better understanding of the Jews as does exposure to seminarians to Jewish lecturers. Also courses in Christian ethics help combat anti-semitism, they noted.

Sandmel reminded the scholars that "if we achieve understanding even sympathetic understanding, our respected theologies are no less than irreconcilable to each other. One cannot blend belief in Jesus as the Messiah with unbelief in him as the Messiah, the abrogation or annulment of the laws of Moses with their eternal validity or atonement as brought by divine grace with atonement by men or one single act of atonement by the Christ with man's need for annual atonement."

In outlining plans for the future, the participants suggested that regional dialogue be held for seminarians of both faiths as well as for laymen and clergy of each group.

Other plans call for a joint study project among Baptists and Jewish scholars, and a third scholars' dialogue in two or three years.

Areas where Baptists and Jews may work together were listed as social justice and personal moral and ethical conduct. Topics such as church separation, religious liberty, drugs, alcohol and prejudice were all listed for possible study and action.

M. Thomas Starks, secretary of the HMB Department of Interfaith Witness, indicated that financial ability and available resources would largely determine the priority among suggestions made for future work.

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**Jesus Revolutionists Need
Local Church, Miss Georgia Says**

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)--"Young people who are involved in the so-called Jesus Revolution need to be channeled into the local church," Miss Nancy Carr, Miss Georgia for 1970, said during the Church Recreation Leadership Conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, here.

"Christian youth who are truly interested in being Jesus people will work through the church," the 22-year old beauty queen said.

"I hope this awakening (the Jesus Revolution) is real and lasting, but to me it seems to be primarily an emotional experience .

Skeptical of the mass approach of the Jesus Revolutionists, Miss Carr said, "I feel it's more real for a person to witness on a one-to-one basis .

"My Christian commitment became most real when I served as youth director last summer at Northside Baptist Church in Columbus, Ga.

