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February 3, 1972

Final Wrapup

Board Expresses Regret, Adopts  
Guidelines on Critical Issues

NASHVILLE (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in their semiannual meeting here acted on the "Becoming" issue, responded to 1971 Southern Baptist Convention actions and approved guidelines for writers and editors in dealing with critical issues.

Trustees approved unanimously a statement expressing regret over misunderstanding and difficulties caused by the alteration of the quarterlies, "Becoming" and "Becoming for Leaders" and reaffirmed the responsibility of the executive secretary to make decisions concerning board publications.

Revision of text and photography in the two periodicals was made at the last stage of the board's publication process because board officials felt the materials, including a two-lesson unit on race relations, were "subject to misinterpretation." The revised materials were still mailed on schedule.

The statement read: "The trustees of the Sunday School Board reaffirm the responsibility of the executive secretary as editor in chief to make executive decisions concerning any Board publication although some may agree and some may disagree with the wisdom of these decisions.

"We deeply regret the misunderstanding and ensuing difficulties which have resulted from the events related to the alteration of the original January-March issue of Becoming and Becoming for Leaders magazines.

"We wish the people of our Convention and other Christian friends to know that it is the firm intention of this Board to present and encourage Christian attitudes in race relations, and the Sunday School Board staff members are encouraged to speak, write, and print such Christian attitudes without equivocation.

"We further pledge our continued adherence to the 'Crisis Statement' on race relations adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1968 which appealed to all Southern Baptists 'to engage in ventures in human relationships, and to take courageous action for justice and peace.' We stand on our record concerning race relations and the ministry of reconciliation. We will remain true to our responsibility in the 'furtherance of the gospel' of Christian love and understanding among the people of all races."

Papers on "Race," "Sex and Sex Education" and "War and Peace" were approved, setting guidelines for writers and editors in dealing with those critical issues.

The trustees recognized that Sunday School Board curriculum materials must deal from time to time with current moral and social issues, on which there is considerable diversity of opinion and feeling among writers, editors and Southern Baptists in general. These must be handled in a constructive and helpful way, the guidelines said.

The trustees further recognized that the board's supervisory personnel and all of its editorial staff must be committed to the principle of publishing material which deals with all areas of Bible truth, including truth related to current issues.

Board trustees approved a response to a motion made before the St. Louis convention and referred to them through the SBC Executive Committee. The convention in St. Louis had referred to the SBC Executive Committee a motion which said:

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"That the name 'Broadman' be dropped from 'The Broadman Bible Commentary' so as to remove any connection between the commentary and the Southern Baptist name, due to its liberal content."

The Executive Committee asked the board to respond to the motion. In their reply, the board stated: "The Sunday School Board trustees feel that no change should be made in the name of this set of books which have already been published and distributed widely."

Reasons cited for the decision included the fact that the commentary meets characteristics set up for a Broadman publication and that it is being used by thousands of purchasers, the majority of whom are Southern Baptists who seem to have no problem with the name. Also noted were the costs of securing new copyrights and correcting at least one half of the printing plates for all twelve volumes.

"Under the basic doctrinal concept of the priesthood of believers, calling for the right and responsibility of believers to make their own determinations in spiritual matters, the production of books presenting varying points of view has been considered necessary. Some of these viewpoints may be considered fundamentalistic, conservative or liberal, depending largely upon the stance of the individual doing the evaluating.

"Broadman Press has sought to present within limits diversified views when sincerely expressed in publishable form by Bible-loving men who appear to have something to say and who say it well, whether those views might be shared by all Southern Baptists or not."

Also referred to the board's trustees by the SBC Executive Committee was a motion from the 1971 convention ". . . that the Convention request the Sunday School Board to eliminate the position of doctrinal reader."

Pointing to the board's tradition of using doctrinal readers through much of its history, a reply to the motion states, "The administration affirms and the trustees concur in the affirmation that the position of doctrinal reader is a necessary and appropriate one."

The statement cites the need for a doctrinal reader based "on the concept that educational materials published by the board for use by churches must be products of group work since such publications must record facts in the most accurate and understandable way possible after exhaustive analysis and do not seek merely to express opinions."

In other actions, the board approved the transfer of the position of editorial secretary from the executive office into a staff relationship to the director of the church services and materials division. This change was made in order to put the editorial secretary "more into the main bloodstream of development of curriculum plans and materials for use in local churches," according to James L. Sullivan, executive secretary.

The advertising and sales promotion department, Book Store Division, was deleted from the division organization and an operations department was added. The operations department will be responsible for advertising and sales promotion, inventory selection and control and the coordination of direct sales.

Al Crawford, supervisor since 1961 of the sales promotion section, Book Store Division, was named manager, campus stores department, of the same division.

Trustees approved the following changes in church literature periodicals to be effective with October-December, 1973, issues. All these are church training periodicals:

--Transfer "Skill," "Now," "Becoming" and "Becoming for Leaders" from church literature periodicals to church literature special study materials, to be published less frequently to meet the needs of the users.

--Change "Adult Church Training Guide" to "Source for Leaders" and add "Source - Kit for Leaders," "Baptist Adults - Kit for Leaders," "Baptist Youth" and "Baptist Youth - Kit for Leaders."

The board's building subcommittee was authorized by the trustees to employ an architect to develop detailed plans and specifications and to proceed with extensive remodeling of the Spilman Auditorium at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Assembly.

Jerusalem Chosen for '73  
Baptist Layman's Congress

JERUSALEM (BP)--Two thousand Baptist laymen from around the world are expected to gather in the Holy City in November, 1973, under the sponsorship of the men's department of the Baptist World Alliance.

David Wong, an architect of Hong Kong and chairman of the Alliance men's department, made the announcement here before a group Southern Baptist state editors who were visiting in Israel.

The Jerusalem meeting will be the second in a series of four regional congresses of Baptist laymen arranged by the Baptist World Alliance during 1972-75, Wong said.

The first will be a meeting of the Pan American Union of Baptist Men, July 17-27, 1972, in Cali, Colombia. Owen Cooper, an industrialist of Yazoo City, Miss., is president of the organization and was present in Jerusalem with Wong.

Following the Jerusalem gathering of Baptist laymen, Wong announced that similar laymen's meetings will be conducted in 1974 in Hong Kong, and in 1975 in Stockholm preceding the Baptist World Congress scheduled for July 7-11 in Stockholm.

The purpose of the Jerusalem meeting, Wong stated, would be to enable Baptist men to draw inspiration from Jesus' earthly homeland for a more aggressive witness to their Christian faith.

Jerusalem's largest auditorium, Binyanei Hao'oma, will be the site for the meeting.

Joining with Wong and Cooper in the announcement here were Floyd Harris and Jack Jones of Washington, D.C., area, and Erling Oddestad of Stockholm, president of the Baptist Union of Sweden.

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BSSB Trustees Approve  
Guidelines for Writers

2/3/72

NASHVILLE (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board approved here three papers setting guidelines for writers and editors in dealing with race, sex and sex education and war and peace.

The trustees recognized that Sunday School Board curriculum materials "must deal from time to time with current moral and social issues, on which there is considerable diversity of opinion and feeling among writers, editors and Southern Baptists in general." These issues must be handled in a constructive and helpful way, the statement said.

The trustees further recognized that the board's supervisory personnel and all of its editorial staff must be committed to the principle of publishing material which deals with all areas of Bible truth, including truth related to current issues.

The paper on race stated: "As the principal publishing agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, the board has a unique opportunity to render significant service in matters of race. Southern Baptists are the second largest religious group in the nation. They can and should become real leaders in practicing and fostering better racial relationships and in working for justice and equality of opportunity for the members of all races. The board can be one of the foremost influences in helping Southern Baptists to be Christian in their treatment of racial groups."

Noting that the board's literature has dealt with race in the past and that it will continue to do so, the paper stated that the real question is not whether to deal with race, but how to deal with it.

Among the points included in the race paper is a call for developing "a climate that assumes that those who disagree about race are nevertheless sincerely seeking the Christian position. The atmosphere in which such matters are discussed shall be one in which proper respect is shown toward divergent views and toward the persons who hold them, the paper explained.

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Utilizing a study of Bible principles, encouraging people to want to move nearer Christ in their concern for relationship to racial groups and creating a positive and constructive atmosphere and tone within each of the board's publications are among the guidelines.

The paper also stated that ". . . the board will best advance the cause of improved racial conditions, not by proposing detailed, ready-made, arbitrary solutions, but by educating our people in the basic principles of Christian human relations."

"For us, the educational approach is superior to a dogmatic, crusading or promotional approach," the guidelines said.

In a further discussion of purpose in using material on racial relations in Sunday School Board publications, the paper stated: "Whatever the opinions of individual writers and editors may be, the board's objective is not to promote integrated churches or segregated churches, but Christian racial relations. So, we will promote neither integration of churches nor segregation. Rather, we will appeal for a Christian treatment of racial groups, whether integrated or not."

In a paper titled "Sex and Sex Education," six problem areas were cited as giving evidence of the need for sex education. They were ignorance, false ideas about sex, the alarming increase of premarital and extramarital sexual indulgence, the strong sexual stimulation to which people are exposed in everyday living, the need for birth control education and the problem of sexual perversion.

"The Bible often refers to sex and sexual behavior, and it is noteworthy that the subject is always treated frankly and without apology," the paper said.

Some Sunday School Board periodicals can deal with sex more successfully than others because they are intended for private reading and are not ordinarily used as study guides for educational groups in the churches, the statement said.

"Sexuality must be presented as the God-given reality that it is. . . . Always and in all our publications, the biblical ideal of purity and chastity must be upheld," the paper stated.

A paper on "War and Peace" stated that ". . . the board gives no official endorsement to either (pacifist or non pacifist) position but allows writers to express their views as they wish so long as they are properly respectful of those who differ with them. It is important that an appropriate balance be maintained between articles representing differing viewpoints. . . . Both pacifists and nonpacifists should unite in working for peace."

Four basic Christian convictions that bear on the task of working for peace were listed: (1) God is the creator and ruler of our world. (2) God is a God of judgment. (3) God alone is sovereign. (4) God is Redeemer and Father.

Included in the 17 guidelines for use by writers and editors were calls for prayer for peace, participation in government and public affairs to exert a Christian influence, support of efforts toward the reduction of armaments by all nations, while emphasizing the importance for our nation to be spiritually strong, and learning about the needs of the peoples of the world.

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BSSB Trustees Respond  
To Convention Actions

2/3/72

NASHVILLE (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board responded to motions made at the 1971 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis requesting deletion of the name "Broadman" from the "Broadman Bible Commentary" and elimination of a doctrinal reader position.

In their semi-annual meeting here, the trustees studied the following motion made before the St. Louis convention and referred to them through the SBC Executive Committee:

"That the name 'Broadman' be dropped from 'The Broadman Bible Commentary' so as to remove any connection between the commentary and the Southern Baptist name, due to its liberal content."

The trustees approved a reply to the SBC Executive Committee which states: "The Sunday School Board trustees feel that no change should be made in the name of this set of books which have already been published and distributed widely."

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Reasons cited for the decision included the fact that the commentary meets characteristics set up for a Broadman publication and that it is being used by thousands of purchasers, the majority of whom are Southern Baptists who seem to have no problem with the name. Also noted were the costs of securing new copyrights and correcting at least one half of the printing plates for all twelve volumes.

Included in a discussion of Broadman publication characteristics was a statement of purpose:

"Across the years, Broadman has sought to produce general books for wide distribution through many outlets. An expressed purpose has been to present varying viewpoints held by different Baptists or Baptist groups. Under the basic doctrinal concept of the priesthood of believers, calling for the right and responsibility of believers to make their own determinations in spiritual matters, the production of books presenting varying points of view has been considered necessary. Some of these viewpoints may be considered fundamentalistic, conservative or liberal, depending largely upon the stance of the individual doing the evaluating.

"Broadman Press has sought to present within limits diversified views when sincerely expressed in publishable form by Bible-loving men who appear to have something to say and who say it well, whether those views might be shared by all Southern Baptists or not."

Also referred to the board's trustees by the **SBC Executive Committee** was a motion from the 1971 convention ". . . that the Convention request the Sunday School Board to eliminate the position of doctrinal reader."

Pointing to the board's tradition of using doctrinal readers through much of its history, a reply to the motion states, "The administration affirms and the trustees concur in the affirmation that the position of doctrinal reader is a necessary and appropriate one."

The statement cites the need for a doctrinal reader based "on the concept that educational materials published by the board for use by churches must be products of group work since such publications must record facts in the most accurate and understandable way possible after exhaustive analysis and do not seek merely to express opinions."

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Sunday School Board Trustees  
Express Regret over Becoming

2/3/72

NASHVILLE (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board approved a statement expressing regret over the misunderstanding and difficulties caused by the revision of "Becoming" and "Becoming for Leaders."

The statement also reaffirmed the responsibility of the executive secretary as editor-in-chief to make decisions concerning board publications, and encouraged board staff members to speak, write and print Christian attitudes on race "without equivocation."

Revision of the text and photography in the two periodicals was made at the last stage of the board's publication process after printing because board officials felt the material, which dealt with race relations, was "subject to misunderstanding."

The statement approved by the board reads:

"The trustees of the Sunday School Board reaffirm the responsibility of the executive secretary as editor in chief to make executive decisions concerning any board publication although some may agree and some may disagree with the wisdom of these decisions.

"We deeply regret the misunderstanding and ensuing difficulties which have resulted from the events related to the revision of the original January-March issue of 'Becoming' and 'Becoming for Leaders' magazines.

"We wish the people of our convention and other Christian friends to know that it is the firm intention of this board to present and encourage Christian attitudes in race relations and the Sunday School Board staff members are encouraged to speak, write, and print such Christian attitudes without equivocation.

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"We further pledge our continued adherence to the 'Crisis Statement' on race relations adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1968 which appealed to all Southern Baptists 'to engage in ventures in human relationships, and to take courageous action for justice and peace.' We stand on our record concerning race relations and the ministry of reconciliation. We will remain true to our responsibility in the 'furtherance of the gospel' of Christian love and understanding among the people of all races."

The statement as approved was drafted by a special committee of five board members after two board members said they felt a proposed statement approved the previous evening by two board committees was not strong enough.

A three-paragraph statement had been proposed to the full board by the plans and policies committee and the church services and materials committee, and was presented to the board by Robert W. Jackson, president of Tift College, Forsyth, Ga., and Scott Tatum, pastor, First Baptist Church, Shreveport, La., both members of the church services and materials committee.

R. Stuart Grizzard, pastor of National Memorial Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., said he did not feel the original statement was strong enough. "It would appear to me that we should see that our people, whatever their understanding of this, do not like what was done. I wonder why we can't admit perhaps that there was a mistake made."

Claude U. Broach, pastor of St. Johns Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., told the board that regardless of the wisdom of the decision, or the intent of the people involved, "this board has been pictured, at least in the public eye, as subscribers to a matter that has racist overtones."

Broach proposed a substitute motion, part of which was incorporated with the original committee-drafted statement to form the final version.

Several board members voiced support for Broach's substitute in favor of the committee's statement.

Richard T. Moore, pastor of Centerville Baptist Church in Chesapeake, Va., said he felt the substitute was more conciliatory, a stance which he felt the board should emphasize. He added that the board should express regret over the misunderstandings which developed following the decision, not regret over the unfortunate publicity.

A motion made by Wade Darby, pastor of First Baptist Church in Jefferson City, Tenn., asked the chairman to appoint a committee composed of the three individuals who drafted the original statement, plus Tatum and Broach, to come back to the board later with a new statement including the best of the two proposals.

Later, when the revised statement was submitted, it was adopted unanimously with almost no discussion.

When the matter was first brought before the board, Executive Secretary James L. Sullivan summarized the background of the controversy, pointing out the factors involved in the decision to revise the quarterlies, which were mailed to churches on schedule.

There were three primary factors, Sullivan said, two of miscommunication and one of education philosophy. A photograph with the unit, he said, did not portray reconciliation. "It was the wrong age group, the background was obliterated, the facial expressions were wrong, it was the wrong pose, and the wrong mix."

Secondly, he said, the textual material had one paragraph which was subject to misinterpretation, not because of race, but because it advocated what could have been seen as being a solution to problems with the touch method of physical contact. He pointed out the controversy over sensitivity training in speaking of this difficulty.

Third, the approach in the textual material was not consistent with the board's educational philosophy. "Causes, research shows, must be sustained by being sucked forward from the front, not by being pushed forward from the rear." He added that promotion of race relations belongs to the convention's Christian Life Commission and Home Mission Board, while the Sunday School Board's role is that of education.

Later in the meeting, the board approved a seven-page statement setting forth guidelines for editors and writers on the subject of race. It outlined in detail the board's philosophy of dealing with the question.

"In dealing with the race problem, all of the principles of effective communication are applicable," the guidelines said. "The prevailing atmosphere and tone of each of our publications shall be positive and constructive. Without compromising the truth, writers and editors must respect the attitudes and feelings of the various segments of the board's constituency. They must respectfully recognize differences of opinion and not seek to force on any reader a viewpoint he is not prepared to accept. . . .

"For us the educational approach is superior to a dogmatic, crusading or promotional approach. . . . In fulfilling its educational mission, . . . the board will best advance the cause of improved racial conditions, not be proposing detailed, ready-made, arbitrary solutions, but by educating our people in the basic principles of Christian human relations," the guidelines said.



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