



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 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) 254-5461
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

April 10, 1972

Baptist PR Workers Slate Study of Profession in SBC

SAN ANTONIO (BP)--Members of the Baptist Public Relations Association meeting here voted to ask a special committee to study the role and status of public relations as a profession in the Southern Baptist Convention.

The 85 conference participants elected as president, Tom Brannon, public relations director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, Columbia; and as president-elect, Clarence Duncan, administrative assistant of the Southern Baptist Radio-Television Commission, Fort Worth.

Outgoing President Catherine Allen of Birmingham, public relations consultant for the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, made the proposal for a "blue ribbon committee of former presidents" to study the role and status of public relations in the denomination.

"Our major failure in Baptist public relations has been our inability to communicate fully to management and administration what public relations is all about," Mrs. Allen said.

"Public relations has always been misunderstood," she said. "The public relations director has often been expected to perform black magic, or has been confined to the narrow limits of press agency."

Mrs. Allen, the first woman president of the organization, also advocated equal pay, status and employment opportunities for women in Baptist public relations.

"Women will work longer and harder for less pay than men, but just because they will, men should not ask them to do so," she said.

Two discussion periods plus a major address by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Ethics Professor G. Willis Bennett dealt with professional ethics of public relations.

Much of the discussion centered around what the public relations worker should do when his loyalties to truth and honesty come into conflict with his loyalties to "the boss who might want him to manage the news."

Bennett told the group there are no easy answers to such questions, and each individual must decide under God what he must do in each situation. "I feel for you," Bennett said. "You try to balance on a tightrope."

Another major speaker, Lester Kinsolving, who writes a syndicated religious news column that frequently exposes sham and hypocrisy in religious organizations, praised Southern Baptist public relations workers for refusing to manage the news and report only favorable developments. But he also urged them to be more courageous.

"No dirty linen gets any cleaner under concealment, which often makes it dirty in the first place," Kinsolving declared.

Regrettably, today, observed the Episcopal priest turned newspaper columnist, there appears to be a higher percentage of prophets in the fourth estate (journalism) than in the second estate (the clergy).

Kinsolving closed with a prayer for God "to kindle in our hearts that high spirit of adventure in which men scorn the way of safety and face danger in order to tell and write the truth."

Another workshop speaker, John Howard Griffin, author of the book, *Black Like Me*, told of his experience as a white writer in chemically changing the color of his skin to live in the South for six months as a black man.

Asked if he were treated any differently by people who professed to be Christians, Griffin said, "Yes, in some cases." But he recounted one experience which he described as "the most shattering of my life."

While his skin was black, he visited a church (he would not identify the congregation) where he had lectured a year earlier when his skin had been white and was treated "so warmly."

But when he tried to enter as a black man, dressed the same way he had been when he lectured there, he was told: "Are you trying to get yourself in trouble? Get yourself over to that nigger church."

Inside, the members were singing the hymn, "Walking in the Paths of Jesus."

Griffin said he was so shattered by the experience that he did not trust himself to write about the incident in his book, *Black Like Me*. Since that incident in 1960, Griffin said the situation has changed "only superficially." The same thing could happen today, he observed.

In another major address, a former Southern Baptist minister who is now a special assistant to President Richard M. Nixon told the conference that a deep cynicism has plagued the nation, largely because of a myth that government would provide a panacea to all our ills.

"The tragedy of the late 60's when our cities and campuses burned, and the sense of meaninglessness that possesses so many of our young men are partially results of our having high hopes met with revelations of failure," said Wallace B. Henley of the White House staff.

"On that awful morning when we awoke and found that our saviour, big government, had failed to bring Camelot, had failed to bring us the Great Society, our frustration turned to rage and disillusionment," he said.

Henley, a Baptist minister on the White House staff, called for Baptists to reject the myth that government is either bad, or the saviour of society, and "to be salt inside government as well as outside."

He rejected the view that federal aid to religious institutions is "an awesome monster, feeding them with one claw while ravaging them with the other." Noting there are many types of federal aid that do not violate the principle of separation of church and state, Henley said that to lump them all into one wicked category is a disservice to Baptist people.

The three-day conference ended with presentation of awards to Baptist public relations workers for creative and effective approaches to communications.

New officers elected, in addition to the president and president-elect, include: John Ivins of the Virginia Baptist State Association, program vice president; Isaac Terrell of the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes, membership vice president; Bill Nunnelley of Samford University, newsletter editor; Marjorie Rowden of William Carey College, recording secretary; and Agnes Ford of Nashville, treasurer.

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Former SBC President
Announces Retirement

4/10/72

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--J. D. Grey, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has announced his plans to retire as pastor of First Baptist Church here, effective no later than Dec. 31, 1972.

Grey, president of the Southern Baptist Convention for two terms from 1952-1953, has been pastor of the New Orleans church for almost 35 years. He is also former member of the Baptist World Alliance executive committee, and former president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

In announcing his plans to retire, Grey said that if the church should call a new pastor before Dec. 31, his retirement date will be adjusted to coincide with the coming of the new pastor.

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Belgian Baptists Increase
Work with Language Groups

BRUSSELS (BP)--Belgian Baptists will increase their witness among German-speaking and Dutch-speaking citizens, according to announcements made during a meeting of the European Baptist Federation's committee for Belgium.

A lay missionary couple, Mr. and Mrs. Rainer Alexander of Bochum, Germany, will move to Belgium and continue Baptist work with German-speaking people in Eupen, near the German border.

They will concentrate initially on working with children and youth in cooperation with the Baptist church at nearby Aachen, Germany, according to Joachim Zeiger, home missions secretary for German Baptists.

Also, Dutch Baptists are making contacts with Dutch-speaking people in Belgium, Theo van der Laan, general secretary of the Netherlands Baptist Union, announced.

These actions of Baptists in neighboring countries strengthen the efforts of the fledgling "interior mission" of the Belgian Baptist Union, said Southern Baptist Missionary Rudolph M. Wood, who is stationed in Nivelles.

John Desy, president of the Belgian Baptist Union, reported to the committee that with the addition of a new church at Nivelles the union has nine churches and four mission points with a total membership of 308. Twenty-one Baptisms were recorded in 1971.

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Baptist Work in Indonesia
Will Expand with Hospital

4/10/72

RICHMOND (BP)--A crisis in Baptist work in Indonesia will be eased next fall when one unit of a newly constructed hospital is opened in the town of Bukittinggi on the island of Sumatra.

A missionary physician, Kathleen Jones, explained the situation while attending a medical missions conference here.

In June, Dr. Winfield Applewhite is scheduled to transfer to Bukittinggi from the Baptist Hospital in Kediri, Java. He will join Nurse Everley Hayes in making preparations to open the 50-bed hospital, Dr. Jones said.

Baptist medical work in Bukittinggi is not new. Negotiations for land and a building permit for the hospital began in 1963 but were mired in endless legal proceedings.

In 1965 permission was finally secured to begin a clinic there which served over 40,000 Indonesians during its five-year existence.

The Indonesian Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) announced early in 1970 that land and a building permit had been secured and construction on the hospital would begin shortly.

Dr. Jones, then stationed in Kediri, was the only Baptist missionary physician in Indonesia at that time. Under her supervision, Nurse Ruth Ford (now retired) maintained the clinic in Bukittinggi for some time, anticipating the arrival of Dr. Frank B. Owen who was then on furlough in the U.S.

However, Dr. Owen suffered a fatal heart attack en route to Indonesia. Without a physician to take charge, the clinic had to be closed and construction of the hospital curtailed in July 1970.

Since then three physicians have been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board for Indonesia, and they are currently engaged in language study. Another physician has inquired about serving in Indonesia, with the hope of being appointed by this summer.

"We are grateful that the physicians have been available which will enable us to meet the need for a surgical hospital in the Bukittinggi area," said R. Keith Parks, the SBC Foreign Mission Board's secretary for Southeast Asia.

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"One of the urgent needs now," he added, "is a nursing staff to train Indonesian nurses. They will need on-the-job training in Bukittinggi. We know we won't have nurses to staff the hospital, but we will need key personnel to train nurses to serve there."

Dr. Jones said: "A missionary nurse gets to do more on the mission field than at home. Her job is more than just teaching. She will be used in ward teaching and supervision, central supply supervision, screening of clinic patients and ordering of supplies as well as classroom instruction."

She also has many opportunities for evangelistic work, Dr. Jones added.

The nursing school at the Kediri Baptist Hospital can provide some staff nurses. After graduation from their three-year nursing course, nurses must serve in the training hospital for three more years according to Indonesian law.

Then they are required to serve another three years in nursing, making it feasible for some to remain at Kediri for nine years.

"It is through the nationals we train that we can multiply ourselves," said Dr. Jones.

In addition to the nursing school at Kediri, there also are training programs in medical technology and anesthesiology, as well as intern and residency programs.

It is likely that some of the nurses fulfilling their three- or six-year obligations to the hospital may be sent to Bukittinggi, Dr. Jones said.

It is difficult to attract national physicians to work at the Baptist medical units because they are under the same obligation to serve at their teaching hospital as are nurses, Dr. Jones explained.

Currently, a resident and two interns are on the staff at Kediri. Dr. Jones said it is likely that one of these men might go to Bukittinggi.

"For a year I was the only missionary physician in Indonesia, and during that time urgent prayer requests were made for missionary physicians," Dr. Jones added. "That has been answered in a wonderful way.

"We hope that much more prayer will be made for nurses, not only for Indonesia, but all over the world," she said.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist papers

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Clinard to Join Faculty of
Hardin-Simmons University

4/10/72

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--Gordon Clinard, Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, will join Hardin-Simmons University faculty this fall as professor of Bible.

Clinard went to Southern Seminary in 1970 from San Angelo, Tex., where he had been pastor of the First Baptist Church since 1966.

Clinard, a past president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, is a native of Springfield, Tenn. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and the bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has held previous pastorates in Texas.

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CORRECTION

On BP story mailed 4/7/72, headlined "Nixon Unable to Address Southern Baptist Convention," please change graph nine to read: ". . . while editorials in three other papers have favored the invitation" instead of two, as sent. Also change last sentence of that graph to read "Editorials supporting the President's speaking have appeared in the Maryland Baptist, the South Carolina Baptist Courier and the Mississippi Baptist Record. Thanks.

--Baptist Press



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460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

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HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

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