



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 Orville Scott, 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) 254-5461
RICHMOND Jesse G. 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

August 28, 1972

**Alaska Baptist Elect
First Black President**

JUNEAU, Alaska (BP)--The Alaska Baptist Convention elected a black Baptist layman as its president here, and adopted a resolution opposing the use of tax funds for the support of private and parochial schools.

The Alaska convention became the first state Baptist body in the Southern Baptist Convention to elect a black man as state convention president.

The new president is Herbert Cotton, an accountant with the Recording Corporation of America in Anchorage.

Cotton had been serving as president of the convention since last May, assuming the presidency from the post of first vice president after the previously-elected president, Kelly Dickson, had resigned because of health.

The newly-elected convention president is a graduate of Southern University, Baton Rouge, La., a former member of the Alaska convention's Executive Board, and a deacon at Fairview Baptist Church in Anchorage.

The convention adopted a resolution opposing use of tax funds for parochial and private schools, claiming such aid is a violation of the principle of separation of church and state of the Constitution's First Amendment.

The resolution also voiced opposition to such aid "because of the words of Jesus, who said, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.'"

Another resolution approved a tax-free housing allowance for retired ministers participating in the retirement plan of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, claiming such a deduction should be considered "a rental allowance paid as part of the retired ordained minister's compensation for past services."

In another action, the convention approved the largest budget in its 27-year history. The 1973 budget of \$283,120 would allocate \$29,000 to world missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program.

Approving the report of its Executive Board, the convention authorized an increase in the missions staff supported jointly by the convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. A plan was approved to place pastoral missionaries at Clear and Tok, Alaska, and a full-time superintendent of missions in the Chugach Baptist Association near Anchorage.

Executive Secretary Troy Prince was assigned the responsibility of assuming the function of the state missions secretary.

The convention also voted to give Orton Ranch, a camping facility located in Southeast Alaska near Ketchikan, to the First Baptist Church of Ketchikan.

A report to the convention indicated that there were 848 professions of faith and 879 additions to letter to the 37 churches of the convention last year.

Messengers from 23 churches scattered from Ketchikan to Kotzebue, and Kin Salmon to Fairbanks, attended the convention. Sessions were marked with a spirit of harmony and optimism, according to Prince.

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Special recognition was given to summer missionaries who served in Alaska this summer, and the veteran retiring missionaries John and Lillian Isaacs of Fairbanks, who retire Nov. 1 with plans to move to a new home in Florida.

Next year, the convention will meet on the Kenai Peninsula, Aug. 14-16. The 1974 convention will be held in Anchorage.

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New Study May Lead to
U. S. College Approval

8/28/72

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Office of Education has funded a study which possibly could recommend that the federal government move into the business of accrediting colleges and universities.

At the urging of Elliot E. Richardson, secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), the Office of Education has launched a study that will "evaluate the federal government's reliance on accrediting agencies in determining institutional eligibility for higher-education assistance programs."

Leslie Ross, assistant director of the staff on accreditation and institutional eligibility, said the study may recommend a more direct federal role in determining eligibility.

"In our kind of free and open system the evaluation of education institutions ought to be a voluntary, peer group review," Ross said. "But because so much federal money flows into these schools, we have been drawn into it for reasons of protecting the public purse. It's a dilemma," he added.

The recent Office of Education announcement noted that a report in 1971 from HEW Secretary Richardson asked the Office of Education to initiate a review of the public functions of accreditation and "the public accountability of those accrediting agencies that enjoy the nationally recognized status conferred by the commissioner."

The new study will be conducted by the Brookings Institution in Washington, under a \$142,300 grant from the Office of Education. The contract asks the Brookings Institution to "assess the extent to which the government's use of such private, voluntary agencies for accreditation serves the public interest and what changes may be warranted in establishing federal eligibility requirements."

U. S. Education Commissioner Sidney P. Marland Jr., said that the study, scheduled to be completed in about 13 months, is expected to play a major role in helping Congress to formulate federal assistance programs for colleges and universities and other post-secondary schools.

Currently there are 45 nationally recognized accrediting groups used by the Commissioner of Education to determine eligibility for assistance under a variety of federal aid programs for students and institutions.

The listing of accrediting organizations initially was a mandate of the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952, which required the Commissioner of Education to publish a list of recognized agencies deemed reliable for determining the quality of educational institutions.

Over the past 20 years, the Commissioner's list of accrediting agencies has grown in importance as an indicator of educational quality for many federal and state agencies, foreign governments, industrial corporations, and the "educational consumer."

The growing federal relationship with the private accrediting agencies and associations has been closely monitored by the Office of Education through its accreditation and institutional eligibility staff, and the advisory committee on accreditation and institutional eligibility.

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**Russell Richardson Named
Illinois Evangelism Head**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--Russell Richardson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Wilmington, Ill., has been named director of evangelism for the Illinois Baptist State Association with offices here.

Richardson's appointment was announced by Ron S. Lewis, manager of the Church Development Division for the state association, during committee meetings held in conjunction with a called session of the Illinois Association Board of Directors.

During the board meeting, the directors approved the purchase of a 10-room house in Carmi, Ill., for use by the Baptist Children's Home. The purchase price was \$31,500.

The appointment of the new evangelism director fills a post vacant since James M. Ponder resigned in 1970 to accept a similar position with the Florida Baptist Convention.

A native of Oklahoma City, Richardson, 42, has been pastor of Baptist churches in Tennessee, Oklahoma and North Carolina.

He is a graduate of East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn., and has also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, and Appalachian State University, Boone, N. C.

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**Baptist School Scholarship
Granted 19 Years Ago Honored**

MURFREESBORO, N. C. (BP)--For Stephen T. S. Chiang, the journey from his homeland in Taiwan to Chowan College, a Baptist school in northeastern North Carolina, must be measured by both time and distance.

It took Chiang 19 years to cover the 18,000 miles.

The scholarship he was granted in 1952 was honored by the Baptist school here, even though the president of the school had never heard of Chiang.

The 8,000 mile, 19-year journey began when Chiang was offered a full two-year scholarship by F. O. Mixon, Chowan's president in 1952, on the recommendation of Miss Anabelle Coleman.

Chiang had been converted to Christianity under the influence of Miss Coleman. He was born on mainland China where he graduated from high school in 1948, and was forced to flee to Taiwan during the Communist takeover.

Mixon had written to Chiang that his scholarship would include room, board, tuition, fees and books. He added that "if you cannot arrive in the United States in time for the opening of the fall semester on Sept. 6, 1953, the above scholarship will apply at any future date when you can arrive."

That day was long in coming. Chiang was not granted a passport to travel in America, primarily, he said because government officials felt youth should study at home (Taiwan) instead of in foreign countries.

Chiang worked as a foreign affairs policeman after graduating from the Taiwan police academy, but each year he reapplied for study in America. He almost gave up, but in 1971, he applied again. To his surprise, his request was approved.

When Chiang wrote to Chowan, it was the first Bruce E. Whitaker, president of the school since the death of Mixon in 1956, had heard about the scholarship. After checking the files, he quickly replied promising to honor the scholarship granted in 1952.

Ironically, after waiting 19 years to study at Chowan, Chiang's stay will be short--only seven months. He plans to transfer to Campbell College, another Baptist school at Buies Creek, N. C., to major in sociology.

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NASHVILLE TN 37203