



# BAPTIST PRESS

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January 5, 1973

### Nashville College Razed By \$2 Million Blaze

NASHVILLE (BP)--Fire which apparently began in a basement faculty member's office gutted the main academic classroom building at Belmont College, a Tennessee Baptist institution in Nashville.

Firemen battled the three-alarm blaze for more than four hours during the New Year holiday weekend. Flames were discovered by a college administration official on his way to do some weekend work.

Blanton Hall, a four-story brick building, had provided classroom space for the Baptist college throughout its 21-year existence. For 30 years before that it had served a predecessor institution. The facility housed half of the school's 12 departments, including biology, chemistry, English and foreign languages, history and political science, mathematics, and psychology and sociology. An annex, providing space for the school's department of nursing was unharmed.

Belmont President Herbert C. Gabhart put the estimated loss at between \$1.5 million and \$2 million. "We are shooting in the dark as far as the actual amount that will be needed," Dr. Gabhart reported. "We must decide whether we are just to replace the building or if we are to make it fit into our long-range planning for the school."

Trustees of the college were being called to a special session of the board less than a week later to determine the course of action the college would pursue. Meanwhile, 22 faculty offices housed in Blanton Hall were relocated in other existing facilities. Classes for the second semester opening Jan. 4 were rescheduled in six other academic buildings on the campus.

Belmont has a present enrolment of 930 students and is a coeducational liberal arts college. College officials reported that the school's first evening program for adults, previously announced to begin the week of Jan. 8, would be unaffected by the razing of Blanton Hall. Evening classes had already been scheduled in three buildings surrounding Blanton Hall, none of which was hit by the fire.

The blaze began in a basement room in Blanton and swept through the ceiling, removing most of the first floor. From there it moved rapidly through stairwells, practically bypassing the second floor, leaping to the third floor and burning through the roof and upper outer walls. Flames leaped as high as 75 feet above the roof.

Personal losses were perhaps the greatest suffered as a result of the fire. Years of teaching notes and personal libraries of seven or eight professors were completely destroyed. Two men who were well advanced in their own doctoral pursuits lost notes and bibliographies representing years of work. No injuries or loss of life resulted from the tragedy, however,

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HMB Staffer McKay  
Takes North Carolina Post

1/5/73

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staffer Richard W. McKay was named new director of the Department of Pastoral Care and Family Services for the Wake County Hospital System in Raleigh, N.C.

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McKay has served as assistant director in the Board's division of chaplaincy since 1969 where he was head of hospital and health care chaplaincy. He joined the board in January of 1969 in charge of institutional chaplaincy, but assumed leadership of hospital chaplaincy in July of that same year.

He will assume his new position Feb. 1.

McKay formerly was assistant director of the school of pastoral care at North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C.

He has pastored churches in Virginia and North Carolina, and served as chaplain in Southwestern State Hospital in Marion, Va.

A native of Drewry's bluff, Va., McKay is a graduate of the University of Richmond and holds a Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. He received his clinical pastoral education at Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh and North Carolina Baptist Hospital.

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Parochial Aid Battle  
Looms in 93rd Congress

1/5/73

WASHINGTON(BP)-- A lively battle for tax credit aid to private and parochial schools looms on the horizon as the 93rd Congress got underway on January 3.

In the House of Representatives, Republican Leader Gerald R. Ford (R. Mich.), Rep. Herman T. Schneebeli (R., Pa.) and Rep. James Burke (D., Mass.) introduced a bill which would give parents a tax credit of 50 per cent for tuition paid to send their children to a non-profit elementary or secondary school up to a limit of \$200 per child.

In the Senate, Sen. Abe Ribicoff (D., Conn.) introduced an identical bill. The same bill was approved during the last Congress by the House Ways and Means Committee. No action was taken, however, in the Senate where Ribicoff had introduced the same measure.

James E. Wood, Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, declared that "the proposed legislation must not be seen as aid to parents but as financial aid to nonpublic schools, the vast majority of which are parochial schools."

Wood pointed out that the Baptist Joint Committee has a record of opposition to tax credit aid to parochial schools. The committee testified against such a measure before the House Ways and Means Committee last August.

At its October semi-annual meeting last year, Wood said, the Baptist Joint Committee "reaffirmed its opposition and respectively requested that the committee on ways and means refuse tax credits out of consideration of the American tradition of religious liberty and separation of church and state."

The Baptist executive requested that "expressions of opposition from all sectors of American society should be communicated to members of Congress."

Commenting on the prospects for his bill in the House of Representatives, Ford said he thought the prospects for passage were "fairly good," particularly since it is backed by the House Ways and Means chairman Wilbur Mills (D., Ark.).

Ribicoff made no prediction for the bill's chances in the Senate, but the tax credit idea is supported heavily by President Nixon's administration.

The traditional arguments were used both by Ford and Ribicoff in support of some form of public aid to the private schools. These are: parents should be helped to exercise freedom of choice in education for their children; parents should be relieved of part of the double financial load when they send their children to private schools; if the parochial schools close it will cost the public many millions of dollars to absorb their pupils.

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Opposition to the tax credit plan for parochial schools will be voiced not only by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs but by numerous other religious, civil liberties and educational organizations. These will include the National Education Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

A coalition of many such organizations has been formed and organized opposition to tax credit proposals will be expressed vigorously.

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Texas Oil Workers  
Meet Norway Baptists

1/5/73

STAVANGER, Norway (BP)--About 30 Texas Baptists who went to Stavanger, Norway, to work in oil production, attended a fellowship meeting recently with Norwegian Baptists in the Baptist Church of Stavanger.

Stavanger, on the southern coast of Norway, is the nearest port to an oil field being explored in the North Sea between Scotland and Norway.

The Texans have moved to Norway during the past two years to work in the project. Some plan to stay 10 years or longer.

"We know that God has brought us here not only for producing oil," said a Texas oil engineer. "He must have another purpose in it. We do not yet see it clearly, but we are willing to serve Him."

Although a Protestant interdenominational church has been formed to serve the approximately 200 American families in the area, the Texas Baptists will now have regular contact with Stavanger Baptists. Teenagers from both countries have planned joint weekly meetings.

The first fellowship meeting was prepared by Olav Frikstad, the local pastor; Gunter Wieske, evangelism secretary for Norwegian Baptists; and a Texas couple.

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Family TV Show Should Draw  
Baptist Support, Says Editor

1/5/73

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. (BP)--A Baptist editor here urged his fellow believers to write a national TV network to support "a wholesome, family program."

R.J. Hastings, editor of the weekly Illinois Baptist, singled out the TV series, "The Waltons," seen on Thursday night in most areas. He said CBS "is using national advertising to urge the public to watch and support this wholesome program about a Baptist family in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia during the Great Depression."

Church members who were eager to protest when CBS seemed ready to run X-rated shows on TV, now "must be just as vocal in supporting what is good," Hastings said in an editorial.

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CORRECTION

In Baptist Press story mailed 1/3-4/73, page 6, story headlined "Texas Begins Search For New Executive Secretary", please add the following paragraphs:

The board also passed a resolution of sympathy for members of Woodlawn Baptist Church, Austin, which lost 19 persons, mostly youth, in a bus-truck wreck on a narrow bridge in Ft. Sumner, N.M.

In other action the Texas Executive Board voted to reclaim after August 31, 1973, more than \$161,000 in endowment funds and 10 acres of property from the University of Corpus Christi (Tex.) which the convention gave its independence last year.

The university relinquished use of income from \$161,369, originally given the school by the Texas convention for endowment purposes. The income will be rerouted for endowment at nine other Texas Baptist schools and for Baptist student work on some 82 Texas campuses.

The 10 acres of property will be retained by the Texas convention for a religious or Baptist student center on the new upper-level state school expected to absorb the University of Corpus Christi in the near future.

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--Baptist Press