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March 27, 1973

Trilogue Panel Notes Concern
Of Jews Over Key 73 Campaign

NASHVILLE (BP)--The nature of the proclamation of Key 73, a nationwide evangelistic effort involving 140 religious bodies, aimed at "calling our continent to Christ," is what Jews take issue with, the nation's first trilogue of Jews, Catholics and Baptists was told here.

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, outlined Jewish opposition to Key 73 during a panel discussion in ecumenism, evangelism and pluralism at the historic meeting here.

Tanenbaum, one of the most outspoken critics of Key 73, said that until the trilogue discussions, here, "there has been no authentic discussion, no authentic communication about Key 73."

With communication, understanding and fellowship as the cornerstone of the trilogue, the purpose and methods of Key 73 became the focal point of dialogue for a three-hour discussion.

"The slogan and declared objectives, clearly imply no special understanding of the unique role of the Jewish people in God's economy," said Tanenbaum.

He charged that several of the 140 groups involved in Key 73 have been practicing techniques of deception and social ostracism to gain converts among Jews. He specifically named Campus Crusade for Christ, Inter Varsity, and Young Life as using questionable and offensive techniques.

Tanenbaum was most critical of the Jews for Jesus movement for proselytizing, saying the group cannot prevail as a serious option since they "are neither Jew nor Christian and will be accepted in neither household of faith."

Tanenbaum pointed out that a distinction needs to be made between evangelizing and proselytizing. The latter seeks "to undermine the faith of another religious body by fair or foul means. This," he said, "is totally impermissible and morally reprehensible," and it "threatens to damage Jewish-Christian relationships."

Jews, he added, have never questioned the right of Christians to proclaim their religious faith. The issue, he said, is the nature of the proclamation, especially when it singles Jews out as a special target audience.

Another panelist, Ron Kerr of the United Methodist Board of Evangelism who heads the launch activities for Key 73, said that the presence of a converted Jew in the launch television film for Key 73 says something about Christian insensitivity. "We didn't know he was Jewish until we started filming--we just weren't sensitive."

Kerr, director of communications for the Methodist board, also apologized to the group for presence of a document on evangelizing Jews in the Key 73 Congregational Resource Book.

Edward Flannery, director of the secretariat for Catholic-Jewish relations for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, pointed out that Christians are under a mandate to preach to everybody. "To knock on every door" is a civil right, said Flannery, just as it is a civil right of the Jewish community to resist the program.

With only 40 of the 150 Catholic dioceses in the nation participating in Key 73, Flannery said that "some of the dioceses have specifically excluded Jews as objects of conversion," but that "everyone enters Key 73 on his own terms."

He quipped that there should be a Jewish Key 74," and that next year Jews should knock on doors "to remind Christians of their obligations."

M. Thomas Starkes, interfaith witness secretary for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, another panelist in the discussion, said that Key 73 is really "not that big an issue with Christian evangelicals."

Starkes called for a kind of evangelism that is non-judgmental, open, sharing, affirming, and that deals not only with individual faith but social justice. Calling this "dialogical evangelism," Starkes said it begins with forgiveness and with seeking of forgiveness.

More than 80 Baptist, Jewish and Catholic scholars and pastors attended the conference, the first in history involving representatives of the three faiths.

The conference was sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nashville and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops; the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of interfaith witness; the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Federation of Nashville.

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Baptists, Jews, Catholics
Urged, Work for Racial Justice

3/27/73

NASHVILLE (BP)--A national Jewish leader, addressing the nation's first Baptist-Jewish-Catholic trilogy here, called for a coalition of Christians and Jews to fight to save the social programs of the Great Society.

"We need to fight to save those programs, not because they were all equally effective, but because to dismantle them is an act of contempt for the poor, the killing of hope, and the inciting of despair," said Albert Vorspan of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Vorspan, director of the Jewish group's Commission on Social Action in New York, chided government leaders, including President Richard M. Nixon, for "repellent immorality in government" and criticized religious leaders for their "eloquent silence" in failing to speak out publicly against immorality in government.

Vorspan was one of four panelists discussing racial and social justice during the first Jewish-Catholic-Baptist trilogy ever held in the nation. Another of the panelists was Lewis Rhodes, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn.

Presiding at the session was Bishop Joseph L. Howze of Jackson, Miss., one of three black Catholic bishops in the nation.

In a response to the panel, Bishop Howze warned the 75 conference participants that it would do no good to talk "with high-sounding language here tonight" if those words are never put into action.

It was Vorspan, using the strongest language of the three-day trilogy, who sounded the call to action.

Urging formation of a coalition of concern among Jewish and Christian leaders, Vorspan advocated "a task force of interfaith leaders to speak truth to power, to explode the myths and deceptive half-truths which flow from Washington and pollute the atmosphere..."

Highly critical of President Nixon's policies, Vorspan denied that he was engaging in "narrow partisan politics," declaring: "both our political parties have covered themselves in dishonor."

No less than half-dozen times, however, Vorspan singled out either the President by name or by position, charging that "instead of moral leadership, the White House today is...pandering to the meanest instincts of the American people."

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"And in the light of Watergate and ITT, adventures into foreign policy and suitcases stuffed with mysterious money, America is becoming a moral desert and we all wander about waiting for the voices of moral leadership which will speak, once more, to the best, not the worst, that is in us," he said.

At another point, Vorspan took a poke at Evangelist Billy Graham, comparing President Nixon's plea for reinstatement of the death penalty for certain crimes to Graham's suggestion of castration of rapists.

Noting a deep sense of despair and futility hanging over the nation, Vorspan claimed that the nostalgia of the 1970s is depressing. "If you liked the 50s, you'll love the 70s," he quipped.

It was the "obscenity of Vietnam that blew the Great Society, Lyndon Johnson, and the American social conscience right out of the water," he said. "Some other things went wrong, especially in the sphere of race relations" because these landmark laws changed the South but did little for the poor locked in "our stinging urban and northern ghettos."

Integration has failed in the north even worse than in the south, Vorspan charged. "We had played a bitter joke on the black man," creating "the frustration of the unfulfilled dream of integration.

"If Martin Luther King had not been slain in Memphis, he would have had his heart broken in the years following," Vorspan lamented.

In another address, the Msgr. George G. Higgins of the U.S. Catholic Conference in Washington said he feared history will say of the churches in the decade of the seventies that "we did not challenge the status quo."

Rhodes, after tracing Southern Baptist progress in race relations, declared that racism against blacks, Jews, Chicanos, Indians and Puerto Ricans "is still too much with us."

The three-day conference here was sponsored jointly by the American Jewish Committee, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the department of interfaith witness of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board; plus two local groups--the Jewish Federation of Nashville and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nashville.

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Southwestern Names
Baker New Professor

3/27/73

FORT WORTH (BP)--N. Larry Baker of Monroe, La., has been named assistant professor of Christian ethics and pastoral ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, effective Aug. 1.

Baker has been pastor of the Parkview Baptist Church of Monroe, La., since 1970.

Previously Baker served several churches in Texas, and was a Baptist Student Union worker for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

A native of Shreveport, La., Baker is a graduate of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Tex., and holds the bachelor of divinity and master of theology degrees from Southwestern Seminary. He is completing requirements for the doctor of theology degree.

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Baptists Assist
Flood Disaster

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptists assisted with \$10,000 in relief funds here where flood waters from the Tennessee River caused more than \$65 million worth of damage.

Paul Adkins, secretary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of Christian social ministries which provides Baptist disaster relief funds nationally, said churches in the area have rallied together with the American Red Cross to provide help.

More than 20 per cent of the city was damaged in the mid-March flooding.

Several Southern Baptist churches, including Central Baptist and Woodlawn Park Baptist Churches, reported extensive water damage.

Baptist pastor Fate L. Thomas of Ridgeview Baptist Church, lost everything in his home, totaling more than \$15,000 worth of damage. Another pastor reported more than 34 inches of water standing in his home.

An estimated 2,400 families suffered flood damage. More than 1,400 people went to the Red Cross for temporary assistance. It was the worst flooding in the Chattanooga area since the 1930's.

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Mrs. Maddry Dies;
Widow of Board Leader

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--Mrs. Emma Parker Maddry, 93, wife of the late Charles E. Maddry, sixth executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, died March 25 at a local nursing home following an extended illness.

A funeral service was to be held March 27 at the White Chapel Funeral Home here, with Earl M. Hall, pastor of Normandale Baptist Church, officiating. Burial was to be in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, following a memorial service March 30 in the chapel of Foreign Mission Board headquarters.

The memorial service was to be much the same as one held following the death of Mrs. Maddry's husband in 1962.

Scheduled to officiate were Theodore F. Adams, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Richmond; Baker J. Cauthen, present executive secretary of the board; and George W. Sadler, emeritus board secretary for Africa, Europe and the Near East.

Mrs. Maddry was a radiant Christian lady who shared with Mr. Maddry the responsibility of leadership in the Foreign Mission Board's life during days of great financial difficulty," commented Cauthen.

"Under Dr. Maddry's leadership," he added, "the board was able to pay all debts and begin an advance movement which has continued to the present time."

Maddry was executive secretary of the board from 1933 until 1944. Assuming his duties during the depression, he found the board more than a million dollars in debt and with no more borrowing power. By 1944 the board reported it was debt-free for the first time since its creation in 1845.

Mrs. Maddry is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Robert W. Severance of Montgomery, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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