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Texas Commission Endorses Evangelical Statement

DALLAS (BP)--The Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas voted here to endorse a statement of evangelical social concern, drafted last November by a group of evangelicals from non-National Council of Churches communions.

James M. Dunn, executive secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, and Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, were among signers, which included members of virtually every evangelical group.

The document, titled "A Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern," notes the signers' belief in the inextricability of social concerns and the gospel.

"We confess that we have not acknowledged the complete claims of God on our lives. . . acknowledged that God requires love. . . we have not demonstrated the love of God to those suffering social abuses," the document declared.

It addresses itself to justice, the poor, social and political injustices, materialism, citizenship and sexism.

One part declared, ". . . We must rethink our values regarding our present standard of living and promote more just acquisition and distribution of the world's resources."

Another challenges "the misplaced trust of the nation in economic and military might. . ." and declares, "We must resist the temptation to make the nation and its institutions objects of near-religious loyalty."

Another deals with sexism, in that it acknowledges that "we have encouraged men to prideful domination and women to irresponsible passivity."

James Harris, pastor of University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, who proposed the endorsement, commented, "Most of the signers are our brethren in being committed to the Bible. While I would quibble a little bit over some of the wording, we're with them in spirit."

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High Court Hears Missouri Case on Parochial Schools

1/17/74

By Stan L. Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--A case dealing with the administration of federal funds for special services for educationally deprived children in nonpublic schools was argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Missouri case, Wheeler v. Barrera, arose in the wake of a controversy in which the Missouri Board of Education has persistently refused to grant funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to send public school teachers into church schools during school hours for remedial reading instruction.

Missouri's constitution and state law very rigidly oppose use of public funds in church-related schools.

Title I of ESEA provides funds for educationally deprived children in both public and private schools, mostly in impoverished areas. The present case involves children in such an area of Kansas City, Mo. They are largely from Negro and Spanish-speaking families.

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Parents of children in the parochial schools involved insist that Title I of ESEA requires the state to provide the same services for their children as for public school children.

Leo Pfeffer, eminent church-state constitutional lawyer from New York, argued the case for the state of Missouri. Representing the Catholic school children and their parents were Thomas M. Sullivan of Kansas City and Daniel M. Friedman from the U.S. Justice Department.

Both in written and oral arguments, two questions faced the nation's highest court: (1) Does the ESEA require that public school teachers be sent into nonpublic schools during regular school hours to provide special instruction, and (2) if it does, is such practice in violation of the "establishment" clause of the First Amendment?

The case has had an unusually long and complex history. It originated in the U.S. District Court for the West District of Missouri as *Barrera v. Wheeler*. Anna Barrera and other parents of parochial school children in a ghetto section of Kansas City brought suit against Hubert Wheeler, the commissioner of education for Missouri.

The parents contended that their children were being systematically denied special services provided public school children under Title I. Missouri law, however, prohibits the disbursement of any public funds for church schools.

The district court ruled against Barrera, stating that the ESEA does not require sending public school teachers into private schools during regular school hours.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit then reversed the district court, holding that the state regulations were meaningless because federal law and federal funds were at issue.

During the oral arguments before the Supreme Court, some of the justices strongly hinted that they would prefer to see the case settled in district court. They could thus avoid the constitutional question raised in the case.

Other possible options before the court in this case include deciding outright in favor of Barrera, thereby declaring Title I of ESEA constitutional, or finding in favor of Wheeler, which would then require a closer examination of the law's constitutionality under the First Amendment.

The Christian Life Commission of the Missouri Baptist Convention, among others, filed an amicus curiae brief before the district court upholding the position of the officials of the state of Missouri.

Others filing amicus curiae briefs before the Supreme Court on behalf of the state of Missouri were the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs, the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the National Education Association, The American Ethical Union, the American Humanist Association, the Unitarian-Universalist Association, the Committee for Public Education and Religious Liberty of New York, the Ohio Free Schools Association and Preserve Our Public Schools (Wisconsin).

Filing on behalf of the Catholic school parents were the U.S. Catholic Conference and the U.S. Department of Justice.

A decision can be expected before the end of the court's term in June 1974.

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Effort Set to Double
Great Lakes Baptist Churches

1/17/74

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist executive secretaries and mission directors from seven north central states ringing the Great Lakes met with Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) representatives here to lay groundwork for doubling the number of churches and ministries in the area by 1990.

The group pored over a mass of statistical data compiled over the last year by Tommy Coy, associate secretary for the HMB's department of planning services, pinpointing the areas of greatest potential for new churches and ministries.

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The seven states now have some 1,842 Southern Baptist churches with 400,000 members and are baptizing about 500 persons each week, reports show. Total receipts are around \$40 million annually. During the past 20 years the churches have given some \$30 million through the Cooperative Program (Southern Baptist unified budget).

R. V. Haygood, missions director for Indiana, said that since 1951, when Southern Baptist efforts were expanded in the area, baptisms have totaled about 320,000 in the Great Lakes states, and the value of church property has grown 1,413 per cent from \$11.4 million to more than \$127 million.

"Doubling means that instead of 1,842 churches we would have 3,684. But when we double the number of churches you more than triple your membership," Haygood continued.

"With more than one million Baptists you multiply your dollars seven times. That would mean an income of \$267 million for our churches and \$78 million for the Cooperative Program. But, more than all of that, instead of baptizing 23,000 per year it would be 60,000 to 70,000 per year in the north central states alone," Haygood said.

The meeting was called at the request of leaders in the north central states and followed two previous sessions over the last year.

A year ago, the north central leaders voted to seek HMB help in undertaking the effort to double their involvement in the area by 1990.

Later, they voted to seek HMB support in focusing "the eyes of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) on the north central states in 1977-1990."

The HMB has been asked to assist with financial resources and technical know-how in helping to double all of the ministries now carried on in the states, including churches, missions, Bible study fellowships and language groups.

Fred Moseley, assistant executive director of the HMB, pledged the board's "genuine cooperation and full partnership" in participating with the states in the effort.

The conferees at the Atlanta meeting included four top state Baptist executives--Harmon Moore of Indiana, James Smith of Illinois, Robert Wilson of Michigan and Ray Roberts of Ohio and their associates and state missions directors, David Bunch of Iowa, Frank Burress of Minnesota-Wisconsin, Leonard Irwin, director of the HMB's planning and coordination section, and HMB program leaders.

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Baptist College Gets \$1 Million Federal Grant

1/17/74

CHARLESTON, S. C. (BP)--Baptist College at Charleston has received an advanced institutional development grant of \$1,200,000 from the federal government. It will be made available over a period of the next four years.

Development grants have been given to many private and church-related colleges, including Baptist colleges. This is the first of this size made to the Baptist College at Charleston, a Southern Baptist school.

The grant will enable Baptist College to advance five to ten years ahead of anticipated schedule in its development program, providing better educational opportunity for its students, according to a statement issued by the college.

Funds will be used primarily for library materials and for a strengthened teaching program. The library will be increased to 100,000 volumes.

Qualified members of the faculty and administrative staff will be able to pursue advanced degrees and engage in postgraduate study, with replacement instructors paid in part by funds from the grant.

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1/17/74

Arsonists Destroy Historic
Building at Carson-Newman

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)-- A \$2 million fire, apparently the work of arsonists, completely destroyed Henderson Hall on the Carson-Newman College campus here in the early morning.

The 55-year-old historic Carson-Newman landmark housed several faculty offices, the school's departments of English, speech, drama, religion and foreign languages and the offices of four campus-based literary societies--the Hypatians, Calliopeans, Columbians and Philomatheans.

Faculty members involved lost their personal libraries, lectures, sermons, scholarly research and other mementos in the fire, a spokesman said.

Firefighters, who arrived on the scene shortly after the fire began, said blazes broke out on both the east and northwest sides of the Southern Baptist school's former administration building. Fire Chief Robert Kinder suspects arson.

Many Carson-Newman students aided in fighting the blaze, while others made coffee for the firefighters, a school spokesman said.

Architects had recently completed preliminary plans to renovate the 48,000-square foot structure. In 1968, Gentry Auditorium in Henderson Hall was renovated at a cost of about \$220,000. Fire losses will be covered by insurance, a college spokesman said.

Carson-Newman President John A. Fincher said students and faculty "have volunteered their efforts to overcome the inconvenience of temporary quarters and loss of resources to meet their classes while maintaining a strong academic program."