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February 14, 1974

Va. President Elected
Radio-TV Trustee Chairman

FORT WORTH (BP)--Charles G. Fuller, president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, has been elected chairman of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission's board of trustees.

He succeeds James L. Pleitz of Pensacola, Fla., who has served two one-year terms.

Fuller is pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke. He previously served as secretary of the board of trustees for the Fort Worth-based agency.

Other officers elected during the trustees' semi-annual meeting in Fort Worth included James W. Waters of Macon, Ga., pastor of Mable White Memorial Baptist Church, first vice chairman; B. Dickson Lee of Dallas, area marketing supervisor of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, second vice chairman; Calvin A. Miller of Omaha, Neb., pastor of Westside Baptist Church, secretary; and E. Ray Scroggins of Houston, Tex., minister of education and administration, Park Place Baptist Church, assistant secretary.

Paul M. Stevens is president of the Radio and Television Commission.

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Exorcist is "A Travesty"
Catholic Tells Baptists

2/14/74

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The controversial book and motion picture, *The Exorcist*, is "a travesty" on the original story, a Roman Catholic clergyman who had intimate knowledge of the original case, told an opening session of the Southern Baptist Press Association annual meeting here.

Archbishop Phillip Hannan of New Orleans, who held a post in the Chancery Office in Washington in the late 1940s when the original case began there, said, "The original story of the young boy involved was a beautiful restoration of the Easter story--the triumph of good over evil."

The book and motion picture are "a travesty on the original story. They pander to all the worst instincts. The devil is given center place for so long you think he owns center stage," Hannan said.

"The original priest was not killed," Archbishop Hannan commented in welcoming remarks to the association, comprised of Southern Baptist editors and Baptist Press personnel. "He did not suffer" but experienced "complete peace and rest at the end of the event" in contrast to William Blatty's popularized version of *The Exorcist*.

The original subject of the exorcism, a boy rather than a girl as portrayed in Blatty's book, is now 34 years old and married with children, and lives somewhere in a Virginia suburb of Washington, D. C., Hannan said.

Hannan, who said he has seen the full confidential report on the original exorcism, said psychiatrists had exhausted all efforts to help the boy and that hospital treatment had also failed when contact was first made with the Washington Chancery.

Contrary to Faustian tales, Hannan declared, the boy had not "sold his soul" to the devil, "but he strove against the devil" and was successful. "The story is a great success story--a story of hope," Hannan said.

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He said the boy's memory has grown dim on the event. "When you make a strong fight against the devil that pushes it from your memory."

The archbishop said the Chancery Office in Washington has made no followup on the case because "it was a personal event" and because "it is not our business to make statements about such things."

Hannan commended the press, which he said has learned the names of the original participants, for great "exercise of statesmanship and honor" for refusing to reveal them and invade the privacy of their lives.

"We need each other," Hannan told the Southern Baptists, "because we are living at a time in which our society is ambivalent in moral values. There are those who do not believe in God, although this country was founded on faith in God, Hannan said.

"It is only with the continuence of faith that we can advance along the line of the principles which established this country.

"A sign of the abivalence of society is preoccupation with exorcism and the devil," he said.

He said satanic powers can and do affect the lives of people but "we are too much preoccupied with evil and too little dedicated to advancing virtue. We can advance virtue only if we admit personal responsibility for our actions. This means that we get a reward from virtue and must suffer the consequences of sin. Very often we have tried to avoid using the word sin which indicates our personal responsibility."

Hannan added, "I'm in favor of psychiatrists but ultimate morality is based upon decisions. We can't avoid that with a terminology which glosses over sin, even though we have difficulty admitting there is such a thing."

Quoting from Dr. Carl Meninger's book, Whatever Became of Sin, Hannan said, "It's on the best seller list, thank God."

He expressed agreement with the thesis of Meninger, a noted psychiatrist, that clergy and psychiatrists have a supportive role and that each should recognize the value of the other and not dismiss either the value of the religious or scientific insights into the problems which affect the lives of individuals.

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Annuity Board Approves
New Plan C Investment

2/14/74

DALLAS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Annuity Board's trustees have approved the inclusion of a new type of investment called participating land equity in Plan C, the board's variable benefit plan.

Such equity ventures will be introduced into the Plan C portfolio during 1974 if the right investment opportunities develop, Gordon Hobgood Jr. of Dallas, trustee and chairman of the board's finance committee, told trustees during their 56th annual session here.

In a participating land equity, the board will make loans on property in growing metropolitan areas which will be developed or will later be resold, Hobgood said.

Hobgood, who made the recommendation, told the trustees their action will allow the variable plan to "participate in more potentially good investments rather than depend strictly on stocks alone."

Investments in Plan C, since its beginning as a variable plan in 1960, have been in stocks alone, although originally it was designed to utilize other types of equity investments.

Initially, land equity will be limited to 50 per cent of the variable plan's portfolio.

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Darold H. Morgan, president of the Annuity Board, praised the finance committee for completing a year-long, comprehensive study in 1973 to develop the new investment procedure which will utilize the available land equity potential.

"The initial objective is to increase current returns across the board in Plan C. We choose land equity as another method of investment, because we believe it will provide a good return," Morgan said.