

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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April 14, 1975

**Baptist Agency Questions
Proposed Education Rules**

By Stan Hasteley

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs presented testimony here expressing serious reservations about a section of a proposed set of federal guidelines designed to channel federal funds to the educationally deprived in nonpublic schools.

The Baptist group emphasized, however, that it does not oppose providing such funds if procedures to safeguard church-state separation are built into the regulations.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Washington-based Baptist agency, testified at a hearing conducted by the office of education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). The day-long hearing was set up to allow a wide variety of affected groups to express their views on the proposed guidelines.

The guidelines in question come as a result of the enactment by Congress last year of a four-year extension to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). HEW is mandated to implement the law on the state and local levels.

Wood testified that the Baptist Joint Committee is concerned about "what we perceive to be a general looseness in definition and structure in the proposed regulations."

He stated further that the Baptist group's objections to specific provisions within the proposed guidelines "stem from a dual commitment on the one hand to religious liberty and church-state separation and on the other hand to the public school system."

One of the joint committee's objections was aimed at the controversial "bypass" provision in the ESEA which permits the U. S. commissioner of education to go around state education officials who refuse to provide funds to pupils in nonpublic schools. About half the states have provisions written into their constitutions prohibiting outright the expenditure of public funds directly or indirectly to private elementary and secondary schools, most of which are religious institutions.

During 1974, when the ESEA extension was being debated in Congress, the Baptist agency announced its support for the bill but objected strongly to the bypass provision. Many observers feel that the bypass will be tested in the courts in the near future.

Other questions raised by the joint committee at the HEW hearing included:

--The so-called "dual enrollment" provision of the proposed regulations, which allows nonpublic school pupils to enroll also in a public school for certain "secular" courses, "could impose serious burdens and responsibilities for which the public school will not be reimbursed."

--A section of the regulations, which calls for meeting the special education needs of educationally deprived children in nonpublic schools by consulting with "persons knowledgeable of the needs of these private school children," leaves unanswered the question of who those "knowledgeable persons" are to be. "If they are private individuals or officials,"

Wood asked, "is not the question of private control of public expenditures raised?"

--Another provision in the regulations, calling for "comparable" services to nonpublic school children, was objected to because the comparability feature is not defined. Wood pointed to the Supreme Court's decision last year in Wheeler v. Barrera which held that "comparable" services does not mean "identical" or "equal" services. The Baptist representative argued that the proposed HEW regulation "does not take full cognizance of the Barrera decision and the proposed wording will inevitably result in protracted litigation."

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--A section, which would allow public school teachers to be assigned to nonpublic schools, would be constitutionally "objectionable," Wood said.

Wood concluded his testimony by cautioning HEW officials that some of the proposed regulations violate the Constitution's requirement of governmental neutrality toward religion. "Neutrality is not observed in these regulations," he stated, "and to that extent religious liberty and church-state separation are infringed."

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Baptist Standard, Largest
State Paper, Changes Location

Baptist Press
4/14/75

DALLAS (BP)--The Baptist Standard, largest of the Southern Baptist state papers, was to move April 17 and 18 to its new building which also will house the company which prints the paper.

The Standard's new location is in a business park near the Dallas city limits and just off the turnpike to Fort Worth. Cost of the facilities is \$1.2 million.

The 35,000-square foot building is on a four-acre tract at one of the highest elevations in the Dallas area. Most of the Standard offices overlook the city's business district.

Two-thirds of the building is occupied by Southwest Offset Inc., printers of the Baptist Standard who also do commercial work.

The Standard, with a weekly circulation of 373,000, has the first building in its 87-year history designed for its own operations and that of its printer, according to its editor, John Hurt.

The Baptist Standard had been located for 25 years on the edge of the Dallas business district. It's new address is 2343 Lone Star Drive (P. O. Box 6330), Dallas, 75222.

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Methodists, Baptists
Tops in RPRC Awards

Baptist Press
4/14/75

WASHINGTON (BP)--United Methodists were first, and Southern Baptists second, in total awards in the annual Paul B. Hinkhouse Awards competition of the national, interfaith Religious Public Relations Council (RPRC) here.

Methodist representatives won 14 of the 49 awards, with Southern Baptists taking 10. Roman Catholics were third with seven awards; Missouri Synod Lutherans won four and Episcopalians, three.

Among the grand prize winners and sharing a \$100 check were John Earl Seelig and Don Hepburn of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth for the best public relations projects.

Other grand prize winners were: print class, J. Martin Bailey, A. D. Publications, Inc., New York, N. Y.; audiovisual, Edwin H. Maynard, United Methodist Communications, Indianapolis, Ind.; broadcast, J. Michael Vincent, Lutheran Television, St. Louis, Mo.; writing, Floramae Geiser, Indiana-Kentucky Synod, Lutheran Church in America.

Texas Baptists were big winners in RPRC competition this year.

In the print class, Southern Baptists swept the booklets category, with Seelig and Hepburn each taking awards of excellence and Gomer R. Lesch of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, winning a merit award.

Seelig won still another excellence award, with Hepburn winning the merit award in the folders category. The two shared the excellence award for public relations.

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Orville Scott of the Baptist General Convention of Texas won an excellence award in the posters and flyers category.

Two more Texas winners included John D. Bloskas of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board in Dallas, who won the merit award for advertising, and W. C. Woody, of TimeRite, Inc., advertising arm of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, Fort Worth, who won the merit award for television specials in the area of broadcasting.

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APR 16 1975

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