



-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
James Lee Young, Feature Editor
75-17

November 12, 1975

Bicentennial Feature

U.S.A. --Land of the
Unfinished Revolution

By C. Welton Gaddy
For Baptist Press

The American Revolution is not over!

True, the colonies' war with England has long since ended. However, the basic ideas over which that conflict arose are still in need of support.

The guarantee of freedom, establishment of an independent government, responsiveness of institutions to the public, leaders representative of the electorate and a political system openly operated are matters which have to be secured by each succeeding generation of United States citizens.

Christians have a special stake in the political process and thus in the American Revolution. Ours is a revolutionary faith which advocates from a religious perspective many of the same social arrangements which were goals of the colonial revolutionists.

During the period in which we celebrate events of 200 years ago, let us recommit ourselves to the ongoing revolution which these events inspired and of which they were part. Still in need of support are efforts aimed at a free citizenry, an open society, and a democratic government.

Freedom has always been a big word in the American experience. Though the desire for freedom persists to this day, a willingness to support the cause of freedom is not so apparent. The actions of a few people who abuse basic liberties have been used by them as a rationale for compromising constitutional guarantees.

Some now mistake dissent for lawlessness and non-conformity for treason. No restriction on legitimate personal liberties should be acceptable to any citizen, especially a Christian citizen.

The guarantee of freedom for others is integral to the guarantee of freedom for ourselves. Revolutionary thrusts toward a free citizenry must not be left without support.

Incorporation of the statement on personal rights--"life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"--in the Declaration of Independence suggests the colonists' commitment to an open society. The new nation would be a place in which personal dignity would be respected and personal potential could be fulfilled. A just social order and responsive social institutions would be maintained.

Today a just social order is only a partial reality.

So long as persons are discriminated against because of race or sex, the cause of justice is incomplete. So long as economic structures benefit the wealthy and further dehumanize the poor, justice is not yet. So long as stomachs bloated from obesity and stomachs swollen from malnutrition exist side by side, justice is delayed. That revolution which moves swiftly toward the realization of a just social order must be continued.

Closely associated with the establishment of an open society is the development of responsive social institutions. Institutions either exist for persons or lose their reasons for existence, function to meet human needs or forfeit their right to function at all. Present efforts to reform our institutions and renew their vitality are part of the best tradition of the American Revolution.

Founders of this nation pledged themselves to the development of a democracy. The governmental process of decision making would be initiated and given direction by the thoughts, discussion, opinions and pronouncements of those individuals who comprised it. The job of nation building is not complete.

The Bicentennial is the year to work even harder in the establishment of a true democracy. It is in the best tradition of the American Revolution for citizens to become actively involved in government for the purpose of opening up its decision-making process, exposing its vested interests, eradicating its corruption, and returning it to the public to whom it belongs.

What this nation will be depends upon us. We will have the kind of government for which we work, enjoy the amount of freedom which we support and experience the quality of society which we influence. Let the Revolution continue! (BP)

November 12, 1975

75-177

Baptist Leader Condemns
U. N. Zionism Vote

WASHINGTON (BP)--The head of a nationwide Baptist agency here condemned United Nations action equating zionism with racism.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, declared that "the deplorable action of the General Assembly on Monday, Nov. 10, is unprecedented in the history of the United Nations."

Wood, who has edited a book dealing with Jewish-Christian relations, said also that the U. N. action has the effect of "endorsing bigotry and racism." He called those forces "age-old maladies of mankind against which the U. N. heretofore has stood unalterably opposed" both in its charter and in its 1948 Declaration of Human Rights.

"This endorsement of anti-semitism can only seriously erode the future credibility and effectiveness of the U. N. as an international organization dedicated to peace and human rights," said the chief executive of the agency supported by nine Baptist bodies, including the 12.5-million-member Southern Baptist Convention.

Earlier, Wood and five other representatives of the religious community in Washington had written a letter to the president of the General Assembly urging action to block adoption of the proposal. That resolution came to the General Assembly through the U. N.'s Third Committee.

The letter expressed the view that "the modern Jewish state is itself a consequence of racism, a reminder of the holocaust of World War II and the inhumanity that man has inflicted on his fellow man."

The group warned that "the struggle against global racism can only be weakened and d based when the term 'racism' loses its meaning and is transformed into a vehicle for the expression of odious political and ideological considerations."

Besides Wood, those signing the letter were Jack Corbet of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, James Hamilton of the National Council of Churches, Sister Margaret Hohman of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Mary Jane Patterson of the United Presbyterian Church, and David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center.

-30-

Court Rules States May Bar
Abortions by Nonphysicians

Baptist Press
11/12/75

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--State laws which forbid nonphysicians from performing abortions do not violate a woman's constitutional right to a medically safe abortion, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled here.

The high court overturned an earlier decision by the Connecticut Supreme Court holding that a state law prohibiting nonphysicians from performing abortions violated the controversial 1973 U. S. Supreme Court abortion rulings. Those decisions held for the first time that women's privacy was being violated by most state abortion laws.

-more-

11/12/75

Baptist Press

The sweeping Connecticut law, under which Patrick Menillo was convicted, makes unlawful an attempted abortion by "any person" except when the life of the mother or the unborn fetus is at stake.

Because the statute is in clear contradiction to the Supreme Court's 1973 guidelines, the Connecticut court felt compelled to declare the entire law unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court's written opinion states that the Connecticut court should not have reversed the conviction of Menillo because the 1973 decisions are based on the assumption that abortion is permissible only when sound medical procedure is used.

The high court reaffirmed its view that "a state cannot restrict a decision by a woman, with the advice of her physician, to terminate her pregnancy during the first trimester because neither its interest in maternal health nor . . . in the potential life of the fetus is sufficiently great at that stage."

Just the same, the court also said that the states do have a legitimate interest in requiring that the abortion be performed "by medically competent personnel under conditions insuring maximum safety for the woman."

-30-

4.4 Million Attend SBC
Sunday Schools on Nov. 2

Baptist Press
11/12/75

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Sunday School Board officials said here that 4,410,720 persons attended Sunday Schools in Southern Baptist churches across the nation in Southern Baptists second annual "High Attendance Day," Nov. 2.

The 4.4 million attendance topped last year's record total by 1,594 but still fell short of the 5,000,000 attendance goal. It represents 61 percent of the more than 7.1 million enrollment in Southern Baptist Sunday Schools. On an average Sunday, the attendance would be 3,722,537, or 52 percent of enrollment.

For the second year of the annual emphasis, the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey had the highest percentage of its total Sunday School enrollment present, with 77 percent or 7,751. The Northern Plains Baptist Convention, covering both Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming, had the second highest percentage with 75 percent, or 8,124.

Other state conventions which reported 60 percent or more of Sunday School enrollment in attendance included Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah-Idaho, Virginia and West Virginia.

Of the larger state conventions, Mississippi was the percentage leader with 67 percent, followed by Alabama and North Carolina with 65 percent each. The Baptist General Convention of Texas had the highest attendance, with 610,747 present.

The Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant-evangelical denomination, has 12.5 million members in 34,734 churches in 33 state or regional conventions covering all 50 states.

-30-

St. Amant Plans Retirement
From Ruschlikon Seminary

Baptist Press
11/12/75

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--C. Penrose St. Amant, president of the Baptist Seminary of Ruschlikon since July 1972, said he will retire from the administrative post in the summer of 1977.

St. Amant, who will be 62 when he steps down, came to the seminary, where he serves as both president and professor of church history, from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

-more-

11/12/75

Baptist Press

He was professor of church history and dean of the school of theology at Southern Seminary, 1959-69, when he relinquished administrative duties to resume full time teaching.

Before joining Southern Seminary, St. Amant taught church history for 16 years at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Previously, he taught at Hannibal-LaGrange College, Hannibal, Mo. He holds five earned degrees, including a doctor of theology degree from New Orleans Seminary and a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

He spent the 1970-71 school year on sabbatical leave from Southern Seminary teaching at Ruschlikon and studying church history at the University of Zurich. He has also studied at Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary in New York and at the University of Paris (Sorbonne), where he served on the Protestant Theological Faculty of Paris.

St. Amant told trustees of the Ruschlikon seminary he had originally planned to retire at age 60 but had realized the need to go beyond that time. He said he would devote more time to writing, preaching and other activities after retirement.