

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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January 14, 1978

**Missions Major Influence
Of Baptists On World**

By Debbie Stewart

WASHINGTON (BP)--Missions has been the major arena of influence for the Baptist denomination on United States relations with other countries, on fellow Americans, and even on Baptists, throughout American history, a Baptist historian said here.

Glenn T. Miller, visiting assistant professor of religion at Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y., addressed the National Baptist Bicentennial Convocation sponsored here by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

"Missionaries, no matter how sensitive they were to the native cultures in which they worked, often saw their work as two-fold: to preach the message of Christ and to bring the blessings of civilization and American idealism," he said.

Miller attributed this "imperialism of righteousness," as it has been called, to the dualistic concerns dominant in the emerging American nation. He said the viewpoint of internationalism that stressed equality and freedom for all nations then mixed with a nationalism that exalted the United States.

Besides foreign missions, Miller said, Baptist churches were affected by "revivalistic pietism" and The Enlightenment.

"The missionary movement helped to cement relationships with other nations, especially Britain, which were also involved in the task," he noted. "It helped to create a worldwide Baptist fellowship of free and autonomous churches. At times it was directly involved in the making or interpretation of American foreign policy; and it stimulated thought about the wider world situation among Baptists."

Miller made some positive observations about the history of Baptist missions, noting that autonomous churches were often developed and that missions solidified Baptists in America.

But a respondent to his address said he believed Miller failed to observe important positive contributions of Baptist missions.

Denton Lotz said Baptists have contributed to the rediscovery of the mission of the church. He observed that American college professors who are eager to fly to Kenya to speak at a meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC), are often hesitant to discuss in their classrooms the 19th century missionary movement that contributed to the formation of the WCC. Lotz is fraternal representative to Eastern Europe, Board of International Ministries, American Baptist Churches in the U. S. A.

Another respondent was Miller's former professor, Culbert C. Rutenber, a professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

Rutenber said the history of Baptist missions is "a mixed bag" of good and bad elements. The current allegations of CIA involvement with missionaries are "horrifying," Rutenber said.

Miller said Baptists have historically responded to major world events, sometimes with perception, and sometimes by being caught "off guard" and making wrong evaluations and reactions.

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He said Baptists "tended to view World War I as "a struggle for righteousness and democracy" with "little real analysis of the underlying causes of the conflict . . . yet, in the midst of all the patriotic rhetoric, there was some uneasiness about the situation."

Miller said the Millennial tradition, influential in the missionary movement, also shaped attitudes on other world events, such as the emergence of the Jewish state of Israel.

"Baptist fascination with the return of the Jews was part of a larger pattern of American interest in the Holy Land," Miller said. "The return of the Jews to Israel was widely believed by both pre and post Millennialists to be a sign of the coming of the Kingdom" of Jesus Christ.

In recent United States history, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has presented Baptist opinions and concerns in public affairs. Miller warned, however, that no one agency speaks for all Baptists, a denomination he said which has "agreed to disagree." The committee and the denomination in general, Miller said, have abandoned much of the blind crusading for unrealistic ideals in favor of "realistic means to obtain realistic goals."

While Miller criticized Baptists for often expecting the Joint Committee to represent them on domestic and foreign issues with a limited committee staff, he endorsed the concept of a joint Baptist witness in the nations' capital.

"In a democratic state, it is the obligation of every group that is concerned with the nation's welfare to make its positions known and to see that its perspectives receive a fair hearing," he said.

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J. M. Price, Pioneer Baptist
Educator, Dies in Texas

Baptist Press
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FORT WORTH (BP)--John M. Price, 91, pioneer Southern Baptist educator, died January 12 in a Fort Worth hospital. His death followed a brief illness.

Price, a native of Kentucky, came to Fort Worth, Tex., in 1915 to establish the School of Religious Education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, the first of its kind in the United States.

"During his 42-year tenure with the seminary, Price pioneered in numerous curriculum developments, which have become benchmarks in the field of religious education," a seminary spokesman said. "Among those courses were church recreation, religious drama, church library work, church finance and religious journalism."

When he retired in 1956, he was named dean emeritus of the seminary's School of Religious Education. While in "retirement," Price was a visiting professor at Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex., where he helped to establish a School of Religious Education. He later was a visiting professor at Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Tex., and at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

While in his 80's Price was still conducting training courses for Sunday School teachers and leaders of Southern Baptist churches throughout the country.

His thirst for education led him to earn six degrees from various colleges, including Th. D. and Ph. D. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was awarded honorary degrees from Baylor University and California Baptist College.

Price authored or co-authored 13 books. His two most notable: "Jesus: A Teacher" (1946) and "Vital Problems in Christian Living" (1942) have become standard study course books among Southern Baptists, a seminary spokesman said.

He is survived by his wife Mabel of Fort Worth, two sons, a daughter and eight grandchildren.

Funeral services were at Gamble Street Baptist Church, Fort Worth, with burial in Fort Worth's Laurel Land Cemetery.

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Photo mailed to Baptist state editors by Southwestern Seminary.

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Foreign Board Adopts Report
For 25-year Plan of Advance

RICHMOND (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board adopted a study report of its plan of advance for the next 25 years and appropriated \$20,000 for world relief during its January meeting here.

The contents of the report, which culminates a self-study the board has made throughout most of 1975, will be presented to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, which meets Feb. 16-18 in Nashville. It will go to the full SBC annual meeting, June 15-17, in Norfolk, Va.

Also, a missions challenge committee, including representatives of the Home and Foreign Mission Boards and members appointed by the SBC president, will report to the Executive Committee and then to the full SBC, according to Baker J. Cauthen, the Foreign Mission Board's executive secretary. He said that committee has been working parallel to studies by the two mission boards.

"It is our firm belief that much good will have been accomplished and the cause of missions at home and abroad greatly strengthened," commented Cauthen of the studies, which, he said, have involved input from a wide area of SBC life. "We also anticipate that there will be an underscoring of the basic support of missions through the Cooperative Program (SBC unified budget) and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and that missionary education will be given new emphasis," he added.

In other action, the board appropriated \$10,000 from relief funds for needs in Lebanon resulting from that country's civil war, appropriated \$10,000 from relief funds through the Baptist World Alliance, and awarded a medical receptorship to George W. Williams, a student at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta. A medical receptorship is an arrangement in which the board provides short-term overseas opportunities for qualified medical students.

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Taylor Challenges Baptists
To Fight For Human Rights

Baptist Press
1/14/76

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--An internationally-prominent black Baptist leader praised Baptists for their role in religious liberty in America but deplored their limited action in the total area of human rights in an address here.

Gardner Taylor, pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ, Brooklyn, N. Y., said, "It must be sadly recorded that apparently many Baptists, north and south (during the period of the American Revolution), did not see the need to view religious liberty as only a part of mankind's human rights, all of which needed the support of Christian people."

Taylor, who spoke at a National Baptist Bicentennial Convocation, said: "It is an irony of American history that this nation has dealt most shabbily with those who occupied the nation before the colonists came, the American Indians, and with those whom the colonists brought here by force, the black Americans."

Taylor, a black man who has just completed a term as chairman of the Baptist World Alliance's Commission on Religious Liberty and Human Rights, was praised by James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, as one of the world's leading spokesmen for human rights.

During a question and answer period following his speech, Taylor was asked how Baptists today could implement their concerns for religious liberty and human rights effectively in view of the fragmented and divided Baptist organizations in America.

He replied that the concept of "public affairs" as embodied in the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which sponsored the convocation, must be augmented throughout the nation. This is the one Baptist agency in America through which nine national Baptist bodies work together in the areas of public affairs, church-state relations, religious liberty and human rights, he said.

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Besides the corporate efforts for human rights, Taylor said that small cells of deeply committed people need to be active throughout the nation. Such small groups are effective far beyond their numerical strength, he pointed out.

As Baptists enter the third century of the nation's life, Taylor cautioned that they could make their greatest contribution by implementing their prophetic insights. He warned against being "lionized and courted and praised and patronized by political people.

"What is so sick about our country is that those seeking political advantage," he continued, "appeal to the lowest in us rather than the highest in us."

Rather than responding to the overtures of political powers and to those seeking political advantage, Baptists need to give expression to their own heritage and mission, he said, "Baptist people have the lordship of Christ, the authority of the Scriptures and the doctrine, in rare purity, of the priesthood of the believer, the royal status of every Christian and, therefore, the dignity of all people," he declared.

Taylor challenged the Baptists of America to renew themselves to the cause of human rights by saying, "The united and faithful witness to the nation of Baptist people who are truly committed to their historic distinctives of liberty and freedom might send forth a glad and glorious word of deliverance ringing through the land."

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American Liberties Are
Eroding, Pastor Says

Baptist Press
1/14/76

By Stan L. Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--An American Baptist pastor from Detroit told a National Baptist Bicentennial Convocation seminar here that a number of liberties guaranteed Americans in the Declaration of Independence and the constitution "have suffered erosion by the passing of time."

William F. Keucher, senior minister of the Covenant Baptist Church in Detroit and a member of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, sponsor of the four-day convocation, specifically attacked the "substantiality" test used by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in seeking to control the degree to which churches may seek to influence legislation without sacrificing their tax-exempt status.

Specifically, the IRS has held that no church which devotes a "substantial part" of its activities to "carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation" may retain its status as a tax-exempt group.

Keucher complained that the policy actually amounts to an effort by government to determine the mission of the church. His contention is supported by the Baptist Joint Committee, which last year passed a resolution deploring the IRS policy.

"The effect of the tax policy," Keucher said, "is to violate the guarantee of the First Amendment that no law can be passed by Congress or by a federal agency exercising a legislative capacity of Congress to prevent the free exercise of religion in America."

Keucher listed as other erosions of liberty in contemporary American life the restriction of personal movement, the "right to know," the right of open participation in the political process, and the right to dissent.

Besides warning of eroded freedoms, Keucher also traced historical developments which led to colonial independence and offered an overview of basic "unalienable" rights guaranteed to American citizens.

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