



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

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

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 254-5461
RICHMOND Richard M. Styles, Acting Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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76-88

Carter Book Target Of Recent Criticism

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP)--"Why Not The Best?", presidential candidate Jimmy Carter's book published by Broadman Press, has been the subject of some recent criticism over whether the publishing and promotion of his book might constitute endorsement or promotion of his candidacy.

James W. Clark, director of the Broadman division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, said the book "was in no way an endorsement of Carter, a Southern Baptist layman, "but was intended to encourage people to participate in political activity, and to recognize that such participation was a legitimate expression of Christian citizenship."

"'Why Not The Best?' was published in September 1975 before Carter was a major candidate," Clark said, and "initial contact with Carter was made several months before he declared as a candidate for president."

Separation of church and state also has been discussed concerning the publishing of Carter's book.

Clark responded, "Broadman was indeed strong in the conviction of the separation of church and state, but we also are strong in the conviction that the scriptures teach that Christians should be good citizens.

"We felt that the testimony of a Christian politician would be very timely," Clark said.

"It also is our strong conviction," he said, "that Christians ought to be encouraged to become involved in politics, rather than discouraged."

Advertisements for the book carried in Baptist state convention newspapers, metropolitan daily newspapers and curriculum magazines published by the Sunday School Board also have been the target of some criticism.

According to Clark, Broadman is "promoting the book through advertising and sales as we would any book we publish. Carter's national political prominence has prompted increased attention for the book not only from the standpoint of sales but also interest from other publishers."

Bantam Books, a major paperback publisher in the United States, has been granted permission by Broadman Press to publish the fast-selling book in paperback form for nationwide marketing in secular bookstores.

Bantam considered the Carter book important enough to make it an "extra," meaning it will not be held to normal publishing schedules, but will be printed immediately. Bantam has selected approximately a dozen "extras" in its history.

On the first printing, Bantam will release 150,000 copies of the book, making a total of approximately 250,000 copies in print.

Newspaper serialization rights for "Why Not The Best?" were sold to Colston Newspaper Features Incorporated, Harvard, Ill. Several newspapers, including the Atlanta Constitution, New York Post, Detroit News, San Antonio Express and Indianapolis Star, are carrying the serialization presently or have completed it.

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Book Digest currently is negotiating with Broadman to print the book in September 1976, and Japanese, Swedish and French publishers have expressed an interest in translating "Why Not The Best?".

Carter was one of a number of names on a list compiled by Broadman as possible authors of a book to speak to Christians about involvement in politics.

In the book he talks at length about his political career but particularly how his spiritual life has affected decisions along the way.

He also gives a summary in the book of his personal opinions about America, based on his observations and experiences.

Carter says, for example, he is optimistic about the U. S.'s third century, because "America's people are our most precious possession."

He contends that "we cannot afford to waste the talents and abilities given by God. It is time for us to reaffirm and to strengthen our ethical and spiritual and political beliefs."

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Family of 3 Graduated--
Then There Were Four

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By Calvin Mercer

WAKE FOREST (BP)--"you've got to be kidding. You mean all three of you?"

That's how people react when they discover that Southern Baptist minister Mims Harth Fanning, his wife Madelene, and their daughter Sheryl were all graduated in commencement exercises at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary--a first for the school here.

"It was a big concern of mine because I had finished college 24 years earlier," said the 49-year-old pastor of Holly Springs (N.C.) Baptist Church.

"I didn't know at first how I was going to adjust to sitting in the same classroom with my 24-year-old daughter and other younger students."

But the family agreed the situation worked out well.

"Some might think I've just been tagging along after my parents, not wanting to cut the apron strings," said Sheryl, who has been music minister for Forestville Baptist Church here, "but I had planned to attend seminary long before they did. It just seemed it was in God's plan that we have these three years together.

"And it's been great having my father in class with me," she added. They have had at least one class together each semester over the last three years. "Last semester we all met in my apartment for a meal each day," said Sheryl, "and we've supported each other all along."

Mrs. Fanning agreed, "We've undergirded each other financially, emotionally and in other ways, although at times it hasn't been easy. But we've made it and feel a tremendous sense of accomplishment."

The Fannings are from Walterboro, S. C., where he owned a farm supply business several years ago.

"After years of struggling with the Lord," he said, "I finally sold the business and moved to North Carolina to attend Southeastern and prepare for the ministry."

Sheryl and her father received master of divinity degrees while Mrs. Fanning was graduated from the school's certificate program for persons who do not hold college degrees.

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But the story has another twist.

Sheryl and fellow-student James Cleveland Brown, Ill., were married in the seminary's chapel the following day.

Her father performed the ceremony.

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Calvin Mercer is a news and features writer for the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary public relations office, Wake Forest, N. C.

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Miss. Board Awards \$3.3 Million
Bid to Rebuild Leveled Assembly

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JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--A \$3.3 million construction bid for restoring Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian, Miss., hit by Hurricane Camille in Aug. 1969, was awarded during a called meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board here.

All but one of the assembly's buildings were destroyed during the hurricane, with the one left standing severely damaged. Construction is expected to take about 18 months, with complete cost expected to be about \$3.7 million, including the construction bid and other expenses. The new facility will conform to a hurricane-proof code in the area and will be built on pilings which will place it above the high tide level. It is to be constructed of steel-reinforced concrete, a board spokesman said.

The board made arrangements for moving "full speed ahead" on construction plans, including Gulfshore and a estimated \$750,000 Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko in mid-Mississippi, now in first phase phanning.

In other action, Harold Kitchings, president of the Mississippi board who has been named associate secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation and secretary-elect of the Foundation, effective June 1, turned the gavel over to the new president, Gene Triggs of Yazoo City, Miss. Triggs was formerly board vice president, and Kitchings has been pastor of First Baptist Church in Kosciusko.

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Raikes' Letter dated Jan. 1774
To Ill. Historical Collection

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By R. J. Hastings

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--A handwritten letter, signed by Robert Raikes, founder of the modern Sunday school movement, dated two years before the birth of the United States, has been added to the Baptist manuscript collection of the Illinois State Historical Library here.

The letter was written Jan. 15, 1774, from Raikes' home in England, and was addressed to Luke Gardiner, Esq., Dublin, Ireland. Although much of the handwriting is dim, Raikes commented on the political conditions in Ireland and mentioned a letter he had read in The Globe Journal, a newspaper of that day, written by Gardiner.

Raikes also describes a visit to Cambridge University, where he had a part in electing a Mr. Bennington as professor of chemistry.

The Raikes letter is one of 21 autographs given the Illinois Baptist State Association by the late Rev. Bernie Smith of Harrisburg, in memory of his mother. Smith's hobby was collecting autographs of well-known persons.

The presentation was made by Vernon Wasson of Pinckneyville, chairman of the State Association's historical committee, and received on behalf of the library by state historian William K. Alderfer.

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The Illinois State Library serves as custodian for Baptist records and manuscripts, which are available for research by the general public.

Other items in the Smith collection include:

A handwritten note, dated March 12, 1889, by clergyman Phillips Brooks, best-known as the author of the carol, "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

A signed photo of David Livingstone, missionary statesman and explorer.

An undated note written by English evangelist George Whitefield.

A receipt dated December 18, 1883, in which T. DeWitt Talmadge acknowledges payment of \$300 for his lecture, "Replies to Ingersollism" (evidently a reference to Robert G. Ingersoll, Illinois attorney and public figure, noted for his atheism).

A six-page handwritten document, which is apparently an excerpt from a diary or a personal testimony of faith, the earliest date being December 12, 1640, signature illegible.

A handwritten note signed by John Newton, English hymn-writer, dated November 11, 1800.

Also included are letters signed by evangelists D. L. Moody and Gypsy Smith, famed English pastor C. H. Spurgeon, and Charles M. Sheldon, the author of "In His Steps."

The Smith collection also includes a sermon outline, written in longhand, used by Henry Ward Beecher on Sunday night, March 19, 1882, at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, N. Y. His sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

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Furman Awarded Contract
To Search for Uranium

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5/24/76

GREENVILLE, S. C. (BP)--DuPont's Savannah River Laboratory has awarded the geology department of Furman University here a \$44,000 contract to do 50 percent of a four-state search for uranium deposits in the Carolinas, Georgia and Tennessee, it was announced here.

The Furman contract is part of a 25-state project to identify areas best suited for uranium exploration, a school spokesman said. DuPont is one of four major contractors conducting the search for the U. S. Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA).

Furman Geology Professor Ken Sargent and seven students will be employed for twelve weeks this summer collecting 4,800 stream sediment samples in the four states to which they have been assigned.

The search for uranium follows an all-time high demand for the metallic element used in generating nuclear power, Sargent said, while the United States is exhausting existing uranium deposits. "The United States government has charged ERDA with the task of finding new sources," he said.

Furman competed with nine others, mostly private firms, for the project. DuPont also employed two private geological consultant firms to conduct geochemical sampling in Alabama and parts of Tennessee and North Carolina, the Furman spokesman said.

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