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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Hear Tuition Grant Case**

By Stan Hasteay

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a brief, unsigned order, the U.S. Supreme Court let stand a ruling by the Missouri Supreme Court that a tuition grant program for the state's college students passes First Amendment requirements.

The 8-1 action of the high court, with only Justice William J. Brennan voting to hear the case, means that more than 10,000 Missouri students will continue to receive state funds for use at the educational institutions of their choice.

Among Missouri's 57 colleges and universities, 17 are affiliated with religious denominations. Three of the schools, Hannibal-LaGrange College, Southwest Baptist College, and William Jewell College, are Baptist-related.

Missouri's law, which took effect in 1972, provides the state's students with "nonreligious educational services in a public or private institution of higher education of their choice."

Under the law, schools whose students participate in the program are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in the hiring of administrators, faculty, and staff or in the admission of students. Schools must also be in compliance with federal civil rights laws to be eligible for participation.

The law further requires the schools to permit their faculty members to select textbooks "without influence or pressure by any source."

Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a Silver Spring, Md.-based group, brought suit against the coordinating board of the Missouri program in July 1974. Eighteen months later, in 1976, a St. Louis County Circuit court ruled that the law violates the First Amendment prohibition against an "establishment of religion" by the state.

On appeal, however, Missouri's Supreme Court ruled 4-3 last July that the law meets constitutional requirements.

G. Hugh Wamble, professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., and former president of the Missouri Baptist Convention, and A.L. Palmer, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fenton, Mo., joined Americans United in the suit.

In written arguments submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, they held that the sectarian colleges have an essentially religious purpose. To back that argument, they quoted from all 17 college catalogs, pointing primarily to the schools' statements of Christian purpose.

The brief argued further that the sectarian colleges' claim to subscribe to academic freedom "has no bearing nor relevance to (their) selection of faculty or upon any individual faculty member's choice of material for or method of classroom presentation."

In addition, the brief pointed out that some of the 17 schools require chapel attendance and the taking of religion courses.

Another argument cited was the "potential misuse" of state funds in such a program, a factor which has in the past swayed the high court.

On the other side, attorneys for the state of Missouri charged that Americans United failed to prove that it had been injured by the program and therefore had no legal standing in federal court.

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Countering arguments raised by its opponents, the state argued that the challenged law meets the Supreme Court's three-part test for constitutionality set down five years ago: (1) The law must have a secular purpose; (2) It must not have the primary effect of advancing religion; and (3) It must not foster excessive entanglement between church and state.

Missouri asserted further that none of the 17 sectarian colleges "has ever refused admission to any student on the basis of religion" and that none of the colleges' governing boards is legally responsible or accountable to any church body. In addition, the state held that academic freedom is practiced in each of the schools, even in the teaching of religion courses.

In its July ruling, the Missouri Supreme Court pointed to possible problems with four of the 17 schools. Since then, two of those have been expelled from the program and one other suspended.

Missouri's written brief also argued that "total separation of church and state is simply not possible in our society" and charged Wamble, and Palmer of making a plea for "compulsory atheism."

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Pan African Delegates
Discuss Christian Unity

Baptist Press
12/14/76

By Orville Boyd Jenkins

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--"We are one with you whether you like it or not," Michael Cassidy, a white South African Protestant leader, told about 700 African delegates and several hundred observers at the Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACLA) here.

Cassidy, program director for PACLA, challenged participants to work to achieve a sense of the unity of all Christians and work toward practical attitudes and expressions of the oneness of the Christian faith.

"All Christian believers have already been made one in accepting Jesus Christ," he said, "whether or not they have realized what that means."

The two-week-long December meeting is the first meeting of such a varied range of Christian leaders from all over the African continent and Madagascar. Reports indicate representatives from every Christian denomination in Africa are taking part in the assembly. Among the delegates are both Southern Baptist missionaries and leaders of most Baptist conventions of Africa.

Cassidy called participants "the fundamental, the sacramental and the sentimental" people of all different nationalities, gathered together to enter into relationship beyond immediate differences.

"Let us break free of the prisons of our racial and national backgrounds that bind us," he said. "Let us shelve our myths and presuppositions about one another. Let us find one another in Christ."

Cassidy called on delegates to face realistically the differences in viewpoint which might divide the Christian community in Africa--political issues, theological traditions and religious background. But the Christian churches should also earnestly seek, as the first group of Christ's disciples to grow in their understanding of what the gospel means, he said.

The Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly has sought to draw from all groups, Cassidy continued, although its evangelical commitment to Jesus Christ and his word remains unshakable. But he emphasized that in spite of different views on many matters, PACLA delegates must be 'mature enough to disagree in love.'

Also commenting on the need for Christian unity in Africa, Festo Kivengere, bishop of the Church of Uganda, said, "Unity of the spirit does not mean tyrannizing uniformity...The unity of Jesus Christ is a liberating unity, (therefore) diversity is no longer a threat."

God has created humans in a variety of colors by design, he said, just as he put varieties of color and design in the rest of creation. The unity of the church, according to Kivengere, lies in all Christians growing into the image of Christ, who is the image of God.

The bishop, who for 30 years has been the spokesman for the East African Revival Movement, told the delegates that growth implies movement and change. The real Christian, he said, must learn to deal with the insecurity of new situations, learning to relate to different kinds of people and learning to cooperate with different kinds of Christians.

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The Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly was scheduled to continue through Dec. 20, Work and prayer groups will lead to the development of proposals and strategies for the full evangelization of Africa by the end of this century.

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Orville Boyd Jenkins is a Southern Baptist missionary stationed in Nairobi, Kenya.

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Billy Graham Addresses
Pan African Assembly

Baptist Press
12/14/76

By Orville Boyd Jenkins

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham preached to a crowd here estimated at 10,000 during a one-day rally in the open air natural stadium of Uhuru (Freedom) Park as part of the December gathering of the Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACLA).

Kenya's minister for agriculture, the Hon. Jeremiah Nyaga, was honorary chairman of the rally. Nyaga, an active Christian, emphasized in his welcoming address that freedom of religion is guaranteed by Kenya's constitution. Referring to the rally meeting place, Uhuru Park, he said that Uhuru is political freedom to come and hear about the way to spiritual freedom.

Graham was introduced by Gottfried Osei-Mensah, the chairman of PACLA and of the Lausanne Continuation Committee for Africa.

"While most participants (in PACLA) are from Africa, we are still part of the worldwide church of Jesus Christ," Osei-Mensah emphasized, explaining that the African church has much to learn from the church in other parts of the world, as well as much to contribute. He thanked the missionaries from Europe and America through whom "the gospel came to us here in Africa." Osei-Mensah was trained in Great Britain and is now serving in Kenya.

Graham commented on the high percentage of Christians in Kenya, calling that country "one of the most Christian nations in the world." However, while some figures show 65 percent of Kenya's population claim Christianity as their faith, actual practicing Christians are estimated at about 35 percent. The rally coincided with the national holiday Jamhuri (Republic) Day, and Graham lauded the political freedom of Kenya.

The counseling of those who responded to the invitation was interrupted by rain. Figures totaled to that point indicated 985 decisions were made, of which 734 said they were accepting Christ for the first time. Fifty-five percent of those responding were between the ages of 12 and 25.

The sermon by Graham in English was interpreted into Swahili by Anglican bishop of Uganda, Festo Kivengere, an evangelist and evangelical leader well known in Africa and Europe.

Graham had visited Kenya previously in 1960. When the crowd was asked how many had been present at Graham's 1960 meeting, several hundred people raised their hands.

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Rutledge, Tanner Change
Guard at 'Train Station'

Baptist Press
12/14/76

By Dan Martin

ATLANTA (BP)--Saturday, Jan. 1, is the day for the changing of the guard; the end of one era and the beginning of another at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

It's a day for looking toward the seizing of the future, because our history has been wrested from the past with struggle.

On the first day of 1977, William G. Tanner, former college president, preacher and scholar, will become executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board.

He succeeds Arthur B. Rutledge, who was to step down Dec. 31, after 12 years as administrator of the board--12 of the stormiest years the denomination or the agency has known.

Both Rutledge and Tanner are looking toward the future--Tanner to helping the SBC reach its goal of winning America to Christ through programs, policies and personnel of the board; Rutledge to quieter times of writing, teaching and preaching.

"I hope the work of the board will be like a train," Rutledge said. "When I step off Dec. 31, I hope there will be no slowing down, that it will keep right on going with no noticeable change of pace."

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The pace of the last 12 years has been noticeable. During Rutledge's tenure, the Home Missions national staff of 50 doubled; the budget, which started at \$6.5 million, tripled. People outside the denomination began to recognize it as being what church planning expert Lyle Schaller calls the "most effective mission board of any religious group in the U.S."

The years have been at turns peaceful and strife filled as Rutledge worked to help move Southern Baptists into all 50 states; to help develop the United States' most multi cultural denomination; to help heal the agonies and hurts of violence, prejudice and poverty; and to minister in Jesus' name to the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the people across our land.

The efforts were made against the context of a society seemingly gone mad--war, racism, changing lifestyles and turmoil marked America during the Rutledge years.

Rutledge says he "feels good about leaving" and is "very optimistic about the future for Southern Baptists and the spread of the gospel."

The work, he says, is in good shape.

"I think this is a fortunate time...a very good point for transition to new leadership. Our work has plans already under way. He (Tanner) will be able to have input along the way. The multi year nature of our Bold Mission Thrust will make it possible for there to be a change of leadership without any noticeable change of pace."

As for Rutledge, he says, he is "going to serve the Lord in other ways, hopefully at a less demanding pace, with less responsibilities..."

Among the responsibilities will be teaching assignments at two Southern Baptist seminaries, work in promoting the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions and preaching a revival.

Rutledge, in his leave taking, referred to the years facing Tanner as "the most demanding and most challenging" to be faced by the board since it was founded in 1845.

Tanner, at 46, the youngest man to head the mission agency in this century, commented: "We are standing on the threshold of two of the most exciting and demanding decades we have faced since the beginning of our nation 200 years ago.

"As we begin this new year, we have the largest missionary component, the largest financial resources and, for our work, the most diverse--yet comprehensive and creative--programs of missionary strategy that we have had in 131 years."

Tanner picked up Rutledge's analogy of a train, and said: "It is incorrect to say that the train is sidetracked, derailed or siderailed because one person steps off. The train slows down to allow one person to step off and another to step on, but the operation itself keeps going right on."

The new Home Mission Board executive, who says he does not see any "drastic changes" in the operation of the board, does call for "radical rethinking" of our approach to missions, both at home and around the world."

While noting he hasn't "traced the contours of such rethinking, he says Baptists tend to think in "certain formalized concepts that we can't seem to break....We even dream in concepts that are traditional...."

Radical rethinking, he says, calls for "breaking old ways of doing things...of ceasing to find reasons why we can't do things and starting to look for ways we can."

He added he is not critical of any denominational agency, board, or commission, but said that if "we are sincere about our objective being to really reach out with the gospel to people, then we can work together and relate, not just pooling our resources, but utilizing our resources together."

If Southern Baptists are really sincere about wanting to win America--and the world--to Christ, then "we ought to be able to crawl over the barriers," he said.

Tanner recently met with Southern Baptist educators--including representatives of the SBC Education Commission--to discuss ways in which the agencies can work more effectively together. He plans other such meetings.

A program will be no bigger than your dreams, Tanner added. "You have to be willing to dream to aspire to things that have never been done before..."

"I'd rather be a leader who will take a chance and reach and try some things that ought to be done, and to fail occasionally, than to have a good record of success based on guidelines with a perimeter no further out than the end of your nose."