



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Court Rejects Catholic
Case Against Labor Board**

By Stan Hasteay

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court will not hear a case brought by the Roman Catholic bishop of Gary, Ind., against the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for s king to unionize lay teachers in parochial schools.

The bishop was supported in his appeal to the high court by the American Baptist Churches in the USA, which argued in a friend-of-the-court brief that important religious liberty questions were at stake.

By declining to hear the case, the Supreme Court did not rule on the substantive First Amendment issues raised in the American Baptist brief. The justices' action means that before the Gary bishop is allowed to argue the case on its constitutional merits, he must first exhaust the "administrative remedies" available to him.

American Baptists argued that from a First Amendment viewpoint, such an alternative is unacceptable to American Baptists in that the review process would excessively entangle the NLRB in church affairs.

Last year the NLRB, a federal regulatory agency, sought to hold an election in which lay teachers in the Gary Diocesan School System would decide whether to form a union. Bishop Andrew G. Grutka filed a complaint against the NLRB in a federal district court asking that an injunction be issued to forbid the federal agency from applying the National Labor Relations Act to Gary's parochial school teachers.

Last October, the district court sided with the bishop and ordered that the injunction be issued. The NLRB then appealed to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, which overturned the district court's order in February 1977, saying that the federal courts had no jurisdiction in the case.

In the friend-of-the-court brief, American Baptist house counsel Earl W. Trent Jr., argued that the high court should hear the case because "immediate access to judicial review in all substantive matters raising First Amendment concerns of church and religious organizations is a singularly important issue to Baptists today."

Trent went on to say that Baptists "are alarmed at the degree to which government administrative agencies have involved themselves in the internal affairs of churches" and that Baptists "believe that the church is irreparably harmed and religious liberty abridged when government without prior judicial review can assert control over its religious mission..."

Trent argued further that by "asserting jurisdiction" over Gary's parochial school system, the NLRB violated both the "no establishment" and "free exercise of religion" clauses of the First Amendment.

The NLRB has maintained that it has jurisdiction to apply the National Labor Relations Act to lay teachers in parochial school systems.

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SBC Charter Bus
Passes Available

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Special charter bus passes will be available for persons attending the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting here in June, according to the SBC transportation committee.

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The passes, good for four days, June 13-16, will cost \$10 each on the scene in Kansas City and \$8 each if bought in advance by contacting SBC Bus Shuttle Service, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 5001 N. Oak Street Trafficway, Kansas City, Mo. 64118.

A spokesman said one taxicab trip from outlying motels costs more than the four-day pass and that no parking will be available in downtown Kansas City unless the person is staying in downtown Kansas City.

Messengers to the convention will not be able to ride the special chartered busses without a pass, which will be available at all outlying motels. The passes will not be usable on regular metro busses.

The spokesman said busses will start moving each morning at 7:30, that each motel will have a color code, and that concession stands will open early each morning for those who want a light breakfast at the convention center's Bartle Hall.

In other announcements, a spokesman said the postal station at Bartle Hall, which will operate each day, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., June 13-16, will have items of interest to philatelists, in addition to regular postal services. Also, special philatelic units of the U. S. Postal Service are available, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, in both Kansas City, Mo., and Kansas City, Kan.--315 West Pershing Road in the Missouri side and 1021 Pacific on the Kansas side.

Calvary Baptist Church, 3921 Baltimore Street, the oldest Southern Baptist church in Kansas City, has invited all persons attending to the SBC and related meetings to an open house, Sunday June 12.

Former pastors of the 137-year-old church will preach at two services that day. Conrad Willard, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Miami, will preach at 11 a.m., Dotson M. Nelson Jr., pastor of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham, and first vice president of the SBC, will preach at the 7 p.m. service, which will be followed by a reception.

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Day Camp Slated For
SBC in Kansas City

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission will conduct a mission day camp for elementary school-age children of messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting here in June.

Enrollment, however, will be limited, in comparison to the past three years the commission has sponsored the camp, because of the size of the camp facility in Kansas City.

Day camp director Frank Black, who directs the commission's Crusader Royal Ambassador department, said the camp will take as many children as possible on a first-come, first-served basis.

Sterling Acres Baptist Church will host the camp, which will operate during sessions of the SBC, June 14-16. Children entering grades 1-6 may enroll for the day camp at a special booth in the registration lobby at the convention center beginning on Monday morning, June 13.

Transportation will be provided each day the camp is in session between the convention center and Sterling Acres Church. Full details will be available when the child is enrolled.

The fee is \$5 per day or \$12 for three days. Families with two children within the age group will be charged only \$20 for the three-day session, and families with three children will pay a maximum of \$25. The fee covers insurance, supplies, two noon lunches, and transportation between the convention center and the church.

Day camp activities--including games, crafts, nature study and visits with Southern Baptist home and foreign missionaries--will be conducted during the daytime sessions of the convention.

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Belmont Students 'Set Sail' for the Bahamas

NASHVILLE (BP)--Belmont College's physical education department will conduct a short-term course in sailing--worth three semester hours of credit--in the Bahama Islands, Aug. 13-21, according to John Thompson, chairman of the department and instructor of the course.

Although students need no sailing experience to register for the course offered by the Baptist school, they will receive some basic sailing instructions on nearby Percy Priest Lake before the 20-person class leaves Nashville.

Students, who will pay \$365 each for transportation, food and lodging, will spend eight days and nights on board sail boats with no more than five students to a boat. Boats will sail the first six days in a group with close supervision by professional instructors. The last two days students will sail their own boats within a designated area.

Participants will learn to use a marine radio, do general housekeeping and repairs on a boat, learn to maneuver boat under sail and power, learn proper anchoring, and receive some shoreside instruction.

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Kentucky Church Will Not Back Down on Ordination

By James Lee Young

Baptist Press
5/4/77

GRAVEL SWITCH, Ky. (BP)--Beech Fork Baptist Church here will ignore a directive from its local Baptist association to rescind its February ordination of a 24-year-old woman or have its fellowship withdrawn.

Mike Jamison, the church's pastor, told Baptist Press, "You can quote me. We don't plan to take any more action. We will not rescind Suzanne Coyle's ordination."

And two executives of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Home Mission Board, which appointed Miss Coyle nearly three years before her Feb. 1977 ordination, released a statement saying, "Ordination was not a requisite of Miss Coyle's employment but was done by her home church at their own initiative . . . Our position is that ordination is a local church matter in Baptist polity."

The statement, which noted the effectiveness of her work and her acceptance by local pastors in the area she serves in the inner city of Philadelphia, Pa., was not prepared in response to the action by the South District Baptist Association's executive board, which gave Miss Coyle's home church the choice to rescind or have fellowship withdrawn.

William G. Tanner, the board's chief executive, and F. Jack Redford, director of the board's department of church extension, prepared the statement before the association's April action.

The Home Mission Board had earlier received several "hot letters" concerning the ordination of Miss Coyle which asked about the "policy of the board and its church extension department, as well as the use of Cooperative Program (SBC's unified budget) funds in support of ordination of women," Redford said.

Miss Coyle serves as a "Church Extension Specialist" in the development of a mission congregation as chaplain-pastor of the Center City Baptist Chapel in Philadelphia. Her responsibilities include working with residents of the Center City YMCA and development of apartment ministries.

"Miss Coyle's support is not from Cooperative Program funds but comes primarily from designated gifts for that purpose," the board statement said, "with a small additional amount from Annie Armstrong Easter Offerings" (for home missions).

"She has served effectively, people have been saved, and pastors in her association speak well of her work," Tanner and Redford said.

"Our position," they continued, speaking for the Home Mission Board, "is that ordination is a local church matter in Baptist polity."

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According to the Western Recorder, weekly newsmagazine of Kentucky Baptists, the Beech Fork ordination issue was raised in an April meeting of the association's board, with Jamison and a lay member of the church presenting their congregation's viewpoint.

"We're very sorry this has happened," Jamison later told Baptist Press. "All we asked from the local association was that they recognize our autonomy as a local church. We did not ask that they accept our theological presuppositions in this matter but that they allow us to be part of the associational body as an autonomous, fellowshiping church."

Miss Coyle told Baptist Press, "My calling to the ministry has not been changed" by the association's action. "I'll continue to function in ministry as a Baptist," she said, noting that she plans to stay with Southern Baptists.

Some associational board members cautioned against severe discipline against the church, and one pastor raised the question of whether the association could act in light of a statement in its constitution that the association has no ecclesiastical authority over any local church.

The ruling was that the associational constitution provision had no effect on the proposed action concerning the Beech Fork Church.

The final vote was 19 to 9 in favor of the motion requiring the church to rescind its action or be put out of the association, the Western Recorder reported.

Loss of membership in an association would not prevent the church from maintaining its relationship to the Kentucky Baptist Convention or the Southern Baptist Convention.

Tanner and Redford said all mission personnel of the Home Mission Board "are jointly employed by the state convention, the association, and/or the local church where they serve. The burden of administrative direction is at the local level. We have cooperative agreements with all state conventions concerning home mission work in their territories.

"The Southern Baptist Convention, our parent body, has not taken a position on the ordination of women, to the best of our knowledge. We try hard to abide by the directive of the convention . . .

"The Paoli Baptist Church, Paoli, Pa., is the sponsoring church that guides Miss Coyle's work in the inner-city area of Philadelphia, along with Delaware Valley Baptist Association," said Tanner and Redford.

"To our knowledge," they continued, "no other woman is ordained who is related to Church Extension," through the Home Mission Board.

They added, "The (Home Mission Board's) chaplaincy division has endorsed women for employment as chaplains who were ordained. These are not paid by Southern Baptists but by the agency where they serve. The Armed Forces do not permit denominations to discriminate between men and women for the military chaplaincy."

C. R. Daley, editor of the Western Recorder, said letters to the Recorder on the issue were generally more concerned with upholding local church autonomy than with the ordination issue. Most were backing the Beech Fork Church's right to its own government without interference, Daley said.

Although complete data is not available, more than 20 women have been ordained by Southern Baptist churches, some of these in Kentucky. The South District Association board's action is believed to be the first among Southern Baptists to make ordination of women a test of fellowship.