



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 24, 1977

## MEMO TO STATE EDITORS:

One of the requests made by Chairman John Roberts and the Committee on Baptist Press in our discussions in September was for additional materials that might be mailed separately providing stories that would be useful to the state papers that might not be appropriate for the secular news media.

The attached story is the first of periodic mailings of this sort. When Norman Jameson arrives November 1, we hope to begin developing some special materials to provide you in this way. Some of it will be promotional. Other articles will be doctrinal in nature. Such features are not appropriate for Baptist Press but they are appropriate and useful to the state papers, so we will try to provide some to you on an infrequent basis.

If you have suggestions or requests in this regard, let me know.

W. C. Fields

WCF:ps

# (BP)

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## -- FEATURES

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77-188-A

Even A President  
Needs Love

by Caspar Nannes

*Coftr.*

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter put aside the cares of office the evening of October 14 to join with members of the Couples Class of First Baptist Church of Washington, to which he and Mrs. Carter belong, at the class' 33rd annual banquet.

Speaking impromptu with moving sincerity, the President told the more than 80 members at the dinner "You have made our lives normal lives. You have given us stability in a position that is inherently sometimes unstable. A President of our country can be an isolated person. You have taken us in and we are indebted to you. Thank you very much."

President and Mrs. Carter joined the Couples Class on January 23, 1977, the day they joined First Baptist Church.

The nation's chief executive was introduced to the gathering by Fred M. Gregg, Jr., teacher of the class.

"Mr. President and Mrs. Carter, I want to thank you for the sacrifice you have made to come out to be with us on such a (rainy) night as this," he said.

"You are the ones who sacrificed, and we are honored," Carter responded. "We look forward to each opportunity to share your influence and see your welcoming smiles and working with you. It adds a dimension to our lives."

During his remarks, Carter noted that Ambassador Francis Dennis of Liberia, associate teacher of the class, had spoken ahead of him.

Alluding to his friendship with the ambassador, Carter pointed out that some people have wondered how he could have "the friendship and support of the black people of the country. We all had in common a common faith. We all worshiped the same Christ."

He then pointed out a practical result of his relationship with Ambassador Dennis.

"There is a mutual spirit of understanding and care. Kissinger tried three times to get into Nigeria and was refused. Now we have a growing friendship with Nigeria. Whether you are a lonesome boy in Plains, Georgia, or in the White House searching for a new understanding of friendship across the ocean, the thing that binds you together is a belief in Christ."

He then paid tribute to Charles A. Trentham, pastor of First Baptist Church, for his understanding and help.

"We have had some problems with our family as all families do. We have come to Dr. Trentham for advice. This has made us feel not as a President above others, but as a President among others."

The imaginative railroad decorations throughout the hall and the banquet theme in large white letters--"Movin' On"--on a big banner behind the stage, caught the President's eye. He called the whole concept and execution "superb." At one table where a train of two engines and four cars kept going round and round a small town there was a station labelled, Plains, Georgia." That was his only criticism of the authenticity of the display. "Plains is not that big," he commented.

Carter set the tone for the evening upon his entrance, with a pleasant "Hi, everybody" greeting. He then stopped by the tables and shook hands with those near the aisle and later stepped down from the head table with Mrs. Carter to stand by each table while a photographer took their pictures with the class members sitting there. They also posed with those who

s rved the dinner.

Trentham inducted Joseph H. Lyttle for his second term as class president and the other officers in a mass ceremony. Edmund C. Sonnenschein served as toastmaster for the evening.

Douglass M. Porter stirred the crowd with his irrepressible singing of favorite songs and Bill Raiford's piano playing, including an original composition, inspired Carter to say, "He has changed completely my image of West Point."

Needless to say, the President is a graduate of the Naval Academy and Raiford of West Point.



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