



-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
480 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

February 8, 1978

78-17

Seminary Day Special For Chinese Student

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Emily Lau, a religious education major at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, came to the United States from Hong Kong three years ago to obtain a college education. She found Christ in the process.

As she now prepares for full-time youth or social ministry, much of her concern lies in Hong Kong with her atheist family and friends.

"They have found it hard to accept my decision to follow Christ. I feel I have a strong ministry back home, showing them how he transformed me," the Chinese student says.

Miss Lau, 22, sends her family the salary she earns each week working as a secretary at a Chinese church in New Orleans. Her seminary expenses are paid by the First Baptist Church of Columbus, Miss., where she professed Christ and was baptised last year.

Miss Lau first became interested in the Christian life at the International House for foreign students in Springfield, Va. during the Christmas season of 1975. When she headed back to her school, Mississippi University for Women, she had resolved to seek the peace she saw in Christians at the International House.

On each of the buses she rode back to Mississippi, she unwittingly sat beside Christians who spent most of the ride telling her of their joy in Christ. "When I look back, I see how the Lord had a hand in it," she said.

Her salvation was only the beginning since she has now dedicated herself to evangelistic service. Her pastor recommended she visit New Orleans Seminary and she says, "I met such nice people, toured around, and loved the atmosphere. I was determined to come."

When she notified her family of the decision, they were displeased and told her they were counting on her to support the family after she completed her bachelor's degree in business administration. The Laus had been withholding from their eldest daughter the news of an illness that had partially incapacitated her father.

"I praise the Lord for my father's illness though, because only through that did I learn humility," the diminutive student says. "Always before it had been easy for me to give, but it took a lot for me to receive. When my college church agreed to support me here at seminary, I was forced to learn grace in both situations. It also taught me that with God, anything can succeed."

Miss Lau terms her first year seminary experience "wonderful." She says, "I am learning from classes and people around me. I enjoy the fellowship, and the opportunity to serve in a Chinese church where we understand each other."

Pressed with the urgency of relating Christ to her family, Miss Lau was stunned this past Christmas with the surprise gift of a two-way ticket to Hong Kong. The ticket was paid for by the girls of her dorm and several faculty members of the seminary family.

Emily spent nearly a month in her home, her first visit there in nearly four years. She returned to New Orleans Seminary aglow with the good news that the Holy Spirit was definitely making progress with her family.

-30-

(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist papers by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

DARWIN-CARVER LIBRARY
S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE



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
Norman Jameson, 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) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2000

RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, 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

February 8, 1978

78-17

**Battle Over Abortion
Looms Across Nation**

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--The battle over abortion has been joined throughout the nation by two major groups who describe their views as "right to life" and "freedom of choice." The issue over abortion has been described by observers in Washington as one of the most emotional and volatile that has ever descended on the heads of members of Congress.

The "right to life" people, headed primarily by the Roman Catholic hierarchy but by no means confined to the Roman Catholic Church, have organized for a national push for a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortions.

The "freedom of choice" people, spearheaded by the National Abortion Rights Action League and supplemented by the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, support the U. S. Supreme Court ruling that the right to abortion is a constitutionally guaranteed right and that the decision about abortion should be between a woman and her physician.

The abortion battle has taken on two major thrusts as far as legislation and governmental action are concerned. The first attempt was to push through a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortions, thus overthrowing the Supreme Court decision. Failing in that attempt in Congress, the "right to life" advocates are feverishly working on both the state and federal levels to defeat programs of governmental aid to pay for abortions.

Since a proposed constitutional amendment on abortion was defeated in the Senate Judiciary Committee, the "right to life" people are now campaigning among state legislatures to call for a constitutional convention to achieve the same end. The "freedom of choice" people are equally opposed to laws restricting abortion and to the proposed constitutional convention.

Two recent events in the nation's capital point up the intensity of the abortion battle. In January, the March for Life attracted participation by estimated 28,000 to 70,000 persons to demonstrate and lobby for anti-abortion governmental activity. In February, the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) held its 9th annual meeting to extend its organization and to press its views into all the states as well as Congress.

According to the report on the March for Life in the Catholic Standard of Washington, the movement took on an overwhelming Roman Catholic religious tone. The day was begun by a rosary on the Ellipse and religious signs permeated the parade to the White House.

The March for Life focused on two targets--President Carter and the Congress. Nellis Gray, president of the march, charged Carter with working against "pro-life" issues, in spite of his anti-abortion stand during the presidential campaign. While in town the March for Life crowd saturated Congress with lobbying activities aimed at anti-abortion legislation.

The four-day meeting of NARAL focused on lobbying techniques and on plans to extend its activities into the states. It brought its membership up-to-date on abortion litigation and legislation and lobbied heavily in the halls of Congress.

-more-

A major event of the NARAL meeting was a breakfast honoring Sen. Edward Brooke, R-Mass., who has been a leading fighter in Congress against legislation that would restrict federal funding for abortions for needy people. The focal point in Congress is the so-called Hyde Amendment, proposed as a rider on much legislation in recent years. Introduced by Rep. Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill., the amendment would prohibit the use of federal funds for abortions.

Since 1978 is an election year, both the anti-abortion forces and the "right of choice" people are making abortion an election issue in all of the states. Both groups seek the nomination and election of public officials who will support their viewpoint on abortion. Due to the religious and emotional nature of the abortion issue and the dedication of both sides, it could mean that in this and future elections abortion will be a determining factor in the formulation of public policy in many areas, depending on which candidates win the elections.

Although the Roman Catholic hierarchy is trying to establish its views on abortion as a "right to life" issue for the unborn fetus, the "right of choice" forces are increasingly insisting that abortion is a religious issue. The NARAL and the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights claim that the Catholics are trying to impose by legislation their moral and religious views on the entire population. They say that such a movement ignores a large segment of the American population who are just as religiously concerned for quality of life and who believe that abortion should be an individual choice not to be decided by force of law or by those who hold differing religious views.

One thing is certain--the abortion issue is not near the point of settlement either in government or in religious circles. It appears that both religious bodies and government entities are in for a long and bitter struggle over the question of prohibiting abortions or allowing individuals freedom to choose a way of life based on their own religious persuasion and their concern for good health and constructive social conditions.

-30-

Baptist Protest Over
Israeli Law Continues

By Elizabeth F. Smith

Baptist Press
2/8/78

JERUSALEM, Israel (BP)--Baptists across Israel continue to react sharply to recent legislation which has the potential to limit Christian activity and endanger religious liberty.

Under the provisions of the December 1977 law, it will be illegal, as of April 1, 1978, to offer or receive material inducements to change religions.

Fuad Sakhnini, chairman of the Baptist association of churches and pastor of Nazareth Baptist Church, said, "Of course we are against any kind of material enticement to be given to people. But," he continued, "everything we do is done to influence people for the gospel, including preaching, teaching and helping. The difficulty lies in the interpretation which may be given to this aid. If it is interpreted that preaching the gospel is against the law, then we are ready to go to jail rather than to stop preaching."

Southern Baptist representative Dale G. Thorne adds: "Actually we are not interested in inducing people to change religion. Our interest is in introducing them to Christ. I don't feel that a person can be truly influenced to accept Christ by physical enticements.

"But the problem of this law is its disparaging attitude toward the Christian message," Thorne continued. "We are commissioned to spread the Christian message. There's possible danger of restricting freedom of Christians and people of all religions."

Robert L. Lindsey, Southern Baptist representative in Israel, said the intention of those who proposed the new law was "to give legal grounds for further intimidation of the Christian citizens and residents in Israel."

The Israel Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist representatives known locally as the Baptist Convention in Israel) and the association of Baptist churches have cooperated with the United Christian Council in its efforts to point out dangers of the law. The 20-member body believes the law offers opportunity to trap Christians and accuse them of bribery.

-more-

Although some Israeli journalists call this law the first real anti-missionary legislation ever attempted in the 30-year history of Israel, a number of provisions exist in various laws dealing with conversion. The criminal code as it exists today also deals with the changing of religion by a minor.

Persons participating in ceremonies for the changing of religion of a minor are subject to a prison sentence. It's also against the law for minors to change religion without written consent of parent or guardian. Minors must change to the religion of one of the parents. Adopted children must be of the same religious background as the adoptive parents.

Jewish leaders have pointed out that the law does not only include Christians but also Jews trying to induce others to convert to Judaism.

Fuad Hadda, Baptist deacon and assistant headmaster of Nazareth Baptist Schools, believes, however, this law is aimed mainly at the Christians "because they are the only group that has a call to go out and teach about Christ to all people. "This law," Haddad warns, "could be misused and become a dangerous weapon in the hands of scheming people."

-30-

Elizabeth (Mrs. James W.) Smith is a Southern Baptist representative serving in Israel.

#####

Mercer Cracks Down
On Student Debtors

Baptist Press
2/8/78

MACON, Ga. (BP)--Faced with an escalating delinquency rate in the repayment of student loans, Mercer University has decided, for the first time in its history, to go to court to collect.

"Already eight suits have been filed in Bibb County to collect delinquent student loans," said W. Newton Moore, assistant attorney for the Baptist university, "and future loan appropriations through the federal government depend on our success in loan collections. This is a revolving fund, and serious debts have been accumulated."

The university previously took a more lenient approach in regard to loan defaults.

"This change in posture has been mandated by federal regulations because of a growing nationwide problem of delinquencies," Moore said. "The federal government is now actively pursuing through the Justice Department judicial settlement against student debtors where local action fails to provide for full satisfaction of the indebtedness."

"No one will now escape the responsibility of repaying these loans," Moore said, "and cases will be pursued to their judicial conclusions."

President Rufus C. Harris in his report to the Mercer trustees at their annual meeting in December said that collections on the loans had become a major task.

"In previous years," Harris said, "Mercer was recognized by the U. S. Office of Education as having one of the lowest delinquency rates in the country. Unfortunately, our delinquency rate is increasing. On the Macon campus, the 1976-77 delinquency rate was 7.9 percent, up 14 percent over 1975-76."

The primary focus of the court action involves collection of delinquencies on the National Direct Student Loan Program, although the university will also use the procedure for collection of all indebtedness, Moore said.

Arthur Christie, director of student financial aid, pointed out that the university took the action only after extensive attempts to collect the loans through regular collection procedures.

-30-



BAPTIST PRESS

*460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

FEB 10 1970

LYNN MAY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37203

HO

CD