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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICESBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355W. 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 Richard T. McCartney, 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) L. Bracey Campbell III, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798
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

April 18, 1978

78-58

Administration Sponsors
Youth Camp Safety Bill

WASHINGTON (BP)--Administration opposition to a youth camp safety law has been reversed with the introduction of such a measure in the Senate at the request of Joseph A. Califano, secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

At a hearing in March by the Subcommittee on Child and Human Development of the Senat Committee on Human Resources an administration spokesperson presented its proposal. Joyce C. Lashof, HEW's deputy assistant secretary for health programs, explained that the administration supported a federal youth camp safety measure which encouraged efforts by the states rather than federal enforcement.

Introduced by U. S. Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., the administration proposal would provide for the development of safety and health standards by HEW and the provision of grants and technical assistance to the states from the federal government. Responsibility for implementation and enforcement of such regulations would remain with the states, according to Califano.

Youth camp safety legislation has been proposed in every Congress except one since 1967. In 1975, the House of Representatives passed such a measure but the Senate did not act on it.

Several church groups have opposed youth camp safety legislation on the grounds that it would bring church camping under governmental control. Other opposition has centered on th increasing role of the federal government in areas traditionally reserved to state governments.

Previous legislation in the House and Senate has included a statement of noninterference which guaranteed freedom for a camp in its program and admissions policy. Standards for camp personnel related only to competence in safety matters, not religious affiliation. The administration proposal does not contain such a guarantee of noninterference by the government in religious questions.

John W. Baker, director of research services of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has noted that the sole purpose of youth camp safety legislation has to do with the health and physical safety of campers. Any implementation of such a law therefore must be related to its purpose, he said.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has neither supported nor opposed such legislation in the past. It has testified before congressional committees on the church-state aspects of such measures.

According to a staffer on the Subcommittee on Child and Human Development no plans have been made for hearings on the new proposal. Copies of the bill have been sent to persons who have testified on youth camp safety in the past with requests for their comments.

Court Upholds State
Ban on Nude Dancing

WASHINGTON (BP)--Holding that no "substantial federal question" is involved, the U. S. Supreme Court declined to schedule for oral arguments two cases from California challenging that state's law regulating nude dancing in bars.

The cases are the latest in a long series of appeals during the high court's current term objecting to a regulation by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control forbidding nude dancing in drinking establishments.

In both of the rejected cases, owners of such establishments argued that the California agency's regulation is unconstitutional because the department has not determined whether nude dancing is obscene. They also argued that their freedom of speech was denied by the regulation.

The California Court of Appeals had earlier ruled against the bar owners and the Supreme Court's refusal to hear the cases leaves that ruling in force.

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Baker James Cauthen Finds
'Honor in His Own Country'

By Toby Druin

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LUFKIN, Texas (BP)--Friends and colleagues proved in Lufkin, Texas, that at least in the case of Baker James Cauthen, a prophet can find "honor in his own country."

For more than two hours in the new Civic Center in the town where the 69-year-old Cauthen spent his boyhood years, he was lauded for his life and ministry as pastor, teacher, missionary and missions executive.

But in his usual manner the executive director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board responded by giving his parents, the people of the First Baptist Church of Lufkin and the churches of Unity Baptist Association--and especially his Lord--all the credit for anything he has accomplished over his 51-year ministry.

More than 1,000 persons attended the banquet sponsored by the church and Unity Association. It was a lovefeast, honoring a man who grew up in their midst, made a profession of faith at six, was called to preach at 16 and served five churches in the association as pastor.

Many paid tribute to him. Mayor Pitser H. Garrison gave him a plaque and designated April 13 as "Baker James Cauthen Day" in Lufkin. Hubert R. Yount, director of missions in Unity Association, presented him a check, a love gift from First Baptist Church and Burke Baptist Church. Thomas E. Merritt, pastor of Polytechnic Baptist Church, Fort Worth, where Cauthen was serving when he surrendered for foreign mission service, brought greetings from that church. Bob Sitton, alumni director at Stephen F. Austin State University, praised him as an outstanding alumnus.

James M. Sapp, director of the division of communications of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, representing executive director, William Tanner, presented Cauthen a plaque. Sapp lauded Cauthen as "one of the stackpoles around which Southern Baptists have held together" and as a man who repeatedly has brought Southern Baptists to focus on evangelism and missions.

Texas Baptist executive director, James H. Landes, said he first knew Cauthen when the missions executive was a teacher at Southwestern Baptist Seminary and through the years had seen his life mean more "than can be put onto a plaque or in words of appreciation." Cauthen, Landes said, is a "man who has moved the world toward Jesus Christ."

Milton E. Cunningham, pastor of Westbury Baptist Church, Houston, and president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, read telegrams of congratulations from many people, including President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter; William L. Self, president of the Foreign Mission Board; William M. Pinson Jr., president of the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, and others.

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Cunningham said that often such banquets or similar occasions are held to magnify an "abrupt change" in a person's life and it's easy to draw a crowd to hear someone tell about "what he was before...Tonight," Cunningham said, "we are here to honor the beauty of a life that from its earliest days has sought God's will."

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union, represented SBC agencies at the banquet. She praised Cauthen for his prophetic voice, for being a partner in Bold Mission Thrust, for being a counselor and guide for the denomination, for being a conscience of the denomination in making it see a hungry, lost and dying world, and for being a friend.

Cauthen, she said, has helped Southern Baptists dream dreams of reaching the world for Christ and helped give them the determination and love necessary to accomplish it. "I believe every Southern Baptist is groping for those words whereby we might say, 'thank you,'" she said.

Jimmy R. Allen, SBC president and pastor of the First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas, said that all of Cauthen's life he has been a "finger pointing men to Jesus Christ." He noted the theme of the banquet: "Baker James Cauthen, a Man for All Nations," the title of Jesse Fletcher's biography of Cauthen, and said, "How do you say thank God for Baker James Cauthen except by thanking God for Baker James Cauthen."

Had Cauthen lived in Biblical days, Allen said, he might have been named Samuel. As was Samuel, he said, Cauthen was prayed for and committed to God by his mother, and he later sought God's call and answered it when it came.

"Samuel knew how to intercede for his people," Allen said, "and God listened to that voice. I find myself saying that this man for all nations (Cauthen) is a man of prayer for all nations."

Allen credited Cauthen with helping Southern Baptists develop an ethical awareness and helping eliminate credibility gaps on the mission field caused by unChristian actions at home. "He is a Samuel," Allen said. "He understands the source of power. Every time our Baptist missions movement moves to a new high water mark, you hear Baker James Cauthen say, 'Hitherto the Lord has helped us.'"

In a poignant response, Cauthen said he wished his mother and father, friends of many in the audience, could have attended. He praised First Church, Lufkin, and the others of Unity Association for their "beckoning, generous arms" of support.

Looking over his 51-year career, he said, "It's good to serve Jesus Christ. They have been years of constant reaffirmation. Thank God, you helped me to see it," he said. "Whatever you do in the name of Jesus, it lasts."

Cauthen mentioned his heart attack last fall, suffered as he began to preach in an Alabama church. He had begun to read from Isaiah 42, he said, "and you know, the thought that ran through my mind was the thought expressed in that Scripture of perfect peace--tranquility that has never gone away. When you stand in need of a friend," Cauthen said, "he is there. It's wonderful to serve Jesus...it leads to such a great end."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by Dallas Bureau of Baptist Press.

Nigerian Hopes to Adapt
Southern Baptist Programs

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Adaptability of Southern Baptist programs for use in Nigeria was the primary interest expressed by S. O. Olaniyan during a visit to the United States.

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Olaniyan, executive secretary of men, youth and boys work in the Nigerian Baptist Convention, attended the Second World Conference of Baptist Men in Indianapolis and then visited Southern Baptist agencies in Nashville and Memphis.

All facets of work with Nigerian youth are included in the responsibilities of Olaniyan, who deals with Bible study, recreation, family relationships and any area to help prepare young people for adulthood.

He sponsors seminars, lectures and meetings for youth in Nigeria and hopes to gradually adapt many of the ideas gained from his visit at the Sunday School Board in Nashville and the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis.

Olaniyan said he plans to make suggestions to help the Nigerian Convention improve the ministries to youth and men, but also to increase or start ministries to the disabled, deaf and shut-in church members.

He said Nigerian churches minister to these groups, but he wants to encourage the churches to create new avenues for worship inside the churches. He also mentioned the hope of new efforts to strengthen ministries in hospitals and prisons.

While visiting in churches in the United States, Olaniyan said he was particularly impressed with the fellowship in Southern Baptist churches, especially on prayer meeting night.

He said most things in Nigerian churches seemed very similar to services he witnessed in Southern Baptist churches.

Olaniyan said approximately 2,000 churches and preaching stations exist in Nigeria, and he intends to return and work to interject new suggestions to help increase the interest of young people in continued church membership.

Along with recommendations for improvements, Olaniyan said he hopes for expansion of his work in the near future, with additional workers to aid him in his efforts in Nigeria.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by Sunday School Board Bureau of Baptist Press.

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**460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219**

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