



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 27, 1979

79-50

Miller Picked First Editor  
Of Nevada Convention Paper

RENO, Nev. (BP)--Nevada journalist Vern A. Miller has been named the first editor of the Nevada Baptist, newspaper for the new Nevada Area Baptist Convention which was officially formed in October 1978.

Miller, 60, retired from the Navy in 1958 and for the past 20 years has been editor and publisher of newspapers in northern Nevada. He most recently was city editor of the Fallon Eagle-Standard in Fallon, where he and his wife, Monnie, were the last two charter members of the First Southern Baptist Church.

While in the Navy, Miller worked in maintenance, as an aeronautical engineer and as public information officer at various ships and locations. For one year, he was publicist for the Navy's Blue Angels flight demonstration team.

Miller attended the University of Nevada school of journalism and graduated from the Armed Forces Information School at Carlisle, Pa. He has sold articles to several western interest and flying magazines.

The first issue of the Nevada Baptist was published in February. It is currently a monthly, distributed to members of 75 Southern Baptist churches and missions throughout Nevada and on the fringes of Idaho, Utah, and California. Plans are to increase publication to twice monthly by fall.

-30-

(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers.

Cancer Claims America's  
1978 Mother of the Year

Baptist Press  
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MEMPHIS (BP)--Mrs. Ellen Edens McCall, the 1978 America Mother of the Year, died at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis March 23 after an extended bout with cancer.

The 57-year-old Southern Baptist church and civic leader, wife of Dr. John W. McCall, Memphis physician, was buried in Memorial Park.

Mrs. McCall was the sister of David Edens, noted Christian counselor of Columbia, Mo.; daughter-in-law of the late Judge John McCall, long time chairman of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission; and sister-in-law of Duke McCall, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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New Peace Agreement Called  
'Good Signing' by Israelis

By Elizabeth Smith

Baptist Press  
3/27/79

JERUSALEM (BP)--"Hatma pova," which means "good signing," is a special phrase among Jews, usually heard only at Yom Kippur when they greet each other on the day of repentance and atonement with the words, "may you be well inscribed in the Book of Life."

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But "hatima pova," on walls and banners, dominated every view of the television studio in Jerusalem that broadcast the March 26 signing of the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt.

This expression is a true reflection of the special atmosphere prevailing in Israel at this time. The solemnity of the occasion, when one remembers the trials and problems of the past, is mixed with joy and hope for a new lease on a better life ahead. Baptists here joined families and neighbors in front of television sets to watch the historic event, which began around 9 p.m. Jerusalem time.

One little kindergarten child insisted on staying up, too. He wanted to obey his teacher who had said that everyone in Israel, young and old, should witness the Arab and Jew sitting together at the peace table.

In every home, excitement and optimism were mixed with caution and realism. Expressions of "amen" and "may the Lord so will" were often repeated.

A group of senior students in the Nazareth Baptist High School were gathered at Baptist Village for a three-day emphasis on spoken English. These Arab students used the speeches of Anwar Sadat, Menachem Begin and Jimmy Carter as part of their regular lessons. Later, they joined in spontaneous prayer for the three leaders.

The general feeling among these students is typical of Baptists and others here. "It is a good step in the right direction. Yet, until the Palestinian question is solved, there can be no real comprehensive peace," they said.

The assistant headmaster of the school, Baptist deacon Fuad Haddad, said, "anything to do with peace is blessed." He, like many others, hopes that the peace process will continue until it draws in all nations in the Middle East.

Dale G. Thorne, administrator of the Baptist mission, said he is "gratified over the treaty and is realistically optimistic." However, he believes "there is a long way to go before real peace is achieved."

A number of Baptists spoke with concern about the hotheads or fanatics on both sides who would harm the peace initiative. The day after the signing, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative Thomas C. Nabors opened the Baptist book store in East Jerusalem at the regular time. Along with other shopkeepers in the area, he hopes that quiet will prevail again after disturbances and demonstrations by radical groups which caused early closing March 26.

"Until the idea of peace invades every aspect of our lives, there will be difficulties," one Baptist said.

Foreign Mission Board representative Margaret Lindsey, who has been in Israel for 35 years, said the signing reminded her of the same hope she felt in 1948 in the first days of the state of Israel. "We can be happy that something is on the way," she said. "However, we must not stop praying. There is room for concern that this peace treaty will be just a paper thing."

Arab pastor Edward Souti, of Acre, feels that if there can be physical peace then "we can start talking about the real meaning of peace--the spiritual meaning as found in the Hebrew word 'shalem' (whole) which is the root for the word 'shalom' (peace)."

Ibrahim Sim'an, a Baptist layleader in Haifa, believes the hardest part lies ahead--"the task of educating for peace instead of war." He advocates beginning this educational process in the homes, schools, camps and community clubs. "Turning enemies and rivals into friends and partners is the first priority of the day," he emphasized.

After the signing ceremony in Washington, public celebration began all over Israel. Thousands of Israelis joined in singing and dancing in colorfully decorated squares and enjoyed open-air performances by famous entertainers.

Greetings of "hatima pova" are still heard coming from their lips. There is hope that this message will sink into hearts as the nation goes forward in the pursuit of peace and a better life ahead.

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Elizabeth (Mrs. James W.) Smith is press representative in Israel.

Conference Urges Christian  
Involvement in Government

Baptist Press  
3/27/79

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Christians should not hide behind the doctrine of church-state separation to keep from being involved in America's political process, claimed speakers at the Arkansas Baptist Christian Citizenship Conference March 23-24.

"Our commitment to separation of church and state does not mean that Christians should not be involved in politics," said Foy Valentine, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

He was supported by a raft of religious and political leaders who encouraged over 200 participants at the first conference of this type in Arkansas to be actively involved in political issues.

"A person needs to be far more involved than just voting," said John McClanahan, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Ark. McClanahan said he opens his church facilities to be used as a forum for Christians discussing campaign issues.

"We don't want to see God and government as separate," said SBC President Jimmy Allen, who feels the most important relations in life are religion and politics.

Jim Lindsey, president of Lindsey and Associates, Fayetteville, concurred with Allen's statement, saying, "I believe in separation of church and state but I refuse to believe God is apart from those who lead." Those who are born again could be the biggest force in government if they would join together, he said.

Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton and U. S. Senator from Arkansas Dale Bumpers pointed out the problems of voters swinging their support from the hinge of one issue. Clinton said he has been told he was going to hell because he was against someone's single interest issue.

"It's important to remember that most issues don't mark the end of the world," Clinton said.

Phil Strickland, staff member of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, said election of candidates on issues is a myth anyway because people vote for an image. "The media presents an aura about an individual for the public," he said. He advised listeners "to try to somehow see that the image and the reality mesh."

Daniel R. Grant, president of Ouachita Baptist University, said institutions, without supporting a particular party, can get their employees involved in politics by encouraging them to run for offices and councils.

A former Ouachita assistant professor of religion, Bill Elder, recently failed in a bid for the U. S. Senate. Elder, now director of Christian Citizenship for the SBC Christian Life Commission, encouraged the participants to "be access people to stimulate yourselves and others, share your expertise and explore the realms of involvement and opportunity and see how our denomination can help in politics."

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Brooks Hays, former Arkansas congressman and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said the church can be effective in both government and religion if it maintains a free pulpit, a pastor who is objective and without prejudice, and if it supports governmental and religious agencies such as Congress and the Christian Life Commission.

Allen pointed out that decision makers are strongly influenced by opinion makers (voters) and that opinion makers have a great responsibility to observe the decisions being made.

Strickland and Bumpers stressed that anyone can involve themselves in political matters by writing to their congressmen. Bumpers suggested a simple handwritten letter and both said this type of correspondence would get more attention and action than any formal letter or petition.

The conference was jointly sponsored by the Arkansas and SBC Christian Life Commissions.

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(BP) Photo to be mailed to Baptist state papers.

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Louisiana Computer  
Saves Time, Money

Baptist Press  
3/27/79

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)--A "secret" password opens the recently installed "Baptist Message" video terminal computer system that will provide improved address change and billing service to subscribers.

Lynn Clayton, editor, said, "The Louisiana Baptist paper is the only state paper with a video terminal connected directly to a computer."

Circulation manager E. T. Carruth said a password brings the subscriber's name to the video screen where a correction or deletion can be made. He said this provides security for subscribers so their names will not be available to anyone but "Baptist Message" employees.

Carruth also said changes in the address file can be made quicker and cheaper.

It previously took three or four weeks to get a change made and new labels prepared and the "Baptist Message" was spending nearly \$500 per month for returned address changes.

The returned address change cost has been reduced about one-half, and a change now can be made in about three minutes.

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