



BAPTIST PRESS

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79-107

**Court Declines To Debate
Parochial School Busing**

By Stan Hasty

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court has sidestepped an opportunity to review its 32-year-old decree allowing states to provide transportation to nonpublic school students.

The high court dismissed "for want of substantial federal question" a challenge to Pennsylvania law mandating transportation for all pupils, public and nonpublic alike, to and from schools located up to 10 miles beyond local school district boundaries.

Two Pennsylvania school districts, including Pittsburgh, had earlier challenged the law in state courts, where they lost. They sought to demonstrate that the law violates the no establishment of religion guarantee of the First Amendment and has the primary effect of advancing religion.

Attorneys for the Pittsburgh School District, in legal briefs submitted to the high court after losing in Pennsylvania's Supreme Court, cited statistics designed to prove the "primary effect" test put forth by the high court eight years ago had not been met by the law.

During the 1972-73 school year, before the law was implemented, some 700 nonpublic school pupils were bused to their schools at a cost to the state of \$150,000. The following school year saw more than 3,800 nonpublic pupils being transported, costing Pittsburgh more than \$477,000.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education had threatened to withhold state education funds to school districts which refused to enforce the transportation law.

No explanation was given by the six high court justices who voted to dismiss the appeal. But the court was apparently unwilling to reopen what advocates and opponents of aid to nonpublic schools alike have accepted as a given since the court decided in 1947 that states may constitutionally provide transportation for nonpublic school pupils.

Since that historic ruling, decided by a bare 5-4 majority, the court has also held that states are not obligated to provide such aid to students attending parochial schools.

The high court has also used the safety and welfare argument cited in the 1947 Everson decision to endorse other forms of aid to such schools, including medical care, free meals for needy pupils, and other so-called "auxiliary" services.

Justices Harry A. Blackmun, Lewis F. Powell Jr., and John Paul Stevens indicated they would have accepted jurisdiction over the case and set it for oral argument. Four justices must agree, however, before a case is scheduled for argument.

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**High Court Will Not Settle
Serbian Orthodox Dispute**

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WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court once again has refused to permit civil courts to settle a long-standing dispute in the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church.

The case involved the defrocking of Bishop Dionisije Milivojevich 16 years ago by the parent church body in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and a subsequent dispute over who owns church property in this country and Canada.

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Millivojevich, who headed the church's American-Canadian diocese, sought unsuccessfully three years ago to have the Supreme Court reinstate him. The court ruled then that civil courts have no right to decide such internal ecclesiastical disputes in hierarchical churches.

At the same time, the high court held that the church property dispute over who owned Serbian Orthodox properties in the United States and Canada must be decided by the church, not civil courts. The justices sent that aspect of the controversy back to the Illinois Supreme Court for actions consistent with that principle.

That court, in light of the 1976 Supreme Court decision, held last January that it had no power to declare that the properties belonged to the bishop and his loyalists.

The high court's unanimous action declining to hear the new appeal presumably marks the end of civil legal appeals for the former bishop and his followers.

The Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church is a hierarchical body with worldwide headquarters in Belgrade under the authority of the patriarchate. It dates to 1054 and a schism within Catholicism which resulted in the formation of 14 new church bodies.

The church's highest legislative, judicial, and administrative authority rests in its Holy Assembly of Bishops, which made the 1963 decision to defrock the bishop.

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Independent Truck Driver
Chooses Study Over Strike

By Bracey Campbell

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Erman Sessiom's 18 wheeler has not been hauling railroad trailers in Los Angeles as it usually does.

But that's not because he's been striking with other independent truck drivers across the country to protest high diesel fuel prices.

"My truck is not running because of my need for Bible study and instruction in better ways to teach and relate to young people," said Sessiom at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center where he participated in Sunday School Leadership Week.

Sessiom, a member of the Evening Star Baptist Church in Los Angeles, said his study is more important than driving his truck across California.

"I serve as youth director and director of the bus ministry program in our church," he said. "You cannot imagine the needs of the young people in the inner city area of Los Angeles. Anytime I have the chance to do a better job in my church I take it."

The week is the first at Glorieta for Sessiom. "But I knew as soon as I drove on campus that there was a closeness and warmth here that would mean a lot to me, my wife and four children," ranging in age from four to 20.

The native of Muskogee, Okla., does not agree with the idea that independent truckers should shut down in protest.

He said the strike is causing serious problems for many innocent people. "And so many of the independent owners live from week to week. Not having any income for just one week causes big problems for many of them."

Sessiom, 39, is convinced that the fuel situation will improve for truckers: "The government knows that the country has to have trucks moving to exist. Just about everything moves on our rigs."

The muscular trucker became a Christian when he was a youngster. "But I really did not get serious about it until five years ago," he said. "I drifted away from the Lord. I tried everything else and nothing worked. You might say that I just went back to the way I was raised."

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Session was one of more than 6,400 persons from across the country who participated in the three training weeks sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

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Food Airlift Aids
Jamaican Flood Victims

By Jennifer Hall Anderson

Baptist Press
6/27/79

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--An emergency appropriation of \$55,000--including the charter of a DC-8 filled with \$35,000 in foodstuffs--is being poured into flood-stricken Jamaica by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The Baptist World Alliance also has dispatched funds to relief of flood victims in Jamaica, according to a separate report. Robert S. Denny, BWA general secretary, said that an emergency allocation of \$5,000 was sent immediately and that further allocations were expected when the BWA Committee on Relief and Development meets in Brighton, England, July 2.

Jamaica is the fourth water-devastated Latin country to receive Foreign Mission Board aid in a five-month period, bringing the total amount of such aid to about \$415,000 since January.

A late June tidal wave and resulting high tides left more than 40 persons dead and 25,000 homeless in Jamaica. Damage has been set at \$127 million. Southern Baptists first responded by sending a portion of the appropriation immediately to Jamaica for food relief, said W. Eugene Grubbs, the board's consultant for laymen overseas and relief ministers.

Later the board dispatched the DC-8 from Miami with powdered milk, cooking oil, beans, other food and agricultural supplies for use in crop restoration on the Caribbean Island, Grubbs said. Three Baptist churches in the Montego Bay area will distribute the goods. All of the money came from Southern Baptist hunger relief funds, he said.

The Florida Baptist Convention and the Dade County Baptist Association "deserve credit" for assuming responsibility for the emergency project, arranging for the jet, and securing laymen to accompany the shipment during the flight, Grubbs said.

Just 16 days earlier the board made an \$8,000 allocation for flood relief in Argentina--\$6,000 for food and \$2,000 for general relief. More than 20,000 people in the Formosa and Chaco Provinces were left homeless and evacuated in early June after rains caused rivers to swell, according to Sarah G. Wilson, Southern Baptist missionary and relief coordinator of the Argentine Baptist Mission.

"As of the moment, none of our Baptist church buildings have been damaged," Miss Wilson wrote in a June 8 letter, "but about 20 Baptist families have been affected and in most cases have heavy losses. As far as we know, there has been no loss of life."

Argentine Baptists are sending food, clothing and blankets to aid the situation. Families are using plastic tents, sent by Southern Baptists in November 1977 during the aftermath of the San Juan earthquake, for temporary shelter. Southern Baptist funds will be used to supplement the population's needs.

"As we pass through the streets of Clorinda in Formosa, we see only the roofs of the houses...Snakes move into the houses, leaving the dry land, hunting a spot not covered by water. Thieves come to steal whatever they can. The military are present to reduce this activity," Miss Wilson said.

In late May, the Foreign Mission Board allocated \$6,000 in emergency funds for purchase and distribution of food to victims of flooding in Paraguay. As of early June, the count of flood victims rose to an estimated 100,000, according to Judi (Mrs. Tom W.) Kent, Southern Baptist missionary press representative in Paraguay.

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Paraguayan Baptists were the first to present themselves as volunteers in the flood aftermath, she said. Flood victims are being housed in camps--two of which are run by Baptists.

"Although these families are not completely destitute, the camp situation is expected to last for three months," said Mrs. Kent.

All three disasters follow on the heels of Brazil's worst flood in its history. Continuous rains devastated the country for weeks early in 1979, leaving up to about 700 dead and close to 400,000 homeless. The Foreign Mission Board allocated \$345,000 for relief in the Brazil floods.

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Wrapup

Baptist Press

Preserve Distinctives, Fight
Intrusion, Schools Urged

6/27/79

By Jack Harwell

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (BP)--Rousing calls to preserve and communicate distinctiveness of church-related colleges and universities, while resisting government domination of private higher education, were sounded here at the University of Notre Dame.

The calls were made during the first National Congress on Church-Related Colleges and Universities, first step in a two-year effort to "review, reaffirm and renew" the role of Christian higher education in American life.

About 700 delegates from 23 major denominations, representing more than 800 private schools, met at Notre Dame. About 700 are also expected to gather in Washington, D. C., Feb. 1-2, 1980, to finalize conclusions drafted at Notre Dame and to hear President Jimmy Carter speak about his convictions on roles of private colleges.

President Carter sent a message to the congress at Notre Dame assuring conferees that "I do not believe the mission of the church-related college is complete. . . I wish you well in your deliberations."

The president's letter also declared: "I must call upon you to strive even harder to uphold the intellectual, religious and humane values of your institutions. I believe you provide a needed response to the spiritual hunger of our day."

Another political leader, Gov. Albert Quie of Minnesota, a former member of the U. S. Congress, said, "As a member of Congress which drafted many programs to give financial aid to college students, it was never my intention for any of these government programs to be used as instruments for government to gain control over colleges."

Gov. Quie, a Lutheran, said, "If you become more and more like public institutions, you will go out of existence, and you should go out of existence. . . If church-related colleges are true to their inception, they should attract many fine students."

L. D. Johnson, Southern Baptist chaplain at Furman University, said in the opening congress message, "We gather here to celebrate our oneness and our diversity. . . We begin at our basic common confession, Jesus Christ is Lord. . . We may say more, but we must not say less."

A leading Episcopalian figure, Cynthia Wedel, challenged congress members to capitalize on "the growing lay movements in many of our churches today," and channel that lay support for higher education.

Mrs. Wedel said, "There are 100 million members of the 23 churches represented here. If even a fraction of them could catch the vision of the importance of the church-related colleges; if they knew of the threats to these institutions today, they could be a formidable ally."

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A former president of the National Council of Churches, Mrs. Wedel added, "One of our biggest tasks is to light a fire under those 100 million lay church members... People power is one of the more tangible resources which churches could and must offer to higher education today."

Mrs. Wedel also called on Christian educators to focus on three major areas of concern: "a worldview of education and history, based on solid Biblical and theological ground;... environmentalist concerns about creation, wildlife, beauty, clean air and water and other gifts of the Creator... (and)... discovery of what motivates modern people, helping them to learn to live truly human lives."

A Mormon educator, Dallin Oaks, made a strong pitch for Christian educators to organize for resistance to what he called "unwise, illogical and probably illegal" government interference in Christian higher education.

Oaks, president of Brigham Young University in Salt Lake City, said, "We cannot accomplish our mission as church-related colleges and universities if our educational lights are even partly obscured by government regulation."

He charged that "the federal government's principle is no longer non-intervention in curriculum, but intervention in those subjects that the government considers 'tools of learning.'"

Oaks urged church-related schools to "band together to lobby against unsound and unworkable laws and regulations, and to challenge illegal enactments in court."

John Silber, president of Boston University, took a different tack in urging support for his long-espoused Tuition Grant Fund. That would be a government-funded program to advance college students their full tuition fees, to be paid with a 50 percent surcharge over a period of years.

He also predicted "vicious competition" between public and private schools between 1980 and 1990 because of declining enrollments, inflationary factors and changing value systems in education.

Silber charged that "God has withdrawn from ceremonies we celebrate" at some church schools. "Colleges and churches are facing an identity crisis, reflecting the cultural decline in America," he said.

Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame, told the congress that one purpose of the meeting was "to see that the history of complete secularization of higher education does not repeat itself in America."

Terry Sanford, president of Duke University, told congress listeners, "We are going to survive" as church-related schools by "awakening the churches and the public" to the Christian standards taught in church-related institutions.

Hesburgh was chairman of the national committee for the Notre Dame congress. Sanford was chairman of the board of directors. Ben C. Fisher, recently retired executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Education Commission, was vice chairman of the board of directors and chairman of the congress program committee.

A major focus at the Notre Dame congress was meetings of six study commissions, studying such aspects of college administration as legal issues, financial problems, church-college relationships and public policy themes.

Findings of the study commissions will be refined and edited by follow-up committees and published prior to the 1980 wind-up meeting in Washington.

One strong recommendation from the study commission on legal issues was creation of a central clearing house for litigation strategy, to help church-related schools determine which legal issues needed to be pursued in courts.

Similar proposals in other areas were made by other study commissions.

Court Rules Against Weber
In Affirmative Action Test

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--Declaring that private employers' affirmative action programs do not violate the Civil Rights Act, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled against a white worker who claimed that such a plan constituted unlawful reverse discrimination.

The 5-2 decision was objected to in a strongly worded dissent by Justice William H. Rehnquist and Chief Justice Warren E. Burger. Justices Lewis F. Powell Jr. and John Paul Stevens did not participate in the decision--Powell because he was ill when the case was argued last fall and Stevens for unexplained reasons.

Brian F. Weber, the white worker at Kaiser Aluminum Co.'s Gramercy, La., plant, had challenged the company's effort to increase the number of skilled black craftsmen through a training program which set aside 50 percent of all openings in the program to black workers regardless of seniority.

When the plan was first implemented in 1974, seven of the 13 openings in the new training program were handed to blacks, even though a number of white workers possessed higher seniority than the blacks chosen. Weber took Kaiser Aluminum to court, arguing that a section of the Civil Rights Act as amended in 1972 specifically forbids discrimination against any person on the basis of race. He won in both district court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

In its decision, however, the Supreme Court reversed the lower courts, holding that because Congress' intention in passing the Civil Rights Act was to remedy past discrimination against blacks and other minorities, the voluntary Kaiser plan was acceptable.

Senior Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr. wrote the historic opinion for the court. He declared that "it would be ironic indeed if a law triggered by a nation's concern over centuries of racial injustice and intended to improve the lot of those who had 'been excluded from the American dream for so long,' constituted the first legislative prohibition of all voluntary, private, race-conscious efforts to abolish traditional patterns of racial segregation and hierarchy."

The argument over congressional intent in passing the provisions of the Civil Rights Act in question dominated the high court's landmark decision in Alan Bakke's similar challenge to the admissions scheme at a California medical school.

Brennan argued in a relatively brief opinion for the majority that the seemingly absolute prohibition against any discrimination whatever contained in the Civil Rights Act "must... be read against the background of the legislative history...and the historical context from which the act arose."

He repeatedly quoted the late Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, one of the prime proponents of corrective civil rights legislation and floor leader in the debate over the Civil Rights Act provisions in question. Congress' "primary concern" in passing the law, Humphrey had declared, was with "the plight of the Negro in our economy."

Brennan quoted Humphrey further that "the crux of the problem (was) to open employment opportunities for Negroes in occupations which have been traditionally closed to them."

Brennan also argued that the Kaiser affirmative action plan "does not unnecessarily trammel the interests of the white employees" by requiring white workers to be dismissed in order for blacks to be hired. "Nor does the plan create an absolute bar to the advancement of white employees," Brennan continued, since "half of those trained in the program will be white."

He also noted that the Kaiser plan was designed as a temporary remedy "to eliminate a manifest racial imbalance" rather than a permanent plan "intended to maintain racial balance."

Rehnquist, writing for himself and Burger in an opinion that ran nearly three times the length of Brennan's ruling for the majority, argued that the legislative history of the provisions of the Civil Rights Act under question demonstrate that Congress intended the prohibition against racial discrimination to be read literally. He also attacked the use of quotas in employment plans such as that at Kaiser Aluminum, saying that "there is perhaps no device more destructive to the notion of equality."

"Whether described as 'benign discrimination' or 'affirmative action,' the racial quota is nonetheless a creator of castes, a two-edged sword that must demean one in order to prefer another," Rehnquist declared.

In its decision upholding the Kaiser plan, the court deliberately stopped short of endorsing all affirmative action programs, thereby leaving open the probability that future similar cases will be coming to the justices.

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Survival Kit Bridges
Gap for New Converts

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Dan Boone's confidence, his physical presence, warm smile and strong handshake make you want to buy what he's selling.

He's selling Oldsmobiles and Hondas and his Houston dealership is one of the largest in the country. His success as a salesman earned him a place on the cover of Time magazine.

But since June 1, 1978, when Boone became a Christian over lunch at a country club, sharing his faith in Jesus Christ has been his first priority.

Boone, 40, the father of three and the last member of his family to become a Christian, is reluctant to talk about the specifics of his life before last June except to say, "I had literally done everything a wild, hell-raising car dealer was supposed to do."

He credits Ralph Neighbour Jr., pastor of West Memorial Baptist Church, Houston, with leading him to Christ and helping him survive the first difficult months of adjustment to a new way of life. Boone is quick to emphasize that becoming a Christian did not mean an immediate end to his problems.

"Becoming a Christian opens the doors for new problems unless a person has someone to lean on," said Boone. His "someone" was Neighbour who made himself available 24 hours a day.

He also developed a set of materials to aid Boone through what Neighbour's pastoral experience had shown him to be the predictable crises of a new Christian. Boone was the first person to work through the 10-week study which has now been produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department as a "Survival Kit for New Christians."

Neighbour, a missionary to Singapore for several years, said he had found in working with many new Christians that most pass through five stages. First is the honeymoon stage of celebrating new life in Christ which is followed by the fight state of dealing with the conflict of old and new lifestyles.

Then comes the doubting state when a person wonders if the moment of salvation was all that was involved in being a Christian. Next, the panic-search-for-truth stage when a person needs to be introduced to resources and methods of Bible study.

The fifth stage is the silent Christian. Neighbour maintains that "multitudes of Christians sleep in this 'silent Christian' stage."

The survival kit, a 128-page book, also contains 11 weeks of guided study a person can do individually or with a group. Topics include salvation, dealing with the old and new natures, authority and witnessing.

A men's group of new Christians in Neighbour's church currently is working through the survival kit materials and meeting on Tuesday mornings at a clothing store.

"So many of today's churches have great expectations for new converts but do not help them in the crucial beginnings of their new life in Christ," said Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department. "I believe the survival kit is a partial answer to this need."

Dan Boone agrees and believes "survival kit" is an ideal title. "The first few months of getting started as a Christian are literally a matter of survival," he said.

But Boone has no desire to return to his former life. Recalling the conversations with Neighbour that led up to the lunch meeting on June 1, 1978, tears came to his eyes.

"That was the greatest day of my life."

Marketplace Visitation

Gets Results For Church

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By Mike Creswell

LAUREL BAY, S.C. (BP)--Sunbathers on the beach at Hunting Island State Park were surprised one Sunday afternoon when a Baptist congregation arrived to hold a baptismal service.

Members of Laurel Bay Baptist Church met to sing, pray and watch pastor Dan Heath baptize nine new church members in the swirling cold waters of the Atlantic.

Church members then filtered through the waders and frisbee-throwers to distribute tracts and share their faith in Christ.

It was a typical day for Laurel Bay. Heath calls it marketplace visitation, and it's beginning to pay off in solid results for the church.

During his seven months at the church, 130 converts have been won and 80 of them baptized into the church. On a high attendance Sunday in February, more than 600 persons clogged every room in the Laurel Bay building. Some classes had to be held outside.

Heath credits the witnessing lay persons in the church "for putting the gospel into flesh," as he refers to their sharing experiences.

"By stepping out boldly," he says, "God's work can be done through average persons like us. I used to be the kind of pastor who thought that if people wanted to come to church all they had to do was come: it was there for them. But it's not like that. We've got to take the church out into the community like Jesus did."

On the Sunday afternoon at the beach, several persons were won to faith in Christ by the Laurel Bay lay persons. They use Bibles, tracts and a low-key approach as they strike up conversations with persons and swing the talk towards Christ.

"Ninety percent of our church's success in reaching persons is because we're going out to witness," says Heath flatly.

Participants meet at the church for prayer and to discuss possible approaches, then go to shopping centers or recreation areas--wherever people are.

The approach is not really optional for the Laurel Bay congregation. Like Alice in Wonderland, the church must run very fast just to stay in the same place.

Military personnel make up much of the congregation, which means a constant turnover in membership. It also means constant efforts are required to keep the membership from dwindling away.

At one time in May the church lost 60 members because of base reassignments, a shock that might have been the kiss of death for some congregations that average 200-250 on Sundays as Laurel Bay.

Such changes keep the church in a mission status under watchcare of the 1,600-member Baptist Church of Beaufort.

But with the new emphasis on witnessing and outreach, Heath hopes the church will grow to a more stable footing, and thereby have an even greater impact on the community.

"God's people are very much alive," says Heath. "They just need to be encouraged and motivated."