



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 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 Stan L. Hasteley, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

October 5, 1979

79-167

Construction Consultant
Program Initiated By HMB

ATLANTA (BP)--A program to help small churches prepare for volunteer groups who come to construct their buildings has been initiated by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Increasing numbers of projects, as well as the need for better planning on the part of churches wanting to build, have necessitated the program, said Bill Wilson of the board's special mission ministries department.

"Last summer, we assigned about 85 construction groups to churches all across the country, and we'll probably have between 100 and 125 groups in 1980," Wilson said.

"With that many projects handled through the HMB office in Atlanta--often thousands of miles from the churches--communication can fail, resulting in stalled construction efforts," he explained.

"We need to be efficient and provide better coordination between these people," Wilson added. "That means we need to send out trained consultants to work with the churches; give them counsel."

The program will make consultants available free of charge to churches in "new work" areas that plan to build. The consultants will be "mature Christians who have construction backgrounds and have led at least two volunteer construction groups." Eight of them have been secured, and more are being added.

The program goes into effect Dec. 1, after which churches which request volunteer groups assigned by the Home Mission Board will need to request a visit by a consultant. Consultants also will be available to assist small churches which need guidance but don't need builders.

The Home Mission Board church loans division and the Baptist Sunday School Board architectural department are assisting in the effort.

-30-

Preacher Says Blacks
Still on the Bottom

By James Lee Young

Baptist Press
10/5/79

DENVER (BP)--After 244 years of blacks seen by American society as "things," they are "still the last to be hired and the first to be fired," Ralph Abernathy told participants at a meeting of the Baptist Student Union in Denver.

-more-

"We are still at the bottom," the Atlanta pastor, civil rights leader and former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference told about 200 persons attending the event sponsored by the Auraria BSU in the St. Francis Inter-faith Center.

"Yet our nation will spend billions and billions of dollars to send man to the moon," and to other planets he said, "and all man brought back was dust and rocks." He said the space projects have been at the expense of the needs of the poor in this country.

Speaking on the topic "Lest We Forget," Abernathy said the nation still keeps blacks down.

"We have failed to tell our children the story about colored restaurants, not being able to use restrooms, about poll taxes, and not being able to vote, he said.

Abernathy said the vast majority of blacks and poor people in the country "are worse off today than they were during the '60s."

Earlier in the week Abernathy said that a recent surge in activity among the Ku Klux Klan is upsetting and could be blamed on complacency among blacks. He encourages black leaders to fight Klan demonstrations by boycotting the businesses of Klan leaders.

He was quoted by Denver's Rocky Mountain News as saying, "So many blacks think the struggle is over--think we have made it--because we have accepted tokenism."

"The whole nation is on welfare and just because some poor black folks don't have jobs, we want to make them feel bad," he told the BSU audience. He said the taxload on middle America should be placed "where it belongs," on the nation's major corporations.

-30-

Professor Finds Baptists a Relief

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--After Hurricane Frederic swept through Mobile, Ala., Robert L. Perkins, visiting professor of Christian philosophy at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, felt fortunate to still have a house.

But he also found it "hard to keep that in perspective," when he went back to Mobile and found his four-acre lot filled with the remains of at least 120 trees.

Perkins says it's frustrating being back in Louisville, after making a weekend trip to his home after Frederic hit. In addition to being away from his wife and two children, "I am not able to do anything or hear anything about the cleanup after the storm," he says.

One consolation is his knowledge that the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and the Alabama Baptist Convention are actively aiding victims of the disaster.

"I was almost in tears when I saw those men working," he said. As he walked out of his house on the Sunday following the storm, he saw a group of men put their power saws to the huge trees cut into logs and ready to move.

One of the volunteers suffered a broken jaw in the cleanup operation. Perkins observed that "here is a guy that really paid the price." Applying Galatians 6:17 to the situation, Perkins said "he is bearing in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

-more-

Frederic's victims will long remember what has been described as the most intense hurricane in Mobile history. Perkins will also remember the great response of fellow Baptists in the aftermath of the storm.

-30-

Supreme Court Returns;
Acts on Church-State Cases

By Stan Hasteley

Baptist Press
10/5/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court returned to the bench Oct. 1 to dispose of nearly 1,000 cases, including several dealing with church-state issues.

The justices unanimously declined to review a ruling by the California Supreme Court which refused to dissolve the state's receivership of Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God. Last January, the state, acting after several members of the denomination protested lavish spending by church leaders, took over all church records and, in effect, temporarily dissolved the denomination.

The state claims it acted under its incorporation laws, which allowed it to consider the Worldwide Church as a charitable or public trust subject to state investigation and receivership.

The Worldwide Church has argued that California's receivership provisions allow the state to claim that church property is owned by the citizens of the state, that church records are public and subject to state audit and review, that the state may compel the church to account for its income and expenditures so it may determine if church funds are being used for their stated purposes, that church officials are public trustees who may be removed and replaced by the state, and that the state may reorganize the church's form of government from hierarchical to congregational.

Last March, the California Supreme Court declined to lift the receivership order, leading church attorneys to appeal to the nation's high court.

In spite of its action denying a hearing, the merits of the case were not involved. It is widely presumed that the case will ultimately come back to the justices for final disposition.

In another church-state action, the justices likewise declined to schedule for oral argument a challenge to Ohio's refusal to recover instructional materials and equipment from parochial schools in the state in the aftermath of a Supreme Court decision outlawing such aid.

Supporters of the high court's decision had sought a mandatory injunction from Ohio courts but lost in an appeal to the state supreme court. That tribunal held that the injunction could be denied because the equipment and materials would soon be obsolescent, that public officials might entangle the state with church leaders in the process of recovery, and that public schools could not benefit from the recovery because they already have such equipment.

Ohio has been one of the key battlegrounds in recent years in the constitutional fight over how much states may aid parochial schools. The Supreme Court has ruled that transportation, meals, and health care are among a limited number of ways states may provide aid without violating the no-establishment clause of the First Amendment.

-more-

In another action dealing with private schools in Ohio, the justices unanimously refused to review a lower court ruling that the state may not control student disciplinary procedures in nonpublic schools.

The Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of due process of law does not confer on parochial school pupils the right to challenge disciplinary actions, the court held.

The high court also ruled out a hearing for a Colorado man who was denied a driver's license because he refused to be photographed for religious reasons. David Johnson and other members of the assembly of YHWHHOSHUA, a small sect, argued unsuccessfully that permitting themselves to be photographed amounts to idolatry.

The Colorado Supreme Court ruled earlier that the state's interest in making a photograph of every applicant for a driver's license is so compelling that it "overbalances" the burden of protecting the free exercise of religion.

In another religious freedom case, the court let stand a New York court's ruling that a clergyman may not refuse to answer questions put to him by a grand jury unless answering the questions would violate the priest-penitent relationship.

Without dissent or comment, the justices unanimously threw out the case brought by Roman Catholic priest Louis R. Gigante, who argued unsuccessfully that his right to keep conversations with penitent individuals confidential overrides the state's need to interrogate him about suspected criminals.

In yet another action, the justices also refused a challenge to the social security system by a minister who claimed he should be exempted from paying self-employment taxes for his conscientious, or religious objection to the system.

-30-

Homosexual, Obscenity
Convictions Upheld

Baptist Press
10/5/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Supreme Court has upheld the convictions of a Virginia man for sodomy and of an Arizona man and a Nebraska woman for violating state obscenity laws.

David A. Hartman, of Prince William County, Va., was convicted of engaging in unlawful homosexual acts after police presented evidence gained by using ceiling vents in a public toilet to spy on suspected homosexuals. During his trial, Hartman argued that he had a "reasonable expectation of privacy" in an enclosed public toilet stall.

In the Arizona case, Erland Earl Bartanen failed in his effort to have the justices review his conviction for displaying obscene films in an adult book store. Bartanen's attorneys argued that the investigating policeman had failed to view the seized films in their entirety but went rather from booth to booth cataloguing movies by the sexual activities they portrayed.

Also denied a review was Beverly Ann Schwartz, Lincoln, Neb., woman who argued that excluding from jury service persons between 18 and 21 years of age and persons 70 years or older violated the Constitution's guarantee of a fair trial.

-30-

Korean Baptist Program
Begins in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Southern Baptists' first attempt to share the gospel with Los Angeles' large Korean community, via television, got underway recently with the airing of the first in a series of weekly programs.

The program, called The Baptist Hour, features interviews, music and a biblical message presented in the Korean language. It's broadcast over the Korean language television station for the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Featured speaker for The Baptist Hour is Don Kim, pastor of Berendo Street Baptist Church. "We're hoping this program will not only reach the non-Christians, but also will make the presence of Southern Baptists known among the Korean people," Kim said.

The thirty-minute special attempts to provide a warm and personal expression of the gospel, Kim explained. Each show features an interview with a Korean layperson who has come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and gospel music performed by a variety of Southern Baptist Korean musicians.

During the program, viewers are invited to call a special telephone number through which they can receive counseling. To encourage viewers to contact the Korean Baptists, a special free offer is made of a cassette tape recording of the program or one of two free books.

Pastors among the region's 20 Korean Southern Baptist churches and missions will be given the names of callers to make follow-up visits, Kim said.

He said that nearly 250,000 Koreans reside in the Los Angeles area. "Many Koreans will view the program out of curiosity," Kim said, just because "they are hungry for any type of program presented in their native tongue."

Funding for the television series was provided by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board through their Key Cities project, a concentrated effort for evangelizing America's major metropolitan communities. The SBC Radio and Television Commission provided technical assistance.