

**(BP)****BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
SBC Executive Committee  
480 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37218  
(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** \_\_\_\_\_, 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) \_\_\_\_\_, 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. Hestey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

February 11, 1980

80-25

**Atheists Protest Employment  
Of Charlotte Police Chaplain**

By Charles Richardson

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--The Mecklenburg County chapter of American Atheists wants the Charlotte police department to get rid of its new chaplain, 38-year-old Dennis Whitaker, a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

A suit has been filed in U.S. District Court against the city and Police Chief J.C. Goodman, claiming the arrangement is "unconstitutional" because it "entangles" church and state.

The Charlotte chaplain's fulltime arrangement is believed to be the only one of its kind in North Carolina, but is in effect at other places in the U.S., according to Burke Holland, who heads the chaplaincy program for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

"I believe this may be the first case filed in the United States dealing with the constitutionality of police chaplain's positions," says Richard D. Boner, assistant attorney for Charlotte.

Under a special arrangement, the police department is sharing the cost of Whitaker's \$20,000 annual salary with the Providence Baptist Church of Charlotte. The Baptist State Convention's department of chaplaincy and the SBC Home Mission Board also contribute to his salary, according to Holland. Half of his salary is paid by Baptists and half by the city for the first year of the new program.

Patricia J. Voswinkle, the plaintiff who filed the suit on behalf of the 100-member atheist organization in Charlotte, called the arrangement "an entanglement because the church is paying half of this man's salary." The Charlotte City Council recently approved the financial arrangement, according to Henry Crouch, pastor of Providence Baptist Church.

Mrs. Voswinkle cited the 1st and 14th Amendments, stating that her organization wanted to eliminate the position of chaplain and forbid the city from hiring another one.

Charlotte City Attorney Henry Underhill said the contract does not violate constitutional rights and said the focus of the contract is on crisis intervention types of work.

"The chaplain may, upon specific request of an officer, provide spiritual counseling but only upon specific request," the attorney said.

"He is prohibited from conducting religious services. The contract prohibits that sort of arrangement. That's why the contract does not violate constitutional rights," he said.

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American Atheists is a national organization with chapters across the country. Madalyn Murray O'Hair of Austin, Texas, is president.

Henry Crouch, whose church is supporting the program, served as the police department's chaplain on a voluntary basis for the past 11 years.

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Baptist Schools Recorded  
Fall Enrollment Increase

Baptist Press  
2/11/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Enrollment at Southern Baptist-related colleges and junior colleges rose by 8.1 percent last fall, according to figures compiled by the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The 46 Baptist senior colleges and universities enjoyed the largest growth. Their enrollment increased 7,182, or 8.17 percent, to 95,132 students.

Junior colleges saw a 6.54 percent increase with a total enrollment of 5,110 students in seven schools, up from 4,796 students in 1978.

"The increase is especially significant when compared to similar figures for other independent colleges and church-related schools," said Arthur L. Walker, executive director-treasurer of the Education Commission.

According to a recent survey by the National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities, the nation's private colleges recorded only a 1.5 percent enrollment increase last fall with church-related colleges posting a 1.9 percent increase.

"Enrollment in all colleges is expected to decrease during the next few years due to population trends," added Walker. "It's encouraging to still be able to report such a significant increase in the enrollment of Baptist schools."

Southern Baptist seminaries recorded a 3.8 percent increase while Baptist academies saw a student enrollment growth of 13.9 percent. Southern Baptist Bible schools reported a 2.98 percent increase in students.

According to the report, there were 114,407 students at Southern Baptist schools last fall.

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New England Baptists  
Get Help With Press

Baptist Press  
2/11/80

NORTHBORO, Mass. (BP)--"Good News, New England" should translate into big news for area press, thanks to a Texas public relations specialist.

Ben Turner, a Mission Service Corps volunteer, is taking a year-long break from an Austin environmental engineering firm to work with the Baptist General Association of New England, an alliance of Southern Baptist associations of churches in the region.

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"Good News, New England" is a "back to the basics" church extension and church growth campaign in which Southern Baptist churches in the area will be involved in Sunday school growth efforts, evangelistic crusades, tent revivals, visitation programs, stewardship and leadership training seminars and the planting of 20 new churches.

Turner's role is to translate Southern Baptists to the media and to train pastors to deal with it.

"We need to make ourselves known to the media," he said. "There is a common misconception that we are a cult, a bunch of holy rollers, ignorant farmers from the South or all of the above."

"We've got to combat this image through the media by getting better coverage of the work we do," he said. "We don't expect miracles, but we want to get to know the press and get them to use our press releases."

Turner also will help pastors get to know the press by producing a brief booklet on how to deal with the media as a method of reaching people.

He plans to develop a comprehensive development campaign for the "Good News, New England" emphasis. He has editorial responsibilities for the association's monthly newspaper, the New England Baptist.

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Jones Retires  
Second Time

Baptist Press  
2/11/80

TAYLORS, S.C. (BP)--S. H. Jones, who will be 80 years old in June, has retired for the second time, stepping down as associate pastor for First Baptist Church, Taylors, S.C.

Jones, associate pastor since 1970, first retired in 1966 after 17 years as editor of the Baptist Courier, newspaper for South Carolina Baptists. During that time, he was elected president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention in 1955 and president of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

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Arkansas Woman Leaves  
\$42,000 for Seminary

Baptist Press  
2/11/80

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A bequest of approximately \$42,000 in the will of an Arkansas woman will provide a permanent student aid fund to assist ministers enrolled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Edna Bryan Boston, who died Dec. 7 in Mountain Home, Ark., directed in her will that a trust fund she had established in 1940 be liquidated and the proceeds used to set up the "Jesse Minor Boston Fund" at Southern Seminary. The money will be invested and only the annual income used to finance the fund.

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Russia in Afghanistan  
Moral Issue: Ethicists

By Renee Wash

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The United States must look at the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as a moral issue to avoid what might eventually become nuclear war said the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's Foy Valentine and other religious leaders on network television Feb. 10.

Valentine, executive secretary-treasurer of the Christian Life Commission, appeared with Donald Shriver, president of Union Theological Seminary, and James Blewett of the U.S. Catholic Conference Center of Concern. They agreed that morality must not be separated from reality when considering action regarding the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and that there is no dichotomy between reality and ethics.

"We really must be concerned about the moral dimensions of Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, the oil shortage, inflation, whatever is happening to western democracy," said Valentine on ABC-TV's religious-cultural series "Directions." "Morality permeates this whole thing. You have to run a western civilization of the 20th century by some perception of what's right and wrong."

Valentine, Blewett and Shriver shared concern over an escalating "militarization of feelings and talks in Washington." They said the U.S. must find ways, such as boycotting the Summer Olympics in Moscow, to show Russia disapproval of their actions without precipitating war.

"It is a moment in the evolution of the human family when we must look for other ways to resolve conflict," Blewett said.

Energy conservation is a major way to assure peace, the group agreed.

"The chief temptation in the whole situation circles around our dependence on (foreign) oil," added Shriver. "Whatever we can do to decrease our consumption of oil will be one of our best investments in the posterity of world peace."

Valentine said he believes President Carter is trying to deliver the United States from its dependence on foreign oil by asking Congress for a national energy conservation program.

"But," he added, "it is also the responsibility of Christians to do their part in conservation which is vitally related to world peace. We have to underline our commitment as Christian ethicists, or just regular church persons, to do the things that make for peace. In stewardship, in conservation and responsible attention to...stirring up the things that can be done to support peace are in line with the church's long-time commitment to peace."

"Throughout this week of history religious people with a moral base have kept some pressures for righteousness in public life," said Valentine. "It is the role of the Christian and of the Jew and of the religious community and of humanists who are committed to moral values to move us in the direction of right away from wrong--in the direction of righteousness and away from evil."

This segment of "Directions" was produced in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the National Council of Churches.