

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

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 27, 1980

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**O'Hair Falls Again In  
Nation's High Court**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Madalyn Murray O'Hair suffered a new defeat here when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to schedule for oral argument her suit seeking removal from Texas state courts of a charge against her for disrupting a public meeting.

Mrs. O'Hair, who was arrested Nov. 3, 1977, after vocally protesting the opening of the Austin, Texas, city council with an invocation, maintained that her rights as an atheist had been denied by the prosecution.

Mrs. O'Hair's attorney argued that the Texas courts are not competent to handle her case because the Texas State Constitution has language which systematically excludes atheists from participation in any judicial proceeding. Article 1, Section 4 of the state constitution, he went on, expressly excludes atheists from holding public office.

Convinced that her rights under the federal constitution supersede those allegedly denied under the Texas constitution, she sought to have her case removed from Travis County (Austin) courts to the U.S. district court for the western district of Texas, also located in Austin.

That court disagreed, however, sending the criminal misdemeanor case back to the county court. Mrs. O'Hair then took the matter to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, where she lost again.

The Supreme Court's refusal to hear the case means that she may now be tried in the county court. If convicted, she will then be able to appeal the case on its merits rather than on jurisdictional grounds. Ultimate disposition of the matter may take another two or three years.

Mrs. O'Hair, director of the American Atheist Center in Austin, has now suffered several defeats in federal courts over the past decade.

During the late '60s and early '70s, she unsuccessfully sought to have astronauts banned from reading the Bible publicly while in space. Last year she failed in an attempt to have the motto "In God We Trust" removed from U.S. coins and currency. And last October her suit seeking to forbid Pope John Paul II from saying mass on the mall in Washington was also rejected.

Mrs. O'Hair did bring one of three cases in 1962-63 which successfully sought to have state-mandated prayers and Bible readings removed from public schools. Those suits resulted in two still-controversial Supreme Court decisions which held that while individual students may engage in personal religious devotional exercises while in school, state boards of education and local educational officials may not officially sponsor or require such activities.

## Two Baptist Groups Consider Work In Equatorial Guinea

LAS PALMAS, Canary Islands (BP)--The efforts of a Baptist church in Las Palmas have focused attention of Spanish Baptists and Southern Baptists on a new missions opportunity in Equatorial Guinea.

J.D. Hughey, secretary for Europe and the Middle East at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said negotiations are underway to consider whether Spanish Baptists or Southern Baptists will take the lead in establishing mission work there.

It would be the first foreign missions project for Spanish Baptists if their union of churches decides to send workers to the West African nation, which was under Spanish rule until 1968.

Maximo Garcia, promoter of missions for Spanish Baptists, says he intends to take the matter before his union. "I intend to do all I can to bring foreign missions in Guinea for our Spanish Union to the point of reality," he said.

Las Palmas Baptist Church became involved in the project around Christmas when a woman in its congregation told of the need for food, clothing and medicine she had witnessed during a recent trip to Equatorial Guinea.

Benedicta Aleman wept as she told the group, "We simply cannot imagine it. Those poor people have nothing. Many have scarcely seen bread. Many have never drunk milk."

Miss Aleman, founder and director of two large private schools in Las Palmas, urged her students awaiting gifts from the wise men in early January to put out an extra shoe for the children of Guinea. (Spain has a tradition that the wise men visit children during the night of the sixth of January bringing gifts just as they did when visiting Bethlehem centuries before; several countries follow variations of this custom.)

Members of the Las Palmas congregation, soon joined by other evangelical congregations, immediately began to collect food and clothing, according to Indy (Mrs. Charles W.) Whitten, Southern Baptist missionary press representative in the Canary Islands.

A local radio station made spot announcements about the campaign and one of the local papers carried an article about the drive.

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## First National Deacon Rally Set At Tower Grove Church

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ST. LOUIS, Mo. (BP)--Ten years of progress for deacon ministries in Southern Baptist churches will be marked at the first National Deacon Rally at Tower Grove Baptist Church here on Sunday, June 8, prior to the start of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Charles Treadway, deacon ministry consultant in the pastoral ministries section of the church administration department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, will direct the conference, which is expected to draw 1,500 deacons, pastors and wives.

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Treadway said many changes have occurred during the past 10 years, the most significant of which may be the change from deacons serving in churches as administrators to assuming more responsibility for ministering to the spiritual needs of members.

The rally will begin at 3 p.m. on June 8 and conclude at 9:30 that night, with a break for dinner between sessions at the church at 4257 Magnolia in St. Louis.

The rally will feature several speakers known to Southern Baptists because of contributions to the development of deacon ministries.

Howard Foshee, author of "The Ministry of the Deacon," which has sold more than 225,000 copies, will speak during the afternoon session, along with Robert Naylor, author of "The Baptist Deacon," which has sold 250,000 copies. Foshee is the director of the Christian development division at the Sunday School Board and Naylor is the retired president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Lambert Mims, mayor of Mobile, Ala., also will address the rally in the afternoon session, speaking about "Deacons: Bold in Sharing Their Faith." Mims is a deacon in Riverside Baptist Church, Mobile.

"Deacons and Pastors: Partners in Ministry" will be the title of an address in the evening session delivered by A. Morgan Brian Jr., attorney from New Orleans and deacon at First Baptist Church there. Reginald McDonough, secretary of the church administration department at the Sunday School Board, also will speak during the evening session.

Other topics to be covered at the meeting will include building a caring congregation and deacons' work in the eighties.

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(BP) photos mailed to Baptist state newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

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Martha Keys To Speak  
At Aging Conference

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Martha Keys, special advisor on aging issues to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, will speak at the Southern Baptist Conference on Aging at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, April 28-May 2.

Ms. Keys, who served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, was appointed to her current post in 1979. She initiated the early planning for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging and continues to act as an advisor to conference officials.

Her address to the Southern Baptist conference will include suggestions about how the religious community can support the Carter administration's objectives for the White House aging meeting.

Following Ms. Keys' address, the more than 400 expected participants will take part in workshops to draft recommendations for possible submission to programers of the White House Conference on Aging and to denominational agencies.

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The four-day conference is expected to draw pastors, church staff members, lay workers with senior adults and representatives from nine sponsoring organizations.

Sponsors include the Southern Baptist Annulity Board, Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, Christian Life Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Hurt Gerontology Center and the Southern Baptist Association of Ministries with the Aging.

Other major conference speakers include Robert Butler, director of the National Institute on Aging, and William M. Pinson Jr., president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

Reynolds Joins Seminary  
Music Faculty in Ft. Worth

Baptist Press  
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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--William J. Reynolds will become guest professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for the 1980-81 academic term, beginning in May.

Reynolds, 59, was forced last December to take early retirement as secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department. The board, which continued Reynolds' salary through April 30, 1980, and age 60, cited changing philosophies and administrative differences as reasons for his retirement.

At Southwestern, Reynolds, a noted church musician, hymnologist, composer and author, will teach courses in the areas of church music ministry, worship and hymnody.

Reynolds joined the church music department at the board in 1955, serving as music editor, director of editorial services, and supervisor of music publications before assuming leadership of Southern Baptists' program of church music in 1971.

A former minister of music in churches in Oklahoma, Missouri and Texas, Reynolds attended Oklahoma Baptist University and is a graduate of Southwest Missouri State College. He also earned a master of sacred music degree from Southwestern Seminary, master of music degree from North Texas State University, and doctor of education degree from George Peabody College for Teachers. He has attended Westminster Choir College.

Reynolds, who has received numerous recognitions for his expertise in music, was general editor for "The Baptist Hymnal," published in 1975, and "The New Broadman Hymnal," published in 1977.

He has produced over 275 musical compositions, anthems, hymn tunes, songs, books and other works and has directed music for national and international events, including the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist World Alliance. He will direct music at the 1980 SBC in St. Louis and the 1980 BWA in Toronto.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

**Chesser Named to Baptist  
Joint Committee Staff**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Larry Guy Chesser has been named assistant in information services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs here, effective March 3, according to James E. Wood Jr., the agency's executive director.

Chesser, 32, succeeds Carol B. Franklin, who left the Baptist Joint Committee last November to become minister of education at Washington's First Baptist Church.

He will work under the supervision of Stan L. Hastey, who directs the agency's information services and also functions as Washington bureau chief for Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Chesser's primary assignment will be coverage of the U.S. Congress, where he will be a fully accredited reporter. In addition, he will handle general reporting assignments, including stories of concern to Baptists coming out of federal regulatory agencies.

A journalism graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., Chesser also earned the master of divinity degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., where he concentrated in Christian ethics.

During his last year at the seminary, the Arkansas native was news director and also served as managing editor of "The Tie," the seminary's alumni publication.

Other reporting includes stints as a sportswriter and editor at the Log Cabin Democrat, Conway, Ark., and the Arkansas Democrat, Little Rock.

During 1971-72, Chesser was public relations director for the Ouachita-Southern (college) Advancement Campaign, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He also served as pastor of two churches in Arkansas, 1968-75.

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**Adrian Rogers Undergoes  
Surgery in Memphis**

Baptist Press  
2/27/80

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, underwent gall bladder surgery at Baptist Hospital here Wednesday, Feb. 27. He was hospitalized four days earlier after experiencing severe pain.

A spokesman at Bellevue Baptist Church, where Rogers, 48, serves as pastor, said doctors expect him to be out of his pulpit for at least three weeks.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Adrian Rogers' official condition following surgery was not available at press time. Baptist Press will send a story in the Feb. 28 mailing updating the one above.