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-- FEATURES

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Publishing House Celebrates
75th With Eye on the World

By Mike Livingston

EL PASO, Texas (BP)--As the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas, marks its 75th anniversary, general director Aldo Broda has a clear view of mission work to the south.

Before Broda became the first national to head the publishing house in 1977, he had worked for 10 years with the Baptist Publishing Board in his native Argentina. Today, from his office in the foothills of El Paso's Franklin Mountains, he has a broader view of the literature ministry.

"We've got to keep our eye on the local church but we've got to see the rest of the world, too," declares Broda, who is more comfortable speaking through an interpreter.

When he talks about seeing the rest of the world as a publishing house ministry, Broda isn't just talking about the other Spanish-speaking areas where Southern Baptists have no missionaries. He's also talking about areas where the national language might be French, Dutch, or even English. And he's talking about Spanish-speaking areas "where missionaries are serving but there are people outside the church who still are not being reached."

Since Casa Bautista de Publicaciones was begun in the kitchen of J.E. Davis, missionary serving in Toluca, Mexico, in January 1905, it has primarily published Christian curriculum literature. Although the publishing house printed a Bible in 1916, it did not print another complete New Testament for 50 years.

But today there are many new dimensions to the work and some of the most exciting chapters of the publishing house have been written since Broda came to El Paso. Still, he would rather look ahead to challenges than look back on accomplishments.

Some of Broda's short-term goals include expanding the market for French literature, a surface the publishing house only scratched about five years ago. He wants to streamline U.S. distribution of publishing house materials and in October 1981 the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville will assume responsibility for the distribution of all Baptist Spanish Publishing House materials in this country.

An exciting goal of Broda's lies in his approach to reaching those outside the church in countries where missionaries are serving. He plans "to attack the secular market with a line of popular books with a Christian perspective" in hopes of increasing sales to that market by 10 percent every year for the next three years.

"We already have about 200 books on the market under a different trademark—Mundo Hispano—and some of the books already are making inroads into the secular market," said Broda.

The different trademark, he explains, "is not used because we want to hide the name Baptist, but because it might help our books reach someone who might back off from denominational publications." One example is the Spanish study Bible which is near the top of the publishing house's best-seller list and has gained wide acceptance, according to Broda.

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Most of the publishing house goals are expansions of ministries that began within the last five to eight years. Few of them represent areas of work in which the Baptist Spanish Publishing House will be breaking new ground. "Most of the changes," Broda says modestly, "have been made simply responding to needs. The main thing I want is for the publishing house to be an interpreter of needs for the church."

Among the employees of the publishing house Broda has a reputation for being sensitive to the needs of others and the reputation is spreading to other Baptist Spanish publishing houses. He says publishing houses in Argentina, Spain, Chile and Brazil have agreed to enter a partnership with his shop with a program of co-editions.

"Co-editions of our material—printing them in more than one language on the same press run—will strengthen the work of all of us," he says. "It makes all of us more powerful."

And as the head of the world's largest publishing house of Christian literature in the Spanish language, producing more than six million tracts, one million books, and 31 different periodicals annually, Broda knows the power of the printed page.

On a more personal level, he knows it even better: his entire family was converted through reading the Bible without any other contact.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

Northwest Compromises
On Constitutional Seats

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RICHLAND, Wash. (BP)--Northwest Baptist Convention messengers compromised on a constitutional proposal to require that associations approve a church before its messengers can be seated by the state convention.

Meeting in their 33rd annual session, messengers also elected Doyle J. Collins, pastor of Vine Street Baptist Church in Roseburg, Ore., as president, and reaffirmed a 1979 resolution that says the Bible's original manuscripts were "doctrinally, philosophically, historically and scientifically" without error, and were verbally inspired.

A motion passed 131 to 128 in 1979 would have required associational approval for a new church prior to affiliation with the state convention. The constitutional committee changed the proposal to require only an evaluation by the association.

After a short debate, messengers voted unanimously to retain the present constitutional provision that requires an evaluation from either a cooperating church, area missionary or the association. They added a requirement that a new church present its petition for affiliation at least 30 days before the convention. Also, any challenge to messengers from a church already affiliated with the convention must be filed in writing at least 60 days before the convention.

In 1979, the Northwest Baptist Convention refused to seat messengers from a church "deviating from accepted Baptist practices," and reaffiliated a church that had been dis-fellowshipped in 1970.

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Messengers approved a \$2,216,998 budget that anticipates income of \$1,330,000 from convention churches, of which 31 percent will be forwarded to world missions through the national Cooperative Program, a one percent increase over last year.

Messengers were told final records would show an increase of about 700 baptisms over the record 4,061 recorded in 1978. Just prior to the sessions, the convention's executive board elected C. Clyde Billingsley Jr. as director of evangelism. Billingsley was director of missions for the Northern Plains Baptist Convention since 1977.

The 1981 convention will be in Bellingham, Wash., Nov. 10-12.

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Bailey Smith Asks Meeting
With Anti-Defamation League

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press
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DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)--Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has asked for a meeting with representatives of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in the wake of renewed controversy over his remarks concerning the Jews.

The latest episode of the furor erupted with national news reports of remarks Smith made in a sermon to his 14,000-member congregation Aug. 31, in which he said Jews have "funny looking noses."

Smith told Baptist Press he has written Nathan Perlmutter, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, and has been told he will meet with Jewish leaders.

"In my letter, I told Mr. Perlmutter I desired a meeting," Smith said. "I also told him, 'I deeply regret any hurt which has come to you or your people because of remarks credited to me.'"

Smith added, "I am determined to do everything I can to convince the Jewish people that I love them."

Perlmutter, contacted Nov. 18, said he has not received Smith's letter, but "will read it and if it is suggestive of utility and constructive gain, of course we will meet with him."

The first incident in the controversy came in mid-September with reports of comments Smith made in a sermon at the National Affairs Briefing, a religious-political rally in Dallas. At the rally, held in August, Smith said God does not hear the prayers of Jews.

Smith was accused of anti-Semitism in the furor which followed publication of the remarks.

Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, told the congregation in the broadcast sermon Aug. 31, on God's Special People and Special Places:

"There are some people with whom God works more intimately than others. Why, you say? Why did he choose the Jews? I don't know why he chose the Jews.

"I think they've got funny looking noses myself. I don't know why he chose the Jews. That's God's business. Amen."

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The radio broadcast reportedly was heard by an Oklahoma City rabbi who obtained a cassette tape, provided as a ministry of the church. The rabbi, who was not identified, gave copies of the remark to Jewish leaders, who in turn circulated it to some Baptist leaders.

The story first appeared in the Dallas Morning News Nov. 14, nearly two-and-a-half months after the remark was made.

Rumors circulated among Southern Baptists that the story was broken to the news media by political opponents of Smith, an avowed conservative and supporter of biblical inerrancy.

Helen Parmley, religion editor of the News, however, said she received tips on the story from "several sources, both Jewish and Baptist," and added the Baptist sources "are not from Dallas."

Smith, in explaining the remark, said it was not part of his sermon and was an aside, primarily directed at a young Jewish man who is a member of the Del City congregation.

"On Aug. 31, before I entered the sanctuary, some people teased me about the bald spot on the back of my head. A handsome, young Jewish man came by and said, 'Preacher, you've got a bald spot and we Jews have funny looking noses.'"

Smith added: "So, in the midst of my sermon, which was defending the fact that Jewish people are indeed the chosen people of God, I looked at the young man and teased him about his statement.

"I personally do not even believe Jews have funny noses."

He noted that in the cassette tape or on the radio, people "could not see the twinkle in my eye or the smile on my face. I was simply teasing a friend."

He commented it is "interesting" he preached the sermon delineating the special place Jews have in God's heart on the Sunday following his reportedly "anti-Semitic" remarks on the Jews and prayer.

He said the noses remark was in the midst of a 30-minute sermon in which he said "the Jewish people are very special to God. I believe they have a more special place in the heart of God than does Bailey Smith. The thrust of the sermon was that Israel is God's chosen land and always will be. The Jewish people are a great blessing..."

"It was an eight word aside. I should not have made it, but I love humor and teasing. It is unfortunate my teasing nature has made people see me as something I am not...has painted a picture of me that simply is not true."

Smith reiterated he is not anti-Semitic. "There is no preacher in America today who is more pro-Israel than Bailey Smith," he said.

Since the controversy erupted, Smith said he has received hundreds of telephone calls and letters, both at home and at church.

"My wife and I have been very disturbed by the anger people have shown. I have to admit I have been deeply hurt. We have shed many, many tears over this," Smith added.

In the wake of the most recent episode, Smith has had to change his home telephone number because of obscene and threatening calls.

As a result, however, he said he "has learned to be more cautious. It is my nature to tease and be jovial, but I have indeed learned my lesson."

He added that as president of the 13.4 million-member denomination, everything he says is news.

"I deeply regret having made the statement. I certainly never thought a teasing remark would be taken the way it has," he added.

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Arizona Baptists
Celebrate Records

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TUCSON, Ariz. (BP)--Arizona Southern Baptists celebrated records in baptisms, enrollment, church planting and stewardship as they held their 52nd annual meeting in First Southern Baptist Church last week.

The 403 registered messengers passed up opportunities for controversy as two scheduled miscellaneous business sessions passed without a motion. Resolutions urged Congress to amend tax laws to restore tax exemption status for missionaries, called for prayer for Americans held hostage, including the Iranian hostages and Americans missing in action, and urged prayer for national leaders and affairs.

Among records set during the past year was an all-time high of 5,586 baptisms, an increase of 18 percent. Also, Arizona Baptists recorded a 5.1 percent increase in Sunday School enrollment with 29 new Sunday Schools established, and increases in church training, 6.9 percent; Woman's Missionary Union, 18.7 percent, and Baptist Men, 30 percent.

Jack Johnson, executive director-treasurer, reported 1980 as a year of transition from a deficit to a surplus financial picture, and reported a turnaround to a \$500,000 surplus.

During the year, 25 new missions and 45 Bible fellowships were established, messengers were told.

Wendell Freeze, a high school administrator from Yuma, was reelected to a second term as president of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention. He told messengers that "Bold Mission Thrust is gaining momentum in our state," in his annual convention sermon.

Messengers adopted a record \$1.3 million budget, of which \$320,675, or 25 percent, will be shared with the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program. It marks an increase as the ASBC works toward a five-year goal of increasing SBC Cooperative Program gifts 107 percent.

The 1981 annual meeting will be in Chandler, Nov. 10-12.

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