



-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hasty, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

January 22, 1981

81-12

High Court To Decide
Hare Krishna Claims

By Stan Hasty

WASHINGTON (BP)--Faced with a covey of conflicting opinions in lower federal courts, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to resolve the question of whether religious groups may be confined to booths and other restricted areas at state fairs.

Specifically, the justices will decide a case brought by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness against officials of the Minnesota State Fair. The latter, acting under a state law, have denied repeated requests by the controversial religious sect to allow members to roam free at the annual 12-day Minnesota State Fair soliciting money, selling literature and proselytizing.

Attorneys for the sect, which claims to be a monotheistic Hindu religion dating back 5,000 years, argue that Krishna devotees were denied their First Amendment free exercise of religion right by the state.

Minnesota's attorney general, who filed a written brief asking the high court to take on the case after the state supreme court held for the Hare Krishnas, counters that lawful state interests dictate that religious and other groups selling merchandise or soliciting funds be restricted to assigned booths.

Among those interests, he argued, the state is to protect the health and safety of the public, preserve order and convenience for fairgoers, give all exhibitors and concessionaires equal access to patrons, and minimize problems of theft, fraud and misrepresentation by solicitors and vendors.

The state's brief also contends that no religious group, including the Hare Krishnas, has suffered discrimination under application of the Minnesota law, a point not disputed by the sect.

Three federal district courts have agreed with the Minnesota contentions by upholding similar statutes in New York, Tennessee and Ohio. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals also ruled against the sect in a similar case challenging an Atlanta airport regulation restricting religious and other solicitors to certain designated areas.

Two other federal courts of appeals and the Colorado Supreme Court have disagreed, however, in favor of the sect in challenges brought against state fair restrictions in other states similar to those in Minnesota.

No date has been set for oral arguments in the case but it is expected to be argued and decided later this term.

In a second church-state action, the justices unanimously declined to schedule for argument a case brought by the American Jewish Congress against the United Arab Emirates for allegedly discriminatory employment practices at that foreign nation's American University.

Martin Hochbaum, who requested an employment application form from the United Arab Emirates university after reading an advertisement for faculty openings in the Wall Street Journal, joined the American Jewish Congress in bringing suit after discovering that the form asked for disclosure of his religion.

The Federal Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, which became law in 1976, sought to liberalize federal restrictions on U.S. citizens' access to the courts in bringing suit against foreign nations. The law provides that private, commercial activities by foreign governments are not immune from U.S. or state laws.

But in the Hochbaum case, New York's highest court ruled that the Arab nation was acting in an area protected by the immunity provisions of the U.S. law.

-30-

SBC Television Network
Programming Pondered

By Toby Druin

Baptist Press
1/22/81

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--If Jimmy Allen's proposal for a Southern Baptist television network becomes a reality, what would a turn of the dial bring into your home?

Would you believe, "Here's Jimmy!"?

Well, maybe not exactly, but Allen, president of the Radio-Television Commission which is proposing a 100-station low powered television network, said the "flagship" of the network, as he envisions it, would be a "Donahue type" discussion of issues and Allen said, "I probably will be the host on a daily basis, because you have to have something out there that the people identify with—that says, 'that is us.'"

The program, he said, might include an examination of mission areas, featuring missionaries who serve there and "dealing with the real issues facing people of that country and our missionary enterprise there."

He would have co-hosts such as the missionaries or outstanding leaders and others.

Allen mused over what a day's programming might include. In addition to the "flagship" show, the day likely would include children's programs for early afternoon. The show will have "God talk," Allen said, but will not be just for those with a biblical vocabulary.

"We would hope the(Baptist) Sunday School Board would come up with some children's programming too," he said. The network idea is a joint venture of the commission and the BSSB. The board will be given an hour a day on the network for its financial backing.

"We will have magazine programs—the news type of thing," Allen said, but added the network probably would subscribe to a cable network for its news production.

The network also might create a new kind of religious news service. "We already have good journalism service," he said. "We might as well tap that into electronic service."

-more-

Other ideas for the network include a sports program Allen is discussing with evangelist Bill Glass; concert series featuring artists in 30-minute and hour-long productions; full-length dramas by Christian groups and even with situation comedies.

Though Allen did not mention it in discussing the network format, one prospect also would be the telecasting of the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, enabling millions of church members to participate visually. Two years ago in Houston when Allen was president of the SBC, a Bold Mission Thrust rally in the Astrodome was telecast via closed circuit to 10 cities across the nation.

Possibly it was a preview of things to come.

-30-

Inerrancy Controversy
Has Had Some Benefits

By Rex Hammock

Baptist Press
1/22/81

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The current controversy among Southern Baptists over the interpretation of the Bible has, in some ways, been good for the denomination, an authority on the history of Baptist controversies says.

"The inerrancy controversy has sensitized all in the convention that we are a people of the Book and we must never forget it," said Walter B. Shurden, dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, Ky.

While noting the positive effects, Shurden predicted the "debate will continue and doubtless intensify."

He also warned denominational executives that if Southern Baptists do not become sensitive to the politics of their convention they risk seeing the denomination's institutions taken over.

Shurden made his remarks during a meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Inter-Agency Council, a group made up of top executives of the agencies and institutions of the 13.6 million-member denomination.

Shurden, author of a book which traces past controversies in the SBC, said the most dangerous influence in the current controversy is the introduction of a "highly organized, apparently well-funded political party who are going not only for the minds of the Southern Baptist people but for the machinery of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Shurden added that while the "rhetoric of the controversy has been the interpretation of Scriptures, the issue does not appear primarily to be biblical or theological. The issue appears to be—and has been for two years—political."

"The very first action of the inerrancy advocates was to construct political organizations to see that an 'inerrancy' president was elected at the SBC," he explained. Since then, the politicizing has intensified, until last summer when the political issue was clarified with the announcement the inerrantists were "going for the jugular" of the convention.

Shurden claimed that inerrancy leader Paul Pressler is "one of the first persons in the history of Southern Baptist controversies to know what the jugular of the convention is. He is aware that to control the institutions of the SBC, you must control the boards of trustees."

-more-

"Their method is clear," Shurden continued. "First, they turn out the votes at the annual meeting of the SBC even if they must bus people in.

"Second, they seek to elect an SBC president who they believe is committed to their goals. Third, their president appoints a committee on committees sensitive to their goals. Fourth, the committee on committees names a committee on boards sensitive to their goals. Fifth, the committee on boards nominates trustees who are sensitive to their goals.

"Sixth, they get the votes back out to make sure the committee on boards' report is accepted.

"In no controversy in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention has the system been misused in this way," Shurden asserted.

Shurden acknowledged the inerrancy debate could "jeopardize Bold Mission Thrust in the same way the Fundamentalist Controversy of the 1920s weakened the \$75 Million Campaign," and said that with earlier Baptist debates, the current controversy will leave its marks, both good and bad, on the convention.

-30-

'Huggin' Man' Cullum
Emphasizes Worthiness

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
1/22/81

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--Toe-twinking and hello-saying are all in a day's work for Robert Cullum.

"Of course, there's more to it, but sometimes people need kind words and a warm hug," says Cullum, director of chaplains' services at San Antonio State Hospital (SASH) and San Antonio State School (SASS). "For some people," he smiles, "I'm that huggin' man."

Cullum heads a team of four chaplains on a 1,600-person staff which provides comprehensive, round-the-clock care for about 800 mental health patients in SASH and 250 mentally retarded clients in SASS. They attempt to "treat the patients in the least restrictive environment possible," explains Eugene Eberlin, director of professional services.

For Bob Cullum, that means working on a couple of levels. The first is more official and less direct. He participates in sessions where professional staffers—doctors, psychologists, nurses, therapists, dietitians and other specialists—meet with patients to plan healing procedures. To these meetings he adds his perceptions of patient needs and suggests possible courses of therapy. He gets information for these sessions from his second form of interaction with patients—person-to-person encounter.

His openness during those contacts makes him vulnerable. "One time I was talking to a newcomer, a teen-age boy, about fire engines," he recalls. "He smiled great big. Then before I knew what was happening, he hit me square between the eyes. I guess he associated me with somebody he didn't like."

"But to be fair, I must say that I've been attacked only twice in more than 14 years," he continues. "Mental health patients aren't all dangerous to the point that you take your life in your hands when you're alone with them. Still, violence is a possibility; you just have to learn to live with it and be careful."

-more-

Cullum's concern for his safety ranks behind concern for patients. He believes mental and spiritual instability are closely related: "I work with people who are disenfranchised from faith. They believe God has left them, nobody cares about them. I sow seeds of good news by telling them, 'You can never be anywhere God is not.'"

He begins the healing process by promoting self-esteem. "Instead of saying, 'I am somebody,' these people say, 'I am nobody.' That cuts to the core of their feelings," he says. "I've got to help them begin to feel good about themselves. They've got to believe God loves them, I love them, others love them—they ought to love themselves."

Teaching that lesson sometimes seems futile, yet Cullum remains calm. "You never know when there'll be a breakthrough," he insists. "One man never used to talk. Then he gradually began to participate in our sing-alongs. That may not seem significant, but it's a great step forward."

Measuring against such milestones, Cullum's ministry reflects unusual standards of progress. He trades statistics for smiles on often-troubled faces. And while some pastors pray their members will stop fighting, Cullum prays his parishioners will learn to sit still through worship services.

Cullum tailors his ministry to accommodate different needs of the mentally ill, who cannot cope with emotional problems, and the retarded, who suffer from physical disabilities which reduce their intelligence quotient (I.Q.).

"The mentally retarded need to be touched. They always put their hands out, and if you don't touch them, they feel rejected," he explains. "But if you go up to a schizophrenic and start pumping his hand, he just might hit you. He's afraid of sudden actions and people who come on strong."

In addition to varying emotional states, the attention spans of mentally ill and mentally retarded differ. Sunday worship services for mentally ill patients have upbeat themes and resemble worship in most churches. Worship for mentally retarded clients is simpler, with short, repetitious lessons, designed so simple minds can grasp essential truths.

Nevertheless, a common denominator binds both services: Cullum emphasizes that God loves every individual and is with each one; and because of this, all persons are worthy.

His interest in "worthiness" doesn't stop when the sermon is over or when patients are dismissed from the SASH/SASS campus. As do his colleagues, he travels to communities in 33 counties placed under the hospital/school's jurisdiction by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

Wherever he goes, Cullum tries to set the record straight about mental illness. "The problem is the public often doesn't understand that patients can be treated effectively," he says.

"There is no such thing as a 100 percent cure for mental illness—any more than there are absolute cures for alcoholism or drug abuse," he adds. "But we've got to let people know that mental illness can be helped. It's not an irreversible disease."