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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE  
SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Alvin C. Shackelford, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Mary Knox, Feature Editor

### BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 720-0550  
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
RICHMOND (Foreign) 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

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87-187

High Court To Rule On Catholic  
Refusal To Turn Over Documents

N-BJC  
By Stan Hasteley

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to decide if the U.S. Catholic Church may be forced to turn over documents related to its anti-abortion activities in legal proceedings aimed at stripping the nation's largest religious group of its tax exemption.

The church, with more than 52 million members, had asked the court's justices to review a federal district court ruling last year that held it in contempt for refusing on church-state grounds to hand over the subpoenaed documents. That court first imposed, then stayed a \$100,000-a-day fine on the church until it complies. A federal appeals panel later affirmed the lower decision on a divided vote.

In its announcement that it has agreed to review the lower rulings, the high court also accepted a friend-of-the-court brief submitted in October by a coalition of church bodies supporting the Catholic Church's refusal to comply with the subpoena. The brief was submitted by the National Council of Churches of Christ, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Christian Legal Society, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and National Association of Evangelicals.

Behind the interest and virtual unanimity within the larger religious community is the view of church-state experts that resolution of the case will affect every religious group's ability to address public issues from a moral perspective. Were the pro-abortion groups to succeed eventually in stripping the Catholic Church's tax exemption, these experts have warned, no church in the future could address controversial issues in the political arena without risking loss of its own tax-exempt status.

One such authority, Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel Oliver S. Thomas, described the potential ramifications: "It's hard to overstate the implications of this case. If the decision is allowed to stand, groups that disagree with a church's position on controversial issues will be able to attack its exempt status even though the IRS says the church is in perfect compliance with the law. Obviously, this could become a key element in a group's overall strategy on a hotly contested issue."

Represented by the Washington firm headed by Edward Bennett Williams, the Catholic Church asked the high court to review the case on two grounds. First, attorney of record Charles H. Wilson argued, the justices should decide if the appeals court disregarded Supreme Court precedent by holding that the church could not challenge the district court's constitutional power to enforce its contempt order.

Second, Wilson challenged the legal standing of third-party groups to challenge the tax-exempt status of a church whose activities on a political issue were found offensive but did not otherwise harm those raising the challenge.

The suit challenging the church's tax exemption was brought against the secretary of the Treasury and the commissioner of Internal Revenue by nine pro-abortion organizations, led by Abortion Rights Mobilization Inc., and by 20 individuals, including several members of the clergy.

Those plaintiffs accused the church of violating the Internal Revenue Code by engaging in excessive political activity in opposing abortion, including endorsement of anti-abortion candidates for public office.

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In addition to the revocation of tax exemption, the suit sought assessment and collection of all back taxes and notification that contributors to the Catholic Church no longer may claim federal tax deductions.

The church has contended it was engaging in constitutionally protected activities.

In its May 1986 ruling, the U.S. District Court for Southern New York held the church in contempt for refusing to surrender internal documents, including all official communications on the subject of abortion with public officials anywhere in the country, and all documents reflecting any Catholic unit's support of 12 separate pro-life organizations.

Earlier this year, the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the district court, 2-1, holding the church lacked standing to challenge the district court's power to hold it in contempt.

In addition to the coalition of churches supporting the Catholic Church's position, the U.S. Department of Justice also has entered a brief in support, asking the high court "to put a halt to this unwarranted judicial intrusion" into the Internal Revenue Service's administration of tax law.

The case will be scheduled for oral arguments later in the current term and presumably will be decided by the term's conclusion in late June 1988.

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Collegiate Bible Study Meets  
Student Ministers' Requests

*N-SSB*  
By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press  
12/9/87

NASHVILLE (BP)--Plans to include collegiate Sunday school materials in The Student magazine will strengthen both campus and church ministries with students, according to state student ministry leaders meeting in Nashville.

Collegiate Bible Study, based on Southern Baptists' Life and Work Series curriculum, will be published monthly in The Student magazine, beginning next October. The venture is a cooperative effort of the Sunday school division and the student ministry department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"This will help tie campus and church ministries closer together. It meets several needs for student work in church ministry to college students," said Sam Fort, director of student ministry for the Northwest Baptist Convention, which primarily is comprised of churches in Oregon and Washington.

The advantage of having the curriculum materials in The Student magazine will be "a visible drawing together of campus and church ministries," said David Wallace, associate director of student ministry for the Missouri Baptist Convention. "This will create an awareness between the two areas with the magazine that's already used on campuses and Sunday school materials to be used by churches."

State student ministry leaders and campus ministers have been involved in developing the curriculum plan, said David Hazelwood, student ministry department planning and projects coordinator.

"Baptist Student Union directors over the years have been trying to work with churches on reaching college students, but they really didn't have many resources to work with. This gives them the resources they need," Hazelwood said.

Until 1982, a separate Sunday school periodical for college students, Collegiate Bible Study, was produced by the Sunday school division. It was replaced by Single Adult Bible Study for college students and single adults beyond college age.

"We are now putting the materials (specifically for college students) in The Student magazine where they are most readily available to students," said Max Caldwell, manager of the youth-adult group in the Sunday school division.

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Adding curriculum materials to The Student magazine will allow the subscription price to be reduced by almost half, due to anticipated increased circulation and a change in the pricing structure of the periodical. The monthly cost will decrease from \$1.05 to 59 cents per month beginning with the October 1988 issue, Hazelwood said.

The Collegiate Bible Study materials are one element of student ministry involvement on campuses and in churches, said Charles Johnson, director of the student ministry department.

The student ministry effort to blend campus ministry and church ministry is reaching more students than either would separately, Johnson said.

Joe Webb, director of student ministry in Florida, and Ralph Hopkins, associate director of student ministry in Kentucky, cited examples of how efforts to blend campus and church ministries are working successfully in their states.

"Churches in Lexington, Ky., and the campus ministry at the University of Kentucky are reaching three times as many students as they once did because they are working together," Hopkins said.

Webb said the local Baptist association in Tallahassee, Fla., has budgeted \$9,000 for the Florida State University Baptist Student Union because the churches and campus ministries have been working together.

State student directors and associates approved a plan to conduct a national student missions conference in Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 27-30, 1989. Similar conferences are held every five years.

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Church's Ministry To Children  
Leads From 1 Goal To Another

F - CO  
By James Warren (B'hood)

Baptist Press  
12/9/87

MERTENS, Texas (BP)--Before Dennis Wiles was named pastor of First Baptist Church of Mertens, Texas, the pastor-search committee discussed the children in the community. Children were a priority.

"The committee felt like the church needed someone that would work with boys and girls. They wanted to know if I had ever worked with them," said Wiles, recalling the discussion in March 1986. "I told them, 'I can see that there is a great potential there, and I would do what I could.'"

Today, First Baptist -- the only church in the Texas farming community of 161 people -- has active Royal Ambassador and Girls in Action Missions programs for these children.

RAs is the Southern Baptist missions education program for boys, grades 1-9. GAs is the Southern Baptist missions education program for girls, grades 1-6.

"When I arrived as pastor, this age group was pretty much being ignored," said Wiles. "Oh, we had Sunday school, but that was really it.

"Two deacons in our church told me that they felt like something needed to be done with these boys. The boys needed to be taught. They weren't tapping the potential that was there in the boys. They wanted to catch them early and get them involved in church. They also knew a lot of these boys' parents weren't involved in church. They wanted to reach the parents, too."

RA goals included telling boys about Jesus, teaching about missions, the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, discipleship, world hunger and fellowship through activities. Last, but not least, was outreach.

The RA program has grown from seven to 17 boys. Some boys in the RA chapter are not involved in other church activities. Others had been loosely affiliated with the church and came once a month. "Now that we have activities that are organized for them, they're here almost every week," said Wiles.

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The GA program has grown from five to 10 girls. "We are reaching girls and their mothers through the mother-daughter activities we are having," he noted.

Boys now are inviting other boys to RAs. "I think it is significant that the church boys invite other boys to RAs first," said Wiles. After involvement in RAs, boys invite their friends to Sunday school.

One strategy was to reach the parents through the boys. "Because some of the parents have not been involved yet, we don't feel like we have necessarily failed because we have touched them through the lives of the boys," he said. "We do want to reach the parents with the gospel.

"The parents that are not involved in church will come for a RA banquet, a GA event or something like that.

"Working with the children has added a lot to our church because we have averaged more in Sunday school this year than we have in the past 25 years. We still have several boys and girls who are not involved in RAs or GAs. We want to involve them, too."

Wiles is adamant about working with children through RAs and GAs. "I didn't have to create a program," said a 28-year-old doctoral student in church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "These are Southern Baptist programs. I could simply adapt the programs to meet our needs. Even though we are a small church, I can use these.

"Through RAs, the boys understand that we can't support a missionary ourselves. We are a small church. They understand we can join hands with other churches and support missions."

Last year, after losing by two points in an associational RA basketball tournament, Wiles remarked to a deacon, "If I had had a place to practice these boys, we would have won this tournament."

This year, the church has built an outdoor basketball court. The slab of concrete represents an outreach tool for the church.

"We have been able to start accomplishing one of our goals through RAs and GAs -- that of reaching people," said Wiles. "I think these are the programs for us. Through the boy appeal activities of RAs and activities in GAs, two basketball goals have helped us reach the goal of winning this community for Christ."

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James Warren is editor of Lad and Crusader RA Materials for the Brotherhood Commission. (BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission

Baptist Chaplain  
Ministers At Track

F - (O)  
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By Ferrell Foster

Baptist Press  
12/9/87

COLLINSVILLE, Ill. (BP)--Silhouetted against a dawn sky, jockeys take their mounts through early morning paces as a frosty breeze blows across the track.

At that early hour, the "backside" of Fairmount Park race track in Collinsville, Ill., is coming to life, bringing with it an energy and excitement borne of competition.

The backside is a world centered around horses and the people who care for them. In the midst of that world, Barry Harris makes his morning rounds at a brisk pace.

Harris is track chaplain at Fairmount Park, splitting his time as pastor of Highland Southern Baptist Church.

"What I do here is just normal pastoral work; it's just the setting is strange," Harris said. That setting is one of people doing jobs they seem to live rather than just do. They groom horses, train horses, care for horses, ride horses, treat horses and talk horses. It is all centered on horse racing.

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"It's a tough game," said Pete Condellone, a longtime fixture on the backside, referring to the intense competition to win races. "That's the way you make your living. Every day you live and die. ... But, it's fun. ... It gets in your blood."

Fairmount Park's backside consists primarily of stables to hold the some 1,100 horses that are kept at the track during the March to October "thoroughbred meet." It also includes dorms, a "track kitchen" restaurant and offices.

Harris has been chaplain for two years, and his face is a familiar one to the workers who live and compete there. He greets everyone by name, and they return with greetings to "Rev," "Preacher," "Chaplain," "Barry," "Pastor" or "Father."

The chaplain exchanges brief, friendly words with most everyone, but he is careful to not interfere with the work by lingering to talk too long.

Bill Jackson, a horse owner and "hot walker," stops walking a horse just long enough to offer his endorsement of the chaplain's work. "This guy (Harris) comes out to the barn area and checks on everybody," Jackson said, indicating that is what he thought a track chaplain should do, and that it is appreciated.

As for Harris, he said, "This job is a gift from God for me." He was full-time pastor at Highland when he decided to look for a second job so the church would be able to afford to build a new building. "Not only did I get a job, I got a job doing ministry," he said.

As track chaplain, he leads a Tuesday night Bible study, gives a brief devotional each morning over the backside public address system, counsels people, witnesses to non-Christians, visits the sick, performs weddings and funerals, and basically serves as pastor to many people who might not have one otherwise.

"We felt we could expand the ministry of Highland Baptist Church," Harris said. "I did not know I would like it so much. I did not know I would like the people so much."

About half of the workers at the track are Christians, and a number are Southern Baptists. The gambling that provides the flow of money is seen as something separate. "When you work on the backside, betting is the farthest thing from your mind," said Condellone.

"Southern Baptists don't think of ministry here," Harris said. "I think, generally, it's a whole new area where the gospel is going out and reaching people."

Recently, track workers held a dinner dance, and Harris was asked to give an invocation. By doing so, Harris said, "six hundred people would hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, someone will have prayed for them and for their safety for the evening."

When Harris was growing up, his father was a horse trader, and he and his brother trained the horses. Now that he's back in the world of horses, he likens it to Br'er Rabbit being thrown into the briar patch. "This is where I was born and raised," he said.

He guessed there were "in the neighborhood of 1,800" people working at the track during the thoroughbred meet. "Moses met God on the backside of the desert," Harris said, "And a lot of people are meeting God on the backside of race tracks."

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State Leaders Urge Churches  
To Sing Hymns Of Beliefs

N-SSB  
By Charles Willis

Baptist Press  
12/9/87

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists gain a sense of unity through singing common hymns and a better understanding of their heritage and doctrine by singing hymns that address Baptist beliefs, state convention music leaders agreed during an annual planning meeting in Nashville.

After a report on development of a Baptist hymnal to be released in 1991, state leaders expressed concern that some churches are purchasing hymnals that do not reflect Southern Baptist beliefs or a knowledge of denominational heritage.

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"Music does provide unity," said Glenn Boyd, music director for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. "When we go from one church to another, there is frustration if the words to hymns have been changed. It's important that our hymnal covers say 'Baptist.' It helps us celebrate who we are."

Sam Prestidge, church music department director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said the involvement of a wide range of Southern Baptists in the development of a new hymnal "will make it distinctively Baptist."

Warren Fields, director of the department of church music for the Georgia Baptist Convention, added: "It's extremely important that we have a substantial number of hymns that address Baptist doctrine. Some other hymnals have theology we would not include. They have used only material that will appeal because it is popular."

Paul Bobbitt, church music department director for the Florida Baptist Convention, agreed: "People tend to believe what they sing. Just as we want to have accurate scriptural theology, we want to be sure that our hymns reflect accurate theology."

"In Florida, it's especially true (because) we have people coming from so many non-Baptist backgrounds. I want our churches to use materials that reflect Baptist theology and doctrine, rather than limiting themselves to contemporary songs of praise and joy that leave out our heritage."

John McGuckin, church music department director for the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, said he fears some churches are using hymns that evoke emotion without theological or doctrinal substance. Young people are not learning the old hymns -- the B.B. McKinney hymns, for example.

"Emotional feelings need to be based on doctrinal teachings," he observed. "The minister of music dedicated only to the trends of today, forgetting the wisdom of yesterday, fails completely the generation of tomorrow," said McGuckin.

Gary Cook, vice president for church program organizations at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, concurred: "The 'Baptist Hymnal' is the only hymnal published by Southern Baptists specifically for Southern Baptists and responsible to Southern Baptists. The 'Baptist Hymnal's' musical and textual content is controlled by Southern Baptist people."

"It should never be said or even inferred that Southern Baptist churches using hymnals other than the 'Baptist Hymnal' are not supportive. However, those who determine which hymnal is placed in Southern Baptist churches should consider if that hymnal has a Baptist heritage of hymnody and doctrinal integrity."

In the opening address for the annual church music planning meeting, W. Hines Sims, retired director of the board's church music department, reminded state leaders their support of Southern Baptist music publications "benefits your program and other programs of your states."

Southern Baptist music publications, he observed, have "an orientation toward Southern Baptist churches, integration with on-going programs and emphases and provide dollars to state programs in advancing the work of Christ."

When plans for the publication of the new hymnal were announced in May, Wesley Forbis, director of the Sunday School Board's church music department and editor-in-chief of the hymnal, said theology "will be foremost in determining works for inclusion" and "the Baptist Faith and Message will be the basis for textual decisions. Each text will be examined line by line, and only those texts which meet the test of the Baptist Faith and Message will be included in the hymnal."

Individual members of the hymnal's theology and doctrine subcommittee already have begun examining portions of the 1975 edition of "Baptist Hymnal," he said.