

February 9, 1958

**Baptists Urged To Lead  
In Religious Liberty**

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M.--(BP)--"We Baptists have not taken our proper place in the fight for religious liberty," the Southern Baptist Press Association was told at its mid-winter meeting here.

The statement was made by W. Barry Garrett, Washington, associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Garrett, a former editor of the Baptist Beacon in Phoenix, Ariz., also is Washington regional editor for the Baptist Press, Southern Baptist Convention news service.

"Look around you today!" Garrett declared. "Find who is the leader in the fight for religious liberty. It is not Baptist people. Seventh Day Adventists and other groups are moving out more aggressively and faster than the Baptists.

"Baptists ought to be the ones leading out," he continued.

Garrett said Baptists, because of their convictions about the right of each individual to choose for himself in matters of religious faith, should continue to lead the fight for religious liberty as they have done in the past.

Garrett said that "one of the most crucial questions of the day is that of Baptists and public education. Baptists need to re-think what our position is on public education." He said a committee is at work in this field of religious liberty at present. Committee members are Baptist leaders of several conventions.

He also urged the formation of public affairs committees among Baptists on state levels. "We need to have active public affairs men in all our states," Garrett said.

Baptists' concern for religious liberty is "not an effort for us to run the government," Garrett continued. "Our approach is strictly on an individual basis.

"Our people must know the facts so they can act intelligently as Christian citizens."

Other speakers at the Southern Baptist Press Association meeting were Wilfred McCormick, Albuquerque author and instructor in journalism at the University of New Mexico; Kenneth B. Butler, Mendota, Ill., of the Butler Typo-Design Research Center, and Albert McClellan, Nashville, director of publications, Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

Editors Propose North  
American Press Group

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M.--(BP)--Two Baptist editors have proposed formation of a North American Baptist Press Association. The association, as proposed, would include editors of publications of all Baptist groups on the continent.

The first editor to propose such an organization was Erwin McDonald, Little Rock, editor of the Arkansas Baptist. He said it would aid 19 million Baptists in North America in their joint Baptist Jubilee Advance.

Later, W. Barry Garrett, associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, said that perhaps editors of the various Baptist groups could meet together in Washington Sept. 16. Many of the editors will be in Washington at that time for a Conference on Religious Liberty, he added.

Both McDonald and Garrett were in Albuquerque for the mid-winter meeting of the Southern Baptist Press Association. The Southern Baptist Press Association includes editors of 25 state Baptist newspapers and of several other Southern Baptist Convention periodicals.

McDonald proposed that if a North American Baptist Press Association were formed, it should have a broader purpose than participation in the Baptist Jubilee Advance. It should "certainly meet now and possibly after that," he declared.

McDonald said that such a meeting of the editors of various Baptist groups would help "us see what we can do to further the cause of Christ in our several ways."

The Baptist Jubilee Advance climaxes in 1964, the 150th anniversary of organized Baptist work on a national scale in North America. The participating Baptist conventions have set goals in evangelism, church extension, and other areas to be reached by that year.

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Survey Committee Lists  
Preliminary Findings

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Preliminary findings of the Committee to Survey Total Southern Baptist Convention Program have been published in the February issue of the Baptist Program, SBC leadership magazine.

The material--regarded as tentative statements only, rather than final decisions--discuss Convention problems in several areas:

1. Problems related to the Southern Baptist Convention itself.
2. Problems related to agencies of the SBC.

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3. Problems of the relationship between SBC agencies and other Baptist bodies as state conventions, associations of churches, and individual churches.

4. Internal problems of SBC agencies.

The preliminary information, covering several pages, was released by Douglas M. Branch, pastor, First Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, N. C. Branch is chairman of the Survey Committee.

The preliminary material suggests changes in several places. However, it does not say exactly how these changes would be made. This apparently will be defined in the Survey Committee's final report and recommendations to the Convention.

The findings do not necessarily represent the unanimity of the committee.

The Survey Committee has been at work two years examining the operation of the Convention. It has the services of Booz, Allen, and Hamilton, of Chicago, a firm of management consultants. H. L. Wilsey, a consultant of the Chicago firm, has worked with the Survey Committee in preparing the tentative findings.

The Survey Committee meets in February to draft its report to the 1958 Southern Baptist Convention session in Houston. The Survey Committee told the 1957 Convention at Chicago that it hoped to present its final report at Houston.

Highlights of the preliminary findings contain these observations:

1. Under present organization and procedures of its committees, the SBC does not receive the information it should have to evaluate and reach decisions on programs.

"Each agency (in its annual report), follows its own format, and, as a consequence, it is difficult to compare the work of two agencies even when they are responsible for closely related programs," the study declares.

"Reports of each agency differ from year to year and thereby limit the possibility of comparing accomplishments over a period of time and of comparing accomplishments with previously announced plans," it continues.

2. The roles of Convention committees and boards of Convention agencies are not always sufficiently differentiated. It says, "Special committees are occasionally called upon to perform tasks which could more effectively be performed by the regular committees or the board or staff of one or more Convention agencies."

3. The present composition of Convention committees and boards of Conventions agencies does not make them sufficiently representative of the denomination.

The findings here indicate that there should be, in the opinion of the analysts, more lay representation on boards and committees.

4. There is some undesirable duplication of effort among Convention agencies.

Specific comments here include "The Relief and Annuity Board and the Southern Baptist Foundation are both responsible for funding of gift annuities." It points to geographical assignments of the Home and Foreign Mission Board, for example, the Foreign Mission Board at work in Hawaii (a United States territory) while the Home Mission Board is at work in Cuba and Panama.

5. "The absence of an effective co-ordinating body has contributed to the growth of the apparent and actual duplication of effort. . . (which) through better co-operation in planning and implementing programs. . . could be avoided and eliminated."

6. The findings say, "There are two agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention which perform functions which duplicate those performed by state conventions, associations, and to a limited extent, local churches in (certain) areas. . ."

These two are the Home Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Hospital Commission, according to the analysts.

"The Home Mission Board sponsors mission and church loan programs in areas in which state conventions, associations and local churches sponsor similar or duplicate activities," according to the study.

About hospitals it states, "The Southern Baptist Hospital's programs are very similar to those sponsored by state conventions and local groups.

". . . it is now questionable whether the Southern Baptist Convention should sponsor in New Orleans and Jacksonville (Fla.) hospitals, which even though they have a missionary aspect, are similar in purpose to hospitals sponsored by local groups elsewhere."

7. Some of the internal problems of SBC agencies mentioned are effective organization set-ups, adequate personnel administration programs, and adequate budgeting and accounting systems. Inadequate financial resources of seminaries in particular was listed.