BAPTIST PRESS

A BAPTIST* NEWS SERVICE
Concise, thorough, accurate, and current news reports about Southern Baptists or of special concern to the denomination.

FROM
WASHINGTON OFFICE
W. BARRY GARRETT, REGIONAL EDITOR
1628—16TH ST., N. W.
WASHINGTON 9, D. C.
TELEPHONE: ADAMS 2-1760

March 10, 1958

SBC President Criticized
By NAACP Official

WASHINGTON--(BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Convention was criticized here recently by an official of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Clarence Mitchell, director of the Washington branch of the NAACP, attacked Rep. Brooks Hays (D., Ark.) as unworthy of being the leader of one of the nation's leading Christian denominations. The reason for the attack was a bill (H. R. 11219) introduced in Congress which calls for the establishment of a Joint Committee of the Congress to study the results of the Supreme Court decision on school desegregation.

Mitchell's remarks were made at the conclusion of the tenth annual conference of the National Civil Liberties Clearing House in Washington. It was during a question and answer period following an address by Mrs. L. C. Bates, Little Rock, president of the Arkansas NAACP, that Mitchell arose to express his feelings toward the Southern Baptist Convention president.

The legislation proposed by Hays will "turn back the clock of integration," declared Mitchell, and the Hays bill is a "repudiation of everything that the Christian faith stands for." Brooks Hays is not worthy of representing a Christian group nor to represent the Christian faith, Mitchell charged.

Immediately following the Mitchell remarks Col. Francis Pickens Miller, president of the Virginia Council of Churches, arose and stated that "it is exceedingly unfortunate that Mr. Mitchell has chosen this time to make a personal attack on such a man as Brooks Hays."

"The lines of communication between the Negro and white people in the South are rapidly closing up," Miller had previously said in a speech to the Conference. "Such attacks as this on men like Brooks Hays will leave the Negro people without a friend in the South," said Miller.

-more-

*News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention
ALBERT McCLELLAN, DIRECTOR
THEO SOMMERKAMP, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
127 NINTH AVE. NO.
NASHVILLE 3, TENN.

In a conversation with the Baptist Press following the incident Hays said, "I do not want to respond to this attack with any heat. Mr. Mitchell probably has not read my remarks and would probably have responded differently if he had. I always want to speak the truth in love about this and all other matters. I have suffered for the Negro people before and will be willing to do so again. Any time Mr. Mitchell wants to talk with me about these matters, I will be happy to see him."

Previously Hays had issued a statement that said, "There is great need to re-examine the situation in the South in the light of the difficulties growing out of edicts requiring sudden changes in age-old customs of the people, and I believe a one-year study of the problem would develop facts that would be helpful to all three branches of the government."

"I hope that this proposal will help assure the South," Hays continued, "that haste and force will not prevail, but rather that patience and tolerant understanding of the problems in all sections will be achieved. It is only in this way that we can stimulate throughout the region the moral fervor and racial good will that have been characteristic of the South."

-30-

Capital Baptist Editor
Commends Long Bridge

WASHINGTON--(BP)--A Baptist editor here has commended the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for lifting the ban on a book dealing with mission work among the Negroes.

James O. Duncan, editor of the Capital Baptist, publication of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, previously had expressed editorial disapproval of the withdrawal of "The Long Bridge" by Phyllis Sapp from the accepted list of mission study books for the Annie Armstrong Season of Prayer for Home Missions.

Following announcement by Courts Redford, executive secretary of the Home Mission Board, that the book is now being offered for sale through the Baptist Book Stores, Duncan wrote an editorial of high praise of the book and its contribution toward a solution of current racial problems. (The book had been withdrawn from circulation by the Home Mission Board for fear it might increase racial tension.)

"The Long Bridge," which is not a discussion of race problems, is a mission study book on the Southern Baptist mission work among the Negro people. It

-more-

reveals that Southern Baptists have an extensive program for Negroes.

Duncan says that the book is an answer to the critics of Southern Baptists for doing nothing for the Negro race. He says that it offsets what the world has heard from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the White Citizens Councils.

"The Long Bridge" is also "a partial answer to the Communist critics who try to tell the whole world of the persecuted Negro," Duncan declared.

Because of its constructive approach to the needs of the Negroes, Duncan suggests that a copy of the book be sent to each member of Congress and to leaders of all other religious groups with the thought that "this is the right way to cross the long bridge."

In his previous editorial deploring the withdrawal of the book from the Home Mission studies, Duncan said, "it is a sad commentary on the depth of the Christian life of the average Baptist when we are not able to objectively study the Home Mission program of work with Negroes."

"We hope that it becomes a best seller," concludes Duncan, as the book is now offered to the public.

-30-

Baptist Minister Tells
'The Church's Big Story'

WASHINGTON--(BP)--A Baptist minister here tells "The Church's Big Story" each week over WMAL-TV.

Lee Shane, minister of the National Baptist Memorial Church, conducts a seven-minute program each Wednesday in which he tells the story of God's power in human life.

Howard Rees, Baptist Student Union director for the District of Columbia and Maryland, was the first of many outstanding personalities to be presented on the program. A victim of polio as a child and later of a crippling accident, Rees now drives his own car and goes most anywhere. His radiant faith in God has led him to triumph over fear in his life.

The program, under the sponsorship of the Council of Churches National Capital Area, is part of a daily religious feature given by WMAL-TV.

Shane is experienced in such programs having headed the committee on Radio and Television for the West Virginia Council of Churches for several years. In 1956 his weekly half-hour broadcast over WCHS-TV, Charleston, was awarded a bronze plaque as the best locally produced religious television program in the area of the American Baptist Convention.

-30-

Capital Area Honors
Three Baptist Presid nts

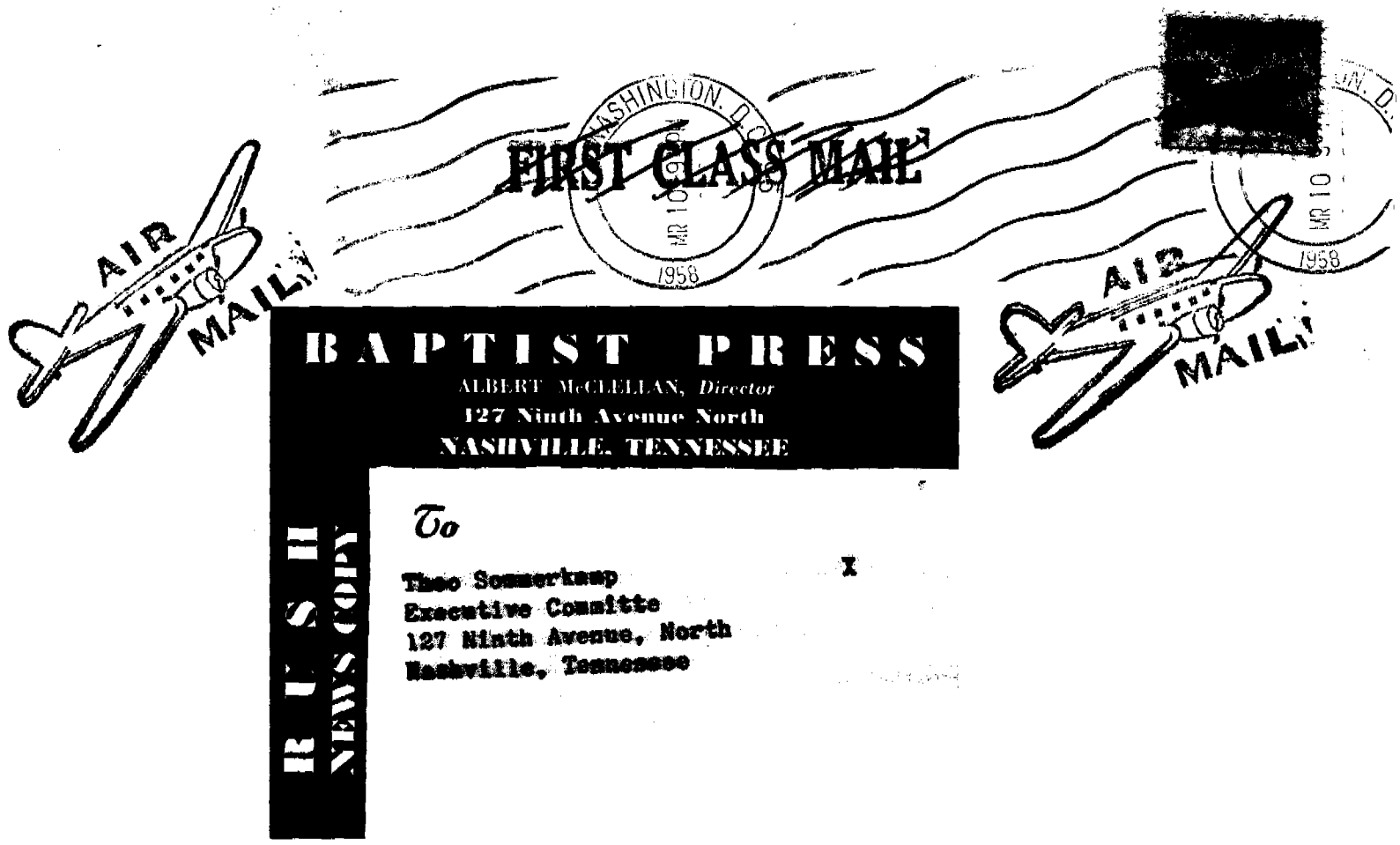
WASHINGTON--(BP)--Three Baptist presidents were honored here by the District of Columbia Baptist Convention at a banquet at the Calvary Baptist Church.

They are Rep. Brooks Hays (D., Ark.), president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Clarence W. Cranford, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church here and president of the American Baptist Convention, and Clifford R. Carter, Public Building Superintendent of the Division of Foreign Quarantine of the U. S. Public Health Service and president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

Four hundred people attended the affair at which Hays and Cranford were the featured speakers. Cranford talked about his proposed trip to Europe and Russia in cooperation with Congressman Hays.

Hays discussed "Our Baptist World Mission" and urged Baptists to express their compassion for the underprivileged people of the world by means of private philanthropy, through the cooperative missions channels, and through the services of good government.

-30-


FIRST CLASS MAIL
AIR MAIL
AIR MAIL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MR 10
1958
BAPTIST PRESS
ALBERT McCLELLAN, Director
127 Ninth Avenue North
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
RUSH
NEWS COPY
To
Theo Sommerkamp
Executive Committe
127 Ninth Avenue, North
Nashville, Tennessee