



Light

Bulletin of THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION of THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

161 EIGHTH AVENUE, N. • NASHVILLE 1, TENNESSEE

VOL. VI, NO. 4

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1959

Successful Christian Life Conferences

The Christian Life Conferences at Glorieta on "Church-State Relations" topped all previous records in attendance and in the interest and response of those who came. Dr. C. Arthur Insko's addresses on this subject were clear, comprehensive, and entirely relevant to the problem of our day in this area of Christian concern. In the open discussions Dr. W. Barry Garrett brought to the group much information on numerous bills that have been introduced in the current session of Congress involving state and church relations. He skillfully directed the discussion of these and the many other questions that were raised. He and Dr. Insko were assisted in the evening discussions by a panel composed of Dr. C. W. Scudder, Foy Valentine, and A. C. Miller.

Dr. Scudder brought new viewpoints and insights to his large Bible class on the subject "The Gospel and Social Frontiers." The attendance and interest of this class revealed a growing awareness among Southern Baptists in the social emphases of the Christian message.

The conferences at Ridgecrest have not been held at this writing. However, all indications are that we will top all previous records in both the annual business meeting of the Commission, and in the Christian Life Conferences.

Other Commission Activities

The Executive Secretary of the Christian Life Commission will go from Ridgecrest to the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance at Rochester, New York, on August 24-28. He has been asked to serve on the World Peace Committee of the Alliance.

As the chairman of the Baptist Joint Committee on Negro Ministerial Education he will confer with Dr. Milton C. Froyd on the agenda for the next meeting of this Committee.

Conference on Counseling and Guidance

The Southern Baptist Conference on Counseling and Guidance will hold its annual meeting this year at Nashville on September 28-30. The subject of the program is "The Christian Response to Humanity's Hurt." Dr. Olin T. Binkley will bring the four major addresses on this general subject. A feature of the program this year will be the workshops to be held in eight areas of concern: Chaplains; Clinical Pastoral Education; Juvenile Delinquency and Broken Homes; Marriage and Family Counseling; Pastoral Care; Social Work; Research Program for Southern Baptists; and Vocational Guidance.

The opening meeting will be at 2:00 P.M. on Monday, September 28; and the sessions will close on Wednesday, September 30, at noon. Dr. Wayne E. Oates is chairman of the program committee.

He will represent the Commission at the meeting of messengers from the Southern Baptist churches of Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada to be held at Salt Lake City on September 17-18.

The latter part of October the Christian Life Commission has been invited to participate in a series of workshops on beverage alcohol to be held at Little Rock and at Pine Bluff under the auspices of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

Salt-o-graphs

"Ye are the salt of the earth"

A free society is marked by the readiness of its people to explore and discuss issues. Men are free to seek truth wherever it may be and to follow it wherever it may lead. In a free society there is an eagerness to listen and to speak, to compare and to exchange. Here one is free to learn and to teach, so that by special knowledge and general experience agreements may be wisely reached and disagreements peaceably adjusted.

In a free society intelligence is the individual's ability to assess values, to judge situations, and to reach decisions about both. Since values conflict and situations change, making up one's mind is the

essential art of maturity. And nowhere is intelligence more enjoyably practiced than in the informal study-discussion group—whether its concern be with statecraft, religion, economics and world affairs, or whether it be with the personal motivations of parenthood, the art of growing old, or the individual's participation in civic affairs.

Learning and leadership are twin values in a free society that is everybody's responsibility. All should strive to learn, even though it is not desirable that all should strive to lead. Because the more mature and the better informed we are, the better will we follow, and the more effective will be our leaders.

Where They Live

What are the living arrangements in this nation for people 65 years of age and over? We sometimes hear people measure this problem in terms of the total number of people who are 65 and above, then draw the conclusion: "How could we ever build homes for all these older people?" Of course all of them must have some place to live, but only a small percentage of them will need institutional care.

The United States Census of 1950 in Volume IV of its special reports shows that 94.3% of the total of 15,041,000 people 65 and over lived in households as of July, 1958. Of this number 68.9% live in their own households and 25.3% live in households with relatives or nonrelatives. This leaves 5.7% who live in other forms of housing, of which 3.1% are in institutions such as state hospitals, old folks' homes, etc.; and 2.6% are in nursing homes and other forms of private housing.

While these figures may vary under certain circumstances, they do reveal the fact that housing for the aged need not be measured in terms of the growing population of older people. No doubt if homes were available, many of those now living with relatives or friends would choose to change their residence, thus increasing the need for housing. But with the development of social security and other forms of old age insurance, and with the development of retirement annuities, the aged population will not only be able to pay a part of the rent on their housing, but they will be able to do constructive work that is being provided for them even now.

This whole program of housing for the aged is at present in flux to such an extent that we must plan very carefully in any program of institutional care we may contemplate.

A Southern Baptist Program for the Aging

This title could be misleading. In a sense, a program for the aging under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Convention is hard to conceive. In the first place, such a program should be classified as social service along with other welfare services. Under the classifications suggested by the recent Committee on Total Program, the term "social service" is applied to our ministry through the hospitals, children's homes, etc. It is, therefore, a function of the newly formed Program Committee to determine the classification for any proposed program for the aging to be fostered by the Southern Baptist Convention.

At the present the institutional care of Southern Baptists for the aging is fostered largely by the states and by some district associations. The first of these homes was provided by the Baptists of the District of Columbia in 1880. Missouri was next in 1913, followed by Maryland in 1915. There was no further activity by the states until 1946, when Virginia established its very attractive buildings at Culpepper. North Carolina followed in 1951, South Carolina and Texas in 1954, Georgia in 1955, and Oklahoma in 1959. The Kentucky home, established in 1952, is sponsored by two district associations—North Bend and Campbell County. North Carolina now has a second home, beautiful and modern. Texas built another in 1955 and is working toward a third. Louisiana has a home at Arcadia, but we have no report from it.

Here are 14 homes in 11 states with a combined capacity of 723 beds, a total of 32 buildings, and a total valuation of \$6,191,785.00. This summary alone clearly indicates the tremendous difficulty Southern Baptists in the states have in building a program of adequate institutional care for the aged. Although we must not let the difficulties stop us, we surely must see in this program a challenge to careful planning and study.

It is at this point that the Christian Life Commission is prepared to offer its services to the leadership in the states by sponsoring a series of regional conferences in the early spring or fall of 1960. Most of the state governments will be sponsoring state conferences in 1960 preparatory to the White House Conference on the Aging in January of 1961. These state conferences are supported by as much as \$15,000.00 from federal funds as authorized by Congress, and they will have some of the best informed people of the nation on their programs. While these conferences will be for leadership training, there can be found ways for some of our leaders as citizens to participate in these meetings and gather much needed information. All of this should help the various church groups in the development of a leadership training for an adequate program for the aging relevant to their needs and commensurate with our abilities.

The Army of the Aged

Between 1900 and 1950 the number of those aged 45 to 64 in the United States tripled to roughly 31 million, and those aged 65 and over quadrupled to 12 million. Present estimates are that today there are 15 million Americans 65 years of age and older, and that by 1975 this figure will climb to more than 20 million.

In view of this startling growth of the population in older people, the U. S. Government has initiated a movement to take care of the emergency before it becomes an emergency. The first White House Conference on the Aging was authorized and signed into law by the President on September 2, 1958. This law provides for grants to the states in the amount of from \$5,000.00 to \$15,000.00 to help them finance the collection of facts about the older people in their populations, conduct state and local conferences, and develop recommendations and reports for discussion at the White House Conference to be held in January, 1961.

The White House Conference on the Aging is expected to draw a minimum of 2,500 delegates. It will make recommendations for a course of positive ac-

tion in dealing with the problems of the aging. The Congressional Act requires the submission of a final report containing recommended action to the President not later than 90 days following the conclusion of the conference.

The purpose of this Congressional action and the White House Conference is:

1. Gainful employment for middle-aged and older people.
2. Sufficient income for the aged to enjoy good health and community life.
3. Housing suited to the needs of older people and at prices they can pay.
4. Assistance of older people in making preparation for their later years.
5. Studies designed to relieve old age of its burden of sickness, mental breakdown, and social ostracism.

New Developments for the Aging

Baylor University has established a Literacy Center with Richard W. Cartright as its Director. The Literacy Center is interested in encouraging older people to help America's 10 million functional illiterates. Special materials are available for adults for this purpose. Additional information may be obtained from Professor Cartright, Box 123 U. B. Exchange, Waco, Texas.

Any firm which refuses to hire persons aged 40 and over is ineligible for Newark, New Jersey, municipal contracts.

Elmo C. Roper's World Poll reports that persons living in Northern Europe more or less agree that age 65 is the proper time to retire. Lower retirement ages are favored by residents of Latin countries. For example, the average Frenchman would like to quit work at 57.

Only 2.9% of Alaska's resident population was aged 65 or over in July, 1957, as compared with 8.7% of the total U. S. population, according to the

Statistical Bureau of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Many older people move back to the United States after reaching retirement age. This is one problem of the aged that is not difficult to understand.

"The Later Years: Independent and Productive" was the theme of a conference held April 15-17 of this year at the Statler Hotel in St. Louis. The purpose of the meeting was to call attention to significant needs of our older population and to stimulate action on state and local levels. States that participated in this conference were Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

"Our Nation must learn to take advantage of the full potential of our elder citizens—their skills, their wisdom, and their experience. We need these traits as fully as much as we need the energy and boldness of youth

—Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Light

Published Bi-Monthly by the
**CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

**A. C. MILLER—Executive Secretary
and Editor**

JAN NISBET—Editor's Assistant

161-8th Ave., N.
Nashville 3, Tennessee

Light is distributed to active pastors, SBC agency heads, state secretaries, state editors, BSU directors and local BSU presidents, as well as to any individual who writes requesting it.

Non-Profit Organization

U. S. Postage

PAID

Nashville, Tenn.

Permit No. 856

Helen Conger-920-12A
Dargatz-Carver Library