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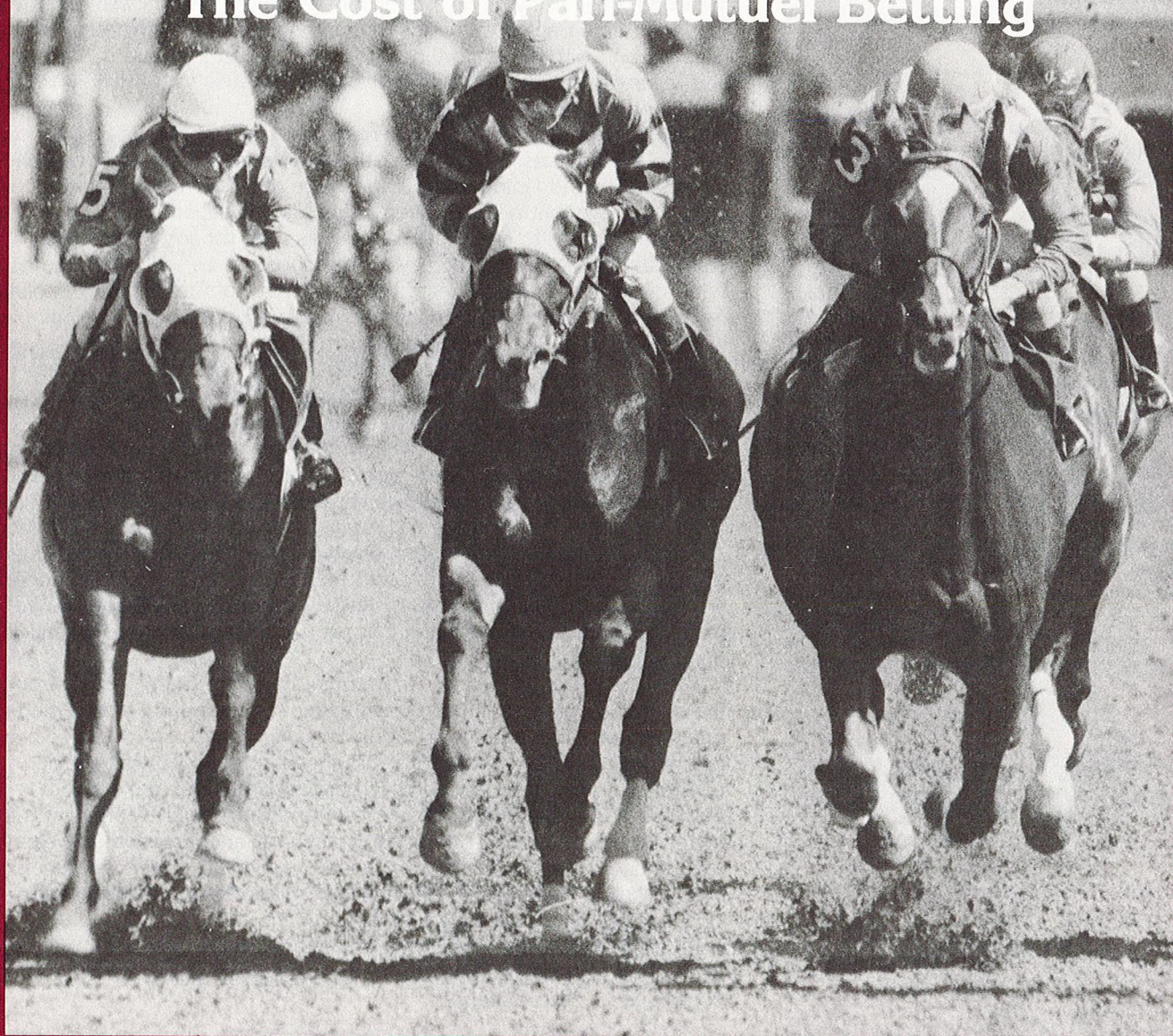
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

BAPTIST CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 1985

BEHIND THE GLAMOUR

The Cost of Pari-Mutuel Betting



• The Family Farm Crisis in America • Page 8

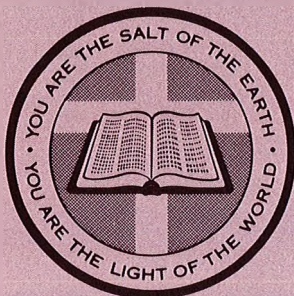
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Cover photo by Richard Shock

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Why I Am a Baptist

In the context of today's doctrinal flabbiness and historical haziness and para-church popularity, it may not be inappropriate to rethink our position as to why we are Baptists.

I am a Baptist for historical reasons. My parents were Baptists. My father was a deacon and the song leader while my mother was a Sunday School teacher in a little one-room, open country meeting house in East Texas where from time to time there gathered the Pleasant Union Baptist Church. Revivals played a big part in my being a Baptist. I was converted when I was a boy during a summer revival meeting. I answered the call to preach during a revival meeting about six years later. Early in my ministry I preached in literally hundreds of revival meetings and this experience deeply affected the course of my life and work. My formal training was at Baylor, the largest Baptist university in the world, and at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, the largest Baptist theological seminary in the world. I began by being a Baptist because my parents were. I grew to manhood as a Baptist with the strong assistance of committed Baptist teachers and with the important support of Baptist institutions, structured and unstructured. But today I am a Baptist because with my convictions I could not well be anything else.

I am a Baptist for intellectual reasons. I believe passionately in freedom, in the rightness of our Baptist emphasis on a regenerate church membership; and I cling to the importance of freedom for every human being. I believe that religious liberty's corollary is separation of church and state, and I refuse to equivocate about this even though times have changed. I believe in democracy for our churches as well as for the nation. With my whole mind and heart, I believe in radical Christianity. Absolutely repugnant to me are baptism for unbelievers, hocus-pocus religion, any hierarchy, and all the mass of paganism which has leaked into religion through the centuries. Radical Christianity insists on holiness "without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). Radical Christianity is biblical Christianity as opposed to creedal Christianity.

I am a Baptist for intuitive reasons. Baptists, more uncompromisingly than any people I know, have emphasized the priesthood of the believer; and God's spirit bears witness with my spirit that this is right. It is a part of Baptist strength that we have encouraged individual encounter with God Almighty. We believe that mystic, spiritual apprehension of God is not only possible, but that it is the norm, with no ifs, ands, and buts, for Christians. We believe with Paul that we can "know" whom we have believed. We feel that experience is the one great thing in our religion, the one essential thing in our religion.

I am a Baptist for practical reasons. There are many things wrong in the Baptist movement. I know these better now than I did when I started preaching in 1940; and I know them far better than I did in 1953 when I left the pastorate to work full-time among Baptists in Christian social concern. For me, the Baptist movement is home. For me, there is nowhere else to go. Within the Baptist framework, I believe that I can better preach and work to proclaim liberty, maintain freedom, develop the biblical understanding of the worth of the individual, engage in genuine evangelism, be involved in true Christian missions, and cultivate authentic Christian morality than anywhere else.

It is then with neither pride nor shame that I have been rethinking why I am a Baptist; but it has been to me a profitable exercise which I strongly commend to other Baptists.

Foy Valentine
Foy Valentine
Executive Director

The Kentucky Derby is my favorite in-person sports event. It wins by a nose over the Masters, Super Bowl, Final Four and Texas-OU. Apologies to Roger Staubach, but the Derby remains the greatest two minutes in sports.

As the band strikes up "My Old Kentucky Home," goosebumps dance down my back. Cynicism is drowned by 150,000 voices and 111 years of mint-julep tradition and a week-long buildup of tension. All for two thundering minutes. No time outs. No second halves or chances.

Just daring little men steering great beasts who may or may not feel like running at 4:38 p.m. the first Saturday in May. I love the Derby.

But it has nothing to do with horse racing as we know it. Except for the greatest two minutes, and maybe a Preakness or Belmont or Santa Anita Derby, horse racing is a sick business that preys on sick people.

Let's keep the great state of Texas free of legalized horse racing.

Please, before you scream, "This guy's full of horse manure!" hear me out. I am not a member of First Baptist or the Moral Majority. It's just that I worked around race tracks for two college summers. I've covered 16 Triple Crown races, and Texas

needs racing the way it does another dry hole in the head. I was proud when yet another horseracing bill was voted down, 96-52, in the Texas House. But the bill was revived in the Senate, and it no doubt will ride again and again.

There is too much money to be made off too many naive Texans who somehow confuse pari-mutuel wagering with the pageantry and tradition of the Derby. "Texas deserves a Derby," I hear. But does it deserve a Churchill Downs? Except for one day a year, the Downs is just another seedy track.

With its money and macho, Texas could turn into the sickest of the pari-mutuel states (36 to date). Horse racing is a Pandora's Box—or maybe pari-mutuel box. Legalizing it would create thousands and thousands of compulsive gamblers who soon would turn to thousands of new illegal bookmakers who give better odds, extend credit the track won't, and don't report your winnings, if any, to the IRS. As we have seen in other states, horse racing soon leads to off-track betting, dog racing, jai-alai, lotteries and casinos. Yes, organized crime already has a grip on Texas, but legalized gambling only would make it a choke hold.

All because a pack of pretty

horses running through the sun around a garden of an infield.

If you thought the Tulane basketball scandal was ugly, just try to keep up with racing's dirt. Just recently, I've noticed an FBI investigation of race fixing at River Downs, Darby Downs and Lebanon Raceway in Ohio and Latonia Race Course in

If you thought the Tulane basketball scandal was ugly, just try to keep up with racing's dirt.

Kentucky. At Ross Meadows in Ada, Okla., eight jockeys were arraigned on charges of possessing illegal electrical devices that could be used to jolt horses into running faster.

When your athletes are equines who aren't capable of knowing right from wrong, or Bute from sugar cubes, you have trouble. Track backsides are crawling with low-lives wearing diamond pinky rings and driving '76 Eldorados in search of the big score. One sure thing. One fixed race. From track to track, meeting to meeting they go—trainers, stablehands, jockeys, ex-jockeys, agents and various vermin. Sure, there are honest ones—and many who aren't.

Does Texas deserve this subculture?

I lived with these people the summers of 1971 and '72. I stayed in dorms on the backsides of Long Island's Belmont Park and Chicago's Arlington Park. My college sports-writing scholarship was funded by the Thoroughbred Racing Association, which wanted recipients to learn racing and perhaps graduate into turf writing. My first day at Belmont, I was taken to lunch by John A. Morris, whose family has the oldest silks in racing. I believe Morris was 86 then.

"Don't bet," was the first thing Morris told me. "In all my years of racing, I've never known anyone who made a living betting the horses."

Morris bet only on the stock exchange, where he made his fortune. But he went to the track to watch his horses compete against those of other regal families. That's why they call racing the Sport of Kings.

A Sports Columnist Believes Horse Racing Is Bad Business

KEEP OUT PARI-MUTUEL

—By Skip Bayless



But most of us just go to bet. Face it, racing really isn't a sport. It's a contest on which people bet. Do you know many, if any, fans who consistently go to the track without making so much as a \$2 wager? So please, don't tell me Texas deserves to have this beautiful sport pitting beautiful animals born to run.

I won't even get into the cruelty-to-horses stuff.

No, people just don't follow horse racing the way they do, say, baseball. You don't devour the Racing

Face it, racing really isn't a sport. It's a contest on which people bet.

Form each morning because you idolize John Henry or Spend A Buck, the Derby winner. I've only known one man who comes close to qualifying as a racing fan. Kenin Finkel is a Times Herald editor who can recite the name and year of every Kentucky Derby winner. Yet he never has been to a Derby and, though he grew up in Miami and lived for stretches in New York, he wouldn't walk across the street to bet on a race.

If only tracks were full of Kenin Finkels. But of course, this would defeat the state's purpose of raising money. Racing proponents claim Texas could make even more than the \$85 million N.Y. pulls in from pari-mutuel wagering. Yet Texas SportsWorld magazine says that no state's gambling revenue equals even 1 percent of its budget.

And Friday from N.Y., Monsignor Joesph Dunn told me that six states have had to allot funds for treatment of what he calls "victims of public policy"—problem bettors. Dunn, who sounds more like a N.Y. cop, works for the National Council of Compulsive Gambling and has worked closely with the police.

"We're not against gambling," Dunn said. "We just want people to understand that the availability of gambling increases compulsive gambling."

Treatment groups call it the "invisible disease." They say 70 percent of white-collar crimes have something to do with gambling. They say public

awareness of compulsive gambling is where that of alcoholism was 20 years ago. Of course, it can't happen to you. No problem, you can drink socially and bet the ponies on weekend junkets.

Then again, what if you could bet legally every day? Dunn says that until exposed to gambling, you don't know if you have the disease. There are an estimated million problem gamblers in N.Y., where legal gambling increased illegal gambling.

"The police figured bookmaking would decline," Dunn said. "Instead, it rose 40-60 percent the first year of OTB (Off-Track Betting). Better odds, no taxes, credit from the shylocks (loan sharks)."

In Texas, there already is enough illegal betting on team sports. Sure, lots of compulsive horseplayers in Texas are going to bet them anyway. But at least the state doesn't make it convenient.

At least Texas isn't feeding off the sickness of many Texans. Aren't there cleaner ways to fill the coffers?

At least Texas hasn't created a subculture of Jerrys. I got to know several Jerrys in my track days. Friday, I talked to "Jerry," a reformed N.Y. gambler who works for Gamblers Anonymous.

"Right now, you got, what, two-three GamAnon groups in Texas," he said. "Legalize racing and you'll have a ton. I used to bet thousands and thousands, nine races a day, and didn't even know how to read a Form. I never went to the track."

Jerry bet names and numbers and wild hunches. He bet with the newspaper handicappers, who in some cases are as sick as Jerry. There are pari-mutuel windows in most track pressboxes.

It is no surprise that in a Texas SportsWorld poll, Texas sports journalists voted 71-12, in favor of racing.

With that kind of support, the racing bill some day might win. But bettors won't. You may get dumb-lucky, but you just can't beat the horses consistently. They're even more unpredictable than human jocks.

Let's keep racing out of Texas. We don't deserve it. ■

Bayless is sports columnist for the Dallas Times Herald. Reprinted by permission.

BWA ACTIONS

Disarmament Resolution Adopted at Congress

A resolution on peace and disarmament was adopted by delegates to the 15th Baptist World Congress which met in Los Angeles in July.

Noting the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II, the resolution expressed hope that the world would "come out of the darkness of the nuclear and conventional arms race" and "into the light of God . . . the light of trust . . . the light of peace and cooperation among all nations."

The resolution was approved after an amendment was added which called "upon all the nuclear powers to enact immediately a verifiable moratorium on the manufacture of all nuclear weapons and to seek mutually the abolition by negotiation of all nuclear arms."

The resolution challenged Christians around the world "to put our trust more firmly in the God of peace, to proclaim more faithfully the Gospel of peace, and to practice more openly the scriptural command 'as far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all people' (Romans 12:18)."

Delegates also adopted a strongly worded resolution on racism which urged "Baptists everywhere to call upon their Government to stand firmly against all forms of support for South Africa as long as apartheid remains on their statute book."

A resolution on Nicaragua expressed "concern that Central America has become a major focus of East-West tension" and urged "all the powers concerned to draw back from this dangerous confrontation by discontinuing the arms build-up and the economic blockade" which "can only add to the suffering already experienced by the people of Nicaragua."

Other resolutions condemned terrorism, reaffirmed the principle of religious liberty and urged Baptists to adopt simpler lifestyles in light of scriptural injunctions to minister to the poor, the hungry and the homeless. ■

IS IT JUST A MATTER OF TIME?

Baptists Have Reasons to Believe Gambling Industry Can Be Stopped

By Larry Braidfoot

"Frankly, I think it's just a matter of time before the horse people win."

The person who made that prediction had just complimented Baptist involvement in the latest battle over pari-mutuel gambling in Texas. But he felt such anti-gambling efforts would eventually crumble.

The same thought is occasionally expressed by some Christians who do not want legalized gambling to spread but who are awed by the huge sums of money the gambling industry continues to pour into campaigns to legalize their product. Many people voiced these fears after the biggest extension of legalized gambling in American history on Election Day 1984. Four states legalized lotteries and one of those states, Missouri, threw in pari-mutuel gambling for bad measure. It seemed 1985 would be a bad year. After all, "it's just a matter of time."

Or is it?

As state legislatures adjourned, the gambling industry could point to only one clear victory for 1985. The

Iowa legislature bought the pitch and legalized a state lottery, following its actions in 1982 in approving pari-mutuel gambling.

The only other state in serious jeopardy is Tennessee. That state's legislature—making a mockery of

As state legislatures adjourned, the gambling industry could point to only one clear victory for 1985.

the democratic process—moved pari-mutuel legislation through committee after committee without holding anything resembling a public hearing on the bill. Having cleared the state Senate, the bill lacked four to six votes for passage in the House and was referred back to committee until 1986. Strong opposition by Gov. Lamar Alexander, at least implying a veto, had a major effect in slowing the legislation.

Pari-mutuel bills bit the dust dramatically in Texas and Mississippi. The Texas House resoundingly defeated the most recent horse-betting bill after both conservative and Black members of the House decided—although for different reasons—they could trust neither the legislation or its proponents. In Mississippi, a leading senator was indicted for soliciting a bribe to ensure passage of the pari-mutuel gambling legislation.

Lottery bills failed to move in a number of states. In several places they were officially killed. In other states, they simply lay dormant. In Florida, the state regarded as most susceptible to a lottery push, the

legislation was killed by a Senate committee.

Effective work by many Baptists helped turn back the gambling industry. Editors of state Baptist papers, state ethics workers, pastors and laypersons contributed greatly to another year of victory in the gambling wars.

What is the reward for these efforts in halting the spread of legalized gambling? The chance to fight the battle again next year!

Facing the battle again in 1986 is frustrating to many people. But if the struggle for peace and racial justice and the battle against pornography and alcohol abuse are never completed, why should we expect the battle against gambling to be different?

In addition to a renewal of the gambling wars at the state level, we can anticipate a broader agenda at the national level. In 1983, one bill was introduced to establish a national lottery. In the first few months of 1985, five were introduced. A new threat also has emerged. Noting the success of gambling promoters in developing high-stakes bingo games on Indian lands, dog racing supporters are pushing hard to wedge their way onto a New Mexico reservation and

Film Available

As state legislatures gear up for the fall agenda, Southern Baptists and other concerned Christians need to prepare for education and action on legislation related to legalization of gambling.

An excellent resource for local churches is "The Gambling Menace," a 16mm film. Released this year, the 28½-minute film provides an interesting and factual presentation of the serious threat posed by the nation's gambling industry. It debunks the propaganda used by gambling proponents to lobby state legislators.

The script was written by anti-gambling expert Larry Braidfoot of the Christian Life Commission.

The film rents for \$38 and is available from the nearest *Baptist Film Center* or from *Broadman Film Library*, Christian Film Service, P.O. Box 8204, Orlando, FL 32856. ■

SBC Statement

Messengers to the 1985 Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas approved a resolution expressing "strong objection to the various legislative proposals for the establishment of a national lottery."

The resolution noted that "lotteries—like all gambling—are socially, economically and morally destructive." It also pointed out that "the lottery industry openly claims that lotteries are a form of gambling which effectively attracts new gamblers."

The resolution urged the Christian Life Commission "to continue to oppose vigorously any efforts to establish a national lottery." ■

jai alai promoters onto an Arizona reservation via loopholes and friendly support at the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Interior (see related story).

The reward for these efforts is the chance to fight the battle again next year.

But it is *not* just a matter of time. Every year we defeat the spread of the gambling industry we learn more about effective involvement as Christian citizens.

- Every year more facts about the destructive influence of gambling become apparent. At a recent conference for a select group of journalists, the most powerful presentation dealt with the moral impact gambling has on the economic lives of citizens. The speaker was not a Baptist preacher, but a Rutgers economist—George Sternlieb, author of *The Atlantic City Gamble*.

- From Alaska to Florida, Christians are learning more about how to work with Christians from other

denominations and with other concerned citizens.

- Citizens are organizing more effectively to make their voices heard. In one state between 3,000 and 5,000 telephone calls were made in a critical 48-hour period.

- Lottery folks can no longer claim a lottery hasn't been outlawed since the "new" lottery movement began in 1964. In Nebraska, a ban on local-option video lotteries was legislated in 1984 and was maintained in 1985, largely through the leadership of Baptist minister James Hamilton. This is the most decisive reversal the lottery forces have yet sustained.

We may get frustrated having to fight the battles annually. But the gambling industry isn't enjoying the struggle too much either. In state after state, industry claims are being met in legislative hearings with factual information opposing their claims. The gambling industry is no longer dominating the public hearings with their supposed expertise.

Also, competition within the gambling industry is getting stronger as the struggle for the limited number of gambling dollars intensifies.

Different groups within the

gambling industry are discovering that "politics makes strange bedfellows." The pari-mutuel industry is looking for allies to defeat lottery forces in a number of states. State lottery industry leaders are anxious to defeat legislation to establish a national lottery.

One of my favorite moments this year came in a talk show in which two representatives pushed for a national lottery. I had the opportunity of opposing the legislation—with the assistance of the director of a

We may get frustrated having to fight the battles annually. But the gambling industry isn't enjoying the struggle too much either.

prominent state lottery. I'll "bet" I enjoyed that more than he did!

Nineteen eighty-six is just around the corner. *NOW* is the time to start getting ready. Here are some things to consider for your church.

- Broadman has released a very good 16mm film, "The Gambling Menace." Ideal for church groups, it also will work well in civic clubs.

- Southern Baptist Video Tape Service has produced "Christians Confronting the Gambling Crisis," an informative tool for small-group viewing.

- If efforts are not already underway, *NOW* is the time to start organizing in preparation for upcoming legislative sessions.

- The Christian Life Commission has a variety of anti-gambling education materials for use in a number of settings.

- A number of state Baptist conventions have ethics workers who are very active on this and other issues. They can be very helpful in planning for action.

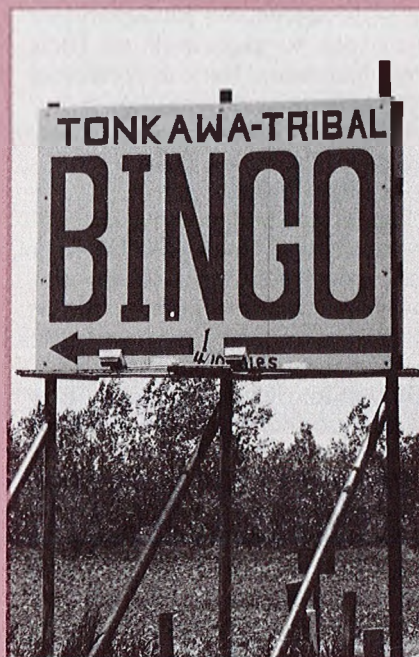
Who knows? It may be "just a matter of time" before we win another round! ■

Braidfoot is general counsel and director of Christian citizenship development for the Christian Life Commission. He has written Gambling: A Deadly Game to be released Nov. 1 by Broadman Press.

Legislation Pending In U.S. Congress

All national lottery legislation has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.). As *LIGHT* went to press, no action had been taken on any of the legislation. A committee aide indicated, however, that hearings might be scheduled this fall. Committee mailing address and phone number: 1102 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, (202) 225-3625.

Two House bills regarding gambling on Indian lands have been referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, chaired by Morris Udall (D-Ariz.). Committee address and phone: 1324 Longworth, (202) 225-2761. HR 2404 was introduced by Udall. The other bill, HR 1920, introduced by Norman Shumway (D-Calif.), allows for more state regulation than does Udall's bill. ■



INDIAN LANDS—A way in for the opportunistic gambling industry?

'GOT NO FOOD'

Infant Mortality and Child Poverty Belt Now Overlaps the Bible Belt in America

By Robert Parham

"We're doing okay, really, just got no food," an Alabama mother of two anemic preschoolers recently told a team of physicians investigating hunger in America.

The mother's refrigerator contained only milk.

In another Alabama community, the doctors found the refrigerator of Pat Jones contained three eggs, one slice of cheese and a water jug. Her three-year-old son had not had milk in three weeks.

Much of Alabama is poor and hungry. Twenty percent of the state's population lives below the poverty line. But Alabama is not alone. Nearly one-quarter of Mississippi's population resides below the poverty line, while 18 percent of North

1. South Carolina 14.8
 2. Louisiana 14.2
 3. Mississippi 14.0
 4. North Carolina 13.5
 6. Alabama 13.0
 7. Tennessee 12.9
 8. Georgia 12.7
 9. Florida 12.1
 13. Virginia 11.3
 14. Texas 11.2
- Oklahoma (16th - 10.7) and Kentucky (17th - 10.6) also have high rankings.

Within certain southern locales, infant mortality rates soar to Third World levels. For example, Hale County, Ala., had a rate of 31 in 1982. Houston's Riverside Health Center had a rate of 23.5 in 1983.

The infant mortality rate is linked to low birth weights. In fact, two-thirds of infant deaths are associated with low birth weights. Babies who weigh 5.5 lbs. or less are 40 times more likely to die in the first month than normal weight babies and are twice as likely to suffer severe handicaps such as deafness, blindness or mental retardation.

Although unanimous agreement about the causes of low birth weights does not prevail among health experts, general agreement coalesces around the opinion that inadequate prenatal care and poor nutrition, which are in turn products of poverty and hunger, contribute to low birth weights.

The rate of children living in poverty also underscores the hunger crisis. In 1983, American children made up 26.8 percent of the total population but 39.2 percent of the total poor population. Nationally, 22.2 out of 100 children reside in poverty which is the highest level

since the mid-1960s. The estimated figure for the South is 23.7.

The plight of southern children results partially from and is compounded by the fact that the state governments of the region offer the least amount of financial assistance to people in poverty of any region in America.

Figures for the combined AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and food stamp benefits for a family of three indicate that the first eight bottom spots are commandingly held by Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, South Carolina, Louisiana and Kentucky. Georgia (10th), North Carolina (11th), and Florida (12th) trail close behind.

The minimal amount of financial assistance offered by southern states is eroded even further by taxes on food purchases. Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee all slice the purchasing power of the poor with state sales taxes on food.

Beyond the inadequacy of financial assistance and unfair taxes, the silence and noninvolvement of the region's churches in public policy

Minimal amount of financial assistance offered by southern states is eroded further by taxes on food purchases.

advocacy on domestic hunger contributes to the state of the South's poverty and hunger-stricken children. The churches generously open their food pantries to the needy but shy away from openly initiating and supporting responsible public policy.

The churches of the South may verbalize care about prenatal life and afterlife, but too often they fail to manifest tangible, political care about the quality of life of the region's youngest and weakest members. A cruel paradox in America today is that the infant mortality and child poverty belt overlaps the Bible belt. ■

Parham is director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission.

Poverty and consequently hunger are returning to America with brutal force.

Carolina's inhabitants do.

Poverty and consequently hunger are returning to America with brutal force. They affect all regions of the nation. But they prey especially on the children of the South. Two measurements underscore this fact: the infant mortality rate and the rate of children living in poverty.

In 1983 the national infant mortality rate—deaths to children under one year of age per 1,000 live births—was 10.9. The southern rate was 12.5.

Ten of the 15 states with highest infant mortality rates are located in the South:

FARM CRISIS

'Social Darwinist' Views Undermine Christian Perspectives on the Issue

By Gary Farley

"Survival of the fittest" is often cited as the distilled, central message of Darwin's theory of evolution.

About 100 years ago sociologist Herbert Spencer borrowed this biological theory and applied it to society. He declared, for example, that in business and industry only the fittest survive. Individual companies or whole industries that could not respond to change would become extinct and be replaced by more adaptive ones. Likewise, nations that adapt survive; others die. This philosophy gained wide acceptance at the turn of the century because it legitimated the activities of the great industrial capitalists.

Social Darwinism, however, was flawed by its failure to consider "social costs." Natural resources were squandered, air and water polluted, and people used up and tossed out on the "scrap heap of humanity."

Social Darwinism was flawed because it made profit the prime concern of human activity. People made decisions to maximize profit rather than to do what God willed. Success was measured in terms of material accumulation, not spiritual growth and service to others. It was flawed by its neglect of evil in the utopian hope that all change was progress toward the perfection of humanity

and the social order. Two World Wars put the lie to these illusions.

Like most errors, Social Darwinism contained enough truth to appear plausible to some at the time and to experience revival in our own day. Indeed, it could be argued that it is the guiding ideology of contemporary conservative economics and political thought. A case in point is its use by some government leaders to explain the plight of many American farmers. These persons identify those who are losing their farms as inefficient, non-adaptive farmers who were unable or unwilling to adjust to the new realities of agriculture.

Ironically, some conservative Christians who would oppose the teaching of Darwinism in biology class have actively embraced its form of social theory as the explanation of the farm crisis. They see no crisis. Rather they see what is happening to the family farm as a natural development in the economic order toward the "big." Big in their minds is equated with better.

This interpretation of the farm crisis underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the American agricultural situation.

American farms fall roughly into three categories. The small, part-time farm is the most common. Many are located in the Appalachian and Ozark Mountains near cities. Many of

these farmers raise a few head of cattle, or specialize in a labor-intensive crop such as tobacco. Most of them are not greatly affected by the crisis because agricultural income is supplemented by "off-farm" income from another job to round out the family budget.

At the other end of the continuum is the huge corporate farm. Though fewest in number, these giants dominate production of fruit and vegetables. If trends of vertical integration of poultry and livestock continue, they will dominate these markets as well. Corporate farms are affected little by the current crisis. In fact, given existing tax law structures, some actually benefit from farm losses through tax "write offs."

In such cases—and they are not isolated ones—tax policy is more of a determinant and motivator of investment and enterprise than is either the will of God or the common good. In the view of the Social Darwinist, this is the farm of the future.

In the middle category are about one-third of American farms which are called "family farms." They are heavily concentrated in the production of cotton and of grains like corn, soy beans and wheat. They are most often located in the upper Midwest and the South, the regions of the nation whose economies are most dependent upon agriculture. These are the loci of the current farm crisis. Most of the farm people of the South and upper Midwest are God-fearing Baptists, Methodists, Mennonites, Brethren, Lutherans and Roman Catholics. In the 1970s many of

Those losing their farms are identified as inefficient, non-adaptive farmers who were unable or unwilling to adjust.

them responded to the world hunger crisis by expanding their operations and production with a zeal motivated both by Christian concern and by hope for profit.

These farmers were hit hard by the Carter administration's grain embargo in 1978 and the inflation of

that era. This has been followed in recent years by drought and reduced yield. And the "high" dollar has made it more difficult for American grain and fiber to compete in world markets. Farmer-like, they were used to cycles of loss and gain and of borrowing, hopefully for the future.

This radical change in land-tenure runs contrary both to the biblical ideals and to our Jeffersonian heritage.

But this time the good times of profit have not returned. Consequently, many are now at the end of their ropes. Ironically, they are often the youngest, best-educated, most aggressive—yes, the "fittest" farmers in their communities.

If the Darwinist perspective prevails and the proposed farm policy Congress is now considering is adopted, or if the current policy is simply extended and these farmers lose their land, then what? The Darwinist talks glowingly of the coming day when American agriculture will be dominated by huge corporate farms and acreages will be controlled by tax-shelter partnerships. A new age for the corporate-rich to garner further profits is their dream. Christians, however, should view this prospect with grave alarm for several compelling reasons.

First, this radical change in land-tenure runs contrary both to the biblical ideals and to our Jeffersonian heritage. In Old Testament times, God gave the land to the people. When it fell into the hands of a small aristocracy, the sin of the nation grew unbearable to God and punishment followed (*Amos 8:1-3*).

Second, "the bottom line" in this approach is what concerns the corporation and the tax-shelter partnerships. They are not concerned about conservation of the land. It is a unit of production to be used up and discarded as a tax write-off. Already reports indicate that windbreaks have been torn down in the West and a new "Dust Bowl" may be in the making. (*See Lev. 25:23; Deut. 8:10; 26: 6-7.*)

Third, it is likely that production of some commodities will fall into the hands of a few producers who can control the markets, forcing prices up. What will this do to the poor and the hungry both at home and abroad? (*See Micah 2: 1-5.*)

Fourth, consider the impact on the family that loses a farm. Consider the guilt, the hurt, the anger, the frustration. Suicide, divorce and family violence are on the rise in rural America. A Social Darwinist might callously dismiss this. A Christian cannot. (*See Micah 7:1-7.*)

Fifth, this crisis endangers many communities. Much of the Midwest and the South is agriculturally dependent. When the farmer is in danger, so is the bank, the retail store, the school, the church. For example, the 26 rural associations of Baptist churches in north Missouri include 407 congregations. About 180 of these have an average Sunday School attendance of less than 35. Imagine what the loss of a family or two to these congregations would mean. Other small-town institutions also would be affected dramatically. This might not bother a

Solutions to the American farm crisis must also include the formulation of a just farm policy.

Social Darwinist, but what about a Christian?

Christians must respond to the needs presented by the farm crisis. Don Evans of the missions department of the Missouri Baptist Convention has devised a workable model. Evans brought in directors of associational missions from across the state to hear about the farm crisis from agricultural and social service specialists. They identified the causes of stress, resources for aid and means for giving counsel. Among the needs identified were a listening ear, food, shelter and aid in finding employment and in restructuring debt.

In turn the directors of associational missions replicated this training for the pastors and lay leaders in

their associations. The farm people of Missouri are learning again that Baptist individuals and churches care.

North Missouri is only one area where Baptists are deeply affected by the crisis. The High Plains of Texas, the old "Cotton Belt" region of the South, and the Mississippi Delta also are gripped by a deepening crisis that causes suffering by our Baptist brothers and sisters. It is important that Southern Baptist churches be sensitive to the problem and find creative ways to minister.

Solutions to the American farm crisis, however, must also include the formulation of a just farm policy. The issues involved are varied and complex. To come to the aid of the grain farmer by raising the price of his commodities will hurt the dairy, hog, cattle and poultry farmers. But to fail to do so raises the probability of the Social Darwinists' future for American agriculture.

A careful review of the subject indicates that formulation of a just farm policy should address at least the following needs and issues:

- Availability of an adequate diet for the domestic poor.
- Food for persons affected by disasters around the world.
- A food-stuffs reserve to provide a cushion against famine/disaster.
- Conservation of agricultural lands and water.
- Preservation of the family farm as the focal point of all farm policies and programs.
- Revision of tax policies which encourage acquisition of farm land for tax sheltering.
- Policies related to farm subsidies and loans which insure that the money goes where there is greatest need.
- A plan for restructuring farm debts.
- Community development including industrialization of small towns in the Midwest.
- Provision of food and agricultural commodities to Americans at a relatively stable price not subject to the fluctuations seen in Arabian oil.

Baptists must remember that an important and biblically authentic part of our heritage is to be "watchmen on the wall" (*Hab. 2:1*). We

(Continued on Page 10)

Cocaine Use Increases Among Women and Poor

Today's cocaine users are younger, poorer and more likely to be women than they were two years ago, a new survey indicates.

Mark Gold, founder of the national 800-COCAINE Helpline, compared a random sampling of 200 callers this year with a similar survey taken in 1983.

His findings:

- Average age of cocaine users two years ago was 31. Now it's 27.
- Male users in '83 outnumbered females 3 to 1. Now the ratio is 1.5 to 1.
- In 1983, 60% of users had incomes of more than \$25,000. Now only 40% are at that income level.
- In the '83 survey, 66% of callers used other drugs in addition to cocaine. Now almost 75% are multiple drug users.

Gold said "there is no question that the cocaine epidemic . . . is widespread, nationwide, constantly finding a new market."

Farm Crisis

Continued from Page 9

must speak out against those trends in society and culture that run contrary to God's will for righteousness and justice. Today a trend exists which will radically change the nature of our nation's most basic industry, a change which threatens our wellbeing. Apologists for this detrimental change are trying to legitimate it by the pseudo-scientific theory of Social Darwinism. We must sound the alarm.

While we minister to the hurts of our farmer brothers and sisters, we must also call for just farm policies. We must warn those whose responsibility it is to formulate farm policy not to repeat the sins of ancient Israel and Judah. God hasn't changed. He is still the champion of the poor. He still hates greed. He still denounces exploitative materialism, even when covered by a veneer of spirituality.

Baptists must not be silent. We must study the issues. We must pray, work, write, speak, influence. ■

Farley, manager of a family farm in Johnson County, Mo., is currently associate director of the rural-urban missions department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

The trend toward multiple drug use, he added, is particularly alarming because of problems caused by drug interactions.

—USA TODAY

Problem of Spouse Abuse Exists Among Evangelicals

Pastors of evangelical Christian churches need to acknowledge that wife abuse takes place in their congregations, says a Christian counselor who has done a national study on the subject.

James Alsdurf conducted a study which found that some pastors tend to link a husband's violence to the wife's failure to be submissive in marriage. This was especially true of those clergy who have little regard for women's rights and who discount reports of violence, he said.

Alsdurf's study also found that a majority of pastors surveyed were willing to accept a marriage in which some violence is present, even though "it is not God's perfect will." They are more willing to accept that than to advise a separation which might end in divorce, he said.

But Alsdurf added that most pastors surveyed said when faced with the moral decision of having to choose between a violent marriage or marital separation to end the violence they would support separation.

—Religious News Service

Americans Buying Fewer Cigarettes

Are repeated health warnings about the dangers of cigarette smoking finally being heard?

Cigarette sales in America dropped in 1982 and 1983 for the first time in more than a decade, according to a study by the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC reported that 584.4 billion cigarettes were sold in 1983, compared to 632.5 billion in '82. Sales for previous years:

1979	621.0 billion
1980	628.2 billion
1981	636.5 billion

Another factor for the recent decline: the federal cigarette tax doubled in 1983.

—USA TODAY

Millions Spent Last Year To Bend Legislature's Ear

Lobbyists spent \$42 million last year trying to influence Congress.

The 1984 total is slightly less than the \$43.3 million spent the previous year, yet it is still more than taxpayers spent for congressional salaries.

The 6,000 registered lobbyists spent an average of \$78,522 per member to push their special interests. Other than top leaders, members of Congress were paid \$72,600.

As for Political Action Committees, a



SPECIAL HONOR—Foy Valentine, with his wife Mary Louise, was presented the CLC's Distinguished Service Award during the agency's report to the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, honoring a lifetime of service in applied Christianity.

(Photo by Tim Fields)

study of the U.S. Senate indicates that Robert Dole (R-Kan.) thus far this year is the No. 1 recipient of money from PACs. Dole's \$569,644 tops the list, followed by Bob Packwood (R-Ore.)—\$377,200, Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.)—\$265,832, and Alan Cranston (D-Calif.)—\$222,533.

—From news sources

Drug Abuse Problem Given UN Priority

The worldwide problem of drug abuse has gained new priority at the United Nations. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar recently singled out three areas of immediate concern to the UN: the quest for peace, the fight against hunger and the struggle against drug trafficking and abuse.

Countermeasures against illicit drug traffic are being considered by representatives of many governments.

—Baptist World Alliance

Soil Erosion Proves Costly to U.S.A.

Soil erosion is eating away a sizable chunk of the U.S.A. each year, a new study indicates.

The billions of tons of soil sliding into lakes and rivers is costing the country \$6 billion annually, according to the Conservation Foundation study.

The study found:

- Dirt, washing off the land, fills city water supplies, leaving less for drinking, recreation and industrial use. Erosion also carries polluting chemicals into the water.

- Sediment each year fills almost 1.5 million acres of lakes and reservoirs at an annual replacement cost of more than \$450 million.

- Water-related recreation suffers \$2 billion a year through reduced use.

- Areas most affected are Midwest, Northeast and Northwest.

—USA TODAY

Charitable Giving Shows Big Increase

U.S. charitable giving in 1984 jumped 11% over 1983 to a record \$72.2 billion, according to the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel.

The Counsel said charitable giving has risen steadily over the last five years. Individuals last year contributed \$61.4 billion, 82% of total charitable giving.

—Evangelical Press

Teachers Get Low Marks In Terms of Prestige

Measured in terms of prestige, teachers get low grades, a Gallup Poll shows.

In the poll, commissioned by the National Education Association, the public ranked school teachers sixth in prestige out of a list of nine professions.

In order: doctors, clergy, college professors, lawyers, business execs, teachers, school principals, local politicians and real-estate agents.

Based on daily workload demands, however, teachers were ranked second in the same list.

—USA TODAY

U.S. Oil Glut Status May Soon Change

All the talk about the current glut in the world's oil market may be deceiving.

The world is now burning up its oil at a rate of 900 billion gallons a year. Scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey who have been taking an inventory of global oil resources note that the world has already burned about one-fourth of the recoverable oil that existed when the first well was drilled about 100 years ago.

Also, exploration has already discovered about two-thirds of the oil it will ever find. Future discoveries are unlikely to change significantly this analysis.

Thus, at the present rate of consumption, the world has about a 60-year supply of oil remaining.

—The Washington Post

Quality Children's TV May Be Disappearing

Quality children's television programs "may disappear altogether" because federal deregulation has taken the pressure off network programmers, warned the president of Action for Children's Television.

Peggy Charren said none of the three major networks offer quality programming for children, yet network officials "walk around and talk about how well they serve the public."

"Except for long toy commercials masquerading for television programs, children's programs may disappear altogether," she added.

ACT encourages diversity in children's programs and seeks to prevent exploitation of children through TV advertising.

—The Tennessean

U.S. Car to Person Ratio Still Climbing

By the year 2005 the U.S. will have two automobiles for every three persons, as car production races ahead of population growth.

In 1980 there were 114.9 million cars, an average of 2.0 persons per car. Estimates for 1985: 125.3 million cars, 1.9 persons per car; 2005: 179.6 million cars, 1.5 persons per car.

—USA TODAY

"Moral Scene" is compiled and edited by the editor.

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Reviews of Works in Applied Christianity

Christian Excellence, Alternative to Success by Jon Johnston. Baker, 1985. Timely, needed book which challenges popular notion that Christians, like non-Christians, are to measure life and success in forms of materialism, status and the standards of secular society. Raises practical and penetrating questions concerning the uniqueness of Christian excellence.

Johnston, a teacher of sociology, anthropology and social psychology, makes extensive, thoughtful use of scripture. Authentic excellence is the norm of God's Word, and Jesus is the model. Such excellence is attainable but costly. Johnston insists Christian excellence is grounded in "agape-love" and discipline. Extensive illustrations and applications are helpful but often lead to looseness of style.

—David Lockard

Convictions that Give You Confidence by Wayne Oates. Westminster, 1984. Those familiar with the writings of this Baptist pastoral counselor have often asked about the implications of his thought for a personal ethic. If you're expecting a list of "do's and don'ts" you will be disappointed. This five-chaptered work develops guidelines for such an ethic for foregoing the luxury of indecision, by working them out in your own personal wilderness, by choosing whom you will serve, by arriving at God's one clear calling for you and by deciding upon your own personal ethical code.

At the core of any personal ethic for Oates is the word "relationship." Jesus' two-pronged summary of the Mosaic ethic reduced the law to a relationship to God and neighbors. In light of the obscenity of wealth, this

notion needs to be expanded beyond persons and things.

The book is excellently illustrated, drawing upon the author's personal experience and a variety of literature. Scripture is used creatively, including a unique interpretation of Jesus' wilderness experience as a paradigm for forging a personal ethic.

—Jimmy D. Neff

Cop Out, Conform, or Commit? by Ronald D. Sisk. Convention Press, 1985. Factual, applicable and practical. Those three words best describe Sisk's treatise dealing with Christian youth and their encounter with drugs. Presents very succinctly the basic information concerning use and abuse of drugs varying from nicotine and alcohol to heroin. Communicates well with teenagers due to the author's expertise in dealing with the youth culture. Through use of various thought-provoking exercises, the book guides youth in making their own decisions concerning drugs and applying those decisions to their individual lives. Excellent resource for leading teens in a four-session study of decision making concerning drugs and their influence upon youths' lives.

—John E. Howard

Decision Making in the Church by Luke T. Johnson. Fortress Press, 1983. How can the Bible help the church in its corporate decision-making? This question is addressed by illustrating how the early church made some rather momentous decisions. Though not limited to Acts, much of the treatment focuses on decisions related to the Peter-Cornelius event, the acceptance of

Paul as a disciple and the Jerusalem Council.

Moving from the model he finds in the N.T., Johnson makes contemporary application to leadership of women in the church, divorced and remarried in the church and the matter of homosexuality. Book is a good model for hermeneutics as it defines problem areas, seeks out pertinent biblical witness and works toward application.

—William M. Tillman, Jr.

Stand the Storm: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade by Edward Reynolds. Allison and Busby, London, 1985. Yes, there is room for another volume on slavery. This concise history is amazing in its breadth of perspective and content. Cameo treatment of African history and culture leads smoothly to treatment of the economic and political origins of slavery both in Africa and Europe. Includes penetrating personal and moral insights of both slaves and slave merchants.

Chapters describing the legacy of slavery in Africa and the Atlantic world add strength to a book that is easily read. Also, careful research and generous documentation make this volume a must for history teachers and all who have a serious interest in black culture. Reynolds, born in Ghana, West Africa, is a history professor at the University of California, San Diego.

—David Lockard

REVIEWERS: Howard is minister of youth at Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.; Lockard is director of organization for the CLC; Neff is pastor of Coronado Baptist Church, El Paso; and Tillman teaches ethics at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth.



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