

November 19, 1960

Georgia Abolishes Contr Versial Body

SAVANNAH, Ga.--(BP)--The Georgia Baptist Convention here abolished its controversial social service commission, the commission whose report on race relations had been thrown out the day before in the annual session.

Pastor Joe S. Holliday of First Baptist Church, Columbus, introduced the resolution eliminating the commission as a convention committee, saying that "there are no constructive suggestions we can make" in the area of race relations and that "good men on the commission have been subjected to unjustified criticism since 1956."

The commission, with Pastor Montague Cook of Trinity Baptist Church in Moultrie as chairman, had submitted a report which said integration of public schools "violates the religious conviction, tradition, and practice" of Georgia Baptists and urging member churches to "find some alternative" to compliance with the 1954 Supreme Court decision ordering integration of schools.

Louie D. Newton, pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta, offered a substitute motion, which was adopted almost unanimously by convention messengers. It petitioned government leaders of all levels in Georgia to do all possible and wise to keep public schools open.

Holliday's motion to kill the commission passed by a slim margin after a standing vote had to be called for.

Georgia Baptists also adopted a resolution pledging prayers for President-elect John F. Kennedy and commending him for "his publicly-declared position on support of the historic and established principle of separation of church and state."

Dick H. Hall, Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Decatur, was elected Georgia Convention president. 1961 convention dates are Nov. 13-15 at Columbus.

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Tennessee Declines Three Racial Pleas

(11-19-60)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Tennessee Baptist Convention here has declined three pleas to act on the controversial race issue.

In annual session here, it turned aside repeated efforts to instruct convention agencies to accept all persons regardless of race, color, or creed.

Instead, it left standing a policy which permits the directors of its three hospitals and four schools to determine the policies for their individual agencies.

Two requests for a direct convention policy came from messengers from Oak Ridge, Tenn. The other--and evidently unrelated except that its plea was the same--was from a Negro Baptist minister.

The first move on the race issue came in a telegram of greetings from the Nashville Christian Leadership Council. Signed by Kelly Miller Smith, prominent Negro Baptist minister here, it urged the convention "to open the doors of your hospitals, schools, and other institutions to all persons without regard to race, creed, or national origin."

A Nashville newspaper said the local council is an affiliate of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Martin Luther King, Atlanta Baptist Negro minister, heads the Southern Conference.

The council claimed action by Tennessee Baptists would "go a long way toward creating the moral climate in which necessary social change can take place" and toward erasing "the evils of racial prejudices and segregation . . ."

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E. D. Galloway, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oak Ridge, later attempted to have the convention take a similar action. The convention was then debating a junior college for Memphis. The president of the convention ruled Galloway out of order.

A physician at Oak Ridge brought a motion before the convention at a still later session. The convention heard his plea for action, but adopted a substitute leaving decisions up to each set of trustees.

Dr. G. C. Kyker asked immediate discussion of integration by the agencies, and their report to the 1961 convention on progress made. He said the convention wears a "label of inconsistency" and holds to an "untenable" position according to "our Christian faith."

Kyker identified himself as an alumnus of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, one of the convention's colleges.

Tennessee Baptist Convention has never adopted a policy on segregation. Currently no negroes are enrolled in its schools. Hospitals, though not admitting Negro patients, give them emergency treatment. The negro cases are later moved to other hospitals.

In other action, Tennessee Convention voted to retain its high school--Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy at Seymour, near Knoxville. The school will be given five years in which to prove its right to exist as a Baptist agency.

The vote was 391 to 303. A special study committee said \$1,650,000 is needed in the next 10 years to make capital improvements at the academy, but the convention did not commit itself to providing these funds.

The schools's future has been clouded since a survey committee recommended last year it be discontinued.

The convention adopted a Cooperative Program budget of \$3.5 million for 1961. A third of it would go to the Southern Baptist Convention for its worldwide ministry ---about \$124,000 less than the state supplied the S B C this year. A pastor termed this a "backward trend" which must be changed in future years. Pressing higher education demands within Tennessee were given as reasons for the S B C cut.

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Don't Tell Us!

(11-19-60)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Tennessee Baptists have cast a unanimous ballot for Jack Kennedy!

The pastor of a church in almost as famous a community--Lookout Mountain-- has been chosen the Tennessee convention's second vice-president.

His election almost overshadowed the election of C. M. Pickler of Memphis as convention president and the choice of Memphis next Nov. 14-16 as convention meeting place.

Jack R. Kennedy fared far better than one John F. Kennedy did in Tennessee Nov. 8 in the United States Presidential election.

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Virginia Dancing
Issue Under Study

BRISTOL, Va.--(BP)--The Baptist General Association of Virginia has referred the issue of dancing on Baptist campuses to a special committee. It will call for a report on the subject next year.

Nelson T. Barker, retired pastor living at Richlands, Va., brought the matter up. He opposed on-campus dancing at the general association's colleges. Prior to the annual meeting here, two local associations of churches had taken stands on the issue.

After receiving Barker's motion, the general association adopted a substitute motion sending the question to a committee including the moderators of the 41 local associations of churches, a trustee from each institution, a faculty member from each school, and two members of the education committee of the state Baptist board.

Another proposal to elevate Bluefield College at Bluefield, Va., from junior to senior college level also was referred--this time to the education committee of the state board.

The general association made a number of constitutional changes, one of which altered the title of its staff organization. It became the Virginia Baptist general board rather than the Virginia Baptist board of missions and education. It said the old title no longer describes the work it does.

Oak Hill Academy in southwestern Virginia became an official agency of the general association. The Grayson County school has been sharing in Cooperative Program funds for education but has not been directly related to the general association. The general association will nominate its trustees in the future.

The Virginia state budget for 1961 will be \$3,350,000 with 36 per cent to Southern Baptist Convention work. The previous S B C share was 35 per cent.

The general board increased in membership by eight. The changes affected the nature of board committees as well as those of standing committees of the general association.

The new president is a Norfolk, Va., layman, Edward G. Ayers. Messengers voted to meet in Arlington for the 1961 session Nov. 14-16.

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Maryland Proceeds
With Name Change

(11-19-60)

ANNAPOLIS, Md.--(BP)--Maryland Southern Baptists changed the name of their state-wide organization after a strong last-ditch effort to keep the old one.

It became the Baptist Convention of Maryland. Its historic title up to that time was Maryland Baptist Union Association.

Francis A. Davis, Baltimore businessman, made a motion to retain the old title, rather than to accept the new one proposed by a constitutional revision committee.

In colorful remarks, the 65-year-old former president of state Baptists presented his argument for retaining the name.

"I am for the present name because it is unique. Unique means one of a kind. One of a kind is one of the most valuable things you can find. Why go to the name everybody else has?"

"I'm unique. I am for keeping our antique, unique name."

Several messengers rallied to Davis's support but when the motion was put, the new name carried 100 to 74.

The new convention approved a survey committee recommendation and will study a proposal for a national Baptist university around the Nation's capital.

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It reelected G. W. Bullard, Baltimore pastor, president. It adopted a Cooperative Program budget goal of \$485,000 with a fixed amount of \$475,000. The Southern Baptist Convention is to get 40 per cent of the fixed amount.

The Maryland body approved recommendations of the Maryland Christian life commission that speakers avoid slighting references to minority groups and that the Southern Baptist Convention set up a world disaster fund.

The disaster fund proposal is an apparent follow-up of a million-dollar a year relief idea suggested by a Texas Baptist editor. It is under study by the S B C Executive Committee.

The item of business which drew most discussion during the convention was one mainly of internal interest. It omitted the salary of the treasurer of the state Woman's Missionary Union from the 1961 budget.

This elicited a bitter charge from a Baltimore pastor that changes in W M U finances were "undemocratic."

The convention voted to meet in Baltimore for its 1961 session, Nov. 13-15.