

November 18, 1959

Convention Boosts
Mobile College Plan

MOBILE, Ala.--(BP)--Plans for a Baptist college here received a boost during the recent session of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

The convention endorsed the move to appoint a steering committee which will assume basic responsibility for planning. Three members of the committee will come from the Mobile area.

When success of a financial campaign has been assured, and the steering committee has completed its work, the committee will relinquish its responsibility.

The Mobile college will then become affiliated with either Howard College at Birmingham or Judson College at Marion, both of which have full academic accreditation and are operated by the state convention.

A survey by the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission showed: (1) An urgent need for a college in the Mobile area; (2) Baptist potential alone is sufficient to justify at least a two-year college; (3) The potential exists for a \$1½ million financial campaign, and (4) Alabama convention can provide a subsidy for the college while increasing support for Howard and Judson Colleges.

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Alabama Fixes Goals
For Baptisms, Churches

MONTGOMERY, Ala.--(BP)--Alabama Baptists set a goal of 35,000 baptisms and establishment of 86 new churches and missions during 1960.

At their state convention here, they also adopted these goals---net gain of 25,000 in membership of affiliated churches to a total of 700,000; circulation of 113,000 for the weekly paper, Alabama Baptist; 515,000 members of Sunday schools; 235,000 in Training Unions, and 275,000 children enrolled in Vacation Bible schools.

B. Locke Davis of Anniston, president of Alabama Baptist State Convention, appointed a committee of nine to plan goals for the next five years or more.

The convention also approved a 1960 state Cooperative Program budget of \$3,162,000.

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Folks & facts.....

.....Dr. Oscar W. Bethea, a practicing physician in New Orleans for 48 years and a member of the staff of Southern Baptist Hospital there since its opening in 1926, retired recently. In recognition of his retirement, Dr. Bethea was honored with a testimonial banquet in the hospital cafeteria to which available members of the original staff were invited along with the deans of the two New Orleans medical schools, the president of the Louisiana State Medical Society, officers of the medical staff, members of the staff's Executive Committee, chairman of the various medical services and local members of the Hospital board of directors.

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.....The Maryland Baptist Union Association's 1960 session will meet at College Ave. Baptist Church, Annapolis, next Nov. 14-16.

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.....St. Petersburg will be site of the 1960 session of Florida Baptist Convention. Dates set are Nov. 15-17.

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City Hospital Leased
To Arkansas Baptists

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.--(BP)--North Little Rock's new hospital, which has been leased in advance to Arkansas Baptist Hospital here, will be known as "Memorial Hospital," with the possibility that another word or two will be added to the front of the title later.

This action was taken at a meeting of the North Little Rock Municipal Hospital Commission.

The commission took final action on the agreement to lease the proposed \$2,250,000 new hospital to Arkansas Baptist Hospital. It also voted to exercise an option it holds on 40 acres where the 100-bed hospital is to be constructed.

The hospital will be built with funds secured from the federal government and from a local bond issue voted some time ago. Approval of the leasing arrangement was voted by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention a year ago.

Under the lease agreement, Memorial Hospital will be operated as a separate unit, with its own administrator, but under the jurisdiction of the Arkansas Baptist Hospital board. Memorial Hospital patients will thus have the benefit of facilities at Baptist Hospital which would not be available at the smaller hospital.

Clifford L. Smith, chairman of the North Little Rock Municipal Hospital Commission, said that the North Little Rock City Council would be asked to concur in the decision to buy the property for the hospital site, since the hospital eventually will be deeded to the city.

Under the lease agreement, the Baptist Hospital board will be required to operate the hospital, keep it in good repair, expand it as future operations require, and stand behind any losses, Smith said.

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Arizona Lets President
Know Its Dissapproval

(11-18-59)

PHOENIX, Ariz.--(BP)--Arizona Baptists have informed President Eisenhower they do not approve of his visit with Pope John 23 at the Vatican.

They also have stated their opposition to election of a President in 1960 whose allegiance to the United States might be secondary to another organization.

Meeting here, the Baptist General Convention of Arizona further called for Baptist churches and institutions to consider carefully their financial dealings when public funds are involved.

Messengers elected Glen E. Crofts, pastor, First Southern Baptist Church, Tucson, president. A budget totalling \$546,381---including aid from Southern Baptist Convention boards for joint work---was adopted for 1960.

The Cooperative Program section of the budget is \$289,622, with 17 per cent of this amount being used to support Southern Baptist Convention activities.

In a pre-convention meeting, the convention's executive board employed Aubrey Halsell of Memphis, Tenn., as director of bond sales. It also voted to issue \$1 million in bonds to build new churches.

The convention went on record opposing any institution, particularly Baptist, which "for selfish gain would jeopardize this great Baptist principle" of separation of church and state. This was interpreted as being aimed at use of tax funds for religious purpose.

While Arizona Baptists believed that the President of the United States "should be a man of God, law, and devoted to his church," it did not believe that "any church has the right to set itself up as a state and demand a state religion for its constituents and oppose his allegiance to the nation to which he claims citizenship."

Eisenhower's visit to the Vatican, and an audience with the pope, was considered by Arizona Baptists as not in the best interests of continued religious liberty.

The convention will meet in Winslow next year.

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BAPTIST FEATURES

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Baptists Speak Out
Concerning President

By Theo Sommerkamp
Baptist Press Staff Writer

Southern Baptists, at their state convention meetings, had much to say about the President of the United States, both present and future.

Three states reacted against President Eisenhower's plan to visit Pope John 23 during a global peace mission.

The potential religious issue in the 1960 Presidential campaign was discussed in the three states.

Church and state posed an issue, in various forms, in Virginia, Arizona, Alabama, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, and Louisiana.

Two conventions voted to change their official names, after following the course required in their constitutions.

Tennessee and North Carolina acted on reports of their special survey committees, accepting some recommendations and rejecting others.

Ohio, Alabama, and Indiana set future goals or created planning committees to chart their future course.

Christian education became a subject for action in South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi. Baptists in Virginia, Florida, and South Carolina talked of new state Baptist office buildings.

Virtually each of the 13 state Baptist organizations which met adopted record budgets.

The Christian life commission of Alabama Baptist State Convention termed Ike's visit to Pope John 23 at the Vatican "disturbing . . . from the viewpoint of religious equality and freedom . . .

"While our sympathies are for world peace, we cannot see this worthy goal furthered by favoritism to a church group seeking political power," it continued.

Only one messenger voted "No" to action taken by the Baptist General Association of Virginia opposing the Eisenhower-papal meeting.

In Arizona, Baptists also took a dim view of this visit.

Arizona and Alabama also spoke their piece about the religious issue which American voters may likely face when they go to the polls in 1960 to elect Eisenhower's successor. Oklahoma added its voice of concern.

The Baptist General Convention of Arizona resolved "without reservation" to oppose "the election of any man to the position of chief executive" whose religious affiliation might conflict with his allegiance to the United States.

The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma took a similar stand. Without naming a candidate or the "other power" to which he might give first allegiance, it was understood by messengers as bearing on the 1960 Presidential campaign.

Alabama convention was explicit. Its statement read:

"It is our thought that any Roman Catholic serving as President, as a matter of course, would be subject to varied types of strong pressures to give favoritism to the Roman Catholic Church regardless of his personal desire and public commitment."

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Georgia Baptist Convention called on the State Department of the federal government to "use its good offices in Spain immediately in terminating the oppression of the pastor and members of the Second Baptist Church in Madrid, and other evangelical churches throughout Spain . . ."

The executive board of Louisiana Baptist Convention is expected to make a comprehensive study of a denomination's leasing a public hospital. Their lease of Homer (La.) Memorial Hospital, built by Homer citizens, comes up for renewal soon. In light of action by Texas Baptists on a similar question, messengers asked for a study by Louisiana Baptists also.

Religious liberty committees reported on "released time" public school religious education in Virginia and North Carolina. Virginia urged its co-operating churches to withdraw from such programs in the public schools while North Carolina felt such courses proper when taught in churches.

Tennessee Baptist Convention voted to reimburse a county board of education \$16,000 donated this year to Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy to pay expenses of public school pupils attending the academy. The county plans to provide its own school in 1962. Until then, apparently, Tennessee Baptists will absorb the cost of public school students.

The convention came within a whisker of eliminating the academy from its institutions. A seven-vote margin out of nearly 1000 ballots cast saved its life for at least another year.

South Carolina Baptists rekindled the debate over whether fraternities belong on a Baptist college campus, and set the stage for a possible showdown in 1960. Their action would involve fraternities at Baptist-operated Furman University in Greenville, S. C.

Alabama Baptists moved another step toward establishing a Baptist college in the city of Mobile. They appointed a steering committee to continue with plans for it.

Mississippi Baptist Convention approved two of its colleges going into debt for dormitories.

The State Convention of the Baptist Denomination in South Carolina voted to change its official name to the less confusing South Carolina Baptist Convention. Maryland Baptist Union Association voted to become Baptist Convention of Maryland, but its change will not be binding for another year.