

**From TEXAS REGIONAL OFFICE**

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May 7, 1965

**Baylor Trustees Request  
Federal Loan Privilege**

DALLAS (BP)--Baylor University trustees meeting here requested the Baptist General Convention of Texas to allow trustees of Baptist schools to decide whether or not to use federal loans to finance construction projects.

The trustees addressed a resolution to a church-state separation study committee of the convention's executive board which is re-studying a convention policy statement adopted in 1961 which forbade Baptist institutions from accepting federal loans or grants.

The resolution adopted by Baylor trustees favored restoration of the loan privilege, stating that loans are repaid to the government and there is no subsidy to the school.

In other major actions, the trustees approved a proposal to establish a 100-member development board composed of members from throughout the nation to "undergird and complement the work of the trustees in the area of development."

Baylor President Abner V. McCall told the trustees a tuition hike from \$20 to \$25 a semester hour this fall will be used to adjust faculty salaries and pay for other educational improvements.

McCall's report that Baylor is hard-pressed for dormitory space touched off discussion on the federal loan issue.

Earl C. Hankamer, trustee from Houston, offered the resolution after declaring that he strongly opposed any action that would jeopardize the traditional Baptist insistence on separation of church and state. He added he did not believe accepting federal loans violated the Baptist position since the money would be paid back.

Ralph Lee of Houston asked that the Baylor board express itself to help the convention's church-state study committee in its deliberations.

Five members of the study committee were attending the board meeting, and several said they welcomed the opinion of the Baylor trustees.

Of the 42 board members present, there were five abstentions by church-state study committee members and one "no" vote on the resolution.

McCall told the board that the federal government has been making a profit on loans to educational institutions for such buildings as dormitories. Trustee Frank Dennard of Dallas said that if the government "can lend us money and make money on it, it removes the subsidy aspect."

The board also approved of granting an honorary doctor of laws degree to Lam Chi Fung, founding president of Hong Kong Baptist College, at the schools May 28 graduation exercises.

The motion to establish the new 100-member development board passed unanimously. The first 25 members of the board will be chosen in the near future and an organizational meeting would come as early as October. The board will function in an advisory capacity with the trustees development committee.

Trustees were meeting at Baylor University Medical Center adjacent to the Baylor College of Dentistry and School of Nursing. Main campus of the largest Baptist school in the nation is located in Waco, Tex.

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Baptist Press

Memorial Scholarship  
Proposed for Writer

HOUSTON (BP)--Establishment of a memorial scholarship in honor of Melvin Steakley, religion editor of the Houston Chronicle who was killed here by a mysterious booby-trap in his car, is being considered by the Texas Baptist Public Relations Association.

The 37-year-old religion reporter died after stepping on the clutch pedal of his car, triggering an old pistol taped to the steering column and wired to the clutch. He had just finished editing the Chronicle's church edition at about 1:00 a. m.

Steakley, a Baptist, had covered numerous Southern Baptist convention meetings as the Chronicle religion editor since 1961.

The Houston Baptist Pastors' Conference meeting here adopted a resolution praising Steakley for his "keen intuitive insight in religious news," and for the candor and frankness of his articles.

The resolution called Steakley a man with a deep sense of mission in the field of religious journalism, and a foe of present-day trends toward religious centralization, hypocrisy, doubletalk, sham, and pretense cloaked by the guise of piety.

The Texas Baptist Public Relations Association, meeting in Abilene, Tex., at the time of the death, appointed a committee to study the possibility of setting up a scholarship in Steakley's memory at Baylor University (Baptist), where he studied journalism.

Police officers are conducting an intense investigation in the case, attempting to determine why Steakley was killed. They were checking all possible angles, including murder, suicide or mistaken identity.

Steakley's widow said she believes her husband was killed by a religious nut or segregationist who became violent after reading Steakley's articles on church integration.

The Sunday before his death, Steakley wrote about the First Baptist Church of Houston voting by a slim majority to refuse Negroes as members.

A few days later, he received a four-page "crank" letter critical of the church's pastor. Steakley had quoted Pastor K. Owen White as stating he knew of only two Biblical qualifications for membership in a New Testament church--salvation and baptism.

The segregationist letter was addressed to 17 others, most of them Baptists, and was signed "The Voice of Truth, Chief Agent of the Holy Spirit."

Police were checking all evidence, including the death device and several witnesses, but had come to no conclusions on why Steakley would have been killed, or why he would have taken his own life.

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SBC Treasurer Reports  
April Gifts to Agencies

5-7-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Treasurer Porter Routh here reported April, 1965 Cooperative Program receipts to SBC agencies were \$1,800,380, bringing cooperative program total for the four months of the year to \$7,370,863.18.

In the same report, he announced designations to SBC agencies during April amounted to \$2,027,676. This brought the year-to-date sum \$12,915,056.14.

So far this year, Cooperative Program receipts are running 7.16 per cent ahead of comparative four-month totals in 1964. Designations have risen 6.94 per cent over the previous year.

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Figures reported by the SBC treasurer count only money for SBC agencies. Money kept by 29 state Baptist conventions for their own uses is not part of this report. Collections in the 33,500 SBC churches retained for local church budgets also is not included.

Through April this year the Foreign Mission Board of the SBC has received more than any other agency--\$15,488,882, which includes both Cooperative Program and designated income. During the same period of 1965, the Home Mission Board has received a total of \$2,186,604, through both channels of receipts.

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SBC Missionaries Caught  
In Dominican Crossfire

5-7-65

DALLAS (BP)--A Southern Baptist missionary family was at one time caught in rebel crossfire during the Dominican Republic revolution before safely returning to the United States.

Mrs. Bill Coffman, one of four Southern Baptist missionaries to the revolution-torn country, told her story here where she is staying with her parents, the J. Woodrow Fullers. Her father is associate pastor of the First Baptist Church here.

The Coffman family--Bill, Ann, and six-year-old Kay--was driving a friend to the Marine evacuation depot when they were suddenly surrounded by cars full of rebel soldiers with machine guns.

"Kay and I hid on the floor of the car while my husband turned the car around and drove back home," Mrs. Coffman said.

"We didn't know if they were shooting at us or not. Later we found out they were looking for a political refugee," she added. The rebels were not shooting at the missionaries.

The frightening experience was quite a contrast to the calm day Ann Coffman spent before the revolution erupted. She was getting her daughter, Kay, ready for a trip to the zoo.

Before their safe evacuation by the U. S. Marines, the Coffman family saw their electricity shut off, and their water and food supplies dwindle.

After being warned by Dominican neighbors and the U. S. Embassy to stay at home, the Coffmans could not go to their three-week-old mission on the opposite side of Santo Domingo.

Later they found that if they had gone anyway, they could not have recrossed the Duarte bridge to their home.

"We could see planes bombing other sections of the city," Mrs. Coffman said. "We could hear the shooting, which seemed much closer than it actually was."

There were two Southern Baptist missionary couples working in the Dominican Republic at the time of the revolution, Mr. and Mrs. Coffman and Mr. and Mrs. Howard L. Shoemake. All are natives of Texas.

Two Baptist missions are located in Santo Domingo. In addition to the one where the Coffman's worked, another was located near the center of the city. Neither the Coffmans nor the Shoemakes were able to contact Baptist nationals from the time the revolution broke out until they were evacuated.

Mrs. Coffman told reporters here she did not know much about Dominican politics, or of possible Communist leanings among rebel leaders. She noted, however, that "the people we worked with showed no signs of Communist leanings."

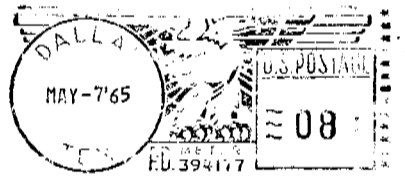
Her husband, Bill, is in Puerto Rico trying to get permission to return to the Dominican Republic.

Shoemake has already returned on invitation of the U. S. Ambassador to help with distribution of medical aid and food. Mrs. Shoemake is in Port Arthur, Tex.

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TEXAS REGIONAL OFFICE  
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**VIA AIR MAIL**

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NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
WATCH FOR THE (BP) CREDIT LINE

the Dallas summer musical production is Mary Martin. No other musical begins until June 7.

The Music Hall is part of the vast Fair Park complex where the annual State Fair of Texas is held each October. Here is also the famed Cotton Bowl where football reigns during the fall and on New Year's Day.

Near the state fair grounds is the Baylor University Medical Center, the Baylor School of Nursing, and the Baylor College of Dentistry, all owned by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Farther east is Buckner Baptist Benevolences' state-wide offices, and the world's largest Baptist children's home--Buckner Baptist Children's Home.

Throughout the city are exotic foreign-food restaurants and Dallas' famed steak houses.

Only a rare messenger will miss the famous Neiman-Marcus store, where kings and queens (and presidents) buy everything imaginable from ten gallon hats to huge yachts.

With so many things to see and do in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, one Baptist joked that convention leaders are hoping a few messengers will show up at Dallas Memorial Auditorium to conduct the convention's business.

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EDITORS: Photos will be available on request from Dallas BP Bureau, but general photo mailing to all state papers is being omitted.