

November 16, 1965

Kentucky Baptists Vote
Special Crisis Meeting

LEXINGTON, Ky. (BP)--The Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting here voted to hold a special convention within eight months to deal with providing adequate financial support for its institutions.

Messengers instructed the convention's executive board and its Christian education committee to make a complete study of all possible avenues of support and make recommendations at the special convention.

All recommendations would be published 30 days prior to the special convention so messengers could study them and think through the proposals.

Time and place of the special session will be determined by the executive board.

Kentucky Baptists had ended in August all but the capital funds phase of a campaign to raise \$9 million for Baptist schools in the state. About \$3 million toward the goal was raised.

A proposal to the convention's executive board the day before the convention to underwrite a \$6 million conventional loan to complete the Christian Education Advance fund campaign never got to the convention floor because of a constitutional requirement stating that all executive board recommendations must be published 30 days before the convention.

The board and the education committee will consider the loan idea, along with the possibility of a bond issue or the possibility of accepting federal aid among several alternatives for providing financial support for the schools and institutions, observers said.

The question of federal aid to Kentucky Baptist schools did not come up officially, except in several speeches.

In the closing address, the president of Ouachita Baptist University, Ralph A. Phelps, Jr., called for a re-examination of the implications of the traditional Baptist stand on separation of church and state. A college today cannot exist without taking federal money, Phelps said.

For the first time in the convention's history, a Negro Baptist pastor spoke on the program. He was Homer Netter of Lexington, Ky.

The convention's Christian Life Committee reported that a survey of the convention on racial integration policies revealed that all Baptist schools, hospitals and institutions in the state were integrated.

Negro students, most of them Americans rather than foreign students, attend all four of the Baptist colleges in Kentucky, and all three of the Baptist hospitals have integrated facilities. Two of the hospitals have Negro physicians on the staff.

The convention adopted a \$3.3 million budget, allocating 36.1 per cent to world mission causes through the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program. An additional \$150,000 was approved for capital needs.

Elected as new convention president was David A. Nelson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky.

An effort to change the convention's constitution to permit the convention president to serve two one-year terms was defeated.

Messengers adopted a resolution commending Gov. Edward T. Breathitt for his leadership in opposing gambling in the state.

Outgoing convention president Frank Owen, in the opening presidential address, urged Baptists to reexamine their stands on the ecumenical movement, race relations, church-state separation, and fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible.

The Kentucky convention will meet next year in Bowling Green, Nov. 17-19, and in 1967 at Louisville, Nov. 8-10.

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Oklahoma Baptists Oppose
Gambling, Praise School

11-16-65

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma meeting here adopted a record \$3 million budget and dedicated four newly-expanded facilities, and adopted resolutions opposing race track gambling.

Four major speakers at the convention expressed strong confidence in the future of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, which is now without a president.

An effort to depart from the convention's 23-year tradition of electing a new president each year for a one-year term fizzled despite maneuvers from the floor.

The convention elected Richard T. Hopper, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ardmore, Okla., in a close vote over Jack Carroll, pastor from Seminole, Okla., who was nominated for re-election.

Opposition to reported efforts in Oklahoma to legalize pari-mutuel race track betting was expressed in two different statements adopted by the convention.

The opposition came in both a convention-adopted resolution and a recommendation from its Christian Life Committee of the board of directors.

A record \$3 million budget, an increase of \$140,000, was approved, allocating 57.5 per cent to Baptist work within the state and 42.5 per cent to support Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Expanded multi-million dollar facilities for four Baptist-owned buildings in the capital city were dedicated during the convention.

Dedicated were the new Oklahoma City Golden Age Homes, a new 200-bed addition doubling the size of Baptist Memorial Hospital, a two-floor addition to Doctor's Medical Building near the hospital, and the Baptist Memorial Hospital School of Nursing.

In the area of evangelism, the convention voted to strive for a goal of 18,000 baptisms (conversions), 29,000 church membership transferrals, a baptism ratio of one to 28, and 10 per cent of resident church members committed as soul winners.

During major convention speeches, four speakers expressed confidence in Oklahoma Baptist University and spoke of its future.

In the convention president's address, Carroll said the question facing Oklahoma Baptist University is not whether it will succeed or even survive, but what it is to become.

The chairman of the board of trustees at the Baptist school, Warren Hultgren, told the convention he was convinced of the basic honesty and integrity of the faculty and students.

Apparently in response to criticism from within convention ranks concerning alleged "liberalism" in teaching at the school, Hultgren said he had sat in classes and was sure "there is no satanic conspiracy to destroy the faith of our young people."

Two convention executives, E. W. Westmoreland and Augie Henry, praised the Baptist school in reports, and said the school needs better financial support in the future.

Henry, executive secretary of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma, said that Oklahoma Baptists must decide within the next five years if they are going to endow their institutions, accept grants from the federal government, or force the trustees to raise the tuition so high that the average student cannot afford to pay.

The 1966 convention was slated Nov. 8-10 at First Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla.

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Israel Baptists Priase
SBC Christian Life Group

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Israel Baptist Convention recently adopted a resolution commending the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention for its leadership in race relations, a letter from Isreal received here revealed.

Said a letter from Dwight L. Baker, chairman of the Baptist Convention in Isreal, to Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the SBC Christian Life Commission:

"The Isreal Baptist Convention expresses its appreciation to the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention for the outstanding manner in which it has stirred the conscience of Southern Baptists to the point that the convention overwhelmingly adopted a resolution that will assist toward solving some of our problems regarding friends of other races.

"We heartily identify ourselves with the constructive approach of the Christian Life Commission in its struggle for a greater positive response on the part of Southern Baptists in the area of civic and moral righteousness in America."

The Israel convention also commended an editorial in the "Christian Century" magazine concerning the SBC Christian Life Commission, saying the editorial was "recognition of the new spiritual maturity emerging in many areas of Southern Baptist life."

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Junior College Level
Affirmed, Prexy Quits

11-16-65

WALKERSVILLE, Md. (BP)--The president of a proposed new Baptist school here resigned after trustees of the embryonic Maryland Baptist College reaffirmed their original policy of beginning the school on a two-year level.

Conwell A. Anderson, president and former Alabama educator, had been attempting to lead the trustees in a senior college program.

Trustees accepted his resignation "with regret," and made it effective immediately although Anderson's salary will continue through Feb. 15, 1966.

The trustees reviewed the action of the Baptist Convention of Maryland, sponsoring body which approved a two-year college, considered financial limitations and decided the original policy had to be reaffirmed, said Dr. Melvin E. Lea, board chairman and a Frederick, Md., surgeon.

Plans to work toward expansion to a four-year college as soon as financially feasible were included in the policy decision, Dr. Lea said.

Anderson said after his resignation that he had explicitly told the board before he accepted the presidency he was interested only in a senior college.

"My selection followed this expression and I have assumed that the trustees concurred with my opinions and intended to establish this type of institution," he said.

Anderson added that he is not opposed to a junior college, but feels it is a distinct type of college requiring special curricula and staff and hence is not the first step toward a four-year institution.

He said his plans for the future are indefinite. "It is a difficult time of the year to get a position in higher education," he said.

Meanwhile, the school will continue its efforts to raise \$3 million within the next three to five years. Fund raising efforts will be led by John R. Cummins, director of development, the board chairman said.

Pledges and a legacy have been received totaling \$644,566 and oral pledges of \$775,000 have been indicated, bringing the total to \$1,419,566.

The school has already purchased a 100-acre site on the edge of Walkersville, Md.

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In other action, the trustees voted "to decline any gift, grant, or aid from any governmental agency," and to rely on voluntary financial support.

The school was scheduled to open in September of 1967, but Dr. Lea said the sad events of the week had probably delayed the opening.

Dr. Lea said the work of architects in designing a campus had been stopped and he had recommended that funds received in the finance campaign be allocated to debt retirement.

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Church Project Aids
Sick, Needy Hondurans

By Paul White
For The Baptist Press

LA LIMA, Honduras (BP)--Two Indian infants, fat and tanned, yelped with excitement as their parents dunked them again and again in the pig trough. It was bath time.

Their parents looked haggard. The man wore no shirt. The woman was bare-foot. Their home was one room in a faded gray shanty stretched along a back street in La Lima's market section.

It was Sunday, and the men were away from their jobs at the fruit mills and orchards. Fruit vendors and flies were everywhere.

The cantinas rang with a Latin version of American music. Teenagers sipped beer and Cokes, and wiggled to the ear-splitting music.

Youngsters stood outside the cantinas playing chase, throwing sticks.

This is semi-rural Honduras where the drinking water is highly dangerous, where sanitation is virtually non-existent, and where diseases that Americans put aside years ago still run rampant, killing many--especially the children.

To this came a Baptist-led group spreading over the highly-populated western region of Honduras to administer sorely-needed drugs and vaccines.

The unprecedented medical project to inoculate a half-million Hondurans is called "Amigos de Honduras," sponsored by the River Oaks Baptist Church of Houston, Tex.

More than 100 carefully-trained Christian young people, doctors, and a few ministers are spread among some 20 villages off the main roads of Honduras.

They administer drugs against poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, typhoid, whooping cough, tetanus, and oral drugs against intestinal germs.

No sermons are preached, except in the daily lives of the Christian young people as they talk to, and minister to the Honduran people. No churches or missions are being established. No doctrine is being promulgated.

The volunteers--about half of them Baptist, the rest Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, and Roman Catholic--live among the villagers they work to aid.

They seek to heal and help the Hondurans, to show them a better way of life, to inoculate them against diseases that kill and maim.

But their task to relieve death and misery by inoculation faces serious threats of under financing, lack of drug delivery from the U. S., and unpaved roads which work to destroy vital transportation.

In La Lima, the project headquarters town, one man carries the burden of the ten-week project's administration.

Guy Bevil Jr., minister of youth at the sponsoring River Oaks Baptist Church in Houston, leads the project. It was his brainchild; now it is his burden.

Boyish in appearance but serious in action, Bevil has almost forgotten the criticism and pessimism spoken by many, including Baptists, of his Honduras project. Bevil calls it expedient person-to-person aid, and "a mark of true Christianity."

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Bevil makes a daily trip with one of the supply vehicles into the project area. The ten-hour trip covers hundreds of miles over sand, slick, or washboard roads.

On one such trip, Bevil and a group carried containers of Salk polio vaccine to La Entrada in temperatures from 100 to 70, valley to mountaintop.

The old jeep ran hot most of the way that day. It stalled four times. Two students and a stowaway newsman pushed more than they rode.

Their most valuable auto accessory in Honduras is the horn. Some natives say that horns probably save more lives than medicines.

All the roads are winding, narrow, and are travelled by trucks whose Honduran drivers hurry along too fast to beat the afternoon rains. Tropical cloudbursts come within 20 minutes of 4:00 o'clock every day.

The only safe relief from the heat is a bottled soft drink. Water is not purified.

On one remote road, Bevil and the group saw a small gas station with only the name "Esso" out front. But inside there was a sign with the self-satisfied tiger, and you can guess what the caption said in Spanish.

Honduras is a paradox. It is the home of the rich and the poor, and a growing in-between class. Its soil is so fertile that when the peasant farmer chops down a tree, cuts off the top and drives it inverted into the ground again as a fence post, it springs back to life and becomes a tree again.

But the nation's problems remain overwhelming.

Honduras needs economic and social development, Villeda Morales, the former president of Honduras said about the new government which overthrew his regime in 1963.

The new administration, led by Gen. Lopez Arellano, knows this as does the United States. So does the Baptist-led American group.

They all agree that Honduras needs new roads, new schools, more health and sanitation programs, and political stability.

Honduras is 44,000 miles of mountain and green valley occupied by 2.2 million Spanish, Indians, Negro and white people living together in almost primitive conditions. About 69 per cent are rural villagers with ancient modes of work and life.

The literacy rate here is about 65 per cent. Health standards are low. Administrative skills are scarce. There are only about 200 miles of paved roads in the country.

Economic conditions began to show general improvement last year. The gross national product of \$462 million in 1964 was an increase of 6.4 per cent over the previous year; but an Honduran economic expert said that the real figure, adjusted for price increases, was only a little over 4 per cent.

The new Honduran government places health at the top of its list of immediate needs.

This was testified to by a Southern Baptist missionary to Honduras, Hoyt Roberts, who said that in the Gua Yara Valley area, more than 16,000 peasants live without any medical aid whatsoever.

Rivoberto Alvarado, a health minister, says almost half the children born here die before they reach 12 years. Some 70 per cent of deaths are preventable, he says.

Like a woman in childbirth, Honduras labors today to deliver itself as a strong, healthy society.

And a group of Christians led by Baptists sought this summer to help Honduras deliver "its child" without disease.