

February 7, 1949

Some Opposition Is More Wonderful Than Praise...
CHURCH UNION LEADERS LAMBASTE SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

CHICAGO--(BP)--Refusal of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to be party to a church union movement has led to a denunciation of SEC leaders by The Christian Evangelist, national weekly of the Disciples of Christ.

Reference was to a recent vote of the Foreign Missions ^{Conference} ~~Council~~ of North America, of which the SBC foreign mission agency is a member, declining affiliation with the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. "One of the determining elements" of the vote, said the editorial, "seemed to be the threat (of Dr. M. Theron Rankin, SBC foreign mission executive secretary) that if this merger were consummated this body (Southern Baptists) would withdraw its membership."

"It may well be questioned," the editor continued his bombast, "whether a communion (Southern Baptists) so consistently unwilling to cooperate in movements toward Protestant unity should be allowed, in the interest of unity of one agency, to halt the progress of the whole cooperative movement now seeking greater effectiveness in its organizational life.

"We can see that many delegates to the Foreign Missions Conference would hesitate to quench the least smoldering light of cooperation shown by this great communion which for generations has stood outside all unity movements throughout the South. It would be unfortunate if the veto, now so unpopular in international relations, should find a place in our interdenominational relations."

C. E. Bryant
Baptist Press
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Nothing New Under the Sun...
"FIFTY-FIFTY" IDEA WAS BASIS
OF ORIGINAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--They say there is never a new idea; merely adaptations of old ones.

Such seems to be true as regards the fifty-fifty division of money handled by Southern Baptist churches. Now -- in 1949 -- as gears are set for emphasis on the equal division of church income for local expense and mission and benevolent causes under the campaign slogan "Fifty-fifty by 1950," someone turns up with an October 1926 copy of Baptist Bulletin Service pleading for the same thing then.

The division of the Baptist dollar one-half to local expenses and one-half to missions and benevolences was recommended to the churches then (1926) by the Cooperative Program Commission, a group named by the Southern Baptist Convention to set up and promote the infant Cooperative Program prior to the formation of an Executive Committee.

"The Commission believes," said that 1926 Baptist bulletin folder, "that every Christian is under just as much obligation to help carry forward the work of the kingdom beyond the borders of his own community as he is to help pay the salary of his pastor, provide a house of worship and take care of the incidental expenses incident to the maintenance of a church building and worship.

"If the basis of distribution proposed in this suggestion were carried out -- one-half of what is given going to purely local expenses, such as pastor's salary, building fund, incidentals, etc., and the other half to the seven objects embraced in the Cooperative Program -- foreign missions, home missions, state missions, ministerial relief, the Baptist schools, orphanages, and hospitals -- and even a majority of the members of these churches were enlisted in giving regularly on this basis, according to their ability, Southern Baptists would be able to have far better houses of worship, pay their pastors larger salaries, and do ten times as much for missions, education and benevolences at home and around the world as we are doing today."

Noting this old bulletin, Dr. Duke K. McCall, executive secretary of the present Executive Committee, pointed out that equal division of money at home and abroad was a basic purpose of the Cooperative Program from its beginning. And, basis for "Fifty-fifty" dates back 2000 years to the teachings of Jesus who said "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

PASTOR ASKS DAY OF PRAYER
AT CONVENTION MEETING

FRANKFORT, Ky.--(BP)--The pastor of Frankfort's First Baptist Church has asked Dr. Robert G. Lee, president, and the program committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to "set aside one whole day at the meeting of the convention in Oklahoma City, May 18-22, for prayer, confession, and testimony."

The pastor, Rev. Dr. Fred T. Moffatt, made the letter available to editors of certain Southern Baptist publications.

"It thrills my soul," he wrote, "to visualize the thousands of messengers to the Oklahoma City convention pouring into the auditorium and leaving on the outside their newspapers, reports, oratory, wisdom, bickering, diplomacy, conversation, hilarity, achievements, real estate, strategy, jealousy, honors, impatience, prejudices, caucuses, ambitions, schemes, and plans, and falling on their knees before almighty God.

"Let us tell God and each other not how wonderful we are, but how sinful," his letter continued. "Not what we have done, but what we have left undone, Not where we have been but where we refuse to go. Not what we have given, but what we have held back. Not who we are, but what we might be if God had complete control.

"A day of prayer so spent," he concluded, "would be an investment for Southern Baptists that would pay spiritual dividends for time and for eternity."

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EXHIBIT SPACE
APPLICATIONS DUE

OKLAHOMA CITY--(BP)--Baptist institutions and agencies desiring space in the exhibit hall at the Southern Baptist Convention here May 18-22 should make application immediately to Mr. George Card, 127 Ninth Ave., North, Nashville, Tenn.

Space in the exhibit hall is available to "agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention and its related agencies," the latter phrase interpreted to include institutions of the various state conventions.

Mr. Card said that March 1 is the deadline for applications for space.

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