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**BEST Opens With
Federal Aid Plea**

NASHVILLE (BP)--The first Baptist Education Study Task (BEST) national conference opened here with a plea by a major speaker for Southern Baptists to accept federal grants and loans for their educational institutions.

Felix C. Robb, president of George Peabody College in Nashville and a Methodist layman, urged federal aid as a partial answer to the financial crisis facing Baptist schools.

In the opening conference address, Robb said it has been demonstrated that such aid "will not prostitute those institutions which refuse to sell themselves to the government."

"If Baptists really believe in Christian higher education, they must double, triple, and even quadruple financial support" to their schools, he declared.

Robb, who becomes director of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools with offices in Atlanta, effective July 1, outlined three alternatives facing Baptist higher education institutions:

(1) Broaden the base of participation and support for Baptist schools; (2) perpetuate the status quo, including whatever elements of mediocrity that might exist; or (3) consider the possibility of going out of business.

He urged Baptists to turn aside from divisive issues and concentrate instead on solving the problems of higher education.

Enough energy has been mis-spent on whether to allow dancing on a Baptist college campus to build two or three good institutions, he quipped.

He added that Baptists must quit bickering over the federal aid question. "You are going to miss providing a great educational service to the nation if you don't ride with the tides on this issue."

Baptists must also face honestly the issue of civil rights, he said.

Calling for full integration of all Baptist schools, Robb said it is sheer folly to buck the national trends toward integration.

He said Baptists must also demonstrate that there is no conflict between academic excellence and scholarship, and Baptist doctrinal beliefs.

Suggesting specific ways for Baptist schools to improve, Robb said the 54 Baptist colleges and universities in the nation should have both diversity and individuality.

He urged some schools to develop great faculties in specific fields, such as biology and mathematics, and cease to compete with each other. He suggested that Baptists should build only two or three really great universities that would compete with other top educational institutions in the nation.

Robb praised Southern Baptists for sponsoring the Baptist Education Study Task, slated to end in the summer of 1967, in an effort to honestly and forthrightly deal with the problems facing Baptist higher education programs.

Southern Baptists own and operate a total of 73 educational institutions, including 54 colleges and universities. Most of them are controlled by separate boards of trustees and are owned by state Baptist conventions. The SBC itself owns only theological seminaries.

Baptists Face Crises In Freedom, Speaker Says

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists were warned here to get ready for crises on their college campuses similar to the "God is dead" controversy at Emory University in Atlanta, and to the obscene speech movement at the University of California in Berkeley.

In a major address to the national study conference of the Baptist Education Study Task, Manning Patillo of the Danforth Foundation in St. Louis, Mo., urged Baptist colleges to develop guidelines for handling such crises in an effort to assure maintenance of freedom.

Calling it one of "the more urgent problems facing Baptist higher education today," Patillo said that something has gone wrong when a movement in obscene language can be launched and taken seriously in a great university.

He predicted that Baptist colleges will deal acutely with the problem of campus freedom in two ways: (1) the questioning of church authority and teaching on the part of faculty members, and (2) student protests against institutional authority and discipline.

Patillo based his predictions and six specific suggestions for the future development of Christian higher education on his experience in leading for the Danforth Foundation a three-year depth study of higher education programs of 800 colleges and universities sponsored by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups.

Patillo said that Emory University, a Methodist institution, faced a real crisis because alumni, supporters, and parents could not understand why the school permits a professor of religion, Thomas J. Altizer, to assert that God is dead.

"Today it is Emory's problem," he said. "Tomorrow it will be yours."

Patillo asserted that it is clear that colleges and universities are not going to be able to enforce traditional standards of student behavior, saying the pressures from students are already "irresistible."

As a partial solution, Patillo suggested that Baptist colleges and universities prepare ahead of time a set of principles which will guide the school's actions in emergencies involving faculty and student freedom.

He also urged Baptist state conventions to have more confidence in the school's board of trustees and administration, to handle such controversies with "charity and understanding," and to "argue them out within the Christian fellowship, not noisily in public speeches and newspapers."

Both Patillo and Sharvey G. Umbeck, two major speakers during the same session, steered clear of a Southern Baptist discussion on whether federal grants and loans should be accepted by Baptist colleges.

Umbeck, president of Knox College in Galesburg, Ill., devoted most of his address on financing Christian higher education to urging sound management practices and a continuous development and fund-raising program at the 54 Baptist colleges.

"Almost all of us pay lip service to the concept that it costs money to raise money, but too few of us put our money where our mouth is," Umbeck said.

Umbeck urged Baptists to develop (1) a clear statement of purpose for their schools, (2) a philosophy of finance, (3) long range planning programs, and (4) effective management of all areas of the institutions.

Patillo had six specific suggestions for Baptist college improvement: re-examination of the organization and administration of the schools, better provision for institutional planning, better guidelines for maintenance of freedom, revitalization of the tradition of liberal education, greater attention to personal qualities associated with education, and more cooperative activity with other educational programs.

Romania Revokes Visas For Baptist Officials

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Romanian Government has revoked without explanation the visas of two Baptist World Alliance officials who planned to visit that East European country later this month.

Josef Nordenhaug, general secretary of the Alliance, said that entrance visas granted to him and Ronald Goulding of London, associate secretary of the Alliance, had been annulled.

No word was available on the Romanian government's disposition of a visa application for a third member of the Baptist party, William R. Tolbert, Jr. of Monrovia, Liberia, president of the Baptist World Alliance.

Tolbert, an ordained Baptist minister, is vice president of the Republic of Liberia.

The three Baptist officials had planned to fly to Bucharest on June 25 to bring to an estimated 85,510 Romanian Baptists the greetings of the world's other 23.5 million Baptists in the Alliance.

Romanian Baptist representatives last attended a Baptist world meeting in 1947, when the Baptist World Congress met in Copenhagen.

Nordenhaug said that visas for Goulding and himself were granted on April 30 and April 26 respectively.

He was notified on Monday, June 13, by the embassy's second secretary, Miron Sava, that the visas had been annulled without explanation.

The application for a visa for Tolbert, third member of the BWA official tour group, was pending with the Romanian embassy in Washington.

Nordenhaug had planned to leave Washington June 15 for Europe, stopping for Baptist union meetings in Sweden and Norway before going on to Bucharest.

Goulding, who directs the Alliance's office in London, and Tolbert were to meet him in Budapest, Hungary, preparatory to their June 25 flight to Bucharest.

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BEST Conference Debates Federal Aid to Baptists

NASHVILLE (BP)--About 200 Southern Baptists debated for more than two hours here the question of federal aid to Baptist colleges, but no firm conclusions were reached.

The occasion was an informal discussion during the Baptist Education Study Task (BEST) national study conference in Nashville.

The discussion served as a prelude to 22 small group conferences seeking to determine optional solutions for problems facing Baptist schools, and offered an opportunity for the conference participants to express their opinions to the entire group.

Five lead-off speakers started the debate, with the executive secretary for North Carolina Baptists, W. Perry Crouch of Raleigh, calling for Baptists to find "ways to cooperate with our federal and state governments in their attempt to meet a crisis in educating several million young people."

Crouch said he did not believe Baptists could secure sufficient financial support from the state Baptist conventions to meet the financial needs of their institutions. "The seven Baptist schools in North Carolina are talking about \$100 million in immediate needs, and we just can't provide that kind of money," he said.

Citing a tremendous communication problem, Crouch said that the average Baptist church member simply does not realize the crucial problems being thrust upon Baptist schools.

Another opening speaker, Baptist historian Davis C. Woolley of Nashville, suggested that Baptists may be at the point at history today that they can no longer compete with tax-supported institutions on the college level.

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Woolley, head of the denomination's Historical Commission, compared the current scene to the situation 50 years ago when Baptists gradually decided to drop operation of elementary and high school-level academies rather than compete with public school programs.

He described trends towards establishment of tuition-free junior colleges throughout the nation, asking if Baptists could attempt to compete with such schools.

Another opening speaker, Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., read a satirical letter from a "friend" pointing out humorous inconsistencies in Baptist practice regarding separation of church and state.

The letter cited as examples such things as tax exemptions for church property, income tax deductions for church contributions, free government services to church groups, paved roads to church buildings, salaries for chaplains, gifts of government land and closed-out military bases to Baptist schools, etc.

In the debate that followed, Robert Alley of Richmond, Va., called the satirical letter "a mockery to a sacred principle," and said he was deeply offended by the letter.

"I need not catalogue for this group tonight the lives of Baptist martyrs who have shed their blood for absolute separation of church and state."

"I beg you not to mock it (church-state separation) and to sell your birthright for a mess of pottage," pleaded Alley, professor at the University of Richmond, a Baptist school.

Another conference participant, however, rose to the defense of Cooper's approach, saying it was a word picture and was a legitimate approach to stimulate discussion.

H. J. Flanders, a Baptist pastor in Waco, Tex., argued that there had never been absolute separation of church and state.

Flanders compared church and state to two parallel lines. "Sometimes the government and church have joined hands across these lines to cooperate in performing a task of interest and concern to each. I see no reason why we cannot join hands and work together without jeopardizing the autonomy of either (church or state)."

Conference participants from North Carolina were especially vocal in the discussion on whether federal control accompanies federal aid.

Crouch, in his opening remarks, said he did not believe "the federal government is seeking to control our church colleges. I believe," he said, "they are asking us to help them meet a crisis (in education)."

A North Carolina attorney and a public school superintendent from Georgia, however, said that Baptist schools would be forced to sign an assurance of compliance to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, pledging to conform with present and future laws.

Miss Lois Edinger of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, countered that the guidelines involved in civil rights compliance deal with a moral issue that Baptists should long ago have settled.

"Those guidelines were set up, not to control the schools, but to correct an unjust situation that has existed for years," she said.

The editor of the Religious Herald, state Baptist newspaper in Virginia, said it would be immoral to ask the government to give Baptist schools money and not expect control of the taxpayers' money.

Reuben Alley of Richmond opposed federal aid, saying he did not want to contribute to the government's committing an immoral act.

Alley said that if Baptist schools were not different and distinctive from schools that get government funds, then they don't deserve one nickle of Baptist support.

Frank Baugh, pastor in Oklahoma City, flatly declared opposition to federal funds for Baptist schools, saying that Baptists in Oklahoma could rise to the challenge and support their school if they are really convinced of the need to preserve church-state separation.

The president of the Oklahoma convention, Richard T. Hooper of Ardmore, advocated a special month-long emphasis on Christian education in Baptist churches throughout the nation and suggested that a special offering be started for education similar to offerings for foreign and home missions.

Hooper's son, David, who is president of the student body at Oklahoma Baptist University, said that we are living in a great society today, and to turn down federal aid would mean "you are going to have to turn back a huge tidal wave."

The president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Franklin Owen of Lexington, observed that it boils down to a question of "how far separated you want church and state to be."

Owen said he wasn't quite sure he was ready to accept federal grants for Baptist schools, but was ready to accept loans. "I am afraid to consider the consequences if we do not consider accepting grants and loans," he added.

Following the big group discussion on federal aid, the conference split into 22 different small groups to bring reports and optional solutions on seven different specific areas of concern to Baptist education programs, not just the federal aid question.

A second national study conference as part of BEST will be held in Nashville in June of 1967, with a special 18-member findings committee charged with summarizing the results of the study, to be made available to college trustees and Baptist state conventions which are grappling with the problems on a state-wide level.

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Texas Baptists Name
Brown Elder Statesman

INDEPENDENCE, Tex. (BP)--A retired Texas Baptist pastor and former student worker, Robert L. Brown of College Station, Tex., received recently the Texas Baptist Elder Statesman award at the old Independence Baptist Church here.

Brown served for 30 years as pastor of the First Baptist Church of College Station, and as director of the Baptist Student Union at Texas Agricultural and Mechanical (A&M) College. Independence is located near College Station, Tex.

After retirement, he was pastor of the Independence Baptist Church for one year. The historic old church was the birthplace of Baylor University, now the largest Baptist university in the world.

The award was presented by R. A. Springer, treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Texas which sponsors the award jointly with the Independence Baptist Association.

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