



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2393
DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAU

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203
Telephone (615) 254-1631

Cuba Gives Caudill
Conditional Release

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist Missionary Herbert Caudill has been granted a conditional release from a Cuba prison, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has learned.

Gerald Palmer, the board's director of language missions, said he talked to Caudill by telephone after receiving unverified reports of his release.

The conditional release gives Caudill, 63, freedom to move about in Havana to seek medical attention for failing eyesight.

On the phone, Caudill sounded in good spirits and said he could see, Palmer said. Caudill also said his son-in-law, David Fite, 32, appeared in better health since an undisclosed illness reported earlier.

Caudill and Fite were imprisoned in April 1965 after being convicted on charges of illegal currency exchange. Caudill was sentenced to 10 years, Fite to six. Thirty-five Cuban Baptist leaders also were imprisoned.

Caudill had received treatment in a government hospital and in a clinic before he was granted the conditional release to seek help on his own. He told Palmer doctors ordered him to rest.

"We're greatly encouraged by this news," Arthur Rutledge, executive secretary of the Home Mission Board, said.

"We're not in position to evaluate the significance of this development but we trust that this will be the means for preserving Caudill's vision."

Rutledge called for Baptists to continue to pray that the conditional release eventually will lead to the release of both Caudill and Fite.

Caudill is blind in one eye due to a detached retina, and there is a possibility the other eye is suffering from a similar complication.

Unconfirmed reports more than a month ago indicated Caudill was experiencing further complications with his eyesight.

Caudill is a native of Clinchport, Va., Fite was born in Fort Worth, Tex. Both, however, spent most of their ministry in the U.S. in Georgia, and both were educated at Mercer University (Baptist) in Macon, Ga.

Caudill was pastor of a field of churches in the Middle Baptist Association in Newington, Ga. Fite has been pastor of churches in Georgia and North Carolina.

-30-

NOTE TO STATE BAPTIST PAPER EDITORS: Watch for future developments on this story within the next few days. A follow-up story might develop before your next deadline.

--Baptist Press

#

College Deanship
Goes To Professor

11/28/66

BELTON, Tex. (BP)--Leroy Kemp, a member of the religion department faculty at Mary Hardin-Baylor College since 1964, has been named dean of admissions at the Baptist school here.

The newly-established admissions division will be a part of the administrative staff with responsibilities for the registrar's office, the student enlistment program, and student loans and scholarships.

Kemp is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex., where he earned the bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees.

-30-

November 28, 1966

NEWS ANALYSIS

State Conventions Grapple With Federal Aid Question

By Jim Newton
Baptist Press Staff Writer

Southern Baptists, on the state-wide level where basic decisions are made, leaned strongly away from federal aid to their institutions, if the actions of numerous state Baptist conventions meeting in November are a true indication.

Six Baptist state conventions adopted policy statements on the federal aid question, and all six unanimously rejected government grants for Baptist institutions.

On federal loans, however, there was no unanimity.

Three conventions adopted policy statements approving federal loans, one re-opened the door for its institutions' trustees to consider federal loans, and four conventions staunchly rejected federal loans.

How can these actions be interpreted? Why were the actions taken? What will be the long-range effects of the actions?

In six states, lengthly reports outlining comprehensive policies on federal aid were presented by study committees which have dug deep into the matter for the past year.

All six, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Florida, Arizona and Mississippi, saw acceptance of federal grants as a violation of separation of church and state.

The question of federal loans is even more complex on a state-by-state analysis. The study committees in Texas and Mississippi, and the Executive Committee of the Georgia convention, each recommended that, with certain restrictions and qualifications, federal loans be accepted; but the conventions overturned the committee recommendations and flatly rejected even government loans.

The Arizona convention approved a committee report instructing its institutions to reject all types of government funds "except for services rendered."

In stark contrast to these actions, the Arkansas, Louisiana, and Florida conventions approved without major debate their committee recommendations approving of federal loans, provided the trustees of the institutions saw no problems of government control.

The Kentucky convention, which in a special called session on June 27 had denied federal loans, reversed its earlier decision by approving a motion that gives the trustees the authority to decide on the matter. The motion was made by Georgetown College President Robert Mills who said his school would consider federal loans if the motion was approved, reaffirming a 1949 policy which leaves such matters up to the trustees.

The Arkansas Convention also voted to relinquish ownership of the Arkansas Baptist Meidcal Center in Little Rock to a private association so that the hospital could accept federal grants. In a somewhat similar action, Missouri Baptists recognized "the independent status" of Missouri Baptist Hospital in St. Louis, which technically is not a convention-owned institution but its trustees had been approved (but not elected) by the convention.

Although no policy statements were adopted, the California convention reaffirmed opposition to the acceptance of tax money to support any Southern Baptist institution, and Virginia Baptists commended their institutions for "continued refusal to accept federal or state subsidies."

New Mexico and Michigan conventions, neither of which operate or own institutions, adopted resolutions reaffirming belief in separation of church and state, and opposing use of federal funds in general by religious institutions.

The South Carolina Convention, which is in the midst of a two-year committee study on the issue, did not take any official action on federal aid, although it was announced that the committee would bring its recommendations to the 1967 convention. The Florida and Arkansas conventions are also continuing their studies.

In order to understand the actions of the conventions, the underlying and primary reasons for the actions must be taken into consideration.

In almost all of the state conventions, there seemed to be a ground-swell of public opinion among the rank and file of Baptists, who ultimately control the policies, against accepting any type of federal aid which might violate the principle of separation of church and state.

The problem is in the difference of interpretation concerning what types of aid are violations of that principle and what types are not violations.

Some observers believe that the church-state actions were prompted by a sincere desire to adhere to the constitutional principle.

Others, however, believe that opposition to federal aid stems from an anti-government, anti-L.B.J. backlash, and that many Baptists who oppose federal aid do so because they oppose the government's program, which now offers more than 300 different programs of aid to public and church-related institutions.

Some fear the government will seek to control the schools and hospitals if they accept federal aid. They acknowledge the fact that the government already controls them to a certain extent, but fear more rigid controls in the future if aid is accepted.

Such was the case in the Mississippi convention, which voted 604-380 to reject its committee recommendations in favor of a vaguely worded statement which suggested that its institutions "not make application for or accept federal money."

One Mississippi convention messenger commented to a visitor that the debate was all on the high and lofty level of the principle of church-state separation, but that everybody knew deep down under the surface was the fear that Mississippi Baptist schools would have to integrate if they accepted federal funds. Only one Mississippi school has signed the Civil Rights compliance regulations, while three others have refused to sign.

Although the race issue seemed to be a factor in the Mississippi decision, it did not seem to be as prevalent in the other states which dealt with the federal aid question. Almost all of the Baptist schools in the other states have signed the Civil Rights Act compliance requirement, and most of them are already integrated.

Another factor in the actions mentioned by observers is the general conservatism among Baptists, and a reluctance to accept change. Many Baptists believe that the denomination has always stood for complete separation of church and state, and they do not want to change this stance.

What conclusions can be drawn from the actions of the conventions, and what will be the long-range effects?

First, the problem is far from being solved, even though six conventions have spelled out their policies on the federal aid issue.

Continued discussion can be expected on the question in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Alabama, which didn't deal with the thorny problem at all this year.

Kentucky and Mississippi may find difficulties in interpreting the action of their conventions, as to the specific meaning on what types of federal aid can and cannot be accepted.

Second, the states which denied all types of federal aid to their institutions will continue to hear from their trustees and administrators groans and pleas for more financial support to fill in the gap caused by denial of federal funds.

This raises the question of whether Baptists, in ground-swell opposition to federal aid, will respond with a ground-swell of financial support for their institutions. Bluntly stated: will they put their money where their mouth is?

Actions similar to the vote in Kentucky last June to allocate \$300,000 a year to their schools to take the place of federal loans denied, and the vote of the South Carolina convention a year ago to raise \$611,898 to replace a federal grant denied to Furman, may face other conventions in the future. So far, South Carolina has raised only about \$280,000 of its goal, and is allocating \$150,000 a year in its budget to replace this money.

Third, the institutions without federal aid will find it increasingly difficult to compete with other institutions which receive it. This faces both the schools and the hospitals alike, and the problem for both will be acute.

Regardless of whether federal aid is accepted or rejected, the institutions will be directly affected by the federal aid that goes to competing institutions. The quality of services offered by institutions which accept federal aid is sure to increase, and standards will be raised even for those institutions which do not accept federal funds.

Fourth, the conventions face anew the question of determining what kind of institutions they will own and operate in a new day in which federal money is offered so lavishly.

The purposes and objectives of the institutions should be defined, although only one convention, Louisiana, specifically asked its trustees to do this. Whether this will be done in other states remains to be seen. Perhaps the current Baptist Education Study Task, (BEST) of the SBC will help answer this question in 1967.

Fifth, a precedent has been set in the Arkansas action which other convention may follow in deciding to release ownership of their institutions so they can accept federal aid without feeling that the convention has compromised a principle. This action could not be called a trend, but it is a precedent.

Sixth, the question of the degree of control conventions should exert over their institutions has been raised. In some cases, such as Louisiana and Kentucky, the conventions said the control of policies should be invested in the trustees. In other states, the conventions set the policies for the trustees.

Some educators fear that a problem of accreditation may be raised in states where actual operating policies are determined by convention messengers, rather than by the trustees. And if a school loses its accreditation, the problem of competing with other institutions is even more acute.

Seventh, the problem of communication between the institutions' leaders, who see the daily terror of increasing financial burdens, and the rank-and-file Baptists, who fear any federal aid would violate a sacred principle, is getting little better.

Each group sincerely wants to communicate its concepts and ideas to the other, yet the problem of communication is still there.

The questions, and the problems, will be a long time in finding answers and solutions, if the actions of the state conventions in November are a true indication.

-30-

Jim Newton is assistant director of the Baptist Press, the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, which carried detailed reports on each of the 29 state Baptist conventions meeting this year.

#