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Editorials Differ On Social Action Trends Within SBC

By the Baptist Press

Did the Southern Baptist Convention in Miami Beach turn a corner and start a new trend toward more involvement in social action ministries whereby churches become involved in changing the world?

Editorials in more than a dozen Baptist state papers gave differing viewpoints, but most seemed to agree that the convention charted a middle-of-the-road course which emphasized both a new awareness of social needs along with the traditional emphasis on missions and evangelism.

The editorials also generally agreed that the 1967 convention was void of any really controversial issues, and that it was a "good" convention.

An editorial in the biggest of the 29 Baptist state papers, the *Baptist Standard of Texas*, predicted that the "convention may be ready to break out of historic confines."

"The messengers were ready to take a fresh look at proposals which in other years would have been shouted down as radical," said the *Baptist Standard* editorial.

Editorials in Baptist state papers in such states as Indiana, Florida, and District of Columbia, Illinois and California observed that the emphasis on "social action" in the convention speeches was significant.

But editorials in the Mississippi, Colorado, and Ohio papers countered that the convention was not a turning point in the denomination towards more social action.

"It is possible that this convention was a turning point," said the *Baptist Record of Mississippi*, "but if it was that, it was turning back to the old gospel emphasis and away from the trends toward social action, which some Southern Baptists would have us take."

"Southern Baptists are not turning from their major emphasis, but simply are hearing calls for better implementation of it," said the *Mississippi paper*.

The *Colorado Rocky Mountain Baptist* saw the "present day so-called 'social action' emphasis as nothing more or less than the 'social gospel' fostered by religionists of a generation ago."

The *District of Columbia Capital Baptist*, however, disagreed. "There will be those who will cry, 'social gospel,'" said the editorial. Let them cry. The world is moving too fast to even sit down and debate with these. Southern Baptists put their hand to the plow--there can be no turning back."

The *Capital Baptist* said that Southern Baptists discovered in this convention that there is a world in need. "It was at this convention that we began to spell it out in the daily issues of life, poverty, birth control, war, peace, etc."

The great majority of the editorials, however, said the convention took a middle-of-the-road interpretation of the significance of the social action emphases in convention messages.

The *Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Maryland, California, and Indiana papers*, for example, each said there was a good balance between an emphasis on the church's involvement in meeting world needs, and on evangelism and missions.

"Baptists are coupling a growing social awareness to their strong evangelistic emphasis," said the *California Southern Baptist*.

"Southern Baptists may yet demonstrate that the relationship between social responsibility and evangelistic activity is not an 'either-or' but a 'both-and'....There is no evidence at all that Baptists will lessen their emphasis on evangelism but there is a good reason to believe they will be taking more interest in society," said the *California paper*.

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The North Carolina Biblical Recorder went a step further, saying that social action and evangelism are not only compatible, but that this approach should receive "a stronger emphasis in SBC life in the crucial years ahead."

The Missouri Word and Way added, however, that the discussion of social issues did not mean that Southern Baptists are changing their minds in regard to the importance of, or priority of, a personal salvation.

Stating that the words "involvement" and "change" was the recurring "high tide" of the convention, the Illinois Baptist observed that "Whether the new vocabulary is a tide that will surely win, or a mere wave that breaks in failure, is yet to be seen."

Most of the editorials agreed that missions and evangelism seemed to be given a continued strong emphasis at the convention. This is where the emphasis ought to be, observed the Ohio Baptist Messenger.

The most highly-publicized issue to crop up during the convention, the war in Vietnam and world peace, drew much less comment in the Baptist state papers than the issue of social action.

Most of the editorials commenting on the actions by the convention adopting a resolution on Vietnam and receiving a carefully-worded "peace" statement from the SBC Christian Life Commission observed that the convention was "hawkish" rather than "dovish" in its stand.

"What started out as a statement on 'peace' almost became a 'declaration of war,'" said an editorial in the Indiana Baptist, which observed that the "convention wanted victory and not withdrawal in Vietnam."

Added the Georgia Christian Index: "The 'hawks' were in the decided majority. It is obvious that Southern Baptists, individually and collectively, back the U.S. policy in Southeast Asia..."

An editorial in the Colorado Rocky Mountain Baptist took issue with the Christian Life Commission's statement on the Vietnam war, and chided the commission for inviting Oregon Sen. Mark Hatfield, classed as a 'dove', to speak following their report. "Nothing should be done," said the editorial, "to cause the least doubt, on the part of our men in Vietnam, as to our complete support of their every effort."

On another major convention issue, the ecumenical movement, the editorials generally observed that Southern Baptists are not ready to join any effort toward organic union of denominations, but there seemed to be, in the words of the Florida Baptist Witness, "very definitely a lessening of Baptist exclusiveness."

The California Southern Baptist called the speeches on the ecumenical movement "a remarkable shift in outlook...among Southern Baptists."

The convention referred to its Executive Committee a proposal that the SBC study the possibility of cooperation with other evangelical groups with particular reference to "witness and evangelism."

The Colorado Rocky Mountain Baptist didn't like the proposal, saying the ecumenical crowd does not emphasize the Bible as Baptists do. The District of Columbia Capital Baptist, however, charged that the proposal would move Southern Baptists closer to the smaller sects and farther away from the main stream of Protestantism.

"This though is about as outdated in the minds of young people of today's world as the horse and buggy," said the Capital Baptist.

On still another issue, most of the editorials agreed that the proposal to re-apportion membership of 15 SBC commissions and institutional boards by rotating representation among smaller states in the SBC would probably come up again, despite its defeat by the 1967 convention.

The Georgia Christian Index said the convention probably made a mistake in not accepting the proposal, while the Colorado paper said that the convention made the right decision.

Other editorial comments chided the convention messengers for not staying through the closing sessions, called for more time for miscellaneous business sessions, urged re-scheduling of the Pastors' Conference and auxiliary meetings and a general re-thinking of the convention schedule.

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Said the South Carolina Baptist Courier in summary: "The proper adjectives to describe the just-completed Southern Baptist Convention are 'good, harmonious, successful, routine, but uneventful, unimaginative and only moderately inspiring.'"

"Good but not great," echoed the Mississippi Baptist Record. "Overall, it gave one the feeling that our convention is growing up and reaching a greater measure of maturity," said the Alabama Baptist.

The majority of the editorials in other state Baptist papers seemed to agree.

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First Youth Rehabilitation ~~529~~ 529
Consultant Named By Board

6/9/67

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has appointed its first field consultant in juvenile rehabilitation work.

Travis B. Lipscomb of Fresno, Calif., will assist Baptist state conventions and associations in the Western United States on establishing, developing and implementing juvenile rehabilitation ministries.

Wilbert H. Goatley of Eminence, Ky., also was appointed at the Home Mission Board's June board of directors' meeting.

Goatley has been pastor of First Baptist Church in Eminence and temporary center director at the Baptist Fellowship Center in Louisville. With this appointment by the Home Mission Board's department of work with National Baptists, he will serve full time at the center.

Lipscomb has been director of juvenile rehabilitation work in Fresno for the past six years and a student missionary under the Home Mission Board.

"Lipscomb's enlarged assignment will greatly strengthen the Home Mission Board's ministry in the area of juvenile rehabilitation," said Paul R. Adkins, secretary of the department of Christian Social Ministries.

The Franklin, Tex., native is a graduate of Baylor University (Baptist) in Waco, Tex., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He also has his master of social work degree from Fresno State College.

Goatley is a Louisville native and a graduate of the University of Louisville and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Previous to his pastorate in Eminence, he was an instructor at Simmons University in Louisville.

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Church Schools Receive ~~529~~ 530
Science Equipment Funds

6/9/67

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Fourteen church-related schools are among 53 colleges and universities to receive grants totaling \$462,600 to purchase scientific equipment needed for undergraduate instruction, according to announcement by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

The grants are in addition to 493 awards totaling almost \$4 million that were announced earlier this spring.

Of the 14 church-related schools, there are five Roman Catholic, four Presbyterian and one each Friends, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed and Reorganized Latter Day Saints.

The institutions receiving grants must match the funds by providing at least 50 per cent of the equipment costs.

This is one of several NSF programs designed to help colleges and universities train scientists and engineers. Under the program, now in its sixth year, grants totaling more than \$40 million have assisted more than 1,000 institutions.

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Allison Resigns Mission
Agency Evangelism Post

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here have accepted the resignation of B. Gray Allison, an associate director in the division of evangelism.

Effective July 15, the resignation stated that Allison plans to give full time to conducting revivals, conferences and other work related to evangelism.

Allison came to the Home Mission Board in November, 1965, from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where he was a professor of evangelism.

C. E. Autrey, director of the evangelism division, said Allison has done an outstanding job in encouraging evangelism within the academic community. He was assigned to work with faculty, administration and pastors serving college and university campuses.

A native of Ida, La., he graduated from Louisiana Polytechnic Institute in Ruston, and New Orleans Seminary earning the doctor of theology degree.

He was pastor of churches in Louisiana before starting a teaching career in 1954 at the New Orleans seminary. He later was a general evangelist, conducting revivals for Baptist churches.

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Church Schools Get Funds
For Training Institutes

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Nine church-related schools are among 39 institutions receiving grants totaling \$361,650 to provide In-Service Institutes for secondary school science and mathematics teachers, according to announcement by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

These grants, which provide training opportunities for 1,457 secondary school teachers, are in addition to 230 awards made earlier this spring. The 1967-68 In-Service Institutes program now includes approximately 13,000 teachers.

Of the nine church-related schools to receive the new grants, there are five Roman Catholic, two Presbyterian and one each Evangelical United Brethren and Free Methodist.

The In-Service Institute program is designed to help teachers obtain additional knowledge of science and mathematics and become acquainted with new materials to improve course content.

According to Walter H. Dood of NSF, the program is sponsored in recognition of the need to provide opportunities for teachers to improve their scientific knowledge while continuing regular classroom duties. In many cases teachers can obtain credit toward a higher degree.

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Church Newspaper Editor
Named To College Post

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SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--A Baptist layman who edits news for 350 church newspapers, Robert L. Lynn of Fort Worth, has been named assistant to the president of Oklahoma Baptist University here, President Grady C. Cothen has announced.

Lynn, managing editor of All-Church Press of Fort Worth, will assume duties as Cothen's administrative assistant July 1, and be responsible for non-academic affairs of the university.

The position of assistant to the president has not been filled since Evans T. Moseley was promoted to vice president, June 1, 1965.

Lynn is a 1953 graduate of the school. He has the master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the master of science degree in journalism from Columbia University.

He has been with the editorial department of the All-Church Press, Inc., since 1953 and managing editor since 1956. His duties include the direction of the editing of 350 All-Church Press newspapers.

Lynn, 35, is a deacon at Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth, and former associational Brotherhood president. He is a native of Duncan, Okla.

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Baptist Medical Schools
Get Improvement Grants

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Three Baptist medical schools are among 170 schools and colleges receiving grants totaling \$30 million to improve the quality of medical education, according to announcement by the Public Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).

The Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, N.C., will receive \$129,959. The Baylor University School of Dentistry, Dallas, will get \$206,406 and the Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, will receive \$185,383.

Eighteen other church-related schools will get grants totaling \$3,103,729. Of the 18, there are 12 Roman Catholic schools, three Methodist, two Seventh Day Adventist and one Jewish.

According to Leonard D. Fenninger, M.D., director of the Bureau of Health Manpower of the Public Health Service, the funds are titled basic improvement grants and are for the purpose of improving the quality of medical, dental, optometric, and podiatric education.

Allowable grant expenditures include salaries of professional and supportive staff, associated fringe benefits, purchase of supplies and equipment and allowable costs of minor alterations and renovations.

The guidelines specify that the grants may not be used for the operation of teaching hospitals, patient care, financial assistance to students, research, research training, or capital construction.

Spokesmen for both the Baptist schools said that the major purpose of the grants is to enable the medical and dental schools to turn out more graduates to meet a critical shortage of medical personnel.

"The government has practically declared a national crisis on the lack of manpower in the medical fields, and the board of trustees for Baylor in Dallas approved accepting this grant on a service contract basis to provide more graduates to meet critical needs," said Boone Powell of Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Powell said one-third of the graduating dental school class will go into some type of government, military or public health service.

A spokesman for Bowman Gray School of Medicine added that they were accepting the grants for the second year in order to increase their enrollment to provide more health manpower to meet the critical needs across the nation and world.

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Catholic Editorial Urges
"Talks" With Southern Baptists

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NASHVILLE (BP)--An editorial in The Tennessee Register, official newspaper of the Roman Catholic diocese of Nashville, commended the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Miami Beach and urged Catholics not to remain aloof from Baptists but to talk with them.

The editorial, written by J. E. Eiselein, commended the election of two Tennesseans, H. Franklin Paschall of Nashville and Gerald Martin of Memphis, to top SBC positions, and also commended a speech by New Orleans Pastor J. D. Grey who urged Baptists to be more involved with other Christians on a local level.

"We, as Catholics, as 'other Christians and men of good will,' cannot remain aloof," replied the Catholic editorial in response to Grey's quotes. "We must see that ecumenism is a two-way street," the Catholic editorial said.

"As Catholics we see in the Baptists, our brothers, that they, too, have 'hawks' and 'doves' as we do. There is no easy answer to Vietnam, the Middle East, peace in the world," the editorial continued.

"So we must talk with them, meet with them, relate the words of our leader, Pope Paul, in his repeated pleas for peace," Eiselein said. "The pope's pleas become more and more specific regarding North and South Vietnam."

"It is not just a question," wrote Eiselein, "of 'hawks' and 'doves' among the Baptists any more than it is among Catholics. It is the matter of Christians concerning themselves, as Dr. Paschall proclaimed, '...the church must concern itself with all the problems of modern man, whether they be personal or social.'"

Then the editorial asked: "Is there a day near at hand that more and more Catholics and Baptists will be kneeling, standing, sitting, singing, praying side by side for peace in God's world?"

"These are exciting, challenging times for us all," the editorial concluded.