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August 3, 1967 672

B.W.A. Urges Baptist Work
 For Peace, Racial Justice

854

By C. E. Bryant

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance closed its annual meeting here with an "appeal to our people in every nation" to work for world peace, racial justice, relief of suffering, and freedom to preach the gospel everywhere.

The Alliance is a voluntary and fraternal association of 81 Baptist conventions and unions around the world. Membership of the groups affiliated with the alliance include about 26,000,000 of the world's 28,000,000 Baptists scattered over 124 countries.

About 120 denominational leaders from 27 nations were present for the four-day meeting in Nashville, with the Sunday School Board and the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention serving as hosts. W. R. Tolbert, vice president of the Republic of Liberia and president of the B.W.A., presided over the sessions.

The Baptist leaders heard and approved a long array of reports. They discussed threats to religious freedom in Rumania and Spain. They learned of Baptist outreach to meet the needs of refugees and other distressed persons. They discussed plans for cooperative advancement of Christian work through evangelism and missions, Bible study and membership training, and the expression of Baptist doctrine.

They also laid plans for a Baptist Youth World Conference at Berne, Switzerland, July 22-28, 1968, and a Baptist World Congress in Tokyo, Japan, July 12-18, 1970.

Three new Baptist bodies were added to the alliance membership--the unions of Baptist churches in North East India, in Israel, and in Ethiopia.

George W. Schroeder of Memphis, Tenn., executive secretary of the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, was named chairman of the Alliance's department of men's work. He succeeds Robert L. Mills of Georgetown, Ky., who resigned.

Reports were heard also from Gunnar Høglund of Chicago, chairman of the alliance's youth department, and from Mrs. Edgar Bates of Toronto, chairman of the women's department. Both told of increased cooperative activities by Baptists on the earth's six continents.

But the meetings were everything except a dull recitation of reports. The delegates centered their attention to practical outreach of the Gospel message of today's world.

Josef Nordenhaug, general secretary of the Alliance, set the pace for such interests, when he declared:

"Let us continue to say that race prejudice is wrong in the sight of God. But let us also find practical ways to uproot it and end the discrimination it breeds.

"Let us continue to say that war is an unchristian way to settle international problems and disputes. But let us also seek practical ways in which we can fulfill our ministry of reconciliation.

"Let us continue to lend support to crusades of evangelism. But let us also incorporate in them God's concern for the whole man.

"Let us continue to recognize that Christ has earnest followers in other church bodies. But let us also hear their testimony and share with them our own."

Members of the committee, joined by theologians and other denominational leaders, spent eight hours of the week's meetings in four study seminars, exploring questions of common interests to Baptists in 124 countries.

These four groups then brought reports of their findings to the committee at its final session.

672

Resolutions presented by Theodore F. Adams of Richmond, Va., a past president of the Alliance, called for a united expression by world Baptists "through their own governments and through the United Nations" of their concern for just and lasting peace.

"The war in Vietnam causes us deep concern, as do the continuing tensions in the Middle East and the internal strife in other lands," the resolution stated. Concern was further expressed for a realization of racial understanding, an end to violence, and relief of the world's suffering and hungry.

R. Dean Goodwin of Valley Forge, Pa., chairman of the alliance relief department, outlined a projected program calling for \$182,000 the next 12 months to meet human needs in six broad areas of the world, and appealed to churches to supply the necessary funds.

For the Alliance's operating needs, the executive committee set a budget of \$172,500 for 1968 (as compared with \$165,000 in 1967), and a tentative projection of \$181,000 for 1969. The budget is underwritten by contributions from member conventions and interested individuals and churches.

C. Ronald Goulding, associate secretary for Europe, said that "permissive religious activity" rather than religious freedom is the lot of a majority of the Baptist in his country.

"It is almost impossible to have communications with our brethren in Romania and Bulgaria," he said, "and these conditions continue to be the areas where our Baptist work is hardest and where restriction, discrimination and persecution against our peoples is most severe."

He expressed anxiety also for Baptist people in Spain. "For a time following the Second Vatican Council it seemed that a new period of freedom would come to the evangelical churches there," he said. However, new laws may impose new restrictions and "turn back the clock in terms of religious liberty in that country."

Recognition for the centenary of Russian Baptists was given by presentation of a Bible to four delegates from the union of Baptists in U.S.S.R. Baptists in that country now number 550,000--the largest group in any country outside North America. They will celebrate the centennial of their founding August 18-28. Alexander Kircun of Poland and Paul Stevens of the U.S.A. were named to represent the B.W.A. executive committee at this celebration.

The Executive Committee will hold its next annual meeting at Monrovia, Liberia, July 30-August 2, 1968. Vienna, Austria was named as site of the 1969 meeting, Tokyo for 1970, and some city in Canada for 1971.

-30-

Tokyo Named For
1970 World Congress

673

8/3/67

182

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Baptist World Alliance Executive Committee, meeting here, authorized its staff "to proceed with negotiations for holding its next Baptist World Congress in Tokyo, Japan, in 1970."

The action came in adoption of a report by a committee headed by Conrad Willard of Miami, Fla. Willard was host chairman to the 1965 congress at Miami Beach.

Shuichi Matsumura of Tokyo, a vice president of the alliance, presented a plea for definite selection of Japan for the meeting's site.

The Japanese capital had been tentatively chosen a year ago, but there reportedly has been difficulty in getting a firm commitment from Japanese business leaders for necessary hotel rooms and the Budokan auditorium.

The congress dates will be July 12-18, 1970. An attendance of 10,000 is expected.

In other business actions as the Executive Committee, members approved an operating budget of \$172,500 for 1968 and a tentative budget of \$181,000 for 1969. The alliance is financed by contributions from its member bodies.

Three new national groups also were admitted to membership. They are the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel, Baptist Churches in North East India, and Baptist Evangelical Association of Ethiopia. This brings to 81 the number of Baptist unions and conventions affiliated with the Alliance.

-30-

673

August 3, 1967

3

Baptist Press

Schroeder Elected Head
Of B.W.A. Men's Unit

674

196

NASHVILLE (BP)--George W. Schroeder of Memphis, Tenn., has been named chairman of the men's department of the Baptist World Alliance.

Schroeder, who also is executive secretary of the Southern Brotherhood Commission, was named by the Alliance's Executive Committee to succeed Robert L. Mills.

Mills resigned because of the overload of other duties connected with his presidency of Georgetown College (Baptist) in Georgetown, Ky.

Schroeder will be assisted by six vice chairmen, one on each continent.

The B.W.A. Men's Department was established at the Baptist World Congress in Rio de Janeiro in 1960. Its purpose is "to contribute to the work of the Baptist World Alliance by (1) promoting closer fellowship, deeper sympathy, and fuller understanding among Baptists throughout the world; (2) encouraging them to bind themselves together in Christian service; and (3) exchanging information concerning activities, ideas, and literature."

Schroeder's nomination to the post was made by a special committee chaired by R. Dean Goodwin of the American Baptist Convention.

Schroeder has been associated with Southern Baptist men's work since 1940 and executive secretary of the Brotherhood Commission since 1952. He has been active in Baptist World Alliance activities for many years, and has been a member of its executive committee since 1960.

-30-

New Ridgecrest Building
Dedicated By Baptists

675

8/3/67

291

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Rhododendron Hall, a new year-round facility at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, was dedicated here recently by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Parts of the hall, built on the site of an older structure by the same name, have been used at conferences this summer, and the complete facility will be ready for the first of two 16-week foreign mission orientations beginning in September, according to Hubert Smothers, director of the board's service division.

Rhododendron Hall has 49 bedrooms, 10 conferences rooms and an assembly room which can be divided into three conference rooms.

The first floor has three offices and a dining room for 500 guests. The basement contains an activities room, a storage room and a laundry room.

The building is the first at Ridgecrest built with self-contained heating units. The SBC Foreign Mission Board will use Pritchell Hall and the children's building during its winter orientations.

Described as a "spiritual bootcamp," the first orientation period will be attended by about 100 newly appointed missionaries and their 175 children. The orientation will be designed to withdraw them from American society and begin the transition to their new cultures, according to David Lockard, director of missionary orientation for the Foreign Mission Board.

Professors, seminarians and a team of group dynamics helpers will instruct the new appointees in cultural anthropology, cross-culture communication, applied linguistics and group dynamics.

The children in grades 1-5, representing about half the total, will be taught by four teachers using the Calvert System of Home Teaching.

Lockard said the new program will "help reduce the effect of the missionary's own culture on himself and help him enter more quickly his field of service."

"As western man encroaches upon non-western man," he said "the Christian missionary, more than ever before in history, needs to be the symbol of love and the expression of an eternal unchanging God."

"The missionary will then learn new roles, new values, new themes and patterns of cultural behavior," he concluded.

-30-

674-675

Little Opposition Shown
To Five Monday Holidays

676

616

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Senate Judiciary Subcommittee has held hearings on a proposal to provide for the observance of five national holidays on Mondays. On the opening day of hearings only one voice was raised in opposition while many spoke in favor of the measure.

A representative of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States, Marion G. Bradwell, said his organization is opposed to the proposed legislation because of "its effect upon the Christian education programs of the churches."

The alliance spokesman also indicated that the Monday holiday bill "offered a possibility of losing sight of the great meaning of these national and patriotic days" and might also be responsible for an increase in highway deaths over the long weekends.

Spokesmen for both the Senate and House Judiciary Committees said no other religious group had asked to present testimony. The House subcommittee has scheduled hearings for August 16, 17.

The bill in the Senate, introduced by Sen. George A. Smathers (D., Fla.), would change the observance dates of five major national holidays so they will regularly fall on Mondays, thus creating five additional three-day holiday weekends.

Specifically, the bill would change the celebration of Memorial Day from May 30 to the last Monday in May; Independence Day from July 4 to the first Monday in July; Veterans Day from November 11 to the last Monday in October; and Thanksgiving Day from the fourth Thursday in November to the fourth Monday in November.

Also, Washington's birthday would be changed to President's Day to honor all the presidents and would be observed on the third Monday in February rather than February 22.

The bill, of course, would not affect Christmas, New Year's or other national or state holidays.

Smathers told the subcommittee that for a number of years there has been a growing interest in adopting a "common sense plan" for the observance of certain holidays. "It is my view," he said, "that our observance of these holidays ought to be rational as well as national."

He explained to the subcommittee that the true significance of the holidays named in his bill lay more with their purpose than with the date they were observed. Because of benefits to employees, employers and the public in general it would be a matter of "practicality as well as patriotism" to extend to all citizens the benefits of these observances in a more rational, uniform manner.

Most of the other witnesses echoed the same sentiments, saying that the Monday holiday idea is a good one for employees and employers, and especially for families.

For the employee, the major benefit would be a better distribution of vacation time by creating five three-day "vacationettes."

For the employer, there would be an economic gain due to the establishment of a regular Monday holiday schedule. The inevitable absenteeism and disruption that occurs when holidays fall in the middle of the week would be reduced.

For the family, more time for travel and family outings, and visits to national shrines.

Most of those who testified before the subcommittee declared that the danger of accidents on the highways is considerably greater on a single midweek holiday than during a three-day holiday weekend.

The objection that it would be wrong to celebrate holidays on other than the appropriate appointed day was also dismissed by most of the witnesses.

Several of the witnesses pointed out that George Washington was actually born on February 11, not February 22. Memorial Day was first observed on May 5, not May 30. The Declaration of Independence was first signed on July 2, not July 4.

Also, Veterans Day commemorates the veterans of all wars, not just those who fought in the First World War. And, Thanksgiving Day has been celebrated at various times since the first one which was probably in October.

It was also pointed out at the hearings that uniform Monday holidays have been adopted in Canada, England and New Zealand where the plans have met with overwhelming popular approval.

Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen (R., Ill.) is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee that has concluded its hearings on the proposed bill.

676

B.W.A. Executive Committee
 Deplores War, Riots, Prejudice

677

630

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance adopted here resolutions deploring war as "an unchristian way of seeking to settle international problems," and calling racial prejudice and discrimination "wrong in the sight of God."

"We deplore and condemn violence, looting, rioting and the unlawful use of force, and voice our sympathy with all victims of these disorders," said the resolution.

"We believe," said the statement, "that it is not God's will that people should live in poverty and wretched conditions and die of hunger or neglect."

Stating that it is not sufficient for Christians to only deplore and condemn, the resolution urged all Baptists "to work towards the elimination of sinful inequalities and injustices in society."

The Executive Committee asked Baptists in every country of the world to seek through their own governments and through the United Nations to take "all possible steps for achieving a just and lasting peace.

"We call upon them (Baptists) and indeed upon all men of goodwill, to work and pray individually and collectively for justice, freedom, stability and peace, realizing that over us all hangs the awesome threat of nuclear war," the resolution said.

The world Baptist group warned, however, against Christians forming a power bloc and using the world's methods in pressure and coercion.

"The Christian way may be slow, hard and costly, but it is the way of the cross and of Christian love. No man can set limits to what God may do through the sincere prayer, dedicated witness, and earnest work of millions of Baptists throughout the world," it said.

The resolution also warned Baptists to guard against cynical despair and urged them "to give themselves to earnest prayer, honest thought, and effective work and witness in the conviction that God can overrule the folly of men and reconcile them to each other as he has reconciled us to himself in Christ."

The resolution was adopted in the form of a "Message to the Baptist Churches Throughout the World" without debate or discussion, and was approved unanimously.

While acknowledging that it is not within the power of function of the B.W.A. Executive Committee to direct, admonish or rule on the internal affairs of Baptist churches or their conventions or countries, the statement said it is the duty and privilege of the committee "to speak out on religious liberty and other matters of common spiritual and moral concern."

A resolution on religious liberty in Spain was adopted by the committee, which commended the preamble of the new religious liberty law in Spain, but claimed that regulations in the remainder of the law restrict the actual exercise of the rights set forth in the preamble.

"The Baptist World Alliance earnestly expresses the hope that anything in the application of the law will restrict or prevent the worship of any people in Spain in the expression of their religious faith," the resolution said. "It further sincerely hopes that non-Catholics in Spain will continue to enjoy freedom to hold and express their religious convictions."

A letter was also drafted by the Executive Committee to the World Council of Churches, requesting its help and influence to "overcome acts of discrimination and restrictions against Baptist people" in Romania.

The letter expressed concern because Baptists in Romania cannot use their church buildings except on certain hours during Saturday evening and Sunday morning, and that Baptists in that country are not allowed visas and permission to attend Baptist meetings outside Romania.

An inscribed Bible was presented to four Russian Baptists attending the Executive Committee meeting, congratulating the Russians on the 100th anniversary of the beginning of Baptist work in the U.S.S.R.

A resolution accompanying the presentation said the event was "of tremendous significance to Baptist people throughout the world," and extended "Christian greetings and love to our Russian Baptist brethren."

Still another resolution expressed appreciation to the hosts for the meeting, held at the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and the SBC Sunday School Board buildings. About 120 Baptist leaders from 27 nations attended, representing 28 million Baptists in 124 countries of the world.

677