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November 3, 1967

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American Baptist Discuss
Evangelism, 1969 Crusade

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VALLEY FORGE, Pa. (BP)--The General Council of the American Baptist Convention voted here to "express the thought that we concur in the stated objectives" of the Crusade of the Americas, and debated a committee study of the convention's evangelism program.

Although the General Council approved of the crusade's stated objectives, it did not change its 1966 decision against participating in the Crusade of the Americas on a nation-wide basis.

Carl Tiller, former president of the American Baptist Convention, made the motion favoring the crusade's objectives in response to a telegram from three American Baptists attending a planning meeting in Chicago for the North American aspects of the 1969 hemispheric-wide crusade.

"I realize we made our decision not to participate," Tiller said, "but I wish we could have done so. But I'm not even going to plead for that. But I do wish the General Council might indicate that it shares concern and prayers for the crusade," Tiller said.

Earlier during the meeting here, it had been reported that two American Baptist affiliated state conventions, those in Indiana and Ohio, had voted to participate in the Crusade of the Americas on a state-wide basis, and that West Virginia Baptists had voted to commend crusade participation for local churches in the state.

Most of the discussion during the meeting came following a report from a five-member committee headed by ABC President L. Edward McBain of Phoenix, appointed to make an "in-depth study" of the total evangelism program of the ABC Home Missions Society evangelism division.

After about 45 minutes debate, the General Council voted to "receive" the report without adopting it, and to request the American Baptist Home Mission Society to study the report and have a representative at the next meeting to discuss it before action is taken.

McBain said the committee did not feel it had the resources or authority to make a detailed investigation of the work of one of the autonomous mission societies over which the General Council has no control. He said that the report was not really "an in-depth study."

It listed in detail, however, the objections voiced by many American Baptists to the convention's evangelism program, citing specific actions by groups of pastors in New Jersey and Ohio and listing eight specific problems.

Among the problems listed were the seeming neglect of "traditional" or "familiar" forms of evangelism by the staff; inadequate communication at every level; withdrawal of funds from state conventions and city societies previously used in the joint support of evangelistic activities; a serious gap between the leadership and constituency; lack of growth in the ABC; and others.

Another major problem was "a reported widespread belief that Dr. (Jitsuo) Morikawa (secretary of the evangelism division) and staff do not believe in personal salvation." The report added, however, "Dr. Morikawa has affirmed before the study committee his firm belief in personal salvation."

In a section on "What Should Be Done About the Problem," the report had seven suggestions to the American Baptist Home Mission Society, including such things as adding staff members to the evangelism division who would devote more time to "familiar" forms of evangelism, help people grow in acceptance of new forms and concepts of evangelism, and to balance "Its concept of ministry to the world with an appreciation of all the evangelistic efforts which have brought us to where we are today."

W. H. Rhodes, executive secretary of the Home Mission Society, said there was nothing in the report that the Home Mission Society had not earlier considered, but that it would receive the report and study it before the next meeting of the General Council, scheduled Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 1968.

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In other actions the General Council discussed a four-point statement of purpose for the convention to get final consideration of the ABC in 1969; and heard reports from ABC agencies.

Following a report that two Negro churches in the South had joined the convention, bringing to 65 the total number of American Baptist churches in the South, council members discussed the need for devoting a major period of time at its next meeting to considering what American Baptists can do to prevent racial rioting in the summer of 1968, and how to best work for improved relations between the races.

A telegram from the executive secretary of the ABC division of Christian Social Concern to Martin Luther King and two other American Baptist ministers jailed in Birmingham was read to the council, but no action was taken.

The telegram from Elizabeth Miller assured King, his brother A. D. King and Ralph Abernathy of American Baptist prayers, and commended them "for your determination to stay with your principles of non-violent action and to accept the consequences of that action."

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Kentucky Southern Merges
With Louisville University

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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Kentucky Southern College, a Baptist school for seven years which eight months ago severed ties with the Kentucky Baptist Convention to become a private Christian school, has now merged with the University of Louisville.

Although the University of Louisville immediately assumes all debts and assets of the former Baptist school, no major change in Kentucky Southern's administration staff and policies is expected for at least the next two semesters.

The school will retain its present name during the interim period, even though the merger with the 165-year-old liberal arts university owned by the city of Louisville was effective Nov. 1, 1967.

Actually, the University of Louisville has not yet decided just how it will incorporate the 238-acre Kentucky Southern campus, its administrative building, a student center and several dormitories into the total University program.

One possibility under discussion, according to university officials, is to develop the old Kentucky Southern campus into a full four-year university for undergraduates while converting the old University of Louisville campus into a center for graduate students only.

Final disposition of the former Baptist school will be left in the hands of a joint faculty-and-trustee committee of the two schools. Outside consulting services may be used to decide what course of action to take.

Commenting on the merger, Kentucky Southern President Rollin S. Burhans said "to have to merge with any institution is only second best to those of us who set out to build a quality Christian college."

The merger possibility was apparently the final alternative left open to the trustees, if the school was to continue operation.

Within two years after opening in 1960 as a Baptist institution, Kentucky Southern was experiencing an annual operating deficit. Its present indebtedness amounts to about \$4,500,000. Loans for buildings accounts for most of this total.

These critical financial needs prompted the school to request release from the Kentucky Baptist Convention on March 10 of this year in order that it might apply for federal loans and grants. After a stormy Executive Board session at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly on that day, the convention voted to release the college and granted it "severance pay" of \$885,050 to assist in its financial needs.

Of this amount, \$500,000 was given immediately to the school in the form of a loan floated by the convention. The remaining \$385,050 was promised to the school in equal yearly installments of \$77,010 for the next five years.

During the past eight months, while operating as a private, Christian school, Kentucky Southern has sought a broader base of support among businesses, individuals and churches of all denominations in the Louisville area.

While some pledges have been made to the school in its recent fund raising efforts, the total amount pledged and paid was not sufficient to alleviate its critical financial need.

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Oregon-Washington Baptists
May Discontinue Child Care

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TACOMA, Washington (BP)--A recommendation that the Baptist General Convention of Oregon-Washington discontinue its program of child care ministries was referred by the state convention to its Executive Board for action.

Trustees of the Bailie Memoiral Boys Ranch made the recommendation that the convention withdraw from the field of child care and dispose of the boy's ranch property "in a way that will be satisfactory to all."

But a motion from the convention floor referred the proposal to the convention Executive Board asking them in joint effort with the boy's ranch trustees "to determine and execute such courses of action that will enable the convention to fulfill honorably its responsibility!"

In other major actions, the convention adopted a record budget of \$430,000 including a state Cooperative Program goal of \$270,000. It increased the percentage going to Southern Baptist Convention causes from 19 to 20 per cent.

The convention also voted to enter a convention-backed bond plan with the Broadway Bonds firm, using \$35,000 from the convention loan funds to guarantee the bonds.

Re-elected president of the convention was Harry Bonner of Venatachee, Wash. Next year the convention will meet at Salem, Oregon, Nov. 12-14.

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Controversial Report Draws
Mixed Texas Baptist Reaction

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LUBBOCK, Tex. (BP)--Texas Baptists have both accepted and rejected parts of a controversial report calling for major organizational changes in the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Messengers attending the convention here rejected two major proposals, referred another recommendation for a year of study, and endorsed several other proposals made as part of the report of the Committee of 100 which was created last year to make a complete study of all the work of the convention.

A constitutional change making it mandatory for a layman to be elected as one of the top three convention officers was rejected after considerable debate.

Another recommendation that three departments of the convention be elevated to division status was also rejected after much discussion.

A proposal calling for creation of a new organization for men to replace the convention's current Brotherhood department was approved.

Most of the debate came over the proposals to make election of a layman as a convention officer mandatory, and over the proposal to change the three Sunday School, Training Union and church music departments to division status.

Lee Porter, pastor of First Baptist Church of Bellaire near Houston, opposed the stipulation that one officer must be a layman, saying that "each convention should be permitted to elect its own officers" without restrictions.

Businessman Robert Foley of Wichita Falls, Tex., who also serves on the Committee of 100, said he was reflecting others who complained "that the convention had become a preacher-dominated convention."

Controversy also flared on a recommendation asking for division status of the three departments. One speaker, R. F. Wideman of San Antonio, Tex., charged that the present department level structure places the Sunday School in "a fourth grade position." Wideman said the Sunday School exerts more influence on more people than any other segment of Baptist work.

Another pastor, Roy Ladd of Houston, countered however that he did not feel that the Sunday School "had been relegated to a lower level."

Major opposition was also voiced against a recommendation asking for changes in the nomination of directors of the Baptist Foundation of Texas. Judge Conally McKay of Tyler, Tex., said the proposal "needs serious study."

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Cooper Waters of Orange, Tex., questioned the reluctance of the Foundation and others to accept the recommendation and asked: "Why don't they want to accept it?" His remark drew applause from the crowd.

The executive secretary of the Baptist Foundation, James Cantrell, argued that the Foundation could find its own directors better than the proposed method, and added that "church-related groups do not have a very good record of money management."

The Baptist Foundation proposal was referred for further study and for a report back to the convention next year.

Only brief mention was made of another controversial decision of the Committee of 100 which had voted to hold in abeyance its report on the work of the Texas Baptist Church Loan Board and Association because the Executive Board of the convention had created a special committee to review the association's record and take over its operation.

During a meeting of the convention's Executive Board, the special committee mentioned "a mistake in judgment" by the association in the purchase of real estate in California.

In the Church Loan Board's report to the convention, a special committee member, W. J. McDuffee of El Paso, Tex., referred to the real estate purchase, saying he did not feel it was a mistake since a profit of \$1 million seemed to be indicated.

E. H. Westmoreland of Houston, chairman of the Committee of 100, expressed regret that a member of the special committee was to report to the convention's Executive Board rather than the convention. He said the value of the property in California had never been a point in consideration of the Church Loan Board's activities.

In other action, messengers approved recommendations for nominating hospital committee members and making the administrative leadership of the Church Loan Association and the Christian Life Commission responsible to the convention's executive secretary.

Messengers called for the creation of a new organization for men to be known as Texas Baptist Men. The organization, which replaces the current Brotherhood department of the convention, will be an auxiliary to the convention, effective Jan. 1, 1969.

The men will call a special session prior to March 1, 1968, for the purpose of adopting its new constitution and by-laws, but no specific date was set for the meeting.

Ten other recommendations of the Committee of 100 were approved, most of them dealing with committee membership and structures of convention programs. A long-range mission thrust in the Rio Grande River area was recommended, and information on how Negro churches can petition the convention for participation was requested to be sent to such churches.

Elected president of the convention was Gordon Clinard, pastor of the First Baptist Church of San Angelo, Tex., and former professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Fort Worth.

A record Cooperative Program budget of \$12.8 million was adopted by the convention. Next session of the convention will meet Oct. 29-31, 1968 in Fort Worth.

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Michigan Baptists Vote 1019
Race Riot Resolution

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PONTIAC, Mich. (BP)--Meeting only a few miles from the site of last summer's riots in both Pontiac and Detroit, the Baptist State Convention of Michigan adopted a resolution reaffirming achievement of equal rights for all, but condemning anarchy and lawlessness.

The resolution also stated: "In these days of unrest and tensions as minority groups struggle for their human rights, we commend those who lead in this struggle, assuring them of our prayers and interest and concern as they pursue all needs which are legally, morally and spiritually right."

"At the same time," the resolution added, "we abhor and condemn those means which ferment anarchy infringe on the human rights of others, and are contributing to the general growing disrespect and deterioration of law and authority."

When riots broke out in Detroit last summer, the area of the city hardest hit was within a few blocks of the Michigan convention headquarters office. Riots also occurred in Pontiac where the convention was meeting.

In major actions, the convention approved a state-wide budget of \$596,413, allocating 20 per cent of the Cooperative Program aspect of the budget to Southern Baptist Convention causes.

The convention voted to reduce the percentage to SBC causes from 25 to 20 per cent, when a report was made that the convention was facing a financial problem, and that receipts from the churches were not adequate to meet needs.

Although the overall budget increased, the amount from the churches was reduced slightly. Next year's convention will meet Nov. 5-7, 1968 in Lincoln Park, Mich.

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