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May 27, 1968

Race Crisis in Nation, Name
Change May be SEC Key Issues

HOUSTON (BP)--A statement concerning the racial crisis in the nation, an unofficial straw vote on changing the name of the nation's largest Protestant denomination, and election of a new president are expected to be major issues to come before the Southern Baptist Convention here June 4-7.

The president of the Southern Baptist Convention, H. Franklin Paschall of Nashville, Tenn., predicted these and other issues which may come up during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, held at Sam Houston Coliseum here.

A strongly-worded statement voicing confession of Southern Baptist failure to deal with the race issue, declaring commitment to defend people against injustice, and appealing to all Southern Baptists to take action will probably be presented to the convention.

The statement was drafted by an informal ad hoc committee of leading Southern Baptist agency executives, and circulated to all executives of Southern Baptist agencies, Baptist state conventions, and editors of Baptist state papers to be presented with their approval to the SBC Executive Committee at its pre-convention meeting here on Tuesday, June 4.

If the Executive Committee approves the statement, it could possibly go as a recommendation to the convention from its Executive Committee.

In what some Baptist leaders have called the strongest statement on race ever to come before the Southern Baptist Convention, the statement condemns racism and racial prejudice and admits a share of the guilt "for the injustice, disorder and wickedness of our land."

Stating that words are not enough, the statement calls for Southern Baptist agencies to set up a task force to deal with "these problems in the most effective manner possible consistent with their program assignments."

It also calls upon Southern Baptist churches, associations and state conventions to join the SBC in "a renewal of Christian effort to meet this national crisis."

Paschall, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, said that he felt the statement reflects the burden of many Southern Baptists at this time in their desire for adoption of a meaningful statement on the part of the convention.

He said that the race issue is almost sure to receive attention at the convention, for it is the burning issue of our time.

Paschall pointed out that the agenda planned by the convention's committee on order of business provides for 4½ hours of miscellaneous business. "This was an effort on the part of the committee and convention officers to respond to the desire of the messengers to debate the issues," he said.

There is a possibility that a group of students from North Carolina will stage what they call "a responsible demonstration" against the convention's silence over the crucial issues of race, poverty and the Vietnam war.

A group of students headed by Roger Sharpe, student at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, has announced plans to picket the convention, and to hold a dialogue session to express themselves to convention leaders. The SBC Christian Life Commission has responded by setting up the dialogue on Monday afternoon, June 3.

For the first time, the convention will have an opportunity to express itself concerning the possibility of changing the name of the convention, even though the unofficial poll will not be binding.

Rather the straw vote will give the SBC Executive Committee guidance and information concerning three possible names which have been proposed during the Executive Committee's three-year study of the question. The names up for a tally are United Baptist Convention, Baptist General Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention.

Election of a new president of the 11-million member convention, and consideration of a record \$27.6 million proposed budget for 1969 will also be major items of business.

The proposed budget of \$27.6 million would be an increase of about \$900,000 over the record 1968 budget.

In addition to the \$27.6 million operating budget, a \$5 million capital needs budget for the five-year period from 1969-73 will be recommended by the Executive Committee.

A resolution may be presented asking the convention to reaffirm a 1913 resolution on separation of church and state. Several prominent Baptist pastors have indicated plans to introduce the resolution.

Another recommendation from the Executive Committee which might spark discussion or debate is consideration of a "conflict of interest" clause as an amendment to the SBC bylaws which would prevent any person who receives funds directly or indirectly from a SBC agency from serving on that agency's board of trustees.

The Executive Committee is expected to make 20 or more recommendations to the convention, most dealing with technical business matters.

Several constitutional or bylaw changes will be presented, some of them for second and final approval, calling for four-year terms and a rotation system on the boards of trustees for Baptist agencies and institutions.

Other recommendations expected to come from the Executive Committee propose a charter for the Christian Life Commission incorporating it under Tennessee laws; a procedure for appointment of a credentials committee; a fixed item of business on the convention agenda for the SBC president's address; editorial changes in the constitution on second reading; selection of Portland, Oregon, as the site for the 1973 convention, slated June 11-15, technical or structural changes in the program statements for Southern Baptist Hospitals and the SBC Sunday School Board; a convention operating budget of \$535,000, a plan for planning SBC emphases for 1974-80; a planning system for observance of the convention's 125th anniversary in 1970; and technical and financial aspects concerning operating reserves and transfer of capital needs funds for specific SBC agencies.

Under the proposed agenda for the convention, each convention agency making an annual report will be required to devote one-third of its report time to open discussion and questions from the floor concerning its operations.

Paschall said this requirement, plus the 4½ hours of miscellaneous business during the convention, would make the convention "interesting and dynamic" as it deals with the issues and business before the denomination. "Nothing makes a better Baptist meeting than lively debate and discussion," he said.

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Crusade Committee Reaffirms
March Plans If Permit Given

5/27/68

LOUISVILLE (BP)--The steering committee for the North American Continental Congress as part of the Crusade of the Americas reaffirmed here its plans to hold an open air rally and/or march, if a permit can be obtained from the proper government officials.

In mid-April, the superintendent of Central National Capital Parks of the National Park Service told congress officials that their permit request was being held in abeyance until after the racial situation in Washington cools off.

"Because of the civil strife that is taking place in Washington, we are not making any commitments or issuing permits for large gatherings in our public parks," said Monte E. Fitch, the authorized government official, in a letter to William J. Cumbie, executive director of the Continental Congress steering committee last April.

The steering committee voted here to instruct its program committee "to go ahead with some kind of an open air rally" if the situation should change "as to make it possible and feasible."

The steering committee met at Walnut Street Baptist Church here where Wayne Dehoney, North American coordinator for the Crusade of the Americas, is the pastor. Dehoney said representatives of most of the nine Baptist bodies in North America participating in the crusade were present in the meeting.

In a major action, the committee approved the program committee's recommendations for major speakers for the Congress, slated at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington on Oct. 10-13.

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The complete program for the Congress was not announced, but major speakers and Bible study leaders were named.

Listed as major speakers were: Hon. Ernest C. Manning, Premier of Alberta, Canada, and ordained Baptist minister and evangelist; J. H. Jackson, Chicago, president of the National Baptist Convention, Inc.; Gardner Taylor, New York, president of the Progressive Baptist Convention; John Williams, Kansas City, vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance and a member of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.; Wayne Dehoney, North American coordinator for the Crusade of the Americas; and Mrs. Marie Mathis, secretary of promotion of the WMU.

Leading Bible study at the Congress will be: Gerald Borchert, Professor at North American Baptist General Conference Seminary in Sioux Falls, S. D.; Dale Moody, Professor of theology at Southern Seminary; and Gordon Anderson, Home Missions Secretary for the Baptist General Conference, Chicago.

Other speakers on the program as confirmed by the steering committee include: Reuben Lopez of Sao Paulo, Brazil, President of the Crusade of the Americas; C. E. Autrey, Director of Evangelism, Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention; Henry Earl Peacock, Coordinator of the Crusade of the Americas and Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil; Gordon Schroeder, American Baptist Convention pastor from Detroit; Emmett Johnson, Baptist General Conference pastor, Elam Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.; Arthur Blessitt, SBC evangelist among the hippies in San Francisco; Owen Cooper, SBC layman from Yazoo, Mississippi; Kenneth Chafin, Professor of evangelism at Southern Seminary; Barry Moore, Baptist evangelist from Canada; and Baker James Cauthen, Executive secretary, SBC Foreign Mission Board.

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Wright to Head Humphrey
Advertising Campaign

5/27/68

WASHINGTON (BP)--Lloyd Wright, a former Baptist public relations man, will be the advertising coordinator for the presidential campaign of Hubert H. Humphrey, according to an announcement by the United Democrats for Humphrey.

Wright, former director of public relations for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has been a senior executive of the U. S. Information Agency for the past four years, serving as executive assistant to USIA director Leonard Marks for the past two years.

A native Texan, Wright first came to Washington in 1962 to help develop the public affairs and recruitment programs for the Peace Corps. He coordinated the advertising and film program for President Johnson's 1964 election campaign.

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