

December 3, 1949

127 Ninth Avenue, North Nashville, Tennessee

SAN FRANCISCO 1951?

BERKELEY, Calif.--(BP)--Dr. B. O. Herring, chairman of the invitation committee for the Southern Baptist Convention to meet in San Francisco in 1951, has announced the following action of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California in its annual session in Long Beach:

"At the 1949 session of the Southern Baptist Convention in Oklahoma City we extended to you our invitation to meet in San Francisco in 1951. We were genuinely and fraternally sincere in so doing. It was just such an act as has occurred annually for years far beyond our memory. We are not aware of any political wire pulling or of any western bloc for pressure purposes.

"We are aware that the vote in favor of San Francisco over another worthy city was measured by a small majority. This, too, we accepted in good faith as just another incident in the operation of Baptist democracy. Relative thereto many reports have been published in sections of our press with which all are more or less acquainted, but the grounds for same are to us positively unknown and unbelievable. If the vote had been just the opposite we would have accepted it in the same co-operative spirit.

"We would like to say to the brethren of the Convention that if it be the sincere and unbiased will of a majority of our people not to come to San Francisco for the 1951 session then we would gladly yield the rights and privileges which the Oklahoma City vote granted to us. Perhaps the instrumentality of a simple poll without undue persuasion of press or speech would yield some guiding data.... If the index thereof should indicate a majority desire to meet elsewhere in 1951, then you may count our former invitation for that meeting to be automatically cancelled, though we are exceedingly anxious for the Convention to come to us.

"We would then claim the privilege of planning another invitation, just as sincere and warmhearted as the first to be presented to some future session of the Convention as wisdom in such matters might seem to warrant."

Ballots for this poll have been mailed from Berkeley, Calif., to all Southern Baptist ministers whose last name begins with A, N, or O. Mr. Porter Routh, Southern Baptist Convention secretary and denominational statistician, advised the procedure used in the poll in order to secure an accurate survey. These particular letters of the alphabet were chosen because they represent a cross section of the Southern Baptist Convention. The returns on the poll will be compiled in the office of the Department of Survey, Statistics, and Information in Nashville, Tenn. The results will be released as soon as a sufficient number of ballots have been returned to assure accuracy in the report. The report will have been compiled prior to the publication of this announcement.

The small margin by which the Southern Baptist Convention voted to hold its 1951 session in San Francisco has been the occasion of the contention of some that the decision should be reversed at the Chicago session in 1950. Dr. Herring emphasized that it was the desire of California Southern Baptists that the Convention be held in San Francisco, but California Baptists felt that the will of the majority of Southern Baptists should rule.