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June 27, 1968

800 Laymen Expected
For Crusade Congress

RIO de JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--More than 800 Baptist laymen from 26 countries in North, Central and South America are expected for the Pan American Baptist Laymen's Evangelism Congress slated here July 15-21, the first such international laymen's meeting of its kind.

Advance registration figures indicate that about 200 are expected from the United States, about 400 to 450 from Brazil, and the remainder from 24 other countries in South and Central America.

The chairman for the Congress, Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., said he was pleased with the overall response to the idea of the meeting.

Cooper, the brainchild of the hemispheric wide laymen's congress who has pushed it from the beginning and campaigned to raise funds for the meeting, said he hoped that the end result would be more involvement of laymen in the Crusade of the Americas evangelistic effort.

"I hope that laymen will accept the fact that they have a place in the crusade, and that they will be inspired to do so," said Cooper, president of the Mississippi Chemical Corp., and recently elected vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A part of the basic purpose in meeting in Rio de Janeiro, he added, is to bring Baptist laymen from differing cultures in the rest of the hemisphere to the spot where the idea for the Crusade of Americas was born, and to learn from the "highly successful evangelistic programs being used in Brazil" where laymen take a major lead in evangelism.

The Crusade of the Americas, slated to climax with simultaneous crusades in the spring of 1969, got its start in Brazil as an outgrowth of the 1965 evangelistic effort of Brazilian Baptists which resulted in 100,000 professions of faith. Each of the participating 38 Baptist bodies is planning its own effort and schedule.

A key part of the Pan American Baptist Laymen's Congress will be putting into practice the things they discussed during the week's meeting, said Cooper, explaining that immediately following the congress, the laymen attending will divide into teams to conduct weekend laymen-led revivals in churches throughout Brazil.

The evening sessions will be aimed at the general public in Rio, and will feature evangelistic messages by top Baptist leaders and evangelists. Cooper said that local officials hope to fill the 33,000-seat Maracanazinho Auditorium.

Principal speakers for evening sessions will be David Gomez, pastor in Rio de Janeiro, Samuel Libert, pastor in Argentina; Baker James Cauthen, head of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; and Nilson Fanini, pastor in Niteroi, Brazil just across the bay from Rio.

Morning sessions Monday through Friday, July 15-19, will meet at the First Baptist Church of Rio de Janeiro, where John Soren, pastor, will be featured Bible study leader each morning. Afternoon sessions will be sectional and special-interest meetings.

Major addresses are also scheduled by Rubens Lopes of Sao Paulo, president of the Crusade of the Americas; Amelio Giannetti, evangelism secretary of the Brazilian Baptist Convention; and Henry Earl Peacock, general coordinator of the crusade; all speaking on aspects of the Crusade of the Americas.

Music will feature sacred concerts by Metropolitan Opera Soloist Irene Jordan of New York; businessman Russell Newport of Springfield, Mo.; Negro Baptist Convention official Robert Bradley of Nashville, Tenn.; and a Negro Baptist choir from Mississippi.

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Advance registration, Cooper reported, includes 190 from the United States; 40 from Uruguay; 30 from Ecuador; 14 from Venezuela; 12 from Chile; 10 each from Argentina and Paraguay; and numbers ranging from two to ten from Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Antigua, the Bahamas, Bolivia, Haiti, Guiana, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Trinidad.

Advance registration figures from Brazil were not available, but officials estimated attendance by Brazilian laymen would be about 400 to 450.

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Dirksen Plans To Renew
Prayer Amendment Issue

6/27/68

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen (R., Ill.) has announced that he intends to reopen the constitutional prayer amendment issue before Congress adjourns.

"Perhaps by mid-July," the Senator said during an informal press conference, he will bring to the floor of the Senate a resolution he introduced at the beginning of the 90th Congress in January, 1967.

Under Sen. Dirksen's proposed amendment, anyone "lawfully assembled" in tax-supported buildings would be free to join in "non-denominational prayer."

This is the first time since he introduced it that the senator has mentioned his proposed prayer amendment. His timing brings his proposal into the final hectic weeks before adjournment of Congress and just prior to the Republican National Convention.

The senator indicated that he would offer his resolution in lieu of a request for the annual observance of Bible Translation Day.

Sen. Dirksen hastened to add that he had "nothing against" Bible translation, but he would do this to give the Senate "a chance to vote on a prayer amendment."

Sen. Dirksen's resolution, greatly altered from one he failed to get through the 89th Congress, has been all but dead in the Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments of the Judiciary Committee.

Sen. Birch Bayh (D., Ind.), a foe of any effort to amend the constitution with such a prayer amendment, is chairman of this committee.

A spokesman for the subcommittee was unaware of the senator's plans and said that hearings have not been scheduled on the resolution. He also said that Sen. Dirksen would be bypassing the committee for political purposes in bringing this to the floor of the Senate.

Under Senate rules it is possible to attach a "non-germane" amendment to any legislation in order to force a vote on a particular issue.

When Sen. Dirksen introduced his revised amendment last year the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs issued a staff report which concluded that the proposed constitutional amendment is "ambiguous at its core."

The report said that the proposal tries to affect court decisions based on the establishment clause with words that are appropriate to the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.

The staff of the Baptist Joint Committee in its report said that it "remains convinced of the adequacy in law of the First Amendment to maintain free religion."

It further said that the new "Dirksen Amendment" raised many problems not now raised by the First Amendment. "This reinforces our resolve to maintain that the First Amendment is all we presently need to preserve our broad religious liberties," the staff concluded.

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Man Created For Rebellion,
Glorieta Speaker Declares

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--"Man was created by God for defiance and rebellion," declared Perry R. Sanders of Lafayette, La., in an address to the third Training Union leadership and youth week at Glorieta Baptist Assembly here.

Sanders, pastor of First Baptist Church in Lafayette, indicated that rebellion can be both bad and good, depending on whether it is rebellion without a cause, or with a constructive purpose.

"Since God placed in us rebellion, how can I not be a rebel whose purposes are redemptive, constructive, and useful for the kingdom of God?" Sanders asked.

He challenged Christians attending the Baptist assembly to channel their rebellious nature into constructive purpose with a cause, a chart, a creed and a cross.

"The cause is salvation; the chart is service, the creed is the Bible and the cross is the cross of Christ," Sanders said.

"Christianity must be vibrant and vital," he said. "No easy, cheap, superficial Christianity is going to turn people to Christ."

By the end of the week, 165 persons among the 2,326 registered for the week's conference had responded to Sanders' call to commitment, making some kind of decision for Christ.

During the week, a special conference on working with the mentally retarded drew participants from as far away as Puerto Rico, most interested in beginning work in their home churches.

In another major address, W. L. Howse of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, told the conference that change in the denomination is inevitable, and that Baptists must be up-to-date. He added however, that change is a difficult ordeal.

"Educatinn and learning do not stop, if people stay in training," said Howse, director of the Sunday School Board's education division. "If they do not (train), then they should get out the scissors every now and then and clip off part of their precious diplomas.

The greatest handicap that the Training Union program at Baptist churches is that the adults still think it is for the youth," Howse added.

He told the adults present they should listen to young people, for they have a great deal to say today and they can help adults move and change.

"They can help us become a part of the 1960's," Howse said of youth. "Most of our young people today are not those on the front page of the newspaper."

Total registration for the three Training Union weeks was 5,988.

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Estrada Gets Plaque
For Radio Programs 6/27/68

FORT WORTH (BP)--Leobardo Estrada, Southern Baptist language missions director for the New York City metropolitan area, has been awarded a plaque for 10 years of preaching to Latin Americans in two hemispheres on two radio programs produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission here.

Estrada is preacher on the programs, "La Hora Bautista", Spanish version of The Baptist Hour, heard on 77 stations in the United States and Latin America; and on "Momentos De Meditacion" (Moments of Meditation), a 15-minute devotional program carried by 92 stations.

The award was presented by the SBC Radio-TV Commission here which produces the programs.

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Resource On Social Issues
Provided For SBC Leaders

NASHVILLE (BP)--Nearly 53,000 Southern Baptist leaders have been mailed a complimentary 272-page Resource Guide to Current Social Issues in an effort to help Baptists come to grips with current social problems, from abortion to war.

Provided by the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, the book was prepared by William M. Pinson Jr., associate professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The book is designed to be a handy reference to suggest resources for helping Southern Baptists to deal with whatever current social issue that they might be concerned about, said Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission.

He added that it is the first time that the commission has distributed its material to all SBC professional leadership (pastors, church music and education workers, and denominational leaders) without cost.

The free book and mailing was made possible, Valentine said, through increased allocations to the commission from the SBC Cooperative Program budget, and because of a $5,000 gift from a North Carolina layman and Baptist deacon.

Frank E. Strider, an automobile salesman from Hendersonville, N. C., made the gift following a decision about a year ago in a revival at First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, to dedicate his life and money in a new way to the cause of Christ, Valentine said.

The book contains 42 main topics and 43 sub-topics. Among the many subjects included are aging, alcohol, artificial insemination, capital punishment, citizenship and political action, Communism, crime, decision making on moral issues, divorce, juvenile delinquency, economics, euthanasia, extremism, gambling, homosexuality, leisure, narcotics, planned parenthood, population explosion, pornography, poverty, race, sex, etc.

"This exhaustive work not only lists selected, annotated resource books on these topics, but also selected journals, periodicals, organizations, printed materials, and audio visuals," said Valentine.

"The commission views this project as one of the most potentially significant things ever done by this agency to help Baptists in the area of applied Christianity," he added.

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