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North American Fellowship Urges  
Closer Education, Publication Ties

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Representatives of nine North American Baptist groups with a combined membership of more than 15 million have suggested that their conventions and conferences work together more closely in the fields of education and publication.

Forty members of the general committee of the North American Baptist Fellowship met here for two days of examination of the concerns they hold in common and an exploration of ways to help each other.

They also welcomed the General Association of General Baptists as the ninth and most recent addition to the Fellowship. Other participating groups are the American Baptist Convention, Baptist Federation of Canada, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention of Mexico, North American Baptist General Conference, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Influence of the Fellowship on member bodies is purely advisory. Its purpose, according to its constitution, is "to make possible opportunities for fellowship and the sharing of mutual concerns."

Duke K. McCall, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., was elected chairman of the Fellowship to succeed V. Carney Hargroves of Philadelphia, an American Baptist pastor who has headed NABF since its organization in March 1966.

Seven definite proposals came out of the Washington meeting.

Three had to do with church outreach to young people. One recommended that avenues of communication be established between Baptist colleges and universities so that their administrations may exchange ideas on both business operation and the educational process. Another suggested a workshop for leaders of theological seminaries operated by the various conventions.

A third sought to encourage recruitment of students on college campuses for church-related vocations. It said, "In the light of the efforts of National Baptists to meet a very great need for theological students and trained leadership for other church-related vocations, and since this is a need which we all share, we recommend that the North American Baptist Fellowship encourage the several Baptist bodies to seek cooperative efforts in establishing and supporting religious student work on campuses where such work does not now exist, that we may cooperate in calling out the called."

Another proposal commended "the informal discussions already begun among top leadership groups of the various Boards of Education and Publication of several Baptist bodies."

It further recommended that these leaders "explore the possibility of sharing material and manuscripts which might be helpful to other groups," and noted that "joint publication of some titles in certain areas seem also to hold excellent possibilities and should be evaluated."

Other proposals had to do with projects for increased communication and fellowship among members of the various Baptist bodies. It was suggested that planners of summer conferences and other denominational meetings should enlist program personnel and guests from other groups so as to permit "fellowship and sharing."

L. Venchael Booth of Cincinnati, a pastor and executive secretary of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, was named to succeed Senator Jennings Randolph as vice chairman. Senator Randolph, of West Virginia, is a Seventh Day Baptist.

Two other officers of the Fellowship were re-elected: Frank H. Woyke as secretary and Carl W. Tiller as treasurer. Both are officers of the Baptist World Alliance, the Fellowship's parent organization.

An annual budget of \$12,900 was adopted for 1969 to pay for administrative costs. Expenses are kept nominal as the committee operates within the framework of the Baptist World Alliance headquarters office in Washington.

The general committee, which met here, will meet again November 23-24, 1969. The committee is composed of representatives of the nine participating conventions and conferences, these representatives named by the respective bodies.

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Baptist World Alliance  
Seeks Additional Income

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist World Alliance administrative sub-committee adopted a 1969 budget of \$178,000, \$3,000 less than previously listed needs, after hearing a report that 1968 receipts may fall as much as \$10,000 short of the 1968 budget of \$172,500.

Carl W. Tiller, treasurer of the Alliance and a budget planner for the U. S. Bureau of the Budget here, told the committee that similar shortages would occur in 1969 unless additional funds become available.

After the budget was adopted, one committee member observed that "this budget is pitifully small for a worldwide organization which serves as the link for fellowship, service, and cooperation of the world's 29 million Baptists in 124 countries."

The Alliance is supported predominately by contributions from the 85 national Baptist bodies (in 67 countries) which are affiliated with it. These contributions will total about \$120,000 in 1968. The remainder of the budget comes from churches and individuals who, a spokesman said, "are interested in having a personal part in the world fellowship's international outreach."

Forty-eight of the member conventions had made contributions in the first ten months of 1968.

Josef Nordenhaug, general secretary, noted that ten member bodies are prevented from sending contributions because of the political conditions in their countries. Forty-three of the member groups -- half of the total -- have fewer than 10,000 members, ten of them fewer than 1,000 members.

He said that these small groups are not financially able to make more than a token contribution to the Alliance, and the burden of support rests on larger bodies in the affluent nations. The contributions from the smaller groups are generally more generous per capita than from the larger groups.

George W. Schroeder, a layman in Memphis, and V. Carney Hargroves, a pastor in Philadelphia, are co-chairman of a Sustaining Gifts Committee seeking to raise additional funds for Alliance operations. Hargroves said he hopes the committee can bring in \$10,000 in new gifts in December to balance this year's Alliance budget.

A world relief program, channeling Baptist assistance to refugees and other people in need is carried on outside the Alliance budget -- though total administrative costs are paid by the Alliance budget. Frank H. Woyke, associate secretary with responsibilities in relief, reported that during the first ten months of 1968 a total of \$109,096 in relief contributions have been channeled through BWA offices to Baptists in Nigeria, Congo, India and other countries where human needs exist, without a penny being deducted for administration or transfer costs.

The figure actually represents only a small portion of what Baptist bodies are doing for relief, Woyke said. The Alliance publicizes needs as they develop, and Baptist bodies are encouraged to meet the needs either through the Alliance direct or through their own mission boards or other channels open to them.

Woyke reported that the 300,000 Baptists in England have been asked to give at least a day's pay in 1969 to help the needy around the world. The council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland has suggested that contributions, over and above all other gifts to world mission and service, be made on Good Friday, April 4, 1969.

The administrative committee also heard a report on plans for the Baptist World Congress in Tokyo, Japan, July 12-18, 1970. Mrs. R. L. Mathis of Birmingham, Ala., program chairman for the congress, said Japanese Baptists have been asked to suggest a theme for the meeting, since various themes being considered by her committee do not translate well into Japanese.

The committee has asked Japanese Baptist leaders to suggest a theme in the Japanese language which can then be translated into other languages.

Mrs. Mathis, BWA associate Robert Denny, and congress music director Claud Rhea of Richmond, visited Japan in November to make arrangements for the meeting. Budokan, a closed sports arena seating 15,800 persons, has been chosen for the meeting site. Smaller auditoriums within short walking distance will be used for sectional meetings.

The congress will meet for six days, beginning at 6:00 p.m., Sunday, July 12, and concluding Saturday night, July 18, 1970. Morning sessions will major on Bible study and an application of Christian principles to problems of the modern world. Afternoons will feature sectional meetings for special interest groups. The evening sessions will be inspirational and evangelistic.

Southwestern Trustees Grant  
Raises, Plan New Construction

FORT WORTH (BP)--Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary re-elected officers, heard committee reports, raised faculty and staff salaries and made plans for future expansion during their semi-annual meeting on the seminary campus here.

James E. Coggin, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth, was re-elected chairman; Ralph M. Smith, pastor, Hyde Park Baptist Church, Austin, Tex., vice chairman; and seminary business manager Wayne Evans, secretary.

The financial committee report showed total assets on July 31, 1968 of \$18,964,541. Of this \$6 million-plus is endowment.

F. Howard Walsh, of Fort Worth, chairman of the building and grounds committee, reported construction under way on several new parking lots and the medical center.

Plans for a new Children's Building were reviewed and the renovation of Price Hall discussed. Both projects are scheduled as soon as funds are available. Walsh also reported the early construction of a president's home.

In the president's report to the trustees, Robert E. Naylor cited the largest fall enrollment since 1961. The 1,735 students represent an increase of 121 over 1967.

Trustees, faculty members and their wives heard a report on Naylor's recent trip to the South Seas during a dinner session.

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Hot Money Lands At Right  
Church On A Wrong Cue

(12-3-68)

NASHVILLE (BP)--For a while, it looked like some shy philanthropist had dumped a bundle of money on the steps of First Baptist Church here right in the middle of a budget campaign.

Fat chance! It turned out to be a bank robber getting rid of some booby-trapped loot.

Robert Snead, minister of music at the church, saw it all and leaped into action.

Snead was sitting in his upstairs office when he heard a car come to a screeching stop outside.

Looking out, he saw red smoke pouring from the car. The driver jumped out, jerked off his coat, fanned the smoke, jumped back in, started toward the corner, stopped again, and fanned the smoke some more.

Snead ran downstairs, thinking the car was on fire and seeking to help. The car had gone, but Snead found on the sidewalk a bundle with a genuine \$5 bill on top, but fake money underneath. Red smoke was pouring from the bundle.

Snead called the police and five patrol cars converged on the scene. The story then began to fall into place.

A nearby branch bank had been robbed of less than \$600. The teller had given the robber a smoke bomb disguised as a packet of \$5 bills. The robber put the "money" into his coat pocket, and three minutes later as he drove past the church, the bomb went off.

Snead said when he called the police, he thought that someone had booby-trapped the money to try to kill the man, and that the bomb might yet explode outside the church.

Despite Snead's description of the car and the driver, police several days later had not located the thief.

Snead said everyone he knows, and many strangers, had kidded him about the incident, about being a non-hero, and about going to any length to raise money for the church's \$586,000 budget campaign.

If he had only captured the robber, Snead might have been able to donate the reward money to the church campaign, which raised nearly \$500,000 on the first day of pledging.

When asked if he really would have given it all to the church, Snead replied, "Well, at least 10 per cent of it."

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## 22 Ousted Church Members Say Convention Exceeded Authority

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--A statement prepared by the pastors of three of the four churches excluded from the Arkansas Baptist Convention was signed by 22 of the churches' members in a meeting here protesting the action as illegal, unconstitutional, and as persecution.

The statement said that the convention went beyond its authority in attempting to discipline the four churches on doctrinal matters, and that the action was actually illegal because it was taken before the convention was duly constituted.

The open meeting was held at University Baptist Church here, one of the four churches ousted by the convention because of practices of either "alien immersion" or "open communion," or both.

The statement was drafted by the pastors of three of the churches: Charles B. Thompson of First Baptist Church, Russellville, Ark.; Merle A. Johnson Jr., of First Baptist Church, Malvern, Ark.; and Perry D. Blount of Lake Village Baptist Church, Lake Village, Ark.

The pastor of the fourth church, Glynn McCalman of University Baptist Church where the meeting was held, explained that he was not signing the statement, but this was not to be taken as opposition. He indicated that he might sign it later.

After a caucus, members of the University Baptist Church present announced that the entire church would consider the statement at its Wednesday night service two days later.

Stating that "we do not look upon ourselves as being legally out of the convention," the signed statement contended that the authority of the state convention is restricted to messengers to the convention and not to churches from which the messengers come.

The convention's constitution states that "The convention shall be composed of messengers from regular Baptist churches which are in sympathy with the principles and purposes of this convention, and which desire to cooperate with other churches through this convention."

The statement signed by members of the four churches contended that there was an unconstitutional interpretation of the meaning of the term "regular" Baptist churches at the Hot Springs convention in November to include only churches which do not practice "open communion" and "alien immersion."

The interpretation at the Hot Springs convention was based on resolutions passed by the convention during previous years on a majority vote. Some of these resolutions were made appendices to the constitution or bylaws, but by majority vote, and not by the two-thirds vote necessary to amend the constitution and bylaws, the statement said.

The group contended that article four of the convention's constitution "forever safeguards local churches from any ecclesiastical authority being exercised by the convention, such as the action to withdraw fellowship."

In strong language, the statement declared: "The people of the Arkansas Baptist churches should be told that we feel that this is persecution and we see this as an attempt to dictate to the local church, which would make the convention an ecclesiastical body with power of expulsion over the local church."

The statement further pointed out that from time to time there have been efforts at the Southern Baptist Convention to make "open communion" and "alien immersion" tests of fellowship, but that the convention presidents have always ruled such efforts out of order.

Those attending the meeting stated that the churches involved should continue to cooperate with the convention, sending their missions contributions to the convention office for distribution.

"We may be denied our credentials in Ft. Smith at the 1969 session, but we are going to be there asking to be seated," concluded the statement.

The group said it would not meet with a committee for reconciliation appointed by the convention "because, in our opinion, there is no reason for this committee because a legal breach has taken place."

They added they would be glad to discuss the legality of the action with an impartial committee appointed for this purpose, and suggested a public meeting of all interested persons at a later time.

Thompson, pastor of the Russellville church, stressed that the churches were not trying to make any other churches adopt policies of observing open communion. "We do not feel that the convention has any authority to rule one way or another on doctrinal matters," he said. "We must want to be left alone as autonomous churches."



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