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Baptist Public Opinion
Poll Planned For Papers

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)--Plans for a Baptist public opinion poll similar to the famed Gallup Poll were presented here during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The public opinion poll on current issues is to be conducted by the research and statistics department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, and distributed through the Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Called "Baptist VIEWpoll", the monthly feature will try for the first year to give a cross section of the views of Baptist pastors and Sunday School teachers on current affairs and issues, the editors of nearly 30 Baptist state papers were told.

Martin Bradley, secretary of the board's research and statistics department, told the editors that the national accounting firm of Peat, Marwick and Mitchell was helping by maintaining all contact with the pastors and teachers polled, to insure complete confidence of the names of those being polled.

Bradley said that contact had been made with the Gallup Poll, and that George Gallup Jr., was very interested in the Baptist VIEWpoll idea.

Bradley said there would be cooperation between Gallup and his office so that subject matter could be used at the same time by both groups, enabling a comparison between Baptist views and the general public.

Most of the three-day meeting of Baptist editors was devoted to speeches, addresses, and workshop sessions by professional newsmen, editors and printing experts on ways to improve Baptist publications.

Elected new president of the association was R. G. Puckett, editor of the Maryland Baptist Lutherville, Md. Puckett, former editor of the Ohio Baptist Messenger, Columbus, Ohio, and former associate editor of the Western Recorder in Louisville, Ky., succeeds Jack Gritz, editor of the Baptist Messenger in Oklahoma City.

Elected vice president was host editor J. Marse Grant of the Biblical Recorder here, and re-elected secretary-treasurer was Don McGregor, associate editor of the Baptist Standard in Dallas.

Principal speakers for the meeting were Sherwood Wirt, editor of Decision magazine, monthly publication of the Billy Graham Association in Minneapolis; and Kenneth Butler, a layout and design consultant from Mendota, Ill., who gave a critique with suggestions for improvement of each of the member publications.

Several North Carolina newspaper editors spoke of the role of the Baptist editor, generally urging them to be "prodders of conscience," to be "prophets" to be creative in their publications.

Wirt, in two addresses, urged the editors to develop their skills as classic writers, saying he felt they were setting their sights too low. He lamented that Southern Baptists apparently do not have a quality school of writing that does more than trains "hacks and scribblers."

Wirt said he believed Baptist state papers were chocking their organs with hard news, and leaving out the Good News, saying they depended too heavily on the Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

He said that an evangelistic article ought to be included in every issue to "keep your papers from going flat spiritually." He advocated Baptist papers telling who Baptists are, what they believe, and the plan of salvation.

He also urged articles dealing with social issues in an interpretive way, giving what the Bible has to say on such issues of race, poverty, abortion, highway safety, etc.

In business session, the editors approved on first reading a constitutional change which calls for election of a president-elect instead of a vice president, and another making the host editor a member of the program committee.

A resolution commended the Baptist Press, news service of the SBC, and urged more financial support to enable daily mailings of news to the state papers.

Next meeting of the editors will be in connection with the annual meeting of the executive secretaries of Baptist state conventions, in Arizona. They voted to meet in Kentucky in 1973. Texas is the host state in 1972.

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Home Missions Offering Jumps About 15 Percent

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists' Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions in 1968 increased 15 percent over a perplexing lag in 1967, hopefully creating enough momentum to reach 1969's \$6½ million goal, Board officials said here.

Total collections of \$4,682,555 revealed an increase for all areas except two--Colorado and Oregon-Washington, according to Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary-treasurer of the denomination's Home Mission Board here.

Rutledge said the 1968 figure shows a specific increase over 1967 of \$594,085--the largest dollar increase in the offering's history.

He explained that Colorado had reported contributions from Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota up until 1968 when these states formed the Northern Plains Convention. Therefore, the decrease in Colorado's reported figure is accounted for in the \$7,630 reported separately from the new Northern Plains Convention.

Rutledge attributed the increase mainly to three factors:

A renewed realization that the annual offering provides almost half the financial support of the denomination's major homeland missions efforts; promotion of establishing 500 new churches (Project 500); and also promotion of the international Crusade of the Americas now in full swing.

He said he really could not even theorize what might have caused the 1967 lag, and indicated that the 1969 goal will be difficult to reach because the goal was set in long-range planning on the assumption that the 1967 and 1968 goals would be met.

The larger goals were undertaken as a part of the observance of the 1968-69 convention-wide emphasis on evangelism and world missions, Rutledge explained.

"While this year's goal is unusually high, we hope for another sizable increase," Rutledge said.

In 1969 the first \$4,850,000 is earmarked for support of the outlined Home Mission Board programs as well as special missions projects.

Of the remaining \$2 million, \$1½ million is earmarked for Project 500 and \$150,000 to assist in providing critically-needed Christian social ministries not otherwise provided for in the budget.

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Baptist Mayor in Washington Honored; Expresses Optimism

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Negro mayor of the nation's capital, a Baptist, has been awarded a brotherhood citation by the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ).

"I am optimistic about the city of Washington," Mayor Walter E. Washington told about 1200 persons gathered to honor him at the 1969 Brotherhood Citation dinner, sponsored by the NCCJ.

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Declaring that "no city has had the strife, pressures and difficulties we have had during the last year," Mayor Washington said he sees many signs of hope and reasons for optimism for a better and safer life for citizens in the nation's capital.

"From the banker to the man in the street, I hear that we are going to overcome," he declared.

The vice president of the United States, Spiro T. Agnew, presented the citation to Mayor Washington for the NCCJ. Agnew praised the mayor for the way he has handled the recent crisis in the nation's capital.

"But we should honor him for the crises he has prevented," the vice president said. "The genius of Mayor Washington is in the headlines not written because of him," Agnew declared.

In response to the vice president, the mayor praised the people in Washington of all faiths and races who have given him strength by "pulling together during this period."

Referring to the 1968 April riots and the fears related to Resurrection City last summer, he declared that the people of Washington "are the champions of the world."

"There is no other way for a city to prosper than for black and white, Jew and Gentile to move together," Mayor Washington said.

Mayor Washington, a Baptist, becomes one of a host of prominent Americans who have been honored by the NCCJ. The list includes former Presidents Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the late John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Another Baptist layman, Brooks Hays, former congressman from Arkansas and president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1958 and 1959) was chosen for the Brotherhood honor in 1963.

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Ashely Named Director
Of Camp Ridgecrest

2/13/69

NASHVILLE (BP)--Monroe Ashley of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board staff here has been named director of Camp Ridgecrest for Boys in Ridgecrest, N. C., effective Feb. 15.

A native of Greenville, S. C., Ashley is a graduate of Furman University, Greenville, S. C., and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C.,

Ashley has served as pastor of the Forestville Baptist Church, Wake Forest, N. C., and Baptist Chaplain at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Since 1967 he has been management consultant, office of management services, Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Camp Ridgecrest is owned and operated by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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State Executive Secretaries
Elect Roberts New President

2/13/69

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP)--The executive secretaries of 30 Baptist state conventions, meeting here for their annual session, elected as their president Ray Roberts, executive secretary of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, Columbus.

Roberts succeeds Robert Lee, executive secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, as head of the state convention executive secretaries' organization.

Elected vice president was Roy Gresham, executive secretary of the Baptist Convention of Maryland, with offices in Lutherville; and elected secretary was James H. Smith, executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist State Convention in Carbondale, Ill.

The state convention executive secretaries met jointly with the editors of 30 Baptist state papers for an opening banquet, and then went into separate session to discuss internal matters of mutual concern.

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