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June 13, 1969

SBC Rejects Demands Of Black Manifesto

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention here adopted overwhelmingly a resolution totally rejecting the demands, principles, and methods of the Black Manifesto, refusing to soften the hard-hitting language of the statement.

As adopted by the convention, the resolution stated:

"Be it further resolved that we reject in total the demands, principles and methods espoused by the National Black Economic Development Council which has made outrageous claims against religious bodies in our nation, proclaiming our disapproval of the intimidation, threats, and ultimatums propagated by leaders of this movement..."

Rumors had been rampant that the author of the Black Manifesto, James Forman, might come to the convention to present personally his demands for reparations, but Forman never showed.

An effort to soften the resolution by deleting the words "the demands" and "principles" of the Black Manifesto, and deleting the word "outrageous" lost with only a few dozen messengers wanting to soften the wording.

Robert Alley, professor at the University of Richmond, Va., supported the request to delete the words, explaining that the convention had a right to raise questions concerning the methods black militants used in making the demands for reparations, but was hardly in a position to question the motives of black people who had been oppressed for years.

One major change, however, was made in the resolution. A paragraph was deleted which urged Southern Baptists to give continuing support to all government and social service agencies, which work through legitimate means and channels to lift the material and social status of needy people.

A standing vote on the deletion of the paragraph was so close that messengers had to use their last printed ballots. Consideration of the entire resolution was delayed for more an hour while the ballots were counted.

Glenn Lawhon, pastor in Forest City, Fla., made the motion that the paragraph be deleted, saying Baptists ought not to support just any "hairbrained idea" the government might come up with in the poverty program.

Several other amendments to change the resolution failed. One would have asked the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, in continuing to implement the 1968 SBC-adopted "Statement Concerning the Crisis in Our Nation," to be careful to maintain the balance between faith and works, evangelism and social action.

Another amendment which lost would have changed a statement urging Baptists to work for social justice and political emancipation among all peoples by deleting the key words and calling on all citizens instead to seek first the Kingdom of God.

As adopted by the convention, the strongly-worded resolution not only rejected the demands of black militants for reparations, but also expressed appreciation for those persons and agencies which have made courageous efforts to work for racial justice and human betterment in difficult areas.

The resolution concluded by calling upon "all citizens of whatever race, creed or national origin to work for racial justice, economic improvement, political emancipation, educational advancement and Christian understanding among all peoples of the nation and world."

The resolution also reaffirmed the Statement Concerning the Crisis in Our Nation adopted by the SBC in 1968 which declared, among other things, commitment to obtain equal human and legal rights for all people, refusal to be a part of racism, and acceptance of

every Christian, regardless of race as a brother welcome in church fellowship. It further urged the Home Mission Board and other agencies to give prayerful urgency to continuing implementation of the crisis statement.

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SBC Adopts Five Resolutions
Defeats One on Objectors

6/13/69

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--After extending time for debate and running out of official ballots, the Southern Baptist Convention here adopted five resolutions, and narrowly defeated a resolution concerning conscientious objectors to military service.

Resolutions were adopted urging a Baptist hospital in New Orleans to put its policy of integration into action, requesting more use of Baptist church educational curriculum materials, opposing a United States representative to the Vatican, urging peace and justice for all men, and asking Baptists to study applications of the first amendment to the Constitution.

Rejected, after lengthy debate and an amendment to the text, was a resolution that would have re-affirmed a 1940 convention action asking for that those who for reasons of religious conviction are opposed to military service should be exempted from forced military conscription.

An amendment to the resolution was offered by Jim Howard of Georgia who asked that a sentence to be deleted which stated that the resolution did not imply approval or support of any who refuse to accept the full obligation of responsible citizenship.

Howard said that the sentence was objectionable because it implied that when someone has religious convictions, he is a substandard citizen.

Emotional pleas for the sentence to remain came from Arthur Leininger of Tampa, Fla., Bill Hale of Richton, Miss., and Jerry Douglas of Clovis, N.M.

They argued that to delete the sentence would help those who have burned draft cards, that it would be a direct slap in the face to thousands of Baptists who serve in the military, and that it was not in tune with Christianity and patriotism.

A student from the University of Richmond, Steve Hassell, favored the proposal, but was interrupted at least three times as he tried to speak.

On the final standing vote, balloting was so close that the messengers had to use their last official printed ballot. The vote count was not announced, only that the resolution failed.

Another resolution that drew debate asked Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans to bring actual practice in line with its stated policy of making its services available to all persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, or ability to pay. The resolution passed by an estimated two to one margin.

On the Vietnam war, the convention approved a resolution urging President Richard Nixon and other responsible diplomatic leaders "to pursue every possible effort to secure an equitable settlement of the Vietnam conflict as soon as humanly possible."

It also commended Defense Secretary Melvin Laird for his appeals to the Hanoi government to grant basic humanitarian and legal rights to American prisoners of war.

Two approved resolutions dealt with separation of church and state, one opposing appointment of a United States representative to the Vatican, and reaffirming opposition to the use of public tax funds for religious functions or institutions.

A resolution concerning the First Amendment was adopted by the convention asking Baptists to carefully study the contemporary applications of the First Amendment in the situation they face, but did not support the Dirksen Amendment to the First Amendment as originally requested.

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Claud Logan Asbury of Wilmington, N. C., who offered the resolution to the committee, asked to read his version as submitted to the committee to the convention, but was ruled out of order.

Asbury disagreed, and Convention President W. A. Criswell ordered him to be seated. After some shoving behind the platform, Criswell shouted that there is no way to conduct the convention except by following the rules. "I'm the president of this convention," he declared.

In previous conventions, Southern Baptists have opposed any change in the First Amendment, saying it is adequate to protect religious liberty.

Another resolution adopted by the convention gave "encouragement and support to our Congressmen" who are backing legislation in Congress dealing with regulation and possible deletion of cigarette and liquor advertisement from the mass media.

Messengers also approved a resolution urging Baptists to use the Life and Work curriculum materials prepared especially for Southern Baptists by the Sunday School Board.

A resolution which earlier had been submitted to the resolutions committee opposing the Anti-Ballistic Missile System was referred by the resolutions committee by vote of the Convention to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington for study and a possible statement.

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SBC Delets Recommendations From Extremism Statement

6/13/69

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention voted here to receive the report of its Christian Life Commission on extremism but to delete its specific recommendations.

Richard Barrett, a layman from Pelahatchie, Miss., who identified himself as a Vietnam veteran, introduced the motion to delete the recommendations.

He told the messengers meeting in the Rivergate Exhibition Center here that the report was a worthy one but in need of further study.

A strongly worded statement preliminary to the recommendations presented by Christian Life Commission Executive Secretary Foy Valentine, condemned extremism, both of the left and right as "dangerous," "insidious," and "anti-Christian."

The statement did not name any specific extremist group or individual but confined itself to a strong dissent on extremist elements which represent "a grave threat to our political, economic, social and religious life."

Recommendations the messengers deleted would have suggested that Southern Baptists study and become alert to extremist forces. They enumerated a number of general guidelines which Christians could follow in confronting extremism.

The Christian Life Commission's preliminary statement bore down equally hard on extremism to the right and left.

"Both expressions of extremism in the church are equally disruptive and destructive. Both have theological overtones when found among church members.

"Those of the left," the statement continued, "would turn the church into an agency of political pressure for radical restructuring of society while ignoring the supernatural dimension of God's saving grace...."

"Those of the right declare that the church's concern is only for man's soul and seek to force every member into a rigid adherence to the Bible as they see it, while ignoring the strong, pervasive emphasis of our Lord upon a costly discipline which places moral and ethical demands upon every Christian in all personal and social relationships."

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SBC Says "QUEST" Not
Suitable as TU Name

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention here told the Baptist Sunday School Board they found unsuitable the name "Quest" as the new name for Training Union, a Sunday night activity in the churches.

Noah Phillips of Keller, Tex., who made the motion, said he felt the new name was silly, implied Southern Baptists were uncertain where they were headed, and that the Convention didn't have an opportunity to participate in the selection.

Landrum Leavell of Wichita Falls, Tex., chairman of the trustees of the huge publishing agency said the decision left the institution in great difficulty.

Messengers suggested individually that the agency distribute literature as planned, but that the Sunday School Board try to come up with a name more acceptable.

Within a few hours after the action was taken, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board Executive Secretary James L. Sullivan announced to the press that board officials had decided to retain the name "Training Union" until further notice.

"We have heard what the convention is saying, and we want to respond as definitely, sincerely, and sympathetically as possible," Sullivan said.

An effort to get the messengers to reconsider their action also was unsuccessful.

Wayne Dehoney of Louisville, Ky., a past president of the convention, called for the messengers to reconsider. He contended the first action was incorrect in precedent, procedure, practicality, and in ethical responsibility.

"I reacted emotionally to this name," said Dehoney in explaining his reason for voting against the name of "Quest" initially. Here are the added reasons he gave.

"First of all, our churches are in trouble with their educational programs. We are battling a declining enrolment.

"Second, I've been coming to Nashville (home of the agency) for bread and I've been getting a stone. He cited the church growth plan of a few years ago as an example.

"While this may not be a valid statement, many of us feel there is a widening gap between the planning desk and the churches.

"We're asking for a laboratory test of these ideas. I can't imagine General Motors Corp., coming out with something new without field testing these ideas.

Dehoney's remarks drew extended applause but not his request to reconsider.

Mrs. R. L. Mathis of Birmingham, Ala., newly-elected president of Woman's Missionary Union, defended the selection of the name of "Quest".

I believe it is a good word and a suitable word," she said. "We can make of a word anything we wish."

Mrs. Mathis pointed out the name had been approved within the process provided by the convention and carried the endorsement of the Sunday School Board's trustees.

In other action the messengers voted to reveal the vote for the convention presidency. It was W. A. Criswell, 7,482, and William Smith, 450, of a total 8,179 votes.

The messengers tabled three motions on the grounds they were covered in resolutions considered earlier. The motions called for a policy of desegregation of all convention agencies, desegregation of Southern Baptist Hospital here, and Bible reading in public schools.

The messengers referred to their Executive Committee a motion for the board of Southern Baptist Hospital to participate in the Medicare program or justify their position.

Approved was a motion for more reverence among the messengers during prayer and Scripture reading and a second asking for more adequate time at the 1970 Convention to transact business.

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Training Union Name
To Be Kept, Board Says

6/13/69

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--In response to the vote of the Southern Baptist Convention that the name "Quest" is considered to be unsuitable as a name for the church training program of Southern Baptists, administration officials of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board have decided to retain the name "Training Union" for the program at this time.

The decision followed within a few hours the intense debate on the matter on the convention floor.

"We have heard what the convention is saying," James L. Sullivan, executive secretary-treasurer of the board, "and we want to respond as definitely, sincerely, and sympathetically as possible."

The name of the Sunday School Board department which is responsible for the promotion of the church/education program will remain the Church Training Department, a retitling approved by the elected Sunday School Board in 1968 at its meeting at Glorieta Baptist Assembly along with the "Quest" name.

"There is no way of estimating the cost of this action," stated Philip B. Harris, secretary of the department. "Nearly 30 church study course books are in the publishing process. They will need considerable editorial change. Quantities of free leadership materials have been printed, and will have to be scrapped.

"Materials in Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union publications carry cross references to "Quest" which will need to be deleted," said Harris.

"We would need to add to this the revision of the Baptist Book Store catalog, which is now being printed, in addition to costs of developing the new name to this point," he added.

Not all of the references to the "Quest" name will be deleted. Some materials have already been published and are available from Baptist Book Stores. Such materials will not be called back, but will not have major consideration in the situation, according to board officials, he said.

"The new name was not to have been used on church literature materials until October 1, 1970," stated Harris. "Thus the change is not as expensive as it would have been if the target date had been earlier."

Copy for these curriculum materials is in the process of being written, but can be changed before printing processes have been begun, he explained.

"Southern Baptists have been asking for drastic improvements in the church training program," said Sullivan, "and this was to have been our effort at giving them these improvements. The retention of the present name will not markedly slow down the improvements of the program itself, however. The program will still seek to lead Southern Baptists to be the people of God, in knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills," he stated.

Harris pointed out that plans will proceed to issue a new adult curriculum with a contemporary flavor, new youth publications, and fresh materials for children and pre-schoolers.

The new periodicals will still be released to the churches in October, 1970. New leadership materials will precede issuance of the curriculum.

Only the name will be changed to respond to the convention.

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SBC Messengers Favor
Social Action in Poll

by Catherine Allen

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Persons attending the Southern Baptist Convention registered strong opposition to racial discrimination and favored increased emphasis on social relationships in an opinion poll conducted here.

With the drop of a marble, persons expressed their opinions in Marble-matic Research at the rate of 600 a day.

"Your opinions are important," said signs on the booth manned by the research and statistics department of the Baptist Sunday School Board of Nashville, Tenn.

Participants answered questions ranging from government to covers of Sunday School literature by dropping marbles beside the answers which matched their opinions. Questions were changed each day.

Four questions had overtones of race relations and social action. One asked if race should be a factor in considering applicants for church membership. Almost 52 percent said no, while 40 percent said each church must decide the matter on its own. Six percent said yes.

Asked if they would move if colored people moved to their neighborhood in great numbers, 48 percent of 624 persons said no, 37 percent said maybe, and 14 percent said definitely yes.

On a question related to discriminatory sale of houses, 81 percent of 211 voters said that persons should be permitted to choose the person to whom he wishes to sell. Fourteen percent said persons should be required to sell houses to the highest bidder.

A question with the portent of social ethics said, "Considering the emphasis each of the following areas has received in Southern Baptist churches, which one most needs an increased emphasis now?"

Forty-one percent said the increased emphasis should be on Christian ethics and social relationships. Twenty-six percent supported emphasis on Baptist doctrine, 15 percent on evangelism, and 16 percent on worship.

A question probing support for the Vietnam War indicated 60 percent thought the United States was right in sending troops to Vietnam. Thirty-four percent thought sending troops was a mistake.

Sixty-five percent of 219 voters strongly or mildly agreed that war is justified when other ways of settling international disputes fail. Thirty-five percent either mildly or strongly disagreed.

Eight-five percent of 637 voters said that every physically fit young American male should be willing to serve in the Armed Forces.

Eighty-two percent of 507 voters gave Richard M. Nixon approval in his handling of the presidency, while only a percent disapproved.

In other government-related questions, 60 percent of interviewees viewed big government as the greatest threat to the country in the future. Sixteen percent pointed to labor as the largest threat, while 13 percent pointed to big business.

Sixty percent of 511 interviewees strongly or mildly agreed that they would rather close Baptist schools than to accept financial aid from the federal government.

Approximately 44 percent of poll participants on Monday and Tuesday and 54 percent on Wednesday were church staff members.

Martin Bradley, secretary of the Research and Statistics Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, said this is the seventh consecutive year an opinion poll has been conducted at the Convention.

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FINAL SBC ROUNDUP

**Baptists Take Dim View
Of Objectors, Militants**

By Roy Jennings

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--A record-breaking throng of messengers to the 112th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention took a dim view of conscientious objectors and the Black Manifesto of Negro militants, while speaking out on a dozen issues and re-electing President W. A. Criswell.

The nearly 17,000 messengers also found "Quest," the new name for Training Union, unsuitable because of its lack of dignity and implications and connotations of the word. Officials of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board said the name would remain Training Union for the time being.

Messengers received progress report of their 19 Convention agencies but declined to take action on 12 recommendations of the Christian Life Commission on extremism.

The report of the social action agency condemned extremism, both of the left and right, as "dangerous, insidious, and anti-Christian."

In a resolution on Christian social concern, the messengers said they rejected in total the demands, principles, and methods espoused by the National Black Economic Development Council.

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The messengers called the claims for \$500 million in reparations against religious bodies in the nation "outrageous" and expressed disapproval of the "intimidation, threats, and ultimatums propagated by leaders of the movement.

At the same time the messengers called upon all citizens, regardless of race, creed, or national origin to work for racial justice, economic improvement, political emancipation, education advancement, and Christian understanding among all people, and reaffirmed the SBC Statement on the Crisis in the Nation adopted last year.

A need for a greater emphasis on family life and sex education through the home and church and for opportunities for Baptist young people to participate in the decision-making process of the denomination, also was formally noted.

The messengers expressed the hope the broader participation would provide a productive outlet for the current critical role of youth within the existing structure of the denomination.

Efforts to reaffirm a denominational position of 29 years that persons opposed to military service for religious convictions be exempted from forced military conscription lost by a narrow vote.

Attempts to push through convention positions on putting the Bible back in public schools and requiring writers and seminary professors to sign doctrinal statements were defeated or modified.

The request for the return of the Bible to public schools was caught up in a resolution asking Baptists at all levels to study carefully the present applications of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution in their area.

Messengers substituted for the other request a motion instructing the convention to call to the attention of their agencies the doctrinal statement framed after careful discussion in 1963 and to urge elected trustees of these agencies to make sure their programs are consistent with it.

As initially presented, the motion called for all writers of Sunday School and Training Union literature and seminary professors to sign statements "affirming their personal belief in the authority, the doctrinal integrity, and the infallibility of the entire Bible."

James L. Sullivan, executive secretary of the Sunday School Board, opposed the motion. He said the motion wouldn't even permit his agency to publish Amazing Grace because he wouldn't be able to find the writer.

In other action the messengers:

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--Asked Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans to bring actual practice in line with stated policy of making available the services of the institution to all people regardless of race, creed, color, national origin or ability to pay.

--Opposed the appointment of a United States ambassador to the Vatican, reaffirmed their belief in religious freedom and soul liberty for all men, and reaffirmed opposition to the use of public tax funds for religious functions or institutions.

--Urged President Nixon and other government leaders to pursue every possible effort to secure an equitable settlement to the Vietnam conflict as soon as possible, and expressed support for fair treatment of American prisoners of war in Vietnam.

Registration reached nearly 17,000, almost 1,000 above the previous high of 16,053 messengers who attended the 1965 Convention in Dallas.

President Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, Tex., had little trouble winning his second one-year term over William Smith Jr., a University of Richmond professor. Criswell drew 7,482 votes and Smith 450.

New convention officers joining Criswell were Lee Porter, pastor of First Baptist Church of Bellaire, Tex., first vice-president, and Harper Shannon, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dothan, Ala., second vice-president.

Three convention officers from Nashville were re-elected. They were Clifton Allen, recording secretary; W. Fred Kendall, registration secretary, and Porter Routh, treasurer.

The record \$27.1 million operating budget for 1970, up \$597,100 provided for a two per cent cost of living adjustment for Convention agencies.

In other business, the messengers selected Dallas as the site for the 1974 Convention site and asked their Executive Committee to restudy plans to meet in Portland in 1973. The convention bureau at the Oregon city reported a scheduling problem with the existing date of June 11-15 and asked Southern Baptists to come a week later.

While the convention was basically business oriented, it still offered the messengers addresses of inspiration by such speakers as President Criswell, Scott Tatum of Shreveport, La., John Bob Riddle of Birmingham, S. M. Lockridge of San Diego, and John Bisagno of Del City, Okla.

President Criswell asked the messengers to seek to provide a balanced ministry of evangelism and social responsibility.

Speaking on "Christ in Faith and Work," he explained that the Christian faith has two sharp cutting edges--faith and works.

"Faith and works are inseparable halves of genuine Christianity," he said. "Neither is a substitute for the other. Faith without works is dead."

Tatum emphasized that the authority of Jesus Christ demanded social action. He described it this way:

"Social action recognizes that if we are to win people to Jesus Christ, we must look upon them as persons created in the image of God and worthy of our love, respect and help. It is difficult to understand the philosophy that suggests, 'I want you to go to heaven with me, but I don't want you in my living room or my church.'"

Speaking to the principle of separation of church and state, Riddle accused Congress of funneling Baptist dollars into parochial schools through legislation under the guise of the poverty program and what he called the flimsy child benefit theory.

If a religion is good, it will support itself and if it's bad, it will call for help from the government, Riddle said. He told messengers the greatest peril they faced today was indifference and apathy about this issue.

Lockridge, Negro minister from the National Baptist Convention, criticized persons who contend God is dead. He asked:

"Who assassinated him" What coroner was called? Who was so well acquainted with him that he could identify the deceased? Why was I not called as a member of the family?"

Bisagno, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, fastest growing church in the Convention, closed out the Convention with his personal testimony and an invitation to become a Christian.

One of the final actions of the messengers' Executive Committee was to elect James Monroe, pastor of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., as chairman. Elected vice-chairman was Cooper Walton, layman of Jackson, Miss. Mrs. Ned King of Dallas was re-elected secretary and Porter Routh of Nashville, executive secretary-treasurer.

The shadow of James Forman, leading advocate of the black manifesto, hung over the Convention although he didn't appear.

Had he appeared, President Criswell said the Atlanta black militant would need to get permission from a majority of the messengers to speak to the convention.

The position of Southern Baptists toward the black manifesto contrasted sharply with that of a visiting fraternal messenger, Thomas Kilgore Jr. of Los Angeles, Negro president of the American Baptist Convention.

Kilgore, who claimed black militants had made significant contributions in the area of black authentication, said he would try to work around Forman and his followers if they occupied his denomination's headquarters offices at Valley Forge, Pa.

While messengers expressed their views inside the convention hall, they also took time to participate in an opinion poll, registering sharp opposition to racial discrimination and favoring an increased emphasis on social relationships.

About 60 per cent of the persons polled thought the United States was right in sending troops to Vietnam and 82 per cent supported Richard M. Nixon in how he is handling the presidency.

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Evangelists Elect
Messegee President

6/13/69

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Evangelists from across the Southern Baptist Convention heard a battery of inspirational speakers and elected officers at their annual meeting at First Baptist Church here.

Evangelist Charles Massegee of Dallas, Tex., succeeded John Tierney of Greenville, S.C., as president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists. Jerry Riemer of Oklahoma City, was elected vice-president.

Other new officers include Jim Hodges, Lakeland, Fla., music chairman; Darcy Hodges, Oklahoma City, assistant music chairman; Joe Shaver, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., treasurer; Don Womack, Memphis, secretary; and Jack Taylor, Castle Hills, Tex., pastor advisor.

Tierney appointed a committee to study ways of cooperating with schedule changes proposed for the special 125th anniversary format the Southern Baptist Convention will put into effect next year in Denver, Colo.

Speakers at the evangelists' conferences were Angel Martinez, Ft. Smith, Ark., Nathan Bussey, Lawton, Okla.; James Robinson, Dallas; Tierney; Ramsey Pollard, Memphis; and R. G. Lee, Memphis.

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