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October 17, 1969

California Association Ejects  
Church, Moderator Over Baptism

by Terry Young

LONG BEACH, Calif. (BP)--In a strange turn of events, the Long Beach-Harbor Baptist Association voted not to seat as a messenger to the annual meeting the man who has been the association's moderator (chairman) for the past year.

The action, which resulted in exclusion of C. Robert Tucker, pastor of International Baptist Church in Carson, Calif., came as a result of a recommendation from the association's credentials committee asking the association to deny a petition from the International Baptist Church for the fellowship (membership) in the association.

The committee, headed by Lawrence Cook of San Pedro, Calif., recommended that the church not be recognized because the church's constitution uses the term "New Testament church" in regard to receiving members from other churches.

The committee reported that it felt that the term "churches of like faith and order" should have been used instead of "New Testament church."

In question, however, was not the wording of the church's constitution, but the report from the committee that the church had voted to receive into its membership persons who were immersed by churches other than Baptist churches.

Tucker, the pastor, said that in receiving new members, the church looks at the applicant's individual experience with Christ, and the practice of the particular church that immersed the person, whether the church is Baptist or not.

Thus far, said Tucker in an interview, the church has not accepted a person immersed by a church of another denomination.

While the question of "alien immersion" was discussed, at the association, several speakers conceded that the real question under discussion was concerning what a New Testament church is.

Vote on the credential committee's recommendation passed by a ratio of about 9 to 1, said the presiding officer, Daniel B. Weaver, vice moderator of the association and pastor of Del Amo Baptist Church, Torrance, Calif.

Tucker said that the church might attempt to gain recognition at the meeting of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California when it meets in San Monica, Nov. 11-13. The state convention constitution, however, forbids the seating of messengers from churches that receive members who have been immersed by any church other than a Baptist church.

It is one of the few state conventions in the Southern Baptist Convention which has such a stipulation in its constitution. The Southern Baptist Convention makes no doctrinal requirement for recognition of a cooperating church.

The Long Beach-Harbor Association constitution only requires that "the doctrinal belief and practices of churches shall conform to the articles of faith usually accepted by the Southern Baptist General Convention of California."

Tucker said that the International Baptist Church feels that it meets this test since its own constitution states that "the sole authority for the faith and practice of this church shall be the scriptures of the Old and New Testament," and that the Baptist Faith and Message adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 shall be accepted as a guide to interpretation of these scriptures.

Tucker has been pastor of the church, which formerly was known as the Leapwood Baptist Chapel, since 1966. It was a mission of First Southern Baptist Church, Long Beach, until constituted as a church last March. As a mission, the church was cited by state leaders as one of the better examples of missions in new areas.

A native of Illinois, Tucker was previously pastor of Central Southern Baptist Church in Long Beach, and as pastor of several churches in Illinois.

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Harold Cole Nominated As  
South Carolina Executive

10/17/69

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--A. Harold Cole, assistant general secretary-treasurer of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, was nominated here for possible election as the convention's next executive secretary.

If he is elected to the post by the full convention when it meets in Charleston, S.C., Nov. 18-20, Cole would become the sixth general secretary of the convention, and would succeed Horace Hammett who retires Dec. 31.

The General Board of the convention voted to recommend Cole to the post, acting on a report from a five-man committee appointed last January when Hammett announced his intentions to retire. The nomination was made by Archie Ellis of Columbia, committee chairman.

There were no other nominations from the floor, and the General Board approved Cole's nomination in an apparently unanimous vote.

Since August of 1962, Cole has been assistant general secretary with primary responsibilities for stewardship promotion.

Previously, he was executive secretary of the Council of Christian Education for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. Prior to that, he was director of the North Carolina Baptist student department. He served in the two North Carolina posts from 1957-62.

A native of South Carolina, Cole was director of the South Carolina Baptist student department from 1949-56, and was assistant pastor of a church in Greenwood, S.C.

He was pastor of two Indiana churches while he attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, where he earned the bachelor of divinity degree. He is also a graduate of North Greenville Junior College and Furman University, both Baptist schools in South Carolina.

Furman, in Greenville, S.C., conferred upon him an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1967.

If elected by the convention, he will assume office on Jan. 1, 1970. Hammett retires after eight years as general secretary on Dec. 31, 1969.

In every instance except one, the last four general secretary-treasurers have been named to the office after serving as assistant general secretary.

In other major action, the General Board voted to approve a \$4 million bond issue for Baptist College of Charleston, and voted to recommend a state-wide Cooperative Program budget goal of \$5.3 million for 1970, an increase of about \$250,000 over the 1969 budget.

The bond issue was approved in order to refinance an existing bond issue of about \$2½ million and pay off \$1 million in operating indebtedness at Baptist College of Charleston.

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BP PHOTO to be mailed to Baptist state papers.

Baptist Colleges, Seminaries  
Support, Ignore Moratorium

10/17/69

By the Baptist Press

Throughout the nation, students and some faculty members at Southern Baptist seminaries and colleges and universities both supported and ignored the national moratorium on the War in Vietnam. In a few cases, outright opposition to the moratorium was expressed.

The vast majority of the 54 Baptist colleges and universities operated in 16 states ignored the moratorium.

Generally, it was the larger Baptist schools on the Eastern Seaboard states that staged moratorium activities which seemed most vocal in opposition to the war, including such schools as University of Richmond in Virginia; Wake Forest University, Meredith and Mars Hill in North Carolina; Stetson University in Florida; and Furman University in South Carolina.

Smaller observances were held at Baylor University in Waco, Tex.; Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee; and several other schools in the Southwest.

Outright opposition to the whole concept of the moratorium was expressed by students at Dallas Baptist College in Texas, and Samford University, Birmingham, Ala..

At Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, about 300 students and several faculty members declared opposition to the war, wearing black arm bands. The 1,600-seat chapel at the seminary was packed for showing of a film about war, and discussion afterward lasted so long that about eight professors dismissed their classes.

During the discussion, one unidentified student came to the front, saying that the Lord had been dealing with him. Explaining that he was a conscientious objector, but was deferred as a minister under a 4-D classification, the youth called another student to the front, asked him to serve as his "pastor," then turned his draft card over to him, and asked that he send it back to his draft board for re-classification.

The student said he did not want to hide behind his 4-D classification while so many other students, also selective conscientious objectors, were classified as 1-A.

Three professors spoke to the group in support of the moratorium. Walter Delamarter, professor of social work, said that when he landed on the beaches of Normandy during World War II, he felt he was participating in a just war. Delamarter, who has just returned from a five-week tour of Vietnam, said he could not feel the war there was a just one.

Henlee Barnette, professor of ethics, said that most Southern Baptists would not listen to young men who were conscientious objectors during World War II, but would listen today "because these are our children." Barnette has two sons--one who is a Vietnam war veteran and another who recently has been classified as a draft resister and granted residence in Sweden.

Barnette said that if the Vietnam war turns out to be a colossal mistake, the young men who opposed it ought to be forgiven and pardoned by the government.

Some seminary professors on the campus said they noted a generation gap among the protestors. The younger students seemed to oppose the war generally, while the older students favored it.

One student, Tom Riner, led a small group of students to the county courthouse where they burned a Viet Cong flag in protest of the moratorium.

Another group of students, however, spent much of the day in the lobby of Norton Hall reading the names of Kentucky men killed in the war.

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., was the only other Baptist seminary with student-planned moratorium activities. There, about a third of the 350 students attended a rally where ethics professor Arthur Insko spoke on the Christian attitude toward war. There was also a prayer emphasis at the seminary's chapel.

The moratorium was ignored, with the exception of prayers at chapel services, by students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C.

About 1,700 students attended a special noon-time observance at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N. C., and the school's students were also active in the later demonstration at Salem Square the older part of the city where W. W. Finlator, pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh and outspoken critic of the war, was the speaker.

Finlator also spoke at Meredith College, a Baptist girls' school in Raleigh, when students read a "confession of sin", expressing corporate guilt for "the mass murder of Vietnamese who never injured us."

Several faculty members at Meredith distributed a statement of concern over the war, calling for immediate steps for a cease fire, and asked that students sign the document as well.

At Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N.C., a "day of concern" was observed with a panel discussion between faculty members and students giving both sides of the war.

During a vigil at the University of Richmond, the names of 800 Virginians killed in the war were read by students. "I played football with him," said one student as he read off the name of a friend. At times, as few as 30 people stood around the flagpole, while at other times, the crowd swelled to 150. About 10 per cent of the student body wore black arm bands in support of the moratorium.

In addition to the vigil, there was a service planned by a faculty group featuring hymns, a litany for world peace, and a period of silence. Also, about 30 University of Richmond students participated in a community rally at the state Capitol.

Peace Day was observed at Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., with a major address by U. S. Congressman Don Riegle of Michigan, advocating a timetable for getting out of Vietnam and for repeal of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

About 600 Stetson students also attended an outdoor service, along with 10 local Baptist pastors. Prayers for peace were led by Baptist, Catholic and Jewish leaders. A political forum discussed both pros and cons of the war.

In Kentucky, the moratorium met with little success at three Baptist colleges. Only about 100 attended a teach-in at Georgetown College. At Cumberland College, about 60 students wore armbands--equally divided between black ones protesting the war, and white ones protesting the moratorium. One student wore a sign on his back saying "Bomb Hanoi." A planned downtown march by Campbellsville College students never got off the ground.

Support for the war and opposition to the moratorium came at Samford University in Birmingham, where Congressman Armistead Selden received a standing ovation for his speech in support of the administration's Vietnam war policy.

At Dallas Baptist College, a coffee-house type meeting was held with students expressing support for the administration. The only criticisms were aimed at a "no win" policy in Vietnam. One student who identified himself as a Christian and a Vietnam war veteran, said he would "have killed anybody that got in my way" while there. He then expressed his own version of the so-called "domino theory."

At Baylor University, the country's largest Baptist school, about 100 students attended an anti-war gathering, and 500 attended a rock music show. A counter-rally staged by Young American's for Freedom, however, drew only 55 students, and many of them wore black armbands in opposition to the session.

Plans for a peace rally at Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Tex., were cancelled by students and the administrations for fear that it might be identified with the "national movement and its negative aspects," according to president William G. Tanner.

In Oklahoma, about 150 students from Oklahoma Baptist University and nearby St. Gregoric College, a Catholic school, held a memorial service for war dead, and candlelight march. A total of 210 students and faculty members signed a half-page ad in the campus newspaper supporting the moratorium.

The school's president, Grady C. Cothen, issued a statement explaining that classes met as usual and that the university endorses no political stance. He made the statement to "clear up misunderstandings concerning OBU's position on the moratorium."

Likewise, Mercer University President Rufus Harris issued a statement outlining a policy of neutrality on the moratorium. The student government voted 12-9 in favor of supporting the moratorium, and a public opinion poll revealed that 74 per cent of the students, 85 per cent of the faculty, and 55 per cent of the law students opposed the Vietnam war.

In Tennessee, only a handful of students at Belmont College in Nashville supported the moratorium, sitting in a silent vigil around the flag pole discussing the war. Later in the week, Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission Secretary Foy Valentine of Nashville told Belmont students that too many important Christian values are threatened by war as a way of life for the people of God to compromise with it, accept it, or continue to tolerate it without a greater peace effort.

At most of the Baptist schools in Texas, Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, and other states, there was little moratorium day activity.

No one knows for sure how to interpret the Baptist school response to the moratorium. It could be an indication that generally, Baptist college and seminary students are either apathetic about the war, or do not wish to be identified with the national anti-war movement.

At more than a dozen Baptist campuses, the anti-war feeling seems intense among some of the students, though not always a majority.

Whether the national moratorium, which continues until the war ends, will have a significant influence on the administration is also unclear. One thing is clear, however; the first moratorium day is just a beginning.



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