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November 26, 1969

Public Hearings Set
On SBC Representation

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Executive Committee's bylaws subcommittee has scheduled an open hearing on whether the Southern Baptist Convention should change its system of representation of churches at the annual convention.

The open hearing will be held at the Southern Baptist Convention Building here, 460 James Robertson Parkway, at 8:30 a.m., Dec. 11, 1969.

R. F. Smith, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Durham, N. C., and chairman of the bylaws subcommittee of the SBC Executive Committee's administrative committee, has called the public hearing.

Smith said that all persons wishing to appear before the committee "are cordially invited and urged to be present."

Smith added that persons unable to appear personally but have information they would like the committee to consider "are urged to send immediately such information to the attention of Dr. Porter Routh." Routh is executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee.

Last June, the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans adopted a motion presented by Robert Alley of Richmond, asking that the SBC Executive Committee "be instructed to undertake immediately a thorough study to provide a basis of change in representation for the Southern Baptist Convention."

No guidelines were given to the Executive Committee by the convention on what changes should be made.

Since the convention, however, numerous Baptist state papers have carried editorials or articles with suggested changes.

Some have argued that the convention, with 33,000 churches and a potential of at least one "messenger" representing each church, and up to ten messengers from some churches, is too large to conduct business in a democratic fashion.

Attendance at the New Orleans convention broke all previous records, with 16,678 registered messengers from Southern Baptist churches present. The crowds were so large that many could not find hotel rooms, or seats in the convention auditorium.

Some editorials and articles have suggested that the 60-member Executive Committee be expanded to a larger body, perhaps as many as 300 members, and that it, rather than the convention, conduct most of the business for the 11-million member denomination.

Other proposals have included the idea of "regional" conventions in various sections of the country, and a national convention only periodically.

These and other proposals will be discussed in detail during the open hearing. Information and ideas discussed in the hearing will be taken into consideration by the bylaws committee when it makes its recommendations and report to the full Executive Committee, in 1970.

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College Students Seek Funds
For Starving People of Biafra

11/26/69

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--College students from three denominationally-affiliated schools here have been knocking on doors in a city-wide campaign to raise funds for air flights of food and medicine for the starving people of the break-away province of Biafra.

Calling themselves the "Student Committee for Biafran Relief," the students are from Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene Christian College, and McMurry College. The three schools represent the Baptist, Church of Christ, and Methodist Denominations respectively.

Already, the students have raised \$3,000, and the drive isn't over yet. Most of the funds have been raised through hot dog sales, charged admission to folk music fests, and a massive door-to-door campaign soliciting funds from individuals.

The drive originated at Hardin-Simmons University when Baptist Student Union President King Sanders, a junior from Dallas, became actively concerned about thousands of suffering people there.

Sanders called a meeting of interested students on his own campus. Soon their enthusiasm spread to the other campuses in this West Texas city.

"College students from the three campuses in Abilene are joining together to do something positive for humanity," Sanders said.

Sanders said their goal is to raise \$4,000, the cost of one C-97 plane flight which carries an average of 16 tons of food and supplies.

Sanders is general chairman for the tri-college committee.

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Baptist Couple Contributes
\$100,000 to Hardin-Simmons

11/26/69

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--A Baptist couple from Dallas, Mr. and Mrs. Van Calvin Ellis, has given \$100,000 to Hardin-Simmons University here for the construction of a new residence for the university's president, Elwin L. Skiles.

The couple made another \$100,000 gift to the Baptist school in 1966 to construct a theater which is named in their honor.

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Dallas Architect Named
To Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)--Howard McAdams an architect from Dallas, has been named architectural supervisor in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church architecture department.

A native of Texas, McAdams is a graduate of the University of Texas, Austin.

He was previously self-employed as an architect. Earlier, he served as draftsman for the W. H. Cothrum Co. and Harwood K. Smith and Partners, both in Dallas.

McAdams is a member of the Dallas chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

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C O R R E C T I O N

On the BP roundup of state conventions headlined "Baptist State Conventions Act On Education, Doctrine, Vietnam," mailed 11-25-69, please add words "or open communion" at end of last sentence, graph 13. Sentence should read: "Last year, Arkansas Baptists refused to seat messengers from four churches that practice "alien immersion" or "open communion." Thanks.

--Baptist Press



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