



BAPTIST PRESS
 News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
 460 James Robertson Parkway
 Nashville, Tennessee 37219
 Telephone (615) 244-2355
 W. C. Fields, Director
 Jim Newton, Assistant Director

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-1631
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

March 23, 1971

Divinity Students May Lose Draft Exemption

WASHINGTON (BP)--Divinity students will lose their military draft exemption if proposed legislation recommended by the House Armed Services Committee is approved by the House and Senate.

President Richard Nixon, in a message to Congress in January of this year, asked for the authority to cancel exemptions for divinity students along with deferments of all students after a certain date.

Men who now hold such exemptions would be permitted to retain them, but none would be granted in the future under the proposals. About 17,000 men enter divinity schools each year in the United States, according to government figures.

Under the new bill reported by the committee, conscientious objectors also would be required to serve for three years instead of two in some kind of alternate service.

The committee voted against changing the requirement for conscientious objector status to permit "selective" conscientious objection. To obtain conscientious objection status a young man still must oppose all wars and not just a single conflict, a requirement that was upheld in a recent Supreme Court decision.

In increasing the period of alternate service for conscientious objectors, the committee emphasized that this was "not to be construed as punitive action." The change, the committee said, will now place the conscientious objector in a "more equitable position" to that of his military inductee contemporary.

Committee Chairman F. Edward Herbert (D., La.) who sponsored the amendment to extend the requirement to three years, argued that it was only fair that these men serve a longer stint than draftees, since draftees must join the reserves for four years after their two years of active duty.

The proposed legislation also would extend the draft until July 1, 1973, and would increase the pay for enlisted persons and career servicemen.

Because of the increased pay for enlisted personnel, many observers here view the committee's action as a big step toward an all-volunteer armed forces, a concept that has been endorsed by the present administration as well as spokesmen for many religious organizations.

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Southwestern Seminary Celebrates Founders Day

3/23/71

FORT WORTH (BP)--A round of luncheons, speeches, a television documentary, and special observances marked the 63rd annual celebration of the founding of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

About 200 executives from the Fort Worth business community attended a luncheon hosted by the seminary at the outset of the celebration.

The president of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Paul Mason who is president of the First National Bank here, hailed the seminary "as a place in the heart of our community committed to learning the meaning of words like 'love' and 'peace.'"

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Seminary President Robert E. Naylor told the businessmen that more than 27,000 students have come to the seminary and gone out to all parts of the world. In addition, students from 24 countries outside the U.S.A., are studying at the seminary this year, Naylor said.

The mayor of Fort Worth, R. M. Stovall, read a proclamation designating the anniversary of the founding of the school, March 14, as "Founders' Day in Fort Worth."

The proclamation said that "Southwestern Seminary has been a 'lighthouse on the hill' in the religious life of Fort Worth."

A 30-minute documentary film prepared by a local television station in cooperation with the seminary was telecast on the anniversary. The documentary highlighted the school's history and introduced a persons who were influential in its founding and growth.

In a campus-wide observance, seminary history professor H. Leon McBeth delivered an address praising the influence of the late George W. Truett, former pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, for his role in helping to found the institution. McBeth called Truett "a symbol of Southwestern."

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Committee Accepting Nominations
For SBC Annual Sermon Preacher

3/23/71

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The chairman for the Southern Baptist Convention's committee on order of business has invited interested persons to submit nominations for the preacher of the annual sermon to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Philadelphia in 1972.

Robert S. Scales, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church here, said that the committee would welcome suggestions from Southern Baptists who want to nominate someone for consideration by the committee.

Scales said that during the past 125 years, the annual sermon at the convention has been preached by persons from 19 different states.

Kentucky had led all other states, with 14 native sons preaching the annual sermon. Seven of these were before 1900 and seven afterwards: Georgia is second with 11, seven before 1900 and four since then.

Since the year 1900, Texas has led all other states, with eight since the turn of the century and two before 1900.

South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee have each provided nine preachers for the SBC annual sermon.

Maryland (5), Massachusetts (1), and the District of Columbia (2) each furnished preachers before 1900 but none since.

Florida (5), Arkansas (2), Oklahoma (6), New Mexico (1), and Ohio (1), have been called on for preachers since 1900, but had none before.

Other states to provide preachers for the SBC annual sermon are Alabama, (7), North Carolina (8), Missouri, (3), Louisiana (4), and Mississippi (5).

Nominations should be sent to the committee chairman at P. O. Box 60368, Oklahoma City, Okla., 73106, Scales said.

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460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

LYNN MAY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE. NO.
NASHVILLE TN 37203

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