



**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  
 J. M. Newton, Assistant Director

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**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

June 9, 1971

**Survey Discloses PR Evaluation  
 Of Texas Churches, Evangelists**

**DALLAS (BP)**--The credibility of individual Baptist evangelists could stand some improvement, according to a survey conducted among editors and reporters on key newspapers in Texas.

Opinions of the public relations practices of Baptist churches and Baptist evangelists rated no better than fair in the survey, even though Baptists were ranked first in comparison to similar representatives of other denominations.

A number of criticisms in response to the survey pointed to the need for improvement. "Your PR (public relations) is stronger, but this is not to say necessarily that it's that much better," one newsman wrote.

Representatives of 16 key Texas newspapers, including editors, managing editors and religion writers, responded anonymously to the questionnaire circulated by the public relations department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Purpose of the survey was to surface communication problems faced by individual evangelists and churches which the convention and the Texas Baptist Public Relations Association hope to help solve.

Part of the credibility gap, in the opinion of several newsmen, involved what one called "the numbers game."

"When it comes to playing the numbers game," he said, "I'm not about to accept their claims...so many this, so many that...the real test is how many stay won, after the evangelists has gone. If they stay, then yes, this is valid. If not, something isn't right somewhere."

In response to a question, 61.4 per cent said PR programs of Baptist churches were fair in their experience, 23.6 per cent, good; and 7.6 per cent each, fair to good and poor.

"The PR program of the Baptist General Convention of Texas or the Southern Baptist Convention is great, but the individual church's program varies from church to church," one writer responded. "Some are PR conscious. Others have no programs at all in this area."

Another said, "Most individual churches have no apparent PR programs, unless they want to push some revival meeting they're planning. Then they can be a little too insistent in wanting coverage. Unfortunately, they do not wish to reciprocate if an issue comes up and they are called on for an interview, particularly if the issue is close to home."

Nearly 42 per cent rated the public relations of individual evangelists as fair, 33.3 per cent, good; 8.3 per cent, fair to good; and 16.7 per cent, poor.

Comments ranged from "they come on too strong" to "unimaginative--sole purpose is to get a notice of a meeting in the newspaper."

Over 66 per cent had only a "fair" personal opinion of Baptist evangelists and more than 33 per cent has a "good" opinion.

Enlarging on this ranking, one writer said, "I have mixed emotions here. Some evangelists have a good approach, not just to religion but man to man." He added that some "thump the Bible" when they should be proving their faith.

The newsmen ranked Southern Baptist churches and evangelists first in Texas in rating 10 different denominations from 1 to 10 in PR effectiveness. And 69.7 said "good" when asked how they would compare Baptists with other denominations. Twenty-three per cent said "fair" and 7.7 per cent said "fair to good."

In probing for basic weaknesses in the PR programs of the churches and the evangelists, the survey elicited a wide range of comment.

One newsman observed that Baptists often miss the point of offering something unique, stressing in their promotional pieces the personalities of revival leaders, rather than what they are trying to do for God.

Other criticisms included, poor editing and writing of copy, bad timing of publicity, too much "pulpit jargon," lack of professional touch, too much emphasis on personalities of little known speakers and not enough on substance, lack of knowledge in dealing with the press, lack of concern for deadlines, failure to localize news releases, failure to organize and delegate overall PR responsibility to one person, poor personal contact with papers, failure to recognize novel and newsworthy elements, failure to speak to the "gut issues of the day and try to relate the Christian faith in a way that is truly convincing," and tendency to exert overbearing pressure to print items.

On that last point, one religion editor cited a call-in harrassment campaign during a revival designed to coerce the paper into printing what the particular church wanted. It failed and probably has "blown it" for some time to come with that particular paper, the writer said.

Although the newsmen freely expressed criticisms, the overall tenor of their response was constructive.

Said a managing editor: "Look up something of general interest and concentrate on that. It doesn't do any good to write for the benefit of preachers and choir members. The object is to attract the attention of those who would otherwise have no curiosity about an evangelistic endeavor and therefore not otherwise attend."

Another urged: "Public relations ought to be defined to all pastors as a far broader thing than printed material, ads, radio-TV spots, etc. But when these media are used the space ought to be used well."

"Promotional programs and material are pretty good as long as they are from the BGCT," said another. "Individual churches have varying degrees of efficiency with publicity--some extremely poor. And that's not limited to small, 'backward' churches!"

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Tanner Elected President  
Of Oklahoma Baptist University

6/9/71

SHAWNEE, Okla (BP)--William G. Tanner, president of Mary Hardin-Baylor College in Belton, Tex., for the past three years, was elected president of Oklahoma Baptist University here, effective Aug. 2.

Tanner will become the school's 11th president, succeeding Grady C. Cothen, who resigned last September to become president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The 41-year-old Tulsa native was reared in Texas, where he graduated from high school, earned five degrees and held several pastorates before going to Mary Hardin-Baylor in 1968.

He is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in English and religion, lettered in three sports and served as Baptist Student Union president.

He holds a masters degree in administration and a doctor of education in administration from the University of Houston (Tex.) and bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

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Tanner is former pastor of First Baptist Church, Gulfport, Miss.; Broadway Baptist Church, Houston; West End Baptist Church, Houston; Field Street Baptist Church, Cleburne, Tex.; and Wheelock Baptist Church, Wheelock, Tex.

He is vice chairman of the Board of directors of the Texas Foundation of Voluntarily Support Colleges and Universities and vice president of the Texas Baptist College President's Association.

He is married to the former Ellen Sampey Yates, daughter of Kyle M. Yates of Baylor University, Waco, Tex.

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"Denominational Integration"  
Sought By Brazilian Baptists

6/9/71

RECIFE, Brazil (BP)--Special two-day congresses are being held all over Brazil as part of the "Crusade of Denominational Integration," launched officially by Brazilian Baptists at their annual convention last January.

Primary purposes of the "Crusade of Denominational Integration" are to integrate the individual member into the work and testimony of his church, to integrate the churches into the denominational plans and to solidify results of recent evangelistic crusades.

The idea of such a crusade was conceived by Joao Falcao Sobrinho, general secretary of the Executive Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention.

Falcao has expressed the conviction that many of the nearly 2,500 Baptist churches knew little or nothing about denominational life, do not participate in the cooperate plan of giving and go for years without winning anyone to Christ.

A three-man team, headed by Falcao, schedules the congresses with state Baptist leaders, usually grouping the meetings in three of four adjoining states to save travel expenses and time.

Other team members are Paulo Araujo, bookkeeper and administrative assistant, and Southern Baptist missionary O. D. Martin Jr., director of the stewardship department for the Brazilian Baptist Convention.

Falcao treats the general theme, Martin presents the stewardship aspects and Araujo talks about the financial and legal organization of the local church.

The team led their first congress in February, in the Northeastern State of Bahia. At least 20 more congresses have followed. Others will be held, until all of the Brazil has been touched, according to Miss Roberta Hampton, Southern Baptist missionary press representative.

Congress participants include pastors, deacons, treasurers and other interested workers. One congress, held at the Paraiba State Encampment near Campina Grande, enrolled 63 workers representing 26 of the 32 churches in the state.

All denominational organizations are cooperating in the "year of integration." Sunday School, Woman's Missionary Union and Training Union have published related lessons in their quarterlies, and the National Baptist weekly newspaper constantly promotes denominational integration.

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Southwestern Seminary Adds  
Five New Faculty Members

6/9/71

FORT WORTH (BP)--Five new faculty members have been added to the staff of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Three will joint the seminary's School of Religious Education; one will teach in the School of Church Music, and the fifth will be a guest professor in the School of Theology.

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Appointed to the faculty of the School of Religious Education were L. William Crews of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staff; Alva G. Parks, minister of education at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala.; and Philip H. Briggs, professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

William Colson, candidate for the doctor of musical arts degree at the University of Illinois, was named to the music faculty; and Marion G. Fray, a Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Rhodesia, was appointed 1971-72 guest professor of missions.

Crews, elected associate professor of social work, has been assistant secretary of the department of Christian social ministries of the SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta. He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and the University of Kansas with the master of social work degree. He has also done graduate study toward the doctor of education degree at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Parks, minister of education at Montgomery's First Baptist Church for 13 years, is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville; Troy State University, Troy, Ala.; and Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky. He is a candidate for the doctor of education degree at Southwestern Seminary.

Briggs, who has taught religious education and church administration at Midwestern Seminary since 1965, is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex.; and Southwestern Seminary where he earned the master and doctor of religious education degrees. He has also been minister of education at several Texas and Oklahoma churches.

Colson, named assistant professor of theory and composition, is a graduate of Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, and a candidate for the doctor of musical arts degree at the University of Illinois.

Fray, missionary to Gwelo, Rhodesia appointed by the SBC Foreign Mission Board in 1962, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., and holds a doctor of theology degree from Southwestern Seminary.

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Texas Board Takes Final  
Vote On College Lease-Back

6/9/71

DALLAS (BP)--The Executive Board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas has reversed its decision that a proposal by Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex., may be in violation of convention policy on separation of church and state.

Last March, the board granted Howard Payne the right to sell a men's dormitory to the Brownwood Higher Education Authority for \$1 million, lease it back for 20 years and repurchase it at the end of the time for \$1.

Despite the approval, the board upheld, by a two-vote margin, a ruling by board Chairman James Harris of Fort Worth that the final decision should be submitted to the annual convention in Houston. He made the ruling, he said, because questions had been raised about church-state implications.

At its last meeting, the Executive Board, with little opposition, made the decision final, deciding that the proposal needed no further approval.

At the March meeting, Texas Convention President Jimmy R. Allen told the board that the proposal "is, in effect, the use of the state by the church" and falls into "a gray area of interpretation." Allen was not present when the decision was reversed later. He is pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., and also serves as a Howard Payne trustee.

The plan had gained prior approval of both the convention's Christian Education Commission and program coordinating committee.

Proponents say the plan will allow the school to consolidate its indebtedness into a long-term, tax-free program at an interest rate of 5 to 6 1/2 per cent. That would reportedly save between \$600,000 and \$700,000 in interest payments over the next 20 years.

The Brownwood Higher Education Authority was established last January under a two-year-old state law which allows an incorporated city to establish such an authority. It would have no taxing power and the city would have no jurisdiction after original appointment of self-perpetuating trustees.

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The nine-man authority board includes six Texas Baptists. Four of them are Howard Payne trustees, one is the school's vice president of fiscal affairs and another is a former trustee.

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Compulsory Religion Argued  
Before U.S. Court of Appeals

6/9/71

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a case before the U.S. Court of Appeals here an assistant U.S. attorney argued that compulsory attendance at church or chapel services for men in the nation's military academies has "no entanglements whatsoever" with religion.

Continuing its defense in a higher court of requiring regular attendance at worship services as a part of the "officer's training package," the government's legal spokesman said that the Department of Defense had found "no other way" to accomplish this particular part of an officer's training.

Robert J. Higgins, assistant U.S. attorney, presented the Pentagon's case in a one-hour hearing before a three-judge Court of Appeals.

The case, *Anderson V. Laird* was brought before the U.S. Court of Appeals here by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). In it six midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy and one West Point cadet maintained that the military regulation is in conflict with First Amendment guarantees of freedom of religion.

In a three-day hearing last spring, top Pentagon officials testified before the U.S. District Court here that required attendance at worship services helped future officers to understand "the impact of religion on various individuals."

In August of last year U.S. District Court Judge Howard F. Corcoran upheld the Pentagon's practice and agreed that the purpose of compulsory chapel for future military officers "is purely secular" and that "its primary effect is purely secular."

Arguing against the government's position, Warren K. Kaplan accused the Pentagon of developing a theory "riddled with logical flaws." Kaplan represented ACLU in its appeal to the higher court.

Kaplan described as a "contrivance" the Pentagon's testimony that the "sole purpose of compulsory attendance was to permit future officers to observe how other men worship...so that in future crises they would be able to understand religious needs."

Reading from catalogues and manuals governing the military schools, Kaplan cited a number of statements where, he said, the "real purpose...is to inculcate future officers with religious faith because of the government's belief that (to do so) they will develop better officers."

Even if the Pentagon's practice is for secular purposes, Kaplan contended, "it would still be unconstitutional because it would inhibit religion in general or enable religion."

The ACLU lawyer maintained that the Pentagon's stated purpose could best be served by some nonreligious means, such as a course in comparative religion, ethics classes or occasional representative visits to religious services.

When the government's spokesman began his presentation to the court, he was asked if the Pentagon rested its case solely on that stated earlier as a secular purpose to train better officers by helping them to understand how other men worship.

"This is the most important one," replied Assistant U.S. Attorney Higgins, "but we regard the effect test as important also."

Judge Harold Leventhal, one of the three judges hearing the case, asked why, if this was the Pentagon's "energizing purpose" in requiring compulsory attendance, it would not be better for the men to attend various churches each Sunday and to go to churches other than those of the men's particular religious commitment.

"This prohibition against switching churches is inconsistent," Judge Leventhal observed. Continuing his questioning, Leventhal asked how this regulation could be passed and maintained in view of the military's stated primary purpose.

Higgins responded that the military took this position because of "parents' concern...and so the academies would know where the men are on Sunday morning."

Higgins contended further that the military's requirement of compulsory religion at the academies rested on the "undisputed facts" that "this is a religious country...that the military acts reasonably when it says inductees can expect religious facilities...and that in times of crises military leaders must be capable of responding to the religious needs of military men under stress."

Leventhal asked Higgins whether "it is rational to expect regular attendance." He observed that occasional attendance would accomplish this facet of the officer's training.

The assistant U.S. attorney admitted to the court that to require attendance at worship services could be "counter productive" if the future officers, as some cadets testified last year, are turned against religion. Even in the case of the undergraduate being "neutral" toward religion, Higgins said, military leaders still say the effect of the required attendance regulation is "good."

In disputing the appellants' claim that the compulsory attendance requirement "is replete with entanglements" with religion, Higgins said that "the churches have nothing to do with the operation of the academies and the academies have nothing to do with the operation of churches."

In addition to Leventhal, the other two judges hearing the case were David Baselon, chief of the U.S. Court of Appeals here, and George E. Mackinnon.

