



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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BUREAUS

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Texas Baptist Board OK'S
Federal Aid For Hospitals

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DALLAS (BP)--The Executive Board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas has approved recommendations that the convention's nine hospitals be allowed to accept federal capital grants and long-term, low-interest federal loans.

The recommendations, which grew out of a year's study by a special hospital committee, must be approved by the convention's annual session in Houston, Oct. 26-28.

The 192-member board also approved a record Cooperative Program budget of \$15,250,000. It killed two other recommendations of the hospital study committee and referred to the annual session a request for independent status by trustees of Memorial Baptist Hospital System, Houston.

The board defeated a request that the nine hospitals be allowed to add non-Baptists as trustees. It also narrowly set aside a request that the board assume authority to release a Baptist hospital in case of financial emergency. Normally, an institution must be released at the annual session.

The loans and grants would be sought only in cases where they would prevent hospitals from losing money for complying with federally-required programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, the committee said.

Considerable debate centered around the claim of the committee that Baptist hospitals in effect subsidize the government by failing to accept grants and loans which would equalize their losses.

A minority report by Pastor James Semple of First Baptist Church, Paris, Tex., recommended that funds from released hospitals be used to provide mobile health clinics and religious ministries in non-Baptist hospitals.

But W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, asked the board, "are you trying to tell me you are going to substitute for Baylor Hospital in ministry in a truck?"

Criswell urged the board to accept the hospital study committee report, saying "it's a new day, and if we don't change with it in our method of approach and appeal, I think we're going to die."

The board took time out to help dedicate a new disaster mobile relief unit that will be used by a trained Texas Baptist task force of workers to assist victims of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and other disasters.

The mobile unit is a large truck and trailer rebuilt to contain communications equipment, emergency supplies of food, water and clothing, facilities for generating electric power, bunks, medicine, operating room facilities and a motorized trail bike.

Charles McLaughlin of Dallas, chairman of the Texas Baptist disaster relief committee, presented copies of the unit's manual of operations to representatives of Civil Defense, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta. Texas Baptists cooperate with these agencies in aiding disaster relief victims.

In other action, the board granted \$100,000 to Dallas Baptist College and agreed to help underwrite a loan for another \$189,000 to assist with a debt on the school's computerized media learning center.

Previous Texas Baptist annual conventions have ruled decisively against allowing institutions to receive federal money, because of fear it would lead to government control.

The hospital study committee's report noted, however, that the health care field has changed "markedly" with the "intrusion" of the federal government. It said hospitals now "are virtually dominated in their practices by federal regulations."

The board passed on the Houston hospital's request to the annual convention without recommendation. Members decided more information was needed on the hospital's request but that it should not be delayed from being presented to the annual session.

Memorial Baptist trustees and Executive Director Wilson Turner told the board that the earlier decision on government grants and loans for hospitals would not affect the Houston hospital's request for release.

They said their basic need was for wider-spread community involvement and considerable non-Baptist involvement on the board of trustees.

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Illinois Board Recommends
Budget, Salary Increases

9/13/71

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--The 72-member Board of Directors for the Illinois Baptist State Association recommended adoption of a \$1.3 million Cooperative Program goal for 1973, and a \$1.2 million state budget.

The new budget would include cost of living increases of up to six per cent for state Baptist employees, providing the wage/price freeze is lifted by Jan. 1. Another clause provides that if the cost of living index increases less than six per cent, the pay raises will be decreased accordingly.

Both the Cooperative Program goal of \$1.3 million and the \$1.2 million state budget will go to the State Association annual meeting in November for final adoption.

For the first time, the 72-member board met in the new Baptist building in the state capital city. The meeting was held just one week after the offices were moved here from Carbondale, in Southern Illinois.

In another major action, the board voted to establish a Church Staff Information Service, despite some opposition from a few board members who said they felt this was a step toward centralization and that pastors and other staff members might be "placed" by impersonal methods.

Robert Ross, chairman of the special ministries subcommittee making the proposal, pointed out that it will be an information service only, sharing biographical information with churches without comment or interpretation.

The information will be shared only by the individuals themselves, and each person will determine the content of the information in his file, Ross explained. If a pastor or church staff member does not want a file on himself, there won't be any, Ross said.

Four other Baptist state conventions have similar plans, Ross said. They are Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Oklahoma, he noted.

In other action, the board approved a study report opposing the proposal to close the Baptist Student Center at Carbondale, Ill., stating that there "is no valid reason" at the present for closing the center.

The board also authorized a \$1.2 million church bond issue for debt retirement of the new Baptist building. Income to repay the sinking fund on the bond issue is to come from lease income on space in the new building. The board also authorized a two-year, \$300,000 loan at seven per cent interest from the Baptist Children's Home Endowment Fund.

A resolution was also adopted by the board protesting the arrest of Sammy Tippit, a Southern Baptist who does evangelistic and mission work in Chicago, on charges of disorderly conduct after he had passed outtracts in front of a Chicago night spot. The resolution claimed that "passing out tracts" could hardly be considered "disorderly conduct."

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C O R R E C T I O N

On B Pstory mailed 9/10/71, headlined: "Southeast Asia Missions Revamp Work in 'Revival,'" please insert the following underlined phrase in graph 7. Copy should read: One of the most significant recommendations emerged from Indonesia in a proposal to close their seminary in Semarang, Java, in favor of the development of new patterns of training for national leaders. Thanks.

--Baptist Press