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April 20, 1972

Send SBC Proposed Resolutions
 To Committee Now, Bates Urges

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Convention has issued a plea urging Southern Baptists who want to introduce resolutions at the denomination's national convention in Philadelphia, June 6-8, to send copies of their statements to the resolutions committee in advance.

Carl E. Bates, pastor of the First Baptist Church here and president of the 11.9 million member convention, cited a new convention bylaw which requests that copies of proposed resolutions be submitted to the resolutions committee chairman 30 days in advance of the convention.

According to Bylaw No. 11, such advance notification providing texts of proposed resolutions would help "make possible more thorough consideration" of each resolution, as well as "expedite the committee's work."

Bates said that last year, as many as 18 resolutions were submitted at one business session, inundating the committee with a great deal of material they had not seen previously. Last year, Bates made a similar request, but it was not at that time an official bylaw.

Copies of such proposed resolutions should be mailed to Randall Lolley, chairman of the convention's resolutions committee, and pastor of the First Baptist Church, Fifth and Spencer Streets, Winston-Salem, N.C., 27101.

Bates pointed out that the bylaw does not prohibit any messenger from introducing a resolution from the convention floor that has not been sent in advance to the resolutions committee. In fact, the resolutions are not officially introduced until read to the body.

The SBC president also noted that each person who introduces a resolution will have an opportunity to read the resolution to the assembled convention before it is officially referred to the resolutions committee.

Under convention procedure, resolutions may be introduced by any messenger, but all such resolutions are referred automatically to the resolutions committee, which reports on recommended resolutions on the final two days of the convention.

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Ramsey Pollard, Former SBC
 President, Plans Retirement

4/20/72

MEMPHIS (BP)--On his 12th anniversary as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church here, former Southern Baptist Convention President Ramsey Pollard announced plans to retire effective June 1.

"I will spend the remaining part of my life conducting revival meetings and in related Christian activities," he told the congregation during a celebration honoring him on his 12th anniversary as pastor.

"I hope to spend some time in assisting Union University (Jackson, Tenn.) in its campaign for capital funds, and to continue to serve as president of the board of directors of the World Evangelism Foundation in Abilene, Tex.," Pollard said.

Pollard, 69, became pastor of the 8,700-member church in 1960, succeeding R. G. Lee. The previous year in Louisville, he had been elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He served from 1959-61.

Pollard also has been president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, Tennessee Baptist Convention, and chairman of the SBC Radio-Television Commission.

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Bates, McCullough Urge Laymen
To Attend Philadelphia Convention

PHILADELPHIA (BP)--Two Southern Baptist leaders have called on laymen across the nation to make plans to attend the Southern Baptist Convention when it meets here June 6-8.

The joint admonition came from Southern Baptist Convention President Carl E. Bates of Charlotte, and Glendon McCullough of Memphis, executive secretary of the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

In urging involvement of laymen in the work of the denomination, they cited results of a survey of 7,300 persons who attended the Southern Baptist Convention last June in St. Louis. The survey disclosed that only 8.8 per cent of the messengers polled were laymen under "secular employment." An additional 6.3 per cent were listed as "homemakers."

The largest percentage of "messengers" to the convention, 84.4 per cent, included members of church staffs, the wives of church staff members, plus denominational workers and missionaries.

In their joint statement, Bates and McCullough said laymen need to attend the national convention so they can recognize and help cope with the problems the denomination faces.

Furthermore, laymen need to become involved in shaping their denomination at the national level and in moving the denomination toward objectives they can support in their churches, the Baptist leaders said.

Bates acknowledged that he and other SBC officers had a difficult time finding well-qualified laymen who were willing to accept committee assignments and who could attend the Philadelphia convention.

Bates said, however, that the convention would benefit from the experience and expertise laymen can contribute to the denomination.

McCullough added that Baptist churches would benefit from the close relationship which pastors and their laymen would develop from attending the convention together.

He continued that laymen could expect to gain motivation and inspiration from attending a national laymen's conference preceding the convention.

"Finally," McCullough said, "the denomination needs more capable laymen, particularly young men, to help direct its work if the denomination is to increase its rate of growth."

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Baptists Assist Refugees
Fleeing North Vietnam

4/20/72

HUE, Vietnam (BP)--Vietnamese Baptists, Southern Baptist missionaries and students of the University of Hue are cooperating to assist some of the thousands of refugees pouring into Hue and Danang, South Vietnam.

Heavy fighting between troops of North and South Vietnam has sent 100,000 or more people fleeing to the safety of cities in the northern provinces of South Vietnam.

Missionary Robert C. Davis Jr. reported that more than 65,000 refugees had arrived here by mid April. About 40,000 were housed in schools, churches and temporary camps, with the rest in private homes, he said.

Another 20,000 to 25,000 are situated in camps hurriedly set up in Danang, south of Hue.

Government agencies and several private organizations are assisting the refugees. During the first week of relief activity, the Vietnam Baptist Mission, the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Vietnam, with the help of local Christians and university students, gave food and clothing to more than 1,200 families.

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The food packages contained rice, milk and soy sauce. Each package also contained a brief message of comfort in the name of Baptists, a quotation of Matthew 11:28, and a special edition of the Gospel of John. Sleeping mats also were distributed.

As soon as the current refugee problem developed, Davis and missionary Lewis I. Myers Jr., of Danang, asked the chairman of their social ministries committee for money to be used for relief.

The committee met hurriedly and allocated \$2,000.

Davis enlisted the help of the university students and others here, while members of Hope Baptist Church in Danang, already organized for such emergencies, went into action immediately.

Davis and his family are based in Danang temporarily. He commutes to Hue three or four days each week. He and his wife opened Baptist work here last September.

The relief program will continue as long as the need exists and financial means permit, he said.

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BP PHOTO to be mailed to state Baptist papers

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Billy Graham States New
View of Prayer Amendments

4/20/72

By W. Barry Garrett

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham at a press conference here on the eve of his Charlotte area crusade said he had changed his views and no longer supports proposed prayer amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

This is in contrast to a statement by Graham at a previous press conference at the Charlotte airport in November 1971, just before the vote in the U. S. House of Representatives on the "Wylie" prayer amendment. At that time the evangelist stated that if he were a congressman, he would vote for the prayer amendment.

The Wylie amendment failed by 28 votes to obtain the necessary two-thirds majority in the Nov. 8 vote.

Prior to the Nov. 8 vote, Graham sent a telegram to the author of the bill, Rep. Chalmers P. Wylie (R., Ohio), stating "I am for the prayer amendment now before Congress."

But in the April 1972 press conference, Graham, flanked by United Methodist Earl G. Hunt Jr. and Southern Baptist Convention President Carl Bates, honorary co-chairmen of the Charlotte crusade, said that he had studied the arguments before Congress for the prayer amendment.

He said that he was convinced that the Supreme Court had only struck down forced prayer exercises; not voluntary ones.

The new Graham statement was made in response to a question by Sam R. Covington, religion editor of the Charlotte Observer, concerning the recent Florida primary election "straw vote" on prayers in schools.

In his reply, the evangelist suggested that the original Supreme Court decision on prayers and Bible reading may have been misinterpreted by lower courts and by school boards so that religious exercises and Bible teaching were dropped unnecessarily.

He also said that he thought there should be another court test to clarify what many people believe to be a Supreme Court ban on prayer in the public schools.

In the press conference here, Graham did not develop fully how he thought religion and education should be correlated in the public schools. However, he did suggest that moral guidelines should be part of what the schools inculcate. He also thought that Catholics, Jews and Protestants could agree on a program of instruction based on the Ten Commandments.

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"We need some moral authority in the schools, and what could be better than the Ten Commandments?" he asked.

Reinforcing his long-held position that the state should not impose set forms of prayer or demand that all pray, Graham said that he is "against any type of forced prayer that the state draws up."

However, he claimed he felt that teachers should feel free under the present rulings to teach the Bible and conduct religious exercises.

The new Billy Graham statement was interpreted by some Baptist leaders as another indication of a rising feeling in the nation that constitutional prayer amendments are not the real solution to the problems raised by religion and public education.

In Washington, a group of national religious leaders are currently considering promotion of a national congress on religion and public education within the next year or two. Several Southern Baptists are included in the group advocating such a national congress.

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Charlotte Officials Honor Bates
As Local Leader, SBC President

4/20/72

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--Civic leaders here paid tribute to Carl E. Bates for his efforts at "strengthening the city's spiritual well being" and for the nationwide recognition he has brought the city during his two years as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bates, pastor of the First Baptist Church here for almost 13 years, was honored at a testimonial dinner in the plush City Club here.

He responded to the kudos from city leaders by saying the only recognition he wanted was the honor the city had accorded him "in allowing me to live among you."

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce President John Ryan, Mayor John Belk, and Wake Forest University President James Ralph Scales of Winston-Salem, N.C., each spoke words of praise for Bates.

Ryan, Southern Bell Telephone Co. executive, paid tribute to the Charlotte pastor as a "great spiritual leader."

Mayor Belk presented keys to the city to Mrs. Bates, and their daughter, Judy, who was to be married the following week to Joseph W. Stoneham, the son of a deacon at the Charlotte church. To Bates, they presented a set of golf clubs.

Both Belk and Ryan noted the construction that is underway on the new \$1 million plus church plant in downtown Charlotte for First Baptist Church. Completion is expected by July 1.

Scales used the testimonial dinner to announce that Wake Forest University will confer an honorary doctoral degree on Bates in the spring commencement.

The Wake Forest president praised Bates for his leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention, which he characterized as "a large, amorphous, brawling and even constructive people.

"No man has led the convention as capably," Scales said.

In response, Bates said he was honored and humbled by the occasion and added that he felt he had made little contribution to the life of the city.

"But I have tried to be a good minister and man," he said.

He praised the laymen of the church, many of whom attended the dinner, for providing leadership in the church during his tenure as president of the 11.9 million member denomination. More than 100 attended the dinner, including numerous Charlotte civic leaders, denominational officials, local pastors and church members.

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BP PHOTO to be mailed to Baptist state papers

High Court Rules Against Demand for Parochial Aid

WASHINGTON (BP)--Missouri parents who chose to send their children to non-public institutions lost their argument before the U.S. Supreme Court that their constitutional rights are violated by prohibitions against tax aid to private schools.

The U.S. Supreme Court here affirmed a federal court's opinion that the Missouri Constitution prohibiting state funds for private schools does not violate the religious freedom of parents who want their children to attend non-public schools.

In the case, *Brusca vs. State Board of Education*, a group of parents from "various religious organizations" complained that Missouri laws prevented, or at least seriously impaired, the free exercise of their religion because the state, while requiring compulsory education, does not subsidize religious schools.

The sections of the Missouri Constitution prohibiting state aid to parochial schools, the plaintiffs said, "are repugnant to and in violation of" their rights as guaranteed under the First, Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U. S. Constitution.

The parents argued that their "prime parental right to educate is being abridged, diminished and destroyed by intolerable economic burdens" because the state denies funds to church-related schools.

The courts, however, disagreed, denying the validity of the complaint.

On Sept. 23, 1971, a three-judge district court ruled against the parents. The judges cited a number of U. S. Supreme Court decisions and said that a parent's right to choose a religious private school for his children may not be equated with a right to insist that the state pay for such an education.

In their argument before the district court, the parents suggested that some alternative program, such as tuition grants, could conceivably be devised which would be free from "government entanglement."

They asked the court to "compel" the state of Missouri "to extend the benefits of gratuitous instruction, free schools, free transportation, free text books and other resources in training to all students, regardless of race, creed or color."

The parents argued that the state's failure and refusal to provide such educational benefits constitutes "action which is coercive and discriminatory" and violates the state's duty to provide educational benefits to all.

In commenting on the request for aid such as tuition grants for parochial school children, the district court judges said that it was not sitting in judgment on plans or laws that have not yet been formulated or adopted.

"All that is here involved is whether the enactment of some program designed to assist a parent in educating his child religiously with the use of tax-raised money is mandated by the First Amendment," the judges observed.

"On this narrow issue we hold that to the extent the religion clauses of the First Amendment do not prohibit such financial aid, they do not require that it be given by the states," the court said.

The appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court complained that the Missouri laws prohibiting parochial aid have the effect "to establish secular humanism as the official religion of the state of Missouri in violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment."

Commenting on the district court's contention that the appellants are "free to accept the benefits of public school education if they so desire," the parents maintained that they "are precisely not free in terms of conscience, a steep price for anyone to pay."

In the Supreme Court appeal, the parents contended that though their taxes helped to support public school programs, they were "compelled" by their beliefs to choose religious education. They said they were free to choose public schools for their children "only if they disregard their conscience."

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