

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Baptist Conferees Told Rich
Pressure Political Candidates**

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--It is becoming more and more difficult for political candidates to act upon their own judgment because of the increased pressures placed upon them by special interest groups with money, a Southern Baptist conference on "Christian Morality and National Politics" was told here.

Campaign costs have so skyrocketed that candidates tend to gravitate to groups that can provide large sums of money, said Phil D. Strickland, associate secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission during the meeting at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center here.

"This becomes a vicious spiral because as politicians rely more on the wealthy for support, they are compelled to represent the interest of the wealthy who in turn increase their control over the decision making process of our nation," he said.

Asserting that this cycle must be broken, Strickland identified big business, the military, and unions as some of the strongest political pressure groups.

"Twenty years ago, the 200 largest business corporations in the U. S. controlled one-half of all manufacturing assets," explains Strickland. "Today they control two-thirds, and that figure is rapidly rising."

Adding that a major portion of the national budget is spent through the Defense Department, Strickland pointed out that in 1970 the average American paid \$400 for defense. That figure, too is rising, he said.

The Pentagon employes one-half of all civilians in the government, helps support more than 100,000 companies, and essentially feeds one in every five Americans, he said.

Strickland, an attorney and author of two books on political involvement, said that despite "a great deal of rhetoric about shifting national priorities," even more will be spent for military and defense-related activities in the next national budget.

"It is easy to see the tremendous power," observed Strickland, "that comes to bear when the power of the corporate structures and the power of the defense organization that receives approximately 60 per cent of the national budget are combined and work together. We call it the military-industrial complex, and the influence that this complex has on American society is almost unbelievable."

Although there is a law, the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925, setting forth regulations for recording campaign contributions over \$5,000 by organized groups, the law is full of loopholes and only one case of fraudulent political financing has been prosecuted in the 47 year history of the act, he observed.

Loopholes used to get around this law include such things as loaning corporate employees to work in political campaigns while still paying their salaries; renting billboard space for a candidate without charging him; paying professional fees to attorneys with the understanding that a portion of the fee is to be contributed to a specific candidate; paying the candidate through fake invoices, or allowing the candidate to use company equipment or credit cards or hotel suites.

Strickland called for Christians to "help relieve the financial pressure on the candidate so that he can use his best judgment without fear of losing adequate financial support."

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He also urged limitations on campaign spending, and stricter enforcement on the present anti-trust laws.

"As Christians," he told the 150 persons attending the conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, "we must be willing to financially support those candidates who feel best represent Christian values and concerns."

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Alabama Board Recommends
Church-Minister Office

8/1/72

TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP)--The Executive Board of the Alabama Baptist State Convention has recommended establishing an office of church-minister relations, and that its three Baptist colleges be allowed to secure funds from state and federal agencies to assist students in tuition fees.

The board also voted to recommend a record \$6 million budget for 1973. All three recommendations must be approved by the state convention when it meets in Birmingham, Nov. 14-15.

If the proposal is approved, Alabama would join five other states in setting up some type of pastor-church relations office, and at least three other state conventions that are studying the possibility of such an office.

In Alabama, the director of the proposed office of church-minister relations would maintain a voluntary file on churches, active and retired ministers and students pursuing church-related vocations.

In addition, the office would process requests for information from churches seeking pastors, or pastors seeking churches, and would provide a counseling service for pastors, church staff members and churches.

The board also voted to recommend authorizing the three Baptist colleges in Alabama "to secure funds which would directly benefit students from federal and state government agencies as would enable their institutions to keep tuition at the lowest possible level." The three schools include Samford University, Birmingham; Judson College, Marion, Ala.; and Mobile College, Mobile, Ala.

The proposed \$6 million budget, an increase of \$340,000 over the current budget, would allocate 35.5 per cent for Southern Baptist Convention causes, 30 per cent for Christian higher education, 14 per cent for state missions, and 20.5 per cent for state Baptist causes.

In other action, the board elected Shelly Richardson, former missionary to the Philippines and Tennessee Baptist student worker, as a campus minister in the Birmingham area, and voted to permit the Alabama Baptist Brotherhood department to employ a furloughing foreign missionary for a one-year period.

The board met at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly here during the assembly's 25th anniversary. As part of the program, the assembly dedicated a new \$328,000 hotel on the grounds.

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Texas Baptists Promote Hall;
Name Three New Staffers

8/1/72

DALLAS (BP)--The Texas Baptist State Missions Commission has promoted R. Clyde Hall, 41, to secretary of the state convention's Church Training department and employed three new staff members.

Hall, who has served seven years as a consultant in the department, succeeds Edward Laux, recently named to head the state convention's new Special Services Division.

A native of Florence, Ala., Hall is former Baptist Student Union director at Florida Southern College, Jacksonville, Fla. He has served as minister of youth or education at five churches in Florida, Tennessee and Texas.

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Three other new staff members named by the commission include James W. Hatley of Weslaco, Tex., as consultant in rural-urban ministries; Robert Allen Hall of New Albany, Miss., a consultant in the church music department; and Jerry Seale of Denison, Tex., as consultant for deaf work.

Hatley, 48, is former pastor of six churches in Missouri and Arizona. He currently is area missions superintendent for the Magic Valley Baptist Association, Weslaco, Tex. He is a native of Maynard, Ark.

Hall, 35, is currently minister of music at First Baptist Church, Henderson, Tex. He formerly has been minister of youth or music at six churches in Arkansas and Texas.

Seale, 25, has been pastor of Fairview Baptist Church, Evant, Tex., and minister of deaf and youth at Meadow Lane Baptist Church, Arlington, Tex.

The two Halls, and Seale are graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, and Hatley is a graduate of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City.

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Baptist Leaders Pleased
With Lay Congress Results

8/1/72

By Dana Driver

CALI, Colombia (BP)--When the second congress of the Pan American Union of Baptist Men concluded here, most of its leaders and participants were amazed at its results and far reaching effects.

The meeting, involving laymen from 20 Latin American countries and three north American Baptist conventions, was "one of those organized, unorganized affairs that no one seemed to know the direction it was going," commented one congress leader. "But once it got there, everyone was pleased," the participant added.

The program feature that seemed to please most was the appearance of Astronaut James Irwin, who presented his testimony to a youth rally for Cali young people, and again during an evening worship service.

The Apollo 15 astronaut, who has resigned from the U. S. space program to devote full time to Christian evangelism, compared his visit to Cali to his experiences on the moon.

"This area that is so mountainous and beautiful reminds me of my trip to the moon, where there were similar surroundings," Irwin said. "And here, like on the moon, I feel closer to God."

During the week, Irwin was decorated by the Columbian Air Force as an official member, plus given awards and greetings by city officials.

Cali newspapers gave the congress front-page coverage every day, something considered a "breakthrough" by Roy Wyatt, professor at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, and a Southern Baptist foreign Missionary. "No evangelical group in Colombia," he explained, "has ever received such coverage."

An area where religious persecution abounded only 25 years ago seemed to welcome the Baptist group with open arms. "The government was very receptive," said Wyatt. "We even had credentials for the meeting, and march orders long before we knew Col Irwin was coming. And when it was confirmed that he was coming, we were given the red carpet treatment."

Asked what effect the congress will have on missions in the area, Wyatt answered, "It's already having effects. Our work has never been this open. The people and the government are receptive to anything we do now. Only good things are ahead for us."

Another byproduct of the congress was the training the participants received in witnessing.

Afternoon workshops covered such topics as "Lay Training," "Using Laymen to Organize

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Missions," "Lay-Pastor Relations," and "The Layman, His Church, Association and Convention."

Following these workshops came 1 1/2 hour sessions on "Soul Winning Instruction" led by Weldon Viertel of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, and Jack Stanton of the SBC Home Mission Board.

The Spanish and English speaking groups were trained in the "Lay Evangelism School" technique used by the SBC Home Mission Board, utilizing Southern Baptists' WIN (Witness Involvement Now) materials in both Spanish and English.

Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., who was re-elected president of the Pan American Union of Baptist Men, said he felt the training the laymen received at the congress was the key element to the meeting's success.

Pointing out that every country and many of the islands of the Western Hemisphere were represented, Cooper said he felt the laymen would go back home motivated to carry out the training and commitments they made at the meeting.

Cooper acknowledged that there were some problems that developed during the international meeting "run by amateurs", but the people were patient. One criticism concerned the morning sessions, which were jammed with lengthy reports by each country represented. Even lengthier translations ran the meetings over into the afternoon several times.

The congress made an impact, however, on Baptist influence in the Cali area through the evening worship services, which featured inspirational and evangelistic messages and singing, congress leaders observed.

In a Tuesday night message, Baker J. Cauthen, executive secretary of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, told the congress that the Gospel "is like a great fire that will continue to spread, and no power can extinguish it." Cauthen warned the laymen and missionaries not to be discouraged by possible opposition.

He also urged a new emphasis on reaching persons outside of metropolitan areas. "We cannot become complacent and comfortable in our city dwellings and forget our brothers and sisters in the jungles and rural areas," Cauthen said. "If we do, we dishonor God."

Most of the sessions were held at the First Baptist Church of Cali, but the evening services on the last four nights of the congress switched to a local gymnasium where Hugo Ruiz, translator for the Southern Baptist Radio-Television Commission's Spanish-language programs, presented evangelistic messages.

Ruiz, a tall, lean Mexican-American, presented fiery messages each evening to a packed gym of more than 4,000 Cali residents. After each message, an estimated 200 persons came forward and knelt with Ruiz in making commitments to God.

It was the evening evangelistic service, plus the publicity, that seemed to make the greatest impact on the people from the Cali area, congress leaders said.

Cooper, president of the Mississippi and Coastal Chemical Corps., who currently is also president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was re-elected president of the hemisphere-wide layman's organization that sponsored the congress.

Elected as first vice president was Edguard Calmon of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and elected second vice president was Walter Cade of Kansas City, a member of the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc.

Re-elected treasurer was Aldo Broda of Buenos Aires, Argentina. W. J. "Doc" Isbel of Memphis, secretary of the Baptist Men's department for the SBC Brotherhood Commission, was elected secretary.



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