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Executive Committee Meets For Short, Routine Session

NASHVILLE (BP)--In one of its shortest sessions in recent years, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention delayed final action on several major items on its agenda, devoting most of its September meeting to internal affairs.

The 63-member committee, in its major decisions, granted new titles to three of its executive staff members, approved a preliminary report on a study of a proposal to provide a counseling program for Baptist ministers, and approved a \$365,000 1973 operating budget.

The Executive Committee delayed, however, final decisions on several items that prompted lengthy debate in subcommittee sessions.

Postponed for final disposition were proposals by the SBC Brotherhood Commission to take over a tabloid newspaper and an independent lay movement organization as a subsidiary corporation, a decision on program assignment for SBC-wide bus ministry promotion, and a change in use of income from a trust fund now going to provide scholarship aid for graduate students planning to teach in Baptist colleges.

New titles were granted to three executive staff members.

Albert McClellan, formerly program planning secretary, was named associate executive secretary and director of program planning.

W. C. Fields, formerly public relations secretary, was appointed assistant to the executive secretary and director of public relations.

John H. Williams, formerly financial planning secretary, was given the title, assistant to the treasurer and director of financial planning.

All three relate directly to Porter W. Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee.

Routh has named McClellan as editor of the Baptist Program magazine effective Jan. 1, 1973. Leonard Hill is managing editor of the publication. Fields will assume additional duties as assistant to the executive secretary October 1.

Responding to a motion introduced to the 1971 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis asking the Executive Committee to study providing a counseling service for ministers, either through its Annuity Board or some other agency, the Executive Committee recommended that no additional SBC commission or agency be established at this time to provide such a service.

Furthermore, the committee commended actions taken in recent months and years by at least seven state conventions to establish either some type of counseling, or information services to help pastor-less churches and church-less pastors get together.

"We encourage these programs to be initiated in all our state conventions where they do not now exist," the Executive Committee said.

Citing the need for continuing the study for two to three years, the Executive Committee authorized creation of a temporary coordination committee composed of Executive Committee members, SBC agency representatives, and state consultants to help evaluate work in the area being done by state conventions and SBC agencies.

A consultation a few weeks earlier had disclosed that 523 associational superintendents of missions surveyed had estimated that 3,000 full-time church ministers leave their jobs in Southern Baptist churches very three years--an estimated annual loss of 2 1/2 per cent.

Responding to another study, the Executive Committee reviewed implementation of recommendations" coming out of a depth analysis of Southern Baptist student work programs, saying that the committee felt "reasonable progress has been made in fulfilling the terms of the recommendations" from the study.

Two resolutions were adopted, praising the contributions of a retiring executive secretary, and the role of a Baptist leader who recently died.

Th resolutions paid tribute to the late T. L. Holcomb, who died six days earlier at th age of 89. For 18 years Holcomb was executive secretary of the SBC Sunday School Board. He also had been pastor of numerous churches, and executive secretary of both the Southern Baptist Foundati n and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Anoth r resolution honored W. Fred Kendall, who retires this year as executive secretary of the Tenn ssee Baptist Convention.

In other actions, the Exec utive Committee approved a public relations campaign seeking to communicate who Southern Baptists are to the people in the Northwest prior to the SBC's annual s ssion in Portland, Ore., next June; selected the Hilton Hotel as the headquarters for the 1974 convention in Dallas; approved plans for conducting a capital needs program from 1974-79; and authorized a study of the method of distributing Cooperative Program funds to the six SBC seminar!

The committee also extended to 1974 a \$2 million fund drive for the Radio-TV Commission, authoriz d the SBC Home Mission Board to borrow \$740,000 to purchase additional property; authorized a study of borrowing procedures for the SBC Home Mission Board Church Loans Division; and designated a \$24,292 estate bequeathed to the SBC by Marie F. Spears of Sllon Springs, Ark., to Cooperative Program capital funds.

Approval was granted to transfer the responsibility for promoting World Missions Conferences (formerly called Schools of Missions) from the SBC Home Mission Board, to the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

Several items, however, were left unfinished for consideration in later sessions f the committe , which meets twice annually between conventions.

A pr posal by theSBC Brotherhood Commission to create a subsidiary corporation, Lay Ministr! Inc., and assume publication of its tabloid newspaper, Mission Action News, drew oppositio- two subcommittee meetings. Decision on the matter was delayed to allow time to obtain more information on the matter.

Glendon McCullough, executive secretary of the Brotherhood Commission, said the proposal was mad in an effort to bring into the mainstream of Baptist life the largest and most aggressive f sev ral\$fragmented lay movements. James Johnson, a computer specialist from Arlington, Tex., who heads the organization, was named a part-time staff member of the commission

?Final determination of location of responsibility for promotion of bus ministries in Baptist churches was also delayed. The program committee was asked to continue study of the matter with th vi w of a signing the program to either the Home Mission Board or Sunday School Board.

Aft r lengthy subcommittee discussion, the committee voted to continue for two years use of income from three trust funds for scholarships for graduate and post-graduate study for teachers in Baptist colleges and seminaries and to review again the use of the funds in 1974.

Presidents of SBC seminaries had requested that income from the trust funds be used for seminary study support, rather than Baptist college scholarships, arguing that th re is less need today for teachers with doctor of phil sophy degrees in some fields at Baptist colleges. The new proposal does includ seminary professors.

Two motions referred to the Executive Committ e by the SBC in Philad iphia were assigned to subcommittees for study and later report. One asked that dates of future conventions be changed

to permit more laymen to attend, and the other asked a committee to study SBC organizational structure to consider giving the Evangelism Division of the SBC Home Mission Board the status of a commission.

Revisions in program statements for the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board, and seminaries were given initial approval, for circulation to SBC agencies before final approval by the convention in Portland next June. A progress report on relations between the Radio-TV Commission and Foreign Mission Board was also adopted, with guidelines from the two agencies on relationships expected in one year.

The session closed with an inspirational message by Owen Cooper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and industrialist from Yazoo City, Miss.

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Cooper Challenges SBC To Raise
\$1.5 Billion; Reach New Prospects

9/20/72

NASHVILLE (BP)--Drawing on his business acumen as a fertilizer executive, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention challenged Southern Baptists to think big and raise \$1.5 billion for world missions in five years, and to send pastors "where the prospects are" instead of oversaturating the deep South with their churches.

Owen Cooper, president of the 11.8 million member convention and president of two chemical companies in Yazoo City, Miss., issued the challenge during an address to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee meeting here.

The head of the Mississippi and Coastal Chemical Corps., spouting denomination and population statistics like a computer, compared the number of Southern Baptist churches and members to the number of unchurched people estimated in the total populations in two associations, one in Ohio and the other in the deep South.

With a total population of 1.1 million and only 34 churches and chapels in the Ohio association, Cooper estimated there were 12,600 adult, unchurched prospects for each church and chapel.

But in the deep South association, there are 48 churches, saturating the area to the extent that there are only seven adult, unchurched prospects for each church.

"I am convinced that there is something wrong with the situation I have outlined to you," Cooper said. "We aren't putting our salesmen where our prospects are."

He compared the denomination to his fertilizer company, saying they would never be successful if they kept an oversupply of salesmen in an area already saturated. Rather, they build new markets and sent their best salesmen to new territories.

"You might not like this analogy," he quipped. "The kind of product might make the analogy bad."

Projecting slides that show Southern Baptist membership concentrated in the deep South and the major national population concentrated in the northeast, Cooper told the denominational leaders that "we must go where the people are."

"Many fields are white unto the harvest, and all too often the reapers are in the wrong fields," he noted. "In too many cases we have too many workers only gleening in fields already harvested"

Baptists must develop a strategy to allocate their resources to areas where unchurched people live so that pastors and missionaries can invest their lives there "without living in poverty and reducing their standard of living...to near subsistence level," he declared.

To do this, he suggested, Southern Baptists must think big and challenge their church members to really give.

Southern Baptists are on a plateau as far as giving through their unified budget plan, the Cooperative Program, is concerned, he said. They need a big challenge, he claimed.

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Cooper, with the help of his staff, estimated the total income of the 11.8 million Southern Baptists to be about \$41.3 billion.

Thus, Baptists spend about \$12 billion for housing and household operation, \$11 billion for food, \$6.5 billion for transportation, \$3 billion for medical service, \$3 billion for medical service, \$3 billion for recreation, and less than \$1 billion for the church.

Baptists give about two per cent of their income to the church, obviously far less than the 10 per cent tithe taught by the Bible, he said.

Asking if Baptists will give, Cooper answered with an emphatic yes, citing historical evidence, if they are really challenged.

In 1919, in a campaign to raise \$75 million in five years, Baptists pledged \$92 million in one year and raised \$58 million in actual receipts.

To equal that feat today, based on the difference in per capita income for Baptists, the denomination could raise \$1.5 billion, Cooper asserted.

Today, however, the denomination raises most of its mission funds through the Cooperative Program unified budget plan, which receives contributions of about \$90 million annually. In five years, the Cooperative Program will produce \$500 million, he predicted.

Subtract that \$500 million from the potential receipts if the \$75 million campaign results were duplicated today, and Baptists "have an unclaimed one billion dollars available.

"It is my firm belief," he argued, "that Southern Baptists will lose hundreds of millions of dollars in the next five years by not asking."

Dramatically illustrating individual per capita giving trends among Southern Baptists, Cooper held up some purchases he made earlier at a discount store and compared their costs to what the average Baptist gives to specific SBC causes.

Holding up a bottle of hair tonic that cost 77 cents, Cooper said it was far more than a per capita average of 53 cents a year the typical Southern Baptist gives to home missions through the Cooperative Program.

Adding a spray antiseptic costing \$1.28 to the illustration, Cooper compared it to the \$1.33 the average Southern Baptist gives to foreign missions through the Cooperative Program.

Displaying a tube of toothpaste costing 55 cents, Cooper said it was almost equal to the average of 52 cents given through the Annie Armstrong special offering for home missions last year on a per capita basis.

The tax on his purchases was about equal to the 11 cents per capita contribution to the SBC Radio-TV Commission last year, he added.

"There are so many of us now, that in aggregate our financial goals look large," he pointed out. "But broken down on an individual basis and compared with our ability to give, our financial goals do not even challenge our members," he charged.

"But I am convinced the best days are ahead for Southern Baptists," Cooper said.

He challenged the SBC leaders attending the Executive Committee meeting to provide the kind of leadership necessary to challenge Baptist laymen to get involved and reach the potential they have individually and corporately.