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January 8, 1973

**Structure Committee Seeks
Stronger SBC Seminaries**

By W. C. Fields
Director, Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)--Six Southern Baptist theological seminaries, which account for 15 per cent of the total students in accredited seminaries of all kinds in the USA, are asked by a Baptist study just released to gear up for even greater productivity.

The "Committee of Fifteen," which has spent nearly four years examining the national agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention, will submit its recommendations and observations to the SBC Executive Committee when it meets here Feb. 18-20.

E. W. Price Jr., of High Point, N. C., is chairman of the study group.

Enrollment in the six seminaries peaked at 5,826 in 1957-58, dropped to 4,932 in 1960 and by Spring, 1973 had climbed back to 5,815, the report states.

Assets of the institutions jumped from \$27 million in 1957-58 to \$68 million in 1972-73, with endowment more than doubling to \$22 million in the same period, according to the study.

Pointing out that since 1946 more than \$36 million in Cooperative Program (SBC unified budget) funds have gone into capital projects for the schools, the committee asks that educational objectives for the next decade major on improvement of education rather than on building construction.

The 129-page report asks seminary trustees to build "only what is absolutely necessary" and recommends that development programs major on raising money for endowment and student aid.

The study asks the SBC Executive Committee and seminary trustees to approve its suggestions that seminary charters be changed and other necessary steps be taken to allow the schools to charge tuition, to charge larger fees for all degrees beyond the master of divinity level and to provide private instruction in such subjects as music and speech on a cost payment basis.

The study states that all six seminaries should continue to grant doctor of ministry degrees in keeping with requirements of the American Association of Theological Schools.

It concludes, however, that not all the schools should attempt to offer advance teaching type degrees, like doctor of philosophy, doctor of theology or doctor of sacred music.

The report reaffirms a traditional policy that students are expected to serve Baptist churches or the denomination in full-time employment.

It cautions against accepting students who would "seek to upgrade their public school professional standings by acquiring denominationally financed master's or doctor's degrees for secular employment.

The committee report emphasizes the purpose of Southern Baptist theological education as providing insight and skill, leadership qualities and techniques, vocational commitments and "personal wholeness."

To achieve these ends, the six schools are asked to complete their work in long range planning requested by the SBC Executive Committee in September, 1971.

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The study asks that seminary administration and faculties maintain an awareness of the importance of the Cooperative Program to Southern Baptist theological education and requests them to "be aware of the destructive power of negative criticism."

The study group presents specific recommendations to the SBC Executive Committee for formalizing and enlarging the informal Inter-Seminary Council of presidents, for improving services to non-degree students and for increasing financial support and usage of the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Department.

The six seminaries jointly operate the Seminary Extension Department which provides continuing education opportunities for laymen and ministers.

The report adds, "The Seminary Extension Department is as fully important as any other area of seminary education."

In a related manner, the study asks approval of its recommendation that a 1977 deadline be set for improvement of enrollment, financial support and academic performance at the American Baptist Theological Seminary.

This predominantly black Bible college in Nashville is operated jointly by the Southern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

The study committee proposes that another evaluation of American Baptist Theological Seminary be made in 1977 to decide whether or not the SBC assets in this institution should be converted to other forms of assistance for black religious workers.

The Southern Baptist Convention, as a national body, operates seminaries, no colleges. The affiliated Baptist state conventions operate 55 colleges and universities, plus other schools.

One of the SBC agencies, the Education Commission, provides coordination and leadership for all of these Southern Baptist institutions. The study says of the commission that its "accomplishments have been substantial."

A recommendation from the study committee asks the commission to move toward a goal of half of its financial support coming from the Baptist colleges by 1980, since they are the main beneficiaries of the commission's services.

The report also suggests that some materials provided by the Education Commission and some services, such as teacher recruitment, be made available to the colleges on a cost basis.

The report of the Committee of Fifteen, an Executive Committee subcommittee, points up the fact that enrollment in the six seminaries has doubled since World War II. The ratio of students to SBC churches likewise has increased from about one to eleven in 1946 to about one to six in 1972.

Between the 1960-61 seminary term and the 1972-73 term the proportion of theology students declined about six per cent, while the proportion of religious education and church music students increased four per cent and two per cent respectively.

In 1972-73 there were 3,737 theology students (69.55 per cent of the total), 1,196 religious education students (22.26 per cent), and 440 church music students (8.19 per cent). The schools also reported 485 non-degree students in '72-'73, a considerable decline from the 912 enrolled in 1960-61.

The study indicates a significant improvement in seminary faculty salaries in the last 15 years, but stresses that they are still below the average for other seminaries of comparable size.

Cooperative Program allocations to seminary operating budgets were up to \$6,575,373 for 1972-73, an increase of 184.65 per cent over 1957-58.

The Committee of Fifteen study is the first major structure evaluation of all SBC agencies and their total programs since 1958.

The 22 recommendations, 97 "concerns," and observations of the committee will be discussed at length by the SBC Executive Committee in its Feb. 18-20 meeting.

Most of the items approved in the report are expected to be passed on for the consideration of agency trustees. A few will go as recommendations to the June 11-13 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas.

The report was released by the Executive Committee to provide ample time for study before action is taken in February.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the third in a series of four articles on the Committee of Fifteen report.

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Baptists, Arabic-Speaking
Christians Plan Cooperation

1/8/73

WASHINGTON (BP)--Representatives from Arabic-speaking evangelical groups scattered across North America formed an advisory committee here to plan methods to evangelize their people, develop unity among Christians in Arab groups and cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Some 150 persons from 13 different groups, mostly Baptist, from across the United States and the Toronto, Canada, area attended the meeting, sponsored by the language missions department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

An estimated 1.5 million Arabic-speaking people live in the United States, with many more arriving weekly, according to Sami Ammari, Southern Baptist missionary to the Arabic-speaking people in the Boston area and organizer of the meeting.

Many are concentrated in New England, the Great Lakes area and on the West Coast, but most large cities have growing Arab populations. Some 150,000 live in Detroit. Both New York and Chicago have about 100,000.

Only one Arabic Baptist church, in Washington, D. C., has been organized, but Bible study groups and home Bible fellowships are developing rapidly among Arab Christians across the nation, according to Ammari.

Virtually everyone who attended told of the growth of Bible study groups and home fellowships in their cities.

Oscar Romo, director of the department of language missions, told the group they are a part of a "national mosaic brought together by God for a purpose."

The Southern Baptist Convention is interested, he said, in helping them reach other Arabic speaking peoples for Christ.

"We come not as Southern Baptists but as brothers in Christ trying to find out where we are and where we need to go," he said.

Theme of the meeting, held at Arabic Baptist Church, Washington, and First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md., was "No Man Careth for My Soul."

One speaker chastised America for having a great deal of concern for Arab oil but little concern for the souls of Arab-speaking people in the United States.

Sami Hamarneh, a researcher for the Smithsonian Institute, was named chairman of the advisory committee. Saleem Khoury of Cleveland was named vice-chairman and Sinote Hanna Ibrahim of Dedham, Mass., was elected secretary. All are Baptists.

Romo said his office will meet with the advisory committee and begin to relate to it. He will also encourage local associations of Baptist churches and state Baptist conventions to provide counsel and guidance for Arab-speaking groups in their areas.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist paper editors.

Missouri Crisis Rates First in Baptist Top 10 Poll

NASHVILLE (BP)--Controversy in the Missouri Baptist Convention, centering around alleged mismanagement of funds and convention affairs, was voted the top Southern Baptist news of 1973, according to a poll released here.

The poll was conducted by Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, among 33 state Baptist newspapers and eight Baptist Press bureau and national office personnel.

Based on a system of awarding 10 points for every first place vote down through one point for a 10th place vote, the Missouri situation collected 193 points on 27 ballots returned, finishing ahead of a continuing debate on orthodoxy, which received 161 points.

Reports of burgeoning Southern Baptist Convention statistics, which passed several milestones in 1973, finished third with 135 points; church-state developments involving such issues as public school prayer and parochial aid was fourth with 129 votes, and increased efforts of women to seek new ministerial roles in Southern Baptist life finished with 125 votes to round out the top five.

A series of stories reporting advances in black-white relations in 1973 in Southern Baptist circles edged Baptist response to the Watergate scandal, 120-119, in balloting for the sixth and seventh slots in the top 10.

After the seventh position, point totals dropped off heavily. Stories reporting expansion by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in the face of critical problems brought on by dollar devaluation received 70 points for an eighth place listing, while problems for Christian missions, surfaced by the takeover of Wounded Knee by American Indian Movement (AIM) militants, ranked ninth with 57 points.

Baptist response with funds and manpower to worldwide disasters, including Nicaragua, Mexico and Spain, finished in a tenth place tie, 54-54, with stories reporting refusal for the second consecutive year by the SBC annual session to abolish the convention's Stewardship Commission and place its functions under the SBC Executive Committee.

Four news developments are lumped in a four-way tie, with 47 points apiece, only seven points out of tenth place.

They are stories reporting reorientation problems and spiritual encounters of Vietnam Prisoners of War; dramatic evangelism results in Korea, including reported mass decisions for Christ; response to the energy crisis; and response to the abortion issue, including Baptist Press exclusive interviews with the plaintiff in a landmark abortion case heard before the U. S. Supreme Court and the Southern Baptist attorney who instigated proceedings leading to the court's decision to strike down abortion statutes.

In the protracted controversy among Missouri Baptists, auditors cited mismanagement of funds and affairs by convention leaders.

Earl O. Harding, the Missouri Convention's executive secretary, died during the investigation. His death came before the convention's 1973 annual session at which it devoted most of its time to resolving the crisis.

The orthodoxy issue was two pronged--involving debate in several state conventions over open communion and alien baptism on the one hand and the 1963 statement of Baptist Faith and Message on the other.

In one orthodoxy development, an independently-formed Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship launched a publication, The Southern Baptist Journal, with the stated purpose of exposing so-called "liberals" in Southern Baptist life.

In other developments, Hershel H. Hobbs, former SBC president, warned against making the Baptist Faith and Message statement a creed and Wayne E. Ward, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, speaking in Texas, charged that "self-appointed orthodoxy committees are the kiss of death" and are "unChristian, unBiblical and unBaptistic."

Ward, who said he has signed "voluntary statements," including the 1963 statement passed by the Southern Baptist Convention, charged that a member of a "self-appointed" orthodoxy committee had approached him and told him if he could not sign a statement the committee was drafting, "then you're through."

Statistical developments reported in 1973 included revelations that Southern Baptists passed the 12 million mark in membership, set a baptism record in 1972 and reached the billion mark in total receipts.

At least three women were ordained to the ministry last year by Southern Baptist churches and at least one other ordained two women deacons in a continuing emergence of leadership roles by women--although still clearly in the minority among 34,500 churches and 12-million-plus members.

A series of advances in black-white relations in 1973 included the first black department head at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, a survey revealing 75,000 black Southern Baptists and more than 240 blacks working for agencies and as missionaries, election by three state conventions of black officers (including the president of the Alaska convention), a move by the Louisiana convention to strike the word "white" from constitutional membership requirements for churches and the hosting of a dinner by SBC President Owen Cooper in Mississippi for a black Baptist convention president--a first among Southern Baptists.

Ten different issues collected first place votes, in widely scattered balloting. The Missouri situation led with seven, the orthodoxy debate collected five and Watergate response, four.

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Bob Jones, Americans
United Challenge IRS

1/8/73

By Stan L. Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--Americans United for the Separation of Church and State and Bob Jones University presented oral arguments before the U. S. Supreme Court challenging the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) action in revoking their tax exemption.

Because the tax exempt status question is at the heart of both cases, the Justice Department had earlier suggested to the court that the cases be heard together or in close succession.

Glenn Archer is executive director of Americans United, a Washington-based group which deals exclusively with religious liberty and separation of church and state. Bob Jones III is president of the Greenville, S. C., university, an independent, non-denominational school.

In the Americans United case, the IRS argued that a federal district court has no jurisdiction to hear the case against the government over the 1969 revocation of Americans United's tax exempt status until the organization exhausts its legal efforts in the tax courts.

In revoking the group's exemption, the IRS charged Americans United with engaging in "substantial" and excessive lobbying activities.

When Americans United first brought suit in March, 1971, the U. S. District Court in Washington, D. C. agreed with the IRS position. In January, 1973 the U. S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed the lower court's decision, thus setting the stage for the Supreme Court test.

Americans United's principal argument before the high court was that small religious organizations are being discriminated against, as opposed to larger and more powerful ones such as the Roman Catholic Church, over the question of tax exemption.

In addition, Americans United insisted that is being penalized for activities protected by First Amendment rights and that it has lost badly needed financial support.

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Americans United was represented before the court by Washington Attorneys Alan B. Morrison and Franklin C. Salisbury. Regardless of the court's decision, Americans United is headed for further legal action, as its present case deals with court jurisdiction as opposed to a final determination of its tax exempt status.

In contrast, the Bob Jones University case is to be decided on its own merits. The university's tax exempt status was revoked in 1970 because of the school's policy of denying admission to black students solely on racial grounds.

Suit was brought in federal district court challenging the IRS action, resulting in a preliminary injunction against the government. The U. S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth District then reversed the lower court's ruling. J. D. Todd Jr., attorney for the university, argued that the IRS is not qualified to act impartially when its own regulations are under attack.

Furthermore, the university insists that the IRS action is actually an attack upon a selected religious group. Although its racial policy is not popular, the school maintains that it is based on religious conviction and falls under First Amendment protection.

Decisions in both cases are expected sometime before the end of the court's current term in June, 1974.

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