



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-5461
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

February 7, 1973

**SBC Mature Enough to Avoid
Catastrophe, Cooper Claims**

DALLAS (BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Convention said here he believes the convention has "reached the maturity to face our problems without having a minor catastrophe."

This maturity, according to Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., will enable Southern Baptists "to devote our time to going out and making Christians."

Speaking to trustees of the SBC Annuity Board at their annual meeting, Cooper, a layman, said the denomination had spent "time and energy on matters that have little to do with the average layman and his life."

President of two chemical companies, Cooper said Southern Baptists have failed to provide sufficient challenge for laymen who are saying, "We want to get involved meaningfully."

Noting the second most important story in Southern Baptist life in 1972 concerned lay involvement in denominational work, Cooper continued, "it's up to Southern Baptist leadership to provide challenges for these laymen."

Cooper referred also to the three-week visit to India he and 16 other Southern Baptists had just made. He said they found India ripe for the Christian gospel.

"Hundreds of people in India could become evangelists for us if they could just get a modest amount like \$25 a month," the SBC president declared.

"In 10 years' time, I think God is going to make it possible for us to have 1,000 of these evangelists," Cooper added.

He said it may become impossible to send foreign missionaries and foreign capital to India for Christian evangelism. "A law is being considered," Cooper observed, "that would prohibit foreign money coming in to proselyte."

However, the people of India "are responding to the gospel" although the country of 550 million is 82 per cent Hindu, 10 per cent Moslem, and only two per cent Christian. The balance of the people are divided into even smaller religious groups.

The touring Southern Baptists found India "in the throes of one of the worst droughts of the century," according to Cooper. He said there is a possibility that 500,000 may starve to death.

In some 300,000 villages in India, he said, the name of Christ has never been spoken. "There are as many non-Christians in India as in nearly all the other countries in which we (Southern Baptists) have mission work."

Referring to the work of the Annuity Board which offers retirement and insurance plans for pastors and church and denominational workers, Cooper said the agency provides "the most cohesive influence in the Southern Baptist Convention."

**Cauthen Returns, Cites
Needs, Calls for Growth**

RICHMOND (BP)--Foreign Mission Board Executive Secretary Baken J. Cauthen, returning from visits to three mission points in the Middle East, has called for new impetus in the advance of mission work overseas.

He emphasized that additional funds and personnel are imperative to meet new opportunities and needs in the areas he visited and in other parts of the world.

Cauthen delivered the dedicatory address at the opening of Bangalore (India) Baptist Hospital. Then he and his wife participated in a church dedication in Teheran, Iran, and visited Baptist-supported reconstruction work in Bangladesh.

While in Bangladesh the Cauthens met with President Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury who expressed appreciation for past Southern Baptist assistance. Cauthen assured him of continuing support.

Impressed by opportunities he saw typified in the work he visited, Cauthen said that, "opportunities such as we have in India and invitations such as the one we are now considering from the Republic of Niger are too significant for us to turn away."

Currently the Foreign Mission Board is considering action on an invitation to project work in Niger. This West African nation would become the 77th foreign country where Southern Baptist missionaries are assigned.

Cauthen added that, "the call for 800 new missionaries in our existing 76 fields dramatizes the current open door."

In answering that call he stated, "such advance depends on funds to fight off the foreign inflation factor on the one hand and support the new personnel needed on the other."

Pointing toward a projected increase in missionary appointments, Cauthen said, "we are expecting to process well over 200 missionary candidates in 1973 with faith that Southern Baptists will continue to express their missionary convictions through the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering."

He said that while prospects for new personnel look good in 1973, sound financial support must accompany any increases in the missionary force.

At the same time, he added, "we cannot forget the needs of the 2,500 missionaries currently deployed around the world."

-30-

**Sunday School Board Trustees
Respond to Convention Actions**

2/7/73

NASHVILLE (BP)--Trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board in their annual meeting here responded to two Southern Baptist Convention referrals, acted on several personnel and organizational matters, and authorized future construction at Nashville and at the conference center at Ridgecrest.

In two matters of reference from the Southern Baptist Convention in Philadelphia, the trustees reaffirmed present Sunday School Board policies.

A resolution urging all writers to use Scripture in all published materials pertaining to "salvation, the church, and the Christian life" was found to be based largely on materials the board had been asked to publish by the Convention, the trustees were told.

A study committee reported that Scripture references have been included without exception in all materials pertaining to the three designated topics.

-more-

The trustees pledged that the Sunday School Board "will continue to exalt the Bible as God's Book of Revelation," and will continue to seek by many different means "to get the Bible known, read, and heeded by all men."

A second referral called for the board "to study the possibility of making available to all Southern Baptist Convention mission churches up to 75 Sunday School and Training Union books quarterly without charge."

The trustees agreed that the present method of supplying one quarter's materials to new Sunday Schools, Training Unions, and choirs, is strongly preferred from the standpoint of polity, economics and incentive.

In other actions, the titles of executive secretary-treasurer and associate executive secretary treasurer, referring to the operating head of the agency and his associate, were changed to president and executive vice president.

The title of the head of the elected trustees was changed from president to chairman, and the designation of vice-chairman of trustees was added to the task of the chairman of the 18-member local executive committee which meets monthly.

Similar changes in titles had been taken within the past year by the SBC Annuity Board and Radio and Television Commission.

President Sullivan reported on behalf of the administration concerning sales and earnings during the fiscal year ending September 30, 1972.

Sales for the year totaled \$44,043,000, and an increase of \$2,261,000 over the previous year. Earnings for working capital, fixed assets, and reserves were \$2,407,000.

All other funds over and above operating costs were used in assistance to Southern Baptist churches through efforts such as field services and educational program development and promotion. A total of \$958,458 was provided to state conventions for their promotion in areas of Sunday School Board program responsibility, Sullivan said.

A vote of appreciation was extended to Leonard E. Wedel, director of the office of personnel, whose early retirement effective March 31 was announced at the meeting.

The trustees voted to merge the office of personnel and the manpower development department into one unit to be named the personnel department. The new department will be placed in the Management Services Division at a future date.

Donald Moni, presently acting manager, was elected manager of the San Antonio Baptist Book Store.

The group approved the appointment of a committee to formulate procedures for the election of a new president upon Sullivan's retirement in February, 1975.

John Jeffers of Auburn, Ala., was named chairman. Also named to the committee were Presnall Wood, Houston, Grover Kagy, St. Charles, Mo., trustee chairman Scott Tatum, Shreveport, La., and vice-chairman Devaughn Woods, Nashville.

In building authorizations, the trustees agreed to the addition of two stories to the West Wing building in Nashville for meeting, dining, and training rooms, plus offices if space permits.

An addition of 32 apartments for the Royal Gorge building at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center also was approved.

A Baptist Book Store was authorized for El Paso, Tex. The trustees agreed to the purchase of the Bible Book Store there on July 31, 1973.

They further urged that the Book Store Division continue to work with the Foreign Mission Board to assume retail distribution of all Spanish language materials in the United States by Oct. 1, 1973.

Committee of Fifteen To Hold Hearing on SBC Restructure

NASHVILLE (BP)--A special Committee of Fifteen assigned to study the structure of the Southern Baptist Convention will hold an open hearing here Feb. 21 to provide a forum for any Southern Baptist to present ideas on the structure and organization of the convention, according to E.W. Price Jr., chairman of the committee.

The open forum will be held at 3:30 p.m., Feb. 21, at the Southern Baptist Convention Building here following adjournment of the SBC Executive Committee meeting.

The Committee of Fifteen was appointed by the Executive Committee in 1970 to study the structure of the SBC and recommend any changes in organization it felt were needed. Price, pastor of Green Street Baptist Church, High Point, N.C., is chairman.

"We do not know that there will be any individuals who want to present anything, but we wanted to give an opportunity for any Southern Baptist to present a point of view before the subcommittee before our study is complete," Price said. He added that the committee has already heard from several individuals and from SBC agency heads.

Price urged anyone desiring to appear before the committee to get in touch with him, or simply to appear at the meeting on Feb. 21.

-30-

Southern Baptist Aid to Managua Will Provide Worship Facilities

2/7/73

RICHMOND (BP)--Although Managua's seven Baptist churches all suffered destruction or serious damage in the Dec. 23 earthquake, their congregations, alive and well, continue to meet under lean-tos and shade trees.

With the rainy season due to begin May 1, this solution will not be adequate for long, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials were told here.

Special contributions from Southern Baptists and monies appropriated by the Foreign Mission Board will make possible the construction of wooden structures as temporary worship facilities for Nicaraguan Baptists.

Shelter is urgently needed, said Norman Godfrey, executive assistant for the SBC's Brotherhood Commission. Godfrey is one of the three men sent to Managua by the Foreign Mission Board to survey damage and consult with the city's pastors and church leaders to determine Baptists' most pressing needs.

The buildings are to be modified from a basic design to meet individual church's needs. Some of the zinc-roofed structures will be reinforced with steel beams, and will be suitable for later conversion to education or recreation facilities.

Robert E. Dixon, executive secretary of Texas Baptist Men, is mobilizing work crews--men who can spend one to two weeks in Managua. Each will bear his own transportation and living expenses and carry his own basic tools. Tent housing will be provided. Dixon reported that the first crew of six will be ready for departure by March 12.

Some local labor will be recruited, possibly church members. Leslie G. Keyes, SBC missionary to Honduras who has had construction experience, will supervise the work.

As of Feb. 7, \$9,434 in funds designated for relief in Managua had been received by the Foreign Mission Board. Construction materials will cost \$10,500, according to W. Eugene Grubbs, the board's consultant on laymen overseas and one of the survey team.

Godfrey and Grubbs were accompanied by Adolfo Robleto of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House, a former pastor of Managua's First Baptist Church

Baptist work in Managua is affiliated with American Baptist Churches.

-30-