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October 31, 1973

Stevens Marks 20th Year
at SBC Radio-TV Commission

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FORT WORTH (BP)--With a touch of fun and slapstick, the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission honored its president, Paul M. Stevens, for 20 years service as the agency's chief executive.

Gifts and tributes were presented by commission board members, employes and city civic leaders, commemorating Stevens' tenure.

A humorous film, produced by employes and called "movie drone news," noted that Stevens, with "his shoeshine, his smile and a hard head," head led his staff in the production of more than 3,600 radio and television programs.

Porter Routh, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee, added to the tongue-in-cheek quality of the gathering. He presented Stevens "a bill for \$9 million, because you said back in 1958 that if we raised your budget to a certain level you'd never ask for more. Since that time you've asked for at least \$9 million more."

In a serious vein, Routh said the commission has received over \$17 million through the Cooperative Program, since Stevens was elected in 1953, to communicate the Christian message through radio and television.

Stevens said, "I am a product of the staff of this commission and the people of the Southern Baptist Convention who support this commission with their gifts through the Cooperative Program."

Stevens, commenting on the commission's success in the broadcasting industry, likened it to his father's comment about controlling a recalcitrant mule: "I just watch where it wants to go, and I follow it very closely."

"That's what we do with the broadcast industry," he commented. "We watch where it is going and we are there, very closely, with a Christian message."

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Baptists Urge Integrity
for Public Officials

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WB

10/31/73

WASHINGTON (BP)--"Southern Baptists are deeply concerned with Biblical morality and we desire to see this morality embodied in those who lead our nation," declared Owen Cooper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, at a fellowship breakfast here for Baptist Congressmen.

Thirteen Baptist Congressmen and representatives of two other Baptist legislators were among those attending the breakfast, which centered on the theme, "Focus on Integrity." It was sponsored by the Christian Life Commission, the Southern Baptist social action agency.

C. Welton Gaddy of the commission staff, who led the Congressmen in a "Prayer for Integrity," said, "Our trust has been ruptured by double-talk and immoral behavior on the part of persons in high echelons of government, our minds are troubled by a tumult of crises, our wills are frustrated as we vacillate between a sense of importance as citizens and a sense of futility."

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"We pray," he said, "that leaders in this room may be among those in this 93rd Congress who by moral leadership secure once again the shaking foundations of this democracy."

The Southern Baptist president said that "because of recent tragic events, public distrust of governmental leadership and cynicism regarding the political process have increased."

Cooper expressed gratitude that, in spite of the continuing scandals in government, "there are so many Southern Baptist Senators and Congressmen as well as other outstanding Christian leaders in the United States government."

Referring to the Southern Baptist constituency, Cooper told the Congressmen, "We are a people who quickly grow impatient with anyone who attempts to use the processes of government for personal gain, to deceive voters or violate basic personal rights and liberties given to us by almighty God and guaranteed for us by the Constitution."

In spite of Watergate and related scandals, Cooper said Baptists "still believe in this government's ability to function effectively and justly. We want to encourage the citizens who attend our churches not to withdraw but to involve themselves even more meaningfully in the political process."

Of 52 members of Congress who are Baptists, 26 had indicated plans to attend the fellowship breakfast, but at the last minute congressional duties prevented several from attending. Two former members of Congress, a Methodist Congressman and 25 Baptist leaders from various parts of the country also attended.

Christian Life Commission Executive Secretary Foy Valentine said the primary purpose of the breakfast was for "fellowship and affirmative support" of those in Congress who struggle to maintain integrity in public life.

Cecil E. Sherman, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Asheville, N. C., and chairman of the Christian Life Commission, emphasized that morality is the same for Christians wherever they happen to be.

Whether people are in the backwoods of the country or in highly sophisticated areas or in Congress, "people are people and being a Christian is just being a Christian wherever you are," Sherman said.

Sherman then outlined the ethics that, he said, "all Americans need to see and a large majority of Americans want to see embodied in their governmental leaders."

"We are to love God," he said. "We are to place our loyalty to Him above all other loyalties. We are to live simply, for the clutter of many things will corrupt us. We are to tell the truth. We are to honor our families. We are to live temperate lives. We are to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We are to 'bear one another's burdens.' These are the great ideas of the Christian ethic."

Gaddy, director of Christian citizenship development for the Christian Life Commission, organized the breakfast which took place in the private dining room for Congressmen in the United States Capitol.

Rep. William Jennings Bryan Dorn (D-S. C.) and Rep. Richard H. Fulton (D-Tenn.) were instrumental in making arrangements and in contacting their fellow congressmen.

Others on the program were former Congressman Brooks Hays, Rep. James M. Collins (R-Tex.), and Alma Hunt, executive secretary of Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Laymen Slate National
Missions Prayer Breakfast

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BC

DALLAS (BP)--A national prayer breakfast for Southern Baptist foreign missions will be held Nov. 30 in the ballroom of the Statler Hilton Hotel here.

About 3,000 laymen and their pastors from churches west of the Mississippi River have been invited to attend.

Extending the invitation were Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Baker James Cauthen of Richmond, executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board; and Glendon McCullough of Memphis, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission, who is spearheading the effort.

The breakfast, which officially kicks off the week of prayer for foreign missions, will feature a visual presentation of Baptist mission efforts in 77 countries around the world.

Cauthen, who has just completed 20 years as chief administrative officer of the mission board, will address the men.

Special guests at the breakfast will include state Brotherhood directors, state Baptist editors, state Baptist convention presidents and executive secretaries from states west of the Mississippi River.

The Dallas breakfast is the second McCullough has guided in eight months. A similar breakfast, emphasizing home missions, drew 1,000 laymen and pastors to Atlanta in March.

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\$5 Million Offer to Move
Union University Withdrawn

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10/31/73

BC

MEMPHIS (BP)--In the wake of opposition from Baptists in West Tennessee, Memphis dentist, Dr. William B. Cockroft, has withdrawn his offer to give \$5 million to Union University if it would move to the Memphis area and meet certain stipulations.

The Baptist layman's decision to withdraw his contribution has, in effect, staved off an expected controversial debate at the Tennessee Baptist Convention meeting in Memphis, Nov. 13-15. A university spokesman predicted the issue might not even come before the convention at all.

Trustees of the Baptist school scheduled a called meeting on Nov. 8 to consider the effects of the withdrawal of Dr. Cockroft's gift.

The \$5 million offer was part of a package plan submitted by Dr. and Mrs. Cockroft and Mr. and Mrs. Wallace E. Johnson, also of Memphis, proposing that Union move to Shelby County (Memphis). Mr. and Mrs. Johnson pledged \$1 million in the proposal.

A Memphis investment firm, Investor's Mortgage Inc., had offered to sell the university a 177-acre tract of land in the northeast section of Memphis, for about \$250,000. Estimated value of the property was set at about \$1.5 million.

Paul Brown, vice president of the investment firm, said that the property would be made available to Union "if the trustees decided to accept Dr. Cockroft's offer," and added that the firm would wait to hear from Union trustees before taking action regarding the property.

Now that Dr. Cockroft has withdrawn his offer, the university is left with its previous plan to build a new campus on property the university already owns on Highway 45 Bypass in north Jackson, Tenn.

The proposal to move the 148-year-old school from Jackson drew stiff opposition not only from Jackson area Baptists who did not want to see the university move from their city, but also from some Baptists elsewhere who were opposed to the strings attached to the gift. The trustees approved the proposal by a vote of 23-17 in September.

Dr. Cockroft, chairman of the board of United Inns, Inc., the largest franchise holder of Holiday Inns in the nation, made 11 different stipulations in his proposal to give the school \$5 million over a five-year period.

The stipulations include requirements that the university remain theologically conservative, academically excellent, change its name, take no direct U.S. government funds and move to Shelby County.

He also asked that two-thirds of the trustees be laymen, that two Southern Baptist members of his charitable trusts organization be members of the trustees--requirements that would have necessitated changing the bylaws of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, which owns the school and elects the trustees.

Originally Dr. Cockroft said he could withhold funds "if in my opinion" the school does not follow the requirements. But he amended that to "if in the opinion of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention" during the meeting of the Union trustees when his proposal was accepted, 23-17.

In announcing his decision to withdraw the offer, Dr. Cockroft issued a prepared statement to the Memphis news media, saying he made the decision "with no malice to those who have been opposed to this offer, but because we believe it is the best interest of the Tennessee Baptist Convention."

He said that some persons who were opposed to his offer "misunderstood and misinterpreted our intentions and actions. Our desire," he said, "was to help the college, not to hurt or hinder it."

It is not known if the Johnsons will withdraw their \$1 million portion of the \$6 million package. In September, a university spokesman quoted Johnson as saying he would not give \$1 million but would give \$1.00 to the school for every \$7.00 it raises if the move from Jackson was not approved.

Dr. Cockroft said he would continue to serve on Union's board of trustees "as well as assist it in its efforts to have a new campus and a quality program" but he did not state he would make another large gift to construct a new campus in Jackson.

Union University President Robert E. Craig said he has "a great respect and appreciation for the Cockrofts and Mr. and Mrs. Wallace E. Johnson. They have sought to be generous, to insure Union University of a new campus and have been positively Christian in their actions.