



BAPTIST PRESS

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Convention Speakers to
Be "Larger than Life"

DALLAS (BP)--Speakers at the Southern Baptist Convention will loom rather large over the 17,000 "messengers" expected to register here June 11-13.

Like 24 feet tall and 32 feet wide! In a manner of speaking, that is.

Color television projection on two screens that size will help bring the human beings up to the scale of the Dallas Convention Center where the meeting will occur.

The center is as long as the length of two football fields and as wide as the length of one football field.

The closed-circuit television system will be extended next door to the Dallas Memorial Auditorium to accommodate an anticipated overflow crowd on the closing night when Evangelist Billy Graham addresses the crowd.

W. O. Vaught Jr. of Little Rock, chairman of the convention's committee on order of business, said, "The use of the television equipment will mean that the faces projected on the screen will be larger than life.

"The audience on either of the extreme sides of the convention hall will have an excellent view of exactly what is taking place on the stage," he added.

Use of the image magnification system was authorized by vote of the SBC Executive Committee, with payment of costs to be one-third from a special offering taken at the convention sessions, one-third from the SBC agencies and one-third from the convention budget.

Contract for the system is with TNT Communications, Inc. of New York, which has provided similar facilities for recent national political conventions and other large meetings.

Additional equipment, including three color cameras, switching equipment, video recorders and monitors, is being provided free of charge by Taft Broadcasting Corporation of Houston.

W. C. Woody of TimeRite, Inc., a subsidiary of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, will be coordinator and producer for the system's use at the Dallas meeting.

"This equipment will allow simple special effects to be used in flashing images on the screen," said Woody. "We can use a split-screen effect, making it possible for the messengers to see both the face of the speaker and any special visual aids he has prepared.

"In addition, there will be a character generator (writing device) for names, titles, etc., to be flashed on the screen. Words to songs, ballots and resolutions can be put up there quickly for everyone to read easily," he said.

Woody said color slides can be used, but that motion picture film must be converted to video tape to be compatible with the system.

Convention officials expect this 1974 meeting of the convention to be "the most highly visible" meeting in the denomination's recent history.

"We feel the use of this equipment will enable us to have one of the best conventions ever," Vaught said.

House Unit Concludes
Hearings on Amnesty

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--More than 30 persons representing numerous groups presented testimony here before a congressional subcommittee considering amnesty legislation.

The proposals include universal and unconditional amnesty, no amnesty at all and various forms of conditional amnesty.

U.S. Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeyer (D., Wisc.), chairman of the subcommittee, stated at the outset of three days of hearings:

"Now that some time has elapsed since the end of our country's direct military involvement in the Vietnam conflict, it ought to be possible to examine rationally the question of whether or not amnesty should be granted to those who refused to serve."

Several religious groups, including the National Council of Churches (NCC), the U.S. Catholic Conference and the American Jewish Congress, appealed for broad legislation which would grant amnesty to draft resisters and evaders, deserters, exiles and veterans who have received less than honorable discharges.

W. Sterling Cary, NCC president, cited the national body's concern for all those who suffer because of the Vietnam War--families of those killed, wounded and disabled, prisoners of war and missing-in-action. He said, however, that the NCC favors universal and unconditional amnesty :

"(It) would be a clear and simple act which could begin to unite us and signal our desire to live at peace with one another, to build rather than divide."

Spokesmen for Clergy and Laity Concerned, the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Church of The Brethren also testified in support of full and unconditional amnesty.

Other groups advocating amnesty at the hearings were the American Civil Liberties Union, the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, Gold Star Families for Amnesty, Project Safe Return, the National Urban League, Americans for Democratic Action and Wisconsin Amnesty Project.

Speaking in opposition, Leon Ulman, of the U.S. Department of Justice, challenged Congress' authority to pass legislation granting amnesty.

Citing historical and legal precedents, Ulman insisted that only the President has the authority to grant amnesty. "Congress cannot," Ulman stated, "interfere with the exercise of that power."

Walter H. Morse, general counsel of the Selective Service System, argued that granting amnesty would have a "disruptive effect in the future" if another major war called for a military draft.

Fred E. Darling, of the non-commissioned Officers Association, compared draft evaders and deserters to murderers.

"To let them return to the country they have shunned," he stated, "is a slap in the face to the millions of men who were drafted, who were wounded, who were maimed or who were killed in a bloody, unpopular war."

He concluded that "the good God calls upon us to be merciful--to forgive trespassers--but he did not mention 'amnesty.'"

Others testifying against the proposed legislation were representatives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and Young Americans for Freedom.

Advocating a middle position were U.S. Sen. Robert Taft Jr., (R., Ohio) and Robert F. Froehke, former secretary of the Army.

Taft asserted that Congress does have the power to enact amnesty legislation in that it may "immunize a general class of individuals from prosecution."

He argued that a bill he introduced last December, the Earned Immunity Act, does not consider the question of whether draft resisters were right or wrong, or whether the United States should have been engaged in Vietnam.

"Rather," he said, "consideration should be given to the issue of establishment of a practical method whereby an estimated 30,000 individuals could return to this country or cease to be fugitives without creating further division among Americans."

Taft's bill calls for up to two years' enlistment in the armed forces or in "alternative service contributing to the national health, safety or welfare."

In his statement before the subcommittee, Froehlke also argued for a blanket conditional amnesty for draft evaders, but held that deserters should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

He endorsed the idea of military or alternative services "as an obligation and privilege, not punishment."

Such conditional amnesty should be granted, he concluded, to "help heal the hurt this nation has suffered."

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Eastern Europe Churches
Can't Affect Politics

3/15/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--Churches in Eastern Europe must not be expected to influence their governments in the same fashion as their American counterparts, a group of visiting church leaders said here.

During an interview with Washington-based religious personnel, Johannes Althausen, director of the Ecumenical Institute of East Berlin, emphasized that where government officials do not respond at all to such pressure, it is futile. "Our experience," he said, is necessarily "different from yours."

His views were underscored by Adam Kuczma, a Methodist educator from Poland, who pointed to a fundamental difference in political structure between Eastern European nations and the United States.

Archimandrite Dometian, of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, noted that in his country the church senses no need to criticize the government. Instead it cooperates with public officials in humanitarian activities, he said.

Asked about their principal theological concerns, the group had varying answers. Kalmat Hussti, a professor at the Reformed Theological School in Budapest, Hungary, stated his main concern as seeking a theology of the Word of God. He pointed to a deep interest in the Bible in his nation and to the challenge of a new and relevant interpretation of scripture.

"The living preaching of this Word of God is more than interesting," he stated. "(It) is a question of Christian existence or non-existence."

Christian Brunnens, dean of the German Evangelical Church in Nue Brandenburg, East Germany, insisted that Christian thinkers in Eastern Europe must find a theology of their own, and not merely use western models. He acknowledged keeping up with the works of western theologians but went on to add that their systems "are not adequate for our situation."

While acknowledging that the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of the Orthodox Church in Bulgaria, Nicolai Shivarof, a professor at the Theological Academy in Sofia, insisted that his church also engages in practical theology, including social action.

The six church leaders appeared here at the beginning of a month-long tour of the United States under the sponsorship of Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe (CAREE). The organization is concerned with promoting better understanding between Christians in the U.S. and socialist countries in Europe.

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**HMB Names New Staffer,
17 to Mission Posts**

MEMPHIS (BP)--A new director of personnel development was elected and six missionary associates and 11 US-2 missionaries appointed here at the spring meeting of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Charles Edwin Hancock, instructor in pastoral care at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary since 1967, was elected director of personnel development services. He will replace T. E. Carter who resigned in 1973.

A native of Thomasville, Ga., Hancock is a graduate of Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex., and Golden Gate Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

Appointed missionary associates were Tom and Carol Prevost of Amory, Miss., who will work as Christian social ministries consultants in Central Baptist Association, Phoenix, Ariz. Mark and Bonnie McAllister of Webster Springs, W. Va., for work in Bolair, W. Va., where he will serve as pastor-director of weekday ministries at Calvary Baptist Church; and Michael and Ellie Januszkiewicz, who serve Slavic Evangelical Baptist Church, New Britain, Conn.

US-2 missionaries appointed include Catherine Anne Tumlin of East Point, Ga., for student work in Flagstaff, Ariz.; James Truett McLaughlin of Dallas, Tex., resort missions at the Grand Canyon; John William Carrigan Jr. of Metairie, La., student work in San Jose, Calif.; Ann Dee Williams of Riverside, Calif., resort missions in Arkansas; Debbie Ruth Patterson of San Angelo, Tex., student work in Atlanta;

Also, Robert Glen Swearingen of Birmingham, Ala., resort missions in Illinois; Benjamin Jackson Broome of Cochran, Ga., student work in Kansas; Nathaniel Milton of Jackson, Miss., student work in Maryland; Phillip Nollin Cockrell of Terrell, Tex., resort missions in South Carolina; Allen Douglas Lukens of W. Frankfort, Ill., resort missions in Tennessee and Steven Robert Wilson of Duncan, Okla., student work in Billings, Mont.

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**Senate Passes Bill to
Restore Death Penalty**

3/15/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Senate passed a bill (S. 1401) by a vote of 54-33 to restore the death penalty upon conviction of certain federal crimes.

The bill, which now goes to the House of Representatives for action, is an attempt to enact conditions for capital punishment which will overcome the objections set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1972 the Supreme Court held that the death penalty as administered in the United States was invalid and unfair because judges and juries had so much discretion in imposing the penalty that inequity and injustice often resulted. Some convicted criminals were executed for crimes for which others received relatively light prison terms.

Since the 1972 Supreme Court decision, several of the states have rewritten their capital punishment laws in an effort to conform to the court standards. This is the first time the federal legislature has acted on a capital punishment bill since 1972. The Senate in its action approved with modifications the recommendation of the Nixon administration.

The fate of the capital punishment bill in the House of Representatives is rather uncertain. It now goes to the House Judiciary Committee, which is tied up with the impeachment investigation of President Nixon.

Unless the House acts on the bill before adjournment this year, the process in both the Senate and the House will begin anew when the 94th Congress convenes in January 1975.

The Senate bill would make execution automatic if a jury, in a separate hearing following a guilty verdict, found that one or more aggravating circumstances existed in the commission of a federal capital crime and failed to find any factors dictating leniency.

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Among the conditions demanding the death penalty are the following: (1) Conviction of treason and espionage if it were a second offense; (2) If a defendant knowingly created a grave risk of substantial danger to national security; (3) If the defendant knowingly created a grave risk of death to another person; (4) If murder were committed in carrying out crimes such as skyjacking, kidnapping, escape from the custody of an officer, delivering defense information to a foreign government, attack on a president and certain other public officials; and (5) Conviction of murder a second time or conviction of two or more federal or state felonies.

The bill also provides a list of mitigating factors, the existence of any one of which would forbid the death penalty. Among them are the following: (1) If the defendant is under 18; (2) If the defendant did not have the capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct; (3) If the defendant committed the crime under duress; (4) If he were only a part of a group in which the crime was committed by another; and (5) If he could not have foreseen that his conduct would result in the death of others.

Under no circumstances, according to the bill, would the death penalty be carried out upon a pregnant woman.