



January 16, 1975

# --- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

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75-09

## An Eyewitness Tells of Cooperative Program Birth

By Baptist Press

Louis D. Newton of Atlanta was an eyewitness to the birth of the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget and events surrounding its early days in the 1920s and 30s.

This is the 50th Anniversary year of the founding of the Cooperative Program.

He recalls the despair of many Baptists during the convention's days of heavy debts when the banks were pressing in on all sides up into the 30s and early 40s.

Newton, a former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president, was editor of *The Christian Index*, news publication of Georgia Baptists, when the Cooperative Program became reality 50 years ago. He's now living in retirement in Georgia.

Newton was one of the "minds", one observer noted, behind the Cooperative Program, often called the financial lifeline to missions and cooperation of Southern Baptists.

Newton, however, credits a single man, the late Austin Crouch, a native Missourian and the first executive secretary of the Executive Committee, SBC, as the "mind behind the Cooperative Program."

"You know the history of every great movement, of every institution is the length and shadow of a man," Newton told A. Ronald Tonks of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission in an oral history interview.

"Now that man Austin Crouch... He'd talk about the limbs of the cedars in Lebanon where those storms sweep up from the Sea of Galilee. Those limbs were joined together and they stood against the storm."

It was Crouch, who in 1925, the year the Cooperative Program was formally adopted by Southern Baptists, urged that a business efficiency committee be formed to study the financial stability of the Convention. He had urged full cooperation and a plan long before the Cooperative Program was begun.

Crouch was named chairman of that committee, leading in a revamping of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and finally installing a business and financial plan.

Two years later, when the convention recommended that the Executive Committee, SBC, secure a staff and assume responsibility for distribution of SBC-wide receipts to the various mission agencies and other causes, Crouch was named the first executive secretary-treasurer of the committee.

Crouch would say, according to Newton, "'We've got to voluntarily--it can't be by compulsion it can't be pressure--but we've got to study and pray until we see the wisdom of working together, giving together.'"

"Dr. Crouch, was the one man, apparently," Newton continued, "who was aware of this inevitable hour (of impending depression) and when the Depression of 1921 was coming along and people were getting not only alarmed but panicky over what was going to happen, then Dr. Crouch said:

" 'I'm not going to say I told you so, but I am going to say you see now why I have been so concerned that we do set up this mode of operation by which we can pool the credits of the convention and the confidence in the convention's work.'"

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Newton and other sources credit Crouch as a primary figure in later paying off heavy debts of Southern Baptists, when the banks were leaning hard and wanting their money.

After talking with Crouch and his colleagues, the banks determined that the "good name of Southern Baptists," was sufficient collateral to pay the convention-wide debts.

Southern Baptists, through their cooperative efforts eventually paid in full interest and principal of all their national debts, which added up to millions of dollars. This Newton noted, was true while some religious bodies were said to be taking discounts on their loans.

Newton recalls long days and nights at the Sam Davis Hotel in Nashville working with Crouch and other executives of the Southern Baptist Convention agencies over the financial status of the SBC.

Following the formation of the Cooperative Program in 1925, many states were still slow to cooperate, yet Crouch succeeded in leading each into cooperation.

But Crouch wasn't without his problems. He and the Executive Committee met with resistance from pastors and others who were afraid that the committee represented the beginnings of some form of "super church."

Crouch was also resisted by some Southern Baptist agency executives who viewed the Executive Committee as a threat to their direct responsibility to the convention. But Crouch's "firmness and fairness" in administration soon dispelled opposition to the convention. Crouch died in August, 1957.

Many great men and women were prominent in formulating the Cooperative Program, not the least of whom was M. E. Dodd, of Louisiana, who was chairman of the commission that brought the Cooperative Program recommendation before the SBC meeting in Memphis on May 13, 1925, the day the program was formally adopted.

Today, the Southern Baptist Convention is comprised of 12.3 million members in more than 34,000 churches in 33 Baptist state conventions. Southern Baptists have work in 82 countries and all 50 of the United States.

The real backbone of Southern Baptists' work is the local church and a feeling of responsibility for support by every individual church member.

Success has come because of the faithfulness of Baptists to their convictions that the world needs Jesus Christ and that the best way for Baptists to spread that message is by a vast effort in support through the Cooperative Program. (BP)

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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'74 Missionaries Represent  
 31 States, Many Colleges

RICHMOND (BP)--Of the 250 persons appointed in 1974 as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, 95 were graduates of Baptist colleges and universities and 110 were from other than Baptist schools, according to a report presented during January's meeting of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board here.

The appointees came from 31 states, plus Washington, D. C., and Canada, according to Louis R. Cobbs, the board's secretary for missionary personnel. Leading the list were Texas with 65; Virginia with 15; and Georgia, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Tennessee, 13 each.

Of the new missionaries, 205 were college graduates. Baptist schools with the largest number of graduates appointed were Oklahoma Baptist University, with 12; Baylor University, with 11; Carson-Newman, Wayland and William Carey Colleges, with six each; and Mississippi College and Louisiana College, with five each.

Other than Baptist schools with the largest number of graduates appointed for missionary service were Texas Technological University and Kansas State University, each with six, and East Tennessee State University, with five.

Of the new missionaries, 124 mentioned their participation in Baptist student work, about 50 percent. Sixty-one were seminary graduates.

Cobbs reported that at the end of the year the board's personnel department was maintaining contact with approximately 2,500 persons. About 1,600 of these are high school and college students. The remaining 900 have completed their college work and are enrolled in seminary or graduate school or are gaining practical experience to help qualify them for overseas ministries.

The department staff conducted 2,728 interviews with candidates and prospective candidates during the year. The student section reported about 2,800 letters were sent to young people who requested information, an average of 235 letters a month.

Cobbs also reported on staff changes during the year.

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High Court Declines To  
 Hear Indian Peyote Case

Baptist Press

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court declined to review an Indian man's claim that his arrest for possession of the drug peyote violated his First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion.

Golden Eagle, a member of the Native American Church, was arrested for possession of the hallucinatory drug in 1971, after a car in which he was riding was stopped for a traffic violation. Peyote is held to be a sacred drug in the sect, and is used in religious ceremonies.

Golden Eagle was held in Kern County, Cal., for 31 days before the district attorney dismissed charges against him on the day his case was to be tried. California law allows Indians to use peyote in religious ceremonies.

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In spite of the dismissal of charges, Golden Eagle took his case through the federal appeals system. But at both the district and appellate levels, his case was rejected. The Supreme Court's action lets stand those decisions.

The U. S. Supreme Court's refusal to hear the case probably rests in the fact that the charges were in fact dropped. As a rule, the high court does not hear cases where actual injury has not been sustained.

Golden Eagle's best hope was that the court would find his 31 days of imprisonment before release sufficient cause of injury to hear the case, but the justices evidently disagreed.

Attorneys for Golden Eagle argued in a written brief that despite the fact he was never brought to trial on the charges, the high court should hear the case because of the way their client was treated by California officials during the arrest and detention.

The brief asked the high court to rule that California should institute "certain sensitive pre-arrest procedural safeguards in this very narrow and unique area to prevent the threat of arrest, without a warrant, from intimidating and deterring members of the Native American Church from practicing their religion."

In addition, the brief insisted that "the only possible purpose for seizing and retaining these highly personal and sacred implements was to hold up to ridicule an 'Indian religion' and harass and humiliate petitioner and his race."

The argument continued, "If practice of the religion is protected, a full and meaningful protection should be afforded. The right to practice the religion of the Native American Church should not be a right which each member may be forced to defend in court."

Although many states have long had laws forbidding the possession and sale of peyote, there were no federal restrictions on the drug until 1966. In that year, the Drug Abuse Control Act was amended to include hallucinogens. The penalty for sale (but not possession) of peyote was put at up to six years in prison and a \$15,000 fine.

Shortly thereafter, however, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended its regulations to provide that "the listing of peyote . . . does not apply to nondrug use in bona fide religious ceremonies of the Native American Church."

The Supreme Court ruled in 1961 that the Native American Church is a legitimate religious body entitled to the full protection of First Amendment rights. But two years ago the court, in a case similar to Golden Eagle's, also refused to hear oral arguments. Thus the sacramental use of peyote has never received full airing in the federal courts.

A number of states, including Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, where sizeable numbers of Indians live, have made provisions for the legal use of the drug in religious ceremonies.

California's law, along with a 1964 decision by the state's Supreme Court that the use of peyote for religious purposes is a practice protected by the First Amendment, unquestionably led to the dismissal of charges against Golden Eagle.

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OBU 'Broom Brigade' Sweeps  
Boren Into Governorship

Baptist Press

By Eddie Ashcraft

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--When Oklahoma's newly inaugurated governor, David Boren, announced in mid-1973 that he would be a candidate for governor, the experts agreed that he was committing political suicide.

A political unknown in Oklahoma, he was giving up a relatively secure seat in the Oklahoma House of Representatives to conduct a "hopeless" race for the chief executive's office.

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But when Boren was inaugurated in Oklahoma City in mid-January, he and his "broom brigade," which played a key role in "sweeping" him into office, were vindicated.

In the beginning, though, Boren, associate professor of political science at Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) since 1969, had little basis for optimism. After all, a poll, which he shelled out \$2,000 for, showed that only 1.5 percent of Oklahoma voters knew who David Boren was.

Even so, Boren says now, "I'm always an optimist. I thought my chances were good from the beginning. I wanted to just plunge ahead. I never looked back once I decided to run. I felt like I had a good chance and I was going to plunge ahead undaunted."

So Boren, with a handful of believers, composed primarily of current and former OBU students and some Seminole County constituents started the meager beginnings which blossomed first into a stunning upset of Gov. David Hall in the Democratic primary, then a runoff upset of U. S. Rep. Clem McSpadden, and finally a landslide victory over State Sen. Jim Inhofe in the general election.

"OBU people were very important all along," acknowledges Boren, a Yale graduate, Rhodes Scholar, and holder of a juris doctorate from the University of Oklahoma.

"There were just a tremendous number of OBU students who were active all through the campaign," Boren continues, "either as canvassers in Shawnee or throughout the state. Jim Marcum (associate professor of history at OBU) was very active in the 'Educators for Boren.' David Cox, Jim Hopper and Gary Cook, all 1974 graduates, helped on my personal staff throughout the campaign.

"Many of our county chairmen turned out to be either OBU graduates or parents of OBU students. These people were really the basis of our organization."

When time came to announce top staff appointments, the new governor, a Methodist, named five OBU graduates, all Baptists. Sam Hammons, a 1972 OBU graduate and son of a Southern Baptist pastor, R. N. Hammons, from Clinton, Okla.; David Berrong, '73; Paul Gritz, '71, son of Jack Gritz, editor of Oklahoma's Baptist Messenger; and Gary Morris, a current OBU student, were named administrative aides. Rob Pyron, '71, editor of the Wewoka (Okla.) Daily Times, was named press secretary.

Boren believes the last month before the primary in August made the difference in his effort. "I wasn't concerned that people didn't really know much about me," he asserts. "For one thing, I knew people just weren't going to pay attention to the campaign until just before the election.

"But all the things we were doing earlier were bearing fruit. We were building a good organization.

"The most important thing to the campaign was the hard work by the people I had for me. We had people who had never been in politics before and who were respected in their home communities, rather than the type of people you usually find in politics. The kind of people we had are most effective because they still have creativity and believability."

It was during the last weeks before the primary that Boren was persuaded by campaigners to adopt the broom as a symbol of the clean sweep effort to clean up Oklahoma politics. Boren first thought the idea was "too corny," but now admits the broom was a major part of his last-month effort.

"The broom was a symbol of frustration for people who wanted things changed," he believes. "They were tired of politics as usual." While Boren believes hard work made the difference in the election, he admits he will always have a special feeling for the broom.

"My whole philosophy from the beginning was just to paddle my own canoe," states Boren. "I was determined to run on my own merits and not get into any shouting matches with the opposition.

"When you decide on that kind of strategy, you don't worry about what others are doing."

Boren, who is now on a leave-of-absence from OBU (approved by the board of trustees in December), asserts that "teaching is still my first love."

He hopes to keep OBU's January legislative internship in operation and perhaps have a governor's internship for one or two OBU students. In addition, Boren wants to participate in a seminar with OBU students, in which he would teach part-time.

Since the November general election, Boren has been working an estimated 16-18 hours per day in the transition into the governor's office. He has also received "between 400-800 letters per day, hundreds of calls and many visitors" offering congratulations.

For David Boren, the broom doesn't stop here, even though he has probably pushed a broom a lot farther than many homemakers. Now he must make good on promises to clean up state government--and that may require a lot more broom-pushing.

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Adapted from The Anvil, alumni publication of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee. Eddie Ashcraft is a staff writer for the publication.

(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist editors by Oklahoma Baptist University

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