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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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NOTE: The following may be added as a final article (No. 8) in the recent seven-part Baptist Press series on legalized gambling--or used independently.

Legalized Gambling: The  
Anatomy of a Campaign

By Robert O'Brien

DALLAS (BP)--Statewide efforts to get out the vote in the closing days of the campaign against parimutuel gambling in Texas probably provided the key to Texans defeating the issue in a recent statewide referendum.

With over 1.4 million votes cast in Democratic and Republican primaries in the state, opponents of parimutuels turned it back by a vote of 734,814 to 702,505. Like the campaign itself, the vote count was harried and remained unofficial from May 6 until June 13 as both sides monitored what appeared to be confused counting. But the bottom line was that Texans defeated it for the ninth time in 25 years.

Getting out the vote, an effort in which the 2-million-member, 4,000-church Baptist General Convention of Texas played a major role, was a key, but certainly not the only key, to victory.

The victory involved a coalition and expertise in launching a statewide campaign which has become commonplace in Texas. It involved a number of diverse groups, with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission in the role of major catalyst.

James M. Dunn, the CLC's executive director, and Phil Strickland, an attorney and associate director, brought the expertise of many past battles to this one. That expertise has also characterized the leadership of two previous commission heads, Foy Valentine, now head of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission, and Jimmy R. Allen, now a San Antonio pastor and SBC president.

The get-out-the-vote effort, spearheaded by the Texas Christian Life Commission, capped off the multi-faceted battle, which involved voter registration efforts, developing a broad coalition, preparation of printed materials, fund raising, a speaker's bureau, and providing of news copy and advertising materials to the media.

"The first thing to do in any such effort," says Strickland, "is to work with the broadest based opposition possible--not just Baptists. Our effort involved practically every significant religious group in Texas or outstanding individuals from those groups, minority group leaders, civic groups, economic interests such as merchants and bankers, political leaders, and a number of law enforcement leaders."

Most of those groups focused through the Anti-Crime Council of Texas, an organization established in the late 1960's. Strickland and Dunn, who serve on its board, played a major role in putting it together, but it has gradually emerged as a broad-based influence in its own right, involving many different types of people.

Texas Baptists worked closely with ACT this time, too. So effective was the combination that pro-gambling leaders tried to characterize it as a "Baptist front" organization. Dunn had one answer for that--"bald-faced lie." He described it as a "scurrilous attempt to arouse anti-Baptist bigotry and silence the church."

Dunn and others close to the situation say that certainly Baptists are heavily active in the Anti-Crime Council, which Abner V. McCall, president of Baptist-owned Baylor University, serves as co-chairman. But Dunn points out that State Rep. Frank Tejeda of San Antonio, a Roman Catholic Mexican-American, serves as the other co-chairman and that a Methodist layman, Robert L. Dillard Jr., vice president of Southland Life Insurance Co., Dallas, is treasurer.

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The Anti-Crime Council of Texas financed a large measure of its efforts through gifts, ranging from large amounts to small amounts, and sale of literature providing background on the gambling issue. It's estimated that ACT spent over \$100,000 in the campaign.

ACT literature included brochures (of which several million were distributed), one-page, get-out-the-vote pieces (which many churches used as bulletin inserts), bumper stickers, question-and-answer sheets, quote sheets and backgrounders. These provided extensive information for potential voters, news media, and speakers, who were made available to speak in every conceivable kind of meeting.

Of the many potential channels of communication, of course, the churches were one of the most prominent. Baptist churches alone purchased and distributed close to two million pieces of ACT literature. Other denominational groups did the same.

ACT also discovered that merchants groups and chambers of commerce, aware of the inroads caused by gambling, accepted material to distribute.

A major part of the campaign included gearing up a comprehensive delivery system of legitimate news about the effects of parimutuels, based on research and experience of other areas, and about what key people had to say on the subject. Such data went to a wide number of news outlets. News conferences, interviews, radio and TV talk shows, and conferences with newspaper editorial boards also played a key role in news dissemination.

ACT had only a limited amount of money (less than \$50,000) for radio and television advertising, compared to a blitz by the other side. But it felt it was necessary for two reasons: it won a few votes and countered claims of opponents adequately enough to keep people already opposed to gambling from changing their vote.

An interesting aspect of the campaign involved use by pro-gambling interests of Walt Garrison, ex Dallas Cowboy running back, in radio and TV spots, while ACT countered with Garrison's former boss, Coach Tom Landry, a member of the ACT board. Garrison took a down-home, snuff-dipper's approach to the issue, opposed to Landry's lowkey, factual, analytical approach.

"A key to any battle of this sort," says ACT executive director, Allan L. Maley Jr., "is to use a spokesman who has credibility already established in the state. Tom Landry, a man with an impeccable reputation, firm convictions and wide popularity, provided that for us."

Although voters defeated parimutuels, the referendum was not binding on the legislature. Efforts most certainly will be launched to get the legislature to come up with a parimutuel bill, and future efforts also may be expected to bring it to another vote--a constant effort of gambling proponents in Texas and elsewhere.

What will opposition forces do to counter such efforts? For one thing, they say, they will maintain efforts to see that ACT grows as a viable spokesman and that it continues to correlate opposition to gambling and other adverse, crime-related activities.

And citizenship and legislative information efforts will continue. "The legislators have heard the people of Texas speak on this issue once again," says Strickland. "They have had three statewide votes on it in the past 10 years and the result has been the same each time.

"They should continue to turn down efforts to pass parimutuel gambling," he says, "but that will not happen automatically. Efforts will have to continue on two fronts--to inform the public about the facts and to be certain legislators understand the issue and act in the best interests of Texas. Legislators should quit passing the buck and deal with the issue itself," he said.

"In Texas, we've voted on it and voted on it," he continued. "Texans shouldn't have it crammed down their throats every time the polls open. The 'Let-the-people-have-their-say-in-a-referendum' theory always works in favor of the folks with the most money. And it's a regressive sort of thing to the poor, who don't have the money to fight and frequently get duped into thinking it's for their benefit. In all forms of gambling, the money flow is always from those who have less to those who have more.

"I'm not saying the public should never vote," Strickland said, "...but the referendum process should not be abused until it becomes a propaganda technique for wealthy vested interests."

Mark Short Nominated  
As Arizona Chief Executive

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Mark Short Jr., associate pastor and administrator at South Main Baptist Church, Houston, has been recommended unanimously by a search committee to become executive director-treasurer of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

The Arizona convention will hold a special called meeting on July 7 at First Southern Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., to vote on the nomination. Short must receive a two-thirds favorable vote. If elected he would succeed Roy F. Sutton, who retires Dec. 31, 1978.

Short, who will be 50 in July, joined the South Main staff in 1973 after serving seven years as manager of Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. Previously he was minister of education at First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., and has served as minister of education and music at churches in Arkansas, Kentucky and Oklahoma.

Currently, Short, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, serves as a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board and holds committee posts in the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Union Baptist Association in Houston. He is also used as a management consultant for churches and conference centers across the country and holds membership in the American Management Association.

He and his wife, the former Margie Horne of Magnolia, Ark., have five children, including a son, Mark Short III, minister of music at First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ark.

Short is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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(BP) Photo will be mailed to state Baptist papers by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

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Home Mission Board  
Has Best SBC Exhibit

Baptist Press  
6/22/78

ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board display in the exhibit hall at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, June 13-15, was judged "best in show" by a panel of professional judges outside SBC ranks.

The award, along with category awards, was presented by the Baptist Public Relations Association, made up of Southern Baptist communicators across the nation.

In Category A, consisting of exhibits ranging from \$1 to \$500 in value, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, won first place and Louisiana College, Pineville, and the Baptist College at Charleston (S. C.) tied for second.

A display by the North Central States took first place in Category B, made up of exhibits ranging in value from \$501 to \$1,000, and Grand Canyon College, Phoenix, Ariz., was second.

In Category C, made up of exhibits valued from \$1,001 to \$2,000, the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Memphis, Tenn., took first place, and the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., was second.

The Home Mission Board exhibit, which won the "best in show" award, was first in Category D, comprised of exhibits valued at \$2,001 and up, while the SBC Annuity Board, Dallas, and the office of communications of the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville, tied for second.

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Congressional Unit Begins  
War on White Collar Crime

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--White-collar crime is "the most serious, all-pervasive, insidious crime problem in America today," according to the chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime of the House Committee on the Judiciary.

U. S. Rep. John Conyers Jr., D.-Mich., opened a year-and-a-half long series of hearings on white collar crime in Washington. He noted that the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and the Joint Economic Committee of Congress have "conservatively estimated that the price to the American public of white-collar crime--not including fraud against government programs and antitrust violations such as price-fixing--roughly amounts to \$44 billion per year. This compares with a figure of \$4 billion per year for all street crimes against property."

Conyers also said "the cynicism and disrespect for the law which the present general tolerance of white-collar crime engenders...destroys the moral fabric of our cultural values. Such losses cannot really be measured in terms of dollars and cents."

Examples of white-collar crime are consumer fraud, price fixing, illegal competition, embezzlement, fraud, tax evasion, corporate bribery, kickbacks, payoff, computer crimes, securities fraud, political corruption and fraud against the government.

Donald R. Cressey, professor of sociology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, said white-collar crime causes inflation, unemployment, international political scandals, bankruptcy and ill health.

A fact sheet prepared by subcommittee staffers noted: "Contrary to popular misconceptions, 'white-collar crime' is not 'harmless' crime. Though committed by non-physical means, white-collar crimes can cause injury and death. Examples include an industrial plant that allows carcinogenic wastes to pollute a water supply, or a pharmaceutical corporation that knowingly sells defective drugs or devices."

Conyers reported that the U. S. Department of Justice has requested only 5.5 percent of its 1979 budget for activities related to white-collar crime. The American Bar Association's Economic Offenses Committee has recommended putting more federal resources into the fight against these crimes. The 1971 National Commission on Reform of Federal Criminal Laws recommended research into the relationship between white-collar crime and organized crime.

Gilbert Geis, professor of social ecology at the University of California at Irvine, called for more severe treatment of "crime in the suites" than for "crime in the streets."

A U. S. attorney's study in 1972 indicated that the likelihood of imprisonment for bank robbery was 91.8 percent, with a sentence of 124.1 months. The possibility of imprisonment for embezzlement of banks was 19.5 percent, with an average sentence of 21.3 months.

Geis stressed the need for a sense of wrongdoing on the part of white-collar criminals. "I think the time is overdue for some old-fashioned anger and moralizing in regard to white-collar crime and criminals. They have got to learn that what they have done or are doing is wrong, that it threatens this country's survival in a very real way, and that we will not put up with it," Geis said.

"Offenders must come to know that callous commercial exploitation of their fellow human beings is beyond the pale. I appreciate that such a demand smacks of preaching, and that preaching is declass  these days: we are all cool and tolerant and cynical," Geis charged.

Future hearings will consider the impact of white-collar crime on the price of goods and services, race and class bias of traditional attitudes toward crime, and the proper federal response to the problem, Conyers said. He also said that he hoped legislative reforms would emerge from the hearings.

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