



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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September 20, 1978

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Baptists in Israel See
Agreement As Breakthrough

By Elizabeth F. Smith

ASHKELON, Israel (BP)--"A glimpse of hope." "A breakthrough." "It's so remarkable we are stunned." "It's the answer to our prayers, a bigger answer than we could have conceived."

These were some of the first reactions of Baptists in Israel to the outcome of the Camp David summit. Both Arab and Jewish believers are cautiously hopeful that the agreements signed by Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat will lead to permanent peace in the Middle East.

Their excitement, similar to that felt after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem last November, is tempered by a realistic attitude about what lies ahead for all parties. Concern for the Palestinians and fear that radical elements may disrupt the negotiations are expressed by a number of Baptists. No one is predicting how the peace settlement will affect Baptist work in Israel.

"It won't be easy in the Knesset," said one Jewish believer. "But I now have hope for success. When the treaty is signed by mid-December, truly it will be Christmas all over the world."

News of the close of the summit reached Baptists in Israel about 5 a.m. Monday, Sept. 18. In Nazareth, Baptist deacon Fuad Haddad went around his neighborhood, knocking on doors, waking people and alerting them to the good news.

Throughout the day people exchanged facts and opinions on the achievements of the conference and watched TV replays of the press conference at the White House. Some were among the rejoicing citizens who celebrated in public squares in towns and cities throughout the country.

Others stayed up until 2 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19, to watch the live telecast of President Jimmy Carter's address to Congress. The nation's striking school teachers, including some at the Baptist secondary school in Nazareth, decided to return to their classrooms to be with their students at this historic moment.

Everyone agrees that the personal courage and deep faith of the three leaders is a very important element in the success of the summit.

Arab lay leader in Haifa, Ibrahim Sim'an, said he was thrilled that "President Carter proved his sincerity as a Christian." A Jewish believer said, "President Sadat is one of the greatest leaders of all times."

Foreign Mission Board representative James W. Smith, a Georgian serving in Ashkelon, said, "As I watched Jimmy Carter sitting between Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, I marveled: How wonderful that a Christian president can bridge the gap between a Jewish prime minister and a Moslem president to bring peace."

The moderator of the Israel Baptist Mission, Norman F. Lytle, said, "The Lord is using three men who are known for their personal piety. These leaders are not in power at this time just by chance. God is working through them to move us along towards peace."

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S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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An unhappy note is being sounded by a few Christians in Israel. As they study the documents they say, "But what about the prophecies describing Israel's borders?"

Robert Lindsey, a Foreign Mission Board representative and pastor in Jerusalem, stated: "Such people, who may even feel they must pray against the proposed agreements, have a serious misunderstanding of the very Scripture passages they quote."

Leaders of Baptist congregations throughout Israel are calling for believers to study the Scriptures diligently and to pray specifically, seeking God's will for the nation at this hour.

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Elizabeth F. Smith is a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative to Israel, where she serves as press representative.

Guidelines Set
For Routh Successor

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention approved guidelines for a successor to Executive Secretary-Treasurer Porter W. Routh, who will retire Aug. 1, 1979, and took some preliminary steps honoring him for more than 27 years in the post.

Brooks Wester, chairman of both the search committee and the Executive Committee, said the search committee has no specific successor yet in mind and urged persons to send suggestions for a successor and a biographical resume for each.

A successor is expected to be elected at the February, 1979, meeting of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee voted to supplement Routh's retirement income with \$500 per month, which would increase with cost of living, and continue to provide half of that amount and half of his survivor annuity to his wife in the event of his death.

Other actions included providing expenses for continuing secretarial assistance to Routh and paying expenses of the Rouths to Baptist meetings, such as the 1980 Baptist World Alliance meeting in Toronto and annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Rouths were also given a three-week vacation trip following a Baptist World Alliance meeting in Brighton, England, next summer.

The guidelines said the person succeeding Routh should have extensive qualifications in the personal, public, professional and Southern Baptist areas.

Personally, the successor should have "a deep and growing experience in Christ as evidenced in devotion to the Lordship of Christ; unimpeachable integrity in the home, the local church and the wider world in which this person must function; unquestioned honesty in financial responsibilities; active involvement in the life of a local Baptist congregation; sound doctrine--theologically conservative with openness to all segments of Southern Baptist life."

In the public sphere, the Executive Committee approved search committee recommendations that the successor be "able to relate effectively with other persons, including ministers, lay persons, agency administrators and denominational leaders; able to represent Southern Baptists favorably with religious and other leaders; respected for moral convictions and business acumen."

Professional qualifications call for "a thorough knowledge of, and demonstrated skill in, administrative competence; business acumen that can be helpful to every entity of Southern Baptist life when called on, effective(ness) in speech and writing..."

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From a Southern Baptist Convention perspective he or she should have "knowledge of, through participation in and study of, Baptist history, ecclesiology and polity; thorough knowledge of the work of the Executive Committee and all the agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention as clearly presented in the bylaws of the convention and the personnel manual of the Executive Committee, (with) special attention...given to the section titled--Executive Secretary--in the manual;...mediating gifts, which include openness, fairness and patience; dynamic vision of the future of the Lord's work among Southern Baptists and commitment to implementation of plans formulated in Bold Mission Thrust (the SBC plan to proclaim the message of Christ to the entire world in this century)."

Additionally, the committee approved 14 other qualifications, declaring that the successor should be "thoroughly conversant with the main streams of Baptist thinking, personally acquainted with the principal Baptist leaders in the convention and in the states; thoroughly familiar with the organizational concepts and methods traditionally followed by Baptists, able to identify quickly basic problems and issues, able to analyze situations to determine relevant facts and their significance; able to propose workable solutions to problems with all reasonable alternatives explored, able to express himself forcibly in both speech and writing, content to render advice and permit the final decision to be made on a group basis."

Also the successor should be able "to follow through on decisions to determine that action is taken as requested or directed, able to guide and direct professional staff members without himself performing the professional part of each assignment; able to work on a cooperative basis with others on mutual problems, able to plan his work and assign priorities in a fashion that will secure performance at the same time it is required, able to develop committee agenda and provide advice and assistance to committee deliberations without usurping the functions of the committee itself, able to integrate proposals or decisions of committees and other groups into well-rounded and sound over-all plans."

Besides Wester, pastor, First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, Miss., other committee members include H. Franklin Paschall, pastor, First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Roy (Anita) Bass of Lubbock, Texas; Paul Cravens, pastor, First Baptist Church, Charleston, S.C.; Conrad Johnston, pastor, Salem Baptist Church, Salem, Va.; James Jones, pastor, First Baptist Church, Trenton, Mich.; and Rodney Landes, El Dorado, Ark.

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Executive Committee
Boosts Bold Missions

Baptist Press
9/20/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Buoyed by a stirring appeal by Jimmy Allen not to settle for second best in Bold Mission Thrust, the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee approved a resolution committing each committee member to personal support of it.

The Southern Baptist Convention president concluded an evening session of the annual Executive Committee meeting urging his listeners not to let a "theology of inertia" bog down active support of the Bold Mission goal to win the world to Christ.

The next morning, the committee approved a resolution by John Dunaway, pastor of First Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky., which declared:

"We individually, as members of the Executive Committee, commit ourselves to lead in making personal witnessing a priority and to lead our churches in equipping our lay people for their role as a personal witness to take the Gospel to every person in our corner of the world and to give priority to Bold Missions in our budgeting, our planning, and promotion."

It further resolved that each member of the Executive Committee "encourage our lay people to catch the vision of Bold Missions so that many of them will want to send support to the Mission Service Corps," the SBC plan to put 5,000 volunteers on the home and foreign mission fields for one to two years service.

The resolution also promised prayer for Allen and SBC agencies in their Bold Mission involvement and urged churches to pray for the effort.

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"And we hope," it added, "that state conventions, if not already, (will) plan a session in their conventions to be used as a kickoff rally for the most challenging endeavor in our history--Bold Mission Thrust."

Allen challenged Southern Baptists to not let inattention and indifference snuff out the best effort at making Bold Mission Thrust work.

Urging Baptists to avoid "making peace with mediocrity," Allen challenged them to shun becoming "burnt out cases who have forgotten the thrill of the trumpets of morning."

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Wrapup

Executive Committee
Faces Variety of Issues

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Actions to study the potential of telecommunications for Baptists and proposals for a new seminary and merger of two Southern Baptist Convention agencies transpired during the annual meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The committee also made statements on the Middle East peace accords and "Bold Mission Thrust," set guidelines to select a successor to its executive secretary-treasurer, and voted a 1978-79 budget.

The telecommunications study grew out of a proposal by the SBC Radio and Television Commission that the Executive Committee explore Southern Baptist participation in telecommunications in cooperation with the Public Service Satellite Consortium.

The committee, after considerable discussion, voted to "encourage the involved and interested (SBC) agencies jointly to participate in a telecommunications study with staff leadership to be provided by the Radio and Television Commission."

Responding to a motion at the 1978 SBC meeting in Atlanta, the committee also asked "all interested parties to support and present their views" on the suggestion for establishing a seventh SBC seminary to the Executive Committee's Institutions Workgroup in February. In turn the work group and the Program and Budget Subcommittee of the Executive Committee will bring recommendations to the Executive Committee which would report to the 1979 convention in Houston.

In a related action, the Executive Committee requested the SBC Sunday School Board to work with appropriate agencies to project seminary enrollments through 1985 and update studies done in 1957 showing the number of churches in a 250 mile radius of each existing seminary site and other possible seminary sites.

The matter of agency merger was proposed in a letter sent by George Bagley, executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist Convention. Bagley, noting that the Brotherhood Commission is now without a leader following the recent death of Glendon McCullough, proposed merger of the commission with the Sunday School Board.

Noting that its action "is not to be taken as implying that the committee or its subcommittees or work groups at this time approve or disapprove of the merger," the Executive Committee asked the board and the commission to study the proposal. The two agencies will appoint a conference committee of three from each to discuss the feasibility of Bagley's suggestion for consolidation and report to the Executive Committee in February.

The Executive Committee also sent a telegram to President Jimmy Carter commending him and thanking God "for the steps which have been made toward peace in the Middle East." It also passed a resolution committing each Executive Committee member to strong personal and prayer support of the SBC's "Bold Mission Thrust" goal to proclaim the message of Christ to the entire world in this century.

Taking further note of the retirement of Porter W. Routh, its long-time executive secretary-treasurer, the Executive Committee approved guidelines outlining qualifications for Routh's successor and took steps to increase Routh's retirement benefits. Routh, who has headed

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the Executive Committee for more than 27 years, will retire August 1, 1979. A successor is expected to be named in February, 1979.

The Executive Committee set its 1978-79 budget at \$736,100, 10.3 percent ahead of the previous year's figure. It includes a six percent cost of living adjustment for Executive Committee staff.

Subject to SBC approval, the Executive Committee set a Bold Mission Thrust Cooperative Program goal of \$83 million for the 1979-80 fiscal year, with a \$68.5 million basic budget, \$2.5 million capital fund and \$12 million Bold Mission Thrust Challenge section.

A three-part action urged that the total Cooperative Program goal for 1979-80, including all state conventions, be \$226,001,938 in keeping with convention action to double Cooperative Program receipts in five years; that states consider raising percentage of their Cooperative Program gifts to the SBC Cooperative Program to help reach that goal; and that the SBC Stewardship Commission intensify efforts to acquaint churches with the necessity to raise their gifts in support of the goal.

In a series of other actions, the Executive Committee:

--Passed resolutions paying tribute to the late Glendon McCullough of the Brotherhood Commission and Ralph Norton and Roy Sutton, retiring as executive directors respectively of the Tennessee and Arizona Baptist Conventions.

--Raised the cost of the SBC Book of Reports from \$1 to \$2 and the cost of the SBC Annual from \$3 to \$5 for church and church-related organizations not normally receiving the annual and from \$7 to \$10 for non-church-related organizations.

--Approved fund raising campaigns for Southeastern, New Orleans and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminaries, in keeping with past actions for other seminaries.

--Appointed a committee, at the request of the SBC Home Mission Board, to study with the board the whole program of church loans and assistance and develop recommendations.

--Recommended to the Southern Baptist Convention that Stouffer's Riverfront Towers serve as the headquarters hotel for the 1980 SBC meeting in St. Louis and that the Holiday Inn Riverfront serve as the Woman's Missionary Union headquarters hotel.

--Voted to publish directories in the SBC annual every other year, rather than annually, at a savings of \$47,500 a year based on current costs. Names of new pastors and deceased will be included each year.

--Divided \$21,089 from the estate of John Price Williams of Clovis, N.M., in three equal shares to the New Mexico Baptist Convention, the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board.

--Approved use of \$30,000 from the Convention Operating Reserve for the Executive Committee to use in 1978-79 for promotion of Bold Mission Thrust in keeping with the SBC's assignment of that responsibility to the Executive Committee.

--Approved a share of the 1977-78 Bold Advance Budget for the Executive Committee and the Baptist World Alliance, which do not normally share in advance funds.



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SEP. 22 1978