

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICESBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor**BUREAUS****ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041**DALLAS** Richard T. McCartney, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996**MEMPHIS** Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) L. Bracey Campbell III, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

February 21, 1979

79-28

Harold C. Bennett Named
To Executive Committee Post

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Harold Clark Bennett was elected unanimously as executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, succeeding Porter W. Routh, who will retire July 31, 1979, after 28 years in the post.

Bennett, 54, executive secretary-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention since 1967, will begin serving as the Executive Committee's executive secretary-treasurer elect, April 1.

He will be the fourth executive secretary-treasurer in the 52-year history of the Executive Committee, which serves as the Southern Baptist Convention between annual sessions except in areas assigned to national SBC agencies. The Executive Committee disburses the SBC's national Cooperative Program funds.

The action of the Executive Committee came in an evening session, Feb. 20, after Bennett, a veteran denominational executive, appeared before them as the nominee of the Executive Committee's search committee.

Earlier in the day, the Executive Committee voted 24 to 23 to change the agenda so that they could learn the nominee's name before the evening session to have more time to consider it. After a parliamentary tangle, members heard the report of the search committee, chaired by Brooks Wester, Mississippi pastor and Executive Committee chairman, in two parts.

First, they gave unanimous approval to a salary package for the executive secretary position, which called for annual compensation of \$45,843 in salary, \$4,584 in retirement contribution (10 percent of salary) and \$1,947 for hospitalization, group life and disability insurance. The package also includes moving expenses and other normal employee benefits.

Next, the committee received Bennett's name as the nominee and deliberated at length on the best approach for making their decision. They decided the vote should come after an informal session with Bennett that evening. The unanimous vote followed that session.

Bennett, a native of Asheville, N. C., who was ordained to the ministry in 1948, has spent 30 years in pastoral and denominational work. He was a pastor and chaplain for 11 years before joining the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., in 1960 as superintendent of new work.

After more than two years in that post, he became secretary of the department of metropolitan missions, SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta, 1962-65, then director of the missions division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas, 1965-67.

His pastoral experience includes churches in North Carolina, Kentucky and Arkansas. Previously he was also assistant pastor of First Baptist Church, Shreveport, Louisiana, and served for a period as chaplain of both the Kentucky State Reformatory and the Kentucky Woman's Prison.

Bennett, who has held a number of elected denominational leadership posts on the local, associational, state and national levels, spent periods as a clerk for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and as a Naval aviator before entering the ministry.

-more-

Before entering theological training, Bennett attended Asheville (N. C.) Biltmore Junior College and Mars Hill (N.C.) College and earned a bachelor of arts degree from Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N. C.

He attended Duke University Divinity School, Durham, N. C., and earned a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., conferred an honorary doctor of laws degree on him in 1968.

He has studied urban planning at Georgia Institute of Technology and has studied securities and investments to improve his effectiveness in administering the Florida Baptist Convention's Church Bond Plan.

In Jacksonville, Fla., he and his family have been active members of the Deermeadows Baptist Church, where he has served as a deacon and Sunday School teacher. He married Phyllis Jean Metz of Joliet, Ill., in 1947. They have three children.

-30-

(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers.

SBC Urged to Involve
Laymen in Bold Missions

Baptist Press
2/21/79

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Responding to a plea from a group of Baptist laymen in key business positions, the SBC Executive Committee voted to appoint a five-member special committee to explore ways Baptist laypersons can be more effectively involved in Bold Mission Thrust.

The action came following a presentation by C. E. Price of Pittsburg, Pa., vice president and general manager of the Industry Services Division of Westinghouse Electric Corp., who spoke on behalf of a group of 15 business and professional executives concerned about involvement of laymen in Bold Mission Thrust.

Price called for Baptist leaders to allow laymen "to use our God-given talents and gifts as we participate as Baptist men in the mainstream of Southern Baptist life through Bold Mission Thrust."

He presented a detailed report suggesting ways that the gifts and talents of Baptist men could be utilized in the Bold Mission Thrust effort by Southern Baptists to proclaim the gospel to every person on earth by the year 2000.

"Many Southern Baptist men who are now supporting para-church groups through participation and giving of their financial resources could become interested and involved in the approaches suggested in this report," Price said.

The report called for pastors to recruit, challenge, motivate and train their laymen in personal evangelism, and for a national strategy to enlist one million Southern Baptist laymen practicing personal evangelism on a daily basis.

It also expressed support for the SBC Home Mission Board's "Friends of Evangelism" program, its National Evangelism Support Team and its prayer support plan for Bold Mission Thrust.

Indicating that many of the problems related to involving laymen in evangelism and missions are communications problems, the report suggested that the Executive Committee organize a Bold Mission Thrust communications advisory committee involving Baptist laymen who are professionals in the field of communications to develop a national strategy to meet this challenge.

-more-

Specifically, the laymen's group suggested enlisting communications experts as Mission Service Corps volunteers, creating a Bold Mission Thrust speakers' bureau, and utilizing a telethon to enlist Mission Service Corps volunteers and sponsors.

They also suggested creating lay advisory committees in the denomination to advise Baptist leaders on business matters, utilizing the services of laymen who are professionals in management structure and systems, management motivation and development, staff relationships and employee counseling, and the purchase of land and buildings for church and mission sites.

In presenting the report, Price cited a study made in 1970 by the SBC Executive Committee which stated that "the under-utilization of laymen may be the greatest current liability of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the appropriate training and utilization of Southern Baptist laymen may be the convention's greatest potential asset."

Since that study was done, Price said, "change has come about slowly and surely and laymen appreciate it."

But now, with the challenge of Bold Mission Thrust, efforts must be redoubled to involve laymen in missions and evangelism, Price said.

Later in a more lengthy presentation to the program subcommittee of the Executive Committee, Price explained that the 15 laymen involved in making the request were not part of any organized movement, and made no claim to represent all SBC laymen.

"We do believe it represents a reasonable percentage of executives and professional men, both active and retired, who desire to participate in a more meaningful way to undergird the Bold Mission Thrust program," he added.

The group met in Tallahassee, Fla., in January to discuss ways to more effectively involve laymen in Bold Mission Thrust after five of the men had gone on an extensive missions tour of the Northwest and West Coast sponsored by the Home Mission Board last October.

As a result of that involvement, the men on the tour issued a plea circulated through Baptist Press urging that Baptist leaders (1) don't just ask us (laymen) for money; (2) take a chance on us and turn us loose to participate directly in missions, (3) use our professional skills in missions and ministry, and (4) take advantage of the influence of laymen to advance the Kingdom of God.

The men later expanded their group to include other top business and professional executives, drafting a 32-page report to the SBC Executive Committee offering specific suggestions on ways to involve laymen in Bold Mission Thrust.

Several members of the Executive Committee's program committee praised the laymen for their insight and involvement, and encouraged the denomination to respond with action instead of mere words or referral for more study.

"This is a top priority item on the agenda," one member said. "It deserves our very best." Another called it "a day I've longed for, and I am happy this has come from these dedicated, committed laymen."

J. T. Williams, president of Killearn Properties, a real estate development company in Tallahassee, Fla., who accompanied Price as a representative of the group, told the subcommittee he was excited about the response to the presentation.

"You're concerned about the same things we're concerned about," Williams said.

Wrapup

Committee Elects Bennett,
Refuses 7th Seminary and Merger

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention elected a new executive secretary-treasurer, declared a proposal for a seventh SBC seminary unfeasible and recommended that the SBC Sunday School Board and Brotherhood Commission not merge.

In other action, the Executive Committee voted to recommend an \$83 million 1979-80 national Cooperative Program budget and voted to establish a five-member committee to study ways lay people may be more involved in Bold Mission Thrust.

Harold C. Bennett, 54, executive secretary-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, was elected as the fourth executive secretary-treasurer in the Executive Committee's 52-year history. He succeeds Porter W. Routh, who will retire July 31, 1979, after 28 years in the post. Bennett will join the staff for an orientation period beginning April 1.

While the Executive Committee said a seventh seminary was not feasible it proposed that the current six seminaries be requested to work together with the committee's institutions workgroup to outline possibilities "of extending their ministries for meeting the needs for theological education in the state conventions in the northeast, north central, western and northwestern areas of the United States.

The Executive Committee studied a seventh seminary following a motion referred to it last year at the SBC annual meeting in Atlanta. The SBC will take final action at its 1979 meeting in Houston.

Following a joint study by the Brotherhood Commission and the Sunday School Board, the Executive Committee voted not to recommend to the convention that the two agencies merge. The study grew out of a proposal made to the Executive Committee by George Bagley, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist Convention.

The \$83 million Cooperative Program budget, which exceeds the 1978-79 goal by \$8 million, includes \$71 million in basic operating and capital needs of SBC agencies and \$12 million in the Bold Mission Thrust challenge section. The basic operating and capital needs amount exceeds the 1978-79 goal by \$7 million. The SBC will take final action on the budget.

Any funds above the basic operating and capital needs total will be divided for Bold Mission Thrust needs among the Foreign Mission Board (40 percent), Home Mission Board (40 percent), Radio and Television Commission (12 percent) and the six seminaries (eight percent). Bold Mission Thrust is the SBC plan to proclaim the message of Christ to the entire world in this century.

The action on the lay involvement study committee followed a presentation by C. E. Price of Pittsburg, vice president and general manager of the Industry Services Division of Westinghouse Electric Corp., who spoke on behalf of a group of 15 business and professional executives concerned about involvement of laymen in Bold Mission Thrust.

Price called for a wide range of actions to allow laymen "to use our God-given talents and gifts as we participate as Baptist men in the mainstream of Southern Baptist life through Bold Mission Thrust."

In other action, the Executive Committee improved benefits of Executive Committee employees. They included a two percent cost of living raise to adjust for a lag in salaries because of inflation over the past five years.

A change in the retirement plan calls for increasing the maximum retirement benefit from 42½ percent of final salary to 50 percent of salary for the average for the highest five years, based on 1 2/3 percent per year multiplied by years of service. In keeping with the current Annuity Board policy, retirement of future employees will be funded by 10 percent of salary each year.

Also the committee adopted a 50 percent survivor annuity for qualified dependent spouses.

In other action, the Executive Committee voted to dissolve a committee studying joint fund raising efforts of SBC seminaries; recommended sites for the 1984 and 1985 SBC meetings in Kansas City and Dallas respectively; recommended to the convention a change in Section XII of the SBC Business and Financial Plan to tighten internal financial controls of SBC agencies and noted some exceptions to the general rule that the Cooperative Program-funded agencies not charge for their services.

The exceptions include agencies which provide a service and/or materials to a limited number of churches where the service or materials is for fund raising for the individual church; agencies which provide curriculum materials, special materials or services to be used in a teaching or training program or in a study of the particular problems of an individual church; and agencies which conduct conferences, seminars or training sessions for individuals.

-30-

John Hughes Dies
Following Surgery

Baptist Press
2/21/79

RICHMOND, Calif. (BP)--John O. Hughes, oldest son of the executive director of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, died Feb. 11 following heart bypass surgery.

Hughes, 36, was the son of Robert Hughes and pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church since 1973.

Hughes' death came two years to the week after his wife, Sandy, died from bacterial pneumonia. Hughes is survived by his two daughters, Debbie, 10, and Karen, 7; his parents, a brother and a sister.

-30-

Mrs. Naylor Recovering
At Home From Stroke

Baptist Press
2/21/79

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Mrs. Robert E. Naylor is resting in her Fort Worth, Texas, home following surgery to clear arterial blockage in her neck.

Mrs. Naylor, wife of retired Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Robert Naylor, suffered a stroke Jan. 20 while the Naylor family were visiting their daughter Rebekah, a medical missionary, in Bangalore, India. They returned to the U. S. Feb. 5.

Naylor said his wife, who was released from the hospital Feb. 10, is "recuperating well."

-30-