



## BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

### NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
W. 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** \_\_\_\_\_, 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) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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80-115

McCall, New BWA Leader,  
Affirms Bible, Lauds Wong

By Carol Franklin

TORONTO (BP)--A ringing affirmation of the truth of the Bible and a touching tribute to his predecessor marked the response of the new Baptist World Alliance president during his presentation to the delegates.

"This Bible is a reliable, trustworthy, and, if you like the term, infallible source of information," Duke K. McCall, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, told an enthusiastic audience.

Holding it aloft, McCall said that his Bible, in contrast to the whole word of God, had been growing over the years. "At first, my mother was my whole Bible," he said. "She taught me that God is love. Later, I learned John 3:16. Over the years I have brought every tool at my disposal to make my Bible grow to be as big as THE Bible."

McCall is the 14th person in the 75 year history of the Alliance and the first American since 1955 to become president of the Alliance, which includes 30 million Baptists from 120 countries and dependencies.

Delegates to the 14th Baptist World Congress, meeting at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, also elected 12 vice presidents and reelected long-time BWA treasurer Fred B. Rhodes of Washington, D.C.

In an indirect reference to disturbances at this congress, McCall said he hoped Baptists would let "the whole revelation of God control us in all our dealings" rather than selected portions. He also apologized "to our Russian brothers," for those "who have taken advantage of the freedom of this great land to embarrass" them.

Carl McIntyre, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, held a rally to denounce the Soviet delegation to the congress as agents of the Soviet government.

Georgi Vins, recently exiled Baptist pastor from Russia, held a counter meeting to emphasize the persecution of Christians under Communist regimes. Demonstrators carrying placards, making a variety of accusations against the Soviet delegation and government, greeted BWA delegates at most sessions.

Of his predecessor, McCall said that David Y.K. Wong is "a quiet man whose spoken word is magnified into thunder by his character." McCall stepped from the podium to embrace Wong.

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S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Gerhard Claas, newly elected general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said in his inaugural address that he does not see the BWA becoming a super-church or huge institution taking the place of local churches and regional denominations.

"We cooperate where the local church would be too limited," he said. "We can represent Baptists to the state, the public and other churches. Through cooperation we can strengthen fellowship and become a tool of God in today's world."

Named as vice presidents, also for five-year terms until the next worldwide gathering of Baptists, were A.S. Clement, England; Rolf Dammann, East Germany; Mandole Molima Koli, Zaire; Mrs. R.G. Codrington, South Africa; K. Imotemjon Aler, India; and Victor San Lone, Burma.

Also Jose dos Reis Pereira, Brazil; Librado Ramos Lozano, Mexico; Roy Bell, Canada; Mrs. Fannie Thompson, Tucson, Ariz.; Edward A. Freeman, Kansas City, Kan.; and Chester J. Jump, Valley Forge, Pa.

No nominations for officers were made from the floor and no objections were registered as the delegates confirmed the choices of a nominating committee.

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Rival Conferences Grab  
Much Media Attention

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TORONTO (BP)--Declaring that Russian Baptists who manage to stay out of prison do so "at the price of compromise," dissident Soviet pastor Georgi Vins opened his rival "Conference on the Persecuted Church" before sparse audiences.

Scheduled by Vins to run concurrently with the 14th Baptist World Congress in Toronto, the conference opened with about 100 participants. About 400 attended a later, evening session.

Vins attracted a lion's share of media attention because of his criticism of the official delegation of Soviet Baptists attending the larger congress.

Another protester used the BWA meeting to attract media attention. At Jarvis Collegiate Institute, Carl McIntyre, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, denounced the BWA for harboring agents of the Soviet government.

About 200 people attended the rally a few blocks from Maple Leaf Gardens, site of the 14th Baptist World Congress where more than 19,000 Baptists from around the world were meeting.

McIntyre charged the Baptist World Alliance with a "high-level conspiracy" with the KGB, the Soviet secret police.

Although he offered no proof, he accused members of the Soviet delegation to the Baptist Congress of being KGB agents and asserted that such charges have been proven against Alexis Stoyen, Michael Zhidkov and Alexei Bichkov, all pastors of the Moscow Baptist Church, and officials of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians/Baptists in Russia.

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BWA Delegates Refer  
Resolutions to Council

By Stan Haste

TORONTO (BP)--Acting on behalf of 19,814 delegates attending the Baptist World Congress, the General Council of the Baptist World Alliance adopted a battery of resolutions on religious freedom and human rights, world peace and disarmament, world hunger, refugees, ecology, family life and evangelism.

Although originally scheduled for action by the delegates, they referred all but a resolution of appreciation for their hosts to the General Council because of a time shortage. The General Council is a policy group comprised of representatives from each of the sponsoring BWA bodies.

It was believed to be the first time in 14 world congresses, held every five years, that responsibility for adopting official resolutions was passed on to the General Council.

Among amendments proposed by delegates but rejected by the resolutions committee were statements condemning Iran for continuing to hold U.S. hostages; expressing the view that every child, "from the moment of conception, has the right to life;" deleting a commendation of the U.S.S.R. and the United States for agreeing to the SALT II treaty; and adding an endorsement of nuclear power.

As passed, the resolution on religious freedom and human rights called on governments of the world "to grant religious freedom to all peoples" and urged "cessation of all discrimination against those who practice or advocate other religions than those approved and accepted in their countries."

The statement also called all signatory nations to adhere to the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, rejected "inhuman conditions in places of confinement," and reaffirmed "our oft-stated insistence upon respect for all persons regardless of racial or ethnic heritage."

A resolution on world peace and disarmament welcomed decisions of the recent special United Nations disarmament session, commended both the Soviet Union and the United States for signing the SALT II treaty, called on the U.S. Senate to proceed with ratification, and pleaded that resources saved by arms reduction be redirected to developing nations.

World hunger was addressed in a separate statement speaking to "the gospel mandate" to alleviate the suffering of the hungry. The resolution specifically appealed to nations to expedite the export/import of food, seed and fertilizer among developing nations, asked richer nations to increase their foreign aid budgets, and called on all nations to continue the common practice of permitting duty-free entry of relief supplies.

In the resolution on refugees, the congress went on record pleading with all governments "to give care and human rights to the dispossessed peoples within their jurisdiction so they may live with hope and security."

The resolution on ecology, which one delegate unsuccessfully sought to have omitted, called on both governments and churches to recognize "the need for careful and responsible husbanding" of oil and other energy sources and to keep in mind the effects of energy shortages, particularly in developing countries as well as "the requirements of succeeding generations."

Other steps should include cleaning up hazardous waste sites, seeking legislation discouraging dangerous waste disposal, and urging experimentation and use of alternative natural sources of energy such as wind, sun and water.

On the subject of family life, delegates recorded the conviction that "every child is a unique creation of God, and deserves to be treated with appropriate dignity." Moral and religious training is a right not to be denied, the statement continued. It also affirmed children's rights to be provided for economically and educationally.

Delegates declared evangelism to be "fundamental to our existence." The statement defined evangelism as "the declaration and application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the nurturing of those who accept him as Lord and Saviour."

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Secretary's Investigation  
Confirms Disqualification

Baptist Press  
7/15/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Investigation by Southern Baptist Convention Registration Secretary Lee Porter confirmed that two Kentuckians were disqualified as messengers at the annual meeting in June because their church had not met the financial requirements that would entitle it to the 10 messengers it sent.

Thomas and Claudia Riner, disqualified by messengers at the recommendation of the credentials committee, stated on their messenger applications that Logos Baptist Church of Louisville, Ky., contributed \$2,300 to the work of the convention in the preceding year. According to the constitutional formula for representation, it takes just \$2,250 to qualify a church for the maximum 10 messengers.

Western Recorder Editor C.R. Daley challenged the Riners' credentials as messengers on the basis that the Logos Baptist Church, of which Riner is pastor, was not "in friendly cooperation with this convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work" and it has not been a "bona fide contributor to the convention's work"—requirements under Article III, Subpoint I of the SBC constitution.

The credentials committee in St. Louis where the convention was held, however, investigated the Riners' credentials challenge under the less subjective Subpoint II which says a church may send one messenger for every 250 members or for each \$250 "paid to the work of the convention during the fiscal year preceding the annual meeting."

The committee determined most of Logos Baptist Church's contributions were not "to the work of the convention," because they were designated primarily to an individual church. In October 1979, Logos sent a \$2,000 check to the North Central Baptist Association in Indiana "for First Baptist Church, Akron, Indiana."

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The other contributions were \$250 "For SBC Foreign Missions Program" and \$50 for books for First Baptist, Akron.

"The \$2,000 given to another church cannot be counted as money paid to the work of the convention," said Porter at the conclusion of his investigation. "I do not believe that money given by one church to another church meets the spirit or the letter of the constitutional provision."

Porter emphasized his investigation did not address the vague requirements of Subpoint I, under which the Riners were challenged, and that no doctrinal test was involved. He said he will ask for a clarification of that subpoint from the Executive Committee in September.

For example, the Riners considered Logos' gift to First Baptist of Akron a contribution "to the work of the convention," though the credentials committee did not.

Daley, however, in an article explaining why he challenged the Riners' credentials, said, "The record showed not one cent had been contributed by this church in its entire existence through the Cooperative Program which is the universally accepted channel by which churches express their interest in the worldwide Baptist missionary enterprise."

The Executive Committee voted in St. Louis, before the Riner challenge, to examine the basis for membership in Article III.

Claudia Riner, a Kentucky state legislator, who was instrumental in having copies of the Ten Commandments placed in all Kentucky public school classrooms, had offered a resolution at the SBC meeting supporting such an action across the country. That resolution was disallowed when messengers unanimously disqualified the Riners as messengers.

Porter said that Logos Baptist Church, on the basis of its membership of 50, and if it had met the "friendly cooperation" requirement of Subpoint I, would have been eligible for a maximum of two messengers. The other eight messengers from the church were not challenged, however, so the credentials committee did not check their credentials.

"If all had been challenged, we probably would have disqualified them all on the basis of misinformation," said Porter. He said the credentials committee can initiate a credentials check on messengers, but chose not to in the case of the eight unchallenged messengers from Logos.



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460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

RS  
CD

LYNN MAY  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
127 9TH AVE NO  
NASHVILLE TN 37203

