



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 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

October 31, 1980

80-174

Missouri Convention Draws Record Messenger Turnout

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (BP)--Missouri Baptists agreed to assist the Baptists of Taiwan, expressed opposition to legalized bingo gambling and prayed for American captives in Iran as they met in their 146th annual session, Oct. 27-29.

The convention, held in First Baptist Church, Springfield, drew 2,647 messengers and visitors, a record.

Messengers also voted to change the name of one of the state's four Baptist colleges.

The Taiwan project, a three-year program of church growth and evangelism, is part of Missouri Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust efforts, according to Rheubin L. South, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention. He called it "a logical extension of Missouri Baptists' efforts to preach Jesus Christ to all men."

The convention is responding to a joint invitation from Baptists of the Republic of China and the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board.

Opposition to the bingo amendment was expressed in a resolution which called on Missouri Baptists and "other citizens concerned with the social welfare of the state to oppose vigorously" a pending amendment to the state constitution which would legalize bingo gambling.

Bingo gambling was condemned as being based on greed, historically associated with fraud and abuse, and difficult to regulate once legalized.

Prayer for the hostages was requested in a resolution expressing concern for the captives, their families and their captors.

The only point of tension during the three-day meeting occurred over the request of Southwest Baptist College in Bolivar, Mo., to change its name to Southwest Baptist University. After repeated assurances from President Harlan Spurgeon that the school did not plan to begin graduate programs, the name change was approved by a vote of 571-392.

In other business actions, the messengers elected Jim E. Jeffries, pastor of National Heights Baptist Church in Springfield, as president and approved a \$10.5 million budget for 1981. Of that amount, 34.5 percent, the same as last year, will be forwarded to mission causes around the world through the national Cooperative Program.

Messengers also celebrated an increase in baptisms for the 1979-80 church year. Unofficially, baptisms totaled 20,838, up 35 percent from the previous year and was the third highest total in the history of the convention and the highest total in more than 20 years.

-more-

Credit for the upturn in baptisms was given largely to "Good News Missouri," an evangelistic program using a mass media blitz of evangelistic testimonies as well as simultaneous revivals in the cooperating Baptist churches.

The 1981 Missouri Baptist Convention will be held Oct. 26-28 in St. Louis. The exact location of the meeting has not yet been determined.

-30-

Nevada Baptists Hold
Second Annual Meeting

Baptist Press
10/31/80

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP)--Adrian Hall, pastor of College Park Baptist Church of Las Vegas, was re-elected president as the newest convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention held its second annual meeting.

The Nevada Baptist Convention was formed in 1978 when churches in two associations—one affiliated with the Southern Baptist General Convention of California and the other with the Arizona Baptist Convention—drew together to organize.

Hall was elected vice president of the convention in 1979, but assumed the presidency when President Don Mulkey resigned to become director of missions for the convention.

During the three-day meeting, the 165 messengers approved an annual budget of \$635,912, an increase of 20 percent over the 1979 budget of \$500,000. Also approved was an increase in giving to the Cooperative Program for worldwide missions causes, up to 14 percent from 12 percent last year.

In another action, messengers approved a goal of establishing 25 new church-type missions or churches during the coming year as part of the convention's Bold Mission Thrust.

"Twenty-five new churches is the goal, a goal which will be met," said Ernest B. Myers, executive director of the fledgling convention.

The 1981 convention will meet Oct. 26-28 at First Baptist Church in Carson City, Nev.

-30-

Baptist Minister Buchanan
Withdraws From House Race

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press
10/31/80

WASHINGTON (BP)--Rep. John Buchanan, R-Ala., withdrew from Alabama's sixth district congressional race after a series of legal setbacks dashed the Southern Baptist minister's chances of reelection for a ninth term.

A U.S. Supreme Court action preventing Buchanan's name from appearing on the ballot as a Whig Party candidate coupled with the decision of the local board of electors to disallow stickers pre-printed with the veteran lawmaker's name on them to be used on ballots led to Buchanan's withdrawal according to Terry Apple, Buchanan's administrative assistant.

After Albert Smith's Moral Majority-aided effort toppled Buchanan in September's Republican primary, his candidacy was revived by a district court order to place the eight-term incumbent on the ballot as a Whig. But the revival was short-lived as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans stayed the district order and the Supreme Court agreed.

-more-

Despite the fact that a sixth district poll taken just before the court decisions showed Buchanan leading both Smith and Democratic candidate Pete Clifford, Apple said the decisions barring the incumbent's name from appearing on the ballot and banning the use of stickers left his chances "remote."

Buchanan has not announced any plans beyond the conclusion of the 96th Congress which is scheduled to reconvene in a lame duck session Nov. 12.

Buchanan was the first victim of Moral Majority and other right-leaning political groups who have targeted several congressional races this year. Their impact on other contests will only be clear after the election and Apple was uncertain how many other races such groups will sway.

"They may have peaked with us," he said.

-30-

Without Help, Missionaries
Are Facing Double Taxation

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
10/31/80

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The salaries of more than 3,000 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries will face double taxation if Congress does not act when it reconvenes Nov. 12 to restore income tax exclusion for religious and other charitable workers overseas, a Foreign Mission Board official said.

The immediate tax bite will total \$1 million for 1979 and \$1 million for 1980, according to Carl W. Johnson, treasurer-elect. Another \$1 million would be due in 1981.

Faced with paying \$1 million a year in U.S. taxes, plus another \$1 million annually in income tax to foreign governments, the Foreign Mission Board is running an open letter advertisement from board President R. Keith Parks to Southern Baptists in the state Baptist newspapers.

The letter asks Southern Baptists to urge U.S. representatives and senators to pass pending legislation to restore the \$20,000 income tax exclusion which was removed by the Foreign Earned Income Act of 1978.

Parks reminded readers of the papers that the action must be passed by Dec. 15, the deadline set by the Internal Revenue Service.

The Foreign Mission Board is only one of a host of organizations facing similar problems. The American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, made up of 32 Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and nonsectarian agencies with workers abroad, also has pushed for passage of the legislation.

The pending legislation involves two House resolutions—HR 1319 and HR 5829. Already reported out of the Senate Finance Committee, HR 1319 would restore the \$20,000 foreign income exclusion. HR 5829, which passed the House as a bill to exempt overseas duties on church bells for the United Methodist Church, was turned into a \$39 billion tax cut bill by Sen. Russell Long, D-La., and the Senate Finance Committee. It retains the exemption for United Methodists and adds an income tax exclusion of \$50,000 for Americans living overseas.

Because of opposition to the added \$39 billion tax cut proposals in HR 5829, congressional observers give HR 1319 the best chance for passage, although the possibility remains that the exclusion may be tacked onto another piece of legislation.

-more-

The problem, according to the observers, is not that representatives and senators oppose the measure, but that so much work faces them when they reconvene that the income exclusion may get lost in the shuffle.

The Dec. 15 deadline represents the second extension granted by IRS. Last June, the IRS extended the deadline until Oct. 15 and refused another extension until a direct intervention by the White House pushed back the date to Dec. 15.

"The intervention of the White House staff was in line with both legislation pending in Congress and proposals in the 1981 economic package recommended by President Carter to give tax breaks to all Americans overseas," Robert Maddox, special assistant for religious affairs at the White House, told Baptist Press.

Parks expressed gratitude, after the extension was granted, for "the efforts of those in Congress and the administration to help us," but labeled it as only "a stay of execution."

Noting the issue may have become "a political football in an election year," Parks said: "If that's the case, it's a shame, a real shame. Missionaries and other charitable workers deserve better treatment than that."

-30-

Texas Baptists Avoid
Doctrinal Conflicts

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press
10/31/80

HOUSTON (BP)--Anticipated battles on biblical interpretation and institutional control never materialized as Texas Baptists held their annual meeting in Houston Coliseum Oct. 28-30.

The meeting, which had been heralded as either a shootout or an extension of a Wednesday night prayer meeting, was surrounded by pre-convention rumors that challenges would be mounted against Baylor University for alleged liberalism of some faculty members and against the Baptist Standard, the weekly newsmagazine, for biased reporting.

Neither challenge developed, and messengers actually wound up commending both Baylor and the Standard.

The Baylor commendation came informally as messengers applauded reports by the academic affairs committee of trustees. The reports were presented for information and did not require formal vote.

The hottest debate occurred over a resolution to commend the Standard. Some messengers charged that the editor, Presnall Wood, and associate editor, Toby Druin, failed to report all sides of the "inerrancy" controversy, particularly where it involved Houston appeals court judge Paul Pressler, an outspoken advocate of purging Baptist institutions of faculty members he considers liberal.

When the debate was over, however, messengers, by an overwhelming majority, voted to adopt a resolution commending the Standard "for its responsible attempts to interpret events and movements which effect the welfare of the people of God," and encouraging the editor to "continue to seek the highest levels of integrity," while maintaining both "prophetic and supportive roles" in Southern Baptist life.

Immediately prior to the debate, Wood reported to messengers on the work of the Standard, and urged them to have an open mind about the responsibility to report the truth. "To say that Baptists are not big enough to live in truth would be an aberration of the truth," Wood said.

-more-

Messengers also moved quickly over the biblical interpretation issue by adopting a motion by Longview pastor Charles Holland and embracing the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963 as "their sole and adequate position."

In a mini-controversy, messengers refused to specifically name Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith in a resolution of support for SBC leadership.

In debating a resolution calling for "prayer support for each other and for our elected leaders," an amendment was offered to specifically name Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla.

Messengers, by a 3 to 1 majority, rejected including Smith's name, preferring to leave the resolution more general.

The resolution, as adopted, however, cited the "pain and distress" suffered because of "widespread and repeated airing of various statements made by some of our Baptist leaders."

A record number of 4,266 messengers registered for the meeting. The previous record of 3,777 messengers was set in Fort Worth in 1954.

The mood of most messengers seemed to "amen" the words of Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., when he said: "It's time to shut up and listen to what Jesus has to say...While we squabble about the inspiration of the Word, the world is desperate for our witness."

Messengers underscored their Bold Mission goals by adopting a \$37.4 million Cooperative Program budget for 1981. The new budget is about \$3.5 million greater than the 1980 version. Included is more than \$13 million in support for Southern Baptist missions causes, 35.5 percent of the overall budget, an increase of one percent over last year.

More than \$24 million of the budget will help support 23 children's homes, hospitals, colleges and other mission causes within Texas.

Carlos McLeod, pastor of First Baptist Church, Plainview, was reelected to a second one-year term as president of the 2.2 million-member convention.

Messengers also adopted a resolution on abortion, going on record as opposing the use of tax supported medical facilities for abortion.

Although the Texas Baptist messengers adopted a more conservative position than it has maintained in the past, its stance represents a break with the Southern Baptist Convention which earlier this year adopted a resolution prohibiting abortion under all circumstances except to save the life of the mother.

The 1981 annual meeting will be Oct. 26-29 in Waco, Texas.