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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

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81-26

Joint Jewish, Baptist Work Group Organized

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A work group to "explore and establish a working relationship" between Southern Baptists and Jews has been formed, according to Bailey E. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Smith, who has established a "close relationship" with representatives of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith following two controversial statements last year, announced formation of the group during the February meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

The Oklahoma pastor said the work group grew out of two meetings—one Dec. 18 in New York City, and the other Feb. 9 in Fort Worth, Texas—between Smith and representatives of ADL. At the first meeting, Smith said, an agreement was made "to explore and establish a working relationship in which Baptists and Jews could improve methods of communication to further mutual respect and understanding."

Smith will chair the Baptist portion of the work group and Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel of New York City, chairman of the national program committee of the ADL, will head the Jewish contingent.

To serve with Smith are Jimmy R. Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission; James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; William G. Tanner, president of the Home Mission Board; William Pinson, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, and C. Wade Freeman, a retired denominational worker who is second vice president of the SBC.

Smith said the group will work to establish a "mechanism to deal with issues of mutual concern," for programming which focuses on common concerns in the area of religious liberty, to set up an annual Baptist-Jewish Academic Institute at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, to develop pastoral workshops on Jews and Judaism to be held throughout the convention, to formulate Sunday School lesson plans and radio and television programs, and to create a series of articles dealing with American Jews and Anti-Semitism for SBC publications.

The group, Smith said, also will seek to foster a better understanding of Israel.

Smith told Baptist Press the work group will supplement work already being done on relationships between Southern Baptists and Jews.

"This (work group) is really a deeper thing than they have been asked to do," he said, noting he does not believe the work group will conflict with the interfaith witness program, assigned by the Southern Baptist Convention to the Home Mission Board.

CP Not 'Sacred Cow',
It Is a 'Sacred How'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--"The Cooperative Program is not a sacred cow," John Sullivan told Southern Baptist leaders during a luncheon here, "but it is a sacred how."

Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., the fifth-ranked church in 1980 SBC Cooperative Program gifts with \$327,000, warned against churches getting "caught up in goals and achievements and interpreting them in terms of 'our share.'"

He told the group gathered primarily for the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, "Often we only do what we feel is necessary for survival or will be of greatest benefit to us."

He said this kind of reasoning reflects a problem of perspective. When a church fails to see the complete picture their own needs tend to overshadow world needs.

Sullivan, also president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said reasons for a church not giving more through the Cooperative Program--such as financially difficult times or not being able to afford larger gifts--"become the smoke screen to justify what we are not doing at every area of life."

He then warned, "Moving away from any commitment normally begins with self deception."

Sullivan challenged that Southern Baptists "must translate the rhetoric of our intention into the reality of our commitment."

-30-

Applications Filed
For Network Sites

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Applications for 100 low-power television stations have been filed with the Federal Communications Commission, and 19 more are in process, members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee have been told.

Jimmy R. Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, gave a progress report on the establishment of a 100-station network during the February meeting of the committee.

Allen announced a plan in early January to establish the network of stations, most of which would have a 10-mile effectiveness, in a bid to establish a delivery system for Southern Baptist television ministries.

In his report, Allen said: "This is a new opportunity for Southern Baptists, but it is a complex kind of opportunity. We have had to learn it as we go."

Under the plan, a subsidiary corporation--the American Christian Television System (ACTS)--was created by the Radio-Television Commission, which has applied for and would operate the network if the licenses are granted.

Members of the committee unanimously ratified the charter of the subsidiary corporation after referring to it as "a significant event in the life of Southern Baptists."

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Other components of the plan, in addition to ACTS, is obtaining a satellite linkup, development of high quality programming and recruiting local churches, associations or conventions to participate in the ownership and operation of the stations.

Officials at the RTVC report no official word has come from the FCC as to when—or even if—licenses for the 100 and 1,000 watt stations would be issued.

The locations applied for:

ALABAMA--Birmingham and Huntsville; ARIZONA--Phoenix and Tucson; ARKANSAS--Little Rock and El Dorado; CALIFORNIA--San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, Fresno and Santa Barbara; COLORADO--Denver and Colorado Springs; CONNECTICUT--Hartford; DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA--Washington, D.C.

FLORIDA--Orlando, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Tampa, St. Petersburg, West Palm Beach, Panama City and Miami; GEORGIA--Atlanta, Augusta, Macon and Columbus; ILLINOIS--Chicago; INDIANA--Indianapolis and Evansville; KANSAS--Wichita and Topeka.

KENTUCKY--Louisville, Paducah and Lexington; LOUISIANA--New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Monroe, Shreveport and Lafayette; MARYLAND--Baltimore; MASSACHUSETTS--Boston; MICHIGAN--Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing; MISSISSIPPI--Jackson; MISSOURI--St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield and Joplin; NEBRASKA--Omaha; NEW MEXICO--Albuquerque; NEW YORK--Syracuse and Albany; NORTH CAROLINA--Raleigh, Charlotte and Greensboro.

OHIO--Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Toledo and Youngstown; OKLAHOMA--Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Ardmore; OREGON--Portland; PENNSYLVANIA--Harrisburg and Pittsburgh; SOUTH CAROLINA--Columbia and Charleston; TENNESSEE--Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, Knoxville and Jackson; TEXAS--Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Lubbock, Midland, El Paso, Texarkana, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, McAllen, Abilene/Sweetwater, Austin, Waco, Wichita Falls and Tyler; VIRGINIA--Richmond, Norfolk and Roanoke; WASHINGTON--Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane; WEST VIRGINIA--Charleston; and WISCONSIN--Madison.

The 19 applications being prepared for filing:

ALABAMA/FLORIDA--Mobile/Pensacola; ALABAMA--Tuscaloosa; ALASKA--Anchorage; CALIFORNIA--Palm Springs; GEORGIA--Savannah and Albany; ILLINOIS--Springfield/Decatur/Champaign and South Bend/Elkhart;

MASSACHUSETTS--Springfield; NEBRASKA--Lincoln/Hastings/Kearney; NEW YORK--New York; NORTH CAROLINA/SOUTH CAROLINA--Greenville/Spartanburg/Asheville; NORTH CAROLINA--Greenville/New Bern/Washington;

PENNSYLVANIA--Wilkes Barre/Scranton; Philadelphia and Johnstown/Altoona; TENNESSEE--Bristol/Kingsport/Johnson City; TEXAS--Amarillo; WISCONSIN--Green Bay.

Executive Committee Adopts
Budget, Proposes Revisions

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--In a far ranging meeting, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a \$93 million Cooperative Program budget for 1980-82, and proposed two changes to the SBC constitution and two to the bylaws.

All of the recommendations—budget, constitution and bylaws revisions—will be referred to the 1981 annual meeting of the SBC in Los Angeles, Calif., for action.

Without dissent, the committee approved a 1981-82 national Cooperative Program budget goal of \$93 million, which includes a basic operating budget of \$83.4 million, to be divided between the 20 agencies and institutions operated by the convention.

The basic operating budget represents an increase of 11.95 percent over the 1980-81 budget of \$74.5 million. Also included is a \$3 million capital needs budget, unchanged from 1980-81, and a Bold Mission Thrust Challenge Budget of \$6,599,400, compared to \$13 million in the 1980-81 budget.

The constitutional changes—which require action at two successive annual meetings—involve qualification of messengers and quorums required for boards of trustees of the agencies and institutions.

The first change, which was recommended unanimously, modifies the basis on which churches qualify for messengers to the annual meetings, revising Article III of the constitution.

Currently, every church "in friendly cooperation," "sympathetic" to the work and purposes of the convention, and "a bonafide contributor" to the work of the convention during the previous year is entitled to one messenger.

According to John McCall, an Executive Committee member and attorney from Louisville, Ky., the article is outdated. "The portion dealing with monetary requirements was adopted in the last century, and the portion on membership was adopted in 1946."

Further messengers, up to a total of 10, currently are allowed at a rate of one for every 250 members or \$250 in contributions through the Cooperative Program.

The change would eliminate church membership size as a criterion and substitute contributions through the Cooperative Program as the only basis for qualification.

Nelson Duke, pastor from Jefferson City, Mo., explained the "convention exists for missionary purposes and not to give recognition to size and membership. The Cooperative Program is our lifeline."

The change would qualify one member per church as before, and additional members at the rate of one for each two percent of undesignated offerings given through the Cooperative Program, or for each \$10,000 contribution, up to a total of 10.

Because of the percentage as well as the dollar amount, McCall said the change would "maximize those who are most generous in Cooperative Program giving," and would not penalize smaller churches.

The second proposed constitutional change sets forth a ruling that 50 percent of a governing group will constitute a quorum. It modifies previous requirements that nine persons are sufficient to transact business.

McCall said the nine-member quorum was adopted when many of the boards had 18 members and "many now have substantially more than that."

The change was recommended to the convention without dissent.

The two bylaws changes, which require adoption only at one convention, relate to the selection of the committee on committees and the work of the committee on resolutions.

The recommendation requires the committee on committees to be appointed by a committee composed of the SBC president and the two vice presidents. Currently, the president, "in conference with" the vice presidents, makes the appointments.

SBC President Smith, who voted in favor of the bylaw revision, said the "change was not directed toward me, and I do not feel threatened by it. I think it is an effort to more evenly distribute the power of appointment."

Conrad Johnston, a pastor from Salem, Va., proposed the revision in an effort to "state in letter" what he believes to be the spirit of the bylaw.

The new bylaw also requires the publishing of the names of the committee on committees through Baptist Press at least 60 days before an annual meeting.

The second bylaw was offered in an effort to deal with a growing number of resolutions offered at the annual meetings. In St. Louis, 49 resolutions were reported out by the resolutions committee.

The proposal would expand the resolutions committee from 10 to 12 members, of which four must be members of the SBC Executive Committee. Currently, three members must be on the Executive Committee.

It requests that resolutions be submitted at least 30 days before a convention, and says all resolutions must be introduced by the end of the first day of the three-day meeting.

The work group which presented the revision to the Executive Committee also suggested that no resolution be presented to the convention which duplicates the views of any other resolution during the past five years, except for correction.

However, at the suggestion of John Lewis, a pastor from Raleigh, N.C., that segment was deleted. Lewis pointed out that "time and again we (the convention) have gotten out of tough situations by endorsing previous actions."

The Executive Committee also rejected two recommendations which were made in resolutions at the 1981 St. Louis convention.

The first requested participation in the election of SBC officers be limited to a maximum of three votes per church, and the second recommended a study of the feasibility of expanding participation in annual meetings by electronic means, including registration and voting.