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**'Moderates' Disappointed  
With Smith Appointments**

By Dan Martin

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—A moderate wing of the Southern Baptist Convention is "truly disappointed" with appointments of SBC President Bailey E. Smith and with the report of the SBC Committee on Boards.

The "anger, grief and frustration" of the moderates could set off the first serious challenge to an incumbent SBC president in recent years.

Smith, who has said he will seek a second one-year term as president of the 13.6 million member denomination, recently announced appointment of the Committee on Committees, which names the Committee on Boards, which in turn names trustees to 22 SBC organizations.

(After making his initial report, which included six repeats from the 1980 Committee on Committees, his sister-in-law, and the wife of a member of the 1980 committee, Smith issued a revised list of appointments. See separate story in this Baptist Press.)

The Committee on Boards, chaired by Claude Kirkpatrick of Baton Rouge, La., recently released its recommendations to the 1981 annual meeting of the SBC in Los Angeles, June 9-11.

Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C., and a leader in the moderate wing, said 17 persons from eight states met in First Baptist Church in Memphis to examine the appointments, and discuss implications and formulate a response.

"I have examined carefully the Committee on Committees report," Sherman said. "I am truly disappointed. It is apparent that a narrow, provincial interest has been served."

Sherman recounted having met with Smith at the SBC Executive Committee meeting in Nashville, Tenn., in February, and said: "I was led to believe that his appointments would reflect all parts of Southern Baptist life. We wanted to trust him. We were led to believe we could trust him. We tried to trust him. He said he wanted to unify us, but he hasn't."

"We are disappointed, but more than that, we are grieved and angered by his actions. He is serving a narrow, small set of people who have a creedal wish for the denomination."

Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston, also criticized Smith's appointments, noting "the way to judge the kind of president a man is doesn't come so much from the kind of sermons he preaches on the circuit, but the kind of people he is willing to turn to for denominational leadership."

Chafin called the Committee on Committees "an unbelievably unrepresentative committee, which in no way reflects the great diversity of Baptists," and added: "I like Bailey. He is an enjoyable human being, but I am not going to stand by and watch him turn this denomination over to a group of fundamentalists who neither built nor support it and nor agree with its goals. They (the committee) seem to have more ties with para-church organizations and Luther Rice Seminary than they do with the denomination they are trying to take over."

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He noted several of those named have "degrees" from Luther Rice Seminary, a non-affiliated, non-accredited school in Jacksonville, Fla., and said: "It is interesting Bailey is willing to give control over our seminaries to people who have connections with what is generally regarded as a mail order school."

Earl Davis, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., host church for the meeting of moderates, says he expects a candidate to oppose Smith to arise spontaneously in the next few weeks and mentioned Chafin as a possible candidate. The Houston pastor, however, told Baptist Press he will not allow himself to be nominated as a candidate for president of the convention.

But, Chafin added: "I think somebody will be nominated. I have no idea who, but if they are nominated, I am going to vote for them. I told Bailey if he stood in the middle of the road, I would support him; if he didn't, I would oppose him. I will oppose him."

Smith said he is "shocked" by the opposition: "I thought they would be calling me to congratulate me," he said.

He said he had four qualifications for appointment: "I wanted people with a deep love for the Bible, a deep love for missions, a deep love for evangelism and a deep love for the denomination.

"I wanted to find people who really love souls," he said, adding he "believes the Bible is the perfect word of God and "I am sure I looked for men who believe that way."

A number of those appointed, he said, are persons for whom he has held revivals in the past two years, or whom he knows personally through those contacts: "I have preached in 40 states and know many of those people.

"Many of the names I received from state executive secretaries and denominational leaders," he said.

The moderate wing, in their Memphis meeting, also took aim at the work of the committee on boards, which will recommend 138 new trustees and 91 reappointments for convention action.

Bill Sherman, pastor of Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville, and brother of Cecil Sherman, said the report of the committee on boards "indicates the convention has fallen into the hands of ultra-conservatives and fundamentalists, many of whom are not graduates of our schools, who write for newspapers critical of who we are, give lip service to being Southern Baptists and do not support our work.

He said the failure to reappoint 10 "mid-termers"—persons eligible for second terms on boards of trustees—raises concern.

He mentioned specifically the failure to reappoint James Auchmuty, pastor of Shades Creek Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., who supposedly received a letter questioning his belief in biblical inerrancy; the bump of Bettye (Mrs. Grady) Cothen, wife of the president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, from the board of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, and the dumping of Adon Taft, religion editor of the Miami Herald and long-time Baptist layman, from the Home Mission Board.

"I am confident there will be an effort to try to redress the wrong done these people who have been removed from our boards without cause," Bill Sherman said.

Smith Names Replacements  
For Resolutions Group

DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey E. Smith has named replacements for two members of the 1981 Resolutions Committee after it was determined they do not meet SBC constitutional requirements for service on a convention-wide committee.

The two persons originally named, Paul Lewis, pastor of First Baptist Church in Carson City, Nev., and Bill Smith, pastor of Wailae Baptist Church in Honolulu, Hawaii, are from conventions which are not qualified for representation on the "Executive Committee, boards, commissions, standing committees and special committees" of which the Resolutions Committee is one.

The constitution specifies state conventions must have at least 25,000 members to qualify. Neither the Hawaii Baptist Convention nor the Nevada Baptist Convention meet those requirements.

Smith named Billy Barber, pastor of First Baptist Church of Tampa, Fla., and Carl Garrett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Carthage, Mo., as replacements.

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Committee On Committees  
Appointments Are Revised

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DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)—Eight persons appointed to the 1981 Committee on Committees have been replaced, Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey E. Smith said.

Smith, who announced appointments to the 52-member committee last week (April 15), said the new appointments are being made in order to avoid having the same persons serve two years in a row.

"I got an extremely supportive letter from J. Howard Cobble pointing out there were duplications," Smith said. Cobble, pastor of First Baptist Church of Avondale Estates, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, is chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

"It (the duplications) came as a surprise to me," Smith said. "I had no idea there were repeats."

According to the 1980 annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, Smith's initial appointments included six persons who served on the 1980 Committee on Committees, appointed by then President Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn.

They are C. Wade Freeman Jr., pastor of Capitol Hill Metropolitan Baptist Church of Washington, D.C.; Ron Herrod, pastor of First Baptist Church of Kenner, La.; Tom Clayton Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Hobbs, N.M.; Stan Coffey, pastor of First Baptist Church of Albuquerque; John Hatch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lakewood in Tacoma, Wash., and Robert Harris, from Edmond, Okla., and a member of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla.

One other person was named to both the 1980 and 1981 committees. Fred Wolfe resigned from the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Lubbock, Texas, and subsequently as the Texas representative on Rogers' committee. He, however, is Smith's choice as representative on the 1981 committee from Alabama, where he is pastor of Cottage Hills Baptist Church in Mobile.

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Two other persons also were replaced. They are Bobbi (Mrs. Jimmy) Jackson, whose husband is pastor of Whitesburg Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala., and Jeanne (Mrs. Tom) Elliff, whose husband is pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla.

Mrs. Jackson's husband was on the 1980 Committee on Committees and has been recommended by the 1980-81 Committee on Boards as the Alabama representative on the SBC Executive Committee.

Mrs. Elliff is the wife of Smith's wife's brother. Smith said she told him "she would just as soon not have the responsibility of serving" since the Elliffs are candidates for appointment as missionaries of the Foreign Mission Board.

Dennis Homan, a layman from Highland Baptist Church in Florence, Ala., will replace Mrs. Jackson; Richard Logsdon, pastor of First Baptist Church of Upper Marlboro, Md., will replace Freeman; Ronald Prince, pastor of First Baptist Church of Minden, La., will replace Herrod;

Bob Lacey, pastor of Northside Baptist Church of Hobbs, N.M., replaces Clayton; Roy Spannagel, pastor of First Baptist Church of Farmington, N.M., replaces Coffey; and K. Milton Higgins, pastor of Richland Baptist Church of Richland, Wash., replaces Hatch.

The new Oklahoma representatives are Ted Coldiron, a layman from First Baptist Church of Enid, replacing Mrs. Elliff, and Hartwell Dunn, a layman from First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, replacing Harris.

Smith told Baptist Press: "Trying to keep my promise of harmony and congeniality, I have called each of the people. They are friends and they agreed not to serve.

"I did not check with Adrian Rogers. It is amazing to me that since Adrian Rogers and I have so many of the same friends there were only these duplications."

Smith said he did not make the reappointments because of criticism from a group of moderates who met early in the week in Memphis, Tenn.

"J. Howard Cobble made me aware of them. When somebody pointed out what could be considered unfair, I immediately sought to change it. My commitment is to be open, honest and fair. It does not matter that it (repeating) has been done in the past. I just want to keep my commitment to bring harmony and peace to this convention without compromising my convictions."

The president of the nation's largest protestant denomination also pointed out he had not consulted with Paul Pressler or Paige Patterson "or any of their representatives" in making the appointments.

Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, and Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, are identified as leaders in an effort to influence the presidency and its appointive powers in an effort to insure trustees committed to biblical inerrancy are appointed as members and trustees of the 22 SBC organizations.

Responding to Smith's re-appointments, Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Asheville, N.C., and a leader of the moderate wing, said: "We don't need errors like this— ineptitude and leadership lapses—in our top job. We need leadership.

"Mr. Smith has always taken positions of convictions and told us he would stick with them no matter what. But this smacks of a candidate who is scrambling to be re-elected. (Smith has announced he will seek a second term as president of the 13.6 million member denomination.)"

Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston, and another leader of the moderate wing, said: "The least dangerous people among his appointments were the repeats. The most dangerous thing was that he stuck with his fundamentalist friends and representatives of a handful of churches who live on the right wing of the convention.

"It also shows he didn't think his actions through before he made the appointments," Chafin added.

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Mrs. Cothen Won't Support  
Challenge of Recommendation

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Mrs. Bettye Cothen, one of 10 trustees of Southern Baptist agencies and institutions eligible but not renominated by the Committee on Boards for a second term, said she will not be part of any efforts to challenge the committee report when it is presented to the convention in Los Angeles.

"It has come to my attention that the failure of the Committee on Boards to renominate me may become a matter of controversy," said Mrs. Cothen, a member of First Baptist Church of Nashville and the wife of Sunday School Board president Grady Cothen.

"I do not wish to have the seminary drawn into such a controversy and I have no desire to be involved personally in the dispute," she said. "Therefore, it is not my desire that the matter be reconsidered or that any effort be made to alter the recommendation of the committee."

Mrs. Cothen has served one term as a trustee of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., and was eligible for renomination for a second term.

While the Committee on Boards traditionally has renominated trustees who have been reported by the institution to have fulfilled their responsibilities, renomination is at the discretion of the committee.

Mrs. Cothen, who lived in California from 1961 to 1966 when her husband was executive-secretary of the state convention, said she had been pleased to serve as a seminary trustee.

"I agreed to serve as a means of making a personal contribution to the seminary, to the work of the Southern Baptist Convention and to the cause of Christ," said Mrs. Cothen.

"My years as a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and later as the wife of the president of the institution (1970-74) gave me a sincere appreciation for the richness in learning given to Southern Baptist students. After nearly a decade in institutions of Christian higher education, I felt this was a natural kind of service I could render," she noted.

However, instead of spending convention time challenging a committee report, Mrs. Cothen said, "It is my hope that the convention may center its attention on witnessing to a lost world."

She said she does not intend to comment further on the renomination issue.

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