



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 8, 1981

81-76

Maryland Representative's  
Board Service Said Invalid

By Dan Martin

PERRY HALL, Md. (BP)--Reeves P. Andrews, one of Maryland's two representatives on the 1980-81 committee on boards, publicly expressed his desire to join an independent Baptist church eight days before he attended the committee's major meeting in Nashville, Tenn.

The committee on boards nominates persons to serve as trustees of the 20 Southern Baptist Convention agencies, including the six seminaries and major missions enterprises.

Andrews told Larry High, editor of the Maryland Baptist, journal of the Baptist Convention of Maryland, he went forward at the close of a service March 15 to join the Perry Hall Baptist Church, in Perry Hall, a suburb of Baltimore.

Eight days later, on March 23, Andrews, an insurance agent, attended the major meeting of the committee on boards in Nashville, and voted on persons to be nominated at the 1981 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Los Angeles.

Andrews is quoted in the Maryland Baptist as saying: "I was leaning in this direction even before I was appointed (elected) last year."

He added: "I am not a member of Perry Hall Baptist Church yet. They tell me it takes three months or longer to complete requirements for membership. It will be quite some time before I am actually an honest-to-goodness member of the church but I am working in that direction and I have that right...."

In addition to expressing a desire to affiliate with an independent church, Andrews has been on the inactive roll of the Southern Baptist Convention-affiliated Oak Grove Baptist Church in Bel Air.

"For at least the past three years Reeves Andrews has been an inactive member of Oak Grove Baptist Church," said Lewis McDonald, senior minister of the congregation and current president of the state convention.

McDonald explained an inactive member "is a member whose commitment to the church is virtually zero. His name is kept on the roll for the sake of compassion, hoping that he will again become a committed member."

Such an inactive member, McDonald said, has no voting privileges. He also told Baptist Press Andrews "has not come (to church) one time in the last four years. I thought he had joined another church. We did not realize he had maintained his membership here."

McDonald, in a formal statement, said he "deeply regrets" that Andrews "has given the impression that he represented our church in his service on the committee on boards."

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He added he has "no problem" with Andrews joining an independent church. "But I do have a problem with people thinking he is an active member of our church when he is not. Mr. Andrews has acted without integrity."

James Hubbard, pastor of Bel Forest Baptist Church in Bel Air, and a member of the 1980 committee on committees, nominated Andrews to serve on the committee on boards.

Hubbard, who was in turn nominated to serve on the SBC Education Commission by the committee on boards, said he did not know Andrews "was leaning in that direction. If I had known it, I would probably not have nominated him."

Hubbard, who is moderator of the Susquehanna Baptist Association, said he knew Andrews as treasurer of the association, a post Andrews retained even though he was not an active member of Oak Grove Baptist Church.

The committee on boards, on which Andrews served, is composed of a layperson and a person in a church-related vocation from each of the 26 states entitled to representation on SBC organizations.

The committee on boards is nominated by the committee on committees, and is elected by the convention. The 1980 committee on committees was named by President Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn.

The committee on boards nominated 136 new trustees, and renominated 91. Included in the report are the nominations of six new trustees from Maryland and one renomination. Of the six new nominations, two replace trustees who were eligible for renomination, but were not renominated.

Claude Kirkpatrick, a hospital administrator from Baton Rouge, La., and chairman of the committee on boards, said he was unaware of Andrews' church membership, but said it will not change the report of the committee.

"Right now there are no plans to change the report other than if a nominee dies or moves to another state," he said. Kirkpatrick said the report is a committee report, rather than that of any individual, although he did say the committee based its vote on "the advice of the representatives from each state."

Even before the revelation of Andrews' church membership, several groups within the denomination have indicated they will challenge the report when it is presented to the convention.

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Texas Advertising Executive  
Pick for Media Vice President

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Ron Dixon, executive vice president and director of the management group of Atkins and Associates Advertising, San Antonio, Texas, has been named vice president of Media Services at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, effective May 15.

Dixon, 39, fills a position created last year during reorganization of the agency's service division, which includes the departments of marketing, broadcast engineering and broadcast services.

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In San Antonio, Dixon supervised all creativity and marketing for more than 100 businesses or retail financial institutions in single product advertising.

He has received more than 100 local, regional and national awards for creative work in the media. Awards include a National Addy from the American Advertising Federation and he was a finalist awards recipient for best radio series in the 1979 Clio Awards competition for advertising excellence.

Dixon is a graduate of the University of Texas. He is a deacon at First Baptist Church, San Antonio, where Radio-Television Commission President Jimmy Allen was pastor before coming to Fort Worth.

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Golden Gate Seminary Board  
Reaffirms Task of Integrity

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Trustees of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary have affirmed they have "taken seriously" the "responsibility to carefully preserve the doctrinal integrity" of the institution."

The trustees, in their annual meeting, dealt with the doctrinal integrity of their institution, adopted a revised campus master plan, okayed a record budget and approved a doctor of philosophy degree.

In responding to Resolution 16, passed by messengers to the 1980 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, trustees noted they are "pleased to acknowledge and affirm" their responsibility to oversee the doctrinal integrity of the school.

In electing faculty and staff, trustees said they are "ever mindful" that faculty, administrators and trustees all subscribe to the Baptist Faith and Message statement adopted by the SBC in 1963.

Trustees also were told of a resolution passed by the executive board of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, in which the California leaders stated their "support and confidence" in the seminary, and said the graduates working in the West demonstrate that the seminary is "fulfilling its mandate in the training of well-qualified and doctrinally-sound men and women...."

Trustees also:

--Approved a 1981-82 budget of \$2,611,050, compared with the 1980-81 budget of \$2,266,138. The SBC Cooperative Program will provide \$1,538,170 of the 1981-82 budget.

--Approved a doctor of philosophy degree program for 1982-83, as well as a new master of divinity in religious education degree. The names of three diploma programs--theology, religious education and church music--were changed to associate degrees.

--Saw a new publicity film, produced by Dick Wallen Productions of Fallbrook, Calif., and donated by Wallen.

--Approved a revised master plan for the campus, designed by Dan Coleman Associates of Greenbrae, Calif., subject to further study by urban economists. It replaces a master plan adopted in 1955.

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--Named Robert L. Cannon vice president of student relations. He currently is dean of students.

--Approved the design for a new flag, which will feature the seminary colors of purple and gold on a background, the seal of the school.

--Reelected E. Glen Paden of Fresno, Calif., as chairman of trustees. Other officers are Mrs. Mildred Carlton of Wauchula, Fla., vice chairman; Jack Pollard of Fort Smith, Ark., secretary, and Terry Morris of Albuquerque, N.M., assistant secretary.

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Cothen Calls Creedalism  
Most Serious SBC Crisis

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Reliance on the Holy Spirit and good sense will enable Southern Baptists to resolve disagreements over who should be president of the convention and who should serve on agency boards, says Grady Cothen, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

But the real cause for alarm, the issue that has Cothen saying, "Now, I'm scared," is his fear that a continuing effort to adopt a narrow creedal statement will cause an irreversible rupture of fellowship in the convention.

Writing in the June issue of "Facts and Trends," a monthly board newsletter for church staff persons, Cothen said such a rupture would so dissipate the intellectual, spiritual and financial resources of the convention it would "cease to exist as an effective evangelistic and missionary force."

"When we test the nature of being a Baptist by the tenets of Scripture, we are on safe ground," he said. "When the test of orthodoxy becomes the words of men about the Bible, we will have painted ourselves into a corner from which we cannot escape."

Instead of relying on any form of creedal statement about the Bible, Cothen urged that "we remember our Baptist heritage. Let us be a people of the Book and not people of a creed. I believe in the total reliability of Scripture," he said.

On the other hand, forcing people to accept an act of faith under threat of loss of job or ordination is not "Baptistic," Cothen noted.

"Our most serious crisis is whether we will adopt a further creedal interpretation that will alienate thousands even though they subscribe to the truth of the statement," said Cothen. "The issue will be the surrender of the Baptist heritage, that the Scripture is the sole rule of faith and practice."

Noting that Southern Baptists have weathered controversies before, Cothen cited eight possible consequences of this creedal crisis which should be viewed with alarm.

First, he warned that "charges and countercharges" could widen "differences to chasms." Secondly, this could lead to irreconcilable polarizations.

Third, Cothen said, the Baptist Faith and Message statement, "our creed which we deny having—will be further 'interpreted' until it becomes rigid enough to satisfy those who feel we must require such a test of fellowship."

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He also warned that a creedal test could: drive thousands of pastors and churches out of the convention; require an inquisition in every school, state convention, association and denominational institution; cause many to designate funds only to causes controlled by "true Southern Baptists;" lead others to withdraw in disgust.

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Simmons Challenges Use Of  
Bible by Anti-Abortionists

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--Southern Baptist ethicist Paul Simmons has challenged religious fundamentalism's use of the Bible to support its anti-abortion posture.

Addressing a Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights forum in Washington, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor charged "the very Bible to which they claim such devotion refutes their position at every significant point."

Simmons ascribed fundamentalists with "a religious zeal that sees itself as God's special agent for the salvation of the world," and said Jerry Falwell is their "superstar."

Their argument for a legislated ban on abortions, he said, is that the Bible teaches the fetus is a human being, and that "abortion is murder and thus should be legally forbidden."

Their easy equation of fetus with person, Simmons contends, is neither biblical nor logical. He cited Genesis descriptions of a human person as a "living soul," as made "in the image of God" and as a choice-maker who can "know good and evil."

The biblical portrait of personhood, Simmons said, "is that of a complex, many-sided creature with the God-like ability and responsibility to make choices," not characteristics of a fetus.

Simmons further pointed to an Exodus 21 passage sometimes used in anti-abortion arguments which requires a more severe penalty for causing accidental injury or death of a pregnant woman than for the fetus.

The covenant law's greater protection for the woman, Simmons said, indicated her full standing as a person while the fetus had "only a relative standing, certainly inferior to that of the woman."

Simmons also cited the lack of a clear prohibition in the Old Testament against abortion—an absence he called "amazing" considering the "harsh prohibition found in surrounding Mid-Eastern cultures."

Declaring that "God is pro-choice," Simmons emphasized the pro-choice position involves responsibility. He urged pro-choice advocates to make it "clear that we believe there is a moral issue involved in pregnancy termination for non-therapeutic reasons," and to make sure that "'free choice' is not a camouflage for a calloused attitude toward abortion after viability."

Simmons predicted that the fundamentalist-New Right movement, whose primary legislative goal is passage of an anti-abortion amendment to the Constitution, will "come to the same end as the McCarthy era."

"It will be exposed for what it is," he said. "A house built upon the shifting sands of deception, falsehoods, character assassination, wilful distortion of the truth, a power-crazed

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authoritarianism, a win-at-any-cost ethic and a total disregard for personal value or religious freedom, has the seeds of its own destruction already sown.

Southern Baptist resolutions on abortion, prior to a dramatic reversal of their position in 1980, have supported a qualified pro-choice position. The resolution adopted last year in St. Louis called for "appropriate legislation and/or a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion except to save the life of the mother."

Simmons hopes the 1981 resolutions committee will recommend a return to the long-standing SBC position on abortion. That position, Simmons said, is more in keeping with the historic Southern Baptist commitment to "religious liberty and soul competency of the believer."

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House Committee To Consider  
Nonprofit Postal Subsidy

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--As the U.S. House of Representatives passed President Reagan's budget proposal requiring sharp spending cuts, the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee announced it will hold hearings to consider how it will make the cuts the budget requires.

One consideration is the administration proposal to eliminate a postal subsidy which allows nonprofit mailers such as Baptist state newspapers to move to full postage rates on a graduated basis.

A 16-year phasing process for these and other nonprofit publications was set up by Congress to soften the blow of its 1970 decision to require each class and subclass of mailer to pay its full cost.

The administration's recommendation to eliminate funding for the phasing would require nonprofit mailers to begin paying full rates this October instead of 1987.

The impact of the Reagan proposal, according to an April survey of Baptist editors, would be to double the postage bills of these papers, forcing them to produce extra income from their supporting conventions or agencies or through higher subscription rates or to reduce the number of issues they publish.

A representative of religious nonprofit publication mailers is scheduled to testify at the committee's first hearing, May 13. By June 15, the committee will be required to report its recommended cuts to the House Budget Committee.

Asked whether the phasing process might yet be saved, a committee aide replied, "The question is, how do you do it? What pocket do you take it out of?"

Though the budget passed by the House required the committee to slash \$5.5 billion from its programs, and the administration recommends that the phasing subsidy be part of that cut, the committee has the option of leaving the subsidy in place.

But even if the House committee were to decide to leave the so-called "revenue foregone" subsidy at the current funding level, it is likely that some cuts would result since the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee has already reported its recommendation that the phasing process be eliminated.

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## Hollis Challenges NBC On Homosexual Sitcom

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A Southern Baptist family specialist is challenging NBC's plans to air a prime-time situation comedy this fall featuring actor Tony Randall as a homosexual.

According to reports in the New York Times and United Press International, the program "Love, Sidney" will air on Wednesday evenings and will feature Randall as an aging homosexual who befriends a young girl and helps raise her son born out of wedlock. The series is based on the pilot film "Sidney Shorr."

Harry Hollis Jr., director of family and special moral concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, takes issue with NBC's plans to focus on "such an immoral model of family life" and is calling on Southern Baptists and others to express their opinions on the proposed show to NBC.

"The decision by NBC to air this show will no doubt contribute to the 'battered family syndrome' already prevalent in this country," Hollis said. "Who needs such a TV show? Families don't need any more unhealthy models of family life and creative artists don't need such exploitive gimmicks to express true creativity."

"The way to help homosexuals or unwed mothers isn't to laugh at their situation but to be realistic about their problems and to exercise compassion in helping them," he said.

Hollis complimented NBC for some superb programming in the past, but said the plot proposed for "Love, Sidney" tarnishes the network's reputation.

"If the TV writers want to continue to live in a society strong enough to provide them their First Amendment freedoms, then they ought to stop assaulting the family which is one of the strongholds most necessary to the survival of this society," he said.

Hollis said Southern Baptists concerned about the show can write Richard Salant, vice chairman of the Board of the National Broadcasting Company Inc., Thirty Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020.

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Tennessee Children's Homes  
To Contest IRS Form 990

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. (BP)--Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. has gained the support of the state Baptist convention executive board in its contest with the Internal Revenue Service over Form 990.

The IRS insists the Children's Homes, an agency of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, file the form which lists all sources and income expenditures. The agency has "respectfully refused" on the grounds that it receives no funds from federal or state governments and that all information requested is available from other sources.

The basic issue is whether the Children's Homes are an "integrated auxiliary" of the churches as defined by IRS, according to Evans Bowen, the Homes executive director.

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes was notified April 9 it would be assessed a financial penalty for its refusal to file Form 990. Its trustees have asked for an administrative hearing. Pending the outcome of that hearing, it will file an appeal in federal district court.

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In a motion passed by the Tennessee Baptist Convention executive board, the members voted to "reiterate its position with separation of church and state by taking such actions as is necessary, including retaining legal counsel, to support the refusal of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. to file Form 990."

Frank Ingraham, Children's Homes attorney, told the executive board its action will affirm that the board, acting as the state convention ad interim, recognizes the ministry to children as performing the work of the state convention.

James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., said he believes this is the first such case to come from a Baptist state convention organization's refusal to file Form 990. He said the case presents a "fundamental church-state issue."

Several executive board members expressed concern about the possible cost, since special constitutional attorneys would be retained and the case could go all the way to the Supreme Court.

Raymond Boston, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dyersburg, said, "We would be derelict as an executive board if we did not vote to participate. This is a principle that is worth whatever it costs." The 100-member board approved the motion with one dissenting vote.

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Tennessee Newspaper  
Names Higdon Assistant

Baptist Press  
5/8/81

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. (BP)--Steven L. Higdon will become assistant editor of the Baptist and Reflector, Tennessee Baptist newspaper, June 15, just after graduation from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He will fill a vacancy caused by the death of Mrs. Bobbie Durham, who was fatally injured in a Jan. 15 automobile accident while on her way to the Nashville airport to cover the departure of volunteers for Upper Volta.

Higdon is editor of The Towers, student weekly newspaper at Southern Seminary. He has been on the staff of the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist newspaper, and the public relations office at Southern Seminary. He is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

On the Baptist and Reflector staff, he will be a photographer and news and feature writer with particular assignments in covering church and associational news.

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Dead Man's Limb  
Brings New Life

By Susan Cahen

BARRANQUILLA, Colombia (BP)—A Colombian father's concern and his son's faith combined recently with a Southern Baptist missionary's expertise and a dead man's artificial leg to give the young man a new life.

Jerrell Ballard, Southern Baptists' only foreign missionary prosthetist, was visiting the llanos, Colombia's counterpart to the U.S. wild west of 100 years ago, with fellow missionary Ross Thompson when a man approached.

The man had walked two hours to ask Ballard to help his son who had lost a leg in an accident. Since the mishap the young man would not leave the house. Ballard talked to the father at length and felt that it would be impossible to do anything, but decided to go and talk to the son.

The 19-year-old had covered his legs with a blanket for fear someone would see his loss of limb. Ballard sought some privacy and examined the stump.

"I got a vision as I looked at that amputated limb of a prosthesis (artificial limb) in my office that could possibly work for this young man," Ballard recalls. "I couldn't believe that I would ever attempt to encourage a patient like I did this one, knowing that I would not see him again to fit the limb."

With a tape measure and sticks, Ballard and others who had accompanied him measured the limb. When they finished, they talked with the boy about God, his strength and what faith could do. Ballard told him that what he was about to attempt was just about impossible—unless God helped.

"I felt the chances were about 99 to 1 to come out wrong," Ballard says, "but I didn't tell him those odds. I asked him to change his life and begin to ask God to help him make this change through prayer."

"When I got back to Barranquilla the first thing I did when I got to my office was to locate the prosthesis that I had in mind," Ballard remembers. "I could not believe it. It was exactly what I needed."

The limb was in the office because the intended recipient had died before it was completed. Ballard measured and remeasured the limb. Then he packaged it and gave it to the medical team going out two weeks later with instructions for Vic Norman, a missionary physician, for fitting the patient.

Ballard says he heard that two days after the team's arrival, the young man showed up without crutches, walking on the new limb. Most patients have to use the crutches for weeks. But, Ballard said, "I don't think he knew any better."

He also showed up at services that night to show his gratitude and to ask the Lord into his life.