



## BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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81-91

Five Committee Nominees

Substituted By Convention

By Robert O'Brien

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention overwhelmingly approved a revised report of their committee on boards after accepting two floor amendments substituting five nominees.

The official action culminated a controversy which began earlier in the year when the committee, which suggests nominees for SBC agency trustee posts, bumped the names of 10 persons eligible for second four-year terms.

Messengers upheld a substitute motion by Ken Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, by a vote of 3,571 (52.7 percent) to 3,089, to restore four of those bumped.

Then they approved a motion by T.L. McSwain of Louisville, Ky., to replace Robert Parker, pastor of Louisville's Kosmosdale Baptist Church as one of the nominees for the SBC Executive Committee, with Eldred Taylor, pastor of First Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. That vote recorded 4,075 (53.72 percent) for the motion and 3,448 (45.4 percent) against.

Arguments on the Chafin motion revolved around the question of which "traditional approach" would be followed. Traditionally, messengers have not challenged the committee's nominees from the floor, and traditionally the committee has not bumped names of those eligible and qualified for a second traditional term.

Both Chafin, who proposed the substitute, and former SBC President Adrian Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., who opposed it, argued in part on those bases.

Chafin contended that the convention should not depart from the tradition of re-electing to another term those who had served faithfully for one term.

Rogers countered that the tradition of not questioning the report of the committee on boards should be continued. If the convention tries to do the work of the committee, it would be "like opening Pandora's box," he said.

Referring to Chafin's remark that the committee should have followed tradition, Rogers called it "a strange thing that a great number (had) challenged a president (Bailey Smith) who had served us well."

He alluded to opposition by so-called "moderates," including Chafin, to a traditional second term for SBC President Smith. The convention defeated the challenge to Smith, although it gave nearly 40 percent of the vote to his opponent, Abner V. McCall, chancellor and retired president of Baylor University, Waco, Texas. Traditionally SBC presidents are unopposed for a second term.

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The result of Chafin's amendment returned Adon C. Taft of Miami, Fla., and Mrs. James S. Potter of Charlotte, N.C., to the trustee slate of the SBC Home Mission Board in place of Richard C. Brackin of Cocoa, Fla., and Mrs. Ronald (Anne) Carter of Greensboro, N.C.; Ben M. Elrod of Georgetown, Ky., to the trustee slate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in place of Thomas M. Atwood of Clinton, Ky.; and William C. Ray of Elizabethton, Ky., to the trustee slate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in place of William Rowlett of Hopkinsville, Ky.

In an action before the convention began, a subcommittee of the committee on boards restored James M. Auchmuty Jr. of Birmingham, Ala., who protested being bumped, to the trustee slate of the SBC Sunday School Board, and Mrs. Grady (Bettye) Cothen of Nashville, Tenn., to the trustee slate of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

The challenge to Parker was made by McSwain on the basis that he and his church were not actively involved in the affairs of Southern Baptists and gave only about 1.5 percent through the denomination's Cooperative Program unified budget for world missions.

McSwain said Taylor's church gave in excess of 28 percent and that Taylor has been deeply involved in Southern Baptist affairs.

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Hymnal Sales  
Prove Hazardous

Baptist Press  
6/11/81

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Hazard pay and hardhats may become standard procedure for Southern Baptist Book Stores after a case of mild, but definite assault with a hymnal.

Two female messengers seeking a large print hymnal in the book store section of the exhibit area at the Southern Baptist Convention were not pleased when the exact version they wanted was not available.

It was not good enough that no such hymnal is in print. Book store employee Greg Skipper erred when he could not produce the desired book.

As he reached down to get an alternate version, one of the women planted an organist's edition hymnal firmly to the side of Skipper's head. Skipper said the unfortunate part is that the organist's version is by far the largest Baptist Hymnal.

"That's what I think of that," the woman said, to which her companion replied, "Wilma, don't hurt the man, it's not his fault."

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1981 Messengers Avoid  
Overt Fight Over Bible

By Robert O'Brien

LOS ANGELES (BP)--More than 13,500 Southern Baptists holstered months of theological rhetoric, modified a two-year turn to the right, vigorously affirmed the Bible as their authoritative guide, and sounded a renewed charge toward Bold Mission Thrust at a three-day meeting at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Messengers to the 124th annual Southern Baptist Convention--far surpassing the west coast record of 9,396 set in 1962 in San Francisco--avoided overt theological confrontation, although it underlaid the politics and business of the convention.

Bailey Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., won reelection to a traditional second term as SBC president with some 60 percent of the vote, defeating Abner McCall, chancellor of Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

So-called "moderates," unhappy over efforts of "biblical inerrantists" to control the SBC, launched the challenge of Smith, losing the election but winning more votes than most convention observers predicted.

In a convention marked by efforts of Smith and other SBC leaders to set the stage for harmony, messengers voted a record \$93 million Cooperative Program budget, magnified the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust goal to proclaim Christ to the world by the year 2000, heard a host of inspirational messages and reports by SBC agencies, and passed 18 resolutions.

Messengers voted for the fourth consecutive year to reaffirm the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement, declaring the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error" upon the motion of former SBC president Herschel H. Hobbs of Oklahoma City with the open endorsement by President Smith.

While messengers turned down recommendations to enlarge a committee on resolutions and reduce the appointment powers of the president, they accepted challenges to the report of a committee on boards, replacing five persons recommended by the committee for trustee slates of various agencies.

In presenting his motion, Hobbs quoted from Second Timothy 3:16, explaining that the original Greek which says "all Scripture is inspired by God..." means that every part of the whole is "God-breathed."

Former SBC President Adrian Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., successfully urged that Hobbs' comments interpreting the action be recorded in the convention minutes as part of the official record.

In response to a question, President Smith said he saw no conflict between Hobbs' motion and the SBC's 1980 doctrinal integrity resolution, which "exhorted" SBC seminaries and agencies to employ only persons "who believe in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible, infallibility of the original manuscripts, and that the Bible is truth without any mixture of error."

However, Hobbs pointed out that a resolution is an expression of the viewpoint of the messengers at that particular annual session, and is not binding on succeeding conventions like a motion.

Hobbs' motion also emphasized "our belief in" the 1963 statement, "including all 17 articles, plus the preamble, which protects the conscience of the individual and guards us from a creedal faith."

In the presidential address and post-election news conference, Smith declared that the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement is the strongest statement Southern Baptists need to make about the Bible.

Messengers also elected Christine Gregory, immediate past national president of Woman's Missionary Union, as first vice president in a runoff with Stan Coffey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M. Gregory, of Danville, Va., was nominated by Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., and Coffey was nominated by James Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas.

Don Kim, pastor of Korean-speaking Berendo Street Baptist Church, Los Angeles, was elected second vice president in a runoff with James H. Morton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Livermore, Calif.

In other business, messengers spoke to a wide range of public issues, adopting resolutions denouncing the Equal Rights Amendment, secular humanism and anti-Semitism, while upholding religious liberty and the need for both peace and a strong national defense.

Other resolutions expressed opposition to a proposal in Congress to change the national election day from Tuesday to Sunday and urged congressional approval of bills to prohibit advertising of and to require warning labels on alcoholic beverages.

Other resolutions condemned providing contraceptives to minors without parental consent, poor television programming, pornography and violence in the cities.

Among those which provoked spirited, although courteous, debate were the resolutions reaffirming opposition to ERA and denial of birth control information and devices to teen-agers. Another reaffirmed Southern Baptists' traditional support for separation of church and state while taking a swipe at the religious right and opposing tuition tax credits.

Notable for their absence this year were proposals on abortion and prayer in public schools, two subjects which in recent conventions have provoked heated debate. Also expected but not presented was a resolution on teaching "creationism" in public schools.

In action taken in advance of the convention, the Executive Committee voted to withdraw a recommendation which would have changed the method for determining the number of messengers a church may have. The recommendation, which would have tied the number of messengers to undesignated or Cooperative Program gifts, had drawn criticism following its adoption by the Executive Committee in February.

Other convention business saw messengers elect William Hull, pastor of First Baptist Church, Shreveport, La., to preach next year's convention sermon and set Atlanta as the 1986 site for the SBC annual meeting.

Messengers also adopted motions to clarify the convention's response to world hunger, heard reports of statistical increases which signal growth in Bold Mission Thrust efforts, and referred several motions for study--including one which would remove Baptist Press, the SBC news service, from the Executive Committee and give it agency status.

The convention approved on first reading the adoption of two constitutional changes which must also be approved by the 1982 convention.

The first would require that at least one of the three convention officers--president, first vice president, second vice president--be a layperson. The second constitutional change would alter the quorum for agency boards from its current nine members to 50 percent of the members of a governing group.

A sermon on Bold Mission Thrust by Jess Moody, pastor of First Baptist Church, Van Nuys, Calif., caught the spirit of the messengers, drawing a standing ovation.

Southern Baptists have a "third army"--the "Bold Missions army"--which is bigger than "the two groups of Baptists pushing and shoving this convention," he declared. Moody characterized the "third army" as 95 percent of Southern Baptists and urged Baptists to "stop feuding and start fishing" and not let "any moderate or conservative pastor's interpretation (of the Bible) become another man's law."