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81-99

Bury Hatchets, Pick Up
Bibles, Smith Urges

By Linda Lawson

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--"The days of anger and hostility are over," Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith says, because "Southern Baptists would rather win the world than fight each other."

"I think we are going to bury our hatchets, pick up our Bibles and go out and win the world," Smith said in an interview at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center where he preached at the Sunday School Leadership Conference.

In a post-convention assessment of the biblical inerrancy debate and power struggles that have plagued the 13.6 million member denomination for the last two years, Smith said: "Inerrancy is no longer a club to hit people over the head."

Smith said he decided the last Sunday before the convention to insert into his presidential address that the "Baptist Faith and Message" is the strongest statement Baptists need to make about the Bible, though he added he has always believed that to be true.

"I knew the conservatives respected me and believed in me. If anyone could influence people to back off on some things I could. As president of the convention that was my job," said Smith.

However, he added, "Nobody had any convictions to back off."

Smith said he hopes the convention will now turn its attention to Bold Mission Thrust. These goals "will only be realized if the great majority of the churches are willing for God to do a significant, dramatic work in our midst," he said.

However, the pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla., said he believes some churches face a greater obstacle than denominational controversy in doing their part in winning the world to Christ.

"There are some people who would rather leave the lost people where they are than for the church to pay the price to save them," he told more than 2,600 conference participants.

Elaborating, Smith said, "I believe we get so in love with things as they are we resist change even when it means doing the Great Commission."

As examples, he cited churches which build recreation buildings and then forbid use of the facilities as outreach ministries and pointed to other churches who resist reaching out to poor persons or other racial or cultural groups.

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"If a church builds something it needs to be there to reach people for Christ. Otherwise, it's just a country club with a steeple on top," he said.

"We need to pay the price for pride, arrogance, self-righteousness and snobbish exclusivism," which Smith called "the biggest detriments we have to reaching the world for Christ."

"The problem is we can reach affluent people and pay our bills, but Jesus said reach all people. Every church must not just be open to people of all races but must aggressively seek blacks, Hispanics, Orientals and others."

He urged leaders of churches to examine themselves, their congregations and ministries for weaknesses and look for ways to strengthen them.

"A church low in baptisms needs to repent and ask why; so does one which is not giving what it should to the Cooperative Program," he said.

"When people criticized us (for low percentage of gifts to the Cooperative Program), I tried to take it as an admonition to do better," said Smith. "Any area where a church is weak, it ought to be willing, very graciously, to admit it and change."

Of contributions he hopes to make in the second year of his presidency, he said, "If Bailey Smith can make any contribution, I would want it to be to lead Southern Baptists back to the simple proclaiming of the gospel and commitment to reaching people."

After being away from home for more than three weeks, Smith was to return to Del City June 26 to begin the church's annual Starlite Crusade in which he will preach 17 consecutive nights.

"They tell me I'm the youngest president of the convention," quipped Smith. "It's a good thing or I wouldn't have survived."

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Former Oklahoma Editor
Asks Dismissal of Suit

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OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Attorneys for former Baptist Messenger editor Jack L. Gritz have filed a petition with the Oklahoma County District Court requesting dismissal without prejudice of a \$400,000 civil suit against six Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma officers.

Gritz, editor of the Oklahoma Baptist state newspaper for 30 years, filed suit following his termination by the state convention's board of directors. He charged the six defendants, acting "in concert," made slanderous statements to obtain his dismissal as editor in September 1979.

Trial in the suit was scheduled to begin June 15, the date on which the request for dismissal was filed.

Named in the suit were Joe L. Ingram of Oklahoma City, state convention executive director-treasurer; Jerry Don Abernathy, also of Oklahoma City, former convention president who now is evangelism director, and four board members, Cal Hunter of Mooreland, C.A. Spradlin of Chickasha, Roy Moody of Tulsa, and Finis Steelman of Davis.

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All six were members of a subcommittee which dealt with Gritz' termination.

The suit claimed the six defendants spoke, published and circulated information alleging Gritz to be a "very sick man."

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Sponsor Commended,
Chided for TV Shows

By Tim Fields

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Procter & Gamble Co., television's largest advertiser, has been commended for withdrawing sponsorship from 50 episodes, but chided for its continuing involvement in daytime soap operas.

Harry N. Hollis Jr., director of family and special moral concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, handed out the kudos and brickbats to Procter & Gamble, which recently announced it had withdrawn sponsorship from more than 50 shows it said were either too violent or sexually explicit.

Hollis said: "I commend the decision by Procter & Gamble and other companies to take responsibility for what they pay to put on the air. The responsibility is theirs and their acknowledgement of that fact is important."

However, Hollis suggested Southern Baptists and other groups working for responsible television programming should not be overly encouraged by the announcement of the P & G decision.

Hollis pointed out the company has withdrawn sponsorship of only 50 episodes or movies and not 50 series.

The 50 episodes represent only a minute percentage of the shows sponsored by Procter & Gamble, Hollis said, quoting Broadcast magazine statistics which indicate P & G sponsored 18,388 commercials in network television in 1980 at a cost of more than \$361 million.

"Using a figure of two to three commercials per episode, the withdrawal of sponsorship from the 50 episodes represents less than three percent of the overall network sponsorship," he said.

P & G also spent \$125 million plus in local television spots for a total of more than \$486 million on television advertising, he added.

Hollis chided the giant advertiser for its continuing ownership and sponsorship of daytime soap operas, which have an unusually high sex quotient. He quoted a national magazine which said P & G owns and sponsors no fewer than six of the soaps, which are far sexier than "prime-time" shows.

The daytime soaps help tear down healthy family life and thus undermine the social structure which makes possible the free enterprise system on which the company depends, Hollis said, adding: "Procter & Gamble needs to use some of its own soap products to wash away the dirt in these daytime series."

Procter & Gamble products include Ivory soap, Tide and Cheer detergents, Sure and Secret deodorants, Folgers coffee and Charmin toilet tissue.

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Hollis said that through support of the Christian Life Commission's Help for Television Viewers campaign Southern Baptists have long been responsibly involved in efforts to clean up TV.

"It is clear that these intense efforts of Southern Baptists and others are having an impact. Advertisers are getting the message that television viewers want to be entertained with creative programs and not exploited with cheap violence and sex," Hollis said.

He said if enough advertisers and programmers get the message we can avoid the censorship which seems to be likely if the current exploitive programs continue.

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Search Committee
Formed At Southern

Baptist Press
6/29/81

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Trustees of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have elected a search committee to seek a successor for President Duke K. McCall, who announced his retirement plans June 10.

McCall will become the seminary's first chancellor upon the election of his successor.

McCall, who has been president of the denomination's oldest institution 30 years, will continue as president of the Baptist World Alliance until 1985. He was elected to the chief post of the 31-million-member world body at the Baptist World Congress in Toronto last year.

Those trustees named to the search committee are:

William K. Weaver, president of Mobile College, Mobile, Ala., and vice chairman of the seminary board; Joseph E. Stopher, attorney-at-law, Louisville, and former board chairman; T.T. Crabtree, pastor, First Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo., immediate past board chairman;

Ben Murphy, vice president, Tyler Corp., Dallas; John Lawrence, pastor, Forest Hills Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C., former national president of the seminary alumni association, and Floyd Roebuck, pastor, First Baptist Church, Rome, Ga.

Board chairman Wayne Dehoney, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, will serve ex officio on the search committee.

An alumni advisory panel will be chosen to aid the search committee, Dehoney said, and a wide variety of denominational leaders from the state conventions, mission boards and the other SBC seminaries will be consulted.

Suggestions regarding the presidential search have been invited, and a special post office box has been secured for the purpose of communicating directly with the committee. Dehoney said mail should be addressed to: Search Committee, Box 6757, Louisville, Ky. 40206.

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Vicious Bees Drive Knapps
To Hut for Three-Hour Stay

KYELA, Tanzania (BP)--Swarming African honeybees attacked Southern Baptist missionaries Doug and Evelyn Knapp and several Tanzanian Baptists as they rode in an open land-rover to an associational meeting.

The group fled to a nearby hut, but the bees pursued them. Leaves piled hastily on the hut's cooking fire smoked out the bees, but they continued to attack anyone attempting to leave the hut.

One member fled through the swarm and rode a bicycle to the Knapps' home for a can of insecticide. Then Knapp, covered with a blanket and armed with the spray, drove off the swarm which had occupied his car for three hours.

One of the women was stung so severely on her head and neck that she had to be taken to the nearest district hospital. There the party learned that many others had reported to the hospital with stings. In the same village, a cow, tied and unable to escape the bees' attack, died of stings.