



- - BAPTIST PRESS

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 Jim Newton, 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
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. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

May 17, 1982

82-76

McCall Will Be Nominated,
Presidential Race Heats Up

By Dan Martin and Norman Jameson

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)-- Duke K. McCall, retired president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, will be nominated for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention at the annual meeting in New Orleans.

Edwin Perry, spokesman for a "group of Louisville pastors and laymen" said: "Duke is not a candidate in the sense of running for office, but if his name is presented, he will not withdraw; if elected, he will serve."

McCall, 67, who became chancellor of the seminary with his retirement in February, was in eastern Europe with a Baptist World Alliance tour and unavailable for comment. He is president of BWA, which represents 30 million Baptists around the world,

Others prominently mentioned as potential nominees are Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas; Edwin Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston and current president of the SBC Pastors' Conference; John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., and Perry Sanders, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lafayette, La.

Also mentioned are Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church, and Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., and immediate past president of the SBC.

Also, a Louisville pastor, Leslie Hollon, 27, of Finchville Baptist Church, has mailed "prayer covenants" to 1,000 Southern Baptist churches, asking members to sign the petitions in an effort to draft Evangelist Billy Graham for the denominational presidency. Hollon says he has not talked with Graham, who apparently is not even aware of the effort, but said he hopes the evangelist would be "open to God's will...."

In announcing McCall's nomination, Perry said: "He (McCall) is a world statesman. We need him. Many of us have been waiting for someone to emerge. If someone else with a sense of the historic integrity and worldwide vision of the denomination had emerged, he would not have allowed his name to be presented."

Perry referred to efforts by a "takeover group" within the denomination to control the presidency, and with it appointment to several powerful committees, and said: "We feel another heavy victory by the takeover group...will hamper, hinder and alter the character of our institutions and agencies, especially our cooperative missions effort at home and abroad. That is why we are so concerned.

Perry, who took part in an effort in 1981 to thwart the movement, said the SBC "is, in effect, a house divided," and said that "many of us fear" the convention is "facing radical character change...disintegration. We cannot go on very much longer divided without separation beginning."

Draper said his final decision on whether to allow nomination "will be made after we get to New Orleans. I am an idealist and I want to feel I am needed to be nominated."

He commented he believes Young "to be the most electable man" because Young will receive high visibility as president of the Pastors' Conference. "I would not want to compete with him for it (the presidency). I am not saying for sure I wouldn't; my feeling is that I would not want to," Draper said.

Young said his "primary concern" is the Pastors' Conference and the evangelistic rally in the Louisiana Superdome. "I haven't given any serious consideration to the presidency. I want to do the job with the Pastors' Conference, to set the tone of evangelism and missions for the convention. I don't have any sense of leadership or guidance about this thing (the presidency)," he added.

The Houston pastor said he "does not plan to be nominated," and said if he were to use the pastors meeting as an "overt stepping stone" it would take away from what "God wants to do in the meeting...."

Sullivan said he will be nominated but does not yet know who will do it. He said he was "surprised" by McCall's decision to be nominated, adding he is the only publically-announced nominee McCall's candidacy would hurt because no votes for McCall would go to an announced "conservative" candidate, but may go to him.

"I've said all along I think the term is convention control," Sullivan said. "The group that announced its intentions to take control of convention boards and agencies is using theology as an in. I do not see the great problem of the denomination right now as theological."

Sullivan believes the SBC president "must work from the middle of the constituency and not from either end," and said he represents the mainstream of the denomination because he is "right in the middle."

"The denomination is a broad-based, cooperative organization to do the work of Christ," Sullivan said.

"I see myself as a conservative who's not angry about it," Sullivan said.

Sanders, mentioned early as a likely candidate, said he will not "run" for the office but is undecided on whether he will allow himself to be nominated. He is a close personal friend of Sullivan, but said Sullivan's candidacy will not affect his decision.

Sanders, 54, has been active on the evangelism circuit the past year, preaching in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Alabama. At the 1981 SBC meeting in Los Angeles, Sanders delivered the closing address and was interrupted by applause 12 times, mostly, he says, after making strong theological points.

He considers the presiding function of the SBC president an enormous part of the presidential responsibility. For such, he feels experience beyond presiding over church business meetings is important.

"I'm going to make my decision exclusively on the basis of what the Lord would have me do at this time in my life," Sanders said. He said people who may vote for him would be people concerned about denominational total support, and cooperative missions. But he said, the same people could vote comfortably for Sullivan or McCall for the same reasons.

An observer of denominational politics said the trio of Sullivan, Sanders and McCall could so split their votes that none would make a strong showing on the first ballot. But, combined, the three could likely prevent a first-ballot victory by the "conservative" candidate, assuring a run-off vote. The "most likely" candidate would then face the "conservative" nominee, if there is, indeed, a united "conservative" nominee as most observers feel there will be.

Jackson, nominated in 1980, said he will not be a nominee, and expressed disappointment in the excessive energy expended in electing a president. "I have only one desire in my heart," Jackson said. "That is that Southern Baptists return to having messengers who vote the

convictions of their hearts at the time of the convention, and not delegates who vote by manipulation of politicians beforehand."

Rogers, who bowed out after serving only one term, said he has "no desire ... no ambition to be nominated," but declined to definitely rule himself out. "However, I can't imagine circumstances which would precipitate that (his nomination)."

—30—

Heart Attack Kills Burtis,
Mission Leader in Argentina

Baptist Press
5/17/82

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (BP)—J. Robert Burtis, Southern Baptist missionary to Argentina, died May 15 at his home in Buenos Aires after suffering a heart attack.

The 44-year-old Texan, appointed a missionary in 1967, was chairman of the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Argentina. In that capacity he had been working closely with missionaries and Argentine Baptist leaders to minimize the impact of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) dispute on the missionaries' work with Argentine Baptists.

Fellow missionary Mell R. Plunk called the death "completely unexpected." Burtis reportedly had no history of heart problems.

At a May 16 memorial service held at San Antonio De Padua Baptist Church, near Buenos Aires, hundreds crowded the pews, aisles and the sidewalk outside the church as Argentine evangelical Baptist Convention President Miguel Bollatti paid tribute to Burtis for his love of Argentina and its people.

Bollatti called Burtis "un tipo gaucho," a term reserved for foreigners whom Argentines have come to consider fellow countrymen.

Plunk said the service was "one of the greatest expressions of love by the nationals that I've ever heard."

Another memorial service was scheduled for May 18 at International Baptist Church, Buenos Aires, to be attended by all Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

Burtis coordinated the work of West Grand Buenos Aires Baptist Association, a group of some 25 churches and 10 mission points, including San Antonio de Padua Church, where he was pastor. The association serves several of the largest municipalities in Argentina, with a population exceeding 3 million people.

His work included starting and developing new churches, training pastors, Bible teaching and seminary extension programs, youth CEMP leadership and interim pastoral work.

Born in Madisonville, Texas, Burtis graduated from Howard Payne College (now Howard Payne University), and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He led churches in San Saba, Singleton, Bryan, Brady and Hempstead, Texas. After missionary appointment he worked as an evangelist in Santa Fe, Argentina, before transferring to Buenos Aires in 1976.

Burtis is survived by his wife, the former Betty Allen of Shattuck, Okla.; two children, Sharon Beth Burtis, 24, of Lubbock, Texas, and John Allen, 13; a sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Richardson of Duncanville, Texas; and his mother, Mrs. Reba V. Burtis of Madisonville.

Thurmon Bryant, Foreign Mission Board area director for eastern South America, cut short an Argentina visit to accompany the Burtis body and family back to Texas May 21.

—30—

(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

—more—

5/17/82

Page 4

Baptist Press
5/17/82

SBC Prayer Sunday
Scheduled May 23

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)-- SBC Prayer Sunday will be May 23, according to Jack R. Taylor, prayer mobilization director for the 1982 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Taylor, a Fort Worth author and evangelist who was first vice president of the SBC last year, said the day has been called to encourage prayer on behalf of the annual meeting, scheduled for New Orleans June 15-17.

In addition to the special Sunday, Taylor said 37 persons have been named to coordinate prayer efforts in the state convention areas, a continuous prayer meeting will start at 10 a.m. Monday and run through the concluding day of the SBC, and special prayer sessions will be held in the Louisiana Superdome during each session.

"We also have a prayer chain, which starts in Texas and ends in Puerto Rico, with one coordinator calling the next, and so on. We will probably have three or four prayer chains before the convention," Taylor said.

Taylor headed up the 1981 prayer mobilization at the request of SBC President Bailey Smith and was again asked to coordinate the effort in 1982.

He commented it will "never be known" the impact of the prayer mobilization on the Los Angeles convention, but added: "I would hate to think what it could have been."

-30-

Network, Manager
Named at Board

Baptist Press
5/17/82

NASHVILLE, Tenn.(BP)--Baptist TelNet was unveiled as the name of the Sunday School Board's satellite telecommunications network by President Grady C. Cothen.

Cothen named Joe Denney, supervisor of the Broadman supplies and audiovisual section at the board, as manager of telecommunications to coordinate broadcast efforts.

Baptist TelNet is expected to begin programming to Southern Baptist churches, associations, states and other Baptist groups by mid-1984, according to Cothen. He said the goal is to assist churches in implementing up-to-date outreach and ministry efforts by telecasting training and educational programs.

"Satellite communications is a method God has given us to do our work in a better way to help churches do what God has commissioned them to do," Cothen said. "We won't dispense with the printed word, but we will add to it the visual word."

The board will operate Baptist TelNet, and other SBC agencies are expected to produce programs for the network on missions, stewardship and other topics. The first taping will be this summer at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

Earlier, Cothen told state Sunday School directors meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz., associations are the key to getting network programming to small churches unable to afford their own receiving equipment. Associations with equipment will be able to take programs as they are broadcast and make them available to churches not participating in Baptist TelNet.

"If we can get every association to purchase the equipment, every church in the Southern Baptist Convention will have access to help in training their workers," he said.

Participating churches and associations will need a television set or monitor, videotape player/recorder and a commercial quality TVRO (television receive only unit). Broadman Press will market equipment through the CAVE Plan.

Cothen said the cost of TVROs continues to drop and they should be available for \$5,000-6,000 by 1983. Also, the board will charge program subscription fees to cover the cost of production. Fees will be set in 1983.

-more-

Cothen said a longer range benefit of Baptist TelN t is that churches will be able to build a library of videotapes on almost any topic of need to church workers.

Denney, 43, a 19-year employee of the board, is a graduate of Auburn University. He joined the board in 1962 as an analyst in the research services department and moved to Broadman in 1970.

-30-

(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press

Private Housing Option
Open for New Orleans

Baptist Press
5/17/82

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--There is another hope for persons who still need housing for the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans June 15-17.

Following convention action, a bureau has been set up through Gene Richards, pastor of Bridgedale Baptist Church, Metairie, La., to offer accomodations with individual families in New Orleans.

Persons wishing to stay with a Baptist family in New Orleans during the convention should contact Richards at 504-888-6164.

-30-