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September 17, 1982

82-131

**Draper Rejects Moderates  
'Depoliticization' Plan**

By Dan Martin *DM*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)** -- Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr. has rejected a proposal to "depoliticize" the denominational presidency.

At a meeting in the SBC Building Sept. 16, Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, declined to support a proposal which would have made substantive changes in the only real power an SBC president possesses: appointments to the powerful committee on committees and the resolutions committee.

The changes were proposed by a group of "moderates" led by Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C.; Bill Sherman, pastor of Woodmont Baptist Church of Nashville, and Ed Perry, pastor emeritus of Broadway Baptist Church of Louisville, Ky.

The appointive power of the presidency has been a point of controversy in the 13.8 million member denomination for the past several years, as one group has publicly stated its intention to control the election of the president, using his appointive powers to turn the convention to a more fundamentalist stance.

The president appoints a layperson and an ordained person from each of the 26 cooperating state conventions which qualify for representation as a committee on committees. That committee nominates two persons from each state to serve on a committee on boards, which, in turn, nominates trustees for the 20 SBC agencies.

The moderates' proposal would require the SBC president to seek and obtain nominations from state convention leaders in appointing the members of the committee on committees and resolutions committee.

The state leaders -- executive secretary, convention president and chairman of the executive board -- would "nominate four names for each state's two positions on the committee on committees -- two laypersons and two ordained persons -- from which list the president ... in consultation with the first and second vice presidents of the SBC, would choose one layman and one ordained person to be appointed to the two positions."

The proposal also would require the president to seek and accept "one name ... from each state for a list of nominees to the committee on resolutions, from which list the president ... would choose the required number of names for the resolutions committee."

Draper was asked to "voluntarily" follow the procedure in his appointments, and to support changes in the SBC Constitution and bylaws.

Bill Sherman told Baptist Press the plan would "serve as a healing agent to depoliticize the climate of our convention. Under the present scheme, the presidential position can be used as a power broker position."

In declining to support the plan, Draper said: "I think the group shares with me a common goal: to bring back unity to the convention. But I do not support it (the plan) at this time. I do not see that changing the bylaws is the best way to do it (bring unity)".

He added he does not believe Southern Baptists would accept such a change, and said he had contacted a "variety of leaders" in the denomination, "none of whom could support this."

"The biggest reason," he added "is that I feel voluntary cooperation is the genius of Southern Baptists, a hallmark of Southern Baptists. It is good for the church, the association, the state convention, the SBC and the presidency."

Draper noted he has said he plans to consult with state convention leadership, his vice presidents and others, and added: "The only difference is I am choosing to do it rather than being required to do so by the bylaws."

Cecil Sherman said he is "disappointed and frustrated" by Draper's response, and said he believes "the stakes are enormous" if the convention is not depoliticized. He added the possibilities "include dissention, distrust and possibly division."

The North Carolina pastor said the meeting was "congenial and harmonious," but said the bottom line is that Draper, "in essence said 'no' and 'Trust Me'."

"Well," Sherman said. "I have been there before. Two years ago I went to breakfast with Bailey Smith (immediate past SBC president) and he said 'Trust me.' I had a hard time believing it then, and my misgivings were generously confirmed."

Sherman characterized Smith's appointments to the two key committees at the 1982 annual convention as one-sided, representing only the fundamentalist/independent spectrum.

Sherman said Draper "nominated Bailey Smith to be president, and was in turn appointed chairman of the committee on committees (1981) by Smith. His election pleased Adrian Rogers, Paul Pressler and Jerry Falwell. He is a man who has given Baylor (University) a hard time with a fundamentalist agenda."

"Now, he is saying, 'Trust Me.' I was here two years ago and that powerfully instructs me today," Sherman said.

Bill Sherman said the appointments "didn't make much difference until the emergence of Mr. Pressler (Paul Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge), who decided to take the rules and use them to his exclusive theological advantage ... to revamp the institutions."

Pressler, a member of First Baptist Church of Houston, has been a leader of an effort to use the political machinery of the denomination to eliminate what he believes to be theological "liberalism" in the seminaries and institutions.

"We are hard pressed to accept Draper on trust because he comes from a group that in the past three years has proven unworthy of trust," said Bill Sherman.

Cecil Sherman said he is "hopeful" Draper will "reopen" consideration of the issue, and that he will "give himself to a plan similar to this."

Perry commented the "moderates" will "still hope and pray that an accommodation can be found whereby our beloved denomination can be saved ... that will depend on policies rather than the ... powers of one person."

Sherman said he "is not sure what course we will take" after Draper's rejection of the plan, indicating he will take about six weeks to consider the possibilities.

With his rejection of the plan, Draper faces the possibility he will be challenged if he seeks a second term as president at the 1983 annual meeting in Pittsburgh. Until recent years, an incumbent seeking a second term generally was unchallenged.

A group of 35 "Concerned Baptist Pastors" from 12 states met in Knoxville in early September to review the New Orleans convention and to discuss possibilities for the future. Informed sources say a challenge to Draper was among the agenda items, but any decision concerning the possibility was postponed until after the Sept. 16 meeting.

Church Medical  
Rates To Rise

DB

DALLAS (BP)--Southern Baptist ministers and church employees are facing an increase in medical premiums next year according to officials of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

According to Annuity Board insurance advisers, premiums will be increased 25 percent in order to maintain the present benefit package for participants in the church plan.

"Thus far we have paid \$16.3 million in 1982 medical claims, an increase of \$4 million over 1981," said John Dudley, director of the Annuity Board's insurance services department. "When you add the inflation factor, the medical cost factor (which increased 12.5 percent last year) and the administrative cost factor--we do not feel a 25 percent increase is unreasonable."

Dudley said the increase for participants in the Southern Baptist package will not be as much as they might have been. He added some insurance companies are increasing premiums by 40, 50 and 60 percent.

"We want to keep our cost as low as possible but at the same time we cannot sustain big losses," Dudley said. Church insurance program, disability and life rates will remain the same for 1983. Medical increases will become effective Jan. 1.

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Senate Panel Approves  
Tuition Tax Credits

By Larry Chesser

WB

Baptist Press  
9/17/82

WASHINGTON (BP)--After two days of intense negotiations and struggle, the Senate Finance Committee cleared a significantly modified version of President Reagan's tuition tax credit proposal for Senate floor action.

Finance chairman Sen. Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., held off efforts to attach amendments likely to doom the bill, supported by what he termed a "fragile coalition." The final vote--delayed until Dole had enough votes to defeat one final amendment he opposed--was 11-7.

The measure faces an almost certain filibuster on the Senate floor which means supporters would have to muster 60 votes to allow enactment before Congress adjourns in early October for the November elections. It is unclear whether the bill would be considered in a post-election lame duck session President Reagan has called to deal with appropriations bills.

The anti-discrimination provisions of the tax credit bill proved the thorniest issue for the committee to resolve. Dole's task in holding the coalition together was to satisfy both those who insisted the bill contain strong enforcement authority against schools which racially discriminate and those opposed to Internal Revenue Service oversight of private schools.

After the committee accepted a series of administration-backed changes strengthening the bill's anti-discrimination language, it went even further in adopting, 10-8, an amendment by Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., which would give IRS joint enforcement authority with the Justice Department--a move opposed by the administration.

Acknowledging the bill could not be reported without the Bradley amendment, Dole offered a substitute amendment which Bradley insisted protected his concern that tuition tax credits or tax exemptions would be allowed where schools practice racial discrimination.

The Dole substitute would delay the effective date of the bill until the attorney general certified to the secretary of the treasury that the Internal Revenue code--as interpreted by the Supreme Court or amended by Congress--prohibits granting tax exempt-status to private schools "maintaining racially discriminatory policy or practice as to students."

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Since a private school must qualify for tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code for parents of its students to be eligible for the proposed tuition tax credits, the effect of the Dole language would put the bill on hold--if passed--until the Supreme Court disposed of the pending Bob Jones University and Goldsboro Christian Schools case. The authority of IRS to deny tax-exempt status to racially discriminatory private schools is the issue.

Should the high court rule IRS is without such authority the bill would then not take effect until Congress passed a law providing that authority.

In addition to the anti-discrimination changes, the committee lowered the maximum credit allowed under the bill and the maximum family income to qualify in order to reduce the cost of the program to the federal treasury.

The original Reagan bill would have allowed a maximum credit of \$100 in fiscal 1983, increasing to \$500 by 1984 and thereafter for half the tuition paid. The committee reduced the maximum credit to \$300 when the bill is fully phased in.

Under the Reagan proposal, families with incomes of \$50,000 and below would qualify for the full allowable credit, with partial credits allowed for families with incomes of up to \$75,000. The committee slashed the qualifying figure to \$40,000 with a phase out at \$50,000.

The committee also went against the administration in offering an amendment to make the tax credits refundable to low income parents whose tax liabilities are less than the credits involved. This change was reported out as a committee amendment to be offered on the floor.

Sen. John H. Chafee, R-R.I., offered an amendment declaring no tax credit go to parents of students unless the school involved was accredited. The committee approved a modification suggested by Dole that eligible institutions satisfy the compulsory attendance requirements of the state in which the student resides.

Another Chafee amendment--barring discrimination based on handicap--was approved with the committee understanding that a private school's lack of facilities to handle handicapped persons' special needs would not constitute discrimination.

An effort by Sen. Harry F. Byrd, I-Va., to bar discrimination based on sex was rejected as was an amendment by Sen. John C. Danforth, R-Mo., to delay the effective date of the bill until Congress had either cut spending or raised revenues to cover the cost of the program.

A Treasury Department spokesman estimated the program would cost \$229 million in 1984, \$491 million in 1985, and \$703 million in 1986. The figures are slightly higher if refundability is added.

Both Chafee and George J. Mitchell, D-Maine, expressed strong skepticism at the estimates, charging the actual cost will be much higher.

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CLC Approves Initiatives on Peace,  
Alcohol Education, Women's Rights

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Baptist Press  
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) -- Development of initiatives on alcohol education and action, peace with justice and improving the status of women in Southern Baptist life were approved by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission at its annual meeting.

Alcohol education and action initiatives include a workshop on drunk driving to press for action at local, state, and national levels, a 1984 conference at Glorieta N.M. on alcohol education and action and materials and programs designed to enlist associations and local churches in anti-drunk driving activities.

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The commission asked the denominational calendar committee to recommend to the Southern Baptist Convention a "Peace With Justice" Sunday, authorized the development of peace with justice resource materials for use by local churches and approved plans for a 1983 conference at Ridgecrest, N.C. on the theme.

The formation of a task force, which will include both men and women, will explore ways to extend women's rights and responsibilities in local churches and throughout Southern Baptist life.

During the annual meeting, J. Gordon Kingsley, president of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., told the commission members the heritage of Baptists is to preach the gospel in its entirety, not just in its personal dimension or its social dimension. "Take the whole gos-pill," he quipped.

"We need you (the Christian Life Commission) so urgently—I almost said desperately—to sensitize us to the doing of the whole gospel, to focus our thinking and energies, to goad us when we are complacent, to guide us when we are wandering, to teach us when we are doltish," he said.

In other action, the commission approved in principle a recommendation and a document of agreement concerning a proposed new Southern Baptist Convention building now under construction and authorized the purchase of automated word processing and bookkeeping equipment.

The trustees recommended the equipment be utilized to provide new and expanded research services in applied Christianity to Southern Baptist state editors and other denominational editors and leaders.

The members also approved a special one-day workshop on race relations, a 1984 conference at Ridgecrest, N.C. on race relations, and the development of new materials on how Southern Baptists can relate to refugees and deal with immigration problems. The go-ahead was also given for the development of audio-visual materials and additional printed resources on world hunger to be made available to local churches and for a 1983 conference on world hunger concerns at Glorieta N. M.

The members also voted to incorporate the commission's Moral Alert publication into Light, a journal of moral concerns, and approved a seven percent cost of living adjustment for the staff. In addition, they authorized the expansion of Light to a monthly publication which would include sections on world hunger, peace with justice, citizenship, and alcohol education and action.

Trustees adopted a \$738,000 budget for 1982-83, and elected David Matthews, pastor of First Baptist Church of Greenville, S.C., as chairman. Re-elected were Patsy Ayers of Sewanee, Tenn., vice-chairperson and David George, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Nashville, secretary.

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Carter Calls for Increased  
Attention to Human Rights

*AB*  
By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press  
9/17/82

ATLANTA (BP)—Former President Jimmy Carter called on government and private sector groups—including churches—to condemn violations of human rights wherever people are oppressed in the world.

Carter spoke to 1,500 Emory University students and faculty at his first in a series of lectures on human rights.

Carter's 35-minute lecture, "Human Rights: Dilemmas and Directions," inaugurated Emory's year-long symposium on human rights and installed Carter in his new role as distinguished professor at Emory.

Carter stressed the United States' responsibility for furthering human rights throughout the world. Most countries either lacked internal strength or a world voice permitting strong statements denouncing human rights violations, he said.

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Oppressed people, Carter claimed, have no "champion" of human rights among nations that remain timid and fearful of the issues of human rights. "There is only one country which has the strength, the moral commitment, the influence and the economic independence to be the chief spokesman for these suffering people: the United States of America," Carter asserted. "When we fail or refuse to speak there is a deafening silence.

"Silence," he added, "is an enemy to human rights," citing the extermination of six million Jews during World War II as an example of the failure to protest human rights violations.

Carter criticized Reagan administration policies for "abandoning" human rights policies created during previous administrations, though he cited the Reagan peace proposal for the Middle East as a step toward "the affirmation of the Camp David accords."

Carter charged the Reagan administration with a "confused" and "at times downright embarrassing" human rights policy, lacking in clarity and consistency. He also called policies which seek to achieve national goals through "the exertion of pressure" as "shortsighted and counterproductive."

Expressing concern for a lack of consistent civil rights policies which keep the poor, women and other minority groups from enjoying the full benefit of democracy, he pointed out that the United States was founded and is held together "by a common belief in human freedom founded on the idea of human rights."

Carter, a Southern Baptist layman, cited his religious experiences as influential in molding his philosophy of human rights. "The teachings of Christ and the standards of the Judeo-Christian ethic are certainly compatible" with the concept of human rights, Carter said. "Love goes hand-in-hand with human rights," he added.

He encouraged churches and other private sector groups to go beyond examining "the theory of human rights," and challenged them to identify individual violations of human rights and speak out against them. "Those ... who do not meet our standards of freedom need to know we will condemn their repressions and applaud their progress toward democracy," Carter said.

He also said both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered in heightened mid-east conflicts. Though Carter acknowledged Israel's endurance of "abominable violations of human rights," he also said Israel "must understand that we endorse the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." His statement was interrupted by applause.

The role as distinguished professor fulfills a "lifelong ambition," Carter said, though he mused he has assumed his duties "four years earlier than I anticipated."

Carter intends to work with Emory professors, "supplementing" discussion on human rights with his own experiences.

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Peso Devaluations, Inflation  
Stress Baptist Work In Mexico

RB

Baptist Press  
9/17/82

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Successive devaluations of the peso, nationalization of private banks and rapidly escalating inflation put a triple pinch on Mexican families and mission work in Mexico and threaten to bring Baptist literature distribution to a standstill.

The Mexican Baptist Convention, with 429 churches and 40,000 members will be affected more than the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board's work in the country.

Devaluations in February and August cut the value of the peso from nearly four cents at the first of the year to less than a cent and a half. An inflation rate of roughly 50 percent--projected to reach 100 to 120 percent by year's end--further erodes the peso's purchasing power.

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Americans, including church groups on mission trips, will be stopped at check points 15-25 miles inside the border to search for unchanged dollars and will be stopped as they cross back into the U.S. and searched for sanctioned food items (Americans seeking food bargains have created food shortages for Mexican citizens).

Mexico's monetary problems have played havoc with the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas, which publishes materials for all of Latin America. Mexico, by far the publishing concern's biggest market, accounted for 18 percent of record wholesale sales of nearly \$2.5 million in 1981. So far this year sales to Mexico are roughly half that amount.

The biggest problem now deals with pricing books and literature, according to Don Kammerdiener, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board director for middle America and the Caribbean. Back in January, when the exchange rate was 26 pesos per dollar, a book printed to sell for one dollar cost 26 pesos in Mexico. With the official exchange rate now at 70 pesos per dollar, one would expect the same book to cost 70 pesos.

However, the bookseller in Mexico must use dollars to pay the publishing house in El Paso. Because he cannot legally exchange pesos for dollars he has to pay the street rate of 100 or more pesos per dollar. Thus, unless he takes a loss, he must charge at least four or five times what the same book cost eight months earlier.

Some distributors received shipments before the devaluation for which they have not paid. The dollar amounts they owe the publishing house remain the same but devaluation has increased the number of pesos they owe. The publishing house, in turn, probably will have to wait longer to collect.

The rippling effect of the peso's instability brings hardship in other areas of Baptist work as well:

**Church Education** - Churches cannot afford the inflated peso/dollar prices to buy needed quarterly literature for Sunday School and other educational programs.

**Outreach** - The price of gasoline recently doubled for the second time in 15 months according to mission press representative Bonnie Hull. Mexican Baptist pastors can no longer afford to drive regularly to their mission points.

**Construction** - Because interest rates are prohibitive, churches save until they can afford to build. But peso devaluation and subsequent inflation wipe out as much as half of those savings, Kammerdiener explained.

**Convention-wide programs** - Convention workers, whose budgets are planned and paid for in pesos, receive the same number of pesos now as earlier in the year. But the purchasing power of those pesos is now less than half of what it was.

One bright spot lies in the mission's Foreign Mission Board support. Because the mission's budget comes from the board in dollars it stands to gain in buying power on the exchange from dollars to pesos.

The favorable exchange rate has enabled the mission to build up what mission treasurer Jimmy Hartfield calls a "little surplus" available to the national convention as it adjusts its problem budgets.

A portion of that surplus, \$53,200, was reallocated by Foreign Mission Board members Sept. 14 to help make up for increasing rental and travel costs and the devaluation of unspent pesos exchanged by the mission before the first devaluation.

Some of Southern Baptists' 90 representatives in Mexico experienced a bit of emotional trauma themselves when some banks refused to cash their dollar checks the week after Mexico's President Lopez Portillo nationalized his country's banks Sept. 1.

That difficulty was short-lived, Hartfield said, and he provided enough pesos for the affected representatives to "get food on the table." The representatives also gain on the peso exchange, he said, but inflation is just about keeping pace with the devaluation.

"It's been an emotional time," he said, asking Southern Baptist to support the missionaries with prayer. But economically, "for Baptist representatives living here, we're just about where we were a few months ago."

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Bold Mission, 8.5x'85  
Ignore Untapped Laity

(C)

By Robert Wachs

Baptist Press  
9/17/82

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--While the Southern Baptist Convention is undertaking two mammoth outreach projects--Bold Mission Thrust and 8.5x'85--a major resource to reach those goals is only partly tapped and undertrained.

Bold Mission Thrust (a plan to tell every person in the world about Christ by the year 2000) and the 8.5 x '85 campaign (to have 8.5 million people enrolled in SBC Sunday Schools by 1985) both require massive numbers of personnel. Yet, despite a willingness and desire among SBC laity to be trained and to minister, church members are being overlooked.

Such were the findings of surveys and interviews conducted over a period of three years by students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. "Equipping Laypersons for Ministry," taught by Bill Clemmons, professor of Christian Education, is designed to help clergy become aware of the theology behind lay ministry and to explore and develop ways to help laypersons develop their own kind of ministry.

"We look at equipping the saints, helping everyone develop his or her own calling, as a primary purpose of the church and its ministry today," Clemmons said. "This is right in step with the traditional Southern Baptist understanding of the 'priesthood of all believers'".

Students enrolled in the class spoke to 614 persons. They found "a high percentage who expressed a desire for training and encouragement from their local church that they might be better able to serve."

A number of questions were asked of those interviewed, including: do all Christians have a calling?; do you consider yourself a minister?, and what ways does your pastor's ministry differ from yours?

A total of 544 (87 percent) said all Christians have a calling, 81 percent considered themselves ministers.

"There was also overwhelming data that the difference between pastors and lay persons is seen in the area of training and fulltime occupation of ministry. We found only 18 percent who saw the difference as one of calling or being ordained," Clemmons said.

The survey asked those questioned to name their gifts for ministry, to consider where they did their ministry and to think of just one way their local church could help them do their ministry better.

"We discovered 90 percent who identified their ministry as doing their church work well and in helping others. In other words they felt they were being faithful with their talents and were being faithful to 'do one of at least three of these'," he said.

Despite the high percentage who feel they have a ministry there is another figure worthy of attention--laypersons who want to do more and be better equipped to do it.

"This is what was especially pleasing to us," Clemmons admitted. "We came up with 73 percent who said what they wanted most from their local church were three things--prayer, encouragement and training. And prayer led the list.

"The biggest needs are for spiritual support, words of support from their church affirming what they are doing is a valid ministry with real meaning, and training so they may fully develop their talents and abilities," he said.

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Far down on the list of wants expressed were 'recognition' for its own sake and financial support. Only one-half of one percent asked for financial support.

"A fact which needs further study is the absence of seeing daily work as a means of lay ministry," Clemmons said. Though 93 percent receive satisfaction from their secular jobs, when asked about their place of ministry most said it was done at church. They feel job satisfaction as they help persons do their job well or provide for their family's well-being.

A related question was about the work of a Christian business person. Honesty and showing concern for others ranked highest.

Surveys were not weighted before they were taken as to who should be interviewed. Final tabulations showed 49 percent of those interviewed were male while 51 percent were female; over 80 percent were married; 45 percent were white collar workers while 28 percent were classified as blue collar and 14 percent were housewives. Of those interviewed, 519 (85 percent) were active church members.

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(Wachs is a student at Southeastern B.T. Seminary)

CORRECTION: In BP story mailed 9/14/82--"Brazilian President Joins 120,000 At Baptist Crusade," please correct spelling of the town where Figueiredo is pastor in fourth paragraph to Niteroi instead of Niteroiemba as sent.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press