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82-135

Plans For SBC Building  
Advanced With Agreement

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) -- Plans for a new building to house eight Southern Baptist Convention agencies moved ahead during the September meeting of the SBC Executive Committee with the approval, in principle, of an agreement between the agencies which would jointly occupy the building.

The Executive Committee, which will either own or be trustee of the proposed new building, authorized its long-range study committee to proceed, obtaining detailed plans, engineering studies, square footage requirements and cost estimates.

Rodney Landes, a layman from El Dorado, Ark., pointed out it was the fourth report the study committee has made to the Executive Committee in the nearly two years it has been in operation. Other members are William Fortune, Knoxville, Tenn.; Dotson Nelson, Birmingham, Ala., and SBC President James T. Draper Jr., Euless, Texas.

Landes, who is chairman of the committee, pointed out much of the work on the agreement was done by work teams from each of the agencies, as well as the executives, who have met regularly to work out details of the joint occupancy.

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee, told members that the "several agencies ... require housing beyond the space presently afforded. These entities believe that good stewardship calls for them to occupy a building together."

"This calls for an agreement between them, since none of these entities has control over another. These entities have entered into such an agreement between themselves under which they would jointly occupy and maintain a building," he added.

Currently, seven of the eight agencies are housed in the SBC Building at 460 James Robertson Parkway in downtown Nashville, a 19-year-old facility. They are the Christian Life Commission, Education Commission, Executive Committee, Seminary External Education Division of the six SBC seminaries, Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary, Southern Baptist Foundation and the Stewardship Commission.

The eighth, the SBC Historical Commission, currently is housed in the Baptist Sunday School Board Building at 126 Ninth Avenue North in Nashville, but plans to move to an SBC building, if it is built.

Under the agreement, the Executive Committee would accept the gift of a tract of land at Ninth and Commerce--adjacent to the BSSB Building--from the Sunday School Board, and would contract for the planning and construction of a building.

The agreement specifies "recognition of the importance of preserving and maintaining the integrity of the individual entities occupying the building. Each is separately incorporated, controlled and directed by its respective directors or trustees. The single exception is the Seminary External Education Division, a unit of the six seminaries ... each of which is an institution of the SBC."

The team which worked out the agreement was headed by Reginald M. McDonough, associate executive secretary of the Executive Committee, a non-voting member.

Members included Christine Bess, Foundation; Harry Bonner, Stewardship Commission; George Capps, Education Commission and American Baptist Theological Seminary Commission; Tim Hedquist, Executive Committee; David Lockard, Christian Life Commission; Raymond Rigdon, Seminary External Education Department, and Ronald Tonks, Historical Commission.

"A lot of the background work was done by the work team," Landes said.

The ten-point agreement sets out the responsibilities of the agencies which would occupy the building, and a nine-point agreement specifies the responsibilities of the Executive Committee, which would manage the building. It also sets out grievance and review procedures.

Members of the Executive Committee also heard a progress report on preliminary planning of the new building, presented by Earl Swensson Associates, Inc., a Nashville architectural firm, retained for \$25,000.

Landes told members the agencies had prepared detailed information outlining their space needs currently and for the next "25 or 30 years." From this information, the preliminary plans were drawn, he added, noting the plans do not include final square footage, engineering estimates or projected costs. Such data will be included in a report at the February 1983 Executive Committee session, he said.

Bennett told the committee of a meeting he had with Mayor Richard Fulton of Nashville, in which the city official agreed to widen and beautify Commerce Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenue if the SBC builds the structure at the proposed site.

The widening will go along with a project to widen Commerce from Second to Eighth Avenue.

Current plans call for the building to be financed through capital needs funds in the SBC budget, 1984-88, with interim financing during construction.

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RTVC Trustees Hear Draper,  
Approve 1982-83 Budget

  
By Greg Warner

Baptist Press  
9/23/82

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Calling the ministry of the Radio and Television Commission "truly futuristic," SBC President James T. Draper Jr. outlined his views on religious broadcasting for the agency's trustees who met here to approve a record budget.

"I would think the Radio and Television Commission, for Southern Baptists, is our agenda for the future," he said. "You are dealing with tomorrow today."

During the meeting, trustees unanimously adopted a base budget of \$5.5 million for fiscal 1982-83, which includes \$4.2 million from the Cooperative Program operating budget. A budget addendum of \$2.5 million in anticipated income will be used to develop TV programs and finance satellite transmission of the programs for the American Christian Television Systems (ACTS).

RTVC President Jimmy R. Allen told the trustees the additional income will come from commitments already made to the commission. The RTVC also is scheduled to receive 20 percent of the 1982 Cooperative Program advance budget, the money given to the Cooperative Program in excess of its operating budget.

Another action by the board clarified that ACTS is an independent entity. The RTVC trustees agreed to offer ACTS up to 12 hours of daily programming at no cost to ACTS.

They also approved changes in staff annuities to take effect in October 1983, eliminating a three-year waiting period for new employees to participate in the Annuity Board's retirement program.

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A new committee authorized by the board will determine if the RTVC needs to establish policies for handling controversies. Trustees suggested the increased exposure of the ACTS network might necessitate such guidelines.

"This is no restriction of the administration and no grievance with the administration," explained South Carolina trustee John E. Roberts, who proposed the study. "We need to consider (the policy) now and not after a controversy comes about."

Draper told the trustees the strength of RTVC broadcasting efforts is the emphasis on local churches and absence of on-air appeals for money. But he said he had little argument with television evangelism. "Personally, I don't think they are hurting any church that is doing anything," he declared. But he predicted the pressure of television sports sensationalism will soon lead many of the evangelists to extremes. "They are turning to some things that we as Baptists can't accept," he said.

"If we are going to make Bold Mission a reality," he told the trustees, "you could be the spearhead that makes that happen, because you, above all the other ministries we have, have the opportunity to touch the masses of people."

"In a world that is being shaped by the media, let's take advantage of that," he offered. "Let's be God's contact in the media."

"We cannot, in this day, ignore the most tremendous opportunity we have ever seen in the history of the world--radio and television--to fulfill, in a special sense, the Great Commission."

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission

1,750 New Missionaries Sought;  
Preachers Again Top The List

*RB*  
By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press  
9/23/82

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries in 96 countries are asking for 1,750 new co-workers, with preachers, church starters and other evangelism specialists again topping the list.

Missionaries worldwide annually submit job requests to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board outlining priority personnel needs. FMB staffers met Sept. 16 and 17 to review the request for 1983, and also began a six month consultation on how to end the chronic shortage of evangelism workers.

About 68 percent of the job descriptions call for preachers, pastors, church developers, seminary teachers and other leadership trainers. The requests also reflect critical need for medical missionaries and student workers. And there is a 64 percent increase in calls for missionary associates--missionaries who begin work between the ages of 35 and 60 and serve renewable four-year terms. Approximately 150 of the requests are for two-year journeymen and special project workers.

"We don't need people out there doing their job without doing THE job" of evangelism, Charles Bryan told the group. Bryan, senior vice president for overseas operations, stressed that missionaries with primary assignments other than evangelism meet "legitimate, bonafide needs," and spread the gospel as they work. But he warned that year after year of low response to missions among Southern Baptist preachers could create an "entire force of specialists" on foreign fields and move Southern Baptist missions away from direct evangelism.

In 1981 the Foreign Mission Board appointed a record 44 "general evangelists," the top number for missionary preachers and church starters. But 375 were requested. This year requests number 392. Twenty-four general evangelists had been appointed through September.

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Worldwide, the need for missionary physicians has grown more critical. Top priority requests call for a pediatrician for Jordan, a hospital staff physician for Zimbabwe, surgeons for Ghana and Indonesia, an internist for India and physicians with general medical-surgical skills for Thailand and Yemen.

Davis Saunders, director for eastern and southern Africa, said the government of Zimbabwe has indicated it may not allow any new Southern Baptist nurses or other medical workers to enter the country until the staff physician assignment at Sanyati Baptist Hospital is filled.

Student workers are requested for Lome, Togo, where a new Baptist Student Center opened in January, and Nigeria, where the government plans to open public universities in every state.

Another factor affecting job requests is missionary retirements. As the post-World War II generation of missionaries reaches retirement age the need for replacements for their jobs will increasingly affect the growth of the total mission force. Retirements numbered 25 in 1981, but will likely average more than 50 per year by the late 1980s.

In Europe and the Middle East approaching missionary retirements make new appointments essential for several countries. Priority requests include a business manager at the School of Health Sciences in Gaza; a bookstore manager in Fez, Morocco, and a church planter-developer in Belgium.

Isam Ballenger, director for Europe and the Middle East, called the Gaza assignment "a tremendous evangelistic opportunity" and said the health science school is the best vehicle for ministry to Palestinians in Gaza.

The bookstore in Fez is the only institution in Morocco (population: 22.3 million) with legal authorization to import and sell Bibles and other Christian literature. "We don't want to lose that inroad," Ballenger said.

In the Toma area of Upper Volta, new believers await a field preacher-church planter. "This is bush, and it'll take a bush man," area director John Mills cautioned. "If you need electricity and running water, forget it." But house-worship groups already meet in 13 villages in the area, Mills added.

In West Africa, pioneer missionaries in Equatorial Guinea and Gambia plead for evangelism specialists and a public health worker. Southern Baptists entered Equatorial Guinea in 1981 and Gambia this year; only one missionary couple serves in each country.

Urgent calls for evangelists and church planters also come from South America, particularly Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. Missionaries in Argentina say the recent British-Argentine war has led many Argentines to churches in search of peace. Brazil missionaries cite a continuing, massive response to the gospel.

In the midst of a new campaign of nationwide evangelism, missionaries and Baptists in Uruguay request roving evangelists who can start and strengthen churches. Missionaries in Colombia ask for at least two evangelism workers for a new church planting team in the capital city of Bogota where more than four million people live.

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CP Study Committee Defines  
Program's Theological Basis

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Baptist Press  
9/23/82

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) -- Most Baptists support the denomination's cooperative giving method, even if they don't understand exactly how it works.

Those were two of the conclusions of a two-year study of the Cooperative Program, James Pleitz, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, told members of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee at its September meeting.

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Pleitz, chairman of the Cooperative Program Study Committee, told the 67 members of the SBC Executive Committee that since last February the study committee has held 12 listening sessions, "from California to Ohio to North Carolina"; sent out questionnaires to 1,200 denominational leaders and had a good response after asking the 34 state Baptist papers to print a questionnaire for any interested Southern Baptist to make comments on the Cooperative Program.

"Basically we found that the vast majority of our people believe in what we're doing through the Cooperative Program," Pleitz said. "However many don't understand exactly how the program works," he said, noting also that many people believe the CP to be of an impersonal nature.

The survey indicated, the chairman said, that many of those responding wish to see the state convntions sharing more with worldwide missions causes, perhaps sending 50 percent of their incomes to the SBC Cooperative Program.

Pleitz said the study committee is preparing a report on its findings, and has opted to break th materials into four areas: Principles of Cooperation, Patterns of Cooperation, Promotion of the Cooperative Program and Problems in the Cooperative Program.

The first segment of the report was presented "for information," and contains the "theological and philosophical basis" for the Cooperative Program, which Pleitz said was the place to begin.

The report contained seven "Principles of Cooperation," specifying the interdependent unity of fellowship of service, the voluntary nature of cooperation, the autonomy of local bodies of believers, and that Christ, "as revealed in the Scripture and through the Holy Spirit," is the final authority for the believer.

The report also noted that "cooperation is built and maintained on mutual respect, trust and integrity."

Pleitz said the study committee will continue its work and will make furthur progress reports in February 1983.

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CORRECTION: In BP mailed 9/22/82, "Committee Report Release Recommended," please change second paragraph to read: "The change in Bylaw 16 requires action by messengers at the 1983 annual meeting in Pittsburgh. While constitutional changes require action by two subsequent conventions, the bylaws can be amended by affirmative vote at a single convention."  
Thanks: BP