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Elder Elected To Head Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Lloyd Elder, 49, was elected without opposition as the seventh president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board Feb. 1 to succeed Grady C. Cothen.

Although no negative votes were cast, two trustees abstained. Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church in Morganton, N.C., and Ned Matthews, pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church of Gastonia, N.C., both said, however, that they plan to support Elder.

After he was nominated by Warren Hultgren, vice chairman of the presidential search committee and pastor of First Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., Elder outlined his "personal testimony concerning the grace of God in our lives."

He then answered questions from the 82-member board of trustees for more than one hour on questions including leadership style, the Bible and relationships with different groups in the denomination.

Elder is expected to move to Nashville April 1 to begin a 10-month orientation process before assuming the presidency when Cothen retires Feb. 1, 1984.

In a brief post-election statement, Elder said, "The time for searching has passed and a time for commitment has come." He said his commitment is "first and eternally to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord" and then cited his family, the local church, the Bible ("God's inspired Holy Word), the masses "lost without Jesus Christ" and the Southern Baptist Convention and its Cooperative Program.

Of the Sunday School Board and its 1,500 employees, Elder said he will seek to "give team leadership to enable the board to fulfill its 16 programs of work assigned by the convention" and that he will seek to learn all he can in the next year from Cothen "as he continues to give strategic, devout and superlative leadership to the board."

Before the election, Elder described the work of the search committee as "probing, gracious, thorough and prayerful."

Calling the election process "an awesome time for the board and for the Elder family," Elder, in his preliminary statement, posed and answered five questions about himself: Who are you? What do you believe? How do you do your work? How do you see the Sunday School Board? How do you discern the will of God?

Describing himself as a "take-charge team leader," Elder said, "I would characterize my style of leadership as pastoral—caring for people but not permissive."

He said love, character, vision and a sense of high purpose are vital qualities for a leader who also must have "courage to decide and move out in the face of all risk because of the possibility of good."

He added: "There is no more important decision than choosing your people." Summarizing, "I like to work with people and ideas and I love to preach the gospel," said Elder, who was a pastor for 16 years in four Texas churches before becoming assistant to the executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1975.

Elder called for a balance of power between the president and the trustees. "I have seen the dangers of trustees moving into administration," said Elder. "It is equally dangerous for the president not to know he guides by leave of the trustees."

About the Bible, Elder said, "I believe the Bible is a Holy Book, divinely inspired by God, infallible and authoritative in the life of every believer. I didn't arrive at this by reading the 1963 statement ("Baptist Faith and Message")," he noted. "A reverence for the Bible was a part of the Elder family. The more I tested that faith presupposition, the more I came to see the Bible as a Holy Book."

Concerning diversity of beliefs among Southern Baptists, Elder warned against staking out positions on any 15 or 16 "major Christian doctrines and making them a test of fellowship.

"I want to state clearly those things that unite us and not make doctrinal positions a test of fellowship on either side," he explained. "I do think Baptists are going to do better when we major on what God can do among us and not become embroiled in tests of fellowship on any one of our particular doctrines."

On criticism, Elder drew laughter when he acknowledged, "I don't like it." However, he noted, "Administratively and pastorally, I have tried to find out what is coming to my attention through the criticism."

He cited the "long, rich, profound heritage of the board which makes an impact as much or more than any institution on the local church." He described as "healthy tensions" for the board the "servant role in the face of business pressures" and "tough-minded humility in the face of constituency criticism."

During the interview process with the search committee, Elder said he came to understand God's will "by faith, one decision at a time."

With his installation in 1984, Elder will become the first president from west of the Mississippi River and the first from Texas. The three most recent presidents—T.L. Holcomb, James L. Sullivan and Cothen—are natives of Mississippi and grew up in towns within a 30-mile radius.

Elder's nomination was released to the trustees Jan. 17 and announced to board employees and Southern Baptists Jan. 20, 12 days before the election.

Robert M. McMillian, pastor of First Baptist Church, Tallahassee, Fla., said he strongly supported Elder's election but he felt the early announcement pre-empted the trustees. "If we were to say no, our credibility would be very low in the convention," McMillian said.

In a later meeting he introduced a motion of gratitude to the search committee, "for bringing us to the happiest of conclusions in the election of Dr. Elder."

Michael J. Clingenpeel, pastor of Packard Road Baptist Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., told Baptist Press he had no problems with the election process. "The trustees were notified first by letter and it is always appropriate to have full information when it is available. For that reason, I was very comfortable with the process as it was designed by the committee."

Tenery told Baptist Press he "had a conviction another man was God's man" for the BSSB post. Matthews said he abstained because he felt he "was not given enough information in advance and would have liked to have more time to reflect on what I did know."

The two men, both identified with the inerrancy faction in the denomination, both said they were "satisfied" with Elder's statements on doctrine and his answers to questions. "As long as he stays with that, I will support him," Tenery said.

Elder is married to the former Sue Bristow. They are parents of two children: Donna Sue (Mrs. Rick) Maas, and Philip Lloyd.

The search committee was chaired by John J. Bryan, a physician from Bluefield, W. Va.

Committee on Committee
Appointments Released

By Dan Martin

EULESS, Texas (BP) — James T. Draper Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has announced the committee on committees to serve at the 1983 annual meeting of the SEC in Pittsburgh in June.

The committee on committees, made up of two representatives from each state convention which qualifies for representation on boards and agencies, has the primary task of recommending a committee on boards at the annual meeting. The committee on boards in turn nominates persons to serve as trustees of the 20 boards and agencies of the 13.8 million member denomination.

In making his announcement, Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, followed up on a pledge he made following his election at the 1982 annual meeting to announce his appointments prior to the convention, to give Southern Baptists time to study and react to them.

Draper told Baptist Press he "feels very positive" about the slate of appointments. "A large percentage of those we named were recommended by people in the state offices—executive secretary, state president or someone in the office.

"We did put in some persons who were recommended by individuals. I felt it was important for individual Baptists to have the freedom to make recommendations and to feel they would be seriously considered," Draper added. He said the appointments "are what I said I would do. These people are known conservatives. They are not extremists, not liberals. They are recognized as conservative, supportive of the Cooperative Program and missions causes."

John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., and SBC second vice president, said he supports the appointments. "If we have made any mistakes, it is certainly not due to negligence...we have worked very hard on it."

Gene Garrison, pastor of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, and SBC second vice president, said the officers worked on the appointments for "six weeks. We made the kind of effort which has to be made. You don't just sit down on Monday afternoon and jot down some names of appointments. It is a long and involved process."

He added he "does not know all of the people who were nominated, but they were all recommended by state leadership. I feel very good about it."

The appointments:

ALABAMA--Jack Hill, businessman and member of First Baptist Church of Lafayette, and Dwayne Lassiter, pastor of Central Park Baptist Church in Birmingham.

ARIZONA--Leroy Summers, minister of music at First Southern Baptist Church in Phoenix, and David Butler, registrar at the University of Arizona and member of Sabino Road Baptist Church in Tucson.

ARKANSAS--Gerald Taylor, pastor of Life Line Baptist Church in Little Rock, and Cecil Weller, retired executive with the Boy Scouts of America and member of Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith.

CALIFORNIA--Bill Hann, pastor of Mid-Cities Baptist Church in Westminster, and Bob Byrd, a dentist and member of Bristol Street Baptist Church in Santa Ana.

COLORADO--Lewis Adkison, pastor of Circle Drive Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, and Dale Mountain, member of Trinity Baptist Church of Loveland.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA--Mrs. Worth Grant, a former missionary to Japan and member of Temple Baptist Church of Washington, and Steve Hyde, pastor of First Baptist Church of Silver Springs, Md.

FLORIDA--Jim Wilson, an evangelist and member of First Baptist Church of Orlando, and Jerry Passmore, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola.

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GEORGIA--Robert Marsh, pastor of Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church of Atlanta, and John McCoy, former medical missionary to Nigeria, and member of Northside Baptist Church of Tifton.

ILLINOIS--Everett Anthony, director of missions of the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association, and Rex Hodge, a construction contractor and member of Logan Street Baptist Church of Mt. Vernon.

INDIANA--James Ehrlich, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Evansville, and Wallace Denton, professor of family life ministries at Purdue University and member of Calvary Baptist Church of West Lafayette.

KANSAS/NEBRASKA--David Cone, pastor of Country Acres Baptist Church in Wichita, and George Delahoussaye, member of First Baptist Church of Bellevue, Neb.

KENTUCKY--David Nelson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Owensboro, and Phyllis Ann Green, member of Northside Baptist Church of Mayfield.

LOUISIANA--Perry Sanders, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lafayette, and Raymond Boswell, member of Highland Baptist Church of Shreveport.

MARYLAND--Hugh Townsend, pastor of First Baptist Church of Berlin, and Terrance Hart, a Westinghouse Corp. executive and member of Faith Baptist Church of Glen Burnie.

MICHIGAN--Milton Wood, pastor of Gorham Baptist Church of Jackson, and Judy Gill, member of First Baptist Church of Swartz Creek.

MISSISSIPPI--Harry Vickery, member of First Baptist Church in Greenville, and John Brock, pastor of Van Winkle Baptist Church of Jackson;

MISSOURI--Mark Brister, pastor of First Baptist Church of Bolivar, and Ted Garrison, a physician and member of First Baptist Church of Camdenton.

NEW MEXICO--John Preston, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church of Farmington, and Fred Maldonado Jr., member of Templo Bautista in Las Vegas.

NORTH CAROLINA--Sam Currin, federal prosecutor and member of Hayes Barton Baptist Church of Raleigh, and Glen Wilcox, owner of a travel agency and member of First Baptist Church of Asheville.

NORTHWEST (Washington/Oregon)--Darrell Evenson, director of missions of the Inland Baptist Association in Portland, Ore., and Doug Franklin, member of Trenton Avenue Baptist Church in Bremerton, Wash.

OHIO--Glenn Davidson, pastor of Pisgah Heights Baptist Church in Westchester, and Jim Dobbs, member of Dublin Baptist Church in Columbus.

OKLAHOMA--Jim White, pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, and Joe Coleman, member of First Baptist Church of Tulsa.

SOUTH CAROLINA--Horace B. Sims Jr., pastor of Abney Memorial Baptist Church of Greenwood, and Harry Dent, member of First Baptist Church of Columbia.

TENNESSEE--Fred Steelman, pastor of Red Bank Baptist Church of Chattanooga and president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and Wendell McClindon, member of First Baptist Church of Donelson.

TEXAS--Ralph Smith, pastor of Hyde Park Baptist Church in Austin, and Mrs. Frank Stewart, a member of First Baptist Church of El Paso.

VIRGINIA--L.W. Bray, an Air Force major general and member of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, and George Kissinger, director of missions of the Peninsula Baptist Association in Newport News.

Valentine Calls For Rejection
Of Further Social Program Cuts

By Gerri Ratliff

WASHINGTON (BP)—A leading Southern Baptist has called for rejection of proposed new cuts in domestic social programs in President Reagan's 1984 budget, calling them "heartless and senseless."

Foy Valentine, executive director of the SEC Christian Life Commission, responding to a recently released report on the effects of budget, tax and military policies on the poor, said "trickle-down economics has been weighed and found wanting."

He added: "The bitter fruit of its planned unemployment which has brought down inflation on the backs of the poor is now clearly seen to be depression and the biggest deficit spending in the nation's history. Last year's domestic cuts have had their inevitable impact: suffering for the poor, misery for the old, anguish for the sick and joblessness for millions who want to work."

The report is being distributed by the Interreligious Taskforce on U.S. Food Policy, a Washington-based coalition of religious agencies including the Christian Life Commission and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. A nonprofit research organization the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, prepared the study.

The center was founded in 1981 by the Field Foundation, a private group that sponsors research on hunger and malnutrition in the United States.

According to the report, the 1984 budget deficit of more than \$180 billion, caused by the military build-up and tax cuts, is creating pressure for more cuts in social programs. Even though low-income programs constitute only about one-tenth of the federal budget they have been subjected to the deepest cuts, the report says.

Instead of a new round of cuts in social programs, the report proposes higher taxes on corporations and reduction or elimination of some tax shelters and the third year of the income tax cut for individuals earning more than \$50,000 a year.

Also targeted in the report are new weapons systems and the military retirement program. Proposed expenditures of \$222 billion on new nuclear weapons over the next five years should be reduced, the report suggests, as could military retirement benefits. "Military personnel contribute none of their own pay whatsoever toward their military pensions," the report says. "Their generous pensions are paid for entirely by the U.S. taxpayer."

The report includes an October 1982 study by the National Journal that found the wealthiest fifth of the population receives nearly twice as much in military retirement payments as the entire bottom fifth of the population receives in food stamps.

Robert Greenstein, director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, summarized the effects of federal budget policies for the poor by noting that in two years, the Reagan administration has reduced spending on low-income programs from \$100 billion to \$82 billion annually.

The report shows that many low-income families have been hurt by budget cuts in more than one program, sharpening the impact of the reductions. Some low-income families are receiving less in food stamps, Aid to Families With Dependent Children and Medicaid, while also facing increases in housing, rent and fuel bills.

The cuts are having a disproportionately large impact on female-headed households with children and on minorities, Greenstein said.

Paul Kittlaus, chairman of the interreligious taskforce, called the proposed cuts "nothing less than an economic and ideological assault on the poor."

"Our government is not only under a Constitutional mandate to 'provide for the common defense.' It is also under a Constitutional mandate to 'promote the general welfare' of all Americans, including the welfare of the poor," Valentine concluded.