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Foreign Board Warns Against Adding Canada; Joint Study Asked

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A proposed motion to add Canada to the Southern Baptist Convention has serious international ramifications, the denomination's Foreign Mission Board warned May 24.

The board asked that the motion, expected to be introduced at the SBC's Pittsburgh convention in June, be referred to the Executive Committee, the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board for joint study with a report to be made to the 1984 convention.

Board President R. Keith Parks said the motion would make the SBC a bi-national convention and could say to the world that Southern Baptists are taking a colonialistic approach.

His comment was expanded by Don Kammerdiener, the board's director for Middle America and the Caribbean, who said there are observers throughout the world who feel Southern Baptists are "an empire on the march and that we would like to extend our tentacles all over the world. I believe passage of this kind of a motion would give encouragement to those voices that say, 'See, we knew it all along -- Southern Baptists want to take over the rest of the world.' I think this would be very unfortunate for us."

Parks said he and others at the Foreign Mission Board are sympathetic to the evangelistic needs in Canada, but they believe the best approach in the long run would be to encourage Canadian Baptists "to express themselves in a kind of Baptist organization that would have universal appeal across Canada rather than be seen as simply an appendage to a foreign convention." Such an approach, he said, would have greater evangelistic impact on Canada.

"The Foreign Mission Board has responded to requests for assistance from Baptists in other countries," Parks said, "and we certainly would be open to responding to requests for assistance from such a group in Canada."

The SBC has reviewed requests for help in evangelism and church growth from Canadian Baptists repeatedly since 1954 and encouraged its agencies to give such assistance. But it has resisted any move toward change in the SBC constitution to incorporate Canada as SBC territory.

The motion this year would seek to add the words "and Canada" to the present constitution statement that the convention is "for Baptists in the United States and its territories...." Approval at two successive conventions is required for such a constitutional change.

Parks said such action would change the basic nature of the convention. "Throughout our history," he said, "we've maintained an integrity as the convention of one nation. Within our own boundaries we've bent our efforts toward establishment of Southern Baptist churches. But beyond our boundaries we've talked about enabling, stimulating and evangelizing and helping to plant churches but have never intended those churches to be extensions of our own convention. They become Brazilian Baptists or Liberian Baptists or whatever."

Kammerdiener, who directs work in the area just south of the United States, said admission of Canada would cause almost immediate pressure from some churches in other countries "that would like very much to identify with the Southern Baptist Convention" because of some short-range advantages for pastors and other forms of contact.

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But he said churches tied to a foreign convention are like cut flowers. "They look pretty at first but they do not have the roots that go down so that they draw on local resources for ideas, for funding, for leadership and for spiritual vitality," he said.

A board member and former missionary, Jimmie H. Carpenter of Seneca, S.C., called the move to admit Canada "selective fraternization."

"I think we would be sending out a message we'll fraternize with white people who are adjacent to our own country and are of our own (majority) race but we're not willing to fraternize with the rest of the world in the same sense," said Carpenter.

The issue of seating messengers from Canada has surfaced several times in the past 25 years. Churches in western Canada started affiliating with what is now the Northwest Baptist Convention in 1953. More than 60 such Canadian churches and mission points, some spreading into central Canada, are identified with the Northwest convention, whose U.S. churches send messengers to the annual convention.

Canada has several Baptist conventions of its own, with general mission boards functioning as societies serving churches related to all the conventions. A federation serves as an instrument for consultation and joint planning.

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(BP photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Press)

Three SBC Agencies Join
To Strengthen Mission Action

By Carol Sisson

Baptist Press
5/26/83

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Woman's Missionary Union, the Home Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission agreed to combine their mission action efforts in order to work more productively with Southern Baptist churches, and ultimately respond more effectively to Bold Mission Thrust and its objectives.

Chief executive officers Carolyn Weatherford (WMU), William Tanner (HMB) and James Smith (Brotherhood) signed a formal agreement in February, defining each agency's area of initiative in mission action. The intent is to use the Home Mission Board's expertise in ministering and WMU and Brotherhood's expertise in using volunteers. Marketing and program specialists from the three agencies met this month to begin implementing plans outlined in the agreement.

"All three of these agencies minister and witness to persons of special needs. This agreement will help us put our efforts together for greater impact and less duplication," June Whitlow, associate executive director for WMU, said.

Primary responsibility for mission action still resides with WMU and Brotherhood. However, the HMB's church missions committee and associational missions will now take the survey to identify mission actions needs and opportunities in the community and association.

Surveying was previously conducted by all three agencies individually. Each still has the option of initiating its own survey, if the need should arise.

WMU and Brotherhood will continue to organize and carry out mission action work in churches but will work more closely with the HMB in using their expertise in identifying and ministering to specific target groups. The three agencies will jointly use materials that will be used in ministering to these groups.

Some of the joint materials will be available through Baptist bookstores by the 1984-85 church year; others will follow.

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81 New Foreign Missionaries Include Twins and Sisters

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Twin brothers and a pair of sisters became missionaries as the South ern Baptist Foreign Mission Board named 81 new career workers May 24, one of the largest groups appointed.

Ron and Don McClung of Georgia will work as evangelists in South America. Ron and his wife, the former Sharon Wheeler of Georgia, will go to Colombia. Don and his wife, the form r Carol Ann Valerius of Texas, are assigned to Brazil.

Sisters Donna Cope Burris and Betty Cope Rains of Mississippi and Alabama, respectively, will head east to Asia. Burris and her husband, Robert, of Texas, will fill assignments in Taiwan. Rains and her spouse, Randy, of Tennessee, go to Bangladesh.

Other missionaries appointed were Keith and Terry Anderson Blakley of Texas, assigned to South Africa; Donald and Teresa Downey Bolls, of Mississippi and New Mexico, to the Niger Republic; Michael and Linda O'Bryant Branscome, North Carolina, to Venezuela; Dave and Jerry Burrell Browder, Texas, to Venezuela and Bill and Jo Brown, Mississippi and Alabama, to Togo.

Also appointed were Charlie and Vida Potts Campbell, Tennessee and North Carolina, to the Philippines; David and Anna-May Thornell Cochran, Virginia and Hawaii, to Indonesia; John and Cheryl Scott Cox, Alabama and Kentucky, to Spain; Richard and Karen Mitchell DeLeon, Mexico and Texas, to Argentina; Don and Anne Jones Dent, Mississippi, to Singapore; and Jim and Darlene Lance Diedrich, Wisconsin, to Tanzania.

The board also named Bernie and Carol Kinsey Dike, Texas and Missouri, to th Bahamas; Steve and Sharon Curtis Ford, Arkansas and Tennessee, to Upper Volta; Dexter and Gloria Banks Greene, North Carolina and Florida, to South Africa; Johnny and Ruth Ann Welch Hailes, New Mexico and Texas, to Argentina; David and Aimee Ware Hammond, West Germany and California, to Brazil and John and Kathy McCartney Hancock, Alabama and Texas, to the Philippines.

Also named were Carolyn Harris, Virginia, to Zimbabwe; Danny and Jan Parker Hinson, Louisiana and Tennessee, to Japan; Truett and Nancy Lee King, Arkansas and Oklahoma, to South K rea; Rick and Laura Sprinkle Lane, Tennessee and Argentina, to Spain; Ron and Jan Wilmoth Langston, Tennessee and Arkansas, to Zimbabwe and Frank and Maria Clark Larson, Tenness e and Washington, D.C., to Belgium.

Also appointed were Ken and Irene Sightler Lawson, South Carolina, to Italy; Mary Mangrum, Tennessee, to Panama; Phil and Beth Clayton Oakley, North Carolina, to Benin; Mike and Kristi Peggram Pennington, Tennessee and Texas, to Venezuela; Loretta Reynolds, Alabama, to Botswana and Sandy Rogers, Texas, to Yemen.

Other new missionaries named were Jon and Priscilla Voth Sapp, Kansas, to Zambia; Steve and Tommie Shaddox Smith, Arkansas and California, to Portugal; Dixon Sutherland and Kandy Queen-Sutherland, Georgia and North Carolina, to Switzerland; Billy and Judy Blackburn Sutton, Arkansas and Louisiana, to the Philippines; Delane Tew, Alabama, to Japan and Randel and Sheila Gonzales Trull, Oklahoma and Louisiana, to Colombia.

Also appointed were Bill and Susan Weaver Vail, Texas and Tennessee, to Peru; Vince and Susan Brock Waite, New York and Missouri, to Ghana; Billy and Katie Cutrer Warren, Tennessee and Louisiana, to Colombia and Darrell and Cheri Allen Wise, Missouri and Florida, to Kenya.

The board reappointed 12 former missionaries. Bob and Thelma Osborne Beaty, Tennessee and Indiana, were assigned to Bophuthatswana. They formerly worked in Zimbabwe. John and Betty Hawkins Carpenter, Georgia, will return to Liberia, where they worked for 16 years. Oliver and Peggy Workman Gilliland, Oklahoma and South Carolina, will return to Indonesia, where they worked for 12 years.

Charlie and Bette White Hawkins, G orgia and Illinois, were reappointed to the Philippines, their former home for six years. Tom and Betty Takahashi Masaki, Hawaii, return t Japan, where they were assigned for nearly 23 years. Oren and Martha Boaz Robison, Oklahoma and Kentucky, return to Liberia. They formerly worked there and in Nigeria.

Helen Roller of California was reemployed as a missionary associate to the Philippines. She formerly served in Zimbabwe. Three special project medical workers were employed: Rick and Debbie Villani Bardin, Texas and Colorado, assigned to South Korea and Peggy Tucker, Kentucky, to Yemen.

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White House Pressure Forces
N w Pray r Amendment Delay

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
5/26/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Reagan's proposed amendment to the Constitution to return to states and localities power to require prayer in public schools was given a fighting chance for survival May 26 when a Senate subcommittee agreed for a second time to delay action on its own version of a prayer amendment.

Appearing at a public hearing, Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, chairman of the Subcommittee on the Constitution, said he was reluctantly yielding to White House pressure to postpone for two weeks his panel's vote on a constitutional amendment. At the same time he warned it will be the final delay.

Visibly irritated at members of the president's staff for lobbying the panel for more time, Hatch, a Reagan loyalist, defended his own conservative credentials but declared: "The White House has got to get its act in order." He said White House operatives should understand the political principle "if you can't get everything, we'd better get the best we can."

The White House and its representatives "will have every opportunity" during the two-week interval to convince skeptical subcommittee members the president's version should prevail, he said, adding he would be "happy" to support it rather than push his own version further. The Hatch amendment would allow silent prayer or reflection at the beginning of the school day and give voluntary student religious groups "equal access" to school facilities for their meetings.

Regardless of which version prevails, Hatch said, a "tremendous change" will occur in the nation's public schools.

Fellow subcommittee member Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz., lashed out at members of the White House staff for their stalling tactics, saying they are "unable, unwilling or incompetent to understand" the president cannot always get what he wants from Congress.

The president's amendment, he declared, represents a "losing cause" in the Republican-controlled Senate. Referring to its chances in the subcommittee, he said, "The votes are not here." As to chances in the full Senate, DeConcini said he is "relatively confident" the body would reject the White House version.

For a constitutional amendment to become law, two-thirds of both the Senate and House of Representatives must act favorably, followed by ratification by three-fourths, or 38, of the state legislatures.

Hatch also expressed anger at what he described as the "right wing," saying its leaders have "continued to badger and fight against" his proposal, and in the process have created "bad feelings and animosities" that need to be set aside in order to pass some constitutional amendment on school prayer.

What is more important than the debate over which amendment to bring to a vote is to move Congress toward ending what he called "official antagonism by the state" toward religion, Hatch said. "For too long," he declared, "we've allowed those who are irreligious to govern those who are religious."

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Canadian Southern Baptist
Want SBC Voting Status

By Craig Bird

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Canada, "one of the greatest mission fields" in the world today, desperately needs the evangelistic emphasis and programs of the Southern Baptist Convention, according to Allen Schmidt, coordinator of Southern Baptist work in Canada.

That conviction is the prime motivator for an announced effort to change the SBC constitution to allow Canadian churches to be full voting members of the convention and, "eventually form a Canadian Baptist Convention, fully cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention, according to several men who advocate the change.

"Our churches are step-children in the SBC family," Schmidt said. "For almost 30 years we have used Southern Baptist literature and financially supported the Cooperative Program and the special SBC mission offerings. We are convinced God wants to do some exciting things in Canada and we can be the catalyst."

The Foreign Mission Board recently announced its opposition to making the SBC a bi-national body and suggested the matter be referred for study with a report to be made to the 1984 SBC meeting in Kansas City.

Cecil Sims, executive secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Baptist Convention (which includes 60 Canadian churches) said he has no problems with the matters undergoing study, "because Southern Baptists have a way of doing what's right if given enough time."

SBC President James T. Draper Jr. has reportedly agreed not to automatically refer the proposal to the Executive Committee for study but will let the messengers decide.

Two major arguments are advanced for allowing Canadian churches into the SBC, with the need to evangelize Canada the major one.

C.B. Hogue, former Home Mission Board director of evangelism and now pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., will introduce the motion to change the constitution at the Pittsburgh meeting of the SBC. He quotes surveys which showed 25 percent of the Canadian population was evangelical in 1900 compared to 6.7 percent in 1980. "Today the Southern Baptist churches are the only ones in Canada moving with any pace toward evangelism."

Schmidt points out that for the past five years the baptism ratio of the Canadian SBC churches has been better than that of the Northwest convention and the SBC as a whole. (Last year it was one baptism for every eight members). Yet, "there are eight Communist countries with a higher percentage of evangelicals than Canada--and in 1900 there were more Baptists on the east coast of Canada than there were in Texas!"

The lack of evangelism by national Canadian Baptist groups sparked the move to the SBC by some Canadian churches in the 1950s. "They desired to plug into a worldwide mission effort and have access to SBC literature and programs," Schmidt said. "Those concerns are still valid."

SBC agencies were instructed to study ways to help Canadian Baptists by the 1977 SBC messengers and the Home Mission Board began work in 1978.

Schmidt said other United States evangelical groups, such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance, North American Baptist Conference, the Evangelical Free Church and the Baptist General Conference, already give Canadian churches full membership in the parent organization.

Proponents also see the issue as one of fairness. According to Sims, the Canadian churches affiliated with the Northwest convention have given \$2.1 million dollars to SBC causes in the past decade--last year the Cooperative Program received \$115,000; Lottie Moon, \$50,000 and Annie Armstrong \$17,250. "They feel they should be full citizens of the SBC if they are going to support it," Hogue said.

"There are 5,000 people attending 60 small churches and missions," Schmidt said. "They believe in the Cooperative Program, world missions and Bold Mission Thrust, yet the SBC recognizes us as nothing. We are experiencing a terrible sense of frustration."