

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Pentagon Colonel, Baptist Editor  
Discuss Means To Peace

By Patti Stephenson

HARRISBURG, Pa. (BP)--Opposing stances on the nuclear freeze were taken by two Southern Baptists at the recent lay renewal conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Ga.

Lt. Col. Vaughn Johnson of the United States Air Force warned the recent Soviet attack on a Korean airliner verified "we cannot expect any restraint from a godless ideology. What we can expect is oppression, grasping for power and precious little mercy."

Johnson, member of a crisis monitoring team at the Pentagon, and Walker Knight, editor of SBC Today, exchanged different views on the nuclear freeze.

"The Soviets don't think like we do, no matter how much we wish for it," Johnson said. "Laying down our arms will not induce the Soviets to do the same."

Johnson said nuclear disarmament advocated by some Christians "would produce a greater evil than possessing the weapons themselves." Negotiations must continue from a position of "sufficient strength," he maintained.

Before calling for a nuclear freeze, "the United States must achieve parity...by improving what we have and maintaining and replacing weapons," he explained. "Control of weapons based on deterrence is the only thing Soviets understand."

Johnson expressed concern over the involvement of the nation's clergy in the peace movement. "I don't think it's good to mix politics and religion," he said. "I do think most Christians realize we need to maintain a strong defense while we're trying to deal with enemies."

Johnson, who described himself as a "professional peacekeeper," observed "prayer and Jesus Christ are the only ways to reach the Communists."

Knight described himself as frightened by the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. "For me, the Korean incident underscored the Russians' paranoia, which all of our strongarm policy reinforces," he said. The United States and Russia are "moving farther apart with no sign of trust on either side," he said.

Knight also said he is confused by his desire to be "a good American citizen and a kingdom citizen." American Christians who have "fallen victim to a civil religion have placed the flag on par with the Bible," he suggested.

Declaring "the U.S. is not the new Israel," Knight warned "this nation, like all other nations, stands under the constant judgment of God." The Christian must serve God first, country second, he said.

Instead of making peace, Knight observed "our national policy has become peacekeeping with a big stick." He deplored "spending enormous sums on peacekeeping while reducing funds to cure the causes of war. "God's final judgment of all nations will be based on what we do about the poor, the hungry, the sick," he said.

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"Peacemaking is not an option but the vocation of every Christian," Knight continued. "It requires repudiating old values and replacing them with new ones such as going the second mile and loving enemies," he said.

"Christians either have to believe Christ was naive in teaching us to turn the other cheek or practice what he taught and put our security in him."

Knight suggested a bilateral, phased reduction of nuclear arms is the "least immoral" solution to the nuclear arms buildup. "We should begin with a nuclear freeze on testing, production and deployment," he said.

While remaining frightened and confused, Knight said, "my hope rests in God, who is our peace and has already overcome the world."

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Ohio Convention  
Sets Growth Goals

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VANDALIA, Ohio (BP)--Messengers to the annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio set a series of state and church goals for 1984.

Continuing a perennial goal, messengers approved an effort to start at least 40 church-type missions during the coming year and were told that from Jan. 1, 1981, to October 1983, Ohio Baptists started 107 church-type missions, an average of one every 9.3 days.

Messengers also adopted goals to increase baptisms to at least 7,500 in 1984, up from slightly over 7,000 this year and to increase Sunday school enrollment three percent, to 91,820 in 1984.

Messengers adopted a \$4,409,415 budget for 1984, up from \$4,033,451 in 1983. Of the budget, Ohio churches are expected to contribute \$2,544,498 with the rest coming from national SBC agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board.

Ohio will send \$1,017,800 to worldwide missions, evangelism and educational causes through the SBC Cooperative Program, representing 40 percent of the state contributions, up from 39.5 percent last year.

Each year Ohio Baptists plan to increase contributions to the worldwide Cooperative Program causes by a half percent until they reach a 50-50 division.

Messengers urged local churches not giving at least 10 percent of their budgets through the Cooperative Program to increase contributions at least a percent a year until 10 percent is reached.

Churches giving more than 10 percent a year were encouraged to increase contributions a half percent annually until they are giving 20 percent of their budgets through the Cooperative Program.

Arthur L. Patterson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mason, was reelected to a second one-year term as president without opposition.

Resolutions adopted included expressions opposing pornography and the use of alcohol as a beverage, support of the Cooperative Program and statements on religious liberty and peace.

On alcohol, messengers favored efforts to raise the minimum drinking age to 21 and opposed the use of alcohol as a beverage.

The resolution on religious liberty noted the historic principles of government neutrality toward religion appear to be eroding, and opposed the use of public monies for religious instruction and all "unwarranted efforts" by the government to define what is a church.

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It urged resistance to the "growing influence of humanism" in all public institutions, particularly public schools.

The peace resolution noted the United States has responded to the need to keep peace in "volatile areas" of the world, which have resulted in loss of life.

It encouraged Southern Baptists to work actively in the pursuit with justice, not only in preaching, teaching and prayer, but also by being Christian citizens.

It urged prayers for God's leadership of the national leaders, for protection of the peacekeeping forces around the world and for strength and comfort to the bereaved families who have lost loved ones in the service of the nation.

The 1984 annual meeting will be Oct. 23-25 in the Greater Cleveland area.

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Spanish Partnership  
Group Visits Oklahoma

By Bob Mathews

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OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Thirty Spanish pastors and some family members have returned to Spain after a three-week stay in Oklahoma as a part of the Oklahoma-Spanish Baptist partnership.

The Spanish ministers preached in revivals, attended conferences and seminars, went to a college football game, toured Oklahoma Baptist University and met with Evangelist Billy Graham during the Myriad crusade.

Jorge J. Pastor, director of programs for the Spanish Baptist Union's department of media, assessed the group's visit to Oklahoma the night before they flew back to Spain.

"First, we learned to love you more. Some of our people came with a background of prejudice against Americans. But since we came and saw your love, saw your people and how you are, we began to love you.

"Second, we learned how important Sunday school, stewardship and evangelism are. We knew this before, but now we realize, through your churches, your people and your pastors, how important these are.

"Finally, we learned to love more deeply one another as Spaniards through this time together. This was a first for us. These three weeks have helped us understand one another better and this is very important for the future of our union."

Reflecting on the revivals in which the Spanish men served as evangelists, Pastor said he had heard many reports of good results and his group is happy over the meetings.

"At first, I think some of the Oklahoma pastors were reluctant maybe because of the language difference, but as we came to know one another things changed," he observed, adding, "Actually, we all have the same language, the Holy Spirit language."

Pastor said his group was particularly impressed with the bigness of Oklahoma, the wide streets and open plains and its churches. "Your small churches are like our big churches. We have only one church with 500 members and our churches average about 70 members," he said. "We feel you have big churches and strong leadership and they know what they are doing."

One factor learned from their visits to state churches was that invitations are given in almost all services. "In our churches we don't give an invitation every Sunday, but after being here, we like it and we think maybe we can extend the invitation more often."

Joe L. Ingram, BGCO executive director-treasurer and prime mover behind the partnership, agreed the Spaniards' visit was a positive experience.

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He observed Oklahoma's partnership with Spain is unique because it is the only one which has brought the national pastors to the United States in a group. It is also a long-term arrangement and it involves missions as a two-way street, Ingram said.

Future projects include stewardship training for the Spanish churches in the spring of 1984, Sunday school emphasis in fall, 1984; as many as 500 Oklahomans involved in local church revivals in 1985, plus the possibility of a 1986 Billy Graham crusade in Spain.

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West Virginia Passes Controversial  
Resolutions Without Debate

Baptist Press  
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BLUEFIELD, W.Va. (BP)--Almost 400 messengers adopted resolutions on two often-controversial topics--the ordination of women and abortion--without debate at the annual meeting of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists.

Opposition was expressed only through "no" votes as majority votes gave approval to a resolution opposing ordination of women "into the gospel preaching ministry to serve as pastors" while recognizing ordination is "exclusively the prerogative of the local church" and a resolution opposing abortion on demand.

The messengers also voted a one percent increase in the convention's contribution through the national Southern Baptist Cooperative Program to 23.5 percent. Last year the West Virginia convention slashed contributions to the national program from 25.5 to 22.5 percent.

The adopted budget exceeded \$1 million for the second time in convention history. Convention churches will provide \$503,600 of the \$1,216,808 with the rest coming from national Southern Baptist Convention agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board.

A rewritten constitution, designed to meet the needs of the growing convention was also adopted. Most of the changes centered on clarifications of wording and expanded job descriptions for the executive board.

The proposed description of what constituted the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists was amended from the floor. By a 100-90 vote messengers inserted wording to allow churches outside the geographical boundaries of the state to become members.

Opponents to the change argued churches outside the state would not be in touch with the needs of West Virginia but might want to join "to make a statement to the convention of the state where they are located."

Supporters argued any church wanting to help establish churches and missions in West Virginia should be allowed to help and the credentials committee could be trusted to check the motives of churches applying for membership.

The issue has roots in the 1982 convention when two Virginia churches, unhappy with policies of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, were voted into membership and an independent church in Kentucky, Christ Is King Baptist Church in Louisville, was accepted under "watchcare" with a final decision to be made at the 1983 meeting.

Christ Is King later notified the credentials committee it had decided to withdraw its application for membership.

Four new churches, all inside West Virginia, were received, one joining the denomination and three newly constituted. The state office also reported 1,123 baptisms in convention churches in 1982, an increase of 20.7 percent over last year.

A new evangelism intern, Howard Anders, was introduced. He will serve for three years.

The new state office building committee reported the hiring of an architect and will present building and financial plans at next year's meeting.

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Resolutions which carried unanimously condemned the use of alcoholic beverages and drugs and urged strict enforcement of laws concerning them; expressed sympathy to families of the military who died in Lebanon and Grenada; urged churches to minister to the unemployed, and called for West Virginia churches to set aside the first Tuesday of each month to pray for spiritual awakening.

Ronald G. Dillon, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Parkersburg, W.Va., was reelected president without opposition. He was president of the WVCSB in 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1982.

Chester B. Cooke III, pastor of White Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, was elected first vice president and Ron Skidmore, pastor of Edgemont Baptist Church in Bluefield was elected second vice president. Edgemont hosted the 1983 meeting.

Next year's meeting will be Nov. 9-10 at Westmoreland Baptist Church in Huntington, W.Va.

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Indiana Celebrates Silver Anniversary  
Approve First \$2 Million Budget

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INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--The State Convention of Baptists in Indiana celebrated 25 years as a convention and approved its first \$2 million budget during its annual meeting Nov. 1-3.

SBC leaders hoped to return to the site where the convention organized 25 years ago--the First Southern Baptist Church in Indianapolis--but the SBCI had to be moved to Northside Baptist Church in Indianapolis because First Southern sold their property and is relocating.

The history of the convention was presented by Executive Director Emeritus Harmon and Mrs. Moore in five year segments. The vignettes presented by the Moores were recorded on cassette tapes and will be made available to Indiana's 295 churches.

For the first time, Indiana Baptists approved a budget exceeding \$2 million (\$2,012,045). The Indiana Baptists 1984 Cooperative Program goal is \$1,401,555 compared to \$1,271,246 in 1983.

Indiana Baptists will continue to share 31.5 percent of all CP gifts with the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program, a figure expected to be \$441,490.

In other action the convention approved unanimously 10 changes in the constitution. The messengers adopted the Baptist Faith and Message, adopted by the SBC in 1963. They previously had adopted the BFM dating back to 1925.

The only change creating debate concerned the convention arrangements committee. The committee was charged with the responsibility of enlisting major speakers two years in advance as opposed to one year.

Convention President Carver Tinsley became the first president to serve a single term. He became ineligible by taking employment Nov. 15 with the state convention as a director of missions.

The record 360 messengers elected Robert Latham, pastor of the host church, president.

The state convention is scheduled at the First Southern Baptist Church, Evansville, on Nov. 13-15, 1984.

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