



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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*Ed. Commission  
(C)-N*

May 16, 1984

84-73

## American Seminary Commission Adopts Reduced Budget

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tenn., has approved its first reduced budget since 1971.

Commission members voted to operate on a budget of \$276,223 for 1984-85, a decrease of almost \$2,500.

The reduced budget came despite a 2.79 percent projected increase from national Cooperative Program receipts. The seminary commission will receive \$234,218 from the Cooperative Program in 1984-85, an increase of more than \$7,000.

Projections for income from interest-bearing accounts fell short as some reserves were used in 1983-84 for campus development at ABTS, a predominantly black school jointly sponsored by the SBC and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

The Southern Baptist Commission on ABTS is unique in that it pays no salaries. It provides a budget amount to the Southern Baptist Education Commission for consultation, staff services and office space. The majority of the budget is directed to ABTS. Over the past several years the commission has given the seminary more money than it actually receives from the Cooperative Program.

In other action the commission voted to increase the number of scholarships made available to ABTS students from 140 to 146. The single scholarship amount of \$1,025 did not increase from the previous year for the first time since the scholarship program was established in 1978.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., secretary-treasurer of the seminary commission, reported ABTS added two dormitory units housing 10 students each during the past year. It was the first construction on the seminary campus in 30 years.

Fred E.A. Johnson, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Madison, Tenn., was elected chairman of the seminary commission. Other officers include J. David Jicka, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sheffield, Ala., vice-chairman, and Joe P. Williams, pastor of Baptist Tabernacle, Louisville, Ky., recording secretary.

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*C-N*

John Baker Returns  
To Northern Plains

Baptist Press  
5/16/84

RAPID CITY, S.D. (BP)—John P. Baker, 72, who retired in 1976 as executive secretary of the Northern Plains Baptist Convention, has been elected to that position again.

Baker, who was the first executive secretary of the convention, succeeds Roy W. Owens who has accepted a position as regional consultant for the new church growth department of the church extension division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Owens had followed Baker as executive secretary of the convention which includes North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana.

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The Northern Plains executive board turned to Baker to complete the unique goal of the convention—to be the only state convention in the Southern Baptist Convention to dissolve.

Wyoming, a part of the convention since its formation in 1968, became a separate convention this year. As Southern Baptist work continues to grow, there will be a Montana convention and a Dakota convention. Baker will lead in securing directors for the Montana fellowship and the Dakota fellowship and guide the convention toward dissolution. No timetable has been adopted for the process.

The Northern Plains Baptist Convention has approximately 120 churches and 15,000 members.

Since his retirement eight years ago, Baker has been pastor of churches in Hawaii, Utah and Idaho and started two missions in the Baton Rouge, La., area.

He is a native of Evanston, Ill., and graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He was director of missions and stewardship for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, 1962-67, and earlier was pastor of churches in Texas and Colorado. He and his wife, Clide, have two children.

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*HMB-N*

Spiritual Awakening Awaits  
Cooperation, Prayer

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press  
5/16/84

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—Southern Baptists hinder revival by neglecting fellowship with other denominations, a specialist in spiritual awakening told participants at the Fourth National Prayer for Spiritual Awakening Conference at the Baptist Conference Center in Glorieta, N.M.

Great awakenings of the early 19th and 20th centuries were preceded by interdenominational prayer meetings, explained J. Edwin Orr, president of the Oxford Association for Research in Revival. Baptist groups—including Southern Baptists—readily cooperated with churches of other denominations until the turn of the century, he added.

While theological differences may now exist, he said, Southern Baptists could cooperate more with other denominations in moving the United States toward spiritual renewal. He noted the spiritual awakening of 1858 was preceded by "concerts of prayer" among all denominations, and noted, "If revival comes (today), it will spread through the fellowship of other denominations.

"When God sends revival he doesn't read our labels, he reads our hearts," Orr said. One of the reasons the "brush fires," or local occurrences of revival don't spread "is because you (Southern Baptists) don't have fellowship with other denominations."

Church revivalist and author Vance Havner told the more than 380 people attending the Home Mission Board-sponsored conference, God "wants to rouse the church today and wake up sinners who think they're Christians but they're not."

Havner, 83, accused Southern Baptists of concentrating on increasing church rolls rather than leading people to conversion and warned, "We cannot expect God to forgive us our sins if we are not willing to forsake them."

Orr echoed Havner's statements, noting the 1858 revival swept through the churches first as an estimated one million church members were converted.

Confession of sin always accompanies revival, Orr explained. But, he cautioned, some people may use times of confession to tell of others' sins, a practice which could quench the fires of revival because "God doesn't call you to confess someone else's sins."

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Yet, he maintained, "anyone who aspires to be used of God must get right with God first. If you've sinned, "put it right as far as the sin is known. We commit specific sins; we should make specific confessions."

Other speakers challenged participants to stop playing religious games and begin a more serious effort to lead the United States toward spiritual renewal. Robert L. Hamblin, HMB vice-president of evangelism, called on participants to lead lives of self-sacrifice.

Southern Baptists need to be freed from their regard for self, he charged. Church members are "busy with basketball and bowling alleys and have no time to witness for God or read the Bible," claimed Hamblin. "If there is no cross in your life, then you don't know God."

Iris Urrey, a Mission Service Corps volunteer, told how eight years ago in Houston, she "knelt down a tramp and stood up a lady." Urrey recounted how a young Christian continued to share the gospel with her and convinced her that even though she had a criminal record and was a drug addict, God loved her.

Now she tells the story of her conversion in churches and high schools throughout the nation. She recently began traveling in Europe and has been able to share her testimony with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) personnel and their families, particularly high school students.

Urrey questioned whether Southern Baptists were prepared for revival. A young man in Houston was recently converted during conversations with her but no church would reach out to him because he had long hair and sometimes smelled. "I'm afraid of revival because folks like him are going to come to our churches and what are we going to do with them?" she said.

"We are not in the midst of revival because Christians don't share a burden for revival," claimed Grant Adkisson, revivalist, Bible conference leader and pastor of First Baptist Church of Pagosa Springs, Colo.

He questioned whether church members were serious about reaching the nation for Christ, adding many church programs are aimed at reaching inactive church members and not those spiritually lost. Much of what pastors spend their time doing "is getting people to do and to be what they already should be if they were totally committed to Christ," he asserted.

He claimed a deeper spiritual life always results in evangelism, but added many Christians fail to share their faith because they fear rejection, an indication they have not "abandoned" their wills to God.

The church today parallels the actions of Israel during its wilderness journeys described in the Old Testament, Adkisson said. Rather than approach God personally, Israelites requested Moses act as mediator. But the Israelites' neglect of a personal relationship with God left them spiritually shallow and unable to live boldly for God.

"A second-rate commitment produces a second-hand religion," he explained, adding many contemporary church members follow Israel's example and depend only upon their pastors for spiritual insight.

"While we believe in the priesthood of the believer, we practice the priesthood of the pastor," he said. The pastor is viewed as the holy man, said Adkisson, and if he "makes a mistake, you can fire him."

Like Israel, getting bits of information about God from Moses, Christians today receive their religion "in an installment plan" from professional clergy. While "a second-hand religion may keep the pastor in business because he's (seen) as indispensable," said Adkisson, "nothing less than total abandonment (of Christians to God) will bring revival."

Adrian Rogers Added  
To Evangelists Program

CO-N

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention 1979-80 and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., has been added to the list of speakers for the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists meeting.

The CSBE will meet June 13, 1:30-5:30 p.m., in the Music Hall of H. Roe Bartle Hall of the Kansas City Convention Center. The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14 is also being held at Bartle Hall, but will not have a session the afternoon of June 13.

Rick Scarborough, an evangelist from Mobile, Ala., and president of the CSBE, dropped himself off the program so Rogers could be added. Other speakers will be Junior Hill, an evangelist from Hartselle, Ala., and Ron Dunn, a conference leader from Irving, Texas.

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House Narrowly Defeats  
Equal Access Proposal

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press  
5/16/84

BSC-N

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. House of Representatives narrowly rejected a proposal to give student-initiated religious groups the same access for meetings in secondary schools provided for other voluntary, student-initiated meetings during noninstructional periods.

Referred to as an "Equal Access" bill, H.R. 5345, sponsored by Reps. Carl D. Perkins, D-Ky., and Don Bonker, D-Wash., drew a strong majority in the 270-151 House vote, but fell 11 votes short of the two-thirds necessary for passage.

The two-thirds margin became necessary when the bill's backers brought it to the floor under a "suspension of the rules" procedure which allows for only 40 minutes of debate and generally permits no amendments. The procedure is regularly used for quick passage of noncontroversial items.

Citing the lack of time remaining in the 98th Congress due to long summer recesses for the Republican and Democratic nominating conventions and an early fall adjournment or recess for election campaigns, Perkins told colleagues "it would take an act of God" to get the bill to the floor and passed under normal House procedures.

"There is no way in the world we can pass this bill because of the time pressures unless we pass it on suspension today," Perkins said.

Although other legislative channels remain open in the House and especially in the Senate where a similar measure (S. 1059) sponsored by Sens. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., and Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., is pending on the calendar, the defeat lengthened the odds for passage this year.

Nonetheless, some backers of equal access found encouragement in the size of the House majority voting for the bill.

"This vote dramatically demonstrates that the equal access concept commends itself to Congress and proves without a doubt that passage of such legislation is doable," said James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Dunn, whose agency is one of several groups supporting the equal access legislation after earlier opposing a constitutional amendment on school prayer rejected by the Senate, described the equal access proposals as "exceedingly complex."

"We're sympathetic," he said, "to the problems of public school administrators as they try to handle the pressure from zealots on every hand, demanding in one case that the schools become virtually parochial institutions and on the other hand, that they be sterilely hostile to religion. But we see the equal access legislation as a useful tool for these administrators which would help them handle such pressure."

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The bill defeated by the House would have barred secondary schools which generally permit student-initiated and student-composed groups to meet during non-instructional periods from discriminating against the religious content at such meetings.

The bill would have provided such meetings be "voluntary and student-initiated," and that school employees be present only in a non-participatory capacity. House sponsors planned to replace the bill's enforcement mechanism—a cutoff of federal funds—with a judicial remedy contained in the Hatfield-Denton measure.

Perkins indicated the bill had "very little opposition" at first but by the time the measure reached the floor, opposition was more substantial.

In addition to questions raised by congressional opponents of the measure, a number of major newspapers editorialized against it.

"I wish most of my colleagues had read the legislation rather than editorials and rather than what someone might have sent from outside this body because the things that I heard said in this room today certainly are not from this legislation," declared Rep. William F. Goodling, R-Pa., during the brief floor debate.

In that debate, opponents characterized the measure as anything but equal access.

"This bill licenses, authorizes, encourages religious services, prayer meetings, revival meetings in high school classrooms, before—after—and during the school day," charged Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif., chairman of the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights and a primary opponent of the Perkins-Bonker bill.

"Outside preachers, priests, rabbis, cult leaders and gurus will conduct the services if invited by students," Edwards said.

Rep. Gary L. Ackerman, D-N.Y., called the bill a "blatant establishment of religion, naked and undisguised."

"This bill opens the door so wide that not only prayer, but the entire church could be moved inside," Ackerman added.

Bonker disagreed with opponents' charges, insisting the bill was "not the school prayer issue, nor is it the son of school prayer, nor is it even the grandson of school prayer."

Rather, Bonker said, "The equal access bill simply removes discrimination against students who want to meet for religious purposes. It is a practical, constitutionally sound and fair-minded thing to do."

Contending the issue is "equal access, not special privilege," chief deputy majority whip Bill Alexander, D-Ark., said, "The bill does not establish religion. It permits freedom of assemblage for the purpose of religion and other expression."

In addition to the Baptist Joint Committee, other groups supporting equal access included the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the Christian Legal Society.

Joining national teachers and school administrator organizations in opposition to the measure were the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., the Church of the Brethren and several Jewish groups.