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84-92

CLC
(W-N)

Pro-Gambling Legislation Sails Through Committee

WASHINGTON (BP)—On the same day the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, Mo., passed a resolution in opposition to gambling, legislation which would lift federal restrictions on gambling advertising cleared committee hurdles in the United States Congress.

The Senate Judiciary Committee June 14 reported out a bill introduced by Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), a former casino owner and presently general chairman of the Republican National committee. The legislation, S. 1876, would modify sections of an existing law in order to allow interstate advertising of gambling sponsored by a state.

If the changes are approved, casinos and state lotteries could advertise even in states where such gambling activities are illegal.

Hearings on companion legislation, H.R. 5097, were held in the House on the same day. The House version was introduced by Rep. Harry Reid (D-Nev.), a former member of the Nevada Gaming Control Commission.

Congressional sources familiar with both pieces of legislation expressed surprise at the lack of opposition from Congress and the Reagan administration.

Laxalt's bill was reported out without dissent, even though the Judiciary Committee membership includes conservative senators such as Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), Robert Dole (R-Kan.), John East (R-N.C.), Jeremiah A. Denton (R-Ala.) and Howell T. Heflin (D-Ala.).

In the House, John C. Keeney, deputy attorney general of the criminal division of the department of justice, told a subcommittee hearing that the justice department "does not oppose enactment" of the legislation.

In a repeat of earlier hearings chaired by Laxalt, one House subcommittee heard a lineup of gambling industry representatives talk about the need for freedom to advertise their products.

Almost lost in the hearings was a brief claim that the changes in federal law were needed in order to clarify "constitutional problems."

Laxalt and other supporters argue the legislation would bring the law into compliance with a 1975 Supreme Court decision which, according to their interpretation, placed restrictions on the capacity of federal law to limit commercial free speech.

But Larry Braidfoot, a staff member of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and an expert on gambling issues, countered that such an argument "appears spurious."

"The gambling industry, with its billions of dollars in income, would have challenged the current restrictions long ago if the legal problem had been real," he explained.

Braidfoot added although "powerful and influential interests sympathetic to the gambling industry" have characterized the legislation as non-controversial, "our job as Southern Baptists is to make this bill very controversial."

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"If this legislation passes, with no restrictions or limits on advertising, we will be subjected to a barrage of pro-gambling advertising which will glorify every conceivable form of gambling," he predicted. "With the current approach of the Federal Communications Commission and its commitment to deregulation of the media, there will be no limit to what may be done by the gambling industry to hawk its wares."

He urged Baptists and other Christians to communicate their concerns with elected representatives. The legislation, he emphasized, "is on a fast track and will be passed if we do not act quickly to derail it."

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C-N

Cothen Retirement
Clarification Issued

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press
6/26/84

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--A statement clarifying retirement benefits for Baptist Sunday School Board President Emeritus Grady C. Cothen has been issued by BSSB President Lloyd Elder.

Elder issued the statement in a meeting with Russell Kaemmerling and Robert M. Tenery in response to two articles published in the June 1984 issue of the Southern Baptist Advocate.

Kaemmerling is editor and chief executive officer of the privately owned Advocate, a Dallas-based publication. Tenery, a trustee of the BSSB, is pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church in Morganton, N.C., and editor of Baptists United News, also a private advocacy publication.

The June issue of the Advocate contained one article concerning retirement benefits for Cothen, who took early retirement as president of the BSSB in February because of health reasons. Another article concerned the June 12-14 annual meeting of the SBC, and prominently mentioned Cothen in reference to the convention presidency.

Elder asked for the meeting with Kaemmerling and Tenery after Cothen was defeated in a bid to become president of the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination. Charles F. Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, won a first-ballot victory over both Cothen and John Sullivan, outgoing first vice-president of the SEC.

Elder said he prepared his response in readiness for questions which might arise during the report period for the BSSB, but did not deliver them then since no questions concerning Cothen's retirement benefits were raised. He said he waited until after the election to issue the statement to Kaemmerling and Tenery.

Also attending the meeting with Elder, Kaemmerling and Tenery were Richard T. McCartney, editor of the Baptist Messenger, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, D. August Boto, a Dallas attorney and friend of Kaemmerling, and Dan Martin, news editor of Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Elder said certain parts of Kaemmerling's article were accurate, but took issue with other sections he said were inaccurate. He said he wanted to meet with Kaemmerling and issue a statement through Baptist Press to clarify the issues.

Kaemmerling concurred after inviting Elder to write an article for the Advocate.

The BSSB president told Kaemmerling he regrets the article was ever published "because it is one of those cases where the facts distort the truth rather than reveal the truth."

Elder agreed the first story was a news article and the figures quoted were correct but said both articles "contain some factual information, some inaccuracies and editorial distortion which make accurate communication less than available to Southern Baptists."

"The problem I have is you have said the only reason for doing it (printing details of Cothen's retirement package) had nothing whatsoever to do with anything except the information. You have said there is no ulterior motive. But in the second article (concerning issues to come before the SBC) you tie it directly with the election of an SBC president," Elder said.

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Kaemmerling conceded he had obtained the information concerning Cothen's benefit package from "a private letter...to an individual."

Elder said Kaemmerling "did not call me or Jim Clark (James W. Clark, executive vice president of the BSSB) and ask any clarification of any of this.... The only one who had a letter of personal correspondence (on the retirement issue) was one of our trustees. He has a right to that information."

Elder said he verified the information with Tenery, and said the letter "was passed along to the Advocate from the trustee who himself is the editor of a privately owned non-Southern Baptist journal."

Elder said the Advocate was accurate when it reported Cothen received an automobile valued at \$15,883; a satellite receiving system valued at \$2,730; a matching gift for Mrs. Cothen (equivalent to the satellite receiving dish); expenses for trips to the Baptist World Alliance meetings in 1984 and 1985; all-expense paid trips to the SBC as long as he lives, and monthly retirement income of \$4,901 per month or \$58,812 annually.

The information is "exactly accurate," about the cost of the gifts, Elder said, and "commended the trustees for being both gracious and prudent in expressing affection and appreciation to Grady and Bettye Cothen, such as many churches would honor a beloved pastor."

Elder reacted to "allusion" the retirement benefits had "just" been released. He said the retirement plans were approved by BSSB trustees 10 months ago in the August 1983 meeting.

"The Advocate was accurate in reporting Dr. Cothen's retirement...at \$4,901 per month. What it unfortunately fails to report is that the trustees affirmed this by policy decision almost 10 years ago when Dr. Cothen came as president. This is a matter of trustee record. It is also the exact policy in which Dr. (James) Sullivan retired. This policy does not represent a recent decision hidden from Baptists or that involves special arrangement...for (Cothen)."

Elder took issue with the Advocate article on SBC issues.

The Advocate story said, in its pertinent parts: "Cothen, who would not be burdened with the added expenses of a president since he retired with an extremely comfortable salary from the Sunday School Board, is seen as the candidate of the extreme left...."

"Many concerned Baptists are questioning the ethics involved in requesting and obtaining early retirement from the Sunday School Board, citing an inability to continue due to poor health. Sixty days later, with a retirement package in hand that guarantees an annual income which exceeds that of 95 percent of all denominational employees, Cothen emerges as a candidate for the convention presidency."

The article goes on to say: "Rumors have circulated for weeks in and around Nashville about Cothen's 'miraculous recovery.' Many have suggested that the only proper thing to do is either return the money or go back to work. If poor health prevented him working, can he survive the presidency with its demands, or if he is healthy why not earn the salary which Southern Baptists will pay him through increased literature costs?"

Elder said the "assumption" concerning the source of the retirement benefits "is inaccurate. He said Cothen and "our other 750 annuitants are paid primarily by earnings of wisely invested funds already on deposit and designated for that purpose."

He added the retirement benefits for Cothen and other annuitants "will not be affected whether we go up or down in literature costs in the next 20 years."

Elder told Kaemmerling the Advocate "may have the right to call into question the things surrounding this decision," but "the elected trustees of the board and a host of other Baptists have applauded Dr. Cothen as a man of unimpeachable integrity. Many have experienced with him the agony of being forced by radical surgery and its aftermath to lay down prematurely his service as our president."

He added the Advocate "was inaccurate" in its reference to the timing of Cothen's retirement. "The decision to retire was not made 60 days ago, but two years ago. It was forced on him by radical surgery when over half of his stomach was removed." In the ensuing two years, Elder said, Cothen has been hospitalized six times, four of them for additional surgery.

Elder said he had not heard remarks about the "miraculous recovery" of Cothen, and said he instead has "heard Southern Baptists thank God for his provident grace in a two year agonizing progressive recovery. This is what knowledgeable physicians predicted (would occur) if Dr. Cothen would retire."

"We want to trust the Lord and tell the people the truth. We will give you all the correct information you request. We believe Southern Baptists are a fair minded people and will not allow partial facts to separate them from a great board," he added.

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FMB-F

Reappointed Missionaries Possess
Knowledge of Language, Culture

By Leland Webb

Baptist Press
6/26/84

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—More than 10 percent of those added to Southern Baptists' foreign missionary force last year were reappointees, who returned to the field as "survivors" already familiar with the language and culture.

In some cases, they were simply continuing the same journey that led them first onto the field and then away. In other cases, their reappointment resulted from a renewed call or change in their spiritual life.

One reappointed missionary, Aliene Hunt, from Texas, believes many more who resigned could come back. "If they would just be willing to uproot—just trust the Lord and say, 'It's going to be all right.'

"I didn't think so, but when I got here and looked out over that sea of 10 million people, I said, 'Home at last.'"

After three terms of service in the Philippines, she and her husband, Walter, resigned in 1971 to oversee their children's education. He was a pastor in New Mexico for 10 years, then they were reappointed in January 1979.

"We don't have to go through the problem of culture shock and orientation and a jillion other things that new missionaries would have," Aliene reflected after her return.

The Charles Topes of Missouri, reappointed a second time in 1981, see the same advantages. "We know the culture, the people, the language. Three weeks after we hit the field, we can be at work," said Tope.

He and wife, LaVerne, stressed at their reappointment the depth of call they felt. "The Lord has spoken to us plainly through his Word and his Spirit," Tope said. "This is what he wants us to do with the last 10 years of our ministry. And I think we have another 10 years in us."

Another missionary couple, Grayson and Betty Tennison of Texas, returned to Portugal last year. They left in 1976—after 27 years as missionaries—because they felt they had given everything they had to offer there. "We felt the Lord's leadership," Tennison said. They believe they probably wouldn't have gone back if the Portuguese themselves hadn't initiated the request.

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"We never lost our sense of call to missions, but I have always preached and felt--and still feel--that missions is not where you are but what you are."

Not all missionaries can state such clear reasons for leaving as the Tennysons. But one thing is certain: missionaries ask to return only after they feel they have resolved the circumstances that caused them to leave.

"It's very difficult to pinpoint a single cause (for resignation)," said Franklin T. Fowler, whose assignment with the Foreign Mission Board includes studying missionary losses. "We're dealing with a lot of subjectivity."

Winston Crawley, board vice-president for planning, calls one influence the "vulnerability factor" of middle age. "At that point children are at an age when development problems come. Parents are moving into old age and often needing special attention. The missionary is also at a mid-career point of reevaluation--deciding what he wants to do with the rest of his life."

"Many come home because of family needs and then are ready to go back when these needs diminish," added Bill Wakefield, board area director for South and Southeast Asia. "I believe 'cultivation' of the resigned missionary is a significant factor in triggering the return, but a change in the circumstances which caused the resignation would likely be the main cause (for them to seek reappointment)."

Cultivation leading to reappointment comes either through area directors or a program called the Foreign Mission Fellowship. The fellowship was developed in 1972 by now-retired Edna Frances Dawkins to minister to former missionaries, missionary associates and journeymen by maintaining Foreign Mission Board contact with them, providing information and arranging for get-togethers in various locations. Now one out of every four persons reappointed comes out of this ministry.

In some instances reappointed missionaries have found that the circumstances in their lives leading them to a first resignation bring about a second resignation. In fact, reappointed missionaries have a higher resignation rate than other missionaries.

In other instances, however, reappointment is simply part of the missionary's plan to further his or her missions career. For example, some need to resign to further educate themselves so they can return better equipped.

But for all of the reappointees, the mission field is truly their "home."

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(Adapted from The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's magazine, February-March 1984.)