



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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July 27, 1984

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84-106

Laxalt Prepares Push  
On Pro-Gambling Bill

By David Wilkinson

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sources in the U.S. Senate have confirmed plans by Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.) to push legislation on gambling advertising through the Senate before lawmakers recess Aug. 10 for the Republican National Convention.

Laxalt, a former casino owner, hopes to get a floor vote soon since "most senators, much less the public, are not aware of what the bill does," explained one legislative aide. Also, he pointed out, many lawmakers will be away during the next two weeks, which might allow the measure to be debated with only a few senators present.

Laxalt's bill, S. 1876, would lift federal restrictions on interstate advertising by casinos and state-operated lotteries. Under its provisions, casinos and lotteries could advertise even in states where such gambling activities are illegal.

Though companion legislation, introduced by Rep. Harry Reid (D-Nev.), was derailed in a House subcommittee, Senate sources say Laxalt's bill has encountered minimal opposition.

One of the outspoken critics of the bill, Larry Braidfoot of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, believes the legislation, if passed, would "unleash a barrage of pro-gambling advertising into our homes, glorifying every conceivable form of gambling and contributing to a growing national problem."

Braidfoot said it is "imperative" that Southern Baptists and other concerned Christians contact their respective legislators immediately by telephone, telegraph and letter to voice an opinion on the Laxalt bill.

"We can make a difference, if we act quickly," he stressed. "We must be diligent about protecting our homes and communities from the persistent threat of the gambling menace."

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C-N

Cooperative Program Giving  
Hits High, Low Notes

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
7/27/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Cooperative Program giving returned to record levels in June--but May contributions to the national budget of the Southern Baptist Convention dampened hopes the 1983-84 operating budget would be fully funded.

June receipts were \$9,444,063--the most for any June since the Cooperative Program started in 1925 and the fourth highest single month ever. However May income of \$7,739,614 was the lowest in 21 months.

After nine months of the SBC fiscal year, the Cooperative Program has received \$80,569,759 toward a basic budget of \$114.5 million. To reach that figure, monthly receipts the final quarter of the fiscal year would have to average more than \$11.3 million.

The largest single month in CP history (January, 1984) was \$10.2 million.

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All contributions to support the national and worldwide mission and education programs of the SBC are voluntary, though the 38 state conventions which are affiliated with the SBC do budget a certain percentage of their income to pass on to the national level.

Ironically, the budget shortfall looms despite record levels of giving. Four of the last six months are in the top five months for contributions to the national Cooperative Program: January is first; March is second; June is fourth, and April is fifth.

For the year, giving is 5.04 percent ahead of the 1982-83 figures--still ahead of the inflation rate.

Mississippi and South Carolina are the only state conventions to rank in the top 10 in both dollar giving and percentage increase over last year.

South Carolina is eighth in contributions (\$4,565,082) and tenth in percentage increase (9.73) while Mississippi is ninth in dollar amount (\$4,115,402) and seventh in percentage increase (11.24).

Kansas-Nebraska is the leader in percentage increase (48.92 percent) and Texas is the total dollar leader (\$14,345,863).

Other percentage leaders are: Hawaii, 23.54; Nevada, 20.55; Colorado, 19.94; West Virginia, 17.00; Arizona, 12.78; Utah-Idaho, 10.45, and California, 10.24.

Other total dollar leaders are: Florida, \$6,324,410; Georgia, \$6,058,866; North Carolina, \$5,661,162; Alabama, \$5,485,461; Oklahoma, \$5,399,862; Tennessee, \$4,813,545, and Louisiana, \$3,766,639.

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U.S. Senate Retains  
Non-Profit Mail Rates

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7/27/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Senate has voted to keep non-profit mail rates at their current level through fiscal 1985 which begins Oct. 1.

The 1985 Treasury-Postal Service Appropriations bill passed by the Senate July 25 provides \$801 million for the "revenue foregone" subsidy which allows the Postal Service to charge reduced rates to a variety of non-profit and other mailers.

The Senate bill will now go to conference where differences between it and a House-passed measure will be resolved. The House bill allocated \$793 million for the revenue foregone subsidy, a figure which would require a slight increase over current rates.

Both the House and Senate bills are well over the Reagan administration request for \$400 million for the postal subsidy for fiscal 1985.

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Southern Baptists Ready  
For Olympic Visitors

By Todd Turner

Baptist Press  
7/27/84

LOS ANGELES (BP)—A list and schedule three feet tall and stretching across three conference room walls details Southern Baptists' plans to witness to an estimated 1.5 million people expected to attend the Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Staff members of Summer Games Ministries, the Southern Baptist effort to provide a Christian witness at the 23rd Olympiad, claim they are well prepared to deal with the multitudes of people anticipated to converge on the city.

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The calendar, covered with dates when volunteer groups will be in Los Angeles to help in Baptist ministries during the olympics, lists task group meetings and schedules of training seminars for hundreds of local volunteers, as well as details of plans for Baptist ministries during the Olympics.

Southern Baptists are concentrating most of their efforts on reaching people in Exposition Park, stated Elmer Goble, executive director of Summer Games Ministries. The park, he explained, includes the University of Southern California (USC) campus—one of two main Olympic Villages where athletes will reside—and the Coliseum, Sports Arena and the new Olympic swimming pool where much of the Olympic competition will take place. Goble and two local Baptist Student Union directors were appointed by the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee to serve as chaplains in the USC Olympic Village.

As many as 500 local and 75 non-local Baptists are expected to participate in personal evangelism in the area. Many of the volunteers will come from Chinese Baptist Fellowship and other bi-lingual Baptist groups.

Don Hall, director of missions for Crescent Bay-West Los Angeles Baptist Association and head of Southern Baptists' Olympic direct witness task group, said the emphasis will be on quality personal sharing which will help visitors return home "knowing there are people called Southern Baptists who are warm and really mean business."

Southern Baptists will also provide a ministry center for Olympic visitors and athletes across the street from Exposition Park. It will offer a dinner theatre, crisis assistance and "simply a place to rest" for crowd-weary Olympic visitors, stated Doni Hammonds, a US-2 missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and center director.

Hammonds said 10,000 people are expected to visit the center. Most of the volunteers working at the center will also be involved in direct witness in the Exposition Park, Hammonds added. Other centers are planned for San Bernadino and Riverside.

A seven-member fine arts team of student summer missionaries from Texas will provide entertainment at the dinner theatre, said Joe Taylor, director of the group. Programs include a combination of non-stop segments ranging from songs, pantomime and puppets to drama and comedy.

Baptists also will operate a multi-lingual telephone "help-line" and information center for visitors wishing information on ministry opportunities, entertainment, church services, transportation and emergency services.

Nine high school groups from around the country will help local churches with ministries such as mini-Olympics for youth, concerts and activities in parks, and Vacation Bible Schools and backyard Bible clubs. Summer Games Ministries also will sponsor tours of Hollywood and Beverly Hills and evening dinner boat cruises along the Los Angeles coastline.

Housing has been a big headache for Olympic visitors, both in finding it and affording it. Using a bed and breakfast plan, Baptists already have placed about 20 visiting families in local Baptists' homes.

"I think we are in pretty good shape," claimed Goble shortly before the games began. "Time-wise and volunteer-wise we can see we are going to make it."

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Baptist Schools Among  
Competitive Colleges

Ed. Gimm  
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Baptist Press  
7/27/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Six Southern Baptist colleges and universities are among the 302 higher educational institutions listed in the third edition of Peterson's Competitive Colleges, recently published by Peterson's Guides, the Princeton-based publisher of education and career reference materials.

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The Baptist schools include Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Furman University, Greenville, S. C.; University of Richmond, Richmond, Va.; Stetson University, DeLand, Fla.; Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N. C. and William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

The new edition highlights the less than 10 percent of all American higher educational institutions which practice admissions selectivity. Schools are considered "competitive" when they consistently have more applicants that meet entrance requirements than they can accept.

Criteria for selection as a competitive college include the ratio of number of applicants to number of students accepted; the percentage of freshmen with scores of over 600 on both SAT math and verbal exams or 26 on the ACT; the percentage of freshmen who scored over the national average on the respective tests and the percentage of freshmen who were in the top half and top tenth of their high school graduating class.

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BSSB-F

Musicians Say Singing Baptists  
May Become Worship Observers

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press  
7/27/84

(This is the final story in a four-part series on congregational singing)

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Hearty singing, not holy mumbling, should be the goal of congregational singing, according to two Southern Baptist musicians.

Jean Pilcher, minister of music of First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark., and William J. Reynolds, associate professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, agreed that a long-standing trend toward worship as a spectator experience rather than a participatory event has led to a lack of meaningful involvement in congregational singing.

Pilcher, who has local church experience as an organist as well as music director, said she feels many persons view congregational singing as "something that happens before something else happens" in the order of worship. In fact, she points out, congregational singing "may be the only oral statement of faith the congregation makes."

Reynolds, music director for the SBC annual meeting for 14 years, said he has heard Southern Baptists in many settings engage in both "hearty singing and holy mumbling."

The former minister of music and retired Sunday school music secretary said congregational singing "is not a recreational activity, not fun time, not diversionary activity to break the monotony. We sing because of the impact of what those words say. Congregational singing edifies the individual, glorifies the Lord and strengthens the faith of the Christian."

Pilcher feels congregations should "sing with understanding, making the hymn text the main thing and singing the vehicle." At the same time, persons should "sing with conviction, out of their hearts. In hymns addressed to God, I'd like to see them address God, to see God, to talk to him personally; in hymns of prayer or confession, to see themselves in that way."

Reynolds said that Southern Baptists have seen an increase in the multiple choir program since the 1940s, "but at the same time, congregations have become listeners and watchers. I am concerned that everybody participate," he continued. "I am not happy until I have everybody in the congregation singing. I'll go to Sunday School departments, church training groups and other church organization meetings to encourage them to sing."

Acknowledging there are people who know they can't sing, Reynolds said "I don't fuss at people on Sunday mornings. I don't want to be a cheerleader. You can't overcome that attitude in one Sunday. You have to everlastingly stay with it and love those people into singing."

Pilcher believes most congregational singing comes "from people who really know the Lord. When the Psalm says 'make a joyful noise,' that's what it means." She said affirmation through the church newspaper or in speaking helps to encourage good and joyful singing.

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"Southern Baptists have been a singing people," Reynolds said. "But we have become spectators in recent decades. Congregational singing happens when people participate together. I hope in the years ahead for greater participation. Everyone ought to sing; everyone has an obligation to praise the Lord."

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(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Silent Prayer Rider  
Passed By House

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press  
7/27/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—One day after it cleared "equal access" legislation for President Reagan's signature, the U.S. House of Representatives approved language protecting the rights of "individuals in public schools" to "participate in moments of silent prayer."

By votes of 378-29 and 356-50, the House attached silent prayer language offered by Rep. Steve Gunderson, R-Wis., to a bill reauthorizing 11 education programs.

Gunderson offered his amendment as a substitute for stronger language pushed by Reps. Dan Coats, R-Ind., and Robert S. Walker, R-Penn., which would have denied federal education funds to states and local school districts which refused to permit vocal prayer in public schools. Before becoming law, the amendment will have to survive a conference with the Senate which did not include any similar provision in its bill and then be signed by President Reagan.

The potential impact of the amendment in local schools was disputed by House members in disagreement over whether it permits anything more than what is already allowed under the law. That uncertainty prompted criticism of the House action by a Baptist church state specialist.

"The passage of the Gunderson amendment yesterday was unfortunate," declared Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs research assistant Rosemary Brevard. "The day before the House dealt very responsibly with the issue of the place of religion in public schools by passing equal access legislation; now it has confused the whole picture."

Brevard said the Gunderson amendment "may simply restate the law under the in-place Supreme Court decisions: youth may pray silently and personally whenever they want—at meals, during a test, etc. However, the language as passed could authorize teacher-instigated moments of silent prayer—state-sponsored religion which many Baptists oppose."

During debate, Gunderson said he wanted "an organized minute of silence that students could use however they like. The problem is that if you have an organized or scheduled minute of silence at the beginning of the day or immediately preceding the lunch hour, then you get the State and the school back in the business of 'organizing' time for prayer."

But in explaining Gunderson's intention, an aide told Baptist Press the representative interprets his language to permit a teacher to call for a moment of silent prayer but would not permit school boards or states to structure a regular moment for the ritual.

In announcing his support for the Gunderson alternative to the Coats-Walker amendments, equal access sponsor Rep. Don Bonker, D-Wash., lauded Gunderson for removing "organized" from his amendment, "so that we do not have the school authorities involved directly or indirectly in scheduling or putting notices on the bulletin board, or whatever." Bonker said later, "I think we state something that is already practical and obvious and in law."

Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., a supporter of the Coats-Walker vocal prayer proposals, offered his objections to permitting only silent prayer, saying "by definition, you cannot stop silent prayer unless you have thought control." Without thought control, Gingrich argued, "it is not relevant to permit silent prayer."