



BAPTIST PRESS

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Southwestern Faculty
Supports Dilday's Actions

By Jim Jones

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Faculty members at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, have given school President Russell H. Dilday Jr. a vote of confidence as he comes under criticism for speaking out about the division between Baptist fundamentalist and moderate factions.

In a special called session of the faculty Nov. 13 while Dilday was in Kansas City, Mo., approximately 90 of the 105 faculty members approved a resolution stating Dilday had a right and a duty to speak out on the current controversy. No count was taken of the standing vote but no one stood in opposition.

Scott Tatum, professor of preaching and a senior faculty member, presided at the special session, said John Newport, provost and vice-president for academic affairs at the seminary. Newport said he didn't know whether faculty members who might disagree with Dilday's stand stayed away from the meeting, but "I'm sure that some don't agree with everything he says, but I think they agree on his right to speak out."

Apparently all of the faculty members who were in town attended the special meeting, Newport said. About 15 faculty members spoke at the meeting and also backed Dilday's right to speak out in the controversy.

Dilday and leaders of Southern Baptist seminaries, colleges and other institutions have been saying the SBC is in danger of being taken over by a fundamentalist political faction.

Critics of the fundamentalists say the conservative wing is trying to force Baptists into a mold, shattering the denomination's unity and its traditional way of financing its church activities.

Fundamentalist leaders, including W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, have said Baptist leaders paid by the denomination should stop taking sides in the fundamentalist-moderate debate. Criswell and others argue the heads of seminaries and other institutions who are speaking against the fundamentalist faction are attacking a part of the constituency which pays their salaries.

The three-point resolution approved by the seminary faculty, which is considered among the most conservative of the faculties of the six Baptist seminaries, also reaffirmed the faculty's belief in the Baptist Faith and Message, a doctrinal statement followed by Southern Baptists.

The first point was the affirmation of Dilday.

"As loyal Southern Baptists we value our denomination and support its worldwide witness in mission, evangelism and Christian education," the resolution began. "We want the great body of Southern Baptist pastors and people to know where we stand during the current crisis."

The resolution states: "We reaffirm our president, Russell H. Dilday Jr. President Dilday has spoken out on the issues facing the Southern Baptist Convention and we feel he has both the right and responsibility as a denominational leader to make his voice heard.

"We feel our president has pointed out real and serious dangers which threaten this seminary, as well as the entire work of the Southern Baptist Convention. We share his concern and support his courageous stand."

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The second and third points were affirmation of the Baptist Faith and Message and of loyalty to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dilday publicly entered the debate last June at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Kansas City when he said a fundamentalist political machine was short-circuiting the democratic process of the denomination.

Of the Baptist Faith and Message, the faculty noted: "This conservative, biblical statement expresses the heart of the historic Baptist faith. All of us who teach at Southwestern seminary sign that statement and teach within its doctrinal framework."

The faculty also stressed loyalty to the SBC and the Cooperative Program, the convention's voluntary, unified budget plan, as a vital part of the seminary's heritage. "Lee R. Scarborough, president of Southwestern seminary from 1915 to 1942, led the campaign which formed the Cooperative Program," the resolution said. Scarborough also countered efforts by fundamentalists to undo the SBC's "cooperative witness and work," the faculty added.

The closing paragraph of the statement said: "For more than 75 years the presidents, faculty and trustees of this seminary have stood in the forefront of Baptist cooperation in a united effort to share the gospel. We call all Southern Baptists to join us in preserving this noble heritage."

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(Jim Jones is religion editor for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.)

Black Elected President
Of California Convention

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SAN DIEGO (BP)--California Southern Baptists have elected the first black to hold the convention's highest office.

Willie T. Gaines Jr., pastor of San Jose's Emmanuel Baptist Church for eight years, was elected from a field of five candidates. Black pastors have been vice-presidents of the California convention before.

The state's WMU president, Brenda Staver, from El Toro, was elected second vice-president by acclamation. Carroll Sanders, a Yreka pastor, was elected first vice-president.

The cooperative spirit was marked by changes in administrative leadership with messengers honoring retiring executive Robert D. Hughes and James R. Staples. Hughes has been executive director-treasurer for the past 18 years, and Staples has been president of California Baptist College for 13 years. Their successors, C.B. "Bill" Hogue and Russell R. Tuck, respectively, were officially introduced to the convention.

Messengers approved a host of items, including a \$10 million budget, which included a record \$5,430,000 Cooperative Program for 1985, of which 28.25 percent will be forwarded to national SBC mission causes.

The meeting was marked by little disagreement on issues brought before the messengers, although proposals to study the convention's structure and the staff salary administration program were debated. Messengers decided to allow the new executive director time to study the convention structure and allowed the executive board to administer the salary administration program with some restrictions.

In resolutions, messengers sought parental notification of abortions for minors, opposed homosexual preference legislation in the state legislature, sought stricter state definition of pornography, criticized some television programs while encouraging American Christian Television System (ACTS), and urged church support of world hunger and world peace proposals.

The 44th annual meeting in San Diego registered 1,324 messengers and 361 visitors, making it the third largest annual meeting in convention history. Redding, Calif., will be the site of the 1985 meeting on Nov. 12-14.

Gunmen Rob Missionary,
Steal Car In West Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Mack Sacco was robbed and a mission car stolen in West Beirut by three well-dressed young Lebanese men Nov. 6.

The robbery occurred one afternoon as Sacco was on his way back to East Beirut from the mission office where he works as treasurer of the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Lebanon.

Three policemen stood nearby as another man, whom Sacco thought was a plainclothes policeman, pulled Sacco off the road. Two other men then joined him. When Sacco asked for identification, one of the robbers pulled out a gun and threatened to shoot him. The robbers took the mission station wagon, mission and personal money amounting to about \$800, and Sacco's jacket, glasses and passport while afternoon traffic passed by.

Eight mission vehicles have been stolen since 1976, only one of which has been recovered. After the incident, Sacco got a taxi to a nearby army post, where he got a ride home across the green line to East Beirut.

Sacco, from Ottawa, Ill., and Gilroy, Calif., lived in West Beirut until recently. Only Mabel Summers and Jim and Leola Ragland live on the Muslim-controlled side of the city now.

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Hawaii Baptists
Elect Garland

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WAIHAWA, Hawaii (BP)--The Hawaii Baptist Convention adopted a budget of \$1,398,815. The convention will continue to send 27 percent of its receipts from the churches of Hawaii to the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program.

The Hawaii Convention increased its Cooperative Program dollar giving in 1983-1984 by 32 percent. A total of 453 registered for the convention including 291 messengers. W.C. Garland, former pastor from Florence, Ala., and presently pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church of Pearl Harbor, was elected convention president.

The convention adopted a long range planning committee's report projecting a tripling of the resident membership to 25,000 by the turn of the century. The past year's baptism record increased by 192, up 38 percent. The convention's leadership responded to Executive Director Dan Kong's testimony supporting the 15-year program of Planned Growth In Giving by also sharing their personal stewardship testimonies.

A new master plan was also adopted for the state's conference center on Oahu.

The 1984 convention will be Nov. 7-9 at First Southern Baptist Church of Pearl Harbor.

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Utah-Idaho Messengers
Pledge Increased Giving

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LAYTON, Utah (BP)--The Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention celebrated its 20th anniversary during sessions held at the Layton Hills Baptist Church, Nov. 13-14.

William Warren, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho, was elected to his second term as president. Huron Polnac, pastor of Cherry Lane Baptist Church, Meridian, Idaho, was elected second vice-president. Carol Browning, Sandy, Utah, was reelected recording secretary.

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A record budget of \$1,432,000 was adopted in spite of the fact the convention is presently 15 percent short of meeting the 1984 budget. In answer to the present shortage, many messengers stood to express a commitment to improve stewardship and a determination to increase mission support through the Cooperative Program. The budget presentation was preceded by a public commitment to the Planned Growth In Giving program which calls for an annual percentage increase in giving for the next 15 years.

Contributions from local churches in Utah and Idaho are expected to make up \$483,942 of the budget. Of that amount, 21 percent, the same as last year, will be sent on to the worldwide mission and educational programs of the Southern Baptist Convention through the national Cooperative Program.

In other action, messengers passed resolutions calling for increased prayer support for its leadership and stronger evangelistic efforts geared toward the predominantly Mormon population. Incomplete reporting indicated over 80 former Mormons baptized into the fellowship of Southern Baptists churches during the 1983-84 church year.

The addition of the seven new churches gives the convention 86 churches.

The 1985 convention will be at Calvary Baptist Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Nov. 12-13.

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Center Cities Ministries
Planned For New Orleans

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

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NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Jimmie Knox, director of the Baptist Exposition Ministries during the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition, will become director of Center Cities Ministries Jan. 1.

The New Orleans program, a cooperative effort of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Greater New Orleans Baptist Association, is the first ministry of its kind in the Southern Baptist Convention, according to Wayne Taylor, associate in the LBC missions division.

Taylor said Knox's responsibilities will include crisis ministry, street ministry in the Vieux Carre, ministry to convention tourists, ministry to office workers and training for Baptist volunteers who will assist with these programs.

Don Mabry, director of the Louisiana Baptist missions division, said office space for the program is under consideration in several locations in downtown New Orleans.

During a recent evaluation session following the close of the Baptist Exposition Ministry program, Knox and his staff of summer missionaries reported that in 22 weeks on the street they distributed 155,000 tracts, including Scripture and Bibles; made 200,000 contacts and recorded 85 professions of faith.

Major emphases of the Center City Ministries program will be to:

- contact persons registered for conventions to offer crisis counseling services while they are in New Orleans;
- provide a continuing witness and counseling program to persons who work in offices and stores in downtown New Orleans and
- provide witnessing teams similar to the Baptist summer missionary performers such as bluegrass and gospel bands who entertain and witness to tourists in the French Quarter.

Baptists operated a multi-faceted ministry during the World's Fair which included programs at campgrounds where tourists parked their recreational vehicles and street witnessing throughout the French Quarter among guests, "street people" and shop operators.

This experience showed Baptists a continuing ministry in the central city is needed, Taylor said.

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Knox said, "Many people do not feel comfortable with a ministry to street people, shop owners, tourists and others" who are apart from regular church channels. A training program for Baptist volunteers to become part of a permanent witnessing and counseling team will be an important part of the program, he said.

Taylor, who directs special ministries with the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said, "We plan to develop a group of Baptists, for example, who work in a large downtown office building, to serve as Bible teachers and counselors for those in that building.

"A ministry is also planned for hotel/motel support employees where we will offer Bible study during lunch time or another convenient time. Crisis counseling for a tourist or conventioner who has experienced trauma while away from home will be another ministry."

Referral to a local Baptist church will be made for follow-up, especially for out-of-town guests, he said.

A summer missionary, whose French Quarter ministry made her aware evangelism is a "lifestyle" said, "I would stop to talk with people--street people, tourists or shop owners--and realized these actions were not thought ahead like church visitation night, instead it was letting the Spirit work in me as I walked down the street."

Knox said he plans to develop a broad base of participation among local Baptists who will find this type of ministry a challenge. During the second half of the fair more local Baptists were responding to the programs, he pointed out.

Central city ministries require a different approach, summer missionaries reported. Among some do's and don't's are:

--Do have spiritual consistency. One missionary said, "When I had my banjo around my neck I was spiritual to the shop owners or street people I had come to know. Later, during time off when I didn't have the banjo, they remarked I was the same person;"

--Do not give out money on request. Rather take the person to a restaurant and buy them food, and

--Do develop the ability to be accepting of others different from yourself.

"This will be a unique and innovative ministry and we plan to evaluate our program every three months and make necessary adjustments," Taylor said.

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Southeastern Students
Support Faculty, Administration

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WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Four hundred and sixty students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., have signed "A Statement of Appreciation" in support of the "faculty and administration of the seminary for their unwavering stand for academic freedom in Christ and their abiding respect for the priesthood of each believer."

Launched by the ethics committee of the student council, the signatures were collected over a period of two weeks and were presented by the faculty at their monthly meeting. Neal Jones, second-year student from Smithfield, N.C., and chairman of the committee, said the statement was drafted "to let the faculty and administration know that we cherish the seminary's tradition of standing strong for academic freedom...."

In addition to expressing support for the faculty and administration, the statement also expressed thanks to the seminary's trustees for "their support in the bringing of God-called, academically competent men and women to the faculty and administration."

Southeastern seminary, one of six seminaries operated by the Southern Baptist Convention, was founded in 1950, and has an enrollment of 1,246.

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