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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 7, 1986

86-16

Florida Group Responds
To 'Conservative' Campaign

By Greg Warner

DeLAND, Fla. (BP)--Vowing they will not be forced out of the Southern Baptist Convention, a group of Florida Baptists who are opposed to recent actions by "conservatives" in the state have met for the first time to map their own strategy.

Thirty-five people, many of them laypersons, gathered at First Baptist Church, DeLand, Feb. 4 and agreed to hold several rallies in the coming months to encourage and organize like-minded Baptists in Florida.

David Medley, pastor of Stetson Baptist Church, DeLand, organized the meeting, which he said was prompted by recent rallies headed by Jacksonville pastor Homer Lindsay Jr. Lindsay, of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, has sponsored several meetings in the state as part of what he said is a nation-wide effort to control the election of the SBC president and rid the denomination of "liberalism."

"In light of what has been happening, we felt the real conservatives in Florida needed a voice," said Medley, one of two pastors to address the two-hour meeting, which was spent primarily in open discussion about what action the group would take.

Craig Sherouse, pastor of First Baptist Church, Seminole, described similar efforts in other states. "We probably have been the most reticent of all Baptists in our major state conventions," he said. "We politely have sat by while Homer and his boys secretly met and later openly rallied, drawing the circle of cooperation smaller and tighter and effectively saying, 'We don't need your kind of Baptists.'"

Sherouse said opposing Lindsay's effort is difficult because "many of us wrongfully have felt outgunned." He added, "Whatever we do ought to be characterized by integrity, avoiding distortion, innuendo and inflammatory language."

In discussion, several participants said they felt excluded by other Baptists who take the "conservative" label for themselves while condemning all others as "liberals." "I'm a little weary of fundamentalists being called conservatives," said Bryan Robinson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Myers. "The conservatives are right here in this room. Baptists historically have insisted on freedom and missions, but neither of these concerns are being touched by those who are mislabeled (as conservatives)."

Others criticized reports that some Florida pastors are "handpicking" messengers to the 1986 SBC meeting who will vote for a certain candidate for president.

Robert Mulkey, pastor of First Baptist Church, DeLand, said a feared split in the denomination "is not going to be a simple matter. We need to find a way of communicating to say, 'Look what we are going to lose if we lose each other.'"

"I'm not leaving this convention, and nobody is going to drive me from it," vowed Medley. He said he felt hopeful after the 1985 SBC meeting at which a peace committee was established to try to ease tensions in the denomination but added the political activity in recent months "shattered that confidence."

While some participants suggested they meet with "conservative" leaders in the state to discuss differences, others favored a more direct, public response to what they called "divisive rhetoric" and "misinformation" about liberalism in Southern Baptist schools.

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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Dixon Free, pastor of First Baptist Church, Ormond Beach, distributed copies of a two-page article by Thomas E. Rush, pastor of Lake Park Baptist Church, Lake Park, Ga., which cited examples of alleged liberalism at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

The article appeared in the Dec. 19 issue of Baptist United News, a inerrancy newspaper published in North Carolina and edited by Robert Tenery, a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, and pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church, Morganton, N.C.

Several recent graduates of Southeastern refuted the charges. Jack Dean of DeLand, who was in classes with Rush, said the allegations were based on statements taken out of context. Others were "outright lies," he said.

Contacted after the meeting, Rush said he stood by the allegations. "There was not a single conservative (professor) at Southeastern," he added. "I don't know any of them who believe the substitutionary atonement of Christ."

Rush said Southeastern students who disagree with his assessment of the school have a different "presupposition" about the Bible. "I am an inerrantist," he said. "It's pretty difficult to be a conservative and not believe in inerrancy."

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Kaemmerling Resigns
As Advocate Editor

By Toby Druin

Baptist Press
2/7/86

DALLAS (BP)--Russell Kaemmerling, editor of the Southern Baptist Advocate since its founding in 1980, has resigned "for personal reasons."

Kaemmerling told the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, his resignation from the Dallas-based publication was effective Dec. 30, 1985.

Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church in Morganton, N.C., and editor of Baptist United News, has been named interim editor.

Although the Advocate carries "Southern Baptist" in its name, it is not a publication of the Southern Baptist Convention, nor of any SBC boards, agencies or commissions. The magazine has been a voice of the inerrantist movement in the denomination.

It has been published infrequently. The last issue was published in October 1985, but it was dated "Summer 1985" and reported on the June meeting of the SBC in Dallas.

Kaemmerling told the Standard his resignation was "a personal change of direction" and that he is pursuing several avenues, including a media company, producing newsletters and evangelistic brochures, maintaining a mailing list and direct-mail fundraising.

Kaemmerling said he remains "100 percent in sympathy" with the inerrantist movement and the individuals involved in it. He said he will still write for the magazine if called upon to do so and if he has the time. His wife, Charlene, also has been a regular contributor to the Advocate, but Kaemmerling said he does not know if the paper will continue a woman's page.

Tenery, pastor of Burkemont church for 14 years, said he has agreed to be interim editor until June. He said he intends to carry a statement from Kaemmerling on the resignation in the next issue, but did not indicate when the next issue will be released.

Tenery, a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, has been the editor of Baptists United News, a voice of the inerrancy movement in North Carolina, since its inception.

The Standard sought to interview the chairman of the Advocate board of directors about the resignation and the future of the magazine, but neither Kaemmerling nor Tenery would identify any of the directors who have not heretofore been identified by the magazine. Both, however, said the directors will be revealed in the next issue.

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D. August Boto, a Dallas attorney who was listed as an interim director when the magazine was chartered in 1980, said in a telephone conversation he was aware of Kaemmerling's resignation and that it was for "personal reasons" but declined to comment further or to divulge any further information about the directors.

Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies and a leader of the inerrantist movement, is Kaemmerling's brother-in-law. He told the Standard he assumed the delay in announcing the resignation was to allow the Advocate to announce it first.

Patterson said he understood that "Russell, himself, for personal and family reasons, felt it best he get out, and I certainly concurred."

Patterson, who has been at the forefront of the effort to turn the SBC to a more conservative direction, said he is not now, and never has been a director of the Advocate, although he is a member of the advisory board.

Kaemmerling is a native of Beaumont, Texas, and a graduate of Lamar University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He was pastor of First Baptist Church of West Columbia, S.C., for three years before becoming editor of the Southern Baptist Journal, a publication of the inerrancy-oriented Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship in 1979.

He resigned as editor of the Journal after only a few months following a disagreement over the direction of the publication. The charter for the Advocate was obtained soon thereafter.

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Sunday School Board
Expands Music Ministry

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
2/7/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The creation of a new music publishing department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board will expand the denomination's music ministry and focus more of the agency's resources on local church music program support, three board leaders reported.

Trustees of the education and publication board voted Feb. 5 to establish the department to produce music products for sale through trade outlets to churches and individuals. Currently, the board produces non-curriculum Christian music products through joint efforts of the Broadman division and the church music department.

Jimmy D. Edwards, vice-president for publishing and distribution, said the new organization, which has not yet been named, will begin work in October 1986 "to publish a wide variety of musical products for church, school and home use."

"Previously the board has made little attempt to reach the leisure or home market, but we plan to move into that arena with vocal and instrumental tapes and records," he said.

Wesley L. Forbis, director of the church music department, said the move is "one which many persons have hoped for, long worked for and vigorously applaud. The church music department soon will be able to devote its entire energies to program and curriculum responsibilities, including periodicals, periodical music and recordings, Convention Press music books and any future editions of Baptist Hymnal."

"This is the realization of a dream a lot of people have had for many years," said Gary W. Cook, director of the church and staff support division. "Persons who are involved directly in the music publishing function realized we have had a situation which did not meet the needs of our constituents."

All products currently produced under the Broadman Press, Van Ness Press and McKinney Press imprints will be published by the new department. Printed music items are expected to include collections, cantatas and anthems, as well as organ, handbell and other instrumental music. Additional products expected to be produced include vocal and instrumental audio and video items, musical instruments and related music items.

The two components will be mutually supportive rather than competitive, Forbis said.

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The new music publishing department will publish products to support the church music program, he said, adding that he expects reciprocal use of copyrights between the departments.

Since the formation of the church music department in 1941, persons responsible for church music programs and curriculum publishing also have tried to meet the needs of churches and individuals for general Christian music products, Forbis continued.

In 1971, trade music publishing was assigned to the Broadman division, while music editing responsibilities continued to be carried out by church music department personnel.

While transition of responsibilities to the new department is expected to require several months beyond the new department's October start-up, Cook said, "Over a period of time, we will see a strengthening of the church music department's focus on the church music program."

A director for the new publishing department is expected to be elected at the August trustee meeting.

Edwards, who will oversee the operation of the new department, said extensive study, including research with ministers of music, state music secretaries and music store owners, supported the board's perception of a large demand for Christian, evangelical music for Southern Baptist churches.

Composers and hymn writers will continue to work with the board's church music department regarding non-curriculum music until the new department assumes responsibility in October, he added.

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Tax Reform Bill Would Tax
Some Exempt Group Earnings

By Stan Hasteley

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2/7/86

WASHINGTON (BP)--A virtually unnoticed provision in the House-passed Tax Reform Act would subject tax-exempt groups--including churches and church-supported institutions--to corporate income taxes on dividends earned if they own as little as five percent of the stock in any corporation.

According to Gary Nash, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, the provision most likely would adversely affect private colleges, universities and hospitals. But, he warned, potentially all churches and church institutions and agencies might be losers if the provision were to become law.

As contained in H.R. 3838--the bill passed late last year by the House of Representatives and now the subject of hearings in the Senate--the provision would likely inhibit large gifts of stock to church-related and other nonprofit institutions. It would also hurt institutional endowment funds in those cases where investments in a single corporation exceed the five percent threshold.

Nash said that while most churches and church agencies--including the Annuity Board--would not be affected by the provision for now, final passage of a tax bill containing it would set a "dangerous precedent." He likened its passage to the proverbial "camel's nose getting into the tent."

That view was supported by tax expert Tom Troyer, of the Washington law firm of Caplin and Drysdale, who told Baptist Press that staff members on Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation told him their eventual goal is full taxation of dividend earnings on all groups, profit and nonprofit alike. The committee also seeks eventually to eliminate the corporate income tax altogether, Troyer said.

Asked for examples of institutions that would feel the impact of the H.R. 3838 provision as passed by the House, he said Duke University and the Eli Lilly Foundation would suffer. The Lilly Foundation provides large gifts to many church-related institutions. He explained that these and other institutions owning five percent of a corporation would be taxed at the full corporate rate-- up to 36 percent--on 10 percent of their dividend earnings, the same formula used to tax the earnings of profit-making bodies. *

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Troyer said the section of the bill imposing the tax was "noticed by practically nobody" because it is contained in the section dealing with corporate taxes. A separate section already widely noted by the religious community would strip denominational pension organizations of their tax-exempt status.

Nash said the Annuity Board would not be affected by the proposed tax on dividend earnings because it maintains a policy of not investing as heavily as five percent in any single corporation.

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Reagan Calls God's Joy
'Anchor That Roots Us'

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
2/7/86

WASHINGTON (BP)--Recalling the sadness experienced by the nation following the recent space shuttle explosion, President Reagan told the annual National Prayer Breakfast that despite the sadness "there was something good about the way we wept together as we said good-bye and suddenly re-remembered that we are a family."

The president encouraged a capacity crowd of 3,200 invited guests "to remember the words of the Bible, 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'"

Reagan pointed to Mother Theresa as an example of a person impelled by joy.

"She's a great example of the truth of a great paradox," he said, "that mankind can find freedom only in surrender, joy only in submission, wealth only in what we give away and safety only in a promise--God's promise of life everlasting."

He told those present that in spite of their differences, they have much in common.

"We share an anchor that roots us in the heavy seas and that anchor is the joy that God gave us," the president said. "Let our thoughts today be of how man harnesses his sadness and turns it into triumphant work." He added his wish "that in our individual work this year, we will fight on for what's right and good and resist the badness that is in us and that we'll do it with joy, because God gave that as a gift to be used."

Before Reagan began his 12-minute talk, the crowd stood and sang "Happy Birthday" in honor of the president's 75th birthday which happened to fall on the same day as the breakfast.

Other public figures led prayers, gave short talks and read Scriptures during the event. U.S. Sen. Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., presided over the annual event during which U.S. Sen. John Stennis, D-Miss., gave the message. Other participants included Vice-President George Bush, evangelist Billy Graham and U.S. Rep. Wes Watkins, D-Okla.

Mary Beth Kisse, a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, was the program's featured soloist.

The National Prayer Breakfast originated in 1953 when President Eisenhower, who at the invitation of the late U.S. Sen. Frank Carlson of Kansas, attended the Senate prayer group and suggested an annual gathering. It has grown over the years to include the sitting administration, members of Congress, the Supreme Court, top military brass and the foreign diplomatic corps. A sitting president has never missed one of the breakfasts.

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