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November 7, 1986

86-165

Presidents 'Repudiate'
Claims Of Capitulation

By Dan Martin

N-100

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—"We repudiate all 'victory' claims and 'capitulation' allegations as completely foreign to the spirit and intent of our initiative," the presidents of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries said in a statement issued to Baptist Press this week.

Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., and spokesman for the presidents, said the presidents made their statement in response to "apparent misinterpretations and distortions of the intent" of the Glorieta Statement issued in late October and aimed at bringing reconciliation to the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination.

The presidents, in addition, urged that the effort at reconciliation "move forward on both theological and political fronts," and pledged their support for "all good faith efforts to achieve fairness and balance in the election of our convention leadership, in appointments to convention committees and in nominations of trustees, board members and commissioners."

The Glorieta Statement, made jointly by the six presidents during a prayer retreat of executives of SBC agencies and the SBC Peace Committee, Oct. 20-22, announced a plan aimed at bringing an end to the seven-year theological/political dispute in the SBC.

The seven-point theological commitment affirms and promises to enforce seminary confessional statements; promises to "foster" balanced teaching; pledges "respect for the convictions of all Southern Baptists;" commits the presidents to pick teachers and speakers from across the SBC theological spectrum; promises to lead seminary communities in spiritual dimensions; pledges to support evangelism and missions while emphasizing Baptist doctrine and heritage and announces three national conferences on biblical inerrancy.

It also affirms belief in the supernatural origin and history of Christianity and biblical accounts of miracles; belief in full inspiration of the Scripture, including a statement the "66 books of the Bible are not errant in any area of reality;" and belief that while the seminaries are "fulfilling the purposes assigned to them," they "are not perfect" and there are "legitimate concerns regarding them which we are addressing."

In the November statement, Ferguson said the seminary presidents "are encouraged by the positive response to our Glorieta Statement.... We are glad our initiative has produced new hope for reconciliation and peace among Southern Baptists.

"We are eager to move ahead with the peace process in every way possible," the statement said. "There are two things we will do to undergird this desire.

"First, we will seek to correct apparent misinterpretations and distortions of the intent of our Glorieta Statement, reflected especially in some of the initial reports in the secular press. We repudiate all 'victory' claims and 'capitulation' allegations as completely foreign to the spirit and intent of our initiative. Our purpose is not 'victory' or 'defeat' for anyone, but a new level of mutual respect and cooperative endeavor for all.

"Second, we will encourage and support good faith efforts to make progress in the political aspects of the controversy which has plagued us.

"Many Southern Baptists have shared with us their frustration about the 'tug of war' going on in our midst. They say, 'You are dealing with the theological concerns; but what can be done about the political struggle?'

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"Our response is, 'We have committed ourselves to fairness and balance in our classrooms. We also will support all good faith efforts to achieve fairness and balance in the election of our convention leadership, in appointments to convention committees and in nominations of trustees, board members and commissioners.'"

The statement adds: "The peace process among Southern Baptists must move forward on both theological and political fronts. Bold initiatives by those who have the position and power to resolve the political conflict are needed if the progress made at Glorieta is to have a lasting impact for good.

"We are moving ahead in keeping faith with our 'Declaration of Commitments' made at Glorieta. We also are committed to work for peace in other aspects of our current conflict."

The statement urges Southern Baptists to join them by "praying for the Peace Committee, especially during its next meeting, Dec. 1-2," and by "encouraging and supporting those who must take the initiative in resolving the political struggle."

The statement was agreed to by the six presidents: Ferguson; Roy Lee Honeycutt, Southern; Russell Dilday, Southwestern; Randall Lolley, Southeastern; Landrum Leavell, New Orleans; and Harold Graves, Golden Gate. Ferguson said William Crews, newly elected president of Golden Gate, was told of the statement, "but was not asked to put his name on it."

Three of the six seminary presidents also responded to a "formal moderate-side proposal" for denominational peace and reconciliation, issued by moderate-conservative leader James Slatton immediately after the Glorieta Statement was made public.

Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., was joined in his proposal by Peace Committee member Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and moderate-conservative candidate for SBC president for the past two years, and Norman Cavender, a layman from Claxton, Ga.

The proposal calls on SBC President Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., to appoint the sitting presidents of eligible state conventions and the sitting presidents of the Woman's Missionary Unions of those conventions as the 1987 Committee on Committees.

It also calls on fundamental-conservatives to "stand down on political organizing;" on the Southern Baptist Advocate to "cease publishing attacks on Southern Baptist institutions and their employees;" for the SBC Forum and Pastors' Conference to be united and non-political; for a "true and actual peace conference" between the opposing sides; and for a "joint committee of moderate-conservatives and fundamental-conservatives" to choose a candidate for SBC president in "1988 or sooner if Dr. Rogers chooses not to run again next year."

Southeastern Seminary President Lolley said he "shares the concerns and sees genuine hope for reconciliation in proposals such as those put forth by James Slatton, Winfred Moore and Norman Cavender."

Midwestern Seminary President Ferguson said he "commends" the initiative taken by Slatton, Cavender and Moore but has "reservations about the feasibility of some of their proposals. Nevertheless, they may be a starting point for good-faith deliberation by all those who are committed to further progress in the peace process."

Southern Seminary President Honeycutt said: "Reconciliation is a two-step process. We have taken one step, and it is up to others to take the second step and address the political aspects. We are dealing with the classrooms; it is time for someone to deal with the boardrooms. I do not think peace will come without both of them."

Honeycutt said the "specific proposals" of the moderate-conservatives "are certainly deserving of support. The specificity of them is good. If we could come together on that statement, we could make St. Louis (the site of the 1987 annual SBC) a celebration of reconciliation.

"These two proposals would take us at least two-thirds of the way toward reconciliation. My perception is that wherever I go, people want an end to this, an end which is amicable and which allows people to maintain their convictions.

"If we can do this (bring theological and political reconciliation), we will have done what no one else in American Christianity has ever been able to do: to come this near to fragmentation and yet remain together."

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Statement 'Declaration
Of Faith,' Dilday Says

By Mark Wingfield

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SWBTS*

Baptist Press
11/7/86

EL PASO, Texas (BP)—The Glorieta Statement by the six Southern Baptist Convention seminary presidents to the SBC Peace Committee was "not a capitulation," Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Russell H. Dilday told Texas alumni of the school.

Dilday spoke to about 250 alumni and friends of the seminary at a breakfast during the Baptist General Convention of Texas meeting in El Paso Nov. 5.

He described the Glorieta Statement as a declaration of faith made by the presidents of Southern Baptists' seminaries but said the statement has been misinterpreted by some secular media, leading some Baptists to view the statement as a victory for the fundamental-conservatives and others to see it as a defeat or "capitulation" of moderate-conservatives.

Dilday said the presidents "had no such intent" and added that rather than planning a "capitulation" to fundamental-conservatives, the presidents "recognized the historical moment in which we found ourselves."

The resulting statement was "a providential expression of our faith," Dilday said. "It was a statement of six individuals," he said, "not of their trustees or faculties."

The president recounted a prayer meeting the six presidents had together Sept. 10 in Kansas City, Mo., as they were preparing for a conference with representatives of the Peace Committee, and described the time as a "very remarkable spiritual encounter."

The presidents, in making the statement in Glorieta, had said it grew out of an hour-and-a-half prayer meeting.

To counter some criticism of the statement, Dilday said it was "never intended to be exhaustive" but addressed the specific concerns raised in the ongoing SBC controversy.

He said the presidents "struggled at some length over how to express their view on biblical authority." They finally decided to say in the statement that the Bible is "not errant in any area of reality. He noted, "We believe the Bible does not mislead us in any area of reality."

Dilday said he hopes the Glorieta Statement will prompt others involved in the controversy to take similar steps toward peace.

"It is time all Southern Baptists come together and look at these doctrines that have been of concern to us," Dilday said, explaining three national conferences scheduled by the seminaries' presidents for the next three years will address this problem.

The first conference on biblical inerrancy will be May 4-7 at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in Ridgecrest, N.C. The next two conferences will address biblical interpretation and biblical imperatives.

Dilday said the seminary presidents want to help Southern Baptists find the answers to three questions: "What does inerrancy mean? How do you interpret what the Bible says? How do you apply it?"

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Honeycutt Corrects
'False Perceptions'

N-00

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—The perception that the Southern Baptist seminaries have "capitulated," is inaccurate and misleading, the president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary says.

Roy Lee Honeycutt, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's oldest seminary, prepared an "Open Statement to Alumni and Friends of Southern Seminary," in response to "certain inaccurate and misleading public interpretations" of the Glorieta Statement issued in October by the six SBC seminary presidents.

His Open Statement is being read during alumni meetings at annual state convention sessions, going on in early November.

Honeycutt, in his statement, also calls on "those in appropriate positions of power" to adopt "equally specific proposals to address the political dimensions of the controversy. The fairness we seek for the classrooms should be sought by others for the boardrooms."

In the statement, Honeycutt writes: "At Glorieta, N.M., the six seminary presidents initiated a bold and daring step toward reconciliation within the Southern Baptist Convention. The proposal was unanimously supported by the seminary presidents and represents our best effort to be partners in the process of reconciliation.

"Unfortunately," he added, "certain inaccurate and misleading public interpretations are being made. Some suggest that 'capitulation' has occurred; that the seminary presidents have accepted the inerrantist theory of Scripture and are attempting to shift the seminaries toward fundamentalism. Such interpretations are creating false perceptions of Southern Seminary that need immediate correction.

"I remain committed to the fairness and openness of the Glorieta Statement, but I also intend to preserve the distinctive heritage of Southern Seminary."

In the statement, Honeycutt lists seven "specific commitments and reflections."

"First, the Glorieta document represents the guiding principles of the administration of the seminaries, but it is not intended as a new faith statement. Southern Seminary remains committed to the Abstract of Principles and to Article I on Scripture as the norm that continues to guide our teaching and serves as the legal contractual standard for seminary professors."

That statement says: "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience."

Honeycutt says the "clear and unqualified view of both the faculty and the president on the Bible continues to be the faculty's unanimously adopted 1984 Resolution of Gratitude and Commitment to Southern Baptists."

"We still confess without ambiguity, now as then: 'On this historic occasion, we, the faculty of Southern Seminary, recommit ourselves to Jesus Christ as Lord and to the centrality of the Bible for all matters of faith and doctrine. We believe, without reservation, in the inspiration and authority of the Bible and all that the Bible affirms about itself.'"

Honeycutt says the seminary continues "to affirm the trustworthy authority of the Bible within its purpose of speaking to the theological concerns of faith and the Christian life, commonly defined in our confessions as 'matters of faith and practice.'"

He adds the seminary remains faithful to "the great Baptist confessions," which "affirm the Bible 'has salvation for its end' and 'is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinions should be tried.'"

Honeycutt writes the seminary "will keep faith with the scholarly biblical tradition of Southern Seminary by continuing to interpret the divinely inspired Scripture—with reverence, accuracy and integrity—through the best of historical-critical methodology."

In the statement, Honeycutt says the section on Scripture in the Glorieta Statement "was an effort to affirm a broad base of agreement among all parties in the conflict of a high view of the inspiration and authority of the Bible. I recognize in retrospect that the wording of this consensus statement requires careful interpretation and elaboration if the views of the presidents, as conveyed in discussions with the Peace Committee, are to be understood."

In the Glorieta Statement, as one of the three philosophical statements, the presidents say: "We believe that the Bible is fully inspired; it is 'God-breathed' (I Tim. 3:16), utterly unique. No other book or collection of books can justify that claim. The 66 books of the Bible are not errant in any area of reality. We hold to their infallible power and binding authority."

Honeycutt lists "six principles" regarding the Glorieta Statement: "It is proposed in good faith; is proactive; recognizes diversity; calls on no one to abdicate his or her convictions; presupposes enlarging the circle to include all Southern Baptists; and states commitments that are already largely implemented at Southern Seminary.

"Reconciliation will be achieved not by reducing the circle of our fellowship to increasingly narrow dimensions, but by enlarging that circle to include all who stand within the current operative statements of faith among Southern Baptists," he says.

Honeycutt also says: "The seminary presidents have taken the first step toward reconciliation in offering specific proposals to address perceptions about the seminaries. We are now publicly calling on those in appropriate positions of power to take the next step by adopting equally specific proposals to address the political dimensions of the controversy. The fairness we seek for the classrooms should be sought by others for the boardrooms."

In concluding the open statement, Honeycutt asks for prayer "for the convention and all of us at the seminary," and says: "I ask for your understanding and your support while we seek to be dynamic partners in a process of reconciliation. We remain committed to the lordship of Jesus Christ and the seminary's heritage."

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Missouri Executive
Rheubin South Dies

By Bob Terry

N-Mo.
Baptist Press
11/7/86

ST. LOUIS (BP)—Rheubin L. South, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention, died Nov. 6 at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis following a battle with leukemia.

South, 64, was executive director for almost 12 years. Previously, he was pastor of Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Ark., for 23 years.

South distinguished himself in several areas of Southern Baptist life. In Arkansas, he was president of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, chairman of the state convention executive committee and trustee of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and Baptist Medical Center Systems in Little Rock.

For 14 years, South was a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He also was national president of the alumni association of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and was a trustee of the school at the time of his death. He was the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Association of State Convention Executive Directors.

Under South's leadership, Missouri Baptists nearly tripled their state convention budget, growing from \$5.75 million in 1975 to a \$15 million goal for 1987.

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He also led Missouri Baptists in a three-year partnership mission program with Baptists of Taiwan and a statewide evangelistic effort called Good News Missouri, which resulted in the highest annual number of baptisms in more than 20 years. Under his leadership, membership in Missouri Baptist churches grew from 555,711 to 614,072.

South had been a chaplain in the National Guard and retired with the rank of colonel. He also held several honors for his service as an Air Force bombardier during World War II.

A native of Oklahoma, South was educated in Portales, N.M. He graduated from Eastern New Mexico University and Southwestern Seminary.

South is survived by his wife, the former Vera Lois Roberts; three children, Gregory, a physician in Decatur, Ala.; Sharon, the wife of Mark Coppenger, pastor of First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark.; and Diedra, wife of Phillip Bittle of Morgan City, La.; seven grandchildren and his mother, Mrs. M.V. South of Portales, N.M.

Two memorial services are planned for South. First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo., where South was a member, will be the site of the first service Nov. 7. The following day, a second memorial service will be held at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock. Burial will be in North Little Rock.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to a student scholarship fund at Southwestern Seminary, which is being established in South's honor.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Missouri Baptist Convention communications office.

Cancer Strikes
Owen Cooper

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Baptist Press
11/7/86

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)—Owen Cooper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1972 to 1974, has been diagnosed as having cancer of the duodenum.

Doctors performed surgery in late October to bypass blockage of Cooper's duodenum, which is the beginning portion of the small intestine and is attached to the stomach. Doctors reported the cancer itself is inoperable.

Cooper, 78, was the last layman to serve as president of the SBC. He and his wife, Beth, are longtime members of First Baptist Church of Yazoo City, Miss.

He is in Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson.

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Southern Baptists Start
944 New Sunday Schools

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Baptist Press
11/7/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptists started 944 new Sunday schools during the 1985-86 church year ending Sept. 30, for an increase of 70 over the previous year.

In 1984-85, Southern Baptists started 874 new Sunday schools. While the 1985-86 total was an increase over the previous year, it fell short of the goal of 1,200 new Sunday schools.

Texas and Florida again topped the list of new starts with 395 and 81 respectively. Both state conventions increased the number of new Sunday school starts with Texas improving on a 1984-85 record of 311 and Florida increasing from 72.

Rounding out the top five are California with 61 new starts and Georgia and North Carolina each with 30 new Sunday schools. Southern Baptists in Ohio started 22 new Sunday schools.

Five conventions met their goals for new Sunday school starts for the year. Alaska had a goal of 10 and started 12 new Sunday schools. Hawaii more than doubled its goal of three with seven. Iowa topped its goal of four with six. Kansas/Nebraska met its goal of 10, and Puerto Rico passed its goal of five with six new starts.

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Alaska and Kansas/Nebraska met their new-start goals for the second year in a row. Last year, the states were among the four state conventions meeting goals for new starts.

Bold Mission Thrust goals for 1985-90 call for starting 8,000 new Sunday schools, including 2,000 ethnic Sunday schools.

The 1986-87 goal is 1,400 new starts.

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Gambling Elections
Yield Mixed News

By David Wilkinson

Baptist Press
11/7/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Even though the lottery industry was a big winner in the November elections, with five more states voting to establish state-operated lotteries, the gambling industry suffered several major setbacks that will provide encouragement for anti-gambling forces in the future.

Florida voters overwhelmingly turned down a proposal to allow casino gambling in that state. A well-financed campaign headed by businessman Jack Eckerd thwarted casino industry plans to make Florida the Atlantic City of the South. Florida voters defeated the casino proposal by an even wider margin than voters in Arkansas and Colorado did in 1984. The vote especially was bitter for the casino industry, since Florida voters on the same ballot approved a state-operated lottery.

Perhaps the most important long-run development will be the defeat of a lottery referendum in North Dakota. This marked the first time since New Hampshire legalized the nation's first state-operated lottery in 1964 that a lottery proposal had been defeated at the polls. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia had legalized lotteries before the November election.

Kansas was the state hit hardest with approval not only of a lottery but also of pari-mutuel gambling and liquor by the drink.

In addition to Florida and Kansas, lottery proposals succeeded in Idaho, Montana and South Dakota.

The victory in Florida is a major breakthrough for the lottery industry, which had been seeking a foothold in the South. The heavily populated state will become a major publicity factor in lottery industry efforts at legalizing their "games" in other Southern states.

The lottery loss especially will be bitter for Florida Baptists, since the point man for the lottery effort was Ralph Turlington, state commissioner of education and a Baptist. The Florida Baptist Convention led the opposition to the lottery proposal. Dan Stringer, executive director of the convention, made lottery opposition a major commitment. Pat Anderson, a bivocational pastor who teaches criminology at Florida Southern College, had been hired as a consultant to work with Stall-5, the anti-lottery campaign.

Early polls indicated a landslide lottery victory with 70 percent approval rates, but by October the approval rate was down to about 60 percent.

"If we had gotten an earlier start and reduced the margin by June to the 60 percent level, we could have won the election," Anderson said. "The approval level in the polls and the margin of loss is very similar to the California election. In both instances, a late start in organizing the opposition and educating the public contributed greatly to the losses.

"Of course, the fact that the proponents are able to run well-financed campaigns, funded by contributions which are tax-deductible business expenses, gives the lottery supporters a tremendous advantage," Anderson added.

The surprising defeat of the lottery in North Dakota is attributed in part to the active leadership of a popular former governor who opposed the lottery in the same way he had campaigned for office. Former Gov. Art Link led a four-day statewide blitz which involved Larry Braidfoot of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. The effort mobilized opposition and succeeded in attracting media attention to an issue which had been dormant.

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The triple loss in Kansas came after years of struggle with the liquor and racing industries and came at a time when the weak agricultural economy made the state susceptible to the claims of both industries.

"The year ahead will be the most difficult one yet for the anti-gambling forces, especially in dealing with the lottery issue. Lotteries are now legal in over half of the states. The lottery industry will renew its efforts with the enthusiasm that comes from victory and the publicity that goes with it," Braidfoot said.

"On the other hand, the myth has now been dispelled. Voters will turn down a lottery proposal if strong leadership within the state can organize the opposition in a timely manner.

"The time to prepare for next year's legislative session is now," Braidfoot insisted. "If citizens of a state wait until the legislature is holding hearings or scheduling votes or presenting signatures for a referendum, we are guilty of short-sighted planning and will contribute to our own defeat."

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Baptist Volunteer In Ethiopia
Counters Magazine's Allegations

N-FMB

Baptist Press
11/7/86

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)—A Southern Baptist volunteer from Florida has disputed generalizations of misuse of hunger relief funds printed in the October issue of Reader's Digest.

Ed Mason, who has administered Southern Baptist famine relief efforts in Ethiopia since January 1985, said he is distressed organizations from various countries "were painted with the same broad brush" in a Reader's Digest article titled, "Famine Aid: Were We Duped?"

Mason, of Tallahassee, is a former president of the Florida Baptist Convention and a former state public service commissioner. He also served volunteer stints in Ethiopia as business manager of the Southern Baptist mission in 1976-77 and 1982-83.

In an open letter to Southern Baptists who contributed to Ethiopian hunger relief, Mason wrote, "To say that you ... were tricked or misinformed as to how your contributions were being used is, to say the least, inaccurate and unjustified."

The Reader's Digest article was written by Rony Brauman of Doctors Without Borders, a French humanitarian group that once worked in Ethiopia. Money, food and equipment to aid starving people, Brauman claimed, were "hijacked" by officials of the Marxist-backed Ethiopian government to buttress a massive, politically motivated resettlement program.

No Southern Baptist relief workers or funds have been involved in resettlement, Mason noted. Southern Baptist mission efforts, in seeking to meet human spiritual and physical needs, avoid political disputes, he said.

Mason acknowledged, "I cannot say there has not been some mismanagement in some ... feeding programs in Ethiopia. Possibly there has been some skimming of the aid by government representatives and by some NGOs (non-government organizations)."

But to Southern Baptist donors, he wrote, "Please know that your dollars were spent for the purpose for which they were given." About \$4.7 million in hunger relief donations by Southern Baptists have been spent fighting Ethiopia's famine.

Five feeding stations with medical clinics in rugged canyon regions more than 100 miles north of Addis Ababa are operated by about 20 Southern Baptist volunteers and numerous Ethiopian co-workers, all supervised by three career missionary couples in the country.

As to other organizations involved in famine relief, Mason observed, "I know from a personal acquaintance with most of them they are dedicated and committed people with one goal—that of alleviating human suffering.

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"Literally hundreds of thousands of lives have been spared and unnumbered children have been returned to health through ... the food and supplies sent to Ethiopia," Mason wrote. Governments and various groups in numerous countries, along with millions of individual donors, "have made possible a mighty humanitarian effort, the likes of which probably have never before been seen anywhere in the world."

Southern Baptists are continuing to provide rations of grain, milk powder and cooking oil to about 100,000 rural subsistence farmers and their families, he noted.

"The war against famine is not yet won," Mason said. "Adults now have strength to work their farms," but even after major harvests this month and next, food for 10,000 to 15,000 people may be needed.

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Texans Re-elect Powell,
Reaffirm Mission Goal

By Ken Camp

N-Texas

Baptist Press
11/7/86

EL PASO, Texas (BP)—Texas Baptists re-elected Paul Powell as convention president, adopted a \$65.5 million Cooperative Program budget for 1987 and reaffirmed their commitment to the Mission Texas goal of starting 2,000 new congregations by 1990 at the 101st annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in El Paso, Nov. 4-5.

More than 2,300 messengers also adopted resolutions opposing abortion on demand, drug abuse and pornography; supporting missions efforts, particularly among Texas Hispanics; rejecting cuts in human services and legalization of gambling as means to balance the state budget; and offering prayer support to family farmers.

Powell, pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, was re-elected without opposition to a second one-year term as president of the convention.

B O Baker, pastor of Plymouth Park Baptist Church in Irving, nominated Powell, saying, "I believe Paul Powell is the man in God's campaign to provide the leadership to achieve the goals and challenges of Texas Baptists."

Convention messengers also elected Elias Benitez, pastor of Hispana Baptist Church in El Paso, as first vice president and Joe E. Briscoe, a layman from Devine, as second vice president.

In his presidential sermon, Powell called for Texas Baptists to "get off the battlefield" of controversy between moderate-conservatives and fundamental-conservatives that has plagued the Southern Baptist Convention and get "back into the harvest field" of missions.

"Brethren, our quibbling and politicking have gone far enough," Powell said. "It is time to beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks and unite under the banner of missions and evangelism to win our state and our nation and our world to the Savior."

In the convention sermon, Omar Pachecano, associate director of missions for El Paso Baptist Association, challenged Texas Baptists to recognize that because of God's goodness to them, they owe unchurched people the opportunity to hear the gospel message.

"Are we ready to see the world through the eyes of the unchurched? Are we prepared to consider that the unchurched have not rejected Christ but have rejected the way we have packaged him?" Pachecano asked. "Are we ready to give up our maintenance posture for missions?"

The \$65.5 million budget adopted by convention messengers consists of a \$60.5 million basic budget—36.5 percent of which will go to Southern Baptist Convention causes—and a \$5 million challenge budget. Although the basic budget is the same amount as in 1986, the total budget reflects a 4.1 percent increase over the year before.

In the closing sermon of the convention, Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, encouraged Texas Baptists to look with hope at a future focused on proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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"We Baptists in Texas need to leave behind our suspicion and mistrust of each other, renounce our family feuds and reaffirm the centrality of Jesus--re-enthroned Christ as the central point of reference in our convention," Dilday said. "If we will give up our criticism of each other and focus instead on Jesus, then like a mighty magnet he will draw the unravelling strands of our fellowship together in a unity built upon the only ultimate reality--Jesus Christ the Lord."

Next year's convention will be held Nov. 11-12 in Fort Worth.

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N-m

Iowa Southern Baptists
Hold Annual Meeting

By Trennis Henderson

Baptist Press
11/7/86

DAVENPORT, Iowa (BP)--Celebrating the theme, "Iowa ... A Place to Grow Churches," Iowa Baptist messengers recently gathered for the 15th annual meeting of the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship.

During the two-day meeting at Central Park Baptist Church in Davenport, messengers approved a 1987 budget goal of \$886,988 and also adopted long-range plans for 1987-1991.

"The budget and the long-range planning are the two highlights of the meeting," said Wyndell Jones, fellowship executive director. He said the long-range goals should put the statewide fellowship "on target for beginning new congregations and strengthening existing ones."

The 1987 budget goal includes a projected Cooperative Program income of \$213,138 and contributions of \$601,522 from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Other major budget income includes \$32,680 from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, \$17,500 from the Iowa State Missions Offering and \$10,000 from the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Long-range objectives include creating "a climate and a burning desire in our churches for an effective presentation of the gospel to every person in Iowa;" helping Iowa churches "establish and maintain stable and effective pastoral ministries;" helping "establish churches, missions and other units in strategic locations throughout the state;" and encouraging and assisting churches to "provide ministries which will meet the social needs of persons in Iowa."

Among the detailed goals of the long-range plans are increasing the number of baptisms by 10 percent each year for five years, training at least 100 persons per year to become effective witnesses and attaining a total of 100 churches or church-type missions by 1991 by starting six per year.

"The long-range planning goals involved an effort on the part of the fellowship to prepare for the future," noted Jones. "There's just a new vision. Hopefully, it's a turn in the road where we can begin to see some things happen."

Iowa Baptist messengers heard messages from James Smith, president of the SBC Brotherhood Commission; David Bunch, director of the Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps; and the fellowship's presidential address by Ed Gregory, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Cedar Rapids.

New fellowship officers are president, Terry Davis, pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Clinton; vice president, Ty Berry, pastor, First Baptist Church, Bettendorf; and secretary, Dorothy McNeil, First Southern Baptist Church, Fort Dodge.

Next year's annual meeting will be Oct. 16-17 at Immanuel Church in Cedar Rapids.

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