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March 25, 1987

87-44

Indiana Leaders Resign
In Funds Use Dispute

N-CO
(Ind.)

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--The executive director and the director of state missions of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana have resigned as the result of a dispute over the misuse of domestic hunger funds.

Executive Director-Treasurer R.V. Haygood and State Missions Division Director Glen W. Ray resigned March 20 during a special called meeting of the SCBI Executive Committee. Although the committee did not request the resignations, it did accept them -- effective immediately -- during the 12-hour marathon meeting.

The executive committee March 23 named Lew Reynolds, director of the church growth division and David Simpson, director of the communications division, as interim "co-advisors." B.J. Watts, Haygood's administrative assistant, was named interim treasurer.

Don Moore, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Evansville and chairman of the executive committee, said the "co-advisor" arrangement was agreed on "until we can get on track for a new executive director. Two men resigned and we had a big vacancy with no one in charge."

He added Reynolds will continue to supervise the church growth area and Simpson will take over the supervision of the missions division. "They will work together and I will meet with them on a weekly basis," Moore said.

Moore said the SCBI constitution is specific in its instructions about the selection of an executive director and said the executive committee will meet soon "to get a handle on this."

Moore said he regrets the resignations of Haygood and Ray and said he believes the "whole matter could have -- and should have -- been settled before it ever got to the executive committee. It could be handled quietly and easily in staff relationships. But because he (Haygood) chose to handle it in a different arena, it became public and so did some other issues," Moore added.

The chairman said the misuse of hunger funds led to Ray's resignation, but it was "an internal matter, a personnel matter" which led to Haygood's resignation.

During the March 20 called meeting, the executive committee reviewed "a large bulk of materials" on the controversy and called Ray and Haygood in separately for "questions and answers." Both men offered their resignations, Moore said, and the committee "accepted them, with modifications." Moore said the committee decided to accept the resignations "effective immediately" and to grant Ray and Haygood full salary and benefits through September 1987.

The resignations are the result of a three-month controversy over the diversion of \$8,850 in domestic hunger funds to supplement the Church Pastoral Aid budget.

According to Indiana records, missions director Ray requisitioned CPA checks for \$19,700 on Dec. 5, 1986, to pay the salary supplements of pastors receiving assistance. Of that amount, \$8,850 was covered by diverting funds from the designated hunger relief fund account.

Domestic hunger funds are designated gifts distributed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board as part of Southern Baptists' program of combatting hunger around the world. Church Pastoral Aid provides funds for small congregations to be able to have a full-time pastor in order to facilitate church development.

Haygood brought the diversion of funds to the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting Jan. 23. During that meeting Haygood presented and the committee adopted without opposition a strongly worded resolution which called the expenditure of hunger funds for pastoral assistance a "direct violation of the guidelines from the Home Mission Board," and put the committee "on record as strongly opposing this misuse of funds."

Moore said Haygood told the committee Ray had seen and was in agreement with the resolution. "I realized it was a hard statement and it would have a tendency to scar his (Ray's) ministry, but we accepted it because we were told he (Ray) had seen it. When we went to tell him about our action, I found out he had not seen the resolution."

Subsequently, Ray asked to speak at the March 2 meeting of the 33-member executive board. He was allowed to speak and told the board: "In retrospect, I probably should have requisitioned other available limited funding instead of domestic hunger funds"

Haygood disagreed with the Board's decision to hear Ray. He quoted from the SCBI constitution and from the employee policy guidelines which says staff members shall report to the executive director-treasurer and "not directly to the executive board or its committees."

"Protocol has been seriously violated. The staff of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana has always worked for the executive director, not the executive board. Unless it stays on that keel we will let the bottom fall out of what we have," Haygood told board members.

Following the March 2 meeting, the executive committee met and rescinded the strongly worded resolution, substituting one which only says the use of hunger funds was a "direct violation" of HMB guidelines and instructing Ray and Haygood to work together to transfer funds to the hunger fund, "making up the difference for the mistake which has been made."

Haygood's resignation says: "Due to recent events and because I feel I no longer have the full support of the executive board, I do not feel that I can lead this convention any farther. I do not wish to damage it with further strife. Therefore I am submitting my resignation."

Haygood told Baptist Press he resigned "simply because I was too tired of fighting the battle of polarization ... polarization between the conservatives and moderates. I was just too tired to wrestle with it. I had already considered leaving. I felt like the convention could solve its problems better without me on the scene than it could with me (present)."

Haygood would not amplify on the "conservatives and moderates" remark.

He also commented on a report of the controversy which took up three pages in the March 10 issue of the Indiana Baptist. "The reason I resigned is that I have built a good state convention and do not want it destroyed over something that should never have been in the paper."

He also claimed hunger funds misuse "is much larger" than the \$8,850. "They have been used for things other than hunger," he said, adding the executive committee "will be investigating the ramifications" of the charges.

Moore agreed with Haygood that hunger funds "have been used more than once" for purposes other than hunger alleviation, but disagreed with the contention the SBC controversy is involved.

"This has absolutely nothing to do with the SBC controversy," Moore said. "That is not to say people in our state office do not have feelings one way or another, but this has nothing to do with that."

Haygood, 57, came to Indiana in 1969 as state director of missions. He became associate executive director in 1973 and became executive director-treasurer Jan. 1, 1981. Before he moved to Indiana, he was associational director of missions in Little Rock, Ark.

He is a native of Arkansas. He attended Arkansas A & M College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark. He has been pastor of churches in Texas and Arkansas.

Ray, 51, came to Indiana from Ohio in 1983 to become state director of missions. Previously, he was director of associational missions of the Cincinnati Baptist Association. He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and Southwestern Seminary and has a doctor of ministries degree from Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Fla.

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(Information for this story was provided by David Simpson, editor of the Indiana Baptist, and Dar Martin, news editor of Baptist Press.)

Stanley Declines Spot
On Falwell's PTL Board

N-HMB
By Jim Newton

Baptist Press
3/25/87

ATLANTA (BP)—Former Southern Baptist Convention President Charles Stanley first accepted, but one day later declined, membership on the board of directors of the PTL Club in the wake of the resignation of Jim Bakker.

Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., and new chairman of the PTL board, had announced Stanley had agreed to serve on the board of directors along with five others.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, issued a statement to news media the next day saying he could not be a member of PTL's board.

Fred Powell, senior associate pastor of the midtown Atlanta church, acknowledged that Stanley had told Falwell in a telephone conversation he was willing to serve.

"However, after consulting with advisors at the First Baptist Church in Atlanta, it was determined that in the light of Dr. Stanley's previous and prolonged involvement in Southern Baptist Convention activities and the growth and demands of his present ministry, it was best not to do so," the statement said.

Bakker, an Assemblies of God minister who founded the television ministry and Heritage USA center near Charlotte, N.C., resigned after public disclosure that he had been blackmailed over a sexual encounter with a 21-year-old church secretary. Bakker claimed he was the victim of a hostile takeover and "conspiracy to betray me into a sexual encounter" by "treacherous former friends." Bakker's attorney, Roy Grutman of New York, charged that Assemblies of God evangelist Jimmy Swaggert was behind "the religious corporate takeover," but Swaggert denied the allegation.

The Sunday evening following massive media coverage of the controversy, Stanley preached a sermon to his Atlanta congregation, broadcast later in the evening on Pat Robertson's CBN network, entitled "When a Fellow Christian Stumbles."

Although Stanley did not mention Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker by name, he said that when "spiritual leaders fall, it is a warning signal to the nation" and a "call to self-examination" to other Christians.

He called for Christians to respond to the situation with gentleness, humility, and love, and for them to be caring, encouraging, accepting and forgiving.

Stanley charged that any Christian who condemns a brother or sister who has fallen "is not spiritual" and has failed to follow the commandment of Jesus (in Galatians 6:1-5) to "restore a brother in the spirit of gentleness."

Stanley pointed out when Jesus was asked about a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery, he told the religious leaders of his time that the person who is without sin should cast the first stone. Stanley brought to the pulpit a large rock to demonstrate his point, throwing it to the floor and saying: "A person could kill you with that."

Saying "a fellow believer has fallen," Stanley asked if any person present had not committed adultery "in his or her mind" by longing for, or desiring another.

Stanley added Christians have an opportunity to demonstrate to an unbelieving, criticizing, mocking, jeering world that they are going to love persons who fall no matter what.

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"If you've listened to the talk shows, and all the things that are going on, this unbelieving world is having itself one heck of a time criticizing the people of God, pointing fingers at the church," he said.

He added when a spiritual leader falls, it is a cause for self-deception among unbelievers who feel relieved of the pressure and guilt of their own sin. "The unbeliever thinks he has a right now to be more critical, more judgemental, more condemning."

Stanley said the situation should "throw us to our knees to cry out to God for intercession for this nation." He urged church members to use the opportunity to talk to friends at work about the temptations every person faces, and to warn against using this as an excuse to "live in sin."

In closing, Stanley prayed "for our friends who are suffering today" and offered "our love to them, and to all who are affected — the whole nation, the whole body of Christ."

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N-BJC

Court Refuses To Review
Fired Counselor's Appeal

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
3/25/87

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Supreme Court March 23 rejected an appeal by a man who claimed he was dismissed unfairly from his job as a counselor when he refused to stop offering treatment "by spiritual means."

Robert C. Spratt, who appealed his case to the nation's highest court, was employed as a mental health counselor by Kent County, Mich., to provide counseling and therapy for mentally ill inmates in the county's jail system. Among the counseling techniques Spratt used was treatment "by spiritual means" — an option that used a counselee's religious background and beliefs to address the individual's psychological problems.

When the county sheriff's department announced a policy prohibiting the use of that treatment even if requested by a counselee, Spratt refused to abide by the policy because it "contravened his professional judgment."

After being disciplined several times by his supervisors for insubordination, Spratt was fired by Kent County Sheriff Phillip J. Heffron.

In the dismissal letter, Heffron wrote that Spratt "continued to practice an improper mix of religion and psychological counseling" and did not have "a desire or willingness to follow the direction" given him. The sheriff also cited the department's corps of volunteer chaplains and the need to maintain "religious neutrality" in the jail.

Spratt filed a complaint with the U.S. District Court for Western Michigan, which ruled against him in November 1985. A year later, the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the district court's decision. (86-1125, Spratt v. County of Kent)

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Southeastern Graduate Receives
Recognition For Rural Ministry

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Baptist Press
3/25/87

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Judith P. Powell, Baptist pastor and 1983 graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, received the 1987 Warren-Poe Award for Rural Church Ministry during recent Founder's Day ceremonies at the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary.

Powell, a native of Charleston, S.C., has been pastor of Antioch Baptist Church near Enfield, N.C., since 1982. Major improvements in the church facilities and grounds made during Powell's first five years as pastor were noted in the presentation. Twenty-five new members also have been added to the seventy-two member church.

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In accepting the award, Powell expressed her appreciation for Southeastern Seminary's part in her development: "This seminary helped to love me into being. I was allowed to struggle at this school and was encouraged to follow God's direction for my life. I deeply appreciate Southeastern for what it has allowed me to become. I truly love Antioch church and the people I serve there."

Antioch member Herbert W. Smith expressed the church's feeling toward Powell by saying, "She is an outstanding friend, neighbor and leader. She has a head full of good ideas. She really loves us and we sure love her as our pastor."

The award was established in memory of C.C. Warren who served rural churches in North Carolina and was the first president of the board of trustees of Southeastern Seminary. The three-year cash award also honors William Poe who ministered in rural churches in Virginia and North Carolina for 35 years.

Charles T. Dorman, Southeastern's director of student field ministries, stated in presenting the award: "Presenting this award annually since 1985 is one of my happiest tasks. The Warren-Poe heritage is based on the understanding of the struggles pastors face while serving small congregations of limited means. It also reflects an understanding of how very important these small churches are to the kingdom of God."

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Reagan Proclaims May 7
National Day Of Prayer

N-BJK

Baptist Press
3/25/87

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Reagan has proclaimed May 7 as a National Day of Prayer.

Congress in 1952 adopted a resolution calling upon the nation's president to set aside and proclaim a National Day of Prayer each year.

In a written proclamation, Reagan urged U.S. citizens to gather together May 7 "in homes and places of worship to pray, each after his or her own manner, for unity of the hearts of all mankind."

The president wrote: "America has lived through many a cold, dark night, when the cupped hands of prayer were our only shield against the extinction of courage. Though that flame has flickered from time to time, it burns brightest when we are willing, as we ought to be now, to turn our faces and our hearts to God not only at moments of personal danger and civil strife, but in the full flower of the liberty, peace and abundance that he has showered upon us."

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