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May 21, 1987

87-79

Foreign Mission Board Trustees
'Regret' Lack of Women Nominees

By Craig Bird

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Trustees of the Foreign Mission Board voted May 20 to express "regret" no women have been slated for nomination for election to the board at the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention and to ask the SBC Executive Committee to "note this inequality in future years" and address it.

Mary Strauss, who completed her second and final term as a Foreign Mission Board trustee at the May meeting in Richmond, made the motion after reading the list of nine pastors and one full-time evangelist who will be nominated to the agency by the Southern Baptist Committee on Boards in June.

"I stand before you as a member of a vanishing species -- a woman serving on one of the Southern Baptist Convention's boards or agencies," Strauss told her fellow trustees. "The women of this denomination are beginning to feel disenfranchised, second-class and second-rate as they continue to be bypassed for positions of leadership."

Since the April 28 Baptist Press news release she based her comments on, another pastor has been nominated to the Foreign Mission Board. Two vacancies are yet to be filled. Ten women elected in earlier years remain on the 85-member board.

No count was taken on the motion which passed easily, but apparently three trustees voted "no" while some other trustees did not participate in the hand vote. No one spoke against the motion when discussion was called for.

T.C. Pinckney, chairman of the 1987 Committee on Boards, was contacted at his home in Alexandria, Va., after the vote. He said he had encouraged committee members to consider women and ethnic minorities and feels "they did a commendable job -- we have a number of women who will be nominated to other boards, it just happened the people for the Foreign Mission Board all happened to be men."

Pinckney's committee will suggest 142 new trustees and 104 renominations to messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis in June. Currently there are 892 people serving on the governing boards of 24 Southern Baptist entities. Annually about one-fourth of the trustee terms expire and one-half of those are people eligible for reappointment.

Nine women were included in the April committee report, including one each on the Executive Committee, the Sunday School Board, the Annuity Board, the Radio-Television Commission and, pending a by-law change, the Public Affairs Committee. The Historical Commission and the Christian Life Commission each had two women nominees listed.

"I think pastors will readily confess they won't win the world to Christ alone -- the laity will have to be involved too," Strauss said. "Yet the half of the laity in our convention represented by women has been disenfranchised and continues to be bypassed."

"There has never been a missionary sent out who was not mothered by a woman," she said. "It is lamentable when you look at what women have contributed to the mission effort," that from among 14.6 million Southern Baptists, "not one woman could be found capable of helping formulate mission policy."

Strauss noted she was not basing her argument on the doctrinal or theological issues which have become Southern Baptist battlefields ("though I obviously have my own feelings about that") and that she was not "advocating affirmative action in Southern Baptist by-laws."

Instead she pointed to Baptist women serving as governors, legislators, presidents of National organizations and heads of businesses as examples of "women who are articulate, well-educated and experienced who are not being used," on the Foreign Mission Board governing group.

Strauss, a homemaker from Hagerstown, Md., and president-elect of the American Medical Association Auxiliary, warned that such women, "if not utilized, will exercise their talents in other places and we (Southern Baptists and foreign missions) will be the losers."

After the meeting Strauss again stressed the issue was not doctrinal or theological. "There are women who are withholding support from the Home Mission Board because of its stand on ordained women -- that is doctrinal," she said. "But this isn't about a woman's theology but about the absence of women" from the list of nominations.

If the trend continues, "women who have great resources will not be willing to support" Southern Baptist causes, she said. "There is a low ebb of enthusiasm among women to support a convention that doesn't support us."

Pinckney said he contacted each of the other 53 members of the Committee on Boards at least twice in person or by phone. Early in the process, he reminded them of the Southern Baptist Convention's "reputation for having lily-white, all-male governing bodies" and urged them to "seek an appropriate number of women and ethnics."

However, he said he did not attempt, and doesn't think others attempted, to place a specific percentage of women or ethnics "on committee A or board B." Most of the trustee slots have geographic limitations, Pinckney pointed out, "and I guess in the states with Foreign Mission Board vacancies the best people for the job happened to be men."

Women were not excluded from earlier consideration and will not be excluded in choosing nominees for the two final slots at the Foreign Mission Board, Pinckney said.

Messengers to the convention will vote on the nominees and may present other nominees.

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

Texas To Nominate
Jackson As President

Baptist Press
5/21/87

ST. LOUIS (BP)--A Texas pastor, Charles Redmond of Sulphur Springs, says he will nominate Richard Jackson for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention when the SBC holds its annual meeting June 16-18.

Redmond told the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, in mid-May he decided to nominate Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church after reading in the Standard April 19 that Jackson had indicated he would serve if asked.

"For the past two years, perhaps three, I have prayed that God would raise up someone that would be a new person to guide us and lead us," Redmond said. "I really feel that Richard Jackson represents the mainstream of Southern Baptists and will give a balance of leadership that will represent the majority of us."

"I think God has raised Richard Jackson to lead us to a new plateau as Southern Baptists in reaching the world for Jesus Christ," he added.

Redmond said he has talked with Jackson about the nomination and said the Arizona pastor consented to the nomination and agreed to let it be known that Redmond would nominate him.

Jackson, who in April told Baptist Press he believes the office of the presidency of the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination should seek the man, not the man the office, said he is "not a candidate for anything," but will allow the nomination. "If anybody feels I can help the denomination and wants to nominate me, they have my permission," he said at the time. He added he would not give individuals permission, but "anyone" who wished to nominate him had the "freedom" to do it.

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Jackson told the Standard he was honored by Redmond's intention and had told the Sulphur Springs pastor the matter was "between him and the Lord."

"I am sticking to my original statement that any messenger to the convention has the freedom to nominate me if he or she wants to," Jackson told Baptist Press.

If nominated, Jackson likely will oppose incumbent president Adrian P. Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., who has said he will allow his nomination "if the brethren want me."

Redmond, who has been pastor of Sulphur Springs First Baptist Church for seven years, is pastor of the church where Jackson served from 1964-67, prior to accepting the pastorate of the Phoenix congregation.

Redmond said Jackson has come back to the church and the city for funerals and other occasions and has been invited to conduct two revivals during Redmond's pastorate. "He is a model example of a former pastor to a new pastor. Richard's integrity is beyond reproach."

In a related matter, Jackson told the Standard he has received some negative reaction to the announcement he would serve, if asked.

"It grieves me," he said, "that we have such a political atmosphere that when I make a statement for the Baptist way of doing things -- saying I am available -- that I am immediately perceived by some and painted as a candidate."

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Jackson Asks Replacement
For Pre-SBC 'Baptist Hours'

Baptist Press
5/21/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Richard Jackson has been replaced as the preacher of the Baptist Hour, aired on the ACTS television network, until after the Southern Baptist Convention, June 16-18, because of speculation he will be nominated for president of the SBC.

Jackson, who has been the Baptist Hour preacher since the program became part of the ACTS format in March of 1986, said he requested the change to avoid any criticism of ACTS or the Radio and Television Commission.

Two Baptist Hour programs are telecast by ACTS. Jackson preached for the evening program broadcast each Sunday at 9 p.m. central time; Peter James Flaming, pastor of First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., preached for the other broadcast, at noon Central time.

Jackson will be replaced by Joe Ford, co-pastor of the North Phoenix congregation.

Jackson told the Baptist Standard: "I am grieved that we have such a political atmosphere, but I have thought through that someone might be critical of ACTS or the Radio and Television Commission and have asked that I be removed after May 17 until after the convention."

He said he regretted having to leave the preaching assignment. "I would much rather be pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church -- or any local church -- than be SBC president. And, I would much rather preach the gospel to the world on the Baptist Hour than be president of anything."

Of Jackson's decision, RTVC and ACTS President Jimmy R. Allen said: "I am pleased that Richard Jackson has the kind of integrity that allows him to step aside as the speaker on the Baptist Hour while he is being discussed as a possible candidate for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The purpose of the Radio and Television Commission and the ACTS Network is to preach the gospel through the broadcast media. Our practice always has been not to allow the network to become a battleground for political struggles within the SBC."

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Wayland Trustees Name
Methodist As Interim CEO

PLAINVIEW, Texas (BP)—Glenn Barnett, a Methodist layman and retired vice president of Texas Tech University, has been named interim chief executive officer at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas.

Barnett will assume his duties June 30, when President David L. Jester's resignation becomes effective, announced J.B. Roberts, a Plainview businessman and chairman of the Wayland trustees' executive committee.

Jester submitted his resignation May 9 during a trustee meeting which had been called to assess the school's progress following a 20 percent reduction of its \$12.5 million budget in March. Wayland's financial woes have been linked to the petrochemical and agribusiness crises in the region, because much of the school's endowment is related to those industries.

Barnett is one of four consultants who have worked with Wayland since the March trustee meeting in which the budget was cut. He will commute to the Plainview campus from his home in Lubbock, Texas, Roberts said.

Barnett was executive vice president of Texas Tech for 13 years prior to his retirement in 1981.

In a related move, the executive committee named Tom Parrish as interim special assistant to the president, Roberts said. Parrish recently retired as vice president for development at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and before that was vice president for development at Wayland.

A search committee for Jester's permanent replacement should be named soon, Roberts said, noting groups beyond the board of trustees — such as faculty, staff, students and possibly former students — will be included. Trustees will not fill three recently vacated vice presidential positions until a president is elected, he added.

Lubbock attorney Kent Hance, who has been a spokesman for the trustees, said the presidential search probably will take six months to a year to complete. Hance said he will be "very surprised" if a president is elected before next January but added he is confident a leader will be chosen by the summer of 1988.

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BP CLARIFICATION: In story, "Registration Scheduled For 28,000 Messengers," (BP 87-78, May 20, 1987) please delete the following underlined phrase in paragraph 16.

The story, as sent, includes as paragraph 16: "He added churches which have been constituted since the end of the last fiscal year — which ended Sept. 30, 1986 — may not register, since the constitution specifies only those congregations contributing "during the last fiscal year" may have messengers."

By way of explanation, Lee Porter, registration secretary, said the constitution can be interpreted to include all of 1986, not just the first nine months.

Thanks, BP

Texas House Rejects
Lottery Referendum

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
5/21/87

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)—Gambling opponents won an important battle when the Texas House of Representatives rejected a proposed state lottery May 14, but a Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission spokesman warned the fight is not over.

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The lottery bill by Rep. Ron Wilson of Houston called for a constitutional amendment to do away with Texas' 142-year-old ban on lotteries. In addition to two-thirds approval in the House, the proposal needed Senate passage and voter approval in a statewide referendum. In the House, lottery proponents tallied only 72 of a needed 100 votes, while opponents registered 73 votes to kill the measure.

"We were enormously pleased with the vote outcome," said Phil Stickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission. He said a motion to reconsider is possible in the regular session, which is scheduled to end May 27, but not likely. The motion would have to be initiated by a legislator who originally voted against the proposal. A simple majority vote could then approve reconsideration of the lottery, but the bill would still need a two-thirds majority on the final vote.

"The likelihood of lottery supporters turning around the votes they need in this regular session is slim," said Strickland. "However, a lottery is very likely to come up for consideration if, indeed, there is a special session this summer."

Sources in Austin have said that a special session appears increasingly probable as Texas lawmakers struggle to adopt a balanced budget during a time of drastically decreased revenues from oil, gas and agribusiness. During the last special session, a state lottery bill passed in the Texas Senate, but that earlier proposal died in the House Committee on State Affairs.

In floor debate on the recent bill, proponents claimed it could have raised up to \$650 million during the next two-year budget period. Opponents pointed out lottery income in the first two years would not significantly impact the budget deficit, projected by state Comptroller Bob Bullock to be \$5.8 billion by August 1989.

"Texans since 1845 historically have rejected a lottery, both in good times and bad. They have rejected it in good times because it is bad public policy, and they have rejected it in bad times because there are better ways to fund state government. Texans today have maintained that tradition," said Rep. David Hudson of Tyler, a leading lottery opponent in the House.

"We are grateful to the members of the Texas House who sounded a strong note against state-operated gambling," said Gary McNeil, Christian Life Commission legislative assistant. "We are also deeply grateful to Gib Lewis who acted as a true speaker of the House, letting the will of the representatives prevail."

Lewis, who included the lottery as part of his plan to help resolve the state budget crunch, did not lobby members of the House to support it. Gov. Bill Clements, who has maintained an official public position of "neutrality" on the lottery, met privately with several Republican legislators at his capitol office just before the House debate to try to persuade them to vote for the measure.

Richard Land, special counsel to Clements on moral and church-state issues, said that he and the governor had talked "on several occasions" about the lottery, and their views were "privately dissimilar." He said Clements believed the proposal should be decided by referendum.

"I believe the lottery is important, but frankly, it hasn't been high on my list of priorities," said Land, who is on leave of absence from Criswell College in Dallas. He indicated priorities for Clements and himself were abortion regulation, maximum local control for public schools, minimum government regulation of private schools, concerns about sex education and state licensing of church-related ministries.

"We consider the lottery to be a priority," Strickland said. "The lottery is bad public policy, and I feel Texas Baptists share this concern about turning their state into a bookmaker and giving the state a vested interest in making as many gamblers and as many losers as it can. That is not responsible taxation, and that is not responsible government."

Vestal Clarifies
Immorality Statement

By Dan Martin

MIDLAND, Texas (BP)—Peace Committee member Daniel Vestal, who in February issued a stinging denouncement of political coalitions in the Southern Baptist Convention, has issued a statement clarifying his remarks.

Vestal, pastor of First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas, met as a Peace Committee member Feb. 18 with Baptist journalists. He told the writers political coalitions in the 14.6-million-member denomination are "inappropriate" and "immoral" and will "destroy" the convention.

Vestal sent "A Statement of Clarification," to Baptist Press, the denominational news service, in mid-May.

The three paragraph statement says:

"In February I made a statement to Baptist Press in which I said: 'There is a Pressler-Patterson coalition. There are some of us who feel that this kind of coalition has no place in Southern Baptist politic. I think all of us recognize that there is politic in the convention. If you vote, that is politic. There is a sharing of influence, and that is politic.

'Many of us believe that the emergence of this (Pressler-Patterson) coalition, which spawned another coalition (Sherman-Chafin-Slatton-Cavender) is not only inappropriate politic but is immoral.'

"It has come to my attention that this statement has caused some to feel grief and anguish. Although I believed then and believe now that the coalition politics described in my statement are wrong, it was not my intention then, nor my intention now, to imply that men who have engaged in these politics are immoral. I do not consider them as immoral men but love and value them as Christian brothers."

Vestal told Baptist Press the statement "really came from my heart. It is a sincere effort on my part to be reconciling and peacemaking. I am not doing it under any kind of external pressure, either from the Peace Committee or from any individual outside the Peace Committee.

"I had a lot of responses to my statement and in making a decision to issue the statement of clarification, I took into consideration all of the responses I had, positive and negative."

Vestal also indicated he "really would like for the statement to stand for itself. It expresses what I feel."

Three men who were named in the original news story, carried by Baptist Press Feb. 20, 1987, were contacted by Baptist Press for response.

Paul Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, who has been at the forefront of the effort to turn the convention to a more conservative stance since 1979, said:

"I was concerned that the original (Vestal) statement was unclear as to whether accusations were being made against individuals. I deeply appreciate the clarification which clears up and settles the matter."

Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, and who, along with Pressler, has led the conservative effort, said:

"I do not know that Dan intended that (to call coalition leaders immoral). My problem with his statement was that if he says that if you behaved immorally, then by any cannon of logic, he is saying you are immoral.

"I did take serious exception to the statement, and I voiced that concern to Dan Vestal himself. I appreciate very much his response, because I felt he needed to make one publicly.

"As far as I am concerned, the matter is ended."

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James Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., and a leader of moderate-conservatives since becoming the identifiable leader of the Sherman-Chafin-Slatton-Cavender coalition in 1985, told Baptist Press:

"I called Dan and kidded him about the statement. I told him that if he said something I did was immoral, then we ought to talk. I called him in the best of spirit and good humor about it. I was not either personally hurt or put off by his comment and, in fact, had a pleasant and delightful conversation with him.

"I, too, regret and think it is terribly unfortunate the convention has become politicized."

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Leaders Express Pleasure
With Inerrancy Conference

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press
5/21/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Russell Dilday, Paige Patterson and James Flammig agree the Southern Baptist Conference on Biblical Inerrancy was a positive experience for their embattled convention.

The national conference at Ridgecrest, N.C., May 4-7 was sponsored by the six Southern Baptist Convention Seminaries. Their stated intention was to bring reconciliation to the 14.6-million-member denomination that has been arguing about the authority of the Bible for eight years.

Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, was asked by the other presidents to take the lead in planning the conference. He said he has received mostly positive evaluations and personally is "very pleased" with the outcome.

Even though the conference was "a brand new venture with a lot of risks involved," Dilday said, "I firmly believe the approach we took was the right one."

The conference was structured around major addresses by five non-Southern Baptist evangelical scholars who are internationally recognized as inerrantists. Southern Baptist leaders from both sides of the controversy responded to each address. SBC seminary professors also led 15 small-group seminars on specific topics.

Dilday described the conference as a "wide-open, good-faith effort to examine the doctrine of inerrancy in an objective way."

Patterson, president of Criswell College in Dallas who has promoted the inerrancy doctrine, said he feels "essentially positive about the conference."

"I honor the seminary presidents for the idea of bringing together scholars from outside the convention," Patterson said. "The inerrancy position did receive a very clear hearing both in terms of the major papers and the responders."

Patterson said he believes the non-Southern Baptist speakers helped inerrancy get "a fairer hearing" than it would have received just from Southern Baptist speakers.

Flammig, pastor of First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., who has been identified with the moderate movement, said he also was pleased with the conference and thought the major sessions "represented a good balance."

"The conference educated about what inerrancy is and what it's trying to do," he said.

Dilday, Patterson and Flammig commented on three facets of the conference:

First, the conference "demonstrated that our views of biblical authority in our denomination are not that far apart," Dilday said. "When one considers all the qualifications and definitions of classical inerrancy, it is almost identical to the position Southern Baptists have proposed through the years using different terminology."

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Patterson, however, said some people heard the inerrancy position for the first time. "I am told that there were people there, largely falling in the three to eight years out of seminary category, who were walking around saying, 'Man, we've never heard this before.'"

Flamming agreed with Dilday that "theologically we are closer than we thought." But on the other hand, he said, "We are more heavily invested emotionally on both sides than I had anticipated." Both sides are "sincere people who feel very strongly about our positions."

Second, the conference proved that "differences in Southern Baptist life are not over whether we believe the Bible but over how we interpret it," Dilday said. Presentations at the conference showed "even absolute inerrantists have very divergent positions on interpreting Scripture," he added. "People with equally high views of the Bible do disagree on interpreting Scripture."

Patterson criticized Dilday for stating in a news conference at Ridgecrest that the presentations made there showed Southern Baptists' struggle is not theological. "I'm not sure we were at the same conference," he said.

At the news conference Dilday claimed "99.44 percent of Southern Baptists believe the Bible. We're together on the great basic theological principles. That is not what divides us."

In an interview after the conference, Dilday said, "I hope Baptists will discover after the discussion that we can put the issue of whether we believe the Bible behind us."

Flamming said he also noted the "diversity that exists among inerrantists."

"It established in my mind that there is no advantage in going beyond the biblically appointed boundary of inspiration," Flamming said. "Whatever word is used to establish the high nature of the Bible, we will wind up with diversity."

Third, the conference "showed we can disagree in a positive way on the intricate details of issues such as this without threatening the fellowship and unity of our Southern Baptist family," Dilday said.

Patterson agreed, noting, "A lot of our people learned you can talk to one another straightforward and even with great conviction and still love one another."

Patterson voiced an additional criticism of the conference, pointing out the inerrantist position was unfairly represented in the small-group seminars. "The only two (inerrantist) professors who were assigned sessions were assigned others to share the sessions with them," he said.

About 1,000 people representing 31 states attended the conference. A survey of 400 participants revealed that nearly half were pastors. Vocations represented included pastors, 47 percent; lay people, 28 percent; denominational employees, 12 percent; educators, 8 percent; and other church staff, 5 percent.

Of those surveyed, 58 percent said they planned to attend next year's Conference on Biblical Interpretation. Only 4 percent said they would not attend, leaving 38 percent undecided. The conference is scheduled for May 2-5, 1988, at Ridgecrest.

In addition to participants at this year's conference, 206 churches received satellite transmission of the major sessions through the Baptist Telecommunication Network.

Broadman Press will publish a book containing all addresses, responses and seminar papers delivered at the conference. The book is scheduled for release this June and will be sold, along with audio tapes, at Baptist Book Stores across the nation.

Next year's Southern Baptist Conference on Biblical Interpretation will be held May 2-5 at Ridgecrest.

'Ungodly Creed' Leads
To Alliance's 1st Loss

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE (BP)—A layman affiliated with the fundamental-conservative wing of the Southern Baptist Convention has become the first person to drop out of the moderate-conservative Southern Baptist Alliance.

Lee Roberts, a mortgage banker and member of Eastside Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., resigned following the alliance's first national convocation May 14-15 in Raleigh, N.C. He cited his disagreement with the organization's "ungodly creed" as his reason for resignation.

"My spirit was grieved to hear conservatives accused of wanting to adopt a creed, to hear the messengers adopt the statement, 'no creed but Christ,' and in the next few minutes listen as they approved a seven-point creed that all members must affirm," Roberts wrote in his letter of resignation mailed to alliance President Henry Crouch.

The seven-point document is the alliance's "covenant," approved when the 400 participants ratified the organization's constitution.

"It is because of this ungodly creed that has been forced upon me that I now resign my membership in the Southern Baptist Alliance," wrote Roberts, who was chairman of the Southern Baptist Committee on Boards in 1986.

"We have no creed," said Crouch, pastor of Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C. He described the covenant as a list of "historic Baptist principles."

"Basically, our statement of purpose says that we are dedicated to the preservation of historic Baptist principles," Crouch said. "We feel these principles have been part of Southern Baptist life for a long, long time. We are not credal; no one has to sign anything."

But Roberts said the document conflicted with his conscience: "One need not go any further than the first paragraph in the seven-point creed to know that one must choose between the creed of the Southern Baptist Alliance and the holy word of God. It is in paragraph No. 1 that your creed states that each individual has the right to interpret the Scriptures. But God has clearly instructed us in II Peter 1:20 to 'know first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.'"

Roberts also criticized the alliance for its potential for divisiveness. He said an alliance director told him the alliance "was the vehicle for a new denomination, that the vehicle was now in place for a new denomination and that if the conservatives win (which he expects them to do) that the alliance would become a new denomination."

"That's not our purpose," Crouch responded. "It has not been in our discussions at all. If other people read into this that this is what we will become, they have a crystal ball I don't have."

"We see ourselves as an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention and not outside the SBC. For most of us, all we've ever known is the SBC. There may be some people who have that (a new denomination) as a vision, but that's not and has not been what we are trying to do."

Roberts said he was disappointed to hear alliance participants discuss withholding contributions to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget and the convention's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions.

"If he heard it, he heard it in private conversations, and not from the platform," Crouch said. "We cannot govern what local churches do. We're not sponsoring or urging gifts away from the Cooperative Program and mission offerings."

Roberts also said his spirit was grieved:

— "At the mocking and jesting manner in which speakers referred to the Bible."

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— By the reading of a hypothetical letter from the Apostle Paul (actually written by the late civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.) that commended U.S. churches for supporting the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.

— At the "various sermons being read line-by-line by men and women alike."

— By a communion service being "observed among Southern Baptists outside the local church setting, which is contrary to our historical position."

— By a leader of that service, Nancy Sehested, associate pastor of Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., "ignore the body of my Christ (bread) and the blood of my Christ (wine) during the communion service but instead to encourage messengers to eat of the bread of hope and drink the wine of joy."

"I came to the convocation to learn where the Southern Baptist Alliance stands," Roberts wrote. "I found it to stand in direct opposition to the holy word of God, and I can no longer be a part."

Crouch responded: "I appreciate his integrity — if he doesn't believe in what the Southern Baptist Alliance stands for — in disassociating himself." He was certainly welcome at the convocation; we tried to be friendly with him. We could include him, but he could not accept us."