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June 5, 1958

Houston, Texas---An amendment to the Southern Baptist Convention's constitution was presented at the 1958 session of the Convention here. The amendment would permit seating of messengers from Baptist churches in Canada which support Southern Baptist work. The constitution limits the messenger representation to the United States and its territories. Under constitutional requirements, an amendment is voted on the year following the one in which it is offered---in this case, at the 1959 Convention.

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Houston, Texas---The Southern Baptist Convention adopted 23 of 38 recommendations for reorganization of its agency work, including the entire section covering the Foreign Mission Board. The two features of the work pertaining to the Foreign Mission Board are that it "should make definite plans for gradual transfer of responsibility for the work in Hawaii to the Hawaiian (Baptist) Convention" and that the "Board should continue, and expand, its efforts to establish churches for English-speaking people in major cities in countries served by the Foreign Mission Board." Recommended changes in Home Mission Board work were deferred a year for further study.

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Houston, Texas---Brooks Hays, member of Congress from Little Rock, Arkansas, was re-elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention at its 1958 session here.

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Houston, Texas---Southern Baptist Convention President Brooks Hays has named a nine-member committee on world peace to report back to the Convention in 1959. Representative Hays called for "massive reconciliation" to counteract the attitude of "massive retaliation."

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Houston, Texas---The Southern Baptist Convention in 1958 session here received the complete report of its Christian Life Commission, rejecting a motion to delete a section of the Commission's annual report discussing race relations.

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Houston, Texas---Southern Baptists voted here to hold their 1961 Convention in Saint Louis, Missouri. They had already voted to have their 1959 Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, and their 1960 Convention in Miami Beach, Florida. R. Paul Caudill, pastor of First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, was chosen to preach the annual Convention Sermon at the Louisville Convention.

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Texas Studies Church And State Separation

DALLAS--(BP)--The executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas voted to appoint a committee to study the biblical principles for separation of church and state.

The decision to have a committee in this field was prompted by questions concerning federal grants and loans to religious institutions.

Carl Bates, pastor, First Baptist Church, Amarillo, and chairman of the executive board was authorized to appoint the committee. Its members were not named immediately.

A major factor leading to appointment of the study committee on church-state separation was an offer to Texas Baptists of a hospital now being constructed in Texarkana, Tex.

Builders of the hospital want the Texas convention to assume operation and control of the hospital when it is completed. Federal funds, available through the Hill-Burton Act, have been granted to assist in construction.

The executive board, when the offer was made last year, deferred action. The offer however remained open.

Texas Baptists, like most groups in the Southern Baptist Convention, have declined to accept federal grants for their denominational institutions.

In another action, the Texas executive board approved a record state annual budget of \$11-1/2 million for 1959. The board's approval is subject to voting at the Texas convention's annual session in November.

It includes \$8-1/2 million anticipated in undesignated offerings and \$3 million anticipated in special offerings such as the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and the Annie Armstrong Offering for home missions.

The first \$8-1/2 million (undesignated portion) would be divided between state Baptist and Southern Baptist Convention activities. 37 per cent would be for Southern Baptist Convention work.

The executive board also approved a grant of \$10,000 for construction of a chapel at the state school for mentally-retarded children in Austin. Another \$10,000 grant will be made when the fund-raising drive for the chapel has reached a certain point.

The chapel, it was explained, is being built through gifts from various denominations, including Baptists. About 40 per cent of the children come from Baptist families.

Texas Baptist children's homes will be included in the state Cooperative Program budget effective with the budget year beginning October 1, 1959, according to a decision of the executive board.

The board set up two requirements which must be met for a proposed junior college in San Antonio to be accepted as a branch of Mary Hardin-Baylor College, Belton. Mary Hardin-Baylor is a Baptist school.

The board said the San Antonio school must have a \$1-1/2 million, 100-acre campus site and \$1-1/2 in endowment to become affiliated with Mary Hardin-Baylor.

Convention Treasurer R. A. Springer reported that, on a pro-rating of the annual budget for the year to date, gifts are running \$400,000 ahead of budget requirements. If giving continues at this pace through the budget year ending in September, he said, the 1957-58 budget would be oversubscribed by about \$660,000.

The executive board also paid tribute to the late Dr. J. Howard Williams, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and twice former executive secretary of Texas convention.

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Convention Arrangement Opens New Year's Day

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--The general arrangements committee for Baptists here, looking forward to the heavy demand for hotel and motel accommodations during next year's Southern Baptist Convention, has set Jan. 1 as the opening date for making requests for reservations.

W. R. Pettigrew, committee chairman, said reservations will be made in the order in which the requests are received in Louisville after Jan. 1.

No request for accommodations, he stressed, will be handled before the first of the year.

A Convention bureau will be set up by the Louisville Chamber of Commerce in January. All available hotel and motel rooms in Louisville and nearby towns have been assigned to the housing bureau for Convention purposes.

No block of rooms will be available. All requests must be made individually and by mail. Starting in the fall, the committee will list available space and rates, and detailed instructions for applying for reservations.

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Is The Hour Of Power Too Much?

DALLAS--(BP)--Are churches in Texas paying too much for their electricity?

The executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas has authorized employment of a rate consultant. The consultant will meet with a special committee of the executive board studying church utility rates.

The board said the rate consultant will also work with Texas power companies in an effort to establish "more equitable charges to churches for electric service."

The executive board's rate study committee is headed by William Crook, pastor, First Baptist Church, Nacogdoches.

Baptists, Methodists, Disciples, and other religious groups have expressed concern over the rates being charged their affiliated churches for electricity, the board learned.

Churches, it was said, have been paying the same rate as industry for their power. This includes a "demand" charge for having the power available even though it's not used.

Industry uses the power most every day all week long, it was explained, but churches use it only on Sunday, Wednesday night, and for other meetings, and do not "demand" as much power as industry, yet pay the same "demand" charge.

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Arizona To Observe Its 30th Birthday

PHOENIX, Ariz.--(BP)--Arizona Southern Baptists plan to celebrate their 30th anniversary at their annual state convention session in November.

The executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Arizona has voted to stage a pageant at the convention hall. J. Kelly Simmons, editor of the convention newspaper, Baptist Beacon, was asked to write the script and serve as chairman of pageant planning.

Miss Almarine Brown, state Woman's Missionary Union secretary, will direct the pageant.

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At the same board meeting, members voted to begin withholding, immediately, 10 per cent of Cooperative Program funds received from about 27 co-operating churches located in Utah, Nevada, and Idaho.

These churches---with a few others in the same states affiliated with the Southern Baptist General Convention of California---plan to form an independent state convention in September, 1959.

The 10 per cent withheld from contributions of these churches will be kept in a special fund. When the new convention is organized, this money will be returned to the new convention as a balance to have on hand for beginning its new existence.

The executive board named a special study committee to consider securing money to purchase key sites for new churches and missions in rapidly-growing Arizona residential areas.

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1st, Houston Dedicates
10-Story Church Plant

HOUSTON--(BP)--Another tall brag comes out of Texas and Baptists can proudly lay claim to it.

First Baptist Church here, site of the Pastors' Conference and other meetings during the recent Southern Baptist Convention, held dedication services on its new 10-story church and educational building in downtown Houston.

This 2,600-seat sanctuary, largest church auditorium in Houston, is now one of the tallest churches in the country.

It has a roof garden, covered by a wire canopy, complete with barbecue ovens and courts for volleyball, badminton, tennis, and other outdoor sports.

W. Boyd Hunt, former pastor of the church, now a teacher at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth; Forrest C. Feezor, Dallas, executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and K. Owen White, pastor of the church, were the dedication speakers.

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INFORMATION TO BAPTIST STATE EDITORS:

The Baptist Press will furnish, on request, the picture hereinafter described. It was taken in the lobby of the New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal. Pictured are racks specially made for various denominations and religious associations to place their periodicals. Name plates have been placed on the racks so that each denomination's literature can be easily found--for example Southern Baptist, Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist, Theosophical Society, National Baptist, Church of God in Christ, etc. The picture of the tract rack was taken from such an angle that you can see in the background the large train board announcing times of arriving and departing trains. If you want a print of this picture, please write us.--Baptist Press.

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