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July 19, 1991

91-109

Draper elected  
SSB president

By Linda Lawson

*N-SSB*

NASHVILLE (BP)--James T. Draper Jr. was elected without opposition July 18 to become the eighth president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The roll call vote, taken after a one hour and forty-five minute closed session, was 75 in favor, none opposed and one abstention.

Draper, 55, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, and 1982-84 president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will be installed Aug. 20 during the semi-annual meeting of trustees in Nashville. He will succeed Lloyd Elder who, after a lengthy dispute with trustees about his leadership at the board, reached agreement with trustees Jan. 17 to retire 30 days after election of a successor to lead the church programs and publishing agency.

Trustees voted early in the four-hour meeting to go into executive session for the dialogue with Draper and discussion of his salary and benefits package.

After a motion for an open session, Bob Tenery, a trustee from Mocksville, N.C., offered a substitute motion to go into closed session, the first executive session held by the SSB trustees in more than 10 years. That session concerned an employee personnel matter.

"I was on the board when Dr. Elder was elected (in 1983) and we did not discuss the salary package in that session," said Tenery. "We will be discussing some things that shouldn't be in the papers right now. Anytime we want to go out of executive session, we can."

Wayne DuBose, chairman of the presidential search committee, said his group "has no preference (about a closed or open session). "We want to follow the will of the trustees. Dr. Draper is willing to go either way."

Before the closed session, DuBose said his committee received nominations of 21 different people from about 70 Southern Baptists. The 10-member committee conducted "serious interviews" with eight nominees and held nine two-day meetings since being named Feb. 4.

"We did our work amid much prayer and fasting, some pressures and many rumors," said DuBose, pastor of Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport, La. "At times we differed and debated. There was never a time when disrespect was shown one for another. We have the strong conviction that God has led us to Dr. James T. Draper Jr."

Search committee member Kirk Humphreys, president of Century Investments, Inc., of Oklahoma City, said: "There is more to running the Sunday School Board than having your theology right. Management is leading people toward a common goal." He praised Draper as a man of courage, vision and a motivator.

Leon Bolton, a dentist from Memphis, Tenn., was the only trustee who abstained in the vote. While pledging cooperation and support for Draper, he said, in his opinion, convincing evidence about Draper's management skills was not presented.

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After the vote, Draper told trustees: "Carol Ann (his wife) and I have come to believe this is God's will for our lives. Today was the last piece of the puzzle. Thank you. We accept. We'll do our best to lead you in the way God would have us to."

Mrs. Draper added: "I know my God doesn't make a mistake. He is big enough to walk before us and in us and through us. I look forward to seeing what he's going to do."

In a news conference after the meeting, DuBose defended the executive session as an "honorable option. I hope our Southern Baptist people will recognize our right to private time with our president and not read anything negative into it."

Bill Anderson, chairman of trustees and pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Clearwater, Fla., said Draper will receive the same salary Elder currently earns, but "there will be minor differences" in retirement benefits. Elder's salary was reported in January to be \$135,800.

Anderson characterized Draper as a man of integrity, intensity and intelligence. "He is able to get along with people who don't agree."

Draper, who said he had been to SSB headquarters only once before, said his first interests in assuming the presidency of the board will be to get acquainted with employees and to understand and study the institution's organization.

"I will be slow to do a lot of reorganization," said Draper. "I don't make decisions slowly, but I sometimes gather facts slowly."

To fill the position of executive vice president being vacated by James D. Williams, recently elected president of the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Draper said he will seek a chief operating officer to "run the day-to-day operations" of the board.

In selecting employees or naming writers for board publications or speakers at board-sponsored events, Draper said a high view of Scripture would be a requirement.

However, he said he would not require people to describe themselves as inerrantists if they were comfortable with terms such as "God-breathed," perfect or infallible. "We (Southern Baptists) are people who believe the Bible."

As to whether he would enlist known moderates in the 12-year denominational controversy such as Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz., to write or speak for the board, Draper, a conservative, said: "I would have no problem with that. We (Draper and Jackson) disagree on certain things but not on Scripture."

As president, Draper said he will emphasize a "positive rather than a negative course. We will concentrate on producing quality materials. If we do that we'll be competitive. I'm not worried about competition."

Speaking to employees of the board during a chapel service the morning after his election, Draper characterized himself as an informal, open person.

"By nature I'm a redemptive person. I enjoy delegating. I believe in giving credit where credit is due. I don't mind saying I was wrong."

He said he will give attention to spiritual leadership, business leadership, organizational leadership and people leadership. The board, under his direction, will focus on the basics of reaching people, evangelism, starting and growing churches, making disciples and spreading God's Word around the world.

In a dinner meeting with trustees, Bailey Stone, pastor of First Baptist Church of Odessa, Texas, and a close friend of Draper's for more than 40 years, said: "I love Jimmy Draper. He will see a challenge. He will move with it. He will make things work."

Stone, as a 20-year-old youth evangelist, was preaching the night in 1950 when 14-year-old Draper publicly committed his life to the preaching ministry. Stone said he wanted to give a "word of encouragement as we are sailing stormy seas as Southern Baptists."

"I don't know anyone for whom I have greater respect than Jimmy Draper," Stone told Baptist Press. "He is fair. I predict he will be a bridge builder."

Draper, a Texas native, holds the bachelor of arts degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and the bachelor and master of divinity degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He holds honorary doctorates from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas; Dallas (Texas) Baptist University and Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C.

He and his wife are the parents of two sons and one daughter.

In addition to Dubose, Anderson and Humphreys, other members of the search committee included: Bobby Welch, vice chairman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla.; Mark Brooks, pastor of Elmdale Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark.; Frank Palmer, pastor of Forest Avenue Baptist Church in Redmond, Ore.; Iris White, businesswoman from Columbia, Md.; Bill Wilson, director of the convention ministries division of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Brentwood; Gene Mims, vice chairman of trustees and pastor of First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Tenn.; and SBC President Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.

Chapman did not attend the called meeting.

Three alternates elected to serve if any committee members could not serve included: Gene Swinson, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church of Augusta, Ga.; James Hume, pharmacist from Jeffersontown, Ky.; and Danny Strickland, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla.

In other business items in the called meeting, trustees voted to move the Aug. 18-20 semi-annual meeting from Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center to Nashville for Draper's installation, and to accept the resignation of Joyce Byrd, executive assistant to the president, as corporate secretary.

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Also contributing to this story were Herb Hollinger and Lonnie Wilkey.  
(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Annuity Board investments  
secure despite MBL trouble

Baptist Press  
7/19/91

*N. Texas  
Annuity Bd.*

DALLAS (BP)--The Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention does have limited exposure to a troubled New Jersey life insurance company but the "problem will have no effect whatsoever on the (board's) ability to meet every benefit check obligation."

Annuity Board officials said the company, Mutual Benefit Life Insurance of New Jersey, has voluntarily requested protection while it works to solve problems related to some of its investments. The Annuity Board has two guaranteed investment contracts with that company.

"The (board's) Fixed Fund does have limited exposure to MBL in two contracts with a total present value of \$21.3 million. This represents approximately 1.6 percent of the Fixed Fund...The Annuitant Fund, from which benefits are paid, has no investment in Mutual Benefit Life," said a board spokesman.

The New Jersey life insurance company has been in the news recently regarding losses in its mortgage and real estate investment portfolios. These losses have decreased the life insurer's capital position, which is the cushion to protect policyholders from normal business losses.

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Negative publicity led policyholders to withdraw an estimated \$1 billion they had invested with MBL, through early surrenders and withdrawals. To protect its capital position from being depleted, MBL voluntarily asked the State of New Jersey Insurance Department to put it into receivership to protect it from further policyholder withdrawals.

An investment advisor for the Annuity Board, Certus Financial Corporation, said MBL is not insolvent. Rather, it is a victim of a classic "run on the bank" scenario. The life insurer went to the state to avoid being forced to sell its assets at firesale costs and to give itself time to work through its problems equitably for all policyholders. The hope and expectation is that all of its obligations, including those of GIC interest and principal payments, will be met on a timely basis.

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CLC asks Congress  
to support pro-life rules

By Tom Strode

*N-CLC*

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WASHINGTON (BP)--The Christian Life Commission is making an effort to inform Southern Baptists as well as United States senators and representatives of its support of the pro-life, family-planning rules in danger of being overturned in Congress.

On July 18, a letter from Richard D. Land, executive director of the CLC, was mailed to all senators and representatives urging them to oppose attempts to set aside pro-life regulations in the federal family-planning program, known as Title 10.

A day later, the CLC took the unusual step of mailing a church bulletin insert encouraging Southern Baptists to contact Congress and the president to ask their support of the Title 10, pro-life rules. The bulletin insert was included in a special mailing of SALT, the CLC's new publication focusing on SBC interests in Washington.

The CLC is devoting such energy to the issue for two reasons, Land said:

"First, the principle involved -- that they're asking pro-life people to support pro-abortion counseling through the use of their tax money, which is unconscionable," he said.

"Second, the upholding of the Title 10 regulations (by the Supreme Court) was a significant victory for the pro-life movement. If Planned Parenthood and their pro-abortion fellow travelers are able to reverse this through a combination of a multimillion-dollar media campaign and the distortion of the issue as a 'free speech' issue, which it is not, then the pro-life coalition in Congress is seriously undermined, and it portends yet worse things in the very near future. It is serious."

"Whatever happens in the next few days, a massive outpouring of Southern Baptist support may be the only hope that our unborn babies have," Land added.

Since 1988, the Title 10 rules have prohibited clinics from doing abortion counseling, promotion and referrals as a part of their family-planning program. The regulations were not enforced in most states because of court battles. The Supreme Court, however, upheld the regulations in the May decision of the Rust v. Sullivan case.

Since the ruling, pro-choice members of Congress, as well as groups such as Planned Parenthood, have worked to convince the House of Representatives and Senate to overturn the regulations. On July 18, the Senate passed a bill by Sen. John Chafee, R.-R.I., removing the prohibition on abortion counseling. Earlier, the House included language in an appropriations measure negating the regulations by withholding money needed by the Department of Health and Human Services to enforce the rules.

In his letter, Land warned the senators and representatives, "No member of Congress may vote to overturn or in anyway change the Title X regulations and be regarded by the CLC as having a pro-life position.

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"No matter what the proponents of overturning the Title X regulations say, these votes are about abortion, and we will see to it that our constituency understands that this debate is about abortion," Land said.

A "large majority of Americans, including overwhelming percentages of Southern Baptists, have rejected the notion that abortion is a legitimate method of family planning," Land said in his letter.

The CLC's bulletin insert is headlined "Is abortion just another method of birth control?" The CLC is encouraging pastors to reproduce and distribute it to their congregations.

The SALT newsletter is devoted entirely to abortion funding, with a concentration on the Title 10 regulations.

The CLC's actions came during the same week a pro-life coalition announced it was beginning a nationwide advertising campaign in support of the regulations. The Abortion is Not Family Planning Coalition expects to spend about \$1 million in communicating its message that the Title 10 regulations prevent abortion from being treated as another form of birth control in federally funded clinics, a spokesman said.

In June, Planned Parenthood, which receives \$37 million annually through Title 10, announced it would spend \$3 to \$5 million on a national advertising effort. In Planned Parenthood's advertisements, the regulations are described as a "gag rule" on physicians and an attack on "free speech and medical ethics."

More than \$140 million is granted yearly to family-planning clinics through the Title 10 program.

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NOTICE: Aug. 31, 1991 will be the last day for use of the Jacquard computer in the Baptist Press office. After that date, Baptist Press will be available electronically only on the CompuServe system. We will, of course, continue to mail Baptist Press to all our subscribers. Contact David Haywood at the Baptist Sunday School Board for more information.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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