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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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September 18, 1991

91-141

SBC Exec Committee ends  
'participation' with BJC

By Bill Webb

CO-N

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee voted to terminate the convention's participation in the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, but did not restrict the SBC Christian Life Commission from relating to the Washington, based religious liberty organization.

The Executive Committee will ask messengers to the 1992 SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis, Ind., to approve the recommendation.

The Executive Committee, which met here Sept. 16-17, also took action on two other referrals related to the BJC. They will (1) study the what to do with nearly \$400,000 held by the Southern Baptist Foundation and sought by both the BJC and the CLC and (2) recommend to messengers to the 1992 annual meeting a policy that will allow the BJC an exhibit at the annual meeting as a "secondary exhibitor."

The recommendation to terminate the convention's relationship with the joint committee stems from the action of messengers to the 1991 SBC annual meeting to eliminate the BJC from the convention's 1991-92 budget.

The Executive Committee action came as members considered a motion referred to the Executive Committee by the 1991 Convention that the convention "totally dissolve itself from the Baptist Joint Committee...." The motion was introduced by Randy Robertson of Oklahoma.

Executive Committee President/Treasurer Harold Bennett told Executive Committee members the 52-year relationship between the convention and the Baptist Joint Committee began by action of the convention. "Elimination of the budget does not kill that relationship," he said.

The relationship must be severed in the same way it was initiated--by a vote of messengers, he said.

The recommendation leaves open the door for the Christian Life Commission to relate the BJC "in any manner it may deem appropriate." The CLC, which has long been responsible for moral concerns for the convention, also has been given responsibility for religious liberty issues as the convention has distanced itself from the BJC.

The Executive Committee declined to make an immediate decision on requests by the BJC and CLC for \$381,927 on deposit with the Southern Baptist Foundation, originally allocated as part of a capital needs budget item in the 1964 SBC budget. The BJC contends the Foundation has invested on its behalf. The CLC maintains the funds belong to the Public Affairs Committee, which has been merged by SBC action into the CLC.

The matter received almost no discussion in either the plenary sessions of the Executive Committee or in its Administrative Subcommittee.

The recommendation of the subcommittee to study the matter came because subcommittee members were concerned that they did not have all the information they needed to consider the matter, subcommittee chairman C. Ray Fuller of Illinois said.

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"Because we need that additional information and because we need legal counsel" the matter will be considered by a committee that includes the Executive Committee's officers, its Legal Assistance Committee, counsel for the Executive Committee and three subcommittee members, Larry Otis of Mississippi, William Parker of Florida and Danny Crow of Pennsylvania.

"We want to make sure we have everything in our minds and in our hearts so we can protect you as an Executive Committee," Fuller said.

The study committee will report its findings and make recommendation on the matter no later than the Feb. 17-19 meeting of the Executive Committee. However, Fuller said the committee's work could be brought before the Administrative Subcommittee in a special called meeting before that.

The Baptist Joint Committee will be allowed to place an exhibit at Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings on a "space available" basis if messengers approve a recommendation that "previous exhibitors which do not receive convention funds be placed on the secondary exhibitors list."

Other secondary exhibitors include Criswell College, Luther Rice Seminary and Mid-America Seminary.

The Executive Committee voted to convene a conference to analyze the "nature of the Cooperative Program as it is now being interpreted" and to develop "proposals for the future enhancement of the Cooperative Program."

That conference will include representatives of the Stewardship Commission, state convention executive directors, members of the SBC Inter-Agency Council, representatives of the Program and Budget Subcommittee's Budget Planning Workgroup, the executive staff of the Executive Committee and other selected leaders.

In discussion in the workgroup and subcommittee, Executive Committee members expressed concern about the use in state conventions of preferred items, budget items paid before Cooperative Program funds are divided through SBC/state ratios, as well as plans that allow Cooperative Program negative designation giving.

The Executive Committee received as information a report that the Program Workgroup of the Program and Budget Subcommittee will provide a three-person task force to consult with the Accreditation Task Force of the SBC Education Commission on the accreditation of the six Southern Baptist theological seminaries. The workgroup task force will report its findings to the Executive Committee in its Feb. 17-19 meeting.

The workgroup received a report from executives of the Association of Theological Schools on factors the organization uses to evaluate theological seminaries for accreditation.

Discussion centered on the relationship between ATS and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, which has lived under the threat of probation in the accrediting process.

The Executive Committee declined to approve "Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary" submitted by seminary trustees in an effort to bring those articles into uniformity with the documents of other SBC seminaries and agencies, particularly as they relate to the election and removal of seminary trustees.

Seminary trustees were asked to further alter the document to eliminate provisions for a trustee seat to become vacant if a trustee is absent from meetings for three years, leaves the state from which he was elected or is excluded from the church of which he is a member.

The Executive Committee also requested that the seminary trustees remove a prohibition that no professor of the seminary be eligible to be a trustee, and that the seminary trustees eliminate a provision that they be able to remove a fellow trustee by a two-thirds vote.

Executive Committee attorney James Guenther said the changes would ensure that the power to vacate or replace trustees would remain with the convention, which elects the Seminary trustees.

Seminary President Roy Honeycutt said the proposed changes were initiated by the seminary trustees and that he felt confident those trustees would respond positively to the Executive Committee's requests.

Nineteen denominational agencies, institutions, commissions and boards who receive Cooperative Program funds presented budget requests for 1992-93 for a total of \$150,875,971. Those requests, an increase of more than \$10 million over the 1991-91 budget were presented to the Program and Budget Subcommittee and received as information by the Executive Committee.

The Program and Budget Subcommittee will meet in January to consider the budget requests and submit proposals for consideration at the full Executive Committee meeting in February. The 1991-92 Cooperative Program basic operating budget for the Southern Baptist Convention approved by messengers to the SBC in Atlanta is \$140,710,282 and goes into effect Oct. 1.

In other action, the Executive Committee:

-- Adopted resolutions of appreciation for three retiring state convention leaders: James A. Langley, executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention and editor of the Capital Baptist; Ray P. Rust, executive secretary-treasurer of the General Board of South Carolina Baptist Convention; and Ernest B. Myers, executive director-treasurer of Nevada Baptist Convention.

-- Elected John E. Greever, pastor of Pleasant Heights Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind., and Vera L. Morley, member of First Baptist Church, Belle Plaine, Kan., to fill vacancies on the 1991-92 SBC Committee on Nominations.

-- Declined to act on nine SBC referrals, referred one of the order of foreign and home mission board reports at future annual meetings to the SBC Committee on Order of Business, agreed to begin developing a recycling program for future SBC annual meetings and agreed to include future dates of SBC annual meetings in the Book of Reports.

-- Approved an expense procedure for the search committee seeking a successor to retiring Executive Committee President/Treasurer Harold C. Bennett. The procedure will enable the committee to handle and account for its funds independently of the Executive Committee staff until after the search procedure is complete. The approach will enable the committee's work to remain confidential as it moves toward a potential successor.

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Art Toalston elected  
Baptist Press editor

By Bob Allen

CO-N

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

NASHVILLE (BP) -- Southern Baptist journalist Art Toalston Jr. has been named editor of Baptist Press.

He was elected to the position at the Southern Baptist Convention news agency by the SBC Executive Committee's Administrative Subcommittee Sept. 17. The action was reported to the full Executive Committee later that day.

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Herb Hollinger, vice president for Baptist Press, introduced Toalston, a staff writer at the SBC Foreign Mission Board since 1985, as "a highly respected journalist" and "a tremendous addition."

As editor, Toalston, who turns 41 Sept. 26, will be responsible for day-to-day operation of Baptist Press. That will include coordinating the work of the agency's five bureaus and other correspondents, editing and distributing Baptist Press releases and news writing. He will assume the position on or before Jan. 1, 1992.

The election brings the news agency's professional staff to full force for the first time in more than a year.

At a called meeting in July 1990, the Executive Committee, meeting in executive session, fired then Vice President Al Shackelford and News Editor Dan Martin. A third professional position, features editor, had been vacated a month earlier by Marv Knox, who resigned to become editor of Western Recorder, news journal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Subsequently, the committee separated the responsibilities for public relations and Baptist Press, creating a vice president position for each assignment. Mark Coppenger, who had been executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, was elected vice president for public relations effective Jan. 1, 1991. Hollinger, previously editor of the California Southern Baptist, news journal of the California Southern Baptist Convention, became vice president for Baptist Press March 1.

At the Foreign Mission Board, Toalston has covered missions news in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as news related to the administration of the Richmond, Va.-based board. He has also been responsible for coordination of news releases to secular news media and news media of other organizations.

He has been a professional journalist since 1973. Past positions include co-news director at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; religion editor of the Jackson (Miss.) Daily News; education and religion writer for the Middletown (Ohio) Journal; regional editor for the Fostoria, Ohio Review-Times; and staff writer for The Courier of Findlay, Ohio. He also taught journalism and speech in a public high school in Ohio.

He is a native of Alliance, Ohio. He is a graduate of Bowling Green State University in Ohio and attended Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife, the former Karen Kendrick of Montgomery, Ala., are parents of a daughter, Kaeli Hope, who was born June 19.

Toalston's election was recommended by Harold C. Bennett, president and secretary of the Executive Committee. Before the recommendation, Toalston was interviewed by Executive Committee officers on Aug. 23.

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Missionary surgeon in India  
gains needed medical license

By Marty Groll

FMB-N

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

BANGALORE, India (BP)--A Southern Baptist missionary surgeon who recently decided to quit practicing medicine so she could stay in India has been informed she will be allowed by the Indian government to operate again.

The missionary, Rebekah Naylor of Fort Worth, Texas, stopped performing surgery and related medical work at Bangalore Baptist Hospital early this year. The Indian council that approves foreign medical personnel had notified her Feb. 6 it would not grant her a license.

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But government officials telephoned Naylor and read her a letter dated Sept. 18 saying she had been granted a 2-year license to practice medicine in India. They were mailing the letter to her.

The decision came after a series of contacts that seem unlikely, at least on the surface. They involve a foreign missions volunteer, two Southern Baptist pastors in Kentucky, U.S. Sen. Wendell Ford of Kentucky, an aide to Ford from India and the Indian Embassy in Washington. The final contact, a phone call by the Indian ambassador in Washington to his nation's secretary of health in Delhi, completed a communication link Naylor had been unable to make inside India.

"It's hard to believe it really has happened," said Naylor, a missionary to India since 1973. "I am so grateful for the countless numbers of people who have been praying for this, and I think how it finally has happened has been so totally miraculous. I think it shows how wonderfully God works in ways that we never expect."

An aide in Ford's office confirmed Sept. 13 that Indian Embassy officials had promised the health ministry would license Naylor, after the Indian ambassador spoke with health ministry representatives in Delhi. The aide said Ford began working to get Naylor licensed after receiving a letter from David Nelson, Ford's pastor at First Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky.

The Indian aide Ford assigned to the case is in the senator's office on loan for only a short time. He contacted the Indian ambassador and worked for months on the certification bid.

"The Lord put it all together," said Howard Cobble, pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Ky. "He really did."

It was Cobble who first contacted Nelson because he knew Ford belonged to Nelson's church. Cobble had heard of Naylor's plight from volunteer Terrell Mays, an Elizabethtown obstetrician who has worked with Naylor as a volunteer in India.

In recent years a rising tide of Indian nationalism has swept away dozens of highly trained foreign personnel. Four years ago Southern Baptist missionaries in India quit seeking entry for co-workers, citing their failure to stand against an Indian trend to purify the nation of foreign influence. Their last visa request was for a pediatrician. Other requests for specialized medical personnel also were denied.

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board work in India began with the Bangalore hospital, established in 1973. But in 1982 the board began helping an entity named National Indian Ministries, which pooled efforts of Baptist groups working in India to help train Indian Baptists in church planting. Southern Baptists also began working feverishly to prepare the hospital in Bangalore to stand on its own, training nationals to take over jobs filled by missionaries.

A decade ago, 18 Southern Baptist missionaries were working in the densely populated south Asian nation of 860 million people. Today, the only ones left are Naylor and Jason and Carolyn Lee, of Little Rock, Ark.

During the past 14 months, Naylor and others had flown from Bangalore to Delhi four separate times to meet with government officials in her quest for certification. But the council rejected her original bid in July 1990 as well as a later appeal.

"We made so much effort for so many months from this side that did nothing, said Naylor. "We have met countless political contacts, everything possible we could do. It was refused. And our appeal was refused. It was just completely negative."

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During the summer, as it became clear her appeals were fruitless, Naylor began to question what future path she should take. "I just had not known what to do. This had been going on for many months," she said. "Do I remain here and not practice medicine? Do I go somewhere else? Do I go home? What do I do?"

"Finally, a little more than a month ago, I had reached the conclusion that for now, I really needed to be overseas and not in the States. And then I realized that meant it might include not practicing medicine. I had begun to come to terms with that. I wasn't yet particularly happy about it, but I realized if that's what I needed to do, then I would do it."

In recent months Naylor, the hospital's associate medical superintendent, has limited her role to administration and management. She also has been intensely involved in construction of a \$425,000 private wing on the hospital. The new wing opened Aug. 31.

The wing's construction was "a dream, a vision, a need," Naylor said. "We were told it was impossible to raise that sort of sum in a short time, but with God, the impossible became possible." Funding was provided by the Foreign Mission Board (\$200,000), First Baptist Church in Dallas (\$150,000) and other donors in India and the United States.

The wing added 25 beds to bring the hospital's capacity to 143 beds and increased space for treating outpatients. It will be used by private patients who pay market rates for their treatment, making it possible for the hospital to continue treating others too poor to pay as much. Half of the hospital's patients each year are unable to pay for their care.

The city of Bangalore has grown from 1.5 million to 5 million people since the hospital was begun by Southern Baptists in 1973.

In 1989 the Foreign Mission Board transferred management of the hospital to the Christian Medical College in Vellore, India, as visas for Southern Baptist personnel became increasingly difficult to secure. Southern Baptists still own the property, but their financial support will be phased out by 1993.

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Martha Skelton contributed to this story.

Increased requests for funds  
drain hunger relief budget

By Sarah Zimmerman

HMB-N

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists' national hunger relief program is like a good news, bad news joke without the humor.

The good news is more churches and associations are discovering and trying to meet needs in their communities, says Nathan Porter, assistant director of the Home Mission Board church and community ministries department.

The bad news is escalating requests for financial assistance have drained hunger relief resources.

Currently, most petitions are granted at only half the amount requested, says Paul Adkins, HMB vice president for ministry.

Donations to domestic hunger relief have kept pace with recent years, but they have not kept up with inflation or increased requests, Adkins notes. This year's receipts through Aug. 31 total \$655,115, compared to \$651,044 for the same period in 1990 and \$629,523 for the first eight months of 1989.

Adkins predicts the status quo level of giving will not be enough to meet future demands.

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"We're going to see more requests for hunger funds this winter because of the recession," Adkins says. "Unless our economy changes, we're going to see a greater need than ever."

Undesignated donations to the Southern Baptist world hunger program are split 80 percent to the Foreign Mission Board and 20 percent to the HMB. In the United States, churches or associations channel requests for funds through a state coordinator who requests money from the HMB hunger relief fund.

Bob Nowlin, director of church and community ministries for St. Louis Baptist Association, is already experiencing affects of the recession and cutbacks in hunger relief funds.

"The number of people coming to our food pantries has drastically increased," Nowlin says. "More people are being laid off, and the jobs that are available are lower paying jobs. Also, the increase in the cost of housing and utilities means a family has less money for food."

Yet Nowlin says in 1989 he received \$19,000 in hunger relief funds. In 1990, he received \$9,000. So far this year, he has received \$5,000.

Nowlin uses hunger relief funds primarily to stock food pantries at the association's four cooperative ministry centers and individual churches. The pantries typically give people enough food to prepare three meals a day for three days.

"We've had to tell (the ministry centers) to cut back, to somehow reduce the number of people they're feeding," Nowlin says.

Brenda Forlines, director of church and community ministries for the Florida Baptist Convention, says the amount of money she requests from the hunger relief fund is up because more churches are requesting assistance. Many of her requests are used to support ministries with migrants and ethnic residents of south Florida.

Hunger relief projects are also an evangelistic tool. Forlines reports 963 professions of faith in the last 12 months as a result of Florida hunger relief ministries.

Adkins says he hopes Southern Baptists will be generous in giving to hunger relief as a result of observing World Hunger Day, October 13.

Adkins also suggests ways for churches and associations to be involved in hunger relief projects without depending on hunger relief funds.

His suggestions include teaching people how to budget funds and how to make thrifty food purchases and providing transportation to wholesale supermarkets where items are typically less expensive than neighborhood stores.

"I'm concerned that Southern Baptists see hunger relief from the biblical standpoint that we don't own anything," Adkins says. "What we have is given to us that we might help our brothers and sisters. We are mere stewards."

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Morris Chapman makes call  
for national prayer alert

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

CO-N

NASHVILLE (BP)--Using the prayer ministry of a Florida church as a model, Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman has issued a call for Southern Baptist churches to enlist in a national prayer ministry for 1992.

Called Watchman On The Wall National Prayer Alert, Chapman made his plea during his address to the SBC Executive Committee meeting in Nashville Sept. 16-18.

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"Upon my election 15 months ago, I felt in my soul that God wanted me to call Southern Baptists to pray for spiritual awakening in America," Chapman told the Monday night session of the meeting. "We did so during the convention in Atlanta. Now I believe God is leading me to call all Southern Baptist churches, large and small, to enlist in a national prayer ministry for 1992."

Chapman cited the Watchman Prayer Ministry of First Baptist Church, Merritt Island, Fla. where a vision for a prayer ministry was given the pastor in 1989. Chapman asked Larry Thompson, pastor of the Florida church in 1989 but now at Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala, to be the National Director of the Prayer Alert.

"I am asking every Southern Baptist church to volunteer to pray for one hour each week for 52 weeks of 1992," said Chapman. Each participating church will be assigned a watch on one of four walls designated north, south, east or west.

"Individuals will pray toward the direction assigned. In doing so we will pray a wall of protection around God's people called Southern Baptists and we will pray for God to bring spiritual awakening to this nation," Chapman, Wichita Falls, Texas pastor, told the group.

Chapman cited Isaiah 62:6-7 and 64:7 as the basis of his call.

"No great movement of God has ever occurred except that it was preceded by earnest, fervent prayer. Are we ready to engage in the kind of praying which will 'take hold of God'?" said Chapman.

James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, has agreed to allow the board to administer the national program, Chapman said. The National Prayer Corps of the Discipleship Training Department will coordinate the program.

Complete information and registration materials for the National Prayer Alert will be mailed by the SSB to "every Southern Baptist church" during the month of November, Chapman said.

Also in his address, Chapman announced a two-year volunteer mission initiative called "Crossover India" for 1992-93. He appointed John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston, and Charles Carter, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala. as co-chairmen for the project. Extensive training and preparation will be given in 1992 with an "enormous evangelistic effort" in that country in 1993, Chapman said.

Crossover New York 1993 was also announced by Chapman who said the Baptist Convention of New York has invited the SBC Home Mission Board to launch that effort in the Spring of 1993.

"New York Baptists are praying for enough volunteers to make a strong impact in the major cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, New York City, Long Island and Newark, New Jersey," said Chapman.

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Texas board OKs Baylor, budget proposals;  
approves Cooperative Program policy change

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

Texas-N

DALLAS (BP)--At its quarterly meeting in Dallas Sept. 10, the Texas Baptist executive board voted to recommend to the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in November a new relationship agreement with Baylor University and a \$68.8 million budget for missionary, educational and benevolent causes.

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The board also approved the release of escrowed 1991 funds for Baylor University according to a new funding formula, and it agreed to a new policy concerning which church gifts are classified as part of the Cooperative Program unified budget.

After considerable discussion, the BGCT executive board voted 110 to 36 to approve a proposal that potentially could end a controversy over the state convention's relationship to Baylor University.

The proposal still must be approved by the Baylor University board of regents and by the messengers to the annual state convention meeting, Nov. 11-12 in Waco.

A Dallas newspaper reported a group of concerned pastors organized by Joel Gregory, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, and Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston, plan to protest the proposal at the BGCT annual meeting.

Under the terms of the relationship proposal approved by the board, Baylor would amend its charter to eliminate the office of trustee and to provide the BGCT would directly elect 25 percent of the Baylor regents elected annually.

The Baylor bylaws also would be amended to include: "In the election of the 75 percent of the Directors (Regents) elected by the Board of Directors, the University will be receptive to suggestions from Texas Baptists and will give due and careful consideration to the suggestions of the BGCT of persons to be nominated for election to the Board of Directors."

The proposed agreement also calls for inclusion in the Baylor bylaws provisions all Baylor regents must be Baptist; Baylor will be operated within Christian-oriented aims and ideals of Baptists, including those contained in the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963; and the assets of the university would be transferred to the BGCT upon discontinuance by dissolution and liquidation.

The proposal further provides these three bylaws provisions may be amended only by two-thirds vote of the entire board of regents provided at least ten days notice is given in advance. In "extreme emergency" when ten days notice is not given an 80 percent vote would be required.

"This wasn't my solution," explained Robert E. Naylor, chairman of the committee on BGCT/Baylor relationship.

The board also approved the immediate release of 1991 escrowed funds to Baylor at levels in accordance with an institutional funding formula that goes into effect in 1992.

Year-to-date 1991 money for Baylor -- including interest and excluding the expenses of the study on BGCT/Baylor relationship -- is \$2,568,259. Total funds to Baylor for 1991 are expected to be \$4,000,667, down from the previously budgeted amount of \$6,048,219.

According to the new funding formula, implemented as part of the convention's long-range plan, Christian education institutions receive funding based on performance in specific program emphases including students studying for the ministry, Baptist education general support, campus religious experiences and ethnic/minority emphases.

The board also heard a report from the Christian education coordinating board that escrowed 1990 BGCT budget funds for Baylor University -- plus earned interest and minus expenses of the BGCT/Baylor relationship committee -- had been released. The \$1.4 million was released following action of the coordinating board on Aug. 30.

The Dallas Morning News reported Sept. 11 Gregory, a former BGCT president, said he and an organized group of pastors who were disappointed with the executive board's action plan to present "a clear statement of where some of us stand on the Baylor issue" during the annual BGCT meeting.

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After learning the state convention does not "own and operate" any of its institutions in a legal sense, Gregory told the Morning News, "First Baptist (Dallas) will be among those who will review its support of all the institutions."

In other business, the executive board unanimously voted to recommend to the BGCT annual meeting a \$68.8 million Cooperative Program budget for missions and benevolent causes.

The board also affirmed a recommendation from its administrative committee that Texas Baptist churches be allowed to exclude up to five BGCT budget items from support and still have their mission gifts be classified as "Cooperative Program."

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Illinois layman elected head  
of state convention presidents group

CO-N

Baptist Press  
9/18/91

NASHVILLE (BP)--Rodney C. Osborn, an anesthesiologist from Peoria, Ill., was elected president of the State Convention Presidents Fellowship.

Osborn was elected at the breakfast meeting held by the group Sept. 17. The group meets three times a year, in February, June and September, coinciding with the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

The group heard a report from John Greever, president of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, regarding what his state convention is doing to prepare for the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis next June. The presidents also discussed issues affecting their states: Cooperative Program, state convention/internal entity relationships, and home and foreign mission partnerships.

For the past three years at the June prayer breakfast, SBC institution and agency heads, and former state presidents and SBC officers are invited by the presidents to attend. "That meeting is usually very well attended and is a good time of fellowship," said Eddie Hamilton, pastor of Oak Forest Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss., and out-going fellowship president.

Osborn is an ordained deacon Woodland Baptist Church in Peoria. He and his wife, Susan Ann, have three daughters.

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