

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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91-173

Moderates defeat conservatives

in N.C.; Ruschlikon seminary funded By R.G. Puckett

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP)--Messengers to the 161st annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina meeting in Asheville for the 12th time in the past 92 years, elected a full slate of moderates to the top convention offices, voted to send \$30,000 to the Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon immediately from funds in a mission reserve account while calling upon the SBC Foreign Mission Board to rescind its action on defunding the Switzerland-based school which trains church leaders for Europe, Africa and the Orient.

E. Glen Holt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Fayetteville, for more than 22 years and a third-term chairman of the convention's General Board, was elected to the presidency by a 142-vote margin over Billy Cline, pastor of Merrimon Avenue church in Asheville.

Cline, a ten-year trustee of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., had the backing of the conservative Carolina Baptists. Holt had the support of moderates, known in the state as "Friends of Missions."

Dorothy Allred of Gastonia, former president of N.C. Woman's Missionary Union, was elected first vice president on the first ballot with 56 percent of the vote in a field of three candidates.

Edwin Vick, a layman and deacon at First Baptist Church of Raleigh, was named second vice president with 58.5 percent of the vote.

Marian Grant was elected recording secretary with 65 percent of the vote over Brenda Hicks, wife of a pastor in Winston-Salem. Grant has been recording secretary for ten years. Hicks was on the team with Billy Cline.

A move to change the bylaws to give the president unlimited appointive powers for several committees was overwhelmingly defeated. Sponsored by four former state convention presidents, the action would have reverted to a policy which was changed in the 1988 convention. The president and two vice presidents serve as a nominating committee to the convention's general board which acts upon the suggestions and then sends them to the convention.

Leaders estimated the proposed changes were defeated by at least a four-to-one-margin.

Messengers strongly approved a motion which "respectfully requested" the SBC Foreign Mission Board to rescind its defunding action for the Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon. A resolution called the action "insensitive and destructive." In the same session, \$30,000 was approved for the seminary immediately from a missions reserve fund. The money is to be sent directly to the seminary, by-passing the FMB offices in Richmond.

After lengthy debate, a resolution affirming the new Baptist seminary in Richmond was tabled. Tom Freeman, a retired minister in Dunn, N.C., made the motion "in the interest of peace."

In other actions, the messengers approved a budget for 1992 of \$28.8 million, up only \$300,000 from the 1991 amount. The Cooperative Program receipts are divided ~~about 55~~ ^{64.83} percent to the state convention and ~~35~~ ^{35.17} percent to the Southern Baptist Convention, ~~down 0.17~~ percent from last year.

the same as the previous year.

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The budget contains a preferred item of \$1,872,000 for the expanded annuity plan for ministers before the division between the state and national conventions. The budget also has an optional section whereby churches can fund specific Baptist items for world missions without going through the SBC offices in Nashville.

In 1991, about 200 churches have used this option with funds totaling \$2 million channeled to the SBC Cooperative Program and special missions approved by the state convention.

Registration was the fourth highest in the past five years with 5,319 messengers and 425 visitors. Highest attendance in the history of the convention was last year when about 7,000 messengers and visitors registered.

The 1992 convention will be held in Winston-Salem Nov. 9-11. The program/place and Preacher Committee recommended the General Board study the feasibility of having the 1993 convention on Friday and Saturday to enable more laypersons to attend.

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Maryland/Delaware Baptists
discontinue BJC funding

By Bob Allen

Baptist Press
11/15/91

BEL AIR, Md. (BP)--Maryland/Delaware Baptists did a turnabout on issues which had divided moderates and conservatives in previous conventions at their 1991 annual meeting. Messengers to the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, meeting Nov. 11-13 at Oak Grove Baptist Church in Bel Air, adopted a resolution affirming the Baptist Faith and Message statement and discontinued funding for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Maryland/Delaware convention had rejected resolutions on the Baptist Faith and Message in 1987 and 1989 and voted down a proposal to add the statement of consensus doctrines to convention bylaws in 1988.

Last year, messengers voted to send convention funds directly to the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee after the Southern Baptist Convention cut off funding for the coalition for religious liberty concerns. This year, messengers amended a 1992 budget proposed by the two-state convention's general mission board by striking a \$3,600 line item for the Baptist Joint Committee.

The 1991 convention also rejected a constitutional amendment which would have increased representation for churches giving money to the convention's work through channels other than the Cooperative Program. Left intact was a formula which grants larger churches and those contributing the most funds to the work of the convention extra messengers at the annual meeting. The formula specifies the standard related to giving for accruing messengers as contributions through the Cooperative Program, the method of unified budget support for both the Maryland/Delaware and Southern Baptist conventions. The general mission board had proposed other gifts -- such as the Kathryn Barnes Offering for State Missions, gifts designated for BCM/D use only and funds that churches want distributed in some way other than the percentage division of CP funds adopted by the convention -- also apply to the formula. Messengers defeated the board's recommendation by a vote of 210-169.

In debate, critics said the change would encourage moderates to exclude Southern Baptist agencies from their gifts and direct funds instead to various extradenominational entities which have sprung up in reaction to conservative control of the SBC. "This is the first step to seceding from the Southern Baptist Convention," said Fred Bealfeld, a lay messenger from Scott Street Baptist Church in Baltimore.

Jim Willey, pastor of White Marsh Baptist Church in Perry Hall, described the proposal as "a tactic that will result in the weakening of the Cooperative Program."

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Bill Warren, pastor of Allen Memorial Baptist Church in Salisbury, countered. "This is not a vote for or against the Cooperative Program," he said. "The fact of the matter is we already have churches giving their funds through other than the Cooperative Program. I don't agree with them, but they are doing it. The question is do we want them to be part of us or not. ... This is not a vote on the Cooperative Program. This is a vote of inclusion or exclusion for those who have been with us for years."

The concept of protecting the Cooperative Program also was invoked during discussion of funding for the Baptist Joint Committee. "I believe the bottom line is the Cooperative Program," said Robert Lilly, pastor of Catonsville Baptist Church. "My objection is draining off Cooperative Program dollars to fund the Baptist Joint Committee."

Lilly referred to a motion by messenger Lamar Wadsworth, pastor of Woolford Memorial Baptist Church in Baltimore, the convention respond to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's recent defunding of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, by sending BCM/D money directly to the seminary. Wadsworth's motion was referred to the general mission board. "My question," Lilly said, "is how many line items will we have in the next 10 years that bypass the Cooperative Program?"

An amendment offered by Howard Edmonson, pastor of Mason-Dixon Baptist Church in New Freedom, Pa., striking the BJC allocation, passed 210-169. The rest of the budget passed with little discussion.

The \$4,487,830 budget anticipates \$3,098,124 in receipts through the Cooperative Program. CP receipts will be divided between state and national causes, with 59 percent funding BCM/D work and 41 percent forwarded to the SBC, the same division as last year. The budget trims the state convention staff by seven positions, all of which will be vacant by resignation or retirement when the budget cuts take effect. Still, it is a deficit budget, falling \$37,268 short of a zero balance.

Attempts at past conventions to endorse the Baptist Faith and Message statement, which was adopted by the SBC in 1963, had been rebuffed by Maryland/Delaware convention messengers concerned that controversy over interpretation of the document between poles of the SBC's constituency might trickle down to the BCM/D. This year, it received a kinder hearing, coming as a recommendation of the convention's resolutions committee and passing by a 224-129 vote.

Conservative messengers took heart at gains made in a convention generally perceived as strongly moderate. "I think conservatives have reason to be encouraged," said D. Walter Collett, pastor of Covenant Baptist Church in Columbia.

Collett was author of a letter relating grievances aired by conservative leaders invited to an Oct. 17 meeting at Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville. He said the group assigned him the task of writing the letter and mailing it to convention leaders. The letter alleged a "move towards open identification with the moderate/liberal minority of the SBC" among convention leadership. Collett said he believes votes on the Baptist Faith and Message, Baptist Joint Committee and messenger representation amendment indicate a correction in that course.

Asked why some issues soundly defeated in past conventions prevailed this year, Collett said, "Perhaps the people in our churches are beginning to realize the convention has gone too far. ... It may be the people in the pew are becoming aware of what is happening."

The conservatives failed to elect a slate of officers. Messengers voted instead for a moderate slate of incumbent president Homer Carter, pastor of First Baptist Church of Rockville; first vice president Bill Warren, pastor of Allen Memorial Baptist Church of Salisbury; and second vice president Doug Strother, pastor of LaVale Baptist Church, LaVale.

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In other business, messengers passed a resolution asking Foreign Mission Board trustees to reconsider their Oct. 9 decision to eliminate \$365,000 funding for the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. The resolution says the BCM/D disagrees with the decision and asks the board to consider reallocating the money to Ruschlikon.

The convention also instructed the general mission board to develop policies regulating the use of convention facilities by non-Christian groups. The referral was a response to a controversial decision last summer by Maryland/Delaware Woman's Missionary Union to open Camp WoMeTo to a Hindu group for religious exercises. The WMU is an auxiliary to the state convention and owns the camp. The BCM/D has no authority over the use of Camp WoMeTo, but does own its own camp, Skycroft Conference and Retreat Center. "I am filled with righteous anger and indignation over what has happened at WoMeTo," said Gary Glanville, pastor of Northwest Baptist Church of Reisterstown, who made the motion. "My motion is that it not happen at Skycroft." A resolution asked staff to use discretion in decisions about the use of convention facilities until the policies are approved.

Another motion calls for the formation of a study committee to examine the relationship between Baptist Family and Children's Services of Maryland, an agency of the convention, and the BCM/D and its churches.

A total of 746 messengers and 67 visitors registered for the convention, held in a rural area in northeast Maryland. Last year, meeting in suburban Washington, messengers and visitors numbered more than 1,000 for the first time in convention history.

The 1992 annual meeting is scheduled Nov. 9-11 at First Korean Baptist Church in Silver Spring.

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Arizona Baptists elect
officers by acclamation

By Elizabeth Young

Baptist Press
11/15/91

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Arizona Southern Baptists took only one ballot vote and elected all four officers by acclamation.

Dennis Adams, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church West, was elected to a second one-year term as president. Other officers elected are Jim Maynard, pastor of First Baptist Church of Winslow, first vice president; Don Browning, director of church relations at Grand Canyon University, second vice president; and Frankie Kuffel, secretary with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, secretary.

Messengers unanimously adopted a \$3.883 million convention operating budget for 1992 that eliminates five staff positions and increases the Cooperative Program percentage allocated for world missions by 1 percent, to 18 percent.

The 1992 budget, which is a 4.48 percent decrease from the 1991 budget, anticipates Cooperative Program gifts of \$2.365 million from Arizona churches. This is a 1.07 percent increase over the Cooperative Program portion of the 1991 budget.

Additional sources of income in the 1992 budget are \$1,271,340 from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, \$40,526 from the Baptist Sunday School Board and revenue from ASBC-sponsored programs, camps and the Baptist Beacon.

In order to present a balanced budget, six staff positions were eliminated and two others were altered. Positions eliminated in 1992 are a Baptist Student Union director, mission ministries director (reassigned to another staff member when director resigned), Paradise Valley Baptist Conference Center cook, two secretarial positions and one position in the business operations division.

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In addition, the workload and salary of the Paradise Valley Baptist Conference Center manager will be reduced, and the position of the executive assistant to the executive director-treasurer will be changed to a secretarial position upon the early retirement of the current executive assistant.

The state convention's conference center was the subject of a brief discussion and ballot vote during a miscellaneous business session. A motion asking the executive board to reconsider the sale of the conference center failed 167-108. Last November, the state's executive board voted to sell the camping facility to help alleviate a deficit in the Baptist Loan Fund, which is a direct part of the convention and not related to the state's Baptist Foundation. At the end of 1990, the deficit was \$3.6 million.

During the meeting, a report was given on the 1991 state mission offering, which had a goal of \$1 million -- more than 10 times the highest amount previously given. The first \$40,000 of the offering will go toward new work, with the remainder going to help offset the deficit in the Baptist loan fund.

As of Nov. 8, gifts and pledges totaled \$467,535. In addition, it was reported a will had matured, giving an additional \$103,218 to the Baptist loan fund.

Messengers adopted 10 resolutions which praised participation in the state mission offering, encouraged ethnic work and leadership, expressed appreciation to the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, recognized the 50th anniversary of the Southern Baptist Chaplain's Commission, commended the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and called for renewed prayers and support for missionaries, affirmed the ministry of smaller churches, expressed appreciation to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for its support through the cooperative agreement with the convention, called for Christians to be "salt and light" in a variety of ethical issues, and expressed appreciation to the state staff and host church.

Next year's annual meeting will be Nov. 10-11 at North Phoenix Baptist Church.

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Hoosiers support church starts;
install Sullivan as exec

By Tammi Ledbetter

Baptist Press
11/15/91

FLOYDS KNOB, Ind. (BP)--Southern Baptists in Indiana responded to Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis's personal appeal to be involved in starting new churches. The 314 messengers and 148 visitors pledged their support for a state convention directed plan to begin 52 new church starts in the coming year.

The 33rd annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana met at First Southern Baptist Church of Floyds Knob, installing Charles W. Sullivan, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Lenoir City, Tenn., as executive director. Sullivan, who began work in August, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to be "God's man in Indiana."

W.A. Criswell, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Dallas, delivered a message on "building the church that Christ loves." He appealed to messengers to "pour our lives and our souls into winning people to Jesus."

Clarence Brock, pastor of Old Town Hill Baptist Church in Muncie, was elected president by acclamation. James Bullock, pastor of Colgate Baptist Church in Clarksville, was elected first vice president, and Garland Morrison, pastor of Sunnycrest Baptist Church in Marion, was elected second vice president.

A \$2.7 million budget was accepted, a ten percent increase over the 1991 budget. As last year, 32.25 percent will be forwarded to the national Cooperative Program unified budget.

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In addition to expressing appreciation to the host church, resolutions were unanimously passed which endorsed alcohol warning labels; affirmed the right of Operation Rescue to conduct peaceful demonstrations against abortion; pledged ministry to those infected with AIDS and their families, while also noting the only "safe sex" is abstinence before marriage and fidelity to the marriage partner in wedlock.

A resolution reaffirming cooperation in missions through the Cooperative Program also resolved not to receive any direct financial support from Baptist Cooperative Missions or other missions agencies "in competition with the Cooperative Program."

The 1992 meeting will be in Old Town Baptist Church in Muncie Nov. 10-12.

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Colorado Baptists pay off
bond indebtedness

Baptist Press
11/15/91

ALAMOSA, Colo. (BP)--Colorado Baptists, meeting in Alamosa Nov. 12-14, approved a \$1.2 million Cooperative Program budget and heard the convention had completed payment on a troubling bond indebtedness.

"It was one of the most satisfying and rewarding things we've done," said Charles Sharp, state convention executive director, in an announcement the convention had completed the last of the bond payments, 18 months ahead of schedule.

A \$3.5 million loss in the convention's Foundation and church loan division in 1984 had strapped the convention financially. The announcement of the \$40,300 payoff, which originally included 25-30 bond holders, was especially gratifying in light of the convention's financial problems in the '80s, several speakers told the 270 messengers.

John Robbins, pastor of Bookcliff Baptist Church in Grand Junction, was elected president without opposition at the 36th annual meeting.

The \$1,227,406 1992 Cooperative Program budget includes 28.5 percent forwarded to SBC causes, the same percentage as last year. The convention's total budget for 1992 is \$2,526,326.

Messengers approved 11 resolutions, which included opposition to alcohol beverage advertisements, gambling, and support for sexuality as a divine gift in marriage and the sanctity of human life.

Resolutions of appreciation were also approved for Sharp's 10 years of service and for Sydney Portis, who has served 20 years as Colorado's WMU executive director.

The 1992 annual meeting will be Nov. 10-12 at Colorado Springs.

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British, German Baptists will
wait for FMB trustee response

Baptist Press
11/15/91

By Stanley Crabb & Robert O'Brien

BRISTOL, England (BP)--British and German Baptists will "wait and see" what Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees do about the Ruschlikon seminary controversy in meetings in December.

But the two national Baptist bodies, meeting separately in Bristol, England, and Dorfweil, Germany, indicated a negative response could damage future relationships.

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The 200-member Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain approved a long-negotiated working relationship with Southern Baptists, according to David Coffey, general secretary of the union.

But Coffey said that decision will be placed "on hold" until they see how FMB trustees respond to widespread calls for them to reverse a 35-28 vote on Oct. 9. The vote stripped \$365,000 from the budget of the international Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

"We will not be doing anything further" in regard to future cooperative arrangements with Southern Baptists "until the situation is clarified," Coffey said. "We will be watching this meeting with great interest, and we will also be wanting to watch what decisions (the FMB trustees) will be making over the next several months.

"We want Southern Baptists to help us win Europe for Christ ... but for now we must wait and see," Coffey said.

"We felt sadness that we had to debate this matter in this way, and sadness that there is a division in the Baptist family," Coffey said of his union's action. "The discussion about (future relationships) was colored by what has taken place."

German Baptist leaders also will bide their time. "We are looking for the new decision," said Gerd Rudzio of the German Baptist Union. "We are taking a wait-and-see attitude" before deciding what to do.

"It is our sincere desire that the basis of cooperation, trust and reliability (of past relationships with Southern Baptists) be newly established," said a statement from the German Baptist Union's federal board, released by Rudzio and Eckhard Schaefer, general secretaries of the union.

"Only on this basis are we in a position to continue our common work in blessing for our churches and as a testimony to our contemporaries," the statement said. "We do hope that the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond revises and revokes its decision and that we may be newly used in a service partnership before God."

Leaders of the two unions tempered their protest with praise of past cooperation with Southern Baptists, including two Southern Baptist fraternal representatives, Gary and Delores Bishop. The Bishops have worked in northeast England in a cooperative experiment with the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

"This couple has given outstanding service; from all parts there were expressions of appreciation for them," Coffey said. "The council gave unanimous approval for their return to partnership involvements."

In the wake of widespread protests over the seminary defunding action, FMB trustee chairman Bill Hancock has called a meeting Dec. 5-6 in Richmond. Leaders from European Baptists, the Ruschlikon seminary, FMB trustees and FMB staff will air their views.

That meeting will precede the trustees' regular meeting Dec. 9-11, at which they will have the option of reconsidering the action. They also are expected to receive an opinion from board attorneys about whether their action was legal in light of past agreements. Previous FMB boards of trustees voted to fund the seminary budget through 1992 and then on a descending basis thereafter.

"It is my desire that Southern Baptist and European Baptist leaders will maintain a spirit of prayer and patience and not respond with divisive emotions and verbal expressions as we go into these meetings," Hancock said in response to the escalating protest.

"In view of the fact that trustees acted without consultation with Ruschlikon and European Baptist leaders, this meeting is designed to bring all parties together to discuss the factors and real issues involved," he said.

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The German Baptist statement, which welcomed the opportunity for Baptist leaders to meet in Richmond, supported the reaction from the European Baptist Federation. The EBF called the defunding action a breach of trust.

Earlier, EBF General Secretary Karl-Heinz Walter said the issue at stake for Europeans is not a particular professor's theology but whether the Foreign Mission Board keeps its promises.

FMB trustees took the action because the Ruschlikon seminary asked Glenn Hinson, a church history professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., to teach at Ruschlikon for four months. The trustees, who have disagreed on Ruschlikon's theological stance in the past, perceive Hinson as having liberal views on Scripture. They felt the seminary had not operated in good faith with them by allowing him to teach.

"If they had taken us as a serious partner, then I think we could have been in conversation with them or answered their questions, but they acted of a sudden without consultation," Walter said.

The British and German unions both said the action has caused damage to European unity at a time of great opportunity for missions and evangelism.

"In a time where we see walls falling, we should not raise fronts which are hindering and harmful to the mission of the Baptist churches in Europe," the German statement said.

"The real source of our dismay continues to be that we genuinely felt we were on the verge of a new partnership (with Southern Baptists) which would advance the cause of the gospel in the British Isles," Coffey said. "We are convinced that suddenly Europe has reached a turning point, and we are on the verge of a new mission era in Europe," he said.

"If you live in North America, it may be difficult to see how important unity is for us at this time. The political and sociological climate is changing (in Europe) and Christians have caught the message that we must act now. But we need unity in such a time as this."

The trustee action, Coffey said, has caused British Baptists to question the reliability of future FMB decisions.

"I still hope that we can proceed with partnership arrangements," Coffey said. The British union has not only experimented with a cooperative relationship with the Bishops but has anticipated future relationships which would bring more Southern Baptist mission personnel into the countries served by the union.

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'Bring home missionaries' demand
'not relevant' in U.S., says Navaho By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
11/15/91

DALLAS (BP)--Should Christian denominations end mission work among the Native Americans of North America?

No, but the demand coming from critics who charge missionaries have helped exploit Native Americans is understandable, says a Navaho Baptist leader.

"You have to look at it from the historical perspective," explains Russell Begaye, a Navaho and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's assistant director for American Indian church growth. "You have to look at how the gospel was brought to indigenous people in the Americas, especially in South and Central America through Spaniards and the Roman Catholic Church.

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"The Catholics came in and greatly abused the native people" -- not just in Latin America but in what is now the southwestern United States and California. "People were baptized (by force). Many of them were made slaves. Lands were stolen. Hundreds of thousands of Indians were killed through the order of the church."

Nor are Protestants' hands clean, Begaye notes. Some Protestant denominations and missionaries acted as virtual agents for the U.S. government among North American Indians in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

"In the beginning the government appointed a commission consisting of denominational leaders to advise on the work among Indians," Begaye says. "It was through this board that millions of acres of land were given away and decisions to remove Indians from their traditional lands were made. In return the government gave land to these denominational groups to establish missions and churches. In some cases some of the missionaries placed on the reservations became agents on behalf of the government. Missionaries played a key role in how treaties were made and even enforced."

Southern Baptists did not play a role in that chapter of Native American history, Begaye adds. And the denomination has gained popularity among many North American Indians because of its biblical theology and enthusiasm for missions.

In fact, he claims, Southern Baptists have the largest work among Native Americans in North America with more than 500 churches and at least 80,000 members.

As to the demand that Baptists "bring home the missionaries," Begaye says it is "not relevant" to contemporary Southern Baptist home mission work.

"If you're talking about 1991, as far as we're concerned here in North America we're not sending missionaries to Indians any more," he explains. "Policies have changed. The Home Mission Board used to send missionaries. Now they service churches. That's a different approach to missions. If they need a pastor among the Crow Indians, we'll go to that Crow congregation and help them get a pastor. Whether they get an Indian or non-Indian is up to the congregation."

White Southern Baptist missionaries once were paternalistic toward Native Americans, Begaye acknowledges. They acted as leaders in all phases of church work and as all-purpose "protectors" who fostered dependence among their flocks. But now about 80 percent of the churches have Native American leaders, he adds. "Other denominations will run almost the opposite of that. Indians are taking the leadership role and the responsibility. The (Southern Baptist Convention) has really treated us well, especially in the last 20 years or so. They have really listened to the Indian people."

The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, for example, publishes a Sunday school quarterly produced completely by and for Native Americans. "The editor is Indian, the writers are Indian, the illustrators are Indian," Begaye says. "That's the first agency that has gone that far in approaching Indian work where they have completely trusted the Indian people. And our people have responded tremendously."

"Because of that, when somebody out there says, 'This is the white man's God. Why are you following them?' We say, 'It's not their God; it's our God. We produced this material. We're doing the preaching.' It's a whole different attitude."

But paternalism toward Native Americans still exists among Southern Baptists, Begaye adds, because many native churches are too small and too poor to make themselves heard. "Not one Indian has served on any of the boards and commissions of the SBC, ever," he states. At the associational and state levels, he adds, Indians are still "looked at as second-class citizens."

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That isn't preventing Native American Southern Baptists from making their own mission plans. Of the nearly 500 tribes in North America, they work among about 100. They want to reach many more.

"In my opinion and in the opinion of many Indian people, we still need missionaries among Indians in North America," Begaye says. "We send hundreds of people every year across the country doing volunteer mission work. We have a national organization called the Native American Southern Baptist Fellowship that combines all our Indian churches together to do mission work among all tribes."

The fellowship also has ongoing exchanges with native people in Central and South America, and even dreams of sending workers to indigenous peoples in Siberia and Mongolia.

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Native Americans criticize
Columbus, Braves ... and missions

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
11/15/91

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Christopher Columbus and the Atlanta Braves aren't the only institutions taking it on the chin from Native Americans. So is Christian missions.

The once-dismal Braves captured the nation's imagination when they rocketed from last place to a National League pennant this year, and barely missed winning an exciting World Series.

But some Native American groups are protesting the Braves fans' "chop" motion. They feel demeaned by the team's use of American Indian symbols. They aren't too thrilled with the Washington Redskins or the Florida State Seminoles either -- two football teams currently having championship seasons.

In a wider cultural arena, native or indigenous peoples in North and South America are questioning the planned 500th anniversary celebration next year of Christopher Columbus' "discovery" of America. He didn't discover anything, they insist; he invaded. Native peoples were here a long time before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. And why celebrate a man, they ask, who brought death, disease, slavery and European cultural domination to the peoples of this hemisphere?

Columbus didn't personally bring all that to America, of course, any more than he "discovered" a continent already populated by many peoples. "Both are myths," comments one observer. "He was a trader looking for trade routes."

But he opened the door to America for European culture and conquest. That's where renewed criticism of Christian missions comes in, because Columbus and the many Europeans who followed him brought a sword and a cross.

Columbus lived in a place and time when church and state were one. The Roman Catholics of Spain had fought for centuries to throw off Muslim domination from north Africa. The spirit of the crusades to recapture the Holy Land swept Europe. Considerable evidence from Columbus' own writings suggests he was a pious Catholic who believed spreading the gospel to faraway lands would fulfill biblical prophecies. He was proud of his name; Christopher means "Christ-bearer."

He brought that perspective to America, and he brought Roman Catholic missionaries with him. In the decades that followed some loved and served the native peoples they encountered. Others, including Columbus himself on occasion, participated in their enslavement and exploitation.

The National Council of Churches has called for "repentance," not celebration, on the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival.

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Native Americans are protesting "because their voices have not been heard very clearly over these 500 years," said Arthur Cribbs of the United Church Board of World Ministries in a recent interview with USA Today. "We're hoping to create an environment that says there is more to the Columbus story than 'in 1492 he sailed the ocean blue.' We want to turn the page and say what occurred on his second and third voyages."

The debate rages at a time when American educators are arguing the merits of "multiculturalism" -- a philosophy that calls for equal attention and respect for all cultures in our many-colored society, not just Western ideals.

At the same time, the very concept of the nation state is under attack worldwide. Superpower empires are collapsing and people groups are flowing or clashing across disintegrating national borders. Indigenous peoples from Australian aborigines to Canadian Mohawks are uniting to demand more rights, protect or reclaim their ancestral lands and resist what they regard as genocide.

Missionaries, some charge, have participated at times in that genocide -- physical and otherwise.

Meanwhile, a Native American professor called on Baptists last summer to stop "spiritual genocide" against native peoples and end the missionary movement among Indians in 1992.

"Today, 499 years after the first missionaries forced us into slavery, we continue to be oppressed," declared Bill Baldrige. Baldrige, a member of the Cherokee Nation, teaches Native American Christian ministries at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City. He spoke to the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

"Baptist Christians, you are our oppressors," Baldrige said. "This is wrong. This is something Baptists can stop. Stop it. For us the missionary movement has ended Bring the missionaries home."

He charged missionaries still foster a system of "perpetual paternalism" among Native Americans, and Native American Christians who do not follow a white ministry model are called lazy and stupid. He dreams of "clusters of Indian people grasping the gospel" on their own.

But Baldrige is misunderstanding "the whole nature of mission today or even at its best in other eras," responds Clark Scanlon, a former missionary to Guatemala and head of research and planning at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Christian missions today affirms and enhances the good things in native cultures while communicating the gospel, Scanlon explains. Missionaries bring schools, hospitals and clinics. They help develop community leaders and preserve native languages in written form before they are lost. They often stand up for the needs and rights of indigenous peoples under attack.

"Our philosophy in missions today is that a person can be very much a Christian and at the same time proudly say, 'I am an Amerindian. I am a Quechua. I am a K'ekchi'," Scanlon says.

About 30 million indigenous people live in Latin America, according to Scanlon. Southern Baptist missionaries traditionally have focused on majority groups in countries rather than indigenous minorities. But fairly extensive Baptist mission work has developed in recent years among native peoples in Guatemala, Panama, Ecuador, Argentina, Mexico and Chile.

Is it fair to punish contemporary missionaries for the sins -- sometimes centuries old -- of their predecessors?

No, replies Jim Reapsome, an evangelical writer and editor of the Evangelical Mission Information Service. Modern academics, he charges, have resurrected the old ideal of the "noble savage" -- a perfectly happy native living in an idyllic utopia. "The last thing (the noble savage) needed was some missionary butting into their lives," Reapsome writes.

The "noble savage" was largely put to rest by "an injection of reality therapy called World War II," Reapsome continues. "But he's up and walking around again, this time as the 'noble victim' of required multicultural courses.

"What's being imposed on some college and university students is a rigorous, radically politically defined caricature of people in the non-Western world Tomorrow's missionaries are on these campuses, and courses and programs often filter down from intellectually elite campuses to smaller schools, including those with a Christian orientation."

The myth of the indigenous person who lived in paradise until outsiders invaded is just that -- a myth, adds Scanlon. "It's true the Aztecs and Incas had advanced civilizations. They also had human sacrifice and fratricidal war." Some peoples were gentle; others participated in cannibalism.

Missions leaving a people alone is a naive approach, according to Scanlon. "The world never leaves an isolated people alone," he says. "The only question is who will be an introducer of outside culture -- one who comes only to exploit, to destroy, to rob, or one who comes to help, to understand, to care, and most of all to teach?"

The charges against Christian missions as a tool of "cultural imperialism" aren't new. Governments, leaders of competing religions, anthropologists, peoples resisting evangelization, even Christian groups of various stripes have called for a "moratorium" on missions for years.

The renewed criticism, however, comes at a critical historical moment for evangelical missions. Many missionaries and mission agencies are focusing renewed energy on communicating the gospel to unreached, often isolated people groups in an all-out effort to evangelize the world by the year 2000.

To include the native peoples of the Americas in that contemporary mission, however, evangelicals will have to understand -- and respond -- to the hurts of centuries.

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

W. Jere Allen to head
District of Columbia Baptists

Baptist Press
11/15/91

WASHINGTON (BP)--W. Jere Allen, director of the department of metropolitan missions of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, has been elected executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. Unless changed by the convention in annual session, a new by-law provision would make the executive's title, executive director/minister.

Allen was recommended by the executive director search committee, approved by the executive committee in a called session Oct. 21, and the same evening elected by the executive board, with only one board member abstaining.

The Home Mission Board's top specialist in urban missions will be filling the position held by James A. Langley for the past 21 years. Earlier this year Langley announced his retirement, effective at the end of 1991. Allen will assume his new responsibilities Jan. 1.

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The new DCBC executive brings a broad experience in ministry with local churches, state conventions, and a national denomination staff. Although his experience has been in the Southern Baptist Convention, he said he welcomes the opportunity to work with the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. and is fully committed to the DCBC's long tradition of dual alignment. He has experience in strategic planning, urban ministry, building networks, working with churches on plateau, and church extension, including black and ethnic groups.

Allen is a native of Greenville, Miss. A graduate of Auburn University in Alabama, he did post graduate work at Hardin Simmons University in Texas, received a B.D. degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and did further post graduate study at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and the Urban Training Center in Chicago. He received the doctor of ministry degree from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va.

He joined the Home Mission Board staff in 1979 and was an associate until 1983 when he became department director.

Prior to joining the HMB staff, he was on the staff of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, where he worked as a consultant to churches in changing communities, 1974-77, and director, special missions department, 1977-79.

He has held pastorates in Richmond and Roanoke, Va. and Ashland, Ky.

Allen's wife, Faye, has a master's degree in education and is an elementary school teacher. She also holds a degree in Christian education from Southern Seminary. They have two daughters and a son; Lorena Allen Brickson, a licensed clinical social worker in Atlanta; Dawn Allen, a registered nurse in Birmingham, Ala.; and Bill Allen, an electrical engineer in Atlanta.

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Tupitza new editor
of Capital Baptist

Baptist Press
11/15/91

WASHINGTON (BP)--The executive board of the D.C. Baptist Convention approved Victor Tupitza on Oct. 21 as editor of the convention's newsjournal, the Capital Baptist.

Tupitza recently retired from the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington. One of his major assignments with the BJC was editing Report from the Capitol, a magazine published 10 times a year.

Tupitza will begin his staff position with the DCBC Jan. 1. He succeeds James A. Langley, who has edited the Capital Baptist since the summer of 1973, along with his responsibilities as executive director of the convention.

Prior to joining the BJC staff in July of 1979, Tupitza was director of communications for the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

Tupitza received a B.A. degree from Eastern Baptist College (now Eastern College), and a B.D. degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He also has done graduate work at Temple University's School of Religious Thought.

For six years he was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Manayunk, Penn.

Tupitza was a reporter-writer for the Erie (Penn.) Daily News. He also has been a laboratory analyst and a general office sales administrator.

During a recent sabbatical while on the BJC staff, Tupitza spent six months in Germany and England doing research on religious liberty in Eastern Europe countries. He has long had an interest in personal liberties, in part, he says, because his parents left a repressive atmosphere in Russia just before the 1917 revolution.

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The Tupitzas live in McLean, Va., and are members of Calvary Baptist Church in Washington where he is moderator. They have three sons: David, Peter, and Jon-Anton.

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Mississippi Baptists pass
\$21.6 million 1992 budget

Baptist Press
11/15/91

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Mississippi Baptists, meeting at First Baptist Church of Jackson, adopted a \$21.6 million Cooperative Program budget, passed non-controversial resolutions, and elected a layman as president.

The 1,708 registered messengers elected as their president a 75-year-old physician from Waynesboro, W.W. Walley. Walley is the first lay president since 1985 when Charles Pickering of Laurel, now a U.S. district court judge, was president. Walley succeeds convention president Eddie Hamilton, pastor of Oak Forest Baptist Church in Jackson.

Walley, a doctor for 40 years, quipped he has delivered, by his count, a total of 6,731 babies as of this week. He is a member of First Baptist Church in Waynesboro, and has been on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's executive committee and on the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The resolutions opposed all forms of gambling and supported H.R. 2797 which is known as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The resolution noted since the Supreme Court decision of 1990 -- Oregon Employment Division v. Smith -- other court decisions "have gone against religious groups, thus opening the door to government regulations of our churches and intrusion into the free exercise of our faith"

The Act would return to a requirement that government "demonstrate a compelling state interest before it is permitted to burden our religious freedom"

The budget, passing with only scattered opposition, weathered two attempts to amend it. Both would have sent a higher percentage of gifts from churches to Southern Baptist causes outside Mississippi.

Since 1984, Mississippi Baptists have increased by a half percent a year, the portion of budget going outside the state up to 1991 when the amount totaled 37 percent.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board recommended to the convention the percentage stay the same for this next year since church gifts have not paralleled giving increases through the state.

Larry Otis, who is budget committee chairman, told messengers if percentage giving increase from the churches, the budget committee would reconvene to add that half percent to SBC causes outside the state.

As approved, the 1992 Cooperative Program budget of \$21,588,435, will be divided \$7,987,721 to SBC causes outside Mississippi, \$5,476,801 to Mississippi Baptist institutions such as the Baptist Children's Village and the colleges, and \$8,123,913 to church leader training programs.

Though the percentage will stay the same, there is an increase to SBC causes totaling \$236,235.

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Other officers elected were first vice president Edgar Lee Wright, pastor of New Sight Baptist Church in Brookhaven; and David Norris, pastor of Wayside Baptist Church in Scobey.

The recording and assistant recording secretary, respectively, were re-elected. They are J.W. Brister of Jackson and W. Levon Moore of Kosciusko.

The 1992 Mississippi Baptist Convention will meet Nov. 10-11 at First Baptist Church of Jackson.