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SBC wrap-up

**Southern Baptists square off
against Clinton's presidency**

By Art Toalston & Louis Moore

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

HOUSTON (BP)--The nation's largest Protestant body spent three days grappling with how to take issue with one of its own -- a U.S. president whose stances on abortion and homosexuality differ from those of his denomination.

The June 15-17 convention, attended by 17,886 messengers in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center, adopted a resolution that stirred national attention even before SBC messengers officially voted to "separate ourselves" from a detailed list of stances Bill Clinton has taken.

After messengers voted overwhelmingly to square off against Clinton, SBC President H. Edwin Young paused to lead messengers in a prayer for the president, a member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark.

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Additionally, after messengers enacted an SBC constitutional amendment targeting churches that affirm homosexual behavior, the first effort to unseat a church's messengers was waged -- against Immanuel. The SBC's credential committee, in its first ruling on the matter, declared that Immanuel -- among the top-15 churches in funding of SBC causes -- had taken no church-wide action affirming homosexuality.

The debate over Clinton overshadowed other issues that many messengers had expected to dominate the convention, such as Freemasonry's compatibility with Southern Baptist beliefs; concerns whether Houston's homosexual activists might disrupt convention proceedings; and questions that continue to be raised over decisions by the Woman's Missionary Union auxiliary earlier this year to expand its work beyond the SBC's Foreign and Home Mission boards.

Texas-size extravaganzas by the Sunday School Board and Home and Foreign Mission boards -- integrating video and live drama, music, elaborate props and guest celebrities such as actor Dean Jones and country music's Ricky Skaggs -- stirred standing ovations and left numerous messengers searching for words to describe the experience.

"It's like taking a picture of the mountains," retired Mississippi pastor T.D. Traylor said. "You can't zero in on any particular feature" but just appreciate "the whole effect." Said Houston resident Harry Robertson: "In today's age, with MTV and all, you have to keep things exciting."

Attendance, however, was less than Texas-size in the state with the largest SBC-related Baptist convention; the SBC's largest Baptist association, encompassing the Houston area; and the hometown of SBC President H. Edwin Young, pastor of booming megachurch Second Baptist.

The 17,886 messengers fell short of the 17,956 at 1992's SBC in Indianapolis and was less than 2,000 above the total for the 1979 SBC in Houston, when conservatives began a campaign to turn the SBC toward their biblical/theological beliefs.

The total also fell 25 percent short of longtime registration secretary Lee Porter's 23,500 projection. "There are a lot more Baptists in Houston," he noted, "than in the entire state of Indiana."

The resolution targeting Clinton's presidency passed with only scattered opposition in a show-of-hands vote.

It urged Southern Baptists to "use their influence with the President to urge him to stand for biblical morality and to reverse his stands" on:

- repealing pro-life policies of the previous two Republican administrations; directing the Food and Drug Administration to make abortion pills available in the United States; requesting funds from Congress for elective abortions through Medicaid; and supporting repeal of a congressional prohibition of U.S. funding for the United Nations to support nations that require abortions.

- seeking to repeal the ban on homosexuals in the U.S. military; inviting leaders of the "homosexual lobby" to a meeting at the White House; and appointing homosexuals and pro-choice supporters to high-level government jobs.

Advocating the resolution, Arkansas pastor and resolutions committee member Ronnie Floyd stressed it was not a "personal attack," adding Clinton as governor of Arkansas once shared his personal testimony in Floyd's church.

"We love him and we are to pray for him. We respect his position (as president)." But, Floyd said, Southern Baptists should "separate ourselves as a body from his policies on critical issues that are contradictory to the Word of God and what is best for America."

Before a vote was taken, Texas messenger Don Wilkie spoke against the resolution, claiming it "smacks of partisan politics" and represented "a lack of class on the part of this convention."

Georgia pastor and resolutions committee chairman James Merritt said in a news conference prior to the vote a resolution specifically addressed to Clinton is needed since the president represents "the most severe shift in moral perspective and policy formulation of any president in history."

Young, in another news conference, said he hoped such a resolution might result in a private meeting between him and Clinton for "praying and sharing."

While hoping Clinton will reconsider some of his positions, Young added revival is not based on who is president but on Christians.

The White House media relations office did not respond to Baptist Press requests for a response from Clinton to the resolution.

The effort to unseat the 10 messengers from Clinton's home church in Little Rock was waged by Bo Hammock, 32, pastor of Providence Village Baptist Church in Lake Butler, Fla.

Contending Immanuel had not taken church discipline against Clinton, Hammock's motion stated, "They are, by their silence, supporting Bill Clinton's endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle." After holding its first-ever hearing on a church's stance on homosexuality, in which Immanuel pastor Rex Horne defended the church against a "witch hunt," the SBC's credentials committee unanimously adopted a report stating: "Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., is in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work. ... We request that the motion of Bo Hammock of Florida be ruled not well taken."

Horne said he was "hurt, saddened and embarrassed" for his church and its 10 messengers.

"If Immanuel Baptist Church can be called to give a defense of themselves, any church in our convention can be called," he said.

Horne reiterated after the committee decision he has expressed his views on homosexuality, abortion and other issues to Clinton on several occasions. "How clear can you be that abortion is wrong and homosexuality is sin?" the pastor asked. "We try to show grace and love, show the straight path and encourage people to take it."

The credentials committee, in its report to the SBC, sought to clarify future challenges that might be waged under the new amendment to the SBC constitution. The committee stated a church acts only by an official vote of the congregation and a church is not out of cooperation with the SBC because of a position on homosexuality held by one or more of its members.

Before messengers approved the constitutional amendment on the SBC's opening day, completing a two-year process for such action, Executive Committee member C. Ray Fuller, a director of missions from Illinois, stirred applause when he said churches affirming homosexuality must be given "an expulsion of love ... that they have pulled away from what we as Southern Baptists hold dear to our hearts."

Concerning Freemasonry, messengers overwhelmingly approved a Home Mission Board report that stopped short of condemning Freemasonry.

The report, as approved by messengers, states: "In light of the fact that many tenets and teachings of Freemasonry are not compatible with Christianity and Southern Baptist doctrine, while others are compatible with Christianity and Southern Baptist doctrine, we therefore recommend that consistent with our denomination's deep convictions regarding the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church, membership in a Masonic Order be a matter of personal conscience."

The recommendation also exhorted Baptists to evaluate Freemasonry "in light of the Lordship of Christ, the teachings of Scripture, and the findings of this report, as led by the Holy Spirit of God."

The HMB report and a study of Freemasonry by the HMB's interfaith witness department were mandated by messengers at the 1992 SBC in Indianapolis.

Messengers rejected an amendment proposed by M.G. "Dan" Daniels of Alabama to dismiss the report and to call Masonic teachings a "mixture of paganism and Christianity."

Brad Allen, an Oklahoma pastor who is chairman of the HMB's board of directors, opposed the amendment, saying it would "strike two of the dearest things to the Baptist heart," the priesthood of the believer and autonomy of the local church.

Ralph Douglas, a former pastor from Pine Bluff, Ark., told fellow messengers: "It breaks my heart to see these kind of things come before us and divide us again and again and again. Settle this thing once and for all. We need to get on to the business of winning souls for Christ."

Although no SBC action was taken targeting the Woman's Missionary Union auxiliary, WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien was questioned over WMU executive board actions in January to enlarge WMU's focus to include other, non-traditional missions opportunities and to produce missions materials on request for other evangelical groups.

At the end of her SBC report, O'Brien was asked by California messenger Wiley Drake:

"Have you in the past, or will you in the future, encourage the WMU to support missions offerings for the CBF?" organization of Baptist moderates now sending missionaries to home and foreign missions fields and promoting an annual missions offering.

"No, we have not in the past," O'Brien responded, "and we do not plan to do that in the future."

The SBC Executive Committee voiced concern in February that WMU would no longer maintain exclusive relationships with the Home and Foreign Mission boards. FMB and HMB trustees subsequently affirmed the resolution. The WMU executive board discussed the issue June 12 in its traditional executive session but determined no response was needed, according to O'Brien's report at the subsequent general session.

Young was elected by acclamation to a second, one-year term as SBC president. Wiping tears from his eyes following his election, Young said, "I believe that under God there will be a new day of missions and evangelism in all our churches."

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The SBC's current first vice president, evangelist Jay Strack of Dallas, was re-elected on the first ballot from among three nominees. Bobby Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church in Daytona Beach, Fla., was elected second vice president against one other nominee. Re-elected without opposition were Porter, of Panama City, Fla., as registration secretary after being nominated by former SBC President Bailey Smith, and David Atchison of Brentwood, Tenn., as recording secretary.

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**SBC wrap-up sidebar
SBC asks agencies to decide
business morality, CBF ties**

**Baptist Pr ss
6/17/93**

By Art Toalston & Louis Moore

HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention agencies and commissions face serious decisions about the moral dimensions of their business practices as well as their ties to a breakaway Baptist organization as a result of motions referred to them during the June 15-17 SBC in Houston.

Three motions were referred to all SBC entities to divest themselves of stock in companies with practices conflicting with the Bible or to discontinue use of charge cards that help fund Planned Parenthood.

Meanwhile, a motion was referred to the SBC's six seminaries seeking to discourage their alumni associations from having exhibits at meetings of Baptist moderates' Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meetings and to withhold SBC Cooperative Program funds from the associations if they do not comply.

The various SBC agencies are to report their decisions on these matters to the 1994 SBC meeting in Orlando.

Also during the 136th session of the Southern Baptist Convention:

-- Jerry Rankin, a 23-year missions veteran, was introduced to the convention as the Foreign Mission Board's new president. Rankin, the FMB's Southeast Asia and Pacific administrator, was elected by a 59-14 vote of trustees in a special meeting June 14 in Houston -- a vote made unanimous on a motion by trustee Paul Pressler of Houston who had voted against Rankin.

Rankin predicted a \$100 million Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and 5,000 missionaries overseas by the year 2000 with "restored hope and confidence in the trustees and the board" among Southern Baptists.

During the SBC, a motion to allow the convention to vote its approval or disapproval of Rankin, "in light of" questions whether he embraces Pentecostal or charismatic doctrine, was referred to the resolutions committee, which did not offer it for convention action.

Controversy surrounded Rankin's nomination over rumors, which he denied as did the 15-member search committee which selected him from 80-plus nominees, that alleged he embraces such doctrine. "My beliefs certainly are consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message and I believe with all my heart the teachings of Scripture," Rankin said in a news conference. All gifts of the Holy Spirit, he maintained, can be operative -- particularly evangelism, prophecy, service and helps on the mission field -- but the greatest sign and wonder is a person's conversion to belief in Jesus Christ.

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-- Messengers adopted two resolutions dealing with homosexuality and abortion. One opposes providing "government endorsement, sanction, recognition, acceptance, or civil rights advantage on the basis of homosexuality" and supports the passage of legislation in Congress to restore the ban on homosexuals in the U.S. military. The other affirms "the biblical prohibition on the taking of unborn human life except to save the life of the mother" and opposes "all efforts by the United States Congress to pass the radical abortion on demand bill, the Freedom of Choice Act."

Other resolutions approved by messengers denounced "every expression of racial and ethnic prejudice, discrimination, and hatred" and called for President Bill Clinton and other international leaders to work toward ending the genocide in the Balkans; urged Clinton to revoke diplomatic relations with the Vatican; decried the Supreme Court's decision in Lee v. Weisman banning faculty-initiated prayers at public school commencements; maintained Jesus Christ is "the sole and sufficient Savior for all persons who have lived or ever shall be" and the only means of salvation is "personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ"; and affirmed the value of the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist funding mechanism for home and foreign missions.

-- Messengers adopted a 1993-94 SBC program allocation budget of \$138,234,735 for SBC agencies and a 1993-94 SBC operating budget of \$4,222,204 for work of the Executive Committee, funding of Baptist World Alliance and the annual SBC meeting and other SBC operations.

-- In referral of motions, as recommended by the committee on order of business, messengers sent one motion to all SBC agencies and institutions to reconsider a motion from 1992 regarding the limiting of severance packages for employees; motions were sent to the Annuity Board to establish a percentage of annuity investments to provide insurance for pastors with no provision for it and that the board appoint a special committee to study the possibility of accident and health "self insurance;" two motions involved the SBC Book of Reports, one directing the Baptist Sunday School Board to publish it and both requiring mailing of it prior to the annual meeting.

-- Ten motions were referred to the Executive Committee. The motions call for prohibiting churches which have ordained women from being represented at the SBC's annual meeting; requiring the annual meeting's parliamentarian to be a Southern Baptist; amending the SBC bylaws for state conventions to name Committee on Committees members rather than the SBC president in consultation with the vice presidents; requiring Executive Committee members to be members of churches which give at least 10 percent of their receipts to the Cooperative Program; asking the SBC president to appoint a special committee to study all program statements of agencies and institutions; requiring gifts from churches to the Cooperative Program to be recorded and printed in the SBC Annual.

-- A motion for an investigation into allegations of harassment of female students by a trustee of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., was ruled out of order by SBC President Ed Young, acting at the recommendation of the committee on order of business. The convention has no authority to direct trustees on internal operation of an institution, committee chairman Fred Powell, a Moore, Okla., minister, told messengers.

Dennis Murphy, a messenger from Minnesota, had offered the motion.

Sid Peterson, Midwestern trustee chairman, responded from a floor microphone on behalf of the seminary's board, stating the motion's mention of a "certain trustee" had impugned the character of every trustee. He said no such allegations have been brought to Midwestern President Milton Ferguson or him. "If the proper procedures are followed," Peterson said, "I assure you the administration and the trustees will vigorously and thoroughly investigate any and all charges and will take appropriate action."

-- Bobby Boyles, pastor of First Baptist Church in Moore, Okla., was elected to deliver the 1994 convention sermon, upon recommendation of the committee on order of business. HMB ethnic work pioneer Oscar Romo will be the alternate convention preacher; Gary Moore, minister of music at Houston's Second Baptist Church, the SBC's music director.

-- A proposal by a former Sunday School Board president, Lloyd Elder, gained support from 30-plus Baptist state convention presidents and executive directors in a June 14 meeting in a Houston hotel. The group chose a six-member work group to act on 20 "action plans" proposed by Elder for "calling the Southern Baptist family together." Elder's ideas were endorsed prior to the SBC by Herschel Hobbs, 85-year-old former SBC president and retired Oklahoma pastor.

Rodney C. Osborn, an anesthesiologist who was immediate past president of the State Convention Presidents Fellowship and of the Illinois Baptist State Association, was named during the meeting to lead the small work group.

Other members selected were pastor Dick Maples, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; director of missions Joe Baker, president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio; pastor Rodney Travis, president of the Missouri Baptist Convention; R. Quinn Pugh, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New York; and Cecil Sims, executive director of the Northwest Baptist Convention. Elder, professor of biblical studies and preaching at Belmont University in Nashville, will work with the group.

Elder, in the Houston meeting, dismissed comments of critics such as Morris Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president, who charged that Elder's proposals -- particularly the six action plans centered around a "vision of governance partnership" for state conventions to nominate persons for the SBC Executive Committee, Committee on Committees, Committee on Nominations and agency governing boards -- violate Baptist polity by creating a connectionalism. According to Elder, connectionalism was the norm during the first 86 years of Southern Baptist history and exists today in terms of finances through the Cooperative Program.

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Credentials committee affirms
Clinton's home church messengers By Linda Lawson

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6/17/93

HOUSTON (BP)--Responding to a motion attacking President Bill Clinton's policies on homosexuality, the Southern Baptist Convention's credentials committee rejected an attempt to unseat messengers from the president's Little Rock church.

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The committee unanimously adopted a recommendation stating: "Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., is in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work."

The motion by Bo Hammock, 32, pastor of Providence Village Baptist Church of Lake Butler, Fla., claimed Clinton is "doing more to promote and encourage homosexuality than anyone in the history of the United States."

Charging Immanuel with inaction, the motion stated, "They are, by their silence, supporting Bill Clinton's endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle."

After hearing from Immanuel's pastor Rex Horne, the committee backed a recommendation stating it received no evidence Immanuel affirms, approves or endorses homosexual behavior, but received ample evidence to the contrary.

"We recommend the messengers of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas, 1993, be considered duly seated," the committee reported. "We request that the motion of Bo Hammock of Florida be ruled not well taken."

Speaking before the committee, Immanuel pastor Rex Horne, 39, called the motion a "witch hunt," adding he was "hurt, saddened and embarrassed" for his church and its 10 messengers.

"I preach that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is a sin," he said. "My concern is what this convention is going to do, what this committee's going to do about stopping some of this that's nothing more than a witch hunt."

"If Immanuel Baptist Church can be called to give a defense of themselves, any church in our convention can be called," he continued.

Hammock's June 15 motion came the same day the convention gave second and final approval to a constitutional amendment declaring churches which act to "affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior" as "not in cooperation" with the SBC and, therefore, not eligible to send messengers to annual convention meetings.

In its recommendation, the credentials committee, at the suggestion of SBC attorney Jim Guenther, stated Hammock's motion failed to meet the committee's understanding of how to apply the SBC's constitution.

To clarify future challenges that might arise, they stated:

- 1) A church acts only by an official vote of the congregation.
- 2) A church is not out of cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention because of a position on homosexuality held by a member or members of the church.
- 3) The convention retains the right to determine when a church may send messengers to this convention. The test of cooperation is a test of the church and not a test of its members.

Committee member Lee Shepherd of Jacksonville, Fla., said Hammock should have talked privately with Horne before bringing any motion to the convention floor.

"Where do we stop?" Shepherd asked. "We're not going to be having a convention because we aren't going to be able to seat anybody."

Several Little Rock pastors and the executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention expressed support for Immanuel.

In a letter faxed to the committee, Arkansas Baptist Executive Director Don Moore called Immanuel "the flagship of Southern Baptist mission support in Arkansas throughout the years."

Immanuel has led the state in Cooperative Program giving for more than 30 years, giving \$411,485 in 1992, 19.9 percent of their income, to the Cooperative Program. They are 13th in the Southern Baptist Convention in total gifts through the Cooperative Program, Moore said.

"Baptist history provides no precedent for a convention or an association to tell a church what it has to do with regard to the disciplining of an individual church member," Moore continued. "Immanuel Baptist Church has not given its endorsement or approval of the man or the positions held by President Clinton. If such action is taken (unseating of messengers), the convention will have left its historic polity and must be prepared to rebuke, censor and discipline every other church that does not practice church discipline against its errant members."

Hammock, who acknowledged he should have called Horne before the convention, maintained Immanuel Baptist Church should withdraw fellowship from Clinton (remove him from the church membership). Failure to do so constitutes inaction, he said.

"I believe if I had not made that motion, that motion would have been made (by someone else)," said Hammock, whose church includes more than 300 members.

Horne reiterated after the committee decision he has expressed his views on homosexuality, abortion and other issues to Clinton on several occasions.

"How clear can you be that abortion is wrong and homosexuality is sin?" Horne asked. "We try to show grace and love, show the straight path and encourage people to take it."

Guenther said the new constitutional provision regarding churches which "affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior" allows one messenger to challenge messengers of another church "on the basis of that church's faith and practice."

"The convention is in a learning mode as to precisely what they have enacted," Guenther said, predicting more challenges under this provision could be forthcoming in future years. "If this committee believes this constitutional provision ill-advised, then the remedy is to revisit the constitutional provision itself."

SBC registration secretary Lee Porter who oversees the work of the credentials committee said: "I have a problem with a church being blamed publicly without any real evidence. I hope we can somehow develop a better system to handle challenges in the future."

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David Winfrey contributed to this story.

SBC messengers approve
HMB Freemasonry report

By David Winfrey

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HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention messengers overwhelmingly approved a Home Mission Board recommendation that Masonic lodge membership be a matter of private choice.

The recommendation, approved June 16 by the SBC in Houston, is part of a four-page report, requested during last year's SBC in Indianapolis.

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The report states, "many tenets and teachings of Freemasonry are not compatible with Christianity and Southern Baptist doctrine while others are compatible."

"We therefore recommend that consistent with our denomination's deep convictions regarding the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church, membership in a Masonic Order be a matter of personal conscience."

Messengers rejected an amendment proposed by M.G. "Dan" Daniels of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala. The amendment would have removed the recommendation and called Masonic teachings a "mixture of paganism and Christianity."

Brad Allen, chairman of the directors for the Home Mission Board, opposed the amendment, saying it would "strike two of the dearest things to the Baptist heart," the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church.

"If we can't trust the soul competence of the believer in Jesus Christ to do the right thing, we're sunk," said Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church of Duncan, Okla.

Before debate began, SBC President Ed Young cautioned messengers in their debate by quoting John 13:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye have love one for another."

Ron Sutherland, of Rehoboth Baptist Church in Tucker, Ga., a former Mason, said he supported the recommendation even though he did not think it was strong enough.

"I have never seen any other cult any more destructive than this one," he said.

Wallace Finrock, of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, defended Masons as a supporter of religious expression.

"We would have been far worse off as Baptists in Texas had it not been for Freemasons," he said, adding that the first Baptist Sunday school in Dallas met in a Masonic hall.

Allen said the HMB board of directors backed the report, "knowing that we're not going to please everyone because we're Baptist."

Some supported the sentiments of Ralph Douglas, messenger from First Baptist Church of Pine Bluff, Ark., and a former pastor, who said, "It breaks my heart to see these kind of things come before us and divide us again and again and again."

"Settle this thing once and for all," he said. "We need to get on to the business of winning souls for Christ. Let's go on with Bold Mission Thrust," the SBC's global missions thrust.

Masonic leaders hailed the vote as a positive move by Southern Baptists.

"I am pleased that the Southern Baptist Convention has not embarrassed itself by yielding to an extremist splinter group whose demands run so counter to the convention's traditional support of the freedom of each Southern Baptist's personal conscience and the autonomy of each local Baptist church," said John Boettjer, editor of The Scottish Rite Journal.

Boettjer added the study and debate has increased Masons' awareness and sensitivity for concerns by Southern Baptists and other groups.

Home Mission Board President Larry L. Lewis thanked messengers for their support of what he called an "accurate, fair report and recommendation that I believe most Baptists would want to live with."

"I don't think most Baptists want us to condemn Freemasonry," he said, adding that he estimated SBC messengers' support for the HMB report to be 75-80 percent on the vote. "We don't win people to Christ by condemning them."

In a press conference after the vote, Lewis said he recognizes the importance of the issue among some Southern Baptists. He questioned, however, whether the matter warranted the \$111,000 price tag for a study by the board's interfaith witness department.

"With the world all around us lost and going to hell, I'm not sure that the large expenditure of time and resources on this issue were justified," he said. "It did cost more than any other study we've done."

Noticeably absent from the debate was Larry Holly, the Beaumont, Texas, physician who last year requested a study of the compatibility of Freemasonry with Christian and Southern Baptist teachings. The author of two books on the subject, Holly also appeared before the HMB study committee during its research on the matter.

Lewis said he hopes the study and report will satisfy most messengers so Southern Baptists can focus on planting churches and evangelism. "I would not predict that the issue ever will totally be settled."

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Sarah Zimmerman and Philip Poole contributed to this story.

SBC amends constitution to bar churches affirming homosexuality By Brenda J. Sanders **Baptist Press**
6/17/93

HOUSTON (BP)--For the second consecutive year, Southern Baptist Convention messengers approved a constitutional amendment declaring churches which act to "affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior" as "not in cooperation" with the SBC and, therefore, not eligible to send messengers to annual convention meetings.

The amendment was first considered by messengers at the 1992 SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis and was recommended again this year by the SBC Executive Committee since changes in the constitution require approval during two consecutive annual meetings.

Speaking in opposition to the recommendation, messenger Larry Bishop of Norman, Okla., said: "If we adopt this amendment, we do not follow Jesus or trust Jesus sufficiently; we do not love through Jesus. Instead, we seek to substitute an illusionary certainty of the written word. ... We parade our piety before the nation. ... We communicate hopelessness to the churches who make this mistake. And that's all it is, a mistake."

Messengers applauded Executive Committee member C. Ray Fuller of Joliet, Ill., when he said in support of the recommendation: "We want to assure messengers that without a specific, unprecedented move of this nature, we continue to be supportive of churches who reject us. ... We must respond and give them an expulsion of love in acknowledging that they have pulled away from what we as Southern Baptists hold dear to our hearts."

SBC messengers voted to adopt the constitutional revision with little opposition.

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Also during the Executive Committee's report to the convention, opposition was raised to a recommendation to amend SBC bylaw 19 providing for representation from several Baptist entities on the General Council of the Baptist World Alliance.

Messenger Phillip Senn of Troy, Tenn., moved to amend the committee's recommendation, omitting representation on the General Council by the president of the Woman's Missionary Union.

Referring to the WMU's auxiliary status with the convention, Senn said, "I in no way am trying to inflame anyone. I just feel that it is improper for this convention to assign a representative to serve on the Baptist World Alliance General Council that has not been elected by this body."

Executive Committee member Kenneth Barnett of Lakewood, Colo., was applauded by messengers when he spoke in opposition to Senn's amendment, saying, "The Woman's Missionary Union has always worked with the Baptist World Alliance. They have served with distinction in the past and as long as they serve with that distinction I see no reason why WMU ought to be left off."

Messengers voted down Senn's amendment and approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee, including WMU representation on the BWA General Council.

Convention messengers voted to adopt all other recommendations of the Executive Committee with virtually no opposition. These actions included adoption of a 1993-94 SBC program allocation budget of \$138,234,735 for SBC agencies and a 1993-94 SBC operating budget of \$4,222,204, encompassing work of the Executive Committee, funding of Baptist World Alliance and the annual SBC meeting.

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**Musical drama highlights
Sunday School Board report**

By Chip Alford & Philip Poole

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

HOUSTON (BP)--As hundreds of teen-agers flooded the platform, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. encouraged adults attending the Southern Baptist Convention June 15 to support young people participating in a new sexual abstinence campaign.

"True Love Waits," a nationwide campaign aimed at teens, was launched this spring. Houston-area youth joining Draper in the board's report to the SBC, were representative of thousands across the country who already have pledged to remain sexually pure until marriage.

"True Love Waits" was just one of several new programs and emphases highlighted during the board's 90-minute report and dramatic musical extravaganza.

The presentation featured performances by country music singer Ricky Skaggs and contemporary Christian artists Cynthia Clawson and Wayne Watson as well as a cast of some 700 choir and orchestra members from First and Second Baptist churches in Houston. The drama was produced and directed by Gary Moore, Second Baptist's minister of music, and Gerald Ray, minister of music at First Baptist.

Also featured in the musical drama were movie actor Dean Jones and a drill team from Brentwood Baptist Church in Houston.

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The drama, which drew two standing ovations from a crowded hall at the George R. Brown Convention Center, featured costumes and sets provided by both First and Second Baptist churches. Among the props and sets were a giant Bible, the ark of the covenant and a crystal throne. The presentation related the life of Moses to the Sunday School Board's vision of assisting local churches and believers "to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best worldwide provider of relevant, high-quality, high-value Christian products and services."

In the official report to the convention of the board's activities for the previous year, trustee chairman Dan Collins of Mobile, Ala., noted two primary functions of the Sunday School Board: the ministry mission and a commitment to a greater evangelization role of bringing the world to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Collins said the board functions uniquely in Southern Baptist life as both a business and a ministry, but is committed to have a ministry impact "even as we sell our products and our services."

"The board is uniquely poised to help us define and redefine who we are as Southern Baptists, even in these uncertain times in our denomination," Collins added. "We want to reach out and touch people with our products and services."

Draper noted the development of new products suggested by board employees, even while older products continue to have impact. The board currently produces more than 13,000 products and publications.

"We have so many new things, it would take us all night to tell you about them," Draper said.

He specifically noted the "incredible impact" of MasterLife, a multi-week personal discipleship program that has been used by former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega. Noriega became a Christian while imprisoned in Florida.

Draper also invited messengers to participate in the new Family Worship Bible Reading Plan, which provides daily Bible readings from The Family Worship Bible published by the board. The plan contains suggestions for family devotionals, worship helps, family worship activities and songs.

"We encourage Southern Baptists to commit to read the Word of God together each day in 1994," Draper said.

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**Music, multi-media challenge
walls hindering mission outreach**

By Robert O'Brien, Sarah Zimmerman & Philip Poole

Baptist Press

6/17/93

HOUSTON (BP)--A Southern Baptist musical extravaganza confronted walls that home and foreign missionaries must breach to penetrate the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Featuring an array of music and media, the event challenged messengers to the June 16 evening session of the Southern Baptist Convention to eliminate attitudes which prevent missions involvement.

Costumed historical figures on stage and modern-day missionaries on video demonstrated how they have scaled the walls of fear, superstition, ignorance, cultural divisiveness and prejudice across the history of world missions.

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But then, as set walls fell, the focus narrowed to individual Southern Baptists and the personal barriers they must hurdle to allow God's will to work in their lives.

"Do you recognize this wall?" asked Christi Myers, news anchor of KTRK in Houston, who interviewed the historical characters and the missionaries in the dramatic presentation.

"You should," she said, "because it represents your barriers to the perfect will of God in your life" as Southern Baptists seek to minister throughout the United States and in more than 129 nations around the world.

She described it as a "wall of selfishness" made of "bricks ... fastened together by the power of your will in resisting the call of God upon your life."

"Fear, superstition, ignorance, culture, prejudice and persecution are nothing in comparison to the power of this wall in stopping you from climbing over it to victory."

An enthusiastic audience of Southern Baptists repeatedly interrupted the session with applause in appreciation for the cast of professional actors, the choirs and orchestras of First and Second Baptist Churches of Houston and the combined choirs of the Union Baptist Association.

From a foreign missionary leading Backyard Bible Clubs in East German housing complexes to a home missionary feeding hurricane victims in south Florida, the audience got a glimpse of Southern Baptists' worldwide mission efforts.

Dale Thorne of the Foreign Mission Board said he sees walls tumble in Israel as Arabs and Jews become Christians and worship together. In one area, Thorne said many Jews are hearing the gospel for the first time.

Home missionary Ballard White said he had to overcome walls of cultural resistance when he began working on a Sioux Indian reservation in South Dakota more than 20 years ago. Then, the church had six members who were all Anglo. Now the church has more than 230 members, and it has regular services in five communities, plus work in nine other areas.

Home missionaries working with the international community, Ted Mall and Don Gerlach, stressed the need to share Christ with people who may be in the United States only a short time. Mall, a native of India, works at the United Nations, and Gerlach ministers to seaman at the port in Baltimore.

"You never know what happens to seed planted in Jesus' name," said Gerlach, who meets people from 127 countries.

Mall said building relationships with people from other countries and inviting them to Bible studies leads to chances to witness -- his "first and foremost objective." When people return to their homeland and share their newfound faith, Mall said they witness to people he will never meet.

Southern Baptists may never meet people in China, but they are represented there by people like Charlie Wilson. Indigenous churches in China are "filled and overflowing," and 13 seminaries in China are training Christian leaders, Wilson said. He added that volunteers are needed for teaching positions and a number of other professional roles in China.

John Ingouf of the Foreign Mission Board also issued a plea for volunteers. Four hundred Southern Baptists are needed in November for an evangelism emphasis in India. Less than 100 have made definite plans to participate, Ingouf said. He noted that only 2.6 percent of India's 860 million residents claim to be Christians.

The audience was challenged to overcome sin, selfishness and indifference to be involved in missions. Don Kammerdiener, Foreign Mission Board executive vice president, and Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president, issued pleas for financial and prayerful support of missions as well as for people to commit their lives to mission careers.

As missionaries stood among the audience, 619 people made commitments to home or foreign missions, according to preliminary reports. Another 1,800 people made decisions to support missions by giving more sacrificially or praying more consistently.

Before the musical and media presentation, Lewis and Kammerdiener reported on the work the two mission boards.

Lewis said Southern Baptists started 1,281 churches in 1992, up 14 percent from the previous year, and that 71,000 youth and adults volunteered in home missions. He also noted that 2,164 babies were born to women ministered to through crisis pregnancy centers, and 832 women counseled there received Jesus Christ as Savior.

In response to a question from messenger Steven Wylie of Virginia, Lewis said the Home Mission Board is considering new programs to provide campus chaplains or ministers in high school similar to college campus ministries already sponsored by Southern Baptists.

Lewis noted that the annual "See You at the Pole" emphasis each fall has resulted in hundreds of personal decisions by youth and that prayer and Bible study groups have been started in many schools as a direct result of this one-day emphasis.

Kammerdiener said many had expressed the sentiment to him that "we're on the move" in foreign missions.

He has served for the past eight months as interim FMB president. Jerry A. Rankin was elected new FMB president just prior to the start of the SBC meeting.

Kammerdiener noted that more than 250,000 persons -- a record number -- were baptized in 1992 as the result of Southern Baptist overseas missions efforts. He also noted that a record 32,000 churches in other countries were related to Southern Baptist work.

With reference to recent concerns about the future of the FMB, Kammerdiener told convention messengers that he had a "plea and a promise" for them.

"Our promise is that we will be a user-friendly Foreign Mission Board," he said. "Our plea is that you will give us a chance. We want to be in partnership with you as we reach out and touch the world for Jesus Christ."

Kammerdiener also said he had an exhortation for "our friends in the press."

Noting that many stories had been written through the years about denominational controversy, Kammerdiener initially surprised the audience by encouraging the press "to continue to comment on our controversy.

"But, there's only one controversy and that is the controversy that reigns with the Evil One (Satan) in our world. Talk about that controversy!"

Rankin made a brief appearance at the conclusion of the FMB report and echoed calls for continued Southern Baptist support of missions. He also commended Kammerdiener for his work as interim president.

"One of the encouragements I have as new president," Rankin said, "is the assurance that Don Kammerdiener is committed to missions and is committed to continue serving the FMB as executive vice president."

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**Southern Baptists must proclaim
the basic gospel, Graham tells SBC**

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

By Ken Camp

HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptists must stick to the basics of a gospel that has the power to impact society, the church and individual lives, according to Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas.

Graham delivered the annual convention sermon at the June 16 morning session of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center.

Biblical Christians must not lose hope, in spite of an "anti-Christian bias" in the media, losses in electoral politics and a pervasive secularism in society, Graham said.

"By all accounts, we are losing the cultural war of our society," he said, adding that persons committed to a conservative view of morality have been "out-numbered and out-voted."

To those who claim that biblical views of morality are "prehistoric," Graham agreed, saying, "They were ordained and settled in the heart of God before time began."

God is judging America by "taking his hand off the lid" and allowing the nation to experience the consequences of its sin, he said.

Nevertheless, Southern Baptists must continue to preach an uncompromising gospel, knowing that it is more powerful than any cultural influences or societal trends, he said.

Too many preachers are more interested in style than substance, and they preach a "kinder, gentler evangelism" that soft-peddles the doctrine of eternal punishment, Graham said.

"If there was more hell in our pulpits, I'm convinced there would be less hell in our schools, our streets and our homes," he said.

If Southern Baptists "emasculate" the gospel by downplaying its confrontational aspects, they risk joining other denominations in the "graveyard of ecclesiastical history," Graham maintained.

The gospel includes proclamation, declaration, invitation and transformation, and Southern Baptists dare not neglect any aspect of the unchanging message of God's Word, he said.

"The gospel is not true because it works. The gospel works because it is true," he said.

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**Author, pastor Charles Swindoll
urges messengers to have integrity**

By Brenda J. Sanders

HOUSTON (BP)--Urging messengers to live with integrity, popular author and radio personality Charles R. Swindoll delivered the final address during the June 17 closing session of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

"My message to you today who preach the Word of God and who love the Word of God is that you not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, so that you live the Word of God," said Swindoll, pastor of First Evangelical Free Church, Fullerton, Calif., and newly named president of Dallas Theological Seminary. "Don't just teach it. Don't just preach it. Don't just quote it."

The audience applauded when Swindoll encouraged, "Be sure you live it when the church is watching and live it when nobody's watching."

Quoting Psalm 26:1, "Vindicate me, O Lord, according to my integrity," he noted the word integrity means soundness of heart and life.

"Integrity has to do with being financially accountable, personally reliable and privately innocent of impure motives and improper conduct," Swindoll said. "Churches, that is what you need to expect from your pastor; and pastors, that is what we want to see in our flocks. It is a mutual working, an interweaving of integrity from life to life."

Swindoll asked the crowd: "If it were possible for me to slip into your inner world, the world that happens when the doors are locked and the crowd has gone home, and you are alone in the secrecy of your world and your thoughts, what goes on there?"

He continued, "God cares about your mind and the stuff you're putting in it. He cares about your eyes and the things you allow them to see. He cares about your lips and the things you say in the parking lot after board meetings."

Swindoll urged Southern Baptists to be people of integrity, "no matter what may plague us or trouble us. I'm not talking about being perfect men and women, I'm simply talking about being people who are authentic, who keep their word, who return their phone calls, who receive money for certain projects and make sure every dime goes to that project, who can be trusted with whatever authority God gives you.

"I challenge every one of you who serve Christ as a leader in his church that you see yourself as a godly representative of his Word, that you realize you are a model being watched by young and old alike - not that it might freeze you by intimidation, but that it might free you to be the man you really are," he said.

"I think part of having integrity is admitting it when you're struggling," Swindoll shared. "I think it's not leaving the phoney impression in people's minds that you are living above and beyond the pressures of life."

The California pastor insisted, "The power of one is still an incredible power. ... I believe you can live your life free of corruption -- not free of sin, but free of corruption. I want to urge you to remember the value of one person who does that. You become the one person in your church committed to that kind of lifestyle.

"True integrity implies you do what's right when no one else is looking," Swindoll emphasized, "as well as when everyone else may be compromising.

"Real integrity stays in place whether the test is adversity or prosperity," he continued. "Sustained integrity calls for constant personal analysis."

Concluding, he said, "We must allow the sword of the Spirit to cut deeply into the soul and spirit of our beings and cut out the tumors that are bringing disease and corruption to our minds and hearts. ... Be a man, a woman of God in a generation that has lost its way!"

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**Wif of SBC leader killed
in Houston car wreck**

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

HOUSTON (BP)--Mollie Mitchell of Winter Park, Fla., 62, wife of Southern Baptist Executive Committee member J.C. Mitchell, was killed in an auto accident June 16 while attending the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

A van carrying the Mitchells and two other couples was hit broadside by a truck while waiting in traffic. Mollie Mitchell, 62, reportedly was thrown from the van, which then rolled over her and crushed her.

The accident happened near their downtown Houston hotel. J.C. Mitchell was in stable condition Wednesday night in Hermann Hospital in Houston.

Also injured in the accident were Jim and Becky Oliver of Spartanburg, S.C., and Kenny and Sandi Spain of Conway, S.C.

Jim Oliver and Kenny Spain suffered minor injuries. Becky Oliver and Sandi Spain were treated and released from local hospitals.

Jim Oliver is pastor of Roebuck Baptist Church in Spartanburg. Kenny Spain is pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Conway. Oliver is a member of the Executive Committee; Spain is a former member.

The couples had just left the SBC Executive Committee organizational meeting at a downtown hotel. According to convention officials, the group was en route to a dinner for Executive Committee members at the Houston home of Paul Pressler, a former member of the committee.

Mollie Mitchell was a native of Texas and an accomplished pianist. She was a graduate of Temple (Texas) High School, Mary Hardin-Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

J.C. Mitchell is founder of the Pembroke Foundation in Winter Park, a church-starting organization which he now directs. He was pastor of First Baptist Church, Winter Park, for more than 20 years.

In addition to her husband, Mollie Mitchell is survived by three children: Susan Chubb, Lake Mary, Fla.; John C. Mitchell II, Winter Park, Fla.; and Sharon Pickerill, Atlanta, Ga.

Both daughters are married to Baptist pastors.

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Baptist Press

**Filipinos establish
national fellowship**

By Tim Nicholas

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

HOUSTON (BP)--The Filipino Southern Baptist Fellowship of North America organized during the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston.

With 325 churches and mission congregations and 125 pastors in 27 states, the group has pledged itself to double their number by the end of the century.

Jaime Prieto, national consultant for Filipinos for the Home Mission Board, said the group will emphasize evangelism, church planting, church growth and ministries in developing their work.

Officers of the group are Paul Lacanilao, pastor of Cornerstone International Christian Church, SBC, La Puente, Calif., chairman; Seb Manganag, pastor of Philippine International Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., first vice-chairman; Romy Manansala, pastor of The City Chapel, SBC, Jersey City, N.J., second vice-chairman; Noel de Guzman, pastor of Calvary Church, SBC, Westhills, Calif., secretary; Virgilio Oberes, pastor of First Filipino Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., treasurer; and Darwin Sokoken, pastor of Chicago Fellowship, SBC, Chicago, editor.

California has the largest number of Filipino congregations with 52. The number of Filipinos in the state is estimated at 1.3 million. Other areas with high Filipino populations are Hawaii and New York-New Jersey with 300,000 each, and Illinois with 200,000 -- 150,000 in Chicago alone.

Many of the churches are developed near hospitals and military bases. Prieto said that the Philippines is the number one country for exporting nurses to the U.S., second for doctors.

Romulo Soy, state consultant for Filipinos in California, said a key strategy is to equip pastors through Ethnic Leadership Development, a extension program of theological education.

Specialized ministries include one to World War II veterans who have come to the U.S. to claim the citizenship promised at the end of the war. Darwin Sokoken, pastor of the Chicago Fellowship, and a lawyer, said he is helping these persons deal with Immigration authorities and search for jobs.

Manansala said he is teaching classes to immigrants on the American language and culture.

Another ministry is to undocumented Filipinos. "We don't ask, what is your status?" said one fellowship member. "We ask, instead, where did you come from in the Philippines?"

Said another, "It's good to know we have a national family now. Now we can recommend people in our fellowship to assist in the Southern Baptist Convention."

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**Southern Baptist organizations
elect officers, plan '94 meetings**

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

HOUSTON (BP)--Numerous Southern Baptist Convention-related organizations met prior to the annual meeting of the SBC in Houston, tending to such business as new officers and upcoming meetings.

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Among them:

-- Southern Baptist National Hispanic Fellowship.

Officers elected: Rudy Hernandez, evangelist from Grand Prairie, Texas, president; Hugo Campo, Home Mission Board catalytic missionary in San Diego, Calif., vice president; Yamile Fernandez, pastor of Centro Buenas Nuevas, Santa Anna, Calif., board chairman.

-- Southern Baptist Religious Education Association.

Officers elected for 1993-94: president, Bill Taylor, associate pastor/minister of education at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas; president-elect, Michael Harton, director of the Sunday school and discipleship development division for the Virginia Baptist General Board, Richmond, Va.; vice president, Barbara Stauffer, minister of education at Providence Baptist Church in Opelika, Ala.; eastern vice president, Sandy Sigmon, programs assistant for the Atlanta Baptist Association; central vice president, Warren W. Brattlof, associate pastor/education and administration, Oakhursts Baptist Church, Clarksdale, Miss.; midwestern vice president, Bobby L. Walker, director of church and program ministries for the Dallas Baptist Association; western vice president, Dan Boling, professor of Christian education at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.; secretary/treasurer, Lawrence Klempnauer, vice president for student services at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; and assistant secretary/treasurer, Oscar W. Calhoun Jr., minister of education and administration at First Baptist Church of Plant City, Fla.

Officers for 1994-95: president, Michael Harton; president-elect, Carolyn Jenkins, minister to students, First Baptist Church, Nashville; vice president, Cos Davis, director of the preschool-children's department, church growth-Sunday school division, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; eastern vice president, Clay Edge, minister of education, First Baptist Church of Fort Walton Beach, Fla.; central vice president, Thomas Pelphrey, associate pastor, Third Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky.; midwestern vice president, Gail Linam, assistant professor, Dallas Baptist University; western vice president, Katherine Gooden, minister of education, Emmanuel Baptist Church, San Jose, Calif.; secretary/treasurer, Lawrence Klempnauer; and assistant secretary/treasurer, Gerry A. Peak, minister to single adults and families, First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va.

-- Southern Baptist Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Convocation.

Huey Perry, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's chaplaincy division, told the group of his response to rumors that the moderate-led Cooperative Baptist Fellowship might get into the endorsement of chaplains. Perry said he had told CBF coordinator Cecil Sherman that endorsement of chaplains has been given to the Chaplains Commission by the Southern Baptist Convention and: "We will resist any attempt on the part of any group within the Southern Baptist Convention to endorse persons." It was not an issue of "protecting territory," Perry said, but of protecting a system that has evolved among a large number of faith groups. The issue, hypothetical now, would become real should an endorsed chaplain find himself or herself a member of a church that no longer is a part of the SBC but is affiliated with the CBF. He or she would lose endorsement by the SBC.

-- African American Fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Officers elected: Joe Ratliff, pastor of Houston's Brentwood Baptist Church, president; E.W. McCall, pastor, St. Stephens Baptist Church, La Puente, Calif., first vice president; Eugene Gibson, pastor, Mission of Faith Baptist Church, Chicago, second vice president; Dennis Mitchell, pastor, Central Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala., secretary; Jerry Daily, pastor, Macedonia Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., treasurer; and Thelma Kennedy, Flint, Mich., historian.

-- Southern Baptist Computer Users Association.

New officers: Laurie Story, director of information services, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, president; Charles Williamson Jr., director of systems development, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, membership vice president; Don Magee, data processing director, Louisiana Baptist Convention, newsletter editor; Al Farmer, computer services manager, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, SBCNet system operator; David Stovall, director of computer services and telecommunication, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, treasurer; and Pat Moore, management information systems group manager, Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Ala., secretary.

Next year's meeting: to be in conjunction with the June SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Highlights: This was the meeting in the organization's 21-year history held in conjunction with an annual meeting of the SBC. Adopted purpose statement: "To coordinate the computer-related activities of the various organizations of the Southern Baptist Convention." Approved a project team to recommend non-binding standards for electronic mail usage at SBC entities and to explore possibility of a common electronic mail carrier for the SBC.

-- Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions.

Officers re-elected: Ken Chadwick, Salt Lake City, president; T.O. Spicer, Joplin, Mo., vice president; Charles Nunn, Richmond, Va., second vice president; Ernest Sadler, Pascagoula, Miss., secretary; and John Dent, Walhalla, S.C., treasurer.

-- Southern Baptist New Work Fellowship.

New officers: E.B. Brooks, director of church extension, Baptist General Convention of Texas, president; Cliff Matthews, director of church extension, Florida Baptist Convention, program vice president; Tom Kelly, director of black church extension, California Southern Baptist Convention, membership vice president; and Bob Watson, director of church extension, North Carolina Baptist Convention, administration vice president.

-- Southeast Chinese Baptist Association.

New officers: Winston S. Chou, pastor of Chinese Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., president; Abraham Ho, pastor of Charlotte (N.C.) Chinese Baptist Church, first vice president; Kenneth Yan, pastor of Memphis (Tenn.) Chinese Baptist Church, second vice president; Yua Liang, mission pastor of Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville, treasurer; Paul Tong, pastor of Columbia (Md.) Baptist Church, secretary.

-- Southwestern Chinese Baptist Association.

New officers: Victor Wong, pastor of Chinese Baptist Church, Houston, president; Ted Lam, of Tulsa (Okla.) International Baptist Church, vice president and treasurer; and Paul Chao, of Stillwater (Okla.) Chinese Baptist Mission, secretary.

-- Council of Korean Southern Baptist Churches.

Elected as officers: David Yong Bong Lee, pastor of Houston's Calvary Korean Baptist Church, president; Pyong Ok Lee, pastor of Louisville (Ky.) Korean Baptist Church, first vice president; Ki Tak Kim, pastor of Orlando (Fla.) Central Korean Baptist Church, second vice president; James Jung Moon Suk, pastor of Chicago's Antioch Korean Baptist Church, recording secretary.

-- Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship.

Elected as officers: president, Jerry Young, Beth Tephillah congregation, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; vice president, Mike Copen, Petah Tikvah congregation, Springfield, Ill.; treasurer, Oswald Harman, Northside Baptist Church, Highlands, Texas; and secretary, Tom Cox, Whitehall Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio.

-- Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists.

Elected as officers: Ron Pledger, Atlanta, president; Tom Cox, Fayetteville, Ark., secretary; Kay Cox, Fayetteville, Ark., treasurer; Bud Led, Blue Springs, Mo., music director; Charles Killough, Houston, parliamentarian.

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Compiled by Art Toalston.

**While SBC meets in Houston,
World Changers impact lives**

**Baptist Press
6/17/93**

By Brian Hawkins

HOUSTON (BP)--As some 18,000 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention met in Houston to discuss changing the world, more than 250 youth became "World Changers" and impacted the lives of 20 families in some of the poorest areas of the city.

Houston resident Blanca Padilla described the presence of the World Changers at her home as "a miracle that happened because the young people wanted to do this for my family."

"Having these kids work on my house is something I didn't expect to get done any time soon because I didn't have the money," said Padilla. "The kids working on my house are so nice, and they've been wonderful to me and my kids."

More than 4,000 youth and leaders will participate in 13 World Changers work projects throughout the United States and Puerto Rico this summer. The Houston project is being held June 12-19. Churches from Texas, Georgia, Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi are participating in the project.

World Changers work projects, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, are designed to give junior and senior high school youth hands-on experience in missions work.

Youth worked on 10 project sites in the Fourth Ward, one of the city's poorest areas, as well as in the West End and Heights areas. Some projects were less than two miles from the George R. Brown Convention Center where messengers to the SBC met.

One crew worked to remove and repair a crumbling bell tower from Macedonia Baptist Church. The crew also did interior repairs to the church.

Jason Coker, 16, of Calvary Baptist Church, Cleveland, Tenn., said working on the church bell tower proved to be a challenge.

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"We had to set up scaffolding because the church roof is so steep. Our crew has had to work in some interesting positions on that roof," Coker said.

Crew chief Alan Harrington of Immanuel Baptist Church, Odessa, Texas, said his crew has learned to work as a team.

"They have come together well to do a nasty job, and all of them have pitched in and have not complained about doing dirty work," Harrington said.

"This experience has taught me to have faith in God in all I do," said Sonya Creighton, 15, of First Baptist Church, Natchitoches, La. "My crew was doing work on the roof, and I am very afraid of heights. It was only my faith that helped me overcome my fear."

Chris Leibrum, youth consultant for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, is coordinator of the project. Leibrum said the significance of the work project lies in the change that occurs in both participants and residents of the homes.

"It's the process of seeing the two worlds change that makes World Changers so unique," Leibrum said. "The people in the community have their lives changed by the youth, and the youth have their mindsets and lives changed through exposure to the community and the fulfillment of God's call to be a servant."

Work at the project is not only a learning experience in basic construction skills, but a time of spiritual growth.

"World Changers has helped me learn about construction work, but more importantly, this experience has shown me how being a servant is essential to Christian spiritual growth," said Jimmy Croome, 15, of First Baptist Church, Sandersville, Ga.

"World Changers has shown me how to live my life to the fullest extent and show God's love in my life through helping others," said Steve Market, 16, of First Baptist Church, El Paso, Texas.

Youth minister Hal Flickinger, 26, of First Baptist Church, El Paso, said his youth group has learned to be flexible in undertaking any task.

"As for me personally, seeing the abject poverty that people have to live in has made me realize how much we take for granted what we have," said Flickinger.

"This week has been incredible for me and a lot of people," Coker said. "I've had more fun this week than I've had in my entire life. When you think about it, it's really not that fun, but it's a spiritual high nobody can touch."