

December 15, 1958

### Appointments Pave Way For New State Group

PHOENIX, Ariz.--(BP)--The appointment of two new denominational workers by the executive board of Baptist General Convention of Arizona here helps pave the way for formation of an independent Baptist state convention serving Utah, Idaho, and Nevada.

Churches in those three states---with the exception of those in western Nevada---are presently affiliated with Arizona convention. They plan to become part of an independent convention in the near future.

Roland Smith, pastor, Highland Baptist Church, Salt Lake City, Utah, was elected educational director for the three-state area working jointly under Arizona convention and the Baptist Sunday School Board. He will continue to live in Salt Lake City. The election is effective Jan. 1.

Arizona convention elected Roy Ferguson, pastor, First Baptist Church, Kearns, Utah, to become area missionary for Idaho Jan. 1. He will move to that state, but the city of residence hasn't been determined. He will work under joint supervision of the Arizona convention and Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board.

It is expected that these denominational workers will help form the nucleus for the new convention, which would be the 27th co-operating with Southern Baptists.

The Arizona executive board elected E. Jaudon Cobb, pastor, N. Tucson Baptist Church, Tucson, Ariz., pastoral missionary for the city of Nogales, Ariz. Nogales, a city of 12,000 on the Mexican border, is the only major city in Arizona which has been without Southern Baptist work.

As pastoral missionary, Cobb will establish a church which in turn will sponsor missions and help develop self-sustaining new churches in the area. He serves jointly under Arizona convention and the Home Mission Board.

The Arizona board elected George Wilson, pastor, Central Baptist Church, Phoenix, chairman.

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### Actions of the American Association of Theological Schools

RE. SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

A Committee was charged to enquire into the circumstances surrounding the dismissal of thirteen members of the Faculty of the School of Theology, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, on June 12, 1958, and to determine whether this action should affect its accreditation. The members of this committee were:

Dr. Luther A. Weigle---Dean Emeritus of the Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut.

Dr. Merrimon Cuninggim---Dean of Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Charles R. Feilding---Dean of Trinity College, Toronto, Ontario.

Professor Carl C. Rasmussen---Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

The committee had in mind the statement in the Standards for Accrediting a theological school that "regard will be had for . . . the character of its administration." While the Committee had evidence submitted to it on many subjects, its efforts were directed to making a report on the character of the administrative procedures leading up to this particular incident. To avoid misunder-

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(standing, attention must be drawn to the fact that this report concerns the character of particular persons involved actively or passively in that process.)

On the basis of the evidence submitted to the Committee by President McCall of the Seminary and after hearing from trustees and faculty members of many varying points of view, the Committee reports that:

(a) The resignations of the thirteen professors were not tendered or asked for except orally in two instances.

(b) On June 12 when they were dismissed as a body, two of their number were overseas, and a third was out of the state.

(c) Between the time of the presidential recommendation of dismissal and final action, no opportunity of a full hearing, as promised, was given to these absent professors. The hearing given to the other ten professors during the Board meeting on June 12 was, in the Committee's opinion, too hastily conceived and executed to conform to reasonable standards of dignity and due process of law.

(d) The mass dismissal, in the Committee's opinion, failed to treat with consideration the disparate financial and domestic needs and obligations of the dismissed men, even though authority to deal with these matters was given in the action of the Board.

(e) After hearing many explanations of the Board's action from the President, from several Trustees, and from present faculty members, the Committee concluded that the action on June 12 was in part intended as a device to secure the discharge of two members of the faculty and the re-instatement of as many as possible of the remaining eleven.

(f) The dual action of the Board (recommended by the President) on June 12, both dismissing the professors and inviting them (or some of them) to seek re-instatement, indicates in the Committee's opinion, a grave weakness and indecisiveness in the administration of the Seminary by the Trustees and the President. Whatever the charges against the professors, they were manifestly not considered by the Trustees or by the President to be such as to disqualify these professors, or some of them, from further teaching at the Seminary.

(g) It is the Committee's judgment that the Trustees and President are ultimately responsible for the conditions that have made possible the development of what they themselves called an intolerable situation.

Recommendation Adopted by the  
Commission on Accrediting:

(a) That decision with regard to removal of the accreditation of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary be deferred for one year.

(b) That the Trustees of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary be informed that a primary factor in considering the status of the Seminary one year hence will be a full inquiry as to whether they have taken adequate steps to repair the damage to the Seminary and to the dismissed professors.

(c) That the Commission on Accrediting require an inspection of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary immediately prior to the annual meeting of the Commission on Accrediting in December, 1959.

(d) That the Commission on Accrediting recommend to the Executive Committee that the resignation of Duke K. McCall from the Vice Presidency of the American Association of Theological Schools, and from the membership of the Commission on Accrediting, be requested.

Action of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee of the American Association of Theological Schools, December 6, 1958, voted to request the resignation of Duke K. McCall from the Vice Presidency of the Association and from the membership of the Commission on Accrediting, as it is inappropriate that he should continue to serve in these offices while his institution is under investigation by the Association.

Statement From  
Local Trustees

We, the undersigned local Trustees wish to point out that the Committee did not call into question the high academic standards of our Seminary. It is a fully accredited institution.

We have continuously recognized the basic Christian character and ability of the twelve former Professors. Likewise, all the other Professors and the President are men of the highest Christian character.

The report of the Committee, we believe, unfortunately failed to recognize the basic problem which existed. The Trustees were confronted with a power bloc of thirteen professors making demands which the Trustees could not grant. This group, however, insisted on compliance with its demands and tendered an ultimatum that the Trustees must either comply or they would resign. Facing this ultimatum, the Trustees had no alternative but to dismiss these men. This group kept threatening to resign but no resignations were ever forthcoming, and they refused to amend their demands. This attitude obviously could not be permitted to continue, and it was only after months of persuasion for reconciliation or retraction of threats that our dismissal action was taken.

The Trustees proceeded with careful deliberation over a period of three months. At no time was our action hasty or ill-considered.

During the year which is now available, we invite the commission to make a careful investigation of all the facts and circumstances with the calm assurance that they will come to the conclusion that our decision was proper and correct. Our course of action which has been interpreted as indecision was not this at all, but grew out of our desire to go the second mile.

The request that Dr. McCall be asked to withdraw from the Accrediting Commission of the AATS obviously stems from the fact that a litigant ought not to sit on the bench in a case in which he is involved. We call attention to the fact that President McCall voluntarily absented himself from all meetings of the American Association of Theological Schools during this inquiry.

V. V. COOKE  
W. R. PETTIGREW  
C. E. GIBBENS  
RUSSELL PROCTOR  
IRA J. PORTER  
F. A. SAMPSON  
JOSEPH E. STOPHER  
LEO T. WOLFORD

Dec. 8, 1958

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#### Swilley Heads Georgia Executive Committee

ATLANTA--(BP)--Monroe F. Swilley Jr., pastor of Atlanta's Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church was elected president of the executive committee of Georgia Baptist Convention.

The executive committee acts for the convention between annual sessions of the convention, and is charged with responsibility for Georgia Baptist work.

Swilley succeeds Howard P. Giddens, pastor, First Baptist church, Athens, who last month was elected president of Georgia Baptist Convention.

Searcy S. Garrison, Atlanta, convention executive secretary-treasurer, was re-elected for an indefinite term of office, marking the first time an executive secretary had been elected on an indefinite basis.

The executive committee held its annual meeting at the Sheffield clinic, Georgia Baptist hospital.

A record level of giving for the first 11 months of 1958 was announced by Garrison. Cooperative Program giving was 10.5 per cent higher than for the first 11 months of 1957.

Dollar-wise, this reflects Cooperative Program gifts of \$2,638,536, and total of \$4,319,599 for the 11-month period.

In other action, the executive committee approved a state mission budget of \$436,400 for 1959, and heard reports concerning work at Georgia Baptist Hospital, Atlanta, and Baptist Village, a home for the aged at Waycross, Ga. -30-

December 15, 1958

Southern Seminary  
Sharply Criticized

By C. R. Daley

LOUISVILLE--The American Association of Theological Schools has sharply criticized the administration procedure of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Duke K. McCall and the board of trustees of the institution in the mass dismissal of 13 professors last June 12. The action came in a meeting of Dec. 5 and 6 of the AATS in New York and was announced Monday, Dec. 8. The AATS is the recognized accrediting group for theological schools in America. Three Southern Baptist seminaries besides Louisville hold accreditation status with the organization.

The report of the AATS was based on the findings of a special four-man investigating committee of the Association which visited the seminary several weeks ago. The investigation had been welcomed by President McCall, who said the seminary had nothing to hide.

The decision on removal of accreditation from the seminary was deferred one year during which the trustees are to take "adequate steps to repair the damage to the seminary and to the dismissed professors." It is intimated that loss of accreditation is a foregone conclusion unless satisfactory steps are taken by the trustees. Repairing of the damage to the dismissed professors is interpreted by some to mean the rescinding of the June 12 dismissal of the professors. An AATS inspection team is to revisit the Seminary next year just prior to the annual meeting of the AATS to determine what progress has been made to repair damage.

The executive committee of the AATS also voted to ask the resignation of McCall from the vice-presidency of the AATS and also from membership on its accrediting commission of which he was chairman. The committee said that "it is inappropriate that he should continue to serve in these offices while his institution is under investigation by the Association."

#### President and Trustees Blamed

The investigating committee placed the entire blame for the "intolerable conditions" at the seminary upon the President and the trustees. The language of the report could hardly be stronger though the report was prefaced with an assurance that the report was concerned with the character of the administrative process and not the character of particular persons involved in that process.

The dismissed professors by inference of the report were absolved of any blame in the incident. Treatment of them was pictured as questionable in several respects.

1. The professors were dismissed rather than asked to resign.
2. Two of the professors were out of the country and one out of the state at the time of dismissal and were not given a full hearing, as promised.
3. The other ten professors were not given a hearing on June 12 that conformed to "reasonable standards of dignity and due process of law."
4. The disparate financial and domestic needs and obligations of the professors were not treated with consideration by mass dismissal though authority to deal with this was given in the action of the board.
5. The action of June 12 was intended in part to secure the discharge of two members of the faculty and the reinstatement of as many as possible of the remaining eleven.

6. The dual action of June 12 in dismissing the professors and inviting them to ask reinstatement indicates a grave weakness and indecision in

administration of the Trustees and the President.

On the basis of these conclusions the committee placed the entire blame and ultimate responsibility upon the president and trustees.

#### Report Challenged by Local Trustees

The report of the AATS was immediately challenged by eight local members of the board of trustees. The dismissals were termed as "proper and correct" and the AATS was urged to use the next year to learn more of the conditions surrounding the action. An answer to each charge of the investigation committee was contained in statement issued by the eight trustees who spoke for themselves and not for the board of trustees.

#### Dismissed Professors Claim Their Stand Vindicated

Several of the dismissed professors were contacted and issued statements.

Theron Price, now pastor of Wornall Road Baptist Church, Kansas City, said, that the association findings are a "vindication of the stand which the dismissed professors took." He said that the request of the AATS for the resignation of McCall from its vice-presidency "shows, in my opinion, that the president of the seminary has lost the confidence of the responsible theological educators in the country."

Price went on to say, "It is my further judgment that the root of the problem has yet to be dealt with directly. It is my hope that the trustees of our seminary will recognize and accept the fact and deal with it accordingly."

William H. Morton, now professor of Biblical archaeology at Midwestern Baptist Seminary, Kansas City, said the decision of the AATS was "vindication of the position we took. I can only hope the very best for the seminary in cleaning up their difficulties."

A similar statement was made jointly by J. Estill Jones and Guy Ranson, both of whom are still in Louisville. Ranson is to be visiting professor at Duke University in Durham, N. C. beginning in September, 1959.

#### Seminary Family Hears Report

A meeting of the seminary family in Alumni Chapel on the evening of Dec. 8 to hear the report and comments on it by President McCall was attended by about 1500 and lasted two hours. A background of the crisis and a detailed description of the development were heard by the students.

No announcement has been made as to when the full board of trustees will meet to consider the matter, but the executive committee of the board met on Dec. 11.

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Editor's note: The preceding is a copy of the article to be used by the Western Recorder of which C. R. Daley is editor.

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