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**June 19, 1986**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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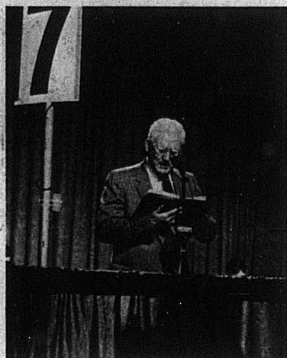
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1986 SBC annual meeting  
June 10-12, Atlanta, Ga.  
pages 2-10

June 19, 1986

**Arkansas Baptist**  
Newsmagazine



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Registration Secretary Lee Porter announces the results of messenger balloting for the SBC presidency during the annual meeting in Atlanta June 10-12. Elected to office were Adrian Rogers, president; Jack Stanton, first vice-president; and Ray Roberts, second vice-president.

# Messengers converge on Atlanta for 129th

by Mark Kelly

ABN photo / Millie Gill

## Tuesday morning, June 10

ATLANTA—As early as 5:00 a.m., they began to gather, messengers from Southern Baptist churches across the United States awaiting the mad scramble for seats in the Georgia World Congress Center during the 129th session of the Southern Baptist Convention.

When the doors finally opened at 6:45—an hour and forty-five minutes before the first session convened—streams of people rushed toward the 27,000-seat main floor. Messengers darted for the escalators, hoping to stake out a front row or aisle seat. They arrived to find several persons had beaten them by entering through unlocked service doors before the building was officially opened.

The rush for seats reflected a height of interest in the annual meeting comparable only to last year's meeting in Dallas, Texas, where an all-time registration record was set. From the outset, registration at the Atlanta meeting paced Dallas numbers almost one-for-one. At 9 a.m. Tuesday morning, shortly after Convention President Charles Stanley gavelled the meeting to order, registration stood at 37,603, just 499 short of the registration in Dallas at the same time last year.

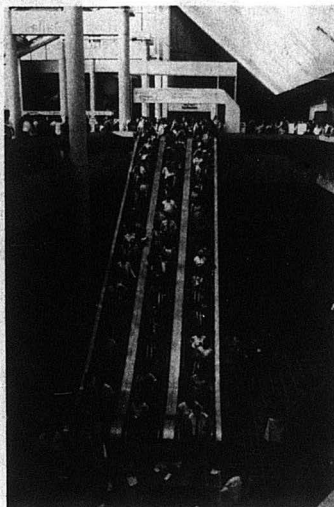
After voting to constitute the convention, messengers heard a motion from Fred Wolfe, chairman of the Committee on Order of Business, to adopt the printed order of business. Immediately, David White, a messenger from Upperco, Md., moved to amend the order of business to provide 10 minutes for each presidential candidate to address messengers before they cast their ballots.

SBC President Stanley ruled the motion out of order on the grounds one "cannot compel another man to speak." White replied he had not intended requiring a candidate to speak, but Stanley ruled the point of order was "not well taken," and messengers proceeded to adopt the order of business.

Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris welcomed messengers to his state, and John Allen, executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention, responded on their behalf. Stanley then called messengers to prayer, observing a practice he instituted in Dallas last year. Messengers paired off and a hush fell over the immense hall as they carried the concerns of the convention to God in prayer.

At 9:40 a.m., Harold Bennett, president and treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, came to the platform to begin the presentation of the Executive Committee's annual report.

Messengers adopted without debate the first five of 11 Executive Committee recommendations. The proposals dealt with a Cooperative Program allocation budget of \$136 million, the SBC operating budget



Messengers to the 129th SBC annual meeting massed in front of the Georgia World Congress Center in anticipation of controversial business items filling the first day's agenda.

(\$2.78 million), granting status to the organization of Southern Baptists in West Virginia, the final reading of a constitutional amendment limiting terms of service on convention boards or the Executive Committee to two consecutive full terms, and a wording change regarding SBC agency officials.

Executive Board Recommendation Six, however, drew expected debate. The proposal, a revision of controversial Bylaw 16, attempted to resolve disagreements over amendments to nominations brought to the convention floor by the Committee on Committees.

The Committee on Committees, appointed each year by the SBC president, nominates to the annual meeting members of the Committees on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees. That body, in turn, nominates trustees for SBC agencies and institutions.

In 1979, "fundamental-conservatives" in the SBC announced their intention to redirect the convention by a systematic replacement of SBC trustees and committee members with persons committed to their particular theological agenda. Much of the controversy in the denomination has revolved around the annual election of the president and the subsequent appointments and

## In this issue

### 10 'to restore peace'

ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed offers a perspective on the denomination's annual meeting in Atlanta June 10-12. He lists several elements necessary for continued progress toward peace in the convention.

### 13 good news, bad news

Ouachita Baptist University President Daniel R. Grant shares some interesting news about the "new freedom" in China.



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# SBC annual meeting, elect Adrian Rogers

nominations to committee and trustee positions.

At the 1985 annual meeting in Dallas, an attempt was made to amend the slate of nominees presented by the Committee on Committees by offering a substitute slate. A ruling by SBC President Charles Stanley, on advice of his parliamentarians, that such an attempt was out of order was based on an interpretation of SBC Bylaw 16, which deals with that committee's report.

The controversy surrounding that interpretation, which held only the committee may offer nominations for the Committee on Boards, spawned two lawsuits and uncounted opinions from divergent perspectives.

In February, a subcommittee of the SBC Executive Committee—called the Bylaws Workgroup—announced the proposal it would offer as a solution to the controversy: alternate nominations would be allowed from the floor, but only on a position-by-position, one-at-a-time basis.

Not unexpectedly, the more than 40,000 messengers to the annual meeting had a lot to say about the proposed revision.

The first messenger to gain the floor suggested postponing a vote on the proposal until Thursday morning. Since President Charles Stanley had indicated prior to the annual meeting that he would operate on the principle of that proposed revision, the reasoning ran that messengers had a unique opportunity to experiment with the proposal before voting it into the bylaws.

A reminder that Bylaw 36 prohibits votes

to amend the bylaws on the final day of the convention brought an "out-of-order" ruling from Stanley, however. A second substitute motion liberalizing the number of alternate nominations each messenger could bring failed on a standing vote.

The proposed bylaw revision passed on a standing vote, and messengers went on to adopt two more Executive Committee recommendations: one opening annual meeting committee service to persons who would be eligible to serve as messengers but living in states not qualified for convention representation, and the other lowering the membership requirements for representation on the SBC Executive Committee, boards, commissions, and standing and special committees.

The balance of the Executive Committee report was left for the afternoon session, and Stanley opened the floor for introduction of bylaws and resolutions.

Twenty-three resolutions were read into the record on topics ranging from gambling and alcohol to child pornography and prostitution to human rights and South Africa.

In a similar deluge, messengers offered 20 motions. The proposed items of business touched on limitations on children as messengers, SBC withdrawal from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, requirements to hire professional parliamentarians for each SBC, limiting new appointees and nominees to one per church, realigning the basis for messenger representation, and a host of other subjects.

SBC President Stanley closed out the first



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session with the annual president's address. Foreshadowing the political significance of the approaching presidential election, Stanley sounded a warning that Southern Baptists not make serious mistakes at this critical point in their history.

Comparing the Southern Baptist Convention to Israel questioning whether to take the Land of Promise or turn back to the wilderness, Stanley declared the denomination is poised on "the brink of blessing."

Like Israel, the SBC faces a need to bridge its disunity and select proven leadership capable of bringing the people to reach their potential, Stanley said. Furthermore, the denomination faces the challenges of mobilizing its tremendous resources and refocusing on missions and evangelism, its "reason for existence," he said.

But Israel made three mistakes, Stanley observed. First, they rejected God's promise they would possess a new, rich land. Second, they listened to the negative doubtings of the 10 spies. Third, they chose to change their philosophy of leadership at a critical point in their history.

Stanley drew a direct parallel for the SBC. Under recent leadership, the denomination had developed "the capacity to be on the cutting edge of every area of American society and influence the nation for the glory of God," Stanley declared.

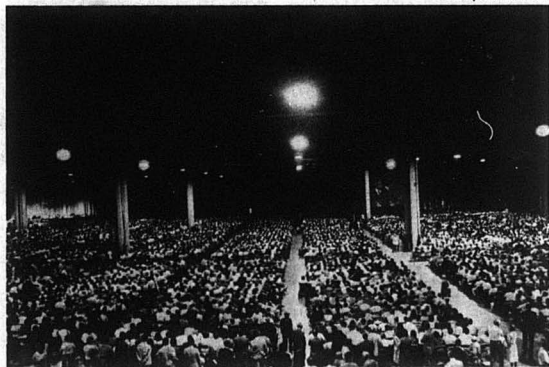
Standing on the brink of such blessing, messengers must "choose to keep going in the direction God has set us," Stanley said. "We have no need to turn back to anything, but must go on to what God has promised."

Israel "chose barrenness over blessing," Stanley declared, and the result was that they were denied for a generation the privilege of enjoying their inheritance. Southern Baptists, he remonstrated, must seize their opportunities and the blessings of God or face the possibility of a generation of barrenness "because we didn't have the courage to move on."

After Andy Stanley, youth minister at Atlanta First Church, pronounced a benediction, messengers closed the morning session by singing "There Is A Name I Love to Hear."

Even as they sang, however, few did more than rise and stand by their chairs, unwilling to chance losing their seats for the afternoon face-off for the convention presidency.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



SBC messengers required three other meeting halls in addition to the 27,000-seat main floor for their first day of business Tuesday, June 10. When ballots were cast for the convention's presidency Tuesday afternoon, 39,099 votes were tallied. Messengers in the remote locations and in the wings of the main hall kept in touch with proceedings through closed circuit TV and a sophisticated microphone system.

## Tuesday afternoon

For most messengers, the one-hour lunch period constituted little more than a standing break. At one o'clock, the tedium of waiting for the presidential balloting was broken with a full hour of gospel music provided by evangelistic singers from across the Southern Baptist Convention.

By the time the moment had arrived for presidential nominations, the already-crowded main hall was jammed to capacity. With television cameras packed in front of the podium and print reporters wedged into the press area, Charles Stanley opened the floor for nominations.

Nelson Price of Georgia was the first to be recognized, bringing with him the expected name of Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn. Calling Rogers "a president who will bring us all together in missions and evangelism," Price identified him as "a candidate for peace and truth."

Although the second nomination brought—that of Winfred Moore of Amarillo, Texas—was no surprise, the man bringing the nomination raised eyebrows across the hall.

Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Church, Phoenix, Ariz., rose to nominate Moore as a man who "knows the truth, believes the truth, preaches the truth, lives the truth, and above all tells the truth." A nomination from Jackson, a pastor known for his "fundamental-conservative" views, belied charges Moore was a "liberal" candidate.

With an almost palpable sense of tension in the air, messengers then cast their ballots for the denomination's much-contested presidency. A low buzz of conversation rose to a dull roar as ushers moved among the messengers to collect the ballots.

The floor was opened for more resolutions and motions. Seven items of business were added. One motion instructed the 1987 Committee on Order of Business to schedule the election of the president as the first item of business on the first day of the 1987 annual meeting in St. Louis in order to prevent the SBC president from using his address to influence the election.

Another motion asked that seminary trustees be requested to adopt statements of intention to comply with the tenets of the Baptist Faith and Message and require semi-



With thousands standing around them, fear of losing their seats kept most messengers firmly planted during the lunch hour Tuesday. Above, the Tommy Robertson family of El Dorado makes the best of the situation.

nary professors to sign a similar statement. All seven motions were referred to the Committee on Order of Business for disposition.

At 2:40 p.m., Stanley prepared messengers for the report of the Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees. He cautioned persons offering alternate nominations to avoid attacking the personal qualifications of persons whose nominations they were challenging.

Committee on Boards Chairman Lee Roberts of Marietta, Ga., then took the floor to present his committee's report. Before addressing the nominations, however, Roberts took a moment to offer an apology to messengers for "intemperate" remarks he had made several weeks earlier. At a meeting in Nashville, Tenn., Roberts had attacked "false doctrines and destructive heresies" which he alleged some SBC seminary professors are teaching.

Roberts then presented the committee's nominations, added three names to and corrected two errors in the printed report, and moved the adoption of the report.

Messengers launched into their experiment with the position-by-position

approach to amending the report. Four amendments were offered to the report, and each time the Committee on Boards responded to the alternate nomination with a statement in behalf of their nominee. Messengers then voted on each amendment.

As messengers struggled through each attempt to amend, it became clear the one-by-one approach made amending the report a practical impossibility. Each amendment failed by a bigger margin than the one before it, and impatience with the would-be amenders mounted with each motion.

Finally, the chair announced the time for dealing with the report had expired. A motion to extend time five minutes passed, and messengers prepared to vote on the controversial report, although many persons still manned the microphones, hopeful of offering their own amendments.

A point of order was raised immediately before the ballot by a messenger who complained the chair was raising his hand when calling for a show of ballots against an amendment but keeping it down when calling for votes in favor. He suggested the action unfairly influenced each vote.

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President Stanley apologized for the action and promised an effort to refrain from such unconscious signals in the future. On a show of ballots, messengers approved the report of the Committee on Boards at 3:14 p.m.

After a time of prayer and congregational singing, the SBC Executive Committee brought its final three recommendations to the body. Messengers approved without debate a three-year Bold Mission Thrust report, a revision of Foreign Mission Board program statements, and a new level for the SBC Foundation's contingency reserve fund.

In closing, Bennett told messengers the Executive Committee had just approved up to \$300,000 to pay legal fees arising out of the lawsuits filed against the convention during the previous year. As of May 31, Bennett said \$176,996.31 had been spent on legal fees for the lawsuit which challenged the 1985 interpretation of Bylaw 16. That suit, decided in favor of the SBC by a federal judge in Georgia, is being appealed.

That announcement drew two motions from the floor. One messenger drew a standing ovation when he moved the convention ask no Southern Baptist "ever involve us again in wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars in the courts of our land."

A second messenger rose to move the convention "withdraw fellowship" from Robert and Julia Crowder, who initiated the lawsuit over Bylaw 16 last year. President Stanley

ABN photo / Millie Gill



SBC volunteer ushers had to work quickly to collect the nearly 40,000 ballots cast in Tuesday's presidential election.

stopped that motion in its tracks, ruling it out of order, as he had the previous motion.

At 4:00 p.m., SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter took the floor to report 39,099 messengers had elected Adrian Rogers as the next president of the convention. Porter noted Rogers received a decisive 54.22 percent of the ballots cast (21,201 to Moore's 45.78 percent (17,898). Stanley declared Rogers the winner of the election, and supporters of the new president rose for a sustained ovation.

After the applause had died down, Stanley produced a letter from U.S. President Ronald Reagan to the messengers of the annual meeting. The letter praised the Southern Baptist Convention for its role in the "great and welcome" change in throwing liberalism "on the defensive" nationally. Reagan said the convention could take a share of the credit for raising the consciousness of the American people on issues like abortion and school prayer.

Stanley opened the floor for nominations for first vice-president and received two nominations. C.B. Hogue of California nominated Jack Stanton of Bolivar, Mo. T.L. McSwain of Georgia nominated Henry Huff of Louisville, Ky. Nominations were closed, and ballots were cast at 4:13 p.m.

Ten more resolutions were read into the record by Committee on Order of Business Chairman Fred Wolfe. Several repeated concerns expressed by earlier resolutions: abortion, pornography and child abuse. Others focused on aid to Nicaraguan contras, apartheid and religious liberty.

Wolfe then brought to the floor a motion made earlier by Darrell Robinson of Alabama to limit alternate nominations to the Committee on Committees report to simply listing the name, state and vocation of the alternate nominee and the nominator.

On a show of ballots, however, Stanley ruled the motion failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote, and messengers moved on to what was expected to be another extended battle over one-by-one amendments to a committee's nominations.

One amendment was offered and defeated before a question was raised about whether a Dan Collins of South Carolina nominated to the 1987 Committee on Boards was the same Dan Collins of South Carolina earlier nominated by the 1986 Committee on Boards as a trustee of the Sunday School Board.

The chair confirmed it was the same person. A ballot was taken on the Committee on Committees report when the previous question was called. The report was adopted on a show of ballots.

After the vote, a messenger voiced his concern that electing one man to a board position and appointing him concurrently to a standing committee demonstrated the reverse of the "fundamental-conservatives'" stated concern for wider representation of the Southern Baptist constituency on SBC boards and committees. Parliamentarian



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John Sullivan responded that no bylaw prohibits a person's serving on a committee and board simultaneously.

A string of challenges to that ruling proved unsuccessful, and at 5:00 p.m. Fred Wolfe took the floor to report on the disposition of motions made earlier in the day. He read to messengers a lengthy list of motions which had been referred to the SBC Executive Committee or appropriate agencies and institutions. After a brief challenge, messengers were notified time had expired for discussion and a show of ballots approved the referral.

At 5:10 p.m., Registration Secretary Lee Porter announced the results of balloting for first vice-president. By a margin of nearly 5,500 votes, messengers had elected Jack Stanton over Henry Huff. Stanton polled 19,418 (58.19 percent) of the 33,639 votes cast, Porter said. Huff garnered 13,951 votes (41.81 percent).

SBC President Charles Stanley declared Stanton the winner and Sandy Sandlin, pastor of Faith Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, delivered a benediction.

## Tuesday evening

The Tuesday evening session opened with music presented by the Singing Men and Women of the Florida Baptist Convention. The congregation then rose to sing "Have Faith in God" and "Speak to My Heart."

President Charles Stanley recognized Charles Fuller, chairman of the SBC Peace Committee for that body's interim report.

Reading selected passages from the committee's printed report, which was released several weeks prior to the convention, Fuller reviewed the committee's purposes and outlined its findings and recommendations.

The committee recommended:

(1) 1986-87 be observed as a Year of Intercession on behalf of the SBC;

(2) a one-year moratorium on theological/political rallies and a dismantling of political power structures;

(3) a cessation of "intemperate, inflammatory and unguarded" language;

(4) Baptist Press, state Baptist newspapers, and autonomous independent journals take care to report events fairly and accurately and refrain from "labeling and attributing improper motives;"

(5) the new SBC president and committees be mindful of fairness in representation as appointments and nominations are made; (6) a retreat for Peace Committee members and SBC agency executives and seminary presidents;

(7) a one-year extension of the committee's authority.

After Fuller's report, a messenger rose to amend it, adding a statement that focused on avoiding the use of public prayer times, report periods, convention sermons and the president's address for political purposes.

Immediately, another messenger challenged the amendment, declaring, "Baptist people believe in liberty. We do not have the right to tell another person how to pray or what to say in a sermon."

The amendment failed on a show of ballots, and, after a vote to extend time for five minutes, the report was adopted with only spotty opposition.

At 7:43 p.m., Committee on Order of Business Chairman Fred Wolfe read another 18 resolutions into the record. Resolutions dealt with the need for more ethnic denominational leadership, prayer in public schools, divorce, and women in ministry, among other things.

The floor was then opened for nominations for the office of second vice-president. Six nominations were received: Ray Roberts of North Carolina, J. Truett Gannon of Georgia, Dan Ivins of Alabama, Darrell Robinson of Alabama, and Mike Johnson of Alabama, who nominated himself.

When nominations were closed, messengers cast their ballots and turned their attention to reports from the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Home Mission Board.

Literature produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board comprises much more than just Sunday School quarterlies, BSSB Presi-

dent Lloyd Elder told messengers. He said more than 150 employees produce 700 issues of 175 periodicals each year and noted BSSB literature reaches all 50 states and 50 foreign countries. Elder said the board serviced 460,263 orders for 151.4 million pieces of literature in 1985-86.

William G. Tanner presented his final annual report on behalf of the SBC Home Mission Board. In July, Tanner will begin new responsibilities as executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

Tanner told messengers the United States has 16 million more lost persons than 10 years ago, when Southern Baptists adopted their Bold Mission Thrust goal of sharing the gospel with every person in the U.S. by 1990. While Southern Baptists do not have the responsibility of converting the United States, they do have the responsibility of evangelizing the land, he said.

Home Mission Board Chairman Travis Wington of Norman, Okla., reported to messengers that Home Mission Board personnel had led 656,117 persons to faith in Jesus Christ during Tanner's 10-year tenure.

Following the Home Mission Board report, Registration Secretary Lee Porter reported results of the balloting for second vice-president.

Porter said Ray Roberts of North Carolina polled 8,864 (53.08 percent) of the ballots cast. J. Truett Gannon ran second with 3,602 votes (21.57 percent). Mike Johnson, the messenger from Alabama who nominated himself, received 2,369 ballots (14.19 percent). Darrell Robinson polled 1,234 votes (7.39 percent). Dan Ivins received 631 votes (3.78 percent).

SBC President Stanley declared Roberts the winner, and after John Sullivan led a closing prayer messengers filed out of the hall singing "He is Lord."

(BP) photo by Trennia Henderson



Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian Rogers (center), pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn., is flanked by First Vice-President Jack Stanton (left) of Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo., and Second Vice-President Ray Roberts of Asheville, N.C., former executive of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.



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Wednesday morning, June 11

Messengers returned in great numbers—though not in the full force of Tuesday—for the second day of their annual meeting.

Frank Ingraham of Tennessee rose to nominate Martin Bradley for the position of recording secretary. In the absence of other nominations, Registration Secretary Lee Porter cast the ballot on behalf of the assembly, and President Stanley declared Bradley elected as recording secretary.

Messengers then heard Roy Lee Honeycutt present the annual report for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Honeycutt told messengers the past year had been characterized by a series of "firsts," among them the creation of a new doctor of music ministry degree; the premiere of "Doing the Word," a monthly video magazine on BTN; and the seminary's first black professor. He also noted more than \$3 million in major gifts was given to the seminary in the first quarter of 1986.

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, brought her organization's annual report. She informed messengers celebrations for the May 1988 WMU centennial anniversary were launched during the WMU's January board meeting.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's report was brought to the floor by President Russell Dilday. He told messengers the seminary is training 4,071 men and 999 women in its schools of theology, religious education and church music. He also outlined Southwestern's Upward 90 program, a \$50 million, five-year strategic plan.

Following Southwestern Seminary's report, Historical Commission Executive Director Lynn May recognized trustee chairman Marion Lark of North Carolina.

Lark warned messengers about persons "who would take them into a strange land," a land marked by milestones of theological uniformity, biblical inerrancy, creedal statements, negative designation of mission gifts, civil religion, and convention hierarchy. "Cooperative missions, not theological uniformity, is our heritage. Biblical authority, not biblical inerrancy, is the waymark that stands tall in Baptist history. Confessions of faith, not creedal statements, give voice to our affirmations," he said.

"Cooperative giving, not negative designation, is our guidepost," he continued. "Separation of church and state, not civil religion, is a tall centerpiece on the table of Baptist history. Appreciation for education, not disregard for scholarship, is our heritage."

After the outspoken statement, Lark was questioned from the floor. Texas messenger H.L. Fontenot asked Lark how he could claim to hold to the authority of the Bible yet repudiate the theory of biblical inerrancy.

Lark responded that the Scripture is indeed "truth without any mixture of error" in spiritual matters. But he declared Scripture should not be taken as authoritative in matters such as scientific truth, for example, where it makes no such claim to authority. Lark's reply received a mixed response from messengers, with several boing him loudly.

Messengers received another six reports before they turned again to business.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary President Landrum P. Leavell told messengers the seminary had recently completed the debt-free construction of a \$5.7 million student center. He also reported the seminary was requiring students to complete the Continuing Witness Training program before graduating. New Orleans students "may not learn a lot about some things, but we don't ever want to graduate a student who doesn't know how to win a person to Jesus Christ," Leavell declared.

Arthur Walker, executive director-treasurer of the SBC Education Commission, told messengers nearly 700 educational and religious leaders attended the National Congress on Leadership in the 21st Century in June. Participants discussed the opportunities and responsibilities facing Christian higher education as it confronts the challenges of a new century.

Harold Graves, interim president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., described the progress of the school since he retired as president nine years ago. Graves, who served 25 years as president of the seminary, noted Golden Gate awarded 131 degrees during its 38th spring commencement exercises.

Brotherhood Commission President James Smith reviewed for messengers major program changes planned for the fall of 1987. The changes resulted from a long range study known as the Missions Impact 2000 Committee, which tried to identify ways churches can more effectively involve men and boys in missions.

Messengers devoted 10 minutes to prayer for the convention and closed by singing "Spirit of the Living God." They then received reports from the Radio and Television Commission and Annuity Board.

Radio and Television Commission President Jimmy Allen noted the previous year had been one of reorganization, stabilization, and expansion. Permission from the SBC Executive Committee to raise \$10 million over five years provided the key to

stabilizing the financial situation of the RTVC's ACTS network, Allen said. ACTS now reaches a potential 3.9 million homes in the United States.

Annuity Board President Darold Morgan told messengers about efforts to provide more effective medical coverage and described the expanded annuity plan soon to be implemented.

After Morgan's report, Franklin Paschal of Nashville, Tenn., rose to make a motion the Annuity Board research and assess living conditions of retired SBC annuitants and bring recommendations to the convention next year in St. Louis regarding more effective ways to share annuity resources with "deserving" annuitants in need. In the absence of opposition, President Stanley ordered the study.

At 10:50 a.m., the convention returned to items of business. Russell Bennett of Louisville, Ky., was the first messenger recognized.

Bennett questioned whether the chair had violated SBC Bylaw 23 by referring to other committees or agencies motions which did not deal directly with those committees or agencies. Bylaw 23 directs the Committee on Order of Business "shall provide periods of time during the early days of the convention for the introduction of all matters requiring a vote not scheduled on the agenda, and, when introduced (unless the convention then gives its unanimous consent for its immediate consideration) shall fix times for the consideration of same."

Parliamentarian John Sullivan noted Bylaw 28: "motions made by messengers dealing with the internal operations or programs of an agency shall be referred to the elected board of the agency for consideration and report to the constituency and to the next annual session of the Convention for action, with the exception that the Committee on Order of Business may be instructed by a two-thirds vote to arrange for consideration at a subsequent meeting of the same Convention, subject to provision of Bylaw 23."

Although the ruling of the chair was upheld on a show of ballots, another point of order was raised by Walter Shurden of Macon, Ga. Shurden asked why a motion for the SBC to withdraw from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs had been scheduled for a floor vote when other motions dealing with SBC standing committees were referred. He asserted that similar motions should be dealt with in similar ways.

Sullivan replied he had no difficulty with referring that motion, but asserted the Baptist Joint Committee was not itself an SBC standing committee. Rather, the appropriate SBC committee was the Public Affairs Committee, which in turn relates to the inter-denominational Joint Committee.

The floor was then opened for nominations for the office of registration secretary. Frank Loder of Jonesboro, Ark., nominated Lee Porter of Nashville, Tenn., and Martin Bradley cast the ballot on behalf of the con-

vention in the absence of other nominations.

The Resolutions Committee presented the first three items of its report. Messengers adopted without debate a resolution condemning gambling and gambling advertising. Another resolution which opposed continuing ambassadorial relations between the United States and the Holy See of the Roman Catholic Church passed as presented. Messengers adopted without debate a third resolution attacking legislation pending in Congress which would tax church pension boards.

John Sullivan interrupted the discussion on resolutions to remind the chair the time had come to consider a motion to withdraw from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. President Stanley opened debate on the motion, and messengers battled at the microphones over whether the Joint Committee is serving the needs of the SBC.

When a vote was taken on a motion to refer the matter to the Executive Committee for study and a report in 1987, Stanley ruled the show of ballots was indecisive. At 11:55 a.m., messengers cast ballots on the motion to refer, and Lee Porter informed them the results would be announced during the evening business session.

In the convention sermon, newly-elected SBC President Adrian Rogers called upon Southern Baptists to lay aside their internal strife in order to take up the battle against



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their common enemy, the devil.

"It has always been the devil's purpose to bring disunity to the people of God and get them to battling one another rather than bombarding the gates of hell," Rogers declared. Vowing to be a peacemaker, he said, "I need you, and you need me. We are not enemies. We are brothers in Christ, bound together by the mortar of love."

The convention's first priority must be "preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ," Rogers asserted. "I believe in the church," he added, "but our churches should not be snooty religious social clubs, but hot-hearted centers of evangelism."

The Wednesday morning session closed with a benediction by Neal Jones, pastor of Columbia Church, Falls Church, Va.



## Wednesday evening

After an afternoon of seminary luncheons, relaxing, shopping, and sightseeing, messengers returned refreshed for an evening program virtually devoid of business and highlighted by the report of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

A half-hour of music by the Georgia Baptist Sons of Jubal and Jubalheirs opened the evening's activities.

Registration Secretary Lee Porter announced messengers had voted 12,001 to 9,556 to refer to the Executive Committee the motion on the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Porter noted the 21,557 ballots cast represented 52.58 percent of the 40,806 registered at the time they were cast.

The Committee on Boards brought a nomination of William Michael Wilson of Aurora, Colo., to fill a vacancy created by a resignation. The nomination passed on a show of ballots.

Messengers routinely elected Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla., to bring the 1987 convention sermon. Roy Fish of Southwestern Seminary was elected alternate preacher, and music evangelist John McKay was named musician for the St. Louis meeting.

Fred Wolfe, chairman of the Committee on Order of Business, moved the referral of seven motions brought to the floor earlier. Russell Bennett of Kentucky rose once again to a point of order, insisting motions which do not relate to agencies cannot be referred without setting a time for action.

After a prolonged conference with his parliamentarians, President Stanley acquiesced to Bennett's interpretation of Bylaw 23

In response to another motion made earlier, Wolfe then moved a world hunger offering be taken during the evening service, and messengers approved that proposal.

A whole spate of new motions followed. One messenger moved that Dan Collins from South Carolina, who had been elected to both the Sunday School Board and the 1987 Committee on Boards, be asked to resign from one position in the "spirit of fairness" which President Stanley had made such a prominent feature of his presiding.

Other motions dealt with the election of a Christian Life Commission executive director committed to the "sanctity of human life," a feasibility study on a New England seminary, and a request Historical Commission trustees examine their chairman's earlier statements for consistency with the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message.

Still more motions included an SBC endorsement of President Ronald Reagan's designation of 1987 as a National Year of Thanksgiving, a motion to schedule mission board reports prior to presidential elections, a request that Southern Seminary trustees investigate charges of universalism against a faculty member, a motion organizers of the Pastors' Conference and Forum pre-convention meetings be asked to merge the two, and a motion no person be allowed to serve in more than one committee or board position at any one time.

Messengers heard reports from two program heads before the Foreign Mission Board brought its annual report.

SBC Executive Committee president Harold Bennett told messengers the denomination's membership has grown 12 percent since the SBC launched its Bold Mission Thrust emphasis in 1976. He noted 3.4 million people have been baptized and Cooperative Program giving has risen 150 percent during that same period.

Cecil Ray, annual director of Planned Growth in Giving, reported churches across the nation have reported stewardship increases of 15 to 24 percent because of the PGG emphasis.

The Foreign Mission Board reported featuring a documentary on the Christian church in China. FMB President Keith Parks reminded the assembly no missionary had witnessed the dramatic events detailed by the film they were about to view. "What you see tonight will stir your soul to the bright future of that vast mission field," he promised.

Parks received a standing ovation when he told messengers the SBC "needs to be so preoccupied with winning the world that we don't have time to fight among ourselves."

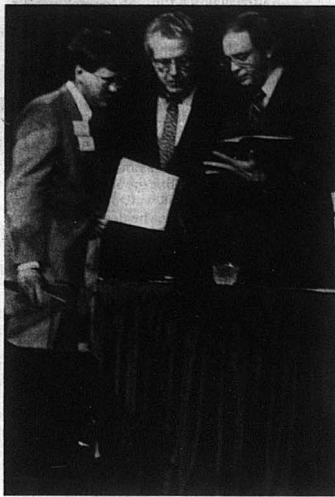
A benediction by N.N. Antonson, pastor of Tyler Road Church, Wichita, Kan., closed the evening session.

## Thursday morning, June 12

Messengers heard eight reports Thursday morning prior to the final report of the Resolutions Committee.

Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern

ABN photo / Millie Gill



SBC President Charles Stanley and Parliamentarians C. Barry McCarty (left) and John Sullivan (center) confer on one of many difficult decisions they were called upon to make during the SBC annual meeting.

Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., told messengers the 36-year-old seminary now counts 6,112 alumni. During the 1985-86 academic year, Southeastern enrolled more than 1,400 students in its seven degree programs, he said. Approximately 68 percent of the seminary's \$5.9 million budget comes from Cooperative Program receipts.

James Dunn, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, declared to messengers, "There is a difference between Caesar's things and God's things." The task of the Joint Committee, he explained, is to "seek to discern the difference."

Dunn enumerated a long list of areas in which the Joint Committee had defended Baptist interests in Washington during the preceding year. He noted his organization was fighting the elimination of charitable deductions for non-itemizers and a proposal to tax church pension funds, two tax reform items which would have a devastating effect on Southern Baptist finances.

The Joint Committee's involvement in the battle over the tax status of church "integrated auxiliaries" had finally forced the Internal Revenue Service to "admit it can't define what is and isn't church," Dunn said. He also noted Joint Committee participation in the fight for equal access legislation and opposition to diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican.



# SBC ATLANTA

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and announced times would be scheduled for the consideration of two motions: one calling for the presidential election to be the very first agenda item on the first day of each convention and the other calling for a female parliamentarian.

Wolfe, however, stepped to a microphone and moved the referral of those two items, the first to the Committee on Order of Business and the second to SBC President-elect Adrian Rogers. On a show of ballots, Stanley judged the motion carried. Messengers also approved the referral of the remaining motions.

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Milton Ferguson declared to messengers, "The only way to destroy an enemy is to turn him into a friend." He noted, "God is in the business of turning enemies—disobedient, wayward children—into friends." Ferguson said Midwestern Seminary seeks to "equip young men and women for the ministry of reconciliation, bringing lost men and women to God."

Southern Baptist Foundation President Hollis Johnson reported his organization's growth in assets during 1985-86 was largely due to an increase in the number of persons served. The foundation added assets of \$2.4 million, bringing total assets to more than \$3.8 million.

A. R. Fagan, president of the SBC Stewardship Commission, pointed to a growth in giving which surpassed the inflation rate as proof of the effectiveness of the commission's program. He also noted the Together We Build program continues to be more efficient and productive and less costly than any other fundraising approach in SBC churches.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, outlined the wide variety of channels through which the commission helped individuals, families and churches to deal with moral issues in the past year. He particularly emphasized the CLC's development of resource and promotional materials for the convention's first Sanctuary of Human Life Sunday in January.

At 10:15 a.m., President Charles Stanley asked messengers to use the scheduled 10-minute prayer time to intercede on behalf of Rheubin South, executive director of Missouri Baptists, who was critically ill in his bout with leukemia.

Baptist World Alliance General Secretary Gerhard Claas and SBC Canada Planning Group member Gerald Palmer delivered reports to messengers before the Resolutions Committee brought the remainder of its report to the floor.

When President Stanley opened the floor for the business session, however, Dan Collins of South Carolina asked to be recognized. He told messengers he counted it a "high personal privilege" to be asked to serve in two positions for the denomination, but noted that at times "personal privilege must yield to a higher purpose." In the interests of "promoting love, unity, and understanding," therefore, Collins offered his resignation from the 1987 Committee on Boards.

The Committee on Committees followed Collins with a nomination of Glen Lister, a layman from Mt. Pleasant, S.C., to replace him. Messengers approved the nomination.

Nine other motions were introduced and passed along to the Committee on Order of Business for disposition.

Messengers approved a resolution on pornography which urged churches to strengthen their educational efforts and actively participate in "legally permissible means of protest to dissuade retail outlets from selling pornographic materials." They

also approved without debate a resolution urging prayer for persons affected by the farm crisis and sensitivity to needs and opportunities for ministry associated with it.

A resolution on the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and religious liberty passed with minor rewording from the floor. The resolution decried the denial of the right to voluntary prayer and Bible reading in the public schools and urged school officials not to discourage such expressions.

A seventh resolution condemning textbooks which fail to note the importance of the Judeo-Christian tradition in U.S. history was passed without debate. It called upon Southern Baptists to "encourage textbook selection committees... not to accept textbooks that have censored the Judeo-Christian heritage."

Resolution Eight, entitled "On Strengthening Missions," was amended twice before adoption. The resolution in general exhorted Southern Baptists to pray and work for spiritual awakening and the work of home and foreign missionaries.

An amendment was offered and adopted on a show of ballots which urged messengers to the annual meeting to attend reports of the two mission boards. The messenger moving the amendment called "disgraceful" the flood of messengers leaving the hall after business items and ignoring mission agency reports.

A second amendment, urging Southern Baptist churches to contribute a tithe on all their undesignated offering receipts, went through two votes by a show of ballots before Stanley called for ballots to be cast.

Messengers then adopted without amendment resolutions urging the involvement of more blacks and minorities in denominational leadership positions, calling upon churches and families to educate children with a Christian perspective on sexuality, and expressing appreciation to those who had contributed to the success of the annual meeting.

## Thursday afternoon

Music for inspiration from Jack Price, music evangelist from Garland, Texas, opened the final session of the 1986 Southern Baptist annual meeting.

With attendance now only a shadow of Tuesday morning's throng, fraternal representatives present for the proceedings were introduced to the messengers and Eugene Nida of the American Bible Society brought a report.

Arthur Walker, secretary-treasurer of the American Baptist Theological Seminary Commission, told messengers the SBC provided 140 scholarships of \$1,100 each to ABTS students in 1985-86. The American Baptist Theological Seminary is a black Bible school co-sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

Walker also said the SBC provided

\$110,000 operating expense for the school in 1985-86. The school enrolled 779 students in campus and extension programs last year.

After a final 10-minute prayer time and reports from the Denominational Calendar Committee and the Denominational Press, messengers concluded final business.

Messengers were told they had balloted in favor of amending Resolution Eight, "On Strengthening Missions," to urge churches to tithe on their undesignated receipts. Voting in favor of the amendment were 5,129 messengers (54.9 percent); opposed were 4,184 (44.1 percent.)

Registration Secretary Lee Porter told messengers registration had reached 40,891



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at 3:18 p.m. Thursday. That represented nearly 5,000 fewer messengers than the previous record-setting year in Dallas.

Three motions remained for action. A proposal to place a mission board report immediately prior to the annual election of the president was referred to the Committee on Order of Business.

The motion to recognize 1987 as a National Year of Thanksgiving passed overwhelmingly, and the motion urging Forum and Pastors' Conference to attempt to merge similarly failed.

With all items of business completed, the 1986 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting adjourned with a benediction offered by Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Church, Tucker, Ga.

## Next week:

- SBC pre-convention meetings
- news of Arkansans elected to offices
- more SBC photos



This year's convention was, in many respects, a replay of last year's convention at Dallas. It was similar in that the fundamental conservatives continued to win and the attendance was large (approximately 40,891—about 4,000 less than last year). There was, in general, a better spirit at this year's convention than there was at Dallas. We attribute this to the assistance rendered President Stanley by the paid accredited parliamentarian, who was constantly by Dr. Stanley's side to give advice. We commend Dr. Stanley for the good job of presiding.

This year's convention revealed more than ever that Southern Baptists must find a way to settle the controversy. Failure to do so can only disrupt our great emphasis on missions and evangelism. Harm will be brought to every area of the convention's work.

Adrian Rogers' convention sermon contained good advice for all Southern Baptists, as he reminded us that if an adversary is truly a Christian, he is a brother in the Lord with whom we will spend eternity.

The messengers are generally to be commended for unusual fine behavior. Large crowds, strained facilities, and emotional issues tend to make people irritable. But, with only a few exceptions the messengers conducted themselves in a Christian manner. One messenger, however, said that he had been "raped" by what had occurred at the convention. Later he apologized for his statement, but made another statement which was derogatory. It is essential that we as Christians learn to behave in a proper manner whether we agree or disagree is what is occurring.

The residents of Atlanta are to be commended for an unusually fine job in hosting the convention. Cab drivers, waitresses, and the residents of Atlanta in general were extremely helpful and courteous to the messengers. This assists greatly in providing a proper atmosphere for a convention.

We commend the Peace Committee for its recommendations which are our best hope for settling the controversy. The first recommendation was, "to make 1986-87 a year of intercession with periods of prayer..." If Southern Baptists will truly seek God's will, reconciliation and restoration will come to our denomination. Seeking God's will must always be the first step in reconciling differences.

The committee's second, third and fourth recommendations called for a moratorium on the theological-political meetings and inflammatory language and for the press to be fair and accurate. In the spirit of the moratorium, we, the staff of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, pledge to do our best to be 100 percent accurate. We further assure our readers that, if an inaccuracy is discovered, we will print a correction.

Letters to the editor are the most difficult area for an editor since free expression is a part of our Baptist heritage. We do, however, call on those writing "Letters to the Editor," to use restraint which is appropriate for several reasons: (1) restraint is usually the most Christ-like approach for a person to use; (2) restraint is usually best for our convention; (3) the use of inflammatory statements is almost certain to result in a similar response; and (4) failure to use restraint could compel the *Newsmagazine* to eliminate all letters to the editor on the SBC controversy.

The Peace Committee has appointed five subcommittees to visit 11 agencies and institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Peace Committee feels that no concerns remain with the Home Mission Board, the Historical Commission, the Sunday School Board, the New Orleans Seminary, the Southwestern Seminary or the Golden Gate Seminary.

As reported previously, there have never been more than

seven seminary teachers accused of teaching outside the bounds of Southern Baptist theology. If there are those that deny the miracles of the Bible, the Virgin Birth, the historical bodily resurrection of Christ, or Christ's grace as the only way of salvation, we must deal with them. However, such investigations must be done in a fair and Christ-like manner by qualified individuals. The use of limited quotations from an individual's book, lectures, writing or sermon, can totally distort the author's meaning or intent.

In the event that we do have those proclaiming liberalism in the employ of Southern Baptists, they should be dealt with personally. If he or she has been falsely accused, a public apology should be made by those who brought the charges. If it is found that the accuser has attempted to mislead Southern Baptists, he should be personally reprimanded. It is, however, essential that every cloud of suspicion be eliminated, if at all possible, from our agencies and institutions.

This year, President Stanley applied the one-by-one messenger challenge approach to the Committee on Committees and Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees as fair as it is possible to do so. There were no changes made to either of these reports and the messengers soon became weary of the attempt. Perhaps no changes were necessary or advisable. But it is apparent that the one by one challenge method is unworkable. There simply is not enough time or energy for such an approach to function with the number of people we have at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

A deterrent to the peace process was the effort to remove the Southern Baptist Convention from participating in the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Fortunately, it was not acted on at this year's convention but was referred to the Executive Committee for study. It will be brought back to the 1987 convention with a recommendation.

Hopefully, in the environment of the SBC Executive Committee, the work of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs can be examined more objectively. Surely, the Executive Committee will take note of the expertise of the Joint Committee assisting Baptist entities. For example, the Baptist Joint Committee has rendered invaluable aid to the Annuity Board in its pursuit to protect the retirement interests of ministers. It is entirely possible that without the help of the Joint Committee our pensions would have been significantly reduced.

The Baptist Joint Committee, more than any other group, is responsible for the Equal Access legislation. This legislation provides for Christian clubs in high schools where other clubs, such as the Young Democrats and the Young Republican Clubs, meet. There are some restrictions, but most authorities believe the Equal Access legislation to be constitutional. This allows prayer and Bible reading, without any violation of separation of church and state.

The Baptist Joint Committee has been the best and most effective deterrent to the appointment of an Ambassador to the Vatican in the United States. It is likely that, had it not been for the effort of the Joint Committee, an Ambassador to the Vatican would have been in place much sooner. The Baptist Joint Committee is our best hope for eliminating an Ambassador to the Vatican.

If we are to restore peace in the Southern Baptist Convention, everyone must seek it. Prayer, restraint and reliance on the leadership of the Holy Spirit are essential. If, however, the controversy continues, we can be assured that Southern Baptists will not do the work God has in store for us to do.

Don Moore

## You'll be glad to know...

...What your foreign mission involvement accomplishes! Your involvement may be through the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon offering, volunteer missions, prayer, mission education or through a relative or friend who serves overseas. In 1985 our foreign mission force reached 3,597 missionaries who are serving in 106 countries. This is the largest non-Catholic missionary force in the world! A record 429 new missionaries were appointed last year.



Moore

Our overseas mission force baptized 435 persons per day on an average. That is 158,775 for the year. That is an average of more than 18 per hour for 365 days. Isn't that fantastic?

Membership in the churches our missionaries have been working with, most of which they have started, topped 2 million for the first time. Student enlistment in theological education overseas jumped by 10 percent last year. The nationals will one day carry the leadership where God is raising up leaders.

You have supported the treatment of 1.5 million people in our hospitals and clinics. More than 100 million saw gospel presentations in their own languages overseas. Another 133 million heard radio broadcasts heavily laced with the gospel of salvation. The printed page continues to be a major means of evangelizing. More than 20 million pieces of literature were produced for distribution.

Friends, no man or ministry on the earth comes close to this report. If we flaunted on a national TV program, I am sure the public would be impressed. We choose not to do that. Most of our churches never even hear the report. Consequently, history's best story of concerted missionary action goes unknown to those who help make it happen.

There may be some sad stories to tell about a three-day meeting in Atalanta. The whole truth includes what happens the other 362 days of the year overseas. Why don't you tell that, too?

I haven't even mentioned home missions and the many things accomplished in our churches through ministries and materials provided or produced by our denomination.

**Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.**

## Former managing editor receives award

Betty Kennedy, former managing editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, received a first place award in print advertising from the National Federation for Press Women on June 14.

The award was for the design of an ad in

the February 28, 1985 issue of the newsmagazine promoting the State Youth Convention. The design depicted a pencil eight inches tall and one column wide with the phrase "Make a note to attend the State Youth Convention."

## missionary notes

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Crockett**, missionaries to Argentina, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: R.E. de San Martin 3340, 1407 Buenos Aires, Argentina). He grew up in Cross County; she is the former Annette Perkins also of Cross County. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1972.

**Mr. and Mrs. Dennis A. Derby**, missionaries to Mauritius, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 26096 Brandywine Dr., Sun City, CA 92381). He is a native of South Gate, Calif. The former Susanne Dacus, she was born in Jonesboro. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

**Mr. and Mrs. Darrel E. Garner**, missionaries to Malawi, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 111 N. Oak, Searcy, AR 72143). He was born in Seminole, Okla., and lived in Colorado and Huntsville while growing up. The former Judy Brown, she was born in Independence County and lived in Walnut Ridge and Fayetteville. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1969.

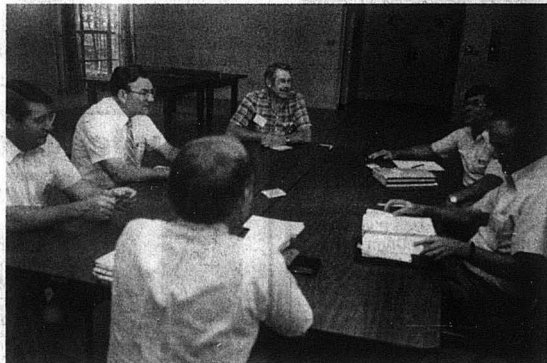
**Mr. and Mrs. Jon M. Lord**, missionaries

to Tanzania, have arrived in Kenya for language study (address: Box 52, Limuru, Kenya). He was born in DeQueen and considers West Monroe, La., his hometown. She is the former Lisa Steele of Monroe, La. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1985.

**Mr. and Mrs. David J. Speigel**, missionaries to Brazil, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 211 E. "B" Ave., North Little Rock, AR 72216). They are children of missionaries to Brazil. He was born in Elmhurst, Ill., lived in several states; Campinas and Teresin, Piaui, Brazil; and considers Sidney, Ohio, his hometown. The former Laura Berry, she was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, but also lived in Brasilia, Brazil; and Louisville, Ky. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1979.

**Dr. and Mrs. William R. Swan**, missionaries to Hong Kong-Macao, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 11811 E. 15th St., Tulsa, OK 74120). Born in Fort Smith, he grew up in Pryor, Okla. She is the former Jannet Morgan of Oklahoma. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1975.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



**Consultants**—New work consultants for new mission sites for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention recently met at Camp Paron for a training seminar directed by Floyd Tidsworth (back to camera), ABCS Church Extension director. Consultants present were (left to right) Elvis Smith, Andy Kerr, Harrison Johns, Hilton Lane and Neal Stevens. Those not pictured are Troy Prince, S.D. Hacker, Robert Staggs, Glenn Hickey, James Browne, Pete Church, Roy Nix, Allen Thrasher, Jack Ramsey and Paul Williams.



## One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

### Mixed emotions about China's new freedom

Surely one of the very best good-news happenings in the last decade, and possibly in the last half of the twentieth century, has been the new freedom for the people of mainland China following the overthrow of the notorious "Gang of Four" and the downgrading of the sayings of Chairman Mao. In the largest nation in the world, still apparently under the control of a communist government, it is truly remarkable to see the growing economic freedom. Some elements of free enterprise in farming have sharply increased productivity and income. But the most encouraging thing of all for Christian people is to see the beginnings of religious freedom for Chinese people and their churches.

A recent news story from China's capital city of Peking (now Beijing) reminds me that even all of this good news from China can be a mixed blessing. It calls to mind many of those old good news/bad news stories, and the similar "mixed emotions" stories. Along with the good news of cautiously opened door of economic and religious freedom in communist China, comes a different report. Peking's first cocktail lounge

has been opened, "a glittery Western-style bar serving Manhattans, Tom Collinses and homegrown favorites like the 'Golden Dream.'" Called "The New Times Bar," the first one available to the 9 million residents of Peking since the 1949 communist revolution, it is reported to have become "a hot spot among young people."

In spite of all of Dr. R.C. Daily's history lectures during my Ouachita days, and even after all of my Baptist Sunday School Bible study of Old and New Testament teachings about how people through the ages have abused their God-given freedom, China's "New Times Bar" is a disappointment. It would be difficult to decide which form of anti-freedom had caused more misery in the world, communism or alcoholism. Each has

proven to be a tyranny in its own insidious way. Each comes wrapped in a glittering cover with an attractive sales pitch. Each leads to a tragic loss of precious freedom.

Is it unrealistic to wish that China could move toward Western-style freedom, including freedom for evangelical Christianity, without moving toward Western-style alcoholism (to name only one result of the abuse of freedom)? Come to think of it, all nations, including our own, must answer the same question.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

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## Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

### Living victoriously

As Christians, we know we are living in an evil world. Yet this was not always so. Throughout the creation narrative, we read that what God created was good. Even the man and woman were innocent. It was through man's disobedience to God that the world was made evil. Since the fall of man, the goodness and beauty of this world can

only be recognized and enjoyed by those who have God within them. These are the blessed who will inherit the earth and will appreciate its original purpose.

This evil world in which we are living will continue until Jesus comes again in his glory. He first came as the lamb of God to take away the sin of this world. In this age, he saves people, but he does not take them out of this world. Though he preserves the redeemed of this world for the time being, we know that the culmination of this age is coming when Jesus will come to judge the world.

What does Christ's death do for those who are still in this world? It saves us from sin in this place and age. His love for us was unlovable was so great that he voluntarily substituted his life for ours. Thus through his own death and resurrection, he took away our sin and endowed us with his sinless life.

Yet it is only as we recognize our sinful nature that we are able to come into this salvation. When Christ stands with the believer before God and declares that this one has accepted his offer of salvation, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, our Heavenly Father declares the sinner free of guilt. It is as the sinner acquires God's righteousness and his nature that he becomes a new creature.

Life is still a constant struggle in this evil world. This world and age in which we live will not change, until Jesus comes to reign over us forever. That Christ is able to deliver the believer from this present evil is one of the purposes of Christ's death. In John 17:15 Jesus prayed, "I will not that thou shouldst take them out of this world but thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." Thus we are given victory over sin in an evil age.

Mary Maynard Sneed, the wife of the editor and mother of two daughters, is an active member of the Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.



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## International

*Persistent witness*

by S. Mikael Carrier, Nettleton Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: Jeremiah 36

Focal passage: Jeremiah 36:4-8,27-31

**Central truth:** Although the obstacles may be great, Christians can find ways to share God's message with others through God's help.

The passage of Scripture with which we deal today reveals to us the creativity and persistence of a child of God in communicating the message God has given to that individual. Jeremiah was forbidden to preach in public. But Jeremiah determined, despite the obstacles, to share God's message.

Jeremiah's persistency is seen in his calling for the scribe Baruch to write his messages because the prophet was not permitted to preach in public (v. 6). Then, on a certain feast day when the Temple was crowded with worshippers, Baruch was sent by the prophet to read from the scroll of prophecies which had been recorded.

After listening with contempt while three or four columns were read, Jehoiakim then took a knife and cut off the columns just read and threw them into the fire. He repeated the action until the entire scroll was consumed.

Jeremiah was not responsible for the outcome of his message. He was only responsible for sharing the message and the people were once again able to hear God's word.

The heart of God is clearly seen in the instruction to write the message (v. 3). The motive behind the writing was that the nation might truly hear God and that they might repent and turn from their wicked ways so that God could heal their land (see 2 Chronicles 7:14).

In Jeremiah's persistence in delivering God's message, we see encouragement and a challenge for us to be more persistent and creative in sharing the message of God's love and concern. The Scriptures say the judgement of God is upon people unless they repent. The consequences to people in rejecting God are as serious today as they were then.

God has commissioned all Christians to live and to speak the message of his love and concern for all people. He gives us assurance from the life of Jeremiah that he will help us when we are truly persistent in our efforts to share his love.

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## Life and Work

*Living while we wait*

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy

Basic passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Focal passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-25

**Central truth:** Christians should be good examples while they wait for Jesus' return.

The resurrection of believers and Jesus' Second Coming are tremendous truths contained in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11. This lesson will identify some examples for believers to follow while we wait for Jesus' return.

Respect for our leaders (vv. 12-13): The death of some believers before the expected return of Jesus caused discontentment in the church. An easy scapegoat for some was their church leaders. Paul instructed them to continue to respect those over them in the Lord. There is a sweet spirit when all believers respect each other and labor together.

Serve effectively while we wait (vv. 14-18): One way to serve effectively is to warn those who have broken ranks with the church. It is the duty of each faithful believer to call the idle member back to service for the Master. Serving effectively is going to the side of a believer when he has lost heart and encouraging him. Another example is giving moral support to weak Christians when they are tempted to sin. Believers should not retaliate evil for evil when we are wronged but should seek ways to do good for one another and for all men (v. 15). In every situation we should be a radiant example of Christian joy.

Submit to the Holy Spirit (vv. 19-22): We are to be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. His guidance is needed to correctly interpret the preaching and teaching of God's Word and to apply it to our lives.

Look to the God of peace (vv. 23-24): Paul's benediction in verse 23 is a didactic prayer about sanctification. Paul instructs us to look to the God of peace to continue the act of sanctification that started at our conversion. God will complete the process of sanctification at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray for each other (v. 25): "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thess. 5:25). This was not flippant request that Paul made just to conclude his letter. He lived almost every day with the threat of physical danger as well as the stress from the churches.

Won't you pause now to pray for someone? They need the strength.

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## Bible Book

*Esther saves her people*

by Roy A. Fowler, First Church, Mountain Home

Basic passage: Esther 3:1 to 7:10

Focal passage: Esther 3:2,5-6; 4:13-16; 7:3-6b

**Central truth:** Esther's acceptance of her responsibility to act in a dangerous situation highlights the Christian's responsibility to stand firm even in the times of stress.

The king gave his signet ring to Haman whom he promoted to be above all his servants. Haman was the man of authority but the enemy of the Jews. He was an Agagite (3:1). Agag was king of the Amalekites. Amalek was Esau's grandson. Malachi 1:4 tells us that the descendants of Esau were a "people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever." Therefore, the enemy of the Jews is the enemy of God. Haman was determined to destroy all the Jews because Mordecai, God's faithful servant, refused to bow down to the enemy.

The plan of death for the Jews was complete and approved by the king (3:8-11). The wrong man was in charge. To save the Jews, the right man must be put in his place. God initiated his plan to save his people before Haman ever thought about his plan to destroy them.

Upon learning of Haman's death decree, Mordecai began to pray in sackcloth and ashes. He courageously prayed at the front of the king's gate (4:1). His example was followed by the Jews in every province (4:3). He sent word to Esther of Haman's decree and asked that she go into the king to make supplication for her people. When Esther refused Mordecai's request, he reminded her she had been placed there and that if she refused to obey that she would die with the rest of the Jews. He also pointed out that if she wasn't ready to be used that God could raise up another deliverer.

With the issues so clearly defined, Esther courageously decided to comply with Mordecai's request. She demanded all Jews enter into a three day period of fasting and prayer. After this she would go to the king even at the risk of her life (4:15-16). On the third day, Esther went before the king and found favor in his sight (5:1-2). She requested the king's and Haman's presence at the banquet she had prepared. Esther revealed to the king the death sentence pronounced upon her and her people. The king had Haman hanged on the very gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai.

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## Former SBC President Louie D. Newton dies

ATLANTA (BP)—Louie D. Newton, president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1946 to 1948, died June 3 of pneumonia at Georgia Baptist Medical Center in Atlanta. He was 94.

Newton, who was pastor of Druid Hills Church in Atlanta for 40 years, was the oldest-living former SBC president.

Born in Screven County, Ga., in 1892, he was a graduate of Mercer University in Macon and Columbia University, New York. As a young reporter for the *New York World*, he refined his writing skills through interviews with John D. Rockefeller, Thomas A. Edison, Charles Evans Hughes and Rudyard Kipling. Those skills later aided him as publicity director for the SBC's "75 Million" campaign to pay debts owed by hospitals, schools and agencies. The same year, 1919, Georgia Baptists purchased the *Christian Index* from private interests and named him editor.

Following the death of his pastor at Druid Hills, Newton, who was chairman of the deacons, was offered the ministerial post. He became pastor on April 1, 1929.

His reputation spread as he hammered on the familiar Baptist themes of the day—anti-liquor, anti-pornography, anti-slot machines—and by protesting to every president from Franklin Roosevelt to Richard Nixon on sending envoys to the Vatican. He was a founder of the Georgia Temperance League.

Newton became a frequent visitor to the corridors of power and counseled with

presidents. This year, following a unanimous vote of the Georgia General Assembly, his portrait was hung in the state capital. He was only the third minister so honored.

Newton was chairman of the SBC's finance committee for 25 years and vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance. He also was a co-founder of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

He once led a nationwide campaign to collect kits of clothing for orphans in war-torn Russia and a Bible and a pipe for Joseph Stalin. The campaign immediately drew fire from the Baptist right led by Fort Worth, Texas, pastor J. Frank Norris, who branded Newton a communist sympathizer. Norris harassed Newton with telegrams each Sunday for months. When eventually presented with the Bible, Stalin bowed and said in Russian, "Thank you."

Newton's weekly radio program, on which he and his wife interviewed notables, ran every Sunday for 57 years until his death.

The Louie D. Newton Center for Extended Care, adjoining Georgia Baptist Medical Center where he died, is named for him, as is a cottage at the Georgia Baptist Children's Home in Palmetto. The Baptist church on the Mercer campus was renamed Newton Hall in his honor.

His wife, the former Julia Carstarphen of Macon whom he married in 1915, died in 1969. Survivors include two daughters, Eden Elizabeth Gurein and Sarah Catherine Robertson, both of Atlanta; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

## Missionary dies unexpectedly in Brazil

VITORIA, Brazil—George Bagby Cowsett, 61, a Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil for 34 years, died unexpectedly June 6 in Vitoria while exercising in his home.

Missionaries report Cowsett returned home from jogging and was riding an exercise bicycle when he died. An autopsy showed the cause of death was a hemorrhage in his pancreas.

Cowsett's wife, Hilda, was in the northwest part of Espirito Santo state, speaking at an associational meeting, at the time. A household helper found him.

A memorial service was conducted June 8 in Vitoria, with 45 pastors and 600 people attending. The body was to be flown to the United States for another memorial service and burial in Wingate, N.C.

Cowsett has been director of religious education and stewardship for the Espirito

Santo State Baptist Convention since 1977. Previously he was a general evangelist and executive secretary of the Rio Grande do Sul State Convention, 1953-65. He was a general evangelist in the state of Goias, 1965-77.

He started churches and was pastor of several during his missionary career. He was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to J.J. and Grace Bagby Cowsett, missionaries to Brazil for 40 years. His grandfather, B.Y. Bagby, was a pastor and cousin of William "Buck" Bagby, first Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil.

Besides his wife, survivors include four children, Naomi Grace Key, Fort Worth, Tex.; Norma Anderson, Jacksonville, Fla.; Elena Catherine Kay, a Southern Baptist missionary serving in Santos, Brazil; and Jack Cowsett, Raleigh, N.C.

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