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REPORT OF  
THE SECOND CONFERENCE ON BAPTIST UNITY  
 Held at  
 THE ALAN B. SHEPHERD CONVENTION CENTER  
 VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA  
 on  
 October 4 - 5, 1963

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## INTRODUCTION

The Second Annual Conference on Baptist Unity was held at Virginia Beach, Virginia, on October 4 - 5, 1963. This Conference, as was the first one which met in Washington, D. C., in 1962, was planned and sponsored by the Baptist Survey and Study Committee. This is a volunteer group of pastors and laymen from the American and Southern Baptist Convention. Eighty-two persons were registered at this Conference.

Delaware	5	North Carolina	19
Georgia	1	Pennsylvania	11
Massachusetts	1	Texas	1
Maryland	5	Virginia	32
New Jersey	4	D.C.	3
		TOTAL	<u>82</u>
Southern Convention	52		
American Convention	23		
Dual Alignment Churches	7		

The Keynote Address was given by Dr. Lawrence T. Slaght, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lowell, Massachusetts, on the theme "Where Are Baptists Today?" - "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism...Many Gifts."

Dr. Slaght spoke of the divisions that are evident in the two conventions - doctrinal, racial, political and social. The main division, as he sees it, is political and social rather than doctrinal or racial. God's creative power is not limited, he pointed out. Our differences are causes for unity, but not for childishness. The great majority of Baptists come from the same roots. Where one Convention is strong, the other is weak, and therefore we have much to share.

"As the design and dimensions of the chasm separating American and Southern Baptists become more clear, the despair in the hearts of those who would establish unity must increase. The likelihood of leveling barriers seems to be diminishing. Yet there are some bridges and traffic that do cross to and fro. A list of such connectors would include free transfer of local church membership, some pastoral interchange, and common fellowship in the Baptist World Alliance (and in the Alliance-proposed "North American Baptist Fellowship"). Usually, Baptists moving from one section of the country to another are accepted by the local church in their new community without the indignity of being faced with the possibility of re-baptism. Pastors cross the border back and forth and assume ministries in areas other than those generic with some frequency although it must be admitted that the traffic northward is heavier than that in the other direction."

Following the address of Dr. Slaght the Conference was divided into several small groups for the purpose of discussing his address and to talk of other aspects of Baptist unity and practical measures that might be taken in the direction of unity.

At the evening session there was a panel discussion led by the Reverend Kean Knudsen, in graduate studies at the University of North Carolina and member of the Binkley Memorial Baptist Church of Chapel Hill, N. C.; Dr.

Norman Maring of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Dr. Samuel Hill of the University of North Carolina; Dr. James Tull of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Dr. William Lumpkin of the Freemason Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, Virginia.

On the morning of October 5, reports from the discussion groups were heard, with the following ideas suggested as aids to greater Baptist unity:

1. The Baptist Survey and Study Committee (a voluntary group of pastors and laymen from north and south responsible for arranging this and last year's Conference) should become a more formally organized group, even to the point of engaging an Executive Secretary to carry forward its work more efficiently and effectively.

2. A more aggressive form of financial support should be established to provide for the expansion of the committee's work.

3. "Unity teams" should be sent by the committee into areas where there are those who would like to know more about the unity movement.

4. The committee should sponsor a dinner at Atlantic City in May, 1964, in connection with the joint meeting of the American and Southern Baptist Conventions, and give such an affair widespread publicity. Serious consideration should be given to holding some other meetings on Baptist unity in conjunction with the Convention.

5. Contact should be made with leaders of the Green Lake, Ridgecrest and Glorietta Assemblies to arrange for summer conferences on Baptist unity.

6. The Conference passed the following resolution calling upon the Home Mission Societies of both Conventions to work cooperatively in the program of church extension:

We recommend that the American and Southern Baptist Conventions, as an essential step to furthering mutual conversation and cooperation, distinguish between necessary and unnecessary territorial expansion on the North American continent. An acceptable form of expansion is regarded as the ministry to those who lack a Baptist witness. An unacceptable form of expansion results from the beginning of competing churches in the same immediate area.

We further recommend that home mission leaders of both conventions be advised of this statement and be requested to begin between themselves a discussion of ways to work together in the missionary witness to North America.

Finally, brief words were spoken on behalf of Baptist unity by four persons who have bridged the gap between American and Southern Baptist churches.

## THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM...MANY GIFTS

Dr. Lawrence T. Slaght

Next May, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the major Baptist bodies in North America will gather together in special recognition of the founding of their foreign mission movement under Adoniram Judson and others some 150 years ago. This vast assemblage will bring to a climax and to a close the current five-year program known as the Baptist Jubilee Advance. This is not the time nor the place to evaluate the program from any standpoint, but the very situation itself stirs the enquiring mind. The fact that Baptists are making much ado about their togetherness must indicate a rather solid separateness. Why are there differing Baptist groups? How deep are the chasms of division? What is the likelihood of leveling such barriers? Would this have any significant value? What can and should be done? The list of such questions could be a long one indeed, and the answers multitudinous. Truly one becomes discouraged, not by the absence, but by the extent of the pertinent material. Nevertheless, it is the thesis of this paper that such questions are realistic and that some reliable answers may be found. Indeed, the day is at hand and the time far spent for a serious consideration of these matters by Baptists at every corporate level.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter four, the apostle beseeches the Christians there to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called," urges them "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and reminds them that there is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Then he straightway acknowledges the problem in unity by recognizing the factor of diversity. Baptists, with their historic emphasis upon the Bible as the ground of their faith and practice, should not have missed the point here; but they did and continue to do so. God's goal is one fold, because there is but one Shepherd. Differences there may well be, for God's creative power is not limited, but these differences are for contributions toward unity, not for the continuation of childishness. In this age of the ecumenical movement it is popular to speak of the "sin of our division," but this is hardly fair. Some of our divisions came about naturally, and it might also be said, most helpfully. However, to view our division as something sacred and inviolable is likewise erroneous. Baptists have work to do here. As Baptists, we recognize one Lord, one faith and one baptism (or at least most of us do), but there has been failure at the recognition of the validity of the differing gifts and an even greater failure at the recognition of the value which these gifts might contribute toward the strength and unity of the body of Christ as a whole. For the trees, we have failed to see the forest.

Why are there differing Baptist groups? To this question, at least three separate and self-contained answers must be given: doctrinal, racial and political. In the first place, there have always been divisions among Baptists based on doctrinal grounds. There have been particular Baptists, six-principle Baptists, Calvinistic Baptists, Arminian Baptists, predestinarian Baptists, free-will Baptists, two-seed-in-the-spirit Baptists, Baptists regular and no doubt irregular. Perhaps twenty different Baptist bodies may be identified as active on the North American continent today, many with an extensive history. Yet this is only a portion of the truth, the most apparent portion. Of even

greater significance is the frequently unrecognized fact that the great majority of Baptists come from the same roots. I refer to those of the American Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, the two Negro Conventions and most of the bi-lingual groups. Even such variants as the Landmarkers are schismatics from the Southern Conventions, and practically all of the language groups have a background in the American Convention. At this point, the year 1845 becomes exceedingly important and against the background which it offers, the doctrinal differences, historically at least, begin to fade into insignificance.

Slavery was introduced into the new world at the very outset of the colonial period. It was a pattern established by all the major expansionist powers. The reason for this is not easy to identify, since the practice had then long been out of favor in European civilization. Apparently greed overcame grace and the need of extensive cheap labor to dig the mines and cultivate the plantations surmounted any humanitarian tendencies. The failure of the founding fathers of our own nation to adequately deal with this situation is well known and must remain the major blot upon their otherwise brilliant record. Also well known is the fact that slavery was dying of its own weight and that probably the United States would have naturally freed itself from this frightful curse sometime in the nineteenth century had not the cotton industry suddenly burgeoned, and with it brought an almost insatiable demand for cheap and ignorant labor. The fiends in hell could not have devised a firmer foundation for slavery. It was at this juncture in history that American Christians lost both heart and head. The intemperate and unrealistic attacks by the abolitionists of the north combined with the ridiculous defense by the clergy of the south regarding their "peculiar institution" makes good reading for a course of study on how not to do things. However, the weight of opprobrium must be placed on the Southerners, for while the abolitionists may have been led in the direction of fanaticism they paid heavily for their position while the clergy of the South almost literally sold their souls for bales of cotton. One may talk loftily about states' rights, varying economic orders and pressures and differing social philosophies, but the fact remains that Baptists split over slavery. Such statements as that of the Virginia Baptist Foreign Mission Society supporting the call for schism from the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society puts the case as well as any.

"To the Baptist Churches of Virginia and the Baptist Denomination of the United States generally:

Dear Brethren:

You will perceive by the accompanying resolutions of the Executive Committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention that they have acceded to our proposal to hold in Augusta, Geo., on Thursday before the 2d Lord's day in May next, a convention.....

1. We wish not to have merely a sectional Convention. From the Boston Board we separate, not because we reside at the South, but because they have adopted an unconstitutional and unscriptural principle to govern their future course. The principle is this - that holding slaves is, under all circum-

stances, incompatible with the office of the Christian ministry.....For ourselves we cordially invite all our brethren, North and South, East and West, who 'are aggrieved by the recent decision of the Board in Boston,' and believe that their usefulness may be increased by cooperating with us, to attend the proposed meeting.

2. We are desirous to see a full Convention. Let us, brethren, have a meeting concentrating in a good measure, the wisdom, experience, and sentiments of the denomination in the South, and South West, and such portions of our brethren in other places as may deem it best to unite with us....

3. Several important subjects, beside the question of organizing a Foreign Mission Society, will, we presume, come under the consideration of the Convention. We will mention some of them, that our brethren in Virginia, especially, may learn, as far as practicable, the views and wishes of the denomination. Whether it will be better to organize a separate Bible Society, and Publication Society, or to continue our connexion with the existing institutions, are questions which must be discussed. It is quite likely too, that the subject of building up a common Southern Theological Institution will claim a share of attention."

James B. Taylor, President

C. Walthall, Sec'y. (P 26, W. W. Barnes, "The Southern Baptist Convention 1845-1953)

We have chosen to call this division in Baptist ranks, political. This is not an adequate term, but is used through accommodation. The differences between Northern and Southern Baptists in the nineteenth century were not doctrinal, they held the same views on the basic tenets of the faith. The differences were not racial for the disputants were all Caucasians. The ground of the disagreement was economic, over-laid by sociology and capped by politics through the eventual development of the Southern Confederacy.

This is not to say that race has not contributed its share to Baptist organizational diversity. It has. Of more than passing interest is the fact that Negro Baptists were active in the formation of a foreign mission society as early as 1815, only one year after the formation of the Triennial Convention. The next hundred years found the Negroes as busy as their Caucasian brethren in the erection, dismantling and re-building of their organizational structures.

In the north an additional movement was at work. The flood-tide of immigration which had begun in the seventeenth century had never ebbed. It had, however, been subject to much change. Prior to the time of the Mexican war, the great majority of the newcomers hailed from England, Scotland, North Ireland and certain sections of Germany. They were, thus, largely Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. Subsequently, however, following a series of varied disasters in other parts of Europe, not only the tempo of immigration increased remarkably, but also the type became greatly diversified. Most of the immigrants in the latter two-thirds of the nineteenth century were neither Anglo-Saxon nor Protestant. This pattern continued on into the twentieth century with violent effect upon Baptists in the north who felt the main force of the invasion.

They valiantly sought to do God's will in the face of overwhelming odds and did achieve some success. Mission work was established among most of the non-English speaking groups, and later associations and conventions were formed as the work prospered and the churches multiplied. Strangely enough, however, maturity among these groups seldom resulted in union with the parent body. The sad fact is that aside from some dual alliance relationships and one small union - that of the Danish Baptists - the American Baptist Convention has never been able to effect an organizational harvest on its original investment in bilingual work. Development has normally stalemated into another convention of Baptists.

Why are there differing Baptist groups? Doctrine has played some part in this, but it has been a minor role. Racial and national backgrounds have had some effect. Still, by and large, the reason lies in the political-social situation aroused by nineteenth century slavery and never settled by the Civil War.

The second question posed - How deep and how wide is the chasm of difference lying between the American and Southern Baptist Conventions - offers an interesting array of points of departure. In 1845, the chasm may have been fairly deep, but it certainly was not wide. Slavery divided, but after 1865 that issue was dead. What a strange turn history has taken here! The fissure of slavery has been closed, but in the opening and the closing thereof a great gulf has appeared.

Let us notice at least three areas where strong divisive factors have appeared and which taken together have established a chasm of division of remarkable proportions.

The first of these areas would be theological. Among Southern Baptists orthodoxy has reigned supreme. In common with Baptists in the north, they long operated without the standard of a confession of faith, but following World War I, in the general theological scramble of the day, they quickly found themselves and adopted a revised form of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. This sufficed until further modification in 1963.

American Baptists were not so minded. Possessing among their membership a much wider spread on the theological spectrum, they were never able to agree among themselves upon any doctrinal standard and were constantly in some sort of turmoil about the subject. Under the strong influence of men like Francis Wayland, who insisted in the mid 1800's that Baptists could not have confessions of faith (ignoring the fact that they already had them), American Baptists have proceeded to maintain this latitudinarian position in the face of wave after wave of attack and attrition. Like a mother, crazed by the death of her child, clings to the body though life has long gone, American Baptists cling to the outward form of a Biblicism which no longer has relevancy. When Wayland spoke of the Bible as authority there could be some concensus of agreement as to what he meant, but that was in a time before the higher critics had emasculated the text and the de-mythologizers had removed the sting of supernaturalism. American Baptists today are a neutralized people, theologically.

In ecclesiology there is also a wide divergence between Baptists of the north and of the south. Robert Baker depicts the differences well when he writes: "In 1802, with the organization of the Massachusetts Domestic Missionary Society, a rival to the associational method of connectionalism appeared. The differences between the associational and the society methods may be clearly drawn. The former grew out of a distinctly denominational consciousness. A denominational body already in existence simply took up another aspect of denominational life. It has already been pointed out that the matter of conducting domestic missionary operations lagged far behind the denominational aspect of the first associational organization. Matters of doctrine, discipline, and even education had received precedence chronologically. The associational method was, in other words, a denominational program based upon the participation of churches in a formal connection. A different emphasis and a completely new set of connectional ideas may be seen in the organization of the missionary society, or, as it may be called, the society method of conducting missions. Instead of having missions as a secondary interest, the missionary society was organized solely for missionary purposes; and instead of a constituency composed of churches in a formal connection, the missionary society was based upon individuals whose participation was completely voluntary. Instead of having ecclesiastical significance (such as would be apparent in a formal connectionalism based upon official church representation), the society method renounced any relationship to organized churches as far as representation was concerned." (P. 12, "Relations Between Northern and Southern Baptists," Robert A. Baker)

The south has consistently followed the associational pattern; the north has tended toward the society form of government. In fact, until recently, many New England churches maintained the same dichotomy: a church for believers, but a society for business. The worth of a tightly integrated government was proved by the Southern Baptists during the long, hard years following 1865. By 1907, American Baptists were somewhat convinced of this when they, too, got around to organizing a national convention, but they are still in the process of trying to convince one another that it was a good idea. Whether to use five poking fingers or one closed fist should not be much of a problem in a fight, but American Baptists seem to think it is.

For the Southern Baptists, ecclesiology has also offered a stumbling block, but quite a different one. Their understanding of the church universal has been notably deficient. The rigid refusal to participate in the ecumenical movement at all levels is maintained neither from a sense of weakness (and thus the fear of a loss of identity) nor from a sense of strength (and thus from a faith in their own superiority), but it arises from a remarkably restricted doctrine of the church. The great wall did indeed protect China from unsavory contacts with unworthy and uninvited guests from the north, but it also sealed the nation's doom. Isolation does not bring simply stagnation, but eventually strangulation and death. The recent, unhappy experience of a Southern Baptist scholar who was soberly attempting to wrestle with a very real problem in Biblical exegesis shows how deadly the strangulation knot may be drawn.

In sociological fields, both groups may report a good harvest, but again their very successes only enlarge the chasm of difference. The Southern Baptist Convention has been a monumental success at winning the home field. In

evangelism and in church extension work, it is without peer. So successful has it been in reaching the masses of people about its own doors that one might even call it a "folk" church in many areas. About one person in ten in the south is actually a member of a Southern Baptist church. About one-third of all church memberships in the south are held in Southern Baptist churches. The total membership today is in excess of nine million and stands as the largest Protestant denomination in America. To rise from less than 400,000 in the generation following the Civil War and from a million and a half at the turn of the century to this pre-eminent numerical position today is truly remarkable. During a comparable period in the north, Baptists were expanding from approximately 300,000 members to 800,000 to the present 1,500,000. The fact that the latter figure has remained fairly constant now for a number of years has finally begun to worry some American Baptists, and they are beginning to talk about "lack of thrust." Others, however, (and this is most serious for they occupy places of responsibility in the Home Mission Society and should thus be directly concerned with the expansion of the home base) say that Baptists of the north will probably always be a small denomination and should reconcile themselves to it.

While Southern Baptists have been effecting phenomenal growth, American Baptists have been witnessing to their faith in quite different, but nevertheless, productive ways. Their contributions to the ecumenical movement and to the improvement of race relations have been extensive. It is neither accidental nor incidental that the present executive officer of the National Council of Churches and the leading spokesman for Negro civil rights are both affiliated with the American Baptist Convention. This is typical of the Baptist position in the north. During the reconstruction period, following the Civil War, numerous educational institutions were established through the aid of northern Baptist missionary funds for Negroes in the south. Seven of these still maintain affiliation with the American Baptist Convention. Baptist churches in the north normally hold membership in local councils of churches and the state conventions uniformly participate in their respective state councils. In 1960, the American Baptist Convention saw its largest church withdraw fellowship and enter into a disastrous schism rather than alter its cooperative position within the national council. Local churches are permitted to withhold their share of financial support for this work and are allowed to be so listed in the annual. The 1962 Yearbook names 65 as so desiring. It is not known how many of the northern churches are inter-racial in membership, but the number must be sizeable. The present secretary of evangelism for the Home Mission Society is of Japanese ancestry; an administrative assistant for the Board of Education is a Negro, and another Negro has just resigned after many years in a very responsible position with the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. One Negro pastor from New York City has for years been a member of the United States House of Representatives. Another Negro pastor has served with distinction, recently, as president of the Protestant Council of metropolitan New York. Both are American Baptists. At present, one member of the General Council of the American Baptist Convention is a Negro. Thus, the pattern varies, but there is a pattern nevertheless. In this age of a rapidly shrinking world, the ability to live and work and worship with those of other races is of primary importance. American Baptists have not solved all the problems in this pressurized area, but they have made valuable contributions.

As the design and dimensions of the chasm separating northern and southern Baptists becomes more clear, the despair in the hearts of those who would establish unity must increase. The likelihood of leveling the barriers seems to be diminishing. Yet there are some bridges and traffic does cross to and fro. A list of such connectors would include free transfer of local church membership, some pastoral interchange, and common fellowship in the Baptist World Alliance. Usually, Baptists moving from one section of the country to another are accepted by the local church in their new community without the indignity of being faced with the possibility of re-baptism. Pastors cross the border back and forth and assume ministries in areas other than those generic with some frequency, although it must be admitted that the traffic northward is heavier than that in the other direction. Within recent years, every American Baptist seminary, save one, has had for its executive officer a man from the south. Active membership in and support of international Baptist alliances has always been a feature of both the northern and southern Baptist conventions. Further efforts at comity, cooperation and unity have been successively attempted and successively abrogated. The mission society of the north was active in the areas of the Southern Baptist Convention from the time of the schism to the days immediately prior to World War I. At about that time, the tables turned and for the past generation the home mission society of the south has been extremely active in areas deemed by the Fortress Monroe agreement to be that of the American Baptist Convention. The usual argument being that Baptists moving from the south found the northern churches strange and cold and so they established their own brand of Baptist witness, later calling upon the Atlanta office for help. During the middle 1950's, however, the state convention officials in the north were petitioned by the Southern Baptist Home Mission office to supply data on number, size and location of Baptist churches so that they might develop a master plan of Southern Baptist expansion in every state of the union. I received such a letter for the state in which I was then serving and carefully filed it away.

Since 1949 there has been no official committee on cooperation between the two Baptist bodies, except that which is represented in and by the Baptist Jubilee Advance. The following minutes in the Northern Baptist Convention Yearbook for 1949 tell the story: "W. C. Coleman, of Kansas, reported orally for the committee on Relations with the Southern Baptists, and, on his motion, it was voted that the committee be discharged and that matters referring to negotiations between Northern and Southern Baptists be referred to the General Council." As I recall the discussion at the time, the chairman claimed that the southerners found no reason for the committee and took the initiative at the severance of conversation. Not having been present at the Southern Baptist Convention, I know not what report was made there nor what implications were expressed. I do know that immediately following the aforementioned negative report by Mr. Coleman, the minutes of the Northern Baptist Convention records a very favorable account of conversations about unity with the Disciples of Christ. It would not be difficult to draw some conclusions at this point about Southern Baptist reaction, and the causes thereof. Certainly something rather drastic occurred that year, for in 1948 a long report was presented to the Northern Baptist Convention relative to negotiations with the Southern Baptists. It included such remarks as, "we believe that there should be a new spirit of mutual understanding and appreciation" and "we find that a

large majority in both conventions agree, to an encouraging extent, in fundamental Baptist principles." Furthermore, it was recommended "that consideration be given to the establishment of such a Baptist Alliance of North America, patterned after the Baptist World Alliance, through which recognized Baptist bodies of North America may give a united expression of their Christian witness." This report was signed by the representatives of both conventions. It would not seem to be an unwarranted guess that the Northern Baptist conversations with the Disciples of Christ deeply offended the southerners. Northern Baptists were certainly lacking in astuteness at this point by carrying on a romance with two swains at once. The present discussions with the Church of the Brethren and the projected renewal of conversations with the Disciples cannot help any rapprochement with the Southern Baptists. Since neither of these dialogues with non-Baptist groups has been approved by the convention as a whole, and since such a powerful figure in American Baptist life as the recently retired secretary of the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board could at his valedictory list possible union with several other church bodies and omit the Southern Baptists, it must be concluded that there are those in high places who do not favor Southern and American Baptist union.

Another factor lending deterrence to unity was well expressed in a rather petulant letter written to the editor of the Christian Century a few years ago. It said, "What keeps Baptists divided...? Is there something in the Baptist understanding of the gospel that makes it easier for Baptists to nurse a grudge generation after generation? Or are Baptists more ignorant than other people, so that they do not know that their differences have no foundation in principle? Is it true that the Baptist conception of the church is so deficient that once a division has taken place, it is beyond the wit of even the most learned or dedicated man to suggest an acceptable basis for reunion?" This critic has a point. The extreme individualism of Baptists renders the situation difficult for an adequate understanding of the doctrine of the church universal. In one way or another, with Baptists, the idea of the church seems to stop with the local church. They have never even developed a satisfactory terminology for a discussion of the broader aspects of the corporate life of the Christian. Southern Baptists with their persistent refusal of cooperation with councils of churches and American Baptists with their death-like grip on the society concept of church government are both guilty.

What likelihood is there then of filling and leveling the chasm of division between the two groups of Baptists? One cannot be honest with the facts and favorable with reaction. The outlook would seem to be dim. However, perhaps this is too pessimistic a picture. At least one other factor should be considered and that is the significance of the movement. What does reason say? What does our good common sense tell us?

One thing is most apparent and that is where one convention is strong, the other is weak. If, for instance, the Southern Convention could come bringing its clear and positive theological standards, its strong associational concepts, its evangelistic zeal; and if, for instance, the American Convention could come bringing its abilities in social action, its sensitiveness to those in other Christian communions and its democratic spirit; then the world might well see another reformation. And contrariwise, if this union does not take place, the witness of the Baptists will surely be attenuated. There are those

who argue, on the other hand, that the best thing that could happen would be for each Baptist group to invade the homeland of the other and, maintaining its own distinctives "look into the faces of one another." (Baker, p. 251) This eyeball to eyeball approach may hold a certain fascination for those who like to live dangerously, and it may rationalize a certain status quo, but it is sadly lacking in Christian temperament and in factual reality. God did not make us all alike, either as individuals or as Christians. Our differences are purposeful, to the building up of the whole body of Christ. If the peculiarities of each group are to be perpetuated in the invasions and in the transplantings, little good can come forth. A Southern Baptist church can prosper in a northern environment largely by drawing upon Southern Baptist material available in the community, such as around a military establishment or in the transplanted people to be found in areas of large migrations. Their tragic failure in the civil rights issue will hardly commend them in the great population centers of the north. At the same time, the lethargic American Baptist Convention can barely pay its bills. Its splendid work on the foreign fields, established in brighter days, now is in desperate need of refurbishing. The Baptist folk in the north simply do not have the money to underwrite an invasion of the south. A church here and there might be established. Certainly it could welcome already established churches, but in doing so it would miss the zeal and dynamic of the Southern Baptists and would be perpetuating its own brand of unlicensed freedom.

In turning to the final question posed - What can be done to repair the divisions between Baptists? - it would seem that the wisest policy would be to turn completely away from it. Recognizing something of the nature, the depth and age of the chasm separating Baptists, it would appear ridiculous, if not almost indecent, to suggest possible leveling media. Four years ago it was my privilege to spend a half-day with a noted scholar and educator who has had wide experience in both the American and Southern Conventions. I asked him the foregoing question. In answer he turned to me sadly and said, "I see no hope at all." Following this pessimistic appraisal came a melancholy recital of brutal facts, the character of which you are all aware. Yet in spite of such experiences, some old and quite shopworn phrases continue to come to mind. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." "One with God is a majority." Perhaps it would not be inappropriate also to be reminded of the apostolic encouragement - "If God be for us, who can be against us?" It must be granted, however, that there are those who would quickly declare this to be a clear claim of supererogation. Nevertheless, knowing that there is only one Shepherd and that therefore there should be but one fold; knowing that the body has many parts, but that there is but one Head; and knowing, furthermore, that the Bible never discourages a prophet from attempting an endeavor solely because it is difficult, it would appear that the proper course for all concerned would be that of constant probing.

In this probing, two theses might well be studied. In the first place, it ought to be proved, beyond doubt, that there is validity in the proposition that the differences between northern and southern Baptists are not theological, that both accept the classical Christian tradition and do so in the historic Baptist manner. Great adjustment in the American Baptist Convention would be necessary here. Under challenge by the Southern Baptists they might do so.

Secondly, the value of leveling the chasm between the two conventions needs to be proved. Would these values be found in the efficiency of operation, the economy of the budget, the strengthening of attack upon entrenched evils, or the deepening of spiritual insights? Church unions are not effected by pious thoughts, but by harsh realities. There may be a flight from something or a fight for something, or both, but the value factors must be identified.

Finally, four enabling forces might be pursued. (1) The present inter-convention activities should be approved and further contacts be sought.

(2) The Baptist World Alliance should be strongly supported and efforts toward the establishment of a North American fellowship be warmly applauded.

(3) The power-structure of both conventions should be penetrated and persons holding non-parochial views should be assisted to places of influence.

(4) The communications media of our conventions should be importuned to establish continental and inter-continental news departments. "Getting to know you" should not be just a catch phrase from tin-pan alley. Neither should "togetherness" be only a master key for some sociological closets. There is truth here and Baptists need to find it. Will they?

WHAT IS OUR FUTURE?

Group Discussion

Dr. Norman Maring, Dr. Samuel Hill, Dr. William Lumpkin,  
Dr. James Tull

Dr. Norman Maring

We American Baptists have made real steady progress beyond where we were ten, fifteen, twenty years ago. I think the fact that three years ago all of our seminary faculties could meet together for a conference on the subject of Christology indicates that we have made great strides. Two years from now we hope to have an open conference on worship. But this is only one of the prongs by which we hope to stimulate conversation and to promote exchange - dialogue, I guess is the word - to create understanding and appreciation of people and points of view with our journal "Foundations" with which I think you are acquainted. We started this journal in 1958 for a twofold purpose: one, to try to help Baptists recover a sense of their identity; second, to try to encourage Baptist pastors, first of all - and we hope laymen to some extent, too - to think theologically about what we do in and outside of our church life.

The Division of Evangelism has stressed vocational evangelism in order to achieve a depth of Christian commitment. While there has been difference of opinion about some of the emphases here, I think real progress has been made through the work of our Division of Evangelism and through the missions of ministers that have been carried on over a period of years. We will never go back to where we started. We have made strides in trying to integrate and unify our organizations and are trying to see further how we could become a more close-knit group, more effective without becoming a machine. We do not want to just tighten up a few bolts and add a few gadgets. We want to realize in a visible way what the church really is to be and do and find the kind of organization, the kind of polity that would enable us to be more unified.

At least there are studies going on in all administrative areas, studies of the association - trying to find how the association could be realigned and made vital once more. Perhaps this could be a step in a chain from which we could develop a representative form of church government - some modified form, perhaps - thus making possible a two-way communication: one, from the grass roots, and then from the top ground. This would get away from the necessity of having somebody at the top to map out the road that we travel and send it down through channels, making no attempt at expression pending judgment and policy-making at the grass roots level. The time will come when in some measure we can have a polity which will make possible this two-way communication. There are a number of other things and ways in which I feel very hopeful that we are moving in a good wholesome direction in the American Baptist Convention.

The third thing is the question of whether there will be a crisis that might make us feel a sense of urgency. That is the kind of question nobody can answer really, though I can conceive of a situation. It seems very possible and very likely to me that we will reach a stage before this generation is over in which there will be a real downturn in interest in churches and

in religion. Many people think today that the so-called religious revival is over. On and off college campuses there are signs that the kind of interest that was so prominent throughout the 1950's is on the decline. There are also many evidences of a kind of secularism and it is quite possible that Northern and Southern Baptists and all the rest of Protestants are going to face a situation that will scare them. When that happens we may begin to ask some searching questions that we have not felt necessary to ask before.

We may come to realize that Baptists, generally, have lost any pure sense of divinity. I know there are many people who can define Baptists without batting an eye, but somebody else defines it some other way and somebody else another, with diversities of opinion as to who the Baptists are and what they stand for. Almost everybody says now and again that this is not Baptist but press them a little bit and they do not know what Baptist is. They know what their version of it is, because we are so very mixed up and diversified. Perhaps it would be interesting to have a questionnaire here on what it really means to be Baptist. I expect with the different points of view we could conduct a good debate.

In summary, I feel a great sense of the importance of our finding ways to unity and cooperation, but I have a kind of pessimism about it because I do not feel the sense of urgency. I do not get it as I talk with others. There may be more of this urgency. There is, of course, plenty of it in a group like this, but we are a pretty small group compared with the conventions from which we come. I hope that it does not take a crisis to bring us together, but it may.

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Dr. Samuel Hill

Last year in a preface to a talk which I gave to this group at its first meeting in Washington, I said, perhaps unwisely, that I thought we would not succeed. There is a sense in which I still believe that this group will not succeed in achieving its obviously stated purpose. We were reminded this afternoon by Dr. Slaght that at least one scholar who has lived and taught in both conventions is of much the same opinion. Perhaps all of us are in one sense or another of the opinion that if we do succeed, it will be along certain lines and in certain ways, but hardly in the way of realizing organic unification of the American and Southern Baptist Conventions. However, I continue to say that the fact of our being here is itself a success. This is a witness, whether we "get anywhere" or not.

I was amazed and deeply pleased by the kind of publicity both positive and highly adverse which the first conference on Baptist unity received last year. People all around the Southern Baptist Convention at least knew about it. Some were irate over the fact that a group of us had met, but everyone was at least interested - indeed, perhaps, fascinated - by the fact that this had happened. This is a witness to the world, to the Baptist world in particular, and one hopes to the Christian world in general. Perhaps this conference should not lead to anything else. It seems to me this is one alternative. I am not committed to this alternative, but it is an alternative that

might well be considered. As someone in our group very perceptively said this afternoon, "Perhaps if the American and Southern Baptist Conventions are united both would suffer." We need the dialogue which this occasion in which we now find ourselves makes possible, and yet we are not quite happy with this as the ultimate statement of the case.

I was very much impressed recently by Professor Albert Adler's comment and description of what the National and World Council of Churches is about. He described the ecumenical movement and various denominations which make up the ecumenical movement as being somewhat akin to the Roman Catholic Church with its different orders. There is real diversity in the different orders of the Roman Catholic Church. Each knows that the other exists, but they do not compete. Of course, they have on occasion, in the past especially, competed, but ideally they do not. Anyone who knows what the Roman Catholic Church is all about could hardly justify any competitive spirit between one religious order of the Roman Church and another. It seems to me that we need to think in similar terms to these.

We need to retain our identity - Baptists have to say something very great to the Protestant Christian world and to the world in general. Possibly we ought to realize our unity along something of the lines which the Roman Catholic Church has. In any case, so far as I can see, we may be sure that what we are doing here is not going to lead to formal unification - neither next year nor ten to twenty-five years from now.

There is still another possible alternative. Perhaps our concern should be institutionalized. I am told that we will have a report from at least one of the discussion groups this afternoon which will point in this direction. What we are doing here is important and needs to be perpetuated, but it must be perpetuated by being institutionalized in some way or another. I will defer any further comments on that until we have heard some formal statement from the discussion group which produced this idea. As I see it, the nature and immediate purpose of this council is to open the way for dual alignment. Naturally, I am speaking for the Southern Convention's viewpoint. But I would like to repeat my statement. The major immediate purpose of this conference is to open the way to dual alignment. Dual alignment is inherently good inasmuch as it tangibly expresses our belief in the unity of the church. It is better to be in two Baptist Conventions than one.

Moreover, dual alignment for Southern Churches is better than a new convention. There has been some talk of a formal schism within the Southern Convention and the establishment of a new convention of Baptists within the South. If this were to happen, the very purpose for which we have come would have been defeated. This is not contributive to unity but to further disunity, so it seems to me. Dual alignment may very well provide the kind of outlet, the kind of safety valve, the kind of wider and deeper identification and ministry which the many restless Southern Baptists require. I think more of these are lay people than pastors, though there appears to be a growing number of restless pastors. We may expect something of a proliferation of this restlessness in the immediate future.

Dual alignment is also better for the Southern Convention churches than losing our strong leaders. And this is increasingly happening. The people whom I teach at the University of North Carolina and who come out of the Baptist tradition are by and large pretty well fed up with the Southern Convention. Now this is true of the rising generation all across the South, especially in the Southeast. I am advised that this is taking place more and more in the more conservative Southwest also. After all, it is just as snobbish to be satisfied with the ministry exclusively to the lower classes as it is to be desirous of an exclusive ministry to the upper classes. I like what the Bishop coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina said recently. He said that "the Episcopal Church is not the church for the upper classes nor for the upper middle classes. This is a complete denial of everything that the Episcopal Church stands for. This is the church for all people." I feel precisely the same way about the part of the Body of Christ to which I belong. There are those who are saying that maybe the ministry of the Southern Baptist is to persons who in their early twenties defect to the Presbyterian or Episcopal denominations. There is no particular reason why we should retain everybody who comes to us when he is eight, ten, twelve or fifteen years of age, and I am not very happy with this as an ultimate statement of our reason for existence. Preparing our more capable people for better churchmanship elsewhere leaves me a bit cold even though I do believe very strongly in what the Presbyterian and Lutheran churches are doing, as are also other visible expressions of the Body of Christ.

Unity is right, it is inherently right, and is a "given" of the Christian Gospel. We have no right to tamper with this as I see it, but if we believe it then let us implement it. If we do not implement it we do not believe it, if I understand what the Bible means by faith or by belief. The Southern Convention, at least, desperately needs the salutary effect of cross-currents. Many of us deplore being cut off from world Christianity. It so happens that I am a Catholic Christian. I think that all the early Baptists were Catholic Christians, for they used the word "Catholic" in all of their early confessions of faith. It is deplorable, stifled and evil to be cut off from world Christianity.

What I would like to see come out of this kind of conference for the sake of myself and my fellow Southern Baptists is an opportunity to not only cooperate but to live alongside and work along with others in the Body of Christ. Frankly, as I see it, unification is not yet an issue for either the American or Southern Baptist Conventions. However, unification could be, under certain circumstances, an issue for the American Baptist Convention. Now the reason I say this is not yet an issue for the Southern Baptist Convention is that the Southern Convention is, if anything, going more conservative at the present time. This is a false conservatism, but it is growing out of reaction; it is a conservatism which we feel impelled to follow because of certain challenges and threats both from within and without.

I very much appreciated Dr. Slaght's most receptive address this afternoon. Naturally, I had to differ with him on one or two points. Probably everybody did. I daresay he would not have wanted it any other way. One of the statements with which I would like to take exception is his statement - I think this is verbatim - "Among Southern Baptists, orthodoxy has reigned



a choice between the two - ecumenical fellowship and the significance of the local congregation, the visible church - I think Southern Baptists are inclined to favor the visible church. I think this is distinctively Baptist just as the concept of the universal church is distinctively Baptist. But there is a difference in emphasis between North and South and we must be conscious of this.

The North needs to remember that Southern Baptists are placed in a most unusual position from the standpoint of the whole strand of Baptist history. For the first time, Baptists have become a majority religious group - or the largest single denomination in a particularly large area of the world. In the South, we have attained a majority status, and this has called for a good deal of adjustment on our part. We have no precedent for this. We have had to find our way in a culture which we have helped so largely to create. In the North there is a different situation. There is an overshadowing Roman Church and the other denominations are, in a number of cases, larger, stronger, perhaps more influential than the Baptist Churches. In the South, we have learned to say the adage "Nothing succeeds like success." We have a growing proposition. Therefore, we have developed the psychology which goes with this success. Success in numbers and in outward things, at least, which the North has not known. So we shall have to do a great deal of sympathizing and studying if we are going to understand each other, but we are the people who ought to lead in this activity.

In the second place, I follow in Sam Hill's footsteps when I say that in the matter of Baptist unity we shall have to do a great deal of trial and error work. We shall have to do some experimenting. We shall have to wait for opportunities to present themselves and seize them to set forward the idea of Baptist unity. We never know when a crisis will arise. We never know when an opportunity will come. This much is certain, I believe: unity will come out of the sense of need. One convention will need the other; indeed, each convention will need the other. I do not know that our plight is any more difficult than that which faced the American Baptist community in 1814 before we had any national or general organization. The churches were just as diverse then, I suppose, as they are now. There were sectional differences, regional differences, and anyone could think of an abundance of obstacles in the way and objections to joining the churches into a common effort. There were dangers, of which many were conscious, but these difficulties were confronted and dealt with by a need, a need to obey the command of Christ to preach the Gospel of Christ to all nations. The foreign missions challenge brought a sense of need for cooperation and unity, and the result was the formation of the Triennial Convention. These needs are going to rise in our generation and we must be ready to present the idea of unity and urge this as an ideal upon our people.

One final word. I think we shall make progress, as many have said here today already, by working at the grass roots. Ours is a movement which is democratically motivated. The people are important, the individual is important in Baptist theory, and by wise propaganda we shall convince a great many people that Baptist unity is needed in this age - is demanded indeed - and this surging conviction will bring results perhaps not in our age, in our

day, but before too many years have passed, I believe the needs will be of such magnitude that our churches will feel impelled to draw closer together. But let us not lose our distinctive emphases. We have a contribution to make to the church of Christ in the world, and no one else can make it for us.

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Dr. James Tull

I would like to add these one or two points. I think that one of our problems is that Southern Baptists are much more interested in expanding than they are in unity. They are in the business of expanding their work. To make them conscious that there is a problem here would be going a long way toward the preliminary step of unity. I happen to see this problem from the vantage point of the teaching position in one of our seminaries in the South and this fact reminds me that we often say, "Well, we can't get at this particular problem because this problem relates to every other problem and we can't solve this one before we solve anything else." And in a sense this is true. We have to realize that we have many other problems in order to create a climate for unity. These are far-ranging problems with which we deal and I think that there are some hopeful signs.

In the first place, in our seminaries, how adequately we are realizing this challenge is no question. I am sure we are very inadequate at the job, and yet the challenge is there. We are in an ecumenical situation. The sources which we use are ecumenical sources. We do not use Baptist books by Baptist authors; we try to use the sources that are best in the field. I believe that we have the opportunity of creating the climate among our young ministers which will enlarge their intellectual horizon and lift the consideration of the gospel into the broader framework. If we do this, we will be taking a long step in the direction of Baptist unity.

I think our fundamental problem here is the conception of the church which we have. I do not know that I can agree with Dr. Lumpkin, but our Southern Baptist churches have for the most part held to an idea of the larger fellowship of the churches. We have had the very narrow concept that the local church is the only church. I have made a little research lately in some of our denominational literature where this point of view has been in times past very strongly expressed, and I see a relaxing of this idea. At least we are paying lip service once again to the backing of the universal church. Of course, historically, among Baptists this was perhaps where the Baptists started. I do not know. I think we will never get anywhere, particularly among Southern Baptists with the idea of Baptist unity, ecumenical expression of Christianity, until we reassert unit backing of the universal church. To me, this is the first step for us. Our seminarians, I believe, at least when they graduate, will have gotten this doctrine of the universal church. I believe many of our laymen are far ahead of our ministers here, and perhaps if my observations are true, we have some basis for hope that we may come into a doctrine of the church which will allow ecumenical relationships to Baptists and other groups of people. I should think and hope that we would do very well to continue our conversations such as this, meet together and talk frankly.

One of the greatest things I have gotten out of these conferences is how frank we are with each other. We say exactly what we think and believe and we say it in the context of Christian love and no one seems to be offended. For us Southern Baptists to know what you American Baptists think of us helps us, and for you to know what we think of you, the image we have, should be helpful to you. I think that we ought to try to reach our leadership, particularly in our own denomination, with this question. At our seminaries, this particular question has not been brought into focus. We have focused on some things, but we have not focused on Baptist unity. We should bring this question into focus, even among our leaders, so that they will attend conferences like this one. I know many of them are organization men and you may not be able to get them here. I am a little pessimistic about that. At least, some of them might come, and if they came, they could not help but get a vision, I believe. They have some visions of some kind, but I mean this particular kind of vision. Also, we need some editorial work all along the way. The state paper level, it seems to me, needs to be focusing upon this question.

#### REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OF DISCUSSION GROUPS

##### Chairman - Group # 1

This group presents five specific suggestions. The first concern is that we pursue this matter of Baptist unity more extensively along theological lines. We in our discussion group believe that the theological differences that we think exist do not exist. There is a wider spectrum in both conventions. Perhaps a future conference should be sponsored by this group or ideally by some official group within the framework of both conventions to deal with the matter of Baptist theology, Baptist tradition, Baptist belief, to see if we can discover our unity at this level in terms of looking toward a heritage.

Concern number two is for more exchange between North and South on the part of both laymen and preachers. It was stated in our group that this was one of the hopes in terms of the Baptist Jubilee Advance program that has not actually been realized. If it cannot be realized officially in terms of pulpit exchange and exchange of visits between laymen and conversations between laymen and churches in the North and South, perhaps again this is the place where some of us who have this concern ought to make a beginning.

The third concern is that we spread out the spirit of this kind of gathering in the particular localities where we serve. Obviously because of cost and distance, etc., wherever we hold a meeting, we will largely draw from those in the immediate area of that meeting. Therefore, our suggestion is that there might be real wisdom in trying to set up some people who would be available to serve as resource leaders in unity conferences that we might establish in our own areas. Though we may be dealing with people primarily of

one convention, we would also have in terms of leadership those who could interpret the position of other conventions.

Our two specific suggestions for your consideration are first that we go on record as encouraging dual alignment as one way of trying to further this interchange between the two conventions. The second specific suggestion is in terms of the Atlantic City meetings. Possibly there could be a meeting sponsored by this group set at a time when our two conventions meet simultaneously to consider Baptist unity specifically.

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Chairman - Group # 2

In the first session, we were seeking to find out from our American Baptists how they felt about the so-called invasion or whether indeed we were living up to what the Home Mission Board has been telling us we are doing. We discovered that we are not in some cases. We wanted to know whether these churches that are being started by Southern Baptists who have gone up north are really meeting a need outside of Southern Baptist territory. It was felt by the group that it was not reaching the people of this area, but only transplanted Southerners. One of the group pointed out that he had recently been on the field and talked with some young Southern Baptist executives in the Manhattan Baptist Church. They were not particularly interested in starting more Southern Baptist churches, but wanted a church they were familiar with, which would probably follow Southern Baptist polity and organization. They had not wished to make a big thing of this, but because they found in some of the areas a religious vacuum they wanted a church that would fill this need. So they were not particularly interested in the Southern Baptist invasion; they were interested in the church, and the only kind they knew were Southern Baptist churches, so they created this kind of a church. Apparently, it is not always a completely native desire.

By the evening session, we had apparently analyzed sufficiently, though we did some continued analysis to come to more constructive comment. We began by discussing the more immediate and possible goal - dual alignment for churches that seemed ready and wanted this. This was discussed at some length. There was some concern in our group about whether this is really good as a long-range measure; the question being, Can we really serve two masters? Does it really ever work out well? There were some who had fear that as this is attempted, it always tends to become either one or the other, that the groups adopt either the Southern or American viewpoint and it becomes a real administrative hassle and is not very creative. The group observed that if it is going to be very creative it is going to take a lot of work, imagination and creativity on the part of the layman to make it so. Some felt that most of our laymen in the churches that have any possibility of going this way simply need the clergymen to lead them in this direction. Many people really could not care less one way or the other. If the clergymen would make the point emphatic, we could move many of our churches into dual alignment. Dual alignment, says one, could perhaps be a real opportunity for creativity in both groups. We

then asked whether we should seek dual alignment. A majority felt that we ought to, but it would take a lot of creative effort and it is not as simple as it seems for there would be some real problems.

One of the more constructive concrete steps that might be taken immediately came out of the morning session. This suggestion was that we should go back to our churches and stress our common heritage more. One objection that was raised, that was perhaps a real objection to the alignment of the conventions, is that we are motivated by the businesses and that as such it is going to be pretty hard to break up these corporations.

Constructive steps were: first, to emphasize strongly the North American Baptist Alliance. Perhaps it can be this kind of over-arching organization that Baptists could adopt to open lines of communication and opportunities to share in some constructive ways of meeting the problems on both sides. Furthermore, we might perpetuate the Jubilee Advance. We could continue some form of program rather than just observing an anniversary. These future programs could be made to help each convention better relate to each other. Secondly, it was suggested that the clergy must do more to give strong positive direction to our laity.

It was also felt that we must distinguish between unity and union in immediate terms. It was brought out that one speaker mentioned last night that perhaps only if a crisis comes will there be any likelihood or any real felt need to move us toward union. One crisis mentioned was the possible explosion of the Southern Baptist steam engine. There is much tension in our convention and there are a lot of us who are extremely unhappy. This was expressed in San Francisco and Kansas City. Great pains have been taken by our leadership to keep us together and it is just very possible in terms of our present seminary crisis that this thing could really turn into a crisis that would catapult many churches and men towards the American Convention and dual alignment.

The suggestion was made that we need to consider re-activating the committee on relationships to other bodies. This was attempted at one time, but it fell through. Perhaps now is the time to re-activate this committee on relationship to other bodies on an official basis and start opening the lines of communication again. Encouragement of good accurate coverage of this meeting was another suggestion. We are happy to hear of the desire of Time Magazine to report it. A suggestion came about pulpit exchange - more pulpit exchange between our ministers, both the one Sunday and also summer arrangements. The final concrete suggestion was to encourage a program like the defense program of sister cities a few years ago; that is, we might have sister churches where we would relate and communicate with each other and discuss our common problems.

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Chairman - Group # 3

This group suggested a program of exchange of pulpits and of denominational leadership for various conferences and programs. We further suggest that we encourage by any means possible active participation in councils of churches and other similar united efforts. Another suggestion is the formation of area fellowships and meetings for the accomplishing of our purposes of Baptist unity. We urge that the American and Southern Home Mission organizations make positive efforts to devise a way to cooperate in a common over-all strategy for church extension and evangelization. We urge that all those interested in our purposes seek to support the movement financially. We must become involved financially, through church budgets, through trying to get individual people to support the effort and obtain interested individuals on foundations to support this work. That would make it possible to develop a more permanent structure for our movement with a definite workable budget and even with a salaried executive.

This would allow for positive steps to be taken to provide participation on convention programs, provide apologetic literature and brochures that would discuss our purposes and even a history of this more recent effort on Baptist unity. Another practical suggestion is to provide a joint comparative display of Southern and American Baptist Convention literature; a question box arrangement that might reveal some of the grass-roots thinking of the people, similar to a type of arrangement that was at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting at Kansas City. Also, the suggestion was made to have a fellowship dinner for people interested in Baptist unity, and an effort through brochures and many other types of literature like this to get our purposes before the people.

The group also suggested that we keep in mind our central purpose: that of ultimate reunion of the Baptists of America in the specific immediate form of American and Southern Baptist Conventions merger. It must be recognized that intermediate lesser aims and goals can be considered not necessarily as threats to this aim, and other such intermediate lesser steps would be some that have already been suggested to you - the idea of the federation of Baptists which may or may not be similar to or identical with the proposed North American Baptist Fellowship suggested by the Baptist World Alliance Committee; dual alignment - and I would emphasize here that we discussed in our group not just Southern churches aligning with the American Convention. I think, really, we have said that to the exclusion of the other. American churches, if dual alignment is going to have any real value and purpose, would want to be on this two-way street. Also, there would have to be pulpit exchanges and encouraging the inclusion of the fellowship of the so-called Southern Baptist invaders into the Northern areas. These people are somewhat isolated from what might be called their kind or their ilk, and should be included in fellowship arrangements with pastor meetings and associations where they reside as much as possible.

We feel that we had not really utilized effectively all of the things at our disposal already, and one of these, of course, is the newspapers - our writing articles and letters to the editors. Anything which would

air and promote our aims would certainly help greatly. Another specific suggestion was that churches who might not be willing at this point to consider dual alignment and certainly not merger could become willing to send young people and laymen to the summer conferences of the other conventions - to Green Lake, if they are Southern Baptist and to Ridgecrest or Glorietta if they are American Baptist. This would also effect the area of race relations and help relieve some of the stress in this area. This is a crucial issue in terms of Baptist Unity.

The success of the "steam engine," as referred to among Southern Baptists, is questionable. There are signs that this may be disintegrating, and that this very practical problem may be the crisis that Dr. Maring suggested might be needed, that this might be the catalyst to provide the forward thrust in this movement. None of the practical means for achieving our purposes are mutually exclusive, nor do we need to think rather in terms of either/or or this as opposed to that, but to use all the means that would be at our disposal. We must recognize everywhere our differences and problems and see that our greater responsibility is to sound a positive note and make a specific example regarding the disparity in the size of our two conventions.

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Chairman - Group # 4

Our group felt at the outset that we should really get to know each other's thinking a little better. We were pretty much agreed that we believed in unity, but the problem was how to effectively put this into operation. Another general current was that there was a great deal of tension felt in Southern Baptist churches and among Southern Baptist pastors because of the fragmented nature of the church and its carry-over into the world. It seems that our churches and people are anemic and need fertilization from the outside. One man said, "We have talked and talked; we must now have some action." Then came the opposite point of view that it was not action we needed yet, because if we followed democratic polity, as the previous speaker just stated, the smaller convention might be swallowed up and thus its witness lost in the total approach. We talked about this continuation of talks in the local church's small group meetings, in area meetings, as has been mentioned, with resource leaders being made available to areas, associations, and perhaps even sections of states and geographic areas.

We did say that though dual alignment was one effective means in working out the problem, some men thought that there were still lines drawn between members of their congregations back to their respective conventional backgrounds. And there was expression of disturbance upon the Baptist World Mission as well as the world at large by this continued cleavage and separateness. Also from the standpoint of pure economics, it was re-duplication and so a waste of God's money.

We also got into a discussion of the reasons for the invasion into the north and south. It was felt that, at first, superficially, it was not because of theological differences. One concern was that American Baptists were

losing their evangelistic thrust because of this cultural difference and economic sociological difference among groups of people. The problem was also a program problem, and this is not a one-way street. It was the dissatisfaction expressed among Southern Baptist pastors with some of their missionary - particularly Women's - literature and the American Baptist's apparent lack up until a year or two ago of an effective evening program in the churches.

The major theological difference was felt to be in the area of the doctrine of the church and that Landmarkism is the - not official - undercurrent idea involved in the invasion pattern because of "American Baptist liberalism." We were aware that there were all kinds of theological expressions in both conventions, but in the new work of the Southern Baptist Convention in the midwest and in the far west there was a more conservative theological expression - this Landmark spirit. The mere effect of this was to pull all kinds of disgruntled Baptists as well as others together.

In the evening session we began to talk seriously about the question of dual alignment, and there was dissatisfaction expressed because this seems to be a one-way street. Actually, officials of both American and Southern Baptist Conventions frown on this or at least do not encourage it. There was a great deal of confusion as to just how a church in one convention does relate to the other convention. What are the steps that one must go through? Several men spoke of experiences where they tried to have a relationship with the other convention and were rebuffed, etc., and ran into difficulties.

Then we talked about the future, and there was an expression that this group should be institutionalized - not have an Executive Secretary, necessarily, but a leg man to handle the details of public relations, publicity, etc. We need certainly to sell this to both conventions for preparation for the Atlantic City conference through press releases, possibility of an exhibit booth there where people who are interested and sympathetic would register, and thus build an effective mailing list for these regional conferences.

Then I think another significant note that had not been heard before was that since the Baptist Jubilee Advance and the seven major Baptist bodies in American were to have been cooperating - though this has not actually been too real or deep - that we should also open up this question of Baptist unity to the National Baptist Convention, the National Baptists Incorporated and the Canadian Convention - all other bodies. We should also have more follow-up in depth from the Baptist Jubilee Advance program.

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Chairman - Group # 5

In the afternoon session of our group, we discussed why the problem of Baptist unity exists. The first point that came up was the misunderstanding of American Baptists by Southern Baptists and the other way around - a mutual misunderstanding. Secondly, the Baptists - Southern and American - do not want to fight the problem of differences of opinion. Thirdly, one conferee

commented that when he was studying at the seminary, he was pastor to a church in Indiana and he determined that since the people there did not know about the differences existing among our conventions, he would not tell them. This is by way of saying that perhaps the differences may be over-emphasized by pastors. When a Baptist from one of the cultures, namely the Southern or the American Convention cultures, moves to the other convention area, geographically speaking, he may feel that he is a traitor to his culture if he affiliates with a church of the other convention. I daresay this may be particularly true when a person from the south moves to the north because of the long-established cultural tradition which encourages a feeling of isolation among Southern Baptists. There may be a misplaced loyalty involved here. In other words, people may feel a greater loyalty to their particular convention than to the Christ who is the Lord of all of us. The lack of communication between Northern and Southern Baptists over a period of years has contributed to this problem. We were reminded of the question Paul asked quite a few years ago, "Is Christ divided?"

Another question was asked, "Has the wall between Northern and Southern Baptists thickened over the past decade?" One of our conferees answered "yes" to this question and said that in Kansas City we had two seminaries - Central and Midwestern - five blocks apart, one supported by the American Convention and one by the Southern Convention. Later, however, as we were discussing this point, the comment was made that the wall may become a bridge. So the wall perhaps has thickened, but also, perhaps, the wall has diminished over the past decade.

As has been mentioned earlier, variations within each of the conventions in many ways are greater than the variations between the conventions as such. It was pointed out that a Southern Baptist may be used to a more structured or regimented program, whereas the American Baptist may be used to a less regimented or freer program. The question was asked, "Have the merger discussions of the American Baptist Convention with the Disciples of Christ and the Church of the Brethren raised roadblocks in the discussion among Northern and Southern Baptists?" We felt that it did present a problem but would not be fatal to the cause or discussions between Northern and Southern Baptists. It was also brought out that as Baptist unity conversations, such as we are now having, are held the wall may widen among the denominational spokesmen, and in a sense, possibly, the fear of loss of jobs or positions, etc., might be in the background here. The geographical mobility that has been characteristic among the Northern Baptists is now becoming an increasing factor among the Southern Baptists, and this may help in that Southerners may become more like the Northerners in this respect and this may assist our cause of Baptist unity. We discussed the matter of whether the American Baptist Convention would be swallowed up by the Southern Baptist Convention, and made the assertion that it will not, or if it is, it will be swallowed up by fellow Baptists.

One of our conferees who is associated with a church in the District of Columbia Convention suggested that we discuss the matter of an in-depth study of the dual alignment set-up in the Washington, D. C., area as a means of seeing how it works and problems that come up and the practical aspects of it. The value of dual alignment to the local church was discussed; however, a cautionary note was sounded that dual alignment may not work for every Baptist

church. For some churches dual alignment might create more problems than it would solve. It was suggested that conversations relative to Baptist unity should be carried on on a local level.

The matter of pulpit exchange between American Baptist and Southern Baptist churches was discussed, both in respect to Sundays and also with respect to longer times - say, a week or so. The group also suggested, as have others, that this Baptist Study Committee ought to be institutionalized. One of the conferees presented, the group thoughtfully discussed and adopted the following resolution which I would like to read: (this is addressed to the problem of the "Southern Baptist invasion" of the American Baptist Convention areas) "We recommend that the American and Southern Baptist Conventions as a necessary step to furthering mutual conversations and corroboration distinguish between necessary and unnecessary territorial expansion on the North American continent. An acceptable form of expansion is regarded as the ministry to those who lack an evangelical Christian witness. An unacceptable form of expansion results from the beginning of competing churches in the same immediate area. We further recommend that the Home Mission leaders of both conventions be advised of this statement and be required to begin between themselves a discussion of ways to work together in the missionary witness in North America."

It seems to me we have operated thus far on the assumption that a crisis brings forth unity. Now I am not sure that this is necessarily so. I grew up in the midwest and went to school in California and in both areas there is considerable practice among American Baptists, and particularly in the area of Southern and American relationships, and never did I see out of this anything that looked like unity. It looked rather like cut-throat competition. It seems to me also that if we are going to wait for a crisis of this kind to develop a unity strategy, we are missing the boat. I would hate to see Baptists become so subjective in their reaction that they could not consider thoughtfully and carefully and really very realistically what is implied and what is meant by dual affiliation. Must we wait for a crisis? It seems to me the steps that we are proposing are something which need to be faced realistically and honestly, to be done with openness and candor rather than waiting for some outside pressure from some crisis to develop before we realize what is going to happen.

I was struck by the accusation of American Baptist liberalism. The areas in which I grew up would go up in smoke if they were described in this way. Perhaps this is not true in some areas, but certainly to speak of the American Baptist Convention as a monolithic organization, just as to speak of the Southern Baptist Convention as monolithic, is completely false in my opinion, and I think we have to avoid very carefully this kind of statement.

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PANEL REACTION TO GROUP REPORTS

Dr. Samuel Hill

Any strength that I may possess is in the area of ideas and analysis and not in the area of know-how and implementation. I am a professor and you cannot expect anything better from me. I am one of those who is "paralyzed and paralyzing" by analysis. However, I remain convicted on two points: first, the church is one and it must act like it is one, and if we need more than motivation, if we had more than motivation, we have this motivation and it is sufficient. Second, I am a really troubled soul about what I am confident will happen to the church in the south. I can only speak for the Southern Church since this is the only area in which I have lived. The Southern Church is facing a very great crisis. It does not know it yet. There are not very many statistical indications about it yet - at least in terms of absolute numbers. There are plenty in terms of relative numbers if one wants to see them, but we do not want to see them and so we do not.

The South is going to have a Protestantized neo-medieval culture. It has been just as religious as medieval Europe was. People have taken for granted the assertions of the Christian faith. The Baptist and Methodist churches have been established in the South in almost any way you want to use the term, except in a highly technical way. This day is fast coming to a close. It has already begun to end at the top level. The rising generation of people who have leadership ability in the South are no longer under any obligation to be Christian. They are now free to be avowedly secular. We Southerners have always been free to be secular, but we have not been free to be avowedly secular. There is a very great crisis in the Southern church, and I remain not only as convinced as I was last year, but increasingly more convinced that we need help. We have something to give - this is very important.

I think you American Baptists need more than a little of what we have, and most of you are happy to acknowledge this fact. I am sure also that we desperately need your help, not just in terms of cultural safety valves but in terms of theological insight, social perception and concern. My, how we need to read Walter Rauschenbusch! We are right now where the Northern Baptist Convention was in the 1890's and the first couple of decades in this century. This does not mean that we are inherently inferior and lagging behind because we are stupid or anything of this sort, but we are just now being confronted with the kind of problems which you had faced and which you had been facing up to for half a century. We need your help. We need it desperately.

We ought to be one, in the first place, on theological grounds, but the practical thing of social concerns brings this in sharper focus. I remember how well Norman Maring made this point in Washington last year, that it very often takes concrete social problems for God to be able to say to his people what the church really is and what our concerns really ought to be. We ought not to apologize for this particularly. This is just one of the ways in which God works. Let us be grateful for the fact that we now have occasion to see what the Gospel is and what the church ought to be. I really am concerned about this and something has to be done. I do not know what practical steps

we need to take, but this organization must continue. I have the feeling that we are doing this year very many of the same things that we did last year. This is not a reflection on the program planning committee, either subtly or overtly. We have been, last year and this year, at much the same stage. I believe we are probably ready to move to some other stage. I do not quite know what it is. It is not the area of my strength and I am the first to admit this. Whether we need to, as somebody has put it, institutionalize the movement or do something else, I do not know, but we must continue. We must let our existence be known. We must make our witness, but this is not enough. We must work and must follow through. I believe that dual alignment is one of the immediate ways in which we can do this.

Frankly, I am very encouraged about what is going on in this movement and about the future of this movement. If it takes imminent unification to encourage you, then I think you ought to go away from here very highly discouraged. There is no imminent unification. We are quite well aware of this. What we are doing is important, it is right, it is desperately needed, and I think we ought to take whatever steps are necessary to perpetuate the concern and to implement the concerns expressed in this group. I am going away from here this afternoon with a much better feeling than I went away from Washington last year, heartened by the importance and the rightness of what we are doing, and determined to use whatever powers of mind and body I have to see to it that our concerns are mobilized.

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Dr. Norman Maring

There are three or four things that I have observed coming out of the groups. First of all, the question about goals. There has been, I think, no fundamental difference about ultimate goals, but there has been a difference about immediate goals and I think we have a difference of opinion about the possibility of organic union in the near future. This is something that we have not resolved. I know there are fairly short differences here that have been expressed in the group. I think we should never lose sight of the ultimate goal. God's will and purpose is unity for His church, not just for Baptists, as far as that goes, though that is what we are concerned with particularly here. We ought to keep that in mind, but we must not lose sight of the fact that we probably have to learn to crawl before we are going to walk. We have to go through many intermediate stages before we achieve the final outcome that we desire.

Secondly, we have to keep this subject alive. We must find ways to bring it to the attention of people who have never even thought about it and that involves a number of things. First of all, taking advantage of the opportunity at Atlantic City where there will be Baptists from the various bodies, various organizational groups, is one good way. If we could have there, on the day that we meet together, some strong plea from a person who would have the confidence of both groups, I think it would be very wholesome. Displays will help. Whatever ways we can think of to bring this question to the attention of the large number of people who will be gathered in Atlantic

City will help. We should find every way we can to publicize at that time and to make an appeal.

Probably there does have to be a permanent structure of some institutionalizing - whether it is just a secretary, a leg man. I am sure it is a big job for the people who have been preparing for this session and making such sacrificial efforts and sacrifice of time. I imagine their schedules would not allow this forever and somebody will have to be given the job as his total responsibility - to give leadership to the movement. Articles in our Baptist periodicals, letters to the editor and that sort of thing will help. I think we are going to have to make some effort, too, in this respect to enlist more of the people who are key figures in our policy-making structures.

I do not think it is unimportant that we try to arouse people at the grass roots, but I know from experience that there are some people who exert more influence than others, not always the ones who are elected leaders. It usually is the case that if you can get these certain individuals, they will carry along with them a great many other people. I think we are going to have to look around and try to involve and interest and enlist such people in our movement as a part of keeping this issue alive. We might try to get resolutions at the National or State Conventions when resolutions are passed.

The third thing we said is that we need to promote understanding, and with this I would agree. Pulpit exchange may help, as would an exchange of seminary professors, as well as other kinds of exchange. We ought to try to have local conferences across our convention areas. I think this would not be impossible at all.

The fourth thing that has been suggested is that we must explore together theological issues. This to me is most important. I believe this has already been submitted, but to get a conception of the church as it appears in the scriptures and exists in the purpose and intent of God would help us to resolve many of our differences, difficulties, our feelings about an ecumenical movement and our feelings about our own dividedness. I am wondering if we could not persuade some persons or person to set up a conference on Baptist unity and an exploration of theological bases at Green Lake and Ridgecrest for the summer.

Our advisory board on theological studies this summer in planning our theological conferences for the next few years has in mind that there ought to be one in which we talk specifically and invite people from other groups to talk about the ecumenical movement so that there would be a real encounter and we would not just be talking to each other. It might well be that this would be better to do between Southern and American Baptists than between American Baptists and some other denomination. I am quite sure our advisory board would be open to this kind of suggestion. This might be one of the ways of enlisting and involving some of the key figures who could affect the interest of a great many other people.

Until there is some real soul-searching, self-criticism and repentance, I am not sure we are ready or that we would gain anything by simply joining organizations. We are already troubled by lack of depth and quality

of commitment from Christians, from Baptists, and if we are just going to make many more members of institutions, why I think that that is not the thing we need most. I have heard it said sometimes about Baptists in certain places that they have a lot of Baptists there but it takes a lot of them to weigh a pound. You could say that about any group, I suppose. But I am concerned about depth, and I think theological explorations are indispensable. I do not think any one of these things is what we must do. We must keep our goal in mind, we must keep finding ways to promote understanding and we must find all the ways we can to keep the issue before people. We must do a depth-level study and research, examining our souls and our presuppositions, our theological bases.

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The Reverend Dean Knudsen

I like the reports that came from the discussion groups this morning and five suggestions appealed to me which appeared to be especially attractive and practical. The first is the one which the previous speaker dealt with last: the need for pursuing theological and ecclesiological studies concerning points of view in the two conventions. This certainly can be planned for in groups such as this. Second, I would like to see us give our support to the idea of a North American Baptist federation. Third, encourage reactivation of the commissions in the two conventions on relations with other Baptist bodies. I do not know why these died; they should not have, and we ought to be able to do something to revive them. Fourth, I still like the recommendation which came from our discussion group urging the adoption by our Home Mission Boards of a common strategy for church expansion in America. And fifth, we ought to concentrate upon the Atlantic City meetings. I rather like the idea of a post-convention conference at which we could carry forward discussions with a larger group.

Now, in addition to these five ideas, let me mention one other matter. Reference has been made this morning to the unfortunate proximity of two convention seminaries in Kansas City. This seemed to me at the outset a very dangerous and unfortunate development. But this much ought also to be added: from the beginning of the second seminary's life, relations between the two seminaries has been most cordial. And this by deliberate resolution on the part of the faculties, as I understand. They have learned to live and to work together in spite of their belonging to two conventions. I would like to see us enlist the members of these two faculties as spokesmen who will exercise particular influence among other theological faculties in the matter of promoting happier relations and the idea of unity between the conventions.

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Dr. James Tull

This is simply a footnote to one thing that has already been said. Although I made the remark about the "paralysis of analysis," I would like to say that I do not think analysis is improper. Indeed, it is very necessary.

A matter of continuing at a deep level of discussion is, it seems to me, rather important. I was talking not long ago to a British Baptist scholar who visited our seminary. He was commenting upon the plight of British Baptists, how they have declined numerically and are dispirited, how the organization of their nation has resulted in erosion of spiritual content in their culture, how Baptists seem to be unable to come to grips with this situation, this crisis, which they face. I think that this is our crisis here. The acids of modernity have bitten deeply into the fabric of our civilization. I think you American Baptists know that better than Southern Baptists know it. This is part of what I think Sam Hill meant when he talked about how we Southern Baptists need to discover Walter Rauschenbusch. "Religion is the content of culture and culture is a form of religion." It was not a Baptist who said that nor was it Walter Rauschenbusch, but it is consonant with what Walter Rauschenbusch believed and it is also consonant with what, I believe, many American Baptist thinkers and scholars have known. We need to know this as Southern Bspptists.

Therefore, to address the Gospel to the situation requires, it seems to me, a united Baptist witness and union on the basis of what our witness is as we address the Gospel to the torments of our time. It seems to me that we have every right to be encouraged, that if we find out what the Gospel is and what the situation is, we have a basis here for real united effort. If we do not have a theory, we are in trouble. We can talk about how to do this, advance certain practical suggestions which are very important, but we also have to have a theory about what we are doing because I believe where there is no theory the people perish. We need to come to grips with our problems at a very deep level and I hope that we will pursue this matter, too, as well as propagating the matter at the grass roots. It seems to me that this is a matter for multiple approaches and that only in this way can we do the work that we need to do.

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The following resolution was submitted: "We recommend that the American and Southern Baptist Conventions as a necessary step to furthering mutual conversation and cooperation distinguish between necessary and unnecessary territorial expansion on the North American continent. An acceptable form of expansion is regarded as the ministry to those who lack an evangelical Christian witness. An unacceptable form of expansion results from the beginning of competing churches in the same immediate area. We further recommend that the Home Mission leaders of both conventions be advised of this statement and be requested to begin between themselves a discussion of ways to work together in the missionary witness to North America."

After a period of discussion the Chairman, the Reverend Howard R. Stewart, asked Drs. Ralph Elliott and Norman Maring to refine the resolution.

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Reaction From Mr. Robert Fox

A few thoughts and reactions I had last night as a layman who has been with this group since its inception, and also as a layman who has lived a number of years in the South and a number of years in the North. Some of you, perhaps, are here as a matter of curiosity, but I believe that most of you are here because you are positively interested in the stated goal of the committee which sponsored this conference. To those of you who have a desire to see our objective brought about and who believe it can be done, I would like to say a word. You probably came here hoping to get some word of encouragement from our denominational leaders, hoping to be inspired and told that the future of Baptists in this country is what we wish to make it. If we want hard enough to be united into one denomination, we want to be told we can do it, and we hope to be informed of some of the methods and means of bringing this about. I believe that light mitigation, modification, that, except for the constructive suggestions that appeared in the informal discussions that you heard and with one or two exceptions in the more formal talks, most of what we heard in the formal talks was generally discouraging. It makes us wonder if we are not wasting our time here and at future meetings.

If the majority of this committee could sponsor this project, believe all of these things, I think we would have disbanded after the first meeting we had. I do not seem to have any great insight into this matter. I am merely an accountant who happened to be interested in the Baptist denomination - not the Southern or Northern brand, but in the whole. There are two existing needs for union and I think the two points should be made. In these days there is a need for closer cooperation with international groups, possibly to avoid mankind's annihilation. There is also the need to consider the additional force given to the various councils of churches in international religious forces if the Baptists of the United States acted as one group; to consider the greater influence that Baptists could exert on moral and spiritual issues which face us nationally if we acted as one Baptist denomination of the United States.

Just one example: the question of Bible reading and prayer in public schools. Consider the tremendous amount of additional funds that could be devoted to going into all parts of the world and telling others about Christ if we terminated the duplication of organization, administration forces, publishing houses, buildings, expenses of church extension, and expenses in many areas. Consider the improvement in the image and effect of the Baptist denomination of the United States if we could not only stop competing and sniping at each other at home and in the missionary fields, but actively join forces like many other denominations who have done so when they are not even the same denomination. Many other different denominational groups have joined. Consider the threat of fascist domination in this country and the growing threat of our cherished separation of church and state. I am sure these men have read carefully the book "Power and the American Freedom," but you do not have to read any particular book to see what is going on in that respect. We are told there is no need. I leave it to you. I believe that with the proper determination and hard work, anything is possible.

I appeal to this group to give it another chance, to put an end to this negative thinking and negative speeches. Let us form a full-time organization with more ability to write and talk of our cause, with a financial program and working force to generate the necessary funds to inform the factors of this country of what we are doing - not just the leaders - and to hold future and better conferences and extend the work of this committee. I think this committee has reached a point where now either we act positively or we disband.

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Drs. Elliott and Maring brought back the following revised resolution: "We recommend that the American and Southern Baptist Conventions, as a necessary step to furthering mutual conversation and cooperation, distinguish between necessary and unnecessary expansion on the North American continent. An acceptable form of expansion is regarded as the ministry to those who lack the Baptist witness. An unacceptable form of expansion results from the beginning of competing churches in the same immediate area. The balance of the resolution remaining the same, we further recommend the Home Mission leaders of both conventions be advised of this statement and be requested to begin between themselves a discussion of ways to work together in a missionary witness to North America."

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STATEMENTS FROM THOSE WHO HAVE BRIDGED THE GAP BETWEEN CONVENTIONS

Mrs. E. W. Buchanan

My theme is found in two verses of scripture: Psalm 16:6 and 9 when the psalmist said, "The lines have fallen for me in places; yea, I have a goodly heritage....Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also dwells secure." As I looked back over my preparation for making this witness to you as a Southern Baptist transplanted in the Northern territory back in the years when there were no Southern Baptists north of the Mason Dixon line, I began to wonder if possibly the program committee had not made a mistake, for two reasons beyond the fact that I am no public speaker. First, I cannot at this point recall ever coming under any teaching or influence that made me feel that as a Southern Baptist I could not find a satisfactory church home in the Northern Convention. And second, my husband and I were so warmly welcomed into the First Baptist Church of Dover, a church which supports the full American Baptist program, that it never occurred to us that there might be people in the church who were not good Baptists. We came into the church and went right to work teaching and as Church School Superintendent. So I am not sure that my experience is one that might be termed normal or average.

However, I grew up in Edenton, N. C., and joined the Edenton Baptist Church when I was ten years old. The Edenton Baptist Church is located in a

community of about 5,000 people of whom about 1500 are Southern Baptists. I attended and graduated from Meredith College, a Baptist college for women supported by the North Carolina State Convention and served for three years as a Baptist Student Secretary in charge of religious activities at Meredith prior to my marriage. At this time the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company sent my husband and me to Dover, Delaware, to live. This is the background - the true Southern background - from which I came. And I say in all sincerity that I have a goodly heritage.

I am grateful for many things that came into my life as a girl growing up in Edenton, N. C. First, I am grateful for truly dedicated Christian parents who took their children to church with them and set the standards for Christian living within the home, for parents who were proud to be Baptists, so much so that we used to tease our mother by telling her that she believed the Baptist Church was founded by John the Baptist and that Jesus joined the Baptist Church when he was baptized in the River Jordan. Her eyes would twinkle when we told her that, but she never would deny it. She wanted us to know she was proud of being a Baptist.

I am grateful that I grew up in a church which accented work with young people through the Church School and "BYPU" activities, a church that encouraged attendance at Associational and Statewide Youth Conferences and rallies. The first time I ever went away from home to spend the night alone was to attend a state "BYPU" convention. Among my most precious memories are the good times we had at the Sunday School picnics held here at Virginia Beach. We had a whole day of swimming in the surf and games on the beach, not to mention the fact that we had picnic lunch and supper and then the exciting train ride home. I am grateful that I had the privilege of attending Meredith College. There I became interested in a new movement just coming into being at that time - the Baptist Student Union. As a Junior at Meredith I attended the first Southwide Baptist Student Conference held in Birmingham. Upon my graduation I returned to my Alma Mater as its first BSU secretary, which position I held for three years.

The corresponding three summers were spent at Ridgecrest, the Southern Baptist Assembly, where I had the privilege of being the first manager of the Baptist Book Store and of attending all the conferences held there during those three summers. At that time I met the most wonderful man in the world who persuaded me to marry him. This wonderful man was a Methodist until just a few months before I married. Then he was immersed and became a member of a Southern Baptist Church because he said I would not marry him until he did. Of course that is not true, but, needless to say, I was very glad that he did that. Now, I am telling you all these personal things for just one reason: that you may understand that I was a true thoroughly indoctrinated Southern Baptist. Truly I did have a goodly heritage.

Immediately after our wedding, as I have told you, my husband was transferred to Dover, Delaware, and, as I have already indicated, we were very warmly welcomed into the only Baptist church in Dover. Then we realized that our lines had fallen into pleasant places. Almost immediately I was asked to teach a Sunday School class and within two years my husband was asked to be

Sunday School Superintendent. Now, I shall not pretend to imply that we had no difficulty in adjusting to different titles or organizations within the church, and we certainly thought some of their ways of doing things were strange. No doubt they thought we were a bit odd, also, but the fact remains that we persevered and they persevered, and we have had many heart-warming experiences and have grown spiritually through the years as we have tried to take advantage of opportunities for serving and worship. Also we have rejoiced in the places of usefulness that have opened to us in the local church, in the State Convention, and even on the national level of the American Baptist Convention. My lines have fallen in pleasant places. Yea, I have a goodly heritage.

What is this heritage? To some I would say, from the Baptists of the Southern Baptist Convention I have inherited a sense of pride in being a Baptist. I believe that is one of the essential things that set Southern Baptists apart. Second, I have inherited a deep loyalty to the Convention. I was able to transfer that loyalty from the Southern Convention to the Northern Convention, and I have, I believe, the same feeling of loyalty to the American Baptist Convention that I had to the Southern Convention as a young girl. I have inherited a willingness or an ability to enter into an emotional expression of religious experience. In other words, I enjoy my religion. To me that is very important. Also, in this same category, I would place my admiration for the evangelistic zeal of the Southern Convention. Fourth, I have inherited a high regard for denominational schools and colleges. It seems to me that the Southern Convention has been more successful in establishing important schools and colleges and has given them better financial support than has been done in the North.

From the American Convention, my heritage: first, an open-mindedness in welcoming people of varying religious backgrounds without giving up the basic Baptist requirements for membership. Second, high standards in the preparation of Church School literature, in the training of Church School workers, and in the requirements for the education of ministers. Now, I know the Southern Baptists will take issue with that. But this is just my idea. Third, a greater degree of involvement in social actions, a more realistic and practical approach to the problems of the community in which we live. And fourth, and greatest of all in my way of thinking, participation in the ecumenical movement.

This last point is of utmost significance because world events of scientific discoveries make it imperative for Christians to unite in their witness. Moreover, I believe that this movement is clearly in the teachings of Jesus, particularly as expressed in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel when he said, "I do not pray for these disciples only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us,... I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me." There is indeed a deep yearning within me to live to see the day when not only Northern and Southern Baptists may be united in their fellowship, but also when every Christian the world over may be able to say, as did St. Augustine, "I take a whole Christ for my Savior; I take the whole Bible for my staff; I take

the whole church for my fellowship." Then indeed we can know the full meaning of the words of the psalmist in Psalm 133 when he exclaimed, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!"

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The Reverend Dean Knudsen

I am now entering my third year as a Southern Baptist church member. I have found the transition rather easy, as I indicated yesterday. I was born in an area where Baptists were not weak, but very strong and grew up in a church of 700 close Baptists in a town of less than 3000 people. I attended a Baptist college, went to California to attend a Baptist seminary when there was a Southern Baptist seminary about twelve blocks down the street, did work as campus pastor in Minnesota, and spent most of my time in the midwest and the west, where the Southern Baptists with whom I came into contact raised some questions in my mind as to the possibility of there ever being any unity. I am sure you can appreciate the fact that I had great fears and trepidations as we entered North Carolina where I expected to do further graduate work. To my surprise and, I must say, to my joy, I have found Chapel Hill perhaps the richest and the greatest church experience of my life.

The church to which I belonged was founded by Southern Baptists; it has a pastor who was educated both in the South and in the North as well as in Europe; it is in a community dominated by a University in part, and yet this church represents to me the best of both North and South. The church, I believe, is open-minded and it is open membership racially, culturally, and denominationally. If you have not met my pastor, I hope you do. Dr. Robert Seymour is here and I am sure you will want to meet him if you have not yet. I would like to dwell just for a few moments upon some of the similarities that I see in the North and in the South, and then focus upon some of the differences which I have, I think, discovered.

The similarities to me seem to pertain primarily to a local group of which I find myself a part. I have found in both conventions a deep concern for people as people. I have found in both North and South a desire for fellowship, the kind of Christian fellowship which leads to growth, which leads to mutual understanding and appreciation, and the kind which is founded upon a mutual faith in Christ. As I look at the similarities, however, it seems to me that it is very difficult to separate the culture from the church. I expressed yesterday in the discussion group that if any of you have never lived in a place where Baptists were dominant, you should go to North Carolina.

It is very difficult for me even now to understand the relationship between the church and the culture in North Carolina. In many ways I see in this area a lack of self-criticism. There seems to be an implicit assumption that because we are so large God has blessed us, that size in itself is the pragmatic proof of the fact that we are God's chosen people. I also have been somewhat disturbed by the fact that the emphasis is placed upon "we" have a mission report, not "we" in a collective sense, but "we" in a sense of Southern

Baptists. This, too, I found in the North. I think there is a tendency as well for us to ignore some of the great social issues of today.

Much could be said about Southern ignoring of the race problem. Much could be said, I think, about the lack of the church criticizing educational institutions, lack of church criticism of some of the social and economic institutions which have developed. To me this represents a somewhat slighting of the ethical emergence of the Gospel. In another direction, I have felt as well that there is an implicit assumption that Christian culture is a good thing. There is, in my mind, as I know there is in Dr. Sam Hill's mind, some question about whether Baptists ever should try to develop a Christian culture. Our church heritage, our church background, our concept of the church does not lend itself well to cultural dominance; yet rarely is this considered. I have found also a heavy emphasis upon tradition, something which I was completely unprepared for. Perhaps this is something which is not religious, but is simply cultural.

Now, in spite of these differences, it seems to me that there is in both conventions a wellspring of understanding and mutual concern from which we can develop a large group of unified individuals. There is a tendency in the North and South, I think, for us to be preoccupied with petty issues. We are preoccupied with our hurt feelings; we are preoccupied with the fact that Southern Baptists have established a church on the opposite corner, and sometimes we are even concerned that Southern Baptists are doing better in a community than we are. I am speaking now as an American Baptist. I think the time has come when the South - and I am speaking solely out of my experience in North Carolina - must realize that the church is going to have a different role in the future than it has now. I think the time has come to realize that the North does not have the answer and that perhaps Northern Baptists need to understand that they can learn from the South as well.

It has been my privilege for these two years to be a member of a church which I feel has bridged the gap much better than I have. This church, I believe, has selected from both North and South the most relevant and pertinent dimensions of the Christian Gospel and is attempting to make an impact in the community in which it exists.

I would close by saying from my experience that the differences between the groups are not theological; the differences are not anything which should divide us; but as nearly as I can determine, the differences between the two groups appear to lie largely in the area of background and culture and a lack on the part of each group of self-criticism, which I think we need desperately.

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Mr. Mart Baldwin

I would like to second everything that Mrs. Buchanan said except that charming story of her youth. I have had somewhat the same experience in South Carolina, but as regards my upbringing in the Southern Baptist Convention I was educated in the Southern Baptist college, and I have the same feelings,

love and appreciation for what the church has done for me in both conventions. I guess it was a little prophetic or indicative that I stood out in opposition to an action which this body took almost unanimously. I am sure it was taken wisely; I just cannot see it yet. I may be offensive to you. I would like to say a word to the lay people here and then a word to the clergy.

God called Abraham out of the Ur of the Chaldees. He has been calling people ever since - perhaps before - he called us here. I believe that is why we are here. He called some of us lay people for economic reasons to go across this bridge, and from my experience I would urge those lay people who are called out to move from North to South to try to find a Baptist church that they can reach and go there and take advantage of the opportunity to fellowship with the people on the other side of the bridge.

It would be unfortunate, I think, to move into the North from the South and find a convenient Southern Baptist Church that you could just fall into and go back to sleep; or if you would move into the South and enter an American Baptist Church. I would not give up for anything the experiences I had when the government said for me to go to Pennsylvania and the opportunity I had to join an American Baptist Church because there was no Southern Baptist church anywhere in the area. That is my advice to those who want to move across the line for economic reasons.

Now, I think God calls the clergy sometimes. He may not be calling you to move out; he may be calling you to speak out, and I do not mean in this oratory necessarily either. But where you have an opportunity, if you have convictions, I think God has called on you to speak out those convictions. Then if that does not satisfy you, he may be calling you to move out. Some of you fellows up here in the North find the winters too cold, the climate not just right - maybe you ought to move South. Or maybe those in the South may be called to the North. Do not hesitate to move. Some of the thoughts I have heard expressed here indicate to me that there are some of the fellows who would like to cross that bridge, but they are scared to do it by themselves. They want to wait till a whole group goes over and they will not be noticed.

I was ordained as a deacon in a Southern Baptist church about 1935. I have been a member of city churches, country churches, old churches, new churches, in South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and since 1947, two churches in Pennsylvania, the First Baptist Church of Harrisburg, which is an old historic church, and for the past five years, a new church which is found on the outskirts of Harrisburg. Just five years ago tomorrow is our fifth anniversary. I welcome you to come and join with us. Edwin Tuller is going to be our guest speaker. We will have a good dinner. I am serving as a member of the executive committee of the General Council of the American Baptist Convention at the present time - chairman of the Division of Program Planning. I am a meteorologist with the United States Weather Bureau. I learned years ago in the South that what goes up must come down. I did not learn that from church. Things might go up and just stay up there, and that was quite a shock to many of us. I have unlearned many things in the years since I was a boy, both about the church and about scientific things too. I would recommend to you - and this is to lay people and the clergy - North and South, East and West - that you throw away your book of answers.

I have a feeling that the trouble with a lot of us is that we learned too many answers as we were growing up and we still cling to them. I would urge you to throw away your book of answers. Oh, how I hated it when I was in school to find that the teacher had ripped out the answers in the back of that algebra book. But it might have been a good thing. I would urge you to write down your questions. We need to write something down. I think if we would write down some of our questions and answers, we would be in a better stance for understanding one another.

It is rather risky to quote an author to his face, but I asked Dr. Maring a while ago to give me the correct title of a series of articles that he published a year or two ago in "Foundations" Magazine. It is like this: "Baptists and Their Changing Views of the Bible From 1865 to 1918." It was largely American Baptists, as you can imagine. Perhaps it would be interesting to have someone write the story of the Southern Baptists from 1918 till the present time, or somewhere thereabouts. But in this article, he made reference to a seminary professor who resigned from his position because of pressure that was brought to bear because of a book that he wrote. Then he told of the professor who succeeded him, who did not lose his job. He was more tactful, he used theological language so that people never did find out exactly how far out left he was. Maybe we are changing in the Southern belt now.

You read a few years ago, perhaps, Paul Harrison's book, and again Dr. Maring gave me the exact title of that book: "Power of Authority in Free Church Tradition." As someone has put it, "Power Structure in the American Baptist Convention." And he really gave us a hard time. If you in the South have not read that book, you ought to read that, too. In this book, I read something about our M. and M. Board in the North. Or as you call it in the South, the Relief and Annuity Board. There the lay people of our churches are concerned to give security to our clergy and our missionaries. It was pictured to me that the thing which was supposed to give us economic freedom might really have shackled us and made spiritual and academic slaves out of us. That could not possibly be true, could it? That you are tied to where you are and what you are because of the economic security that you enjoy on account of these boards. I submit to you to give that serious consideration. If the man who wrote it is right, there is a serious danger if we misappropriate that security. Some people are here who have dared to be free to speak out, to write, and to act responsibly as they were led by a free conscience.

I wonder how many of you have read this little book "Honest to God" by Bishop Robinson, put out, I think, last year. It has its weak places, it is not very fluent. He admits he never would have written it if he had not been laid up for about three months. But at least the Bishop was honest with himself, his church, and his God. I recommend it to you if you have not read it. I have not heard what happened to him. I do not know whether any of you have or not.

I read that the religion of Jesus of Nazareth was the religion of blood. And I have heard criticism that some of our hymnals in the North want to get rid of that blood. That was Jesus' blood. What kind of religion do you have? How much of your own blood has it cost? Too many of us, I think, are inclined to go to fat for our religion.

There are two things I would like to respond to that were brought out here. I do not know who said some of them. First is the issue of ecumenicity. There was reference made to the American Baptist Convention losing its biggest church, I believe. I do not know what reference - but the First Baptist Church of Wichita, Kansas, threatened to withdraw from the Convention a few years ago, withdraw their financial support - which was great - if the Convention could not see it clear to reverse its position in regard to the National Council of Churches and the ecumenical stand. The inference was that the American Baptist Convention incited that threat to reaffirm that stand - and of course that is not true. The fact is that there was no thought of anything else. How could the American Baptists ever accuse us of being bought away from the various forms of the ecumenical fundamental ideas of the unified church of Christ for 25,000 dollars a year?

I happened to be on the committee for Association With Other Religious Bodies. American Baptists have a permanent position in our reorganization for association with other bodies, and if Southern Baptists have a similar group, then we are all set up to cooperate. I was on this committee and I dealt with the representatives from the Deacon Board of this church in Kansas when they brought this issue to the General Council. I stood on the streets of Rochester and talked to the deacons who were just like you - lay people - and I felt as if I could get through to them and give them help as the church. I could not do it. I realized the helplessness, and even in later correspondence with these people, I just could not bridge the gap in a few words. I had to learn this through the years because I had come to the North thinking that the National Council of Churches was anathema, of course, because I came out of the South.

Reference was made to the American Baptist Convention having as their Director of Evangelism a man of Japanese heritage. That is not surprising. The General Secretary of our denomination has as parents people who were sinners before they became Christians. You just cannot blame a man for his heritage. You cannot take too much credit for it either. But I have had eyeball to eyeball contact with him, stood face to face with him, and did not agree with him on some of his ideas of evangelism. I have seen American Baptist pastors walk out shaking their heads. "If this is evangelism, excuse me!" But I have listened to him talk and have read his papers and have learned to love and appreciate him and his type of evangelism. I believe if a man is really interested in doing the work of Jesus Christ and spreading the gospel, if you come to know him and appreciate him, what he has in mind, you will forget his parents.

I shall deal briefly with what I think we might do. How can we accomplish the purpose which is ours? Change of pastors and professors is a way; invasion of the North and South may be an answer; the Jubilee Advance in Atlantic City is an answer. Dual alignment may be an answer, though I have mental reservations as how they might be spelled out in some situations. I do not think that is going to be our ultimate answer. Another that I would like to recommend is a joint communications - a breakdown of communications of those important issues of our day. A united Baptist press, a paper that is supported by, controlled by, edited by all the Baptist bodies jointly within our North American Baptist fellowship might be an answer - something that

would be sent into every Baptist home, North and South. We could all read the same news. Just coming from a conference with a Baptist Committee on Public Affairs made me think of this. Baptists are joined together in Washington to work for freedom of religion and separation of church and state. Those are two things we can get together on, thank God. I would like to recommend another Baptist joint committee - BJCPA - a Baptist Joint Committee of Personal Affairs - Baptists joined together to work for freedom of conscience and separation of man from sin and Satan. I think if we spend more time on the real work of the church, we will not be too far apart in what we do.

Then I want to say something considering the "amazing grace" with which men like Martin Luther King, Jr., (who is an American Baptist pastor) have led Christian Negroes on the road to racial freedom. And this is for North and South. How marvelously these Christian brothers and sisters have appeared in their concepts of Christian attitudes and Christian actions seeking their freedom! That should impress every Christian, every Baptist, because they are largely Baptist. You know what a catalyst is? You have two chemicals that do not like to get mixed and you put something in there that makes them mix. This something does not mix with them, but it makes them get together. I wonder if in the full time and purpose of God, our Baptist Negro brethren might prove to be the catalyst that will bring about the unity which we white people seem so earnestly to desire. If that would be the purpose of God, would you be willing for it to be?