

Panicky Masons win pyrrhic victory at Southern Baptist Convention

by Scott Thompson

The Freemasonic Order's use of dirty tricks and heavy-handed manipulations has won them a temporary, but very costly, victory over their opponents in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). On June 16, delegates to the SBC annual meeting in Houston overwhelmingly approved a resolution that Southern Baptists' membership in Masonry was a matter of "personal conscience." The resolution was authored by the Masons themselves. Over the past year, the masonic-satanic affinity has been hit by the widely publicized exposés distributed by Baptist layman Dr. James L. Holly of Beaumont, Texas. Holly's work has paralleled the campaign by the political movement of Lyndon LaRouche to force the federal government to remove the statue of Ku Klux Klan founder Albert Pike from Judiciary Square in Washington, D.C. The statue was erected in 1901 under the auspices of the Scottish Rite of Freemasons. Representatives of the LaRouche movement and Dr. Holly's allies were present in force at the Houston meeting, distributing to the 25,000 Baptist delegates many thousands of pieces of literature exposing the Masons.

National Scottish Rite leaders flew into Houston to personally defend their influence in American religious life. A knot of Masonic officials, led by *Scottish Rite Journal* editor John Boettjer, spent several hours at the LaRouche table, frantically arguing with organizers distributing the pamphlet attacking Albert Pike.

Despite the outcome of the convention vote, the issue of curbing masonic power is now being openly addressed in a fashion not seen since the 19th century.

The approved resolution and a companion report were submitted to the SBC by Dr. Larry Lewis, who is president of the SBC's Home Mission Board (HMB). The HMB's actions were the result of a year-long study arising out of a resolution by Dr. Holly at the 1992 SBC meeting, which questioned whether Masonry is compatible with Christianity and SBC doctrine.

Since then, Masons, following the lead of the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction, had used every evil trick to prove they were compatible with Christianity, including lying about their fundamental ideas, slander, financial blackmail, throwing anti-masonic pastors out of their churches, and encouraging schism. Meanwhile, Dr. Holly published a new edition of his polemical book, showing from a theological standpoint that Freemasonry is incompatible with Christiani-

ty, because Freemasonry is a satanic, syncretic religion. The Scottish Rite's actions to defeat Dr. Holly and his allies provided sufficient proof to many Baptists that Holly's arguments were sound.

EIR investigators obtained a copy of a letter from Gary Leazer, director of the Interfaith Witness Department (IWD) of the Home Mission Board, who was placed in charge of writing the draft report on the compatibility of Masonry with Christianity. Leazer sent the letter to Southern Baptist (and Mason) D.L. Talbert on Jan. 17. Leazer had just finished his draft report:

"I appreciate all of the help Masons have been to me. Jim Tresner, editor of *The Oklahoma Mason*, and Abner McCall, former president of Baylor University, have each read the report and offered suggestions which I used. John Boettjer asked me to read the proof of the February issue of *The Scottish Rite Journal*, which I did in December. It will be on Freemasonry and religion and will be sent to either 3,000 or 4,000 non-Mason Southern Baptists. I forget how many Fred McPeake said.

"James L. Holly is quite upset with me as I will not meet with him again to let him approve the report before it is submitted. He, of course, will explode when he sees it. I am reaffirming our department's 1986 position that Freemasonry is *not* a religion and recommending that the SBC take a stand neither for nor against Freemasonry. . . . [Still] it is essential that as many Southern Baptist Masons get to the SBC as possible. . . . Give my regards to the other men at your temple."

A June 15 press release from the Southern Baptist Convention stated:

"During last year's SBC, a motion to create a special committee to study Freemasonry was amended and then approved by 'messengers' to have the Home Mission Board's Interfaith Witness Department do the study of Freemasonry and then have the HMB bring 'a report with a recommendation' to this year's meeting. This referral to the Interfaith Witness Department was apparently an attempt to judo a finding of incompatibility between Freemasonry and the SBC.

"Dr. James Holly . . . who is the leading advocate of incompatibility, has issued a call for the resignation of the HMB's Interfaith Witness Department director, Gary Leazer, because he gave a draft of the Freemasonry study to two

Masons and incorporated their comments in the draft before submitting it to HMB President Larry Lewis. Lewis subsequently reprimanded Leazer and removed him from a committee drafting the HMB's recommendation to the SBC prior to approval by the HMB's trustees."

Abner McCall's dirty tricks

Abner McCall is a 33rd Degree Grand Cross Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction Mason, president emeritus of Baylor University, and a former vice-president of the SBC. Abner McCall was featured on the cover of the February 1993 issue of *The Scottish Rite Journal*, referred to in Leazer's letter. *The Journal* noted that Baylor's founder and all subsequent presidents had been high-ranking Masons, despite the university's nominal affiliation with the SBC. McCall also had an article in *The Journal*, viciously attacking Dr. Holly.

EIR's June 4 issue carries an article, "Baylor University Aided FBI in Waco Firestorm," which shows that McCall had approved of having members of Baylor University assist the FBI to develop a phony profile of Branch Davidian leader David Koresh as violence-prone and a child abuser. McCall himself once ranted that David Koresh was no different from Dr. Holly, because both imitated the anti-masonic stance of Hitler and Mussolini.

McCall admitted that he had helped Gary Leazer in drafting the HMB report. He sent Leazer some highly expurgated histories of Masonry, while suggesting to Leazer that masonic ideology was not monolithic. McCall did not want Leazer's report to use the Manichean dualist religious view of Scottish Rite Sovereign Grand Commander Albert Pike, as expressed in his *Morals and Dogma*, which believes explicitly in a Luciferian equilibrium principle in the universe to be taken as an unquestionable, authoritative view of Freemasonry.

The May 1993 issue of *The Scottish Rite Journal*, which was another broadside against the anti-masonic leaders in the SBC, warned that if the convention found Masonry to be incompatible with Christianity, there would be a schism. McCall told a journalist that he was helping lead a schism from the SBC to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, which is being founded by former President Jimmy Carter, some Masons, and moderate SBC members.

Moreover, McCall gloated that the Women's Missionary Union (WMU), which raises most of the money for some 5,000 Baptist missions at home and abroad, was also bringing pressure to bear upon HMB President Lewis to find Masonry compatible with the SBC. The WMU had threatened to begin sharing its income with both the SBC and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. McCall admitted that several leaders of the WMU are members of the Order of the Eastern Star, a rite that was written by a Confederate leader to bind women to Freemasonry. McCall said that most Masons would be urged to remain within the SBC, if it chose compatibility with them, but the SBC would be shrunk to half its former self.

Scottish Rite at the barricades

Scottish Rite Journal editor John Boettjer ran a Scottish Rite command center at the Southern Baptist Convention. (It was Boettjer, too, who had written a lying letter to the *Washington Post* that LaRouche had no evidence proving that Albert Pike, a Confederate general, had been a founder of the Ku Klux Klan, after the *Post* ran favorable articles about the campaign to remove the statue.) Boettjer's Center for Masonic Information in Houston was founded with royalties from John J. Robinson's book, *Pilgrim's Path: One Man's Road to the Masonic Temple*. According to McCall, thousands of copies of this book were handed out at the convention, and it was mailed to all members of the SBC leadership.

Robinson, who was recently put on a fast track to become a 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, had earlier written *Born in Blood*, which *The Scottish Rite Journal* at the time called the best book on Masonry by a non-Mason. It gives a mythological account of the historical role of the 13th-century heretical Knights Templar in founding the Scottish Rite. Robinson is an apologist for the Knights Templar and their participation in the Baphomet heresy, which involved spitting on an image of Christ at initiation; this desecration prompted French King Philip the Fair and the pope to proclaim the Knights Templar heretics and launch a crusade against them.

Boettjer was confident, when he spoke to a journalist the day before the vote, that the final HMB resolution would pass thanks to all the Scottish Rite manipulations. After a long discussion, Boettjer stopped lying, as he had done to the SBC participants, that Albert Pike was a Trinitarian Christian. He admitted Pike's Luciferian religion is Manichean dualism. Moreover, he admitted that Manley P. Hall, whom Boettjer's *Journal* has called "the greatest philosopher" of Masonry, wrote books telling Masons "how to" summon demons and make a pact with the Devil. After confessing this, Boettjer told the interviewer that he "had a pretty good understanding of what Freemasonry is really all about." Thus, the right-hand man of Sovereign Grand Commander C. Fred Kleinknecht, sent to preach the compatibility of Masonry with Christianity, agreed that the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction adepts were Lucifer worshippers seeking a pact with the Devil.

'The fight has just begun'

Although the final HMB resolution passed the SBC overwhelmingly, Dr. Holly told a journalist that "the fight has just begun." The HMB report and resolution claimed that some of the tenets of Freemasonry were compatible with Christianity, but Dr. Holly noted that the HMB was compelled to state, "Many tenets and teachings of Freemasonry are not compatible with Christianity or Southern Baptist doctrine." In fact, this latter finding was so unnerving that Leazer's accomplice, Fred McPeake, tried unsuccessfully to introduce an amendment that "Some people believe that certain tenets of Freemasonry are incompatible with Christianity."