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NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Art Toalston, Editor
Fax (615) 782-8736
CompuServe ID # 70420,17

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WASHINGTON--Pro-life stand fails to hurt candidates, survey shows.
MACAO--Her Chinese heritage helps new missionary; photo.
MINNEAPOLIS--Billy Graham to present Christmas 'peace plan.'
TENNESSEE--Missionaries share recipes 'for a happy life' cookbook.
GEORGIA--Church's prayer & fasting yields 200-plus decisions.
ALABAMA--Univ. of Mobile committee: no wrongdoing in Nicaragua.
TEXAS--Seminary touches the world as it fuels local economy.

**Pro-life stand fails to hurt
candidates, survey shows**

By Tom Strode

**Baptist Press
11/11/96**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Opposing abortion did not harm congressional candidates in the Nov. 5 election, according to poll results announced by the National Right to Life Committee. In fact, failure to make abortion an issue may have hurt Republican challenger Bob Dole in his bid to defeat a pro-abortion president.

The election resulted in pro-life gains in the U.S. Senate but losses in the House of Representatives, a NRLC spokeswoman said at a Nov. 7 news conference. On the core issue of abortion on demand, pro-lifers managed a net gain of two seats in the Senate but a loss of six seats in the House, NRLC Political Action Committee director Carol Long said. One Senate race and four House races remained undecided at the time of NRLC's news conference.

Post-election surveys by the Wirthlin Worldwide polling firm of 1,000 voters showed respondents who cited abortion as one of the two most important issues in determining their vote:

-- voted for the Republican candidate for the Senate 50 percent of the time and the Democratic candidate 33 percent of the time. (The Republican Party platform has a pro-life plank, while the Democratic platform supports abortion rights. Republican members of Congress are much more often pro-life than Democratic members.)

-- voted for the Republican candidate for the House of Representatives 50 percent of the time while voting for the Democratic candidate 37 percent of the time.

-- voted in federal, state and local races normally for Republican candidates 51 percent of the time as opposed to 36 percent of the time for Democrats.

-- voted for Dole 45 percent of the time and Clinton 35 percent.

Abortion "worked for Republican candidates, contrary to much of the conventional wisdom," said David O'Steen, NRLC's executive director. The poll results were consistent with those of 1988, '92 and '94, he said.

The poll's 5 percent difference between Dole (45) and other Republican candidates (50) can be attributed at least partly to the failure by the GOP challenger, who had an overwhelmingly pro-life voting record in the Senate, to address the abortion issue, O'Steen said.

"For whatever reason, he didn't talk about the issue, and I think that was a mistake, a tactical mistake," O'Steen said.

"I think he could have run a little stronger campaign if he'd used the partial-birth issue, and, of course, Bill Clinton was extremely vulnerable there because what he was saying about it and his actions were two extremely different things, and he was allowed to get away with it."

Clinton vetoed the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act, which banned a grisly form of abortion upon a child nearly totally delivered in the second half of pregnancy. In spite of the president's action, the Clinton campaign ran ads on Christian radio stations saying he opposed late-term abortions.

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The Wirthlin poll also demonstrated the gender gap favoring the president was not based on abortion, NRLC's Long said. A Washington Post exit poll showed Clinton won the women's vote 54 to 37 percent over Dole. Of women who said abortion was one of the two most important issues determining their vote, 50 percent voted for Dole and 39 percent for Clinton, according to the Wirthlin poll.

The head of a leading abortion advocacy organization, however, charged Dole's pro-life record hurt him with women voters, though she did not cite any exit polls to support her contention.

Abortion "was the fuse that lit the gender gap and crippled Bob Dole's campaign from the outset," said Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, in a Nov. 7 prepared statement. "Dole allowed himself to be handcuffed by the radical right's extreme agenda on abortion, which helped drive women away."

For the first time since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalized abortion, there is "a solid anti-choice majority" in both houses of Congress, Michelman said.

While "our goal was to reverse the devastating choice losses suffered under the 104th Congress, we knew we could not undo the damage with just one election," Michelman said.

Abortion opponents hold 50 seats in the Senate, with the other seats filled by 35 abortion advocates and 14 senators with mixed voting records, Michelman said. In the House, there are 221 pro-lifers, 145 pro-choicers and 64 with "mixed-choice" credentials, she estimated.

In the House, pro-lifers suffered fewer losses than Republicans, who may drop 10 seats, NRLC's Long said, because: 1) Three new pro-life Democrats were elected and 2) pro-life Republicans replaced pro-choice Republicans in three districts. In addition, pro-life Republicans replaced pro-choice Democrats in six seats.

In the Senate, three GOP pro-lifers won seats formerly occupied by Republican pro-choicers. Pro-life Republicans also won three seats previously held by Democrats with varying degrees of pro-choice voting records. Pro-choice Democrats, however, won two seats formerly held by pro-lifers, one from each party.

Pro-lifers probably would have won an additional Senate seat had it not been for another moral issue on the ballot: gambling. In Louisiana, pro-choice Democrat Mary Landrieu edged pro-life Republican Woody Jenkins by about 12,000 votes of nearly 1.7 million cast on a day when riverboat gambling also was being contested in the state.

"The turnout in Caddo and Bossier and other areas with riverboats was very heavy," Louisiana State University political science professor Jeff Sadow told The Shreveport Times. "She owes everything to gambling." The gambling industry used large amounts of its funds to coax black voters, who are predominantly Democratic, and pro-gambling voters to the polls, Sadow said.

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Her Chinese heritage helps new missionary

By Martha Skelton

**Baptist Press
11/11/96**

MACAO (BP)--Marilyn Hing knows the ABCs of missions.

Recently appointed a Foreign Mission Board missionary to Macao, Hing is returning to the Chinese enclave as an "ABC" -- American-born Chinese -- after two years as a volunteer pharmacist there at Hope Medical Clinic, a ministry of Southern Baptist missionaries in this Portuguese colony on a tip of the Chinese mainland.

Her ministry in Macao helped her understand her own heritage -- and gave her a burden to see the Chinese of Macao come to Christ.

Hing grew up in Superior, Ariz., in a second-generation Chinese-American family. Her grandfather left southern China decades before she was born to make a better life for himself and his family.

Her pilgrimage to missions began when a friend at the University of Arizona in Tucson invited her to go to a Chinese church. She knew about Jesus, but had never committed herself to him. This invitation intrigued her. "What is a Chinese church?" she wondered. She and her sister went to meet other Chinese students, but Hing confronted the gospel and committed her life to Christ. She graduated in 1985 with a degree in pharmacy.

Even as a young Christian, Hing felt a spiritual tug toward overseas missions. While working in a Tucson clinic, she made three volunteer medical trips to Venezuela and the Philippines. Her sense of God's leading drew her to the International Service Corps (ISC). She was assigned for two years to work in Hope clinic.

In one way, Macao represented Hing's roots, but it also represented a lesser-known side of herself. She faced a cultural identity crisis.

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"Being an ABC, I wasn't sure if I was going to clash with the culture," she says.

Language was a definite dividing line. She had been exposed to Cantonese, but in Macao, people would come up to her and start talking in Cantonese. They couldn't understand how someone could be Chinese and not understand them.

She also found some parts of life in Macao very familiar.

"To do things or be with the family is still of the utmost importance (in Macao). I can relate to that," she says. A lot of foods her mother cooked are traditional Chinese dishes. She knew her mother made a certain sticky rice just once a year. When she moved to Macao she found the rice is associated with a festival time.

Issues of culture and language were not just personal for her. They affected how she could get to know the Macanese and share her faith with them. She soon learned that many Macanese are either traditional ancestor worshipers or very secularized seekers of materialistic success. To them, "Christianity is a Western thought and it is not Chinese," she observes. "That's a struggle for many of the local Chinese Christians -- to show that Christianity is a part of their culture."

When she was able to talk about her faith with local people, she often found a stumbling block. "I have learned from the Chinese people that it is really hard for them to accept grace, the undeserved gift. They have always felt that you earn a gift by how deserving you are, by how much you work for it. They appease the gods with their offerings, certain rituals. Unconditional love is totally foreign to them," she says.

By the end of her two years in Macao (1993-95), Hing felt assured God was leading her to seek career missionary appointment to return to the clinic. After attending Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California, she was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board.

Hing will be returning to Macao at a very pivotal time. The city is scheduled to revert to Chinese governance in 1999. "There is a strong spiritual battle going on. I think Satan is putting in overtime," she says. "To be there beyond 1999 is my vision."

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(BP) photo (horizontal) and cutline mailed 11/11/96 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

**Billy Graham to present
Christmas 'peace plan'**

By Dan Wooding

**Baptist Press
11/11/96**

MINNEAPOLIS (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham will go on television this Christmas season to present the fragile world with an ultimate "Peace Plan" that can change the face -- and hearts -- of mankind.

Graham's peace message will be presented in a world television Christmas special called, "A Season For Peace," to be aired in North America Dec. 3 and around the world in more than 150 countries and territories in 33 languages throughout the month of December.

Negotiations are in the final stages for an extended broadcast on two international satellite systems whose "footprints" cover two-thirds of the world's population, including many countries traditionally closed to the gospel.

"Even though we celebrate the birth of the 'Prince of Peace' at Christmas, peace itself seems illusive," Graham says in the program, in a message from the biblical text of John 3:16. "There are border disputes, ethnic war, religious battles, and perhaps most persuasively, people are battered by conflicts within. All over our world, people are beginning to realize that in their quest for peace, what they are really searching for is God."

Graham goes on to say, "They thought this was going to be the 'Christian Century.' But the 20th-century has been the bloodiest century in the history of mankind. And what is the 21st century going to be? Think of all these new weapons and all of these new ways to kill, and maim, and hurt, that we have developed. President Yeltsin stated that the whole world could be standing unknowingly at the edge of the abyss, and we might be."

Recounting, "You walk down the streets of Moscow, or Berlin, or Johannesburg, or New York, or Los Angeles, and you see it among the people that they seem to be searching," Graham explains peace can only be found through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

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"A 'Season For Peace' is not a traditional 'Christmas' program," said Bob Williams, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association international ministries director. "Instead, it contains a message by Billy Graham about peace with God, peace among people and the birth of the Prince of Peace, amplified with music and video in a powerful, dramatic way. This program speaks to people -- regardless of their language or culture."

In countries where people are less likely to be familiar with the Christmas story, the TV program begins with a contemporary theatrical interpretation of the simple Christmas story. The four-minute segment has a global "feel" in style and uses only Scripture as narration.

The special includes perspectives from Nobel Peace Prize recipients Archbishop Desmond Tutu and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa on the world's unceasing quest for peace. "We have all made mistakes in the past," Mandela says, "and this is no longer a time for finger-pointing. Let us forget the past, let us join hands and work together That is the essence of the message of reconciliation We should let peace reside in all our hearts."

Also featured in the special is a commentary by former President Jimmy Carter on the need to "look within" to find the problems that create tension and distrust.

"I'm a Christian and I worship the Prince of Peace," Carter says. "I don't think there's any doubt about it, that anyone who has faith in Christ would have, as part of our elementary human commitment, the promotion of peace, the protection of peace, the end of strife and hatred, of alienation among people. So I think that inherently Christianity can be equated in its broadest definition with the word 'peace.'"

Viewers also will meet on the TV screen a variety of individuals who have found peace in their lives through a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ.

"These are real people who, despite not being sports heroes or being well known for what they do, will attract people to who they are and, more importantly, what they have found," Williams said. "They are individuals who have begun to experience peace, in spite of the restless circumstances of their lives."

The stories are drawn from places like Paris; Bangkok, Thailand; and Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic -- areas of the world staggering under the constant torment of unrest or pressures of urban life. The real-life stories will be told in small segments augmenting points in Graham's message.

Another feature of the Christmas TV special will be "Operation Matthew" in which Christians again will be encouraged to invite friends into their homes to view the program and discuss its message. "The average Christian in North America fails to realize the evangelistic impact of a prime-time telecast around the world," Williams said, noting that "very few countries have the proliferation of cable and channel selections found in North America."

Graham's "World Television Series" last April confirmed the viability of the house party concept, as 1 million participating churches had an average of 20 per congregation. National church leaders have expressed renewed commitment to foster even greater participation, aiming for 30-40 house parties per church for the Christmas special.

The broadcast will provide Christians around the world an opportunity "to explain to friends and neighbors what Christmas is all about," Williams said.

The world television Christmas special is another step in Graham's worldwide television ministry. Beginning in 1989, BGEA began a series of regional outreaches by continent, called "Mission World," which culminated in a worldwide satellite extension of Graham's 1995 crusade from Puerto Rico called "Global Mission."

Last April, the World Television Series broadcast, "Starting Over," was aired on national television networks and satellite systems to more than 200 countries. The World Television Series' Christmas special is presented in response to the overwhelming consensus among national church leaders, government officials and television executives who petitioned BGEA to "do it again."

In North America, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association will air two additional programs during December. On Dec. 2, it will show a telecast taped during Graham's Charlotte, N.C., crusade. The following evening, "A Season For Peace" will air in most markets. Finally, an exclusive North American Christmas special will air the week of Dec. 15, which will be repeated on Christmas Day in many markets.

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Wooding is a freelance journalist in Southern California and founder of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times).

**Missionaries share recipes
'for a happy life' cookbook**

By Lonnie Wilkey

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--For many years former Southern Baptist missionaries Mary Jo and Bill Geiger shared that Jesus Christ is the recipe for a happy life, and they lived their lives to reflect that philosophy in both good times and bad.

Circumstances have changed their lives dramatically during the past 10 years.

In 1986, while serving as missionaries in Chile, Mary Jo was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Despite her deteriorating health, they were able to remain in Chile as missionaries until 1992 when they took medical retirement after 27 years.

They moved to Memphis where Mary Jo is from and Bill became a staff chaplain at Baptist Memorial Hospital East, where he is still able to minister and use his bilingual skills. They are members of Germantown (Tenn.) Baptist Church.

Eleven years ago, one year before Mary Jo learned of her disease, the Geigers prepared a cookbook for their four children. It was a treasure of family recipes carefully saved over the years. They included recipes given to them by friends and loved ones. Many of the Chilean recipes in the book came from family friend Juanita Sepulveda, who came to Memphis from Chile to help care for Mary Jo.

Numerous people since have encouraged them to share their recipes on a much broader scale, Bill Geiger shared.

After looking into the possibility, the Geigers met Tim Fields of Fields Communications and Publishing, Nashville, Tenn., who encouraged them and said he would like to publish their cookbook, with volumes 1 and 2 both titled, "Recipes for a Happy Life: Missionary Family Cookbook."

The title came, Geiger said, from the foreword of the original book. In her own handwriting, Mary Jo reminded their four children -- Kirby, Laurie, Linda, and Susan -- "the Lord is the only one who can give the recipe for a truly happy life."

The cookbook project became very important to Mary Jo, Geiger recounted. Her condition had deteriorated to the point where she was having trouble communicating verbally, he said. "It has been wonderful therapy for Mary Jo the last year and a half."

He noted that the very day she finished her last bit of editing, Mary Jo lost the capacity to work on the computer and gradually has lost her voice.

The cookbook gave her a goal to work toward, her husband said. "It means a lot to Mary Jo that the Lord gave her the ability to complete that book." Just recently, he said, Mary Jo was able with some difficulty to say these words, "I am so happy."

"Life still has incredible meaning," Geiger said.

In the foreword of the original book, Mary Jo wrote: "It has been a rewarding experience for us in remembering the many happy hours around the family table, and then, that expanded table of sharing the bounties of God's blessings with loved ones and friends in our home throughout the years."

Geiger noted their entire life has revolved around the home. "We have been on the mission field, but our ministry from home and our witness at home has been our real ministry -- witnessing to those who came to our house."

The two-volume cookbook is filled with recipes ranging from simple things such as Lasagna and chili to more unusual delicacies such as "money casserole" and "limelight pie."

The book also contains food illustrations drawn by Geiger and sketches of houses where the Geigers lived and all the churches in which they worshiped in the formative years of their children's lives. The sketches were done by Jaime Torrealba, a former Chilean drug addict who came to know the Lord under the Geigers' ministry in Chile.

The bottom of each page of the cookbook also contains a Bible verse. "Mary Jo is a real Bible scholar. She drew Scripture from things close to her and things we tried to teach our children over the years," Geiger said.

Though the cookbooks were intended originally for their children, the entire Geiger family has caught the excitement of being a part of the book, Geiger noted. "We have an incredible family. God has blessed us tremendously with our children."

The cookbooks are available in Baptist Book Stores throughout the country or from the publisher at (615) 646-4650.

**Church's prayer & fasting
yields 200-plus decisions**

By Lynne Jones

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--In the recent Southern Baptist Convention-wide prayer and fasting emphasis, more than 200 people surrounded the altar in the two morning services Nov. 3 at First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga., to make public decisions for recommitment and, for 22 people, professions of faith.

"It would be easy to see the decisions as an end in themselves," said Johnny Hunt, pastor of the suburban Atlanta church. "But the Lord has ignited a spirit of expectancy among his people. It is the beginning of a journey."

Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd, president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, issued a call across the SBC for fasting and prayer Oct. 27-Nov. 3 in his convention sermon at the SBC annual meeting last June in New Orleans. Floyd challenged God's people to do whatever it takes to see revival in America.

"To prepare for the weeklong emphasis, we called our church members to a 40-day fast," said John Franklin, minister of prayer at First, Woodstock. "Our records show 750 days of fasting accounted for."

A 32-member team then visited every adult and youth Sunday school class of the 6,000-member church, speaking from Joel 2 and asking each member to do a personal evaluation of his or her relationship with God.

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**Univ. of Mobile committee:
no wrongdoing in Nicaragua**

By Bob Terry

**Baptist Press
11/11/96**

MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--"I am happy to tell you and the world that there is nothing rotten in Denmark or Nicaragua," declared Robert Maxwell, chairman of a University of Mobile trustee committee established to study allegations regarding the university's Latin American campus in Nicaragua.

The study committee was established May 1995 after concerns about alleged irregularities on the San Marcos, Nicaragua, campus became public. Members included Maxwell, an attorney in Atmore, Ala., Vivian Johnston and Edward Massey, both attorneys in Mobile. Maxwell now serves as chairman of the university's trustees.

The study committee found accounting deficiencies in the early days of the branch campus, which opened in August 1993, Maxwell said. Also, the committee found instances that reflected "a lack of good judgment."

"But the committee does not believe any of the alleged improprieties stemmed from any self-serving, sinister, illegal or immoral motivation or purpose," he added. Later Maxwell observed the study committee concluded no one connected with the university personally profited from any of the business arrangements regarding the Latin American campus.

Maxwell pointed to the "primitive" structures in Nicaragua following years of war and the "lack of appreciation (in Nicaragua) for American ways of accounting" as the principle causes for acknowledged deficiencies.

He said the university has taken steps to assure adequate accounting procedures now and in the future. A chief financial officer with experience in fund accounting has been employed on the Mobile campus and a "trained and experienced counterpart" is in place on the Latin American campus.

In addition, the board of trustees has established a permanent committee of the board dealing with the Nicaraguan campus. Maxwell said the committee is not an oversight committee but functions as a liaison committee to ensure adequate communication between administration and trustees on issues related to the Latin American campus.

The university also is in the process of returning to the Mobile campus the \$2.3 million spent in starting up the branch campus. Maxwell said about \$700,000 has been returned, leaving a balance of \$1.6 million. Donations also have contributed to the reduction, he said.

The study committee spent about seven months conducting interviews, reading reports, examining records, listening to individuals with information about the Nicaraguan campus and personally visiting Nicaragua, Maxwell said. He added the committee attempted to meet with two former employees who first surfaced many of the accusations about operations in Nicaragua.

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"We tried to get each of them to come and offered to meet with them wherever they said. Each declined. That fact caused the committee to strongly suspect the credibility of these two persons," Maxwell added. He said the committee's own research indicated most of the charges of the former employees "had no basis in fact."

Maxwell said the university has been exposed "to a lot of accusations" during the last three years. "I hope all of that is history. The campus is doing great, expanding in enrollment and in quality." He said he hopes the findings about deficiencies in record keeping and poor judgment will satisfy concerned critics.

"The trustee study committee took its charge seriously," Maxwell said. "We kept our objectivity and did our work. Now we hope people will begin to have confidence in those of us at the University of Mobile."

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Seminary touches the world as it fuels local economy

By Dena Dyer

Baptist Press
11/11/97

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Fort Worth's most international product?

The 1996 Fort Worth, Texas, Chamber of Commerce "Driving Guide" says it's Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. With students from around the globe and graduates serving in more than 100 different countries, Southwestern imports and exports more people than any other local business.

But the multi-million-dollar question is: Does Southwestern help the local economy?

Absolutely, said Mike Rosa, Chamber of Commerce senior director of economic development.

"When people think about developing jobs and creating a positive economic impact, the education sector is often overlooked in favor of new industries, sports arenas and so on," he said. "But in terms of net gain to the area economy, Southwestern is as significant as the largest economic developments 'plums.'"

Estimates by Hubert Martin, vice president for business affairs, show Southwestern impacts Fort Worth to the tune of \$129,830,406 per year, assuming every dollar spent in the local economy turns over three times.

Gordon Swift, a Fort Worth consulting engineer and member of the Southwestern Advisory Council, said he has always appreciated the value of Southwestern to the community. "But even with my years of close relationship to the seminary, I didn't realize that the numbers were that large."

Martin wasn't surprised by the figures. "When you see the people we bring here to live, who end up staying for a few years, it can't help but impact the entire community."

But how was the \$130 million figure calculated?

-- The seminary has nearly about 1,800 married students, Martin noted. If each couple spent \$12,000 a year, the community's utilities, grocery stores, restaurants and so forth would see over \$22 million turn over.

-- Southwestern has 250 permanent employees. If each spent just \$20,000 a year, it would add up to \$5 million.

-- In addition, more than 2,000 people visit Southwestern annually for continuing education courses. Multiplying that by \$300 per person spent on hotels, gas and food, gives a total of \$640,000. Prospective student visits, seminary conference participants and student family visits, cause the numbers to climb further.

-- The seminary has an annual budget of over \$8 million, and annual capital construction expenditures approach \$1.5 million.

-- Southwestern's total yearly contribution to the local economy is about \$43 million. Multiplying that by three (if every dollar turns over three times) gives a figure of around \$130 million.

"And these are very conservative estimates," Martin emphasized.

"This doesn't include the \$8 million a year the Cooperative Program (the voluntary unified giving program which determines the budget of the Southern Baptist Convention) sends us, which is outside money coming into Fort Worth. So are the estate gifts and endowment gifts we receive."

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