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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Owen Cooper To Head  
State Poverty Efforts**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., a prominent Southern Baptist layman, has been named to head an 18-member bi-racial board of directors to coordinate and administer the Head Start program for 1500 children in 28 counties of Mississippi as part of the War on Poverty program.

The appointment of Cooper, president of the Mississippi Chemical Corp., who was in runoff balloting last June as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was announced by Sargent Shriver, director of the Office of Economic Opportunity here.

Also named to the 18-member board, called the Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc., (MAP) was W. P. Davis of Jackson, Miss., secretary of the department of Negro Work for the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

The bi-racial board includes six white and six Negro leaders in Mississippi, plus six additional members to be selected from among the poverty-stricken people with whom the board will work.

About a week before appointment of the MAP board, the Office of Economic Opportunity announced that the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM) which had been operating the Head Start program would not receive additional government funds on which to operate.

Shriver, in making the announcement, said that audits and inspection reports had disclosed "serious deficiencies and irregularities" in the management of the CDGM program, and that the group could not be lawfully refunded in its present organization form.

Other reasons given were fiscal irresponsibility, segregated control of the program, deficient employee records, excessive salaries, nepotism, inadequate supervision, and questionable employment practices.

The decision immediately drew a storm of protest from Negro poverty workers in Mississippi from the National Council of Churches' Division of Christian Life and Mission, and from the Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty headed by Walter Reuther.

These groups accused the Office of Economic Opportunity of yielding to political pressure largely from Sen. John C. Stennis and Sen. James O. Eastland, both of Mississippi, and that the real question "is whether the poor will be allowed to run their own war on poverty or whether the government is going to run it for them."

In New York, the National Council of Churches announced that five denominations with colleges in Mississippi had given assurances that no Head Start contracts would be signed by their institutions without prior clearance by the council's Division of Christian Life and Mission.

A subsequent board of inquiry of the Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty charged after a visit to Mississippi that the CDGM program was "a well-administered, carefully organized, creatively run organization demonstrating integrity, fiscal responsibility and managerial competency.

Shriver, in reply to the board of inquiry, said that their review "adds nothing new," saying that the government information was collected over many months by professional auditor-inspectors and analysts.

"Therefore, OEO does not foresee any change in its position," said Shriver. "We do intend to move as fast as possible away from de facto racially segregated programs such as CDGM, to racially integrated programs."

The next day, Shriver announced appointment of the 18-member Mississippi Action For Progress (MAP) board, headed by Cooper.

The MAP organization was awarded grants of \$3 million to administer the Head Start program for 1,500 children. Shriver said that about \$10 million has been reserved to finance MAP child development programs, which could ultimately reach 4,500 to 5,000 children.

Earlier, the OEO had approved grants of \$713,300 to Southwest Mississippi Opportunity Inc., in Woodville, Miss., to administer the Head Start program in three Mississippi Counties for 935 pre-school children; and grants of \$1.2 million to Rust College (Negro), Holly Springs, Miss., to administer Head Start programs in two additional counties.

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Seven Named By Home  
Board For USA Missions

10/17/66

ATLANTA (BP)--Seven career missionaries were appointed in October by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, including workers for language missions in California and inner-city work in Atlanta.

Mr. and Mrs. Jose P. Mendolla of Mill Valley, Calif. will serve in language missions in Santa Paula, Calif.

Mr. and Mrs. James T. Holcombe of Saint Stephen, S.C., will work at the Clarke Howell-Techwood Baptist Center in Atlanta.

E. Milford Howell of Dallas will direct state missions for the Baptist Convention of Maryland, with headquarters in Lutherville. He will succeed J. N. Evans who recently joined the Home Mission Board to head the department of metropolitan missions.

Dan C. Stringer Jr. of Las Vegas, Nev., will be associate director of missions for Southern Baptists in Arizona.

Jerry B. Graham of Sterling, Va., will be pastoral superintendent of missions in Westminster, Md.

Mendolla, a native of Taylor, Tex., is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University (Baptist), Abilene, Tex., and has just graduated from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. He has held pastorates in Texas and California. He will serve under the language missions department of the board, and will be pastor of a Spanish-speaking congregation in Santa Paula.

Mrs. Mendolla, the former Librada Flores, is a native of Coleman, Tex.

Mr. and Mrs. James T. Holcombe were appointed by the Christian Social Ministries Department to serve temporarily in the Clarke Howell-Techwood Baptist Center in Atlanta.

Holcombe is a native of Union, S.C. He was pastor of Saint Stephen Baptist Church in Saint Stephen, S.C., at the time of his appointment.

He and Mrs. Holcombe have also been houseparents in the Kentucky Children's Home in Lyndon, Ky.

Mrs. Holcombe, the former Diana Griffin, is a native of Dayton, Ohio. She is a graduate of Carson-Newman College (Baptist) in Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Howell, a native of Rochester, Tex., has been pastor of the Northlake Baptist Church in Dallas, for 2½ years. Previously he served under the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as a missionary in Nigeria for 21 years. He also held pastorates in Texas and Oklahoma before going to Nigeria.

He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Wroth, Tex., where he earned a doctor of theology degree.

He will direct the work of missions and stewardship for the Maryland Convention, in cooperation with the Home Mission Board.

Stringer, at the time of his appointment, was pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church in Las Vegas. He also has held pastorates in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. He is a native of Cordell, Okla., and a graduate of Baylor University (Baptist) in Waco, Tex., and Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville.

Graham, appointed by the Rural-Urban Missions Department, will go to his assignment in Maryland from the pastorate of the Potomac Baptist Church in Sterling, Va. He is a native of Randlett, Okla., and graduated from the University of Corpus Christi (Baptist), Corpus Christi, Tex., and Southwestern Seminary. He will pastor a church in addition to his duties as superintendent of missions for the Central Baptist Association in Westminster, Md.

James W. Bell of Casa Grande, Ariz., was appointed in August, but this month was assigned by the Rural-Urban Missions Department as superintendent of missions for the Yuma and River Valley Baptist Associations in Arizona.

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The logo for Baptist Press, featuring the letters 'BP' in a bold, stylized font enclosed within a large, thick, black parentheses.

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Editors:

Beginning next week, the Atlanta Regional Office of Baptist Press will handle all BP mailings for a two-week period, October 24 through November 4. During this period, I will be in Berlin covering sessions of the World Congress on Evangelism for Baptist Press and working on the press staff of the World Congress press room. W. C. Fields will be out of the office also during this two-week period.

If any news develops in your state of interest to Baptist Press, please send it to Walker Knight or Dallas Lee at the Atlanta Regional Office of Baptist Press. Their telephone number is 523-2593, area 404. Mailing address is 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Please do not send it to Nashville until after Friday, November 4. I will be back in the office Monday, November 7, and the mailings will continue then from the central office in Nashville.

Thanks for all you are doing to inform Baptists all around the nation of the significant news of our denomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jim'.

Jim Newton  
Assistant Director