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FEATURES

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African Counselor Has
"A School in His Head"

By June P. Carter

RICHMOND (BP)--Oumarou Youssoufou has a school in his head, and he has asked the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to help him get it out.

The property is ready, the buildings designed. Now funds and personnel must be found, and the tall young African, a native of the Republic of Niger (pronounced Ni-ger), is seeking them with evangelistic zeal.

Youssoufou (you-sef-foo), a civil servant rather than an evangelist, is a Christian. In his country Christians are a pitiful minority. "I know every Christian in the country," he declares.

He envisions a Christian school there, a vocational school where young Africans can learn such trades as plumbing, carpentry and leatherwork--and hear the gospel.

Although he hoped to open it last October, he is not discouraged that ground is yet unbroken for the first building. "God has a different schedule--and He hasn't given me the new date," he explains.

If Southern Baptists take on the project, or agree to help with it, Niger could become the 77th country to have Southern Baptist Mission work. It would be the sixth in West Africa with French as its official language.

A borderland of the Sahara Desert, Niger is a Muslim nation, and Youssoufou sees his government's open policy on religion as "an incredible opportunity" for Christians.

A year ago the minister of health asked for 11 Christian doctors (with full support of their churches) to work in government hospitals in Niger. "So far," says Youssoufou, "I have not been able to give him one." The offer is still open, he adds.

Youssoufou, a counselor with his country's embassy in Washington, D.C., recently talked with Foreign Mission Board officials here to try to interest them in his school. His burning concern is that the school be staffed by "born-again Christians," persons who live their religion in their jobs.

To be a Christian school, it must be run by Christians, he continues. "If a Christian is really born again, he'll tell people about Jesus Christ. If one plumber could come for two years and train 20 plumbers, and 10 of these became Christians, then that plumber would have done a great missionary service."

Teachers must be willing to relate to blacks as equals, insists Youssoufou, accepting them as human beings created in the image of God, regardless of their rank or whether they hold a college degree. "It isn't what teachers say, but what they do; actions speak very loudly," emphasizes the embassy counselor, who received his early education in mission schools.

He is interested in seeing short-term people staff the school because in 10 years ("it may take 15 or 20") he would like to see it staffed entirely by African Christians.

Youssoufou speaks fluent English, as well as French, Niger's official language, and Hausa, the language of his own ethnic group. He also "gets along" in several other languages.

In addition to his other duties, he is vice president and treasurer of Africare, a fledgling organization founded by corporations and individuals concerned with improving medical care on the continent.

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Youssoufou has lived in the United States for five years. He and his wife, a Nigerian and a former school teacher, have three children. They attend Temple Baptist Church in Washington, and it was their pastor, Keith Koch, who suggested the contact with the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

Meanwhile, board officials are studying the situation before coming to a decision about opening work in Niger. H. Cornell Goerner, administrator for work in Africa, considers it a good opportunity. He is concerned, however, because so few Southern Baptist missionary couples are equipped to work in the French language. Southern Baptist work in other French-speaking countries is new, and reinforcements are needed there.

Once a vocationally trained layman and his wife are found to go to Niger, it would still take four months of missionary orientation and a year of language study before they would be ready to begin work there.

Youssoufou has come first to Southern Baptists. If they cannot help he will go somewhere else. "I have no idea who will do it--maybe the Methodists--but someone will do it," he declares.

There's something about the way he says it that makes you believe someone will.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist papers.

Second Lifeway Store
Will Open in March

1/15/73

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)--A new Lifeway store, the second of its kind and part of a Southern Baptist book store channel to the general public, is scheduled to open the first week in March at Crabtree Valley Mall, Raleigh, N.C.

The first store was opened August 1972, in Jackson, Miss.

As part of the pilot project being conducted by the Book Store Division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, this store will be one of more than 125 retail outlets in the largest shopping complex between Washington, and Atlanta. The new store will contain approximately 2,200 square feet.

The Lifeway symbol, a figure of a man in a red triangle, will be used extensively in the store's design and decor.

"The original Lifeway concept grew out of the belief that Baptists need to have book stores for the general public located near the busiest street in town," explained W.O. Thomason, director of the board's Book Store Division. "Crabtree Valley Mall is certainly one of the busiest places in this area."

According to Thomason, the store will carry Bibles, books, cards, music, records, musical instruments and gifts. The merchandise carried by these stores includes a selected inventory designed to help people with daily problems, help them grow, help them enjoy a quality way of life, and help them as they help others find a better way of life.

Thomason also pointed out that although Lifeway stores are for the general public, the merchandise is unapologetically Christian. He emphasized there is no effort to diminish the mission of the Baptist Book Stores. However, it is an effort to reach more people with the Christian message through merchandising.

"We are very pleased with the success of Lifeway," said Thomason. "The response has been good. Several letters from across the United States have come to us asking that a Lifeway be put in certain cities. We are anxious to see what the response in Raleigh will be."

Bill Graham, area manager for the Eastern Stores Department, said he believes the Raleigh store will definitely attract people, old and young alike.

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"Crabtree Valley Mall is within a short driving distance of approximately 400,000 people," stated Graham. "This figure includes over 40,000 college students presently enrolled in several schools in the immediate area.

"The many churches, colleges and universities in this area are evidence that the people here are a concerned and caring people. This is a good place for Lifeway," he concluded.

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BSSB Names Consultant
To Work with Missions

1/15/73

NASHVILLE (BP)--Thurman W. Allred, former director of missions for North Carolina's Cabarrus Baptist Association, has been named pastoral ministries consultant in the church administration department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

His work will relate primarily to the nearly 1,200 associations in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Allred will be involved in providing information about the program resources of the Sunday School Board to superintendents of missions throughout the convention," stated Howard Foshee, secretary of the church administration department.

"This information will in turn help the superintendents in their consulting with pastors. Allred will serve in the church ministries section of the church administration department under the direction of Ernest Mosley, section supervisor," Foshee said.

Mosley pointed out that superintendents of missions frequently have expressed concern about lack of information regarding some of the board's projects and products. "As a result," he said, "they can't be as helpful to the pastor concerning these areas as they desire to be. We feel that Allred's prior seven-year experience as a director of missions will qualify him to help the board correct this problem."

Mosely also pointed out that Allred's responsibilities will not overlap with other assignments concerning associational administration or training of associational workers which are the responsibilities of appropriate departments of the SBC Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board.

"This new position was assigned to the church ministries section," explained Mosley, "because the ultimate concern of our section is to help the pastor be as effective in pastoral work as possible. Our work with superintendents of missions is an attempt to help them aid the pastor more than ever before. The superintendent of missions is the closest denominational worker to the vast majority of pastors; therefore he is in the best position to be most helpful."

A native of North Carolina, Allred is a graduate of Gardner-Webb College Boiling Springs, N.C.; Wake Forest University, Winston Salem, N.C.; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Since 1951, he has been pastor of several churches in North Carolina including: Clear Creek Baptist Church, Marion; Cypress Baptist Church, Spring Hope; First Baptist of New London; and Rocky Hock Baptist Church, Edenton. He also served as pastor of Antioch Baptist Church, Blacksburg, S.C.

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Home Mission Board Names 26
Missionaries, New Town Consultant

1/15/73

ATLANTA (BP)--A national consultant in "new town" planning, James Hamblen of Columbia, Md., was among 26 missionaries and missionary associates appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during a board of directors meeting here.

Since 1968, Hamblen has been pastor in Columbia, Md., one of 127 "new towns" throughout the nation. A "new town" is a city, planned from its very beginning to be self-supportive--

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providing the full range of resources and services including social, spiritual, industrial and educational.

As "new town" consultant, Hamblen will represent the board as a member of the inter-religious New Communities Coalition of the Joint Strategy and Action Committee (JSAC). He will also be working to provide data concerning relationships with the developers of new towns with other religious groups, alternatives for congregational development and potential forms of ministry in new towns.

Hamblen, a native of Fort Worth, is a graduate of the University of Texas, Austin, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He is a former pastor of several Texas churches. He and his wife, Beverly, are missionary associates jointly supported by the board and the Baptist Convention of Maryland.

Ten other full missionary appointments were made in addition to two promotions and 12 other missionary associate appointments. They join a missionary force of more than 2,200 working throughout the nation, Puerto Rico and Panama.

Hollis and Eunice Bryant of Calhoun County, Miss., were appointed as missionaries under the joint support of both the Division of Associational Services and the department of church extension of the board and the Alaska Baptist Convention.

Bryant will serve half-time as superintendent of missions and half-time as director of church extension in the Chugach Baptist Association. A graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., he received a masters from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and did additional study at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and Southwestern Seminary.

Jimmie and Mary Burton, appointed by the department of church extension and the Colorado Baptist General Convention are serving in Mancos, Colo., where he is pastor of the First Baptist Church. A Streetman, Tex., native he is a graduate of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Tex., and Southwestern Seminary with additional studies at East Texas State University, Commerce, and University of Colorado, Boulder. Mrs. Burton also attended East Texas Baptist College.

Supported by the SBC Home Mission Board department of church extension and the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, Floyd and Jean Kendall will serve in Capitan, N.M., where he is pastor of the First Baptist Church. Kendall, a Wagoner, Okla., native, graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and Southwestern Seminary. A Missouri native, Mrs. Kendall is a nursing graduate of Arizona State University, Tempe, and attended Southwestern Seminary.

Mrs. Helen Leftwich, whose husband Leonard is superintendent of missions in Effingham, Ill., was appointed by the Division of Associational Services and the Illinois Baptist State Association. Mrs. Leftwich, a San Angelo, Tex., native, is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex.

Linda Dale Ogburn, appointed by the board's department of Christian social ministries and the Baptist General Association of Virginia, is director of the Baptist Center in Alexandria, Va. A native of Charleston S.C., she completed a nursing degree at Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston and received a masters degree in social work from Southwestern Seminary.

Pastoral missionary Larry Thomas and his wife Gayle are working in Kahala ministries in Kamuela, Hawaii. They are appointed by the board's department of church extension and Hawaii Baptist Convention. Both are graduates of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. Thomas, a Jasper, Tex. native, also graduated from Baylor University, Waco, Tex., while his wife a Lorenzo, Tex. native, graduated from California Baptist College, Riverside, Calif.

Promoted from missionary associate to full missionary status, Samuel and Lola Simpson, native of Jamaica, West Indies, are serving in the Metro New York Association, Bronx, N.Y., where he is pastor-director of the Bronx Baptist Church. He is a graduate of Northeastern Bible College, Essex Falls, N.J., and attended Biblical Theological and Union Seminaries in New York.

Appointed as missionary associates were John Campbell, Louisville; Jim Fugate, Huntington, W. Va.; Richard and Dorothy Johnson, Fredericksburg, Va.; Richard and Anne Kirgan, Toledo Bend, Tex.; Cornel and Juliana Pascu, New York City; Michael and Loretta Rector, Columbus, Ohio; and Manuel and Emma Salinas, Ulysses, Kan.