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**McCullough Sees "3rd Board"  
For Involving Laymen**

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--The church's greatest need today is to reform its forces and equip and motivate its troops to battle, a Southern Baptist lay leader told a home missions oriented group here.

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission, suggested a plan involving lay ministers and the possible formation of a "third mission board" for getting the work done.

Keynoting the Home Missions Conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, McCullough used Jesus as his example in identifying the proper role of pastors today.

Jesus didn't try to go throughout the world personally to present the gospel, but concentrated on training and feeding the sheep whom he sent out to lead other sheep into the fold, McCullough said.

The Baptist leader, who recruited home missionaries for 12 years before joining the Commission almost two years ago, encouraged Southern Baptist pastors to share their work "among the twentieth century apostles that the world will know every Christian cares with the heart of his Master."

Identifying himself as part of a benevolent, concerned, caring bureaucracy, McCullough described his job as slashing a path of concern through the tangled jungle of man's need so a lay person can get to work.

"The lay minister must do what no hired apostle can do: provide the human validation, that telling touch that is the church's reach beyond its bureaucracy."

McCullough called the recent record of lay minister involvement the great omission of the modern church.

"In all too many instances, we have permitted the layman to get a warped view of the real purpose of God's church."

The rod used to measure the work of the church is not what can be seen and counted, said McCullough, who labeled the effort "a set of warped priorities and twisted aspirations built on material success."

"The scandal of the twentieth century church is its failure to mobilize the lay minister for evangelism in a world so deeply lost." The national lay leader offered a four-step plan for mobilizing the laymen to help reform the church under the leadership of an enabling pastor.

Begin by getting the lay minister involved in an organized short-term ministry project outside his normal environment, possibly outside the immediate community, and help him discover his hidden gifts, McCullough suggested.

Then, using a reinforcing group, help the layman translate this discovery into continuing participation in ministry projects closer to home, he said.

McCullough suggested a coordinated, church-wide system for making mission assignments and periodic opportunities for the laymen to share their experiences with the larger church fellowship.

McCullough said the "third mission board" he proposed could serve as a coordinating agency in organizing and stimulating participation in home town mission projects.

"It could be a kind of a clearinghouse, an idea factory, a development center for a systems approach to missionary involvement among lay ministers.

"I'm not suggesting a new board. But the Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union organizations should fill this gap in a local church through the implementation of an aggressive mission action program."

And when that happens, the reformation of the church could be the most exciting happening of the century, McCullough predicted.

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'Odd Duck' on a Big Island

8/8/73

By Elaine Selcraig Furlow

When Richboro Baptist Church on New York's Staten Island wanted to install a baptistry, members encountered a skeptical building inspector.

"You going to put two people in there at the same time?" he asked. "Then that classifies it as a swimming pool."

He was all set to make the church install foot baths, showers and lockers until former pastor Lewis Lowe convinced him nobody would be swimming in the baptistry.

"That sort of thing indicates people don't really know who we are," says Al Oliver, currently pastor at Richboro. "Some of them are curious...we can always attract a big crowd for a baptism service because they've never seen that sort of thing before."

Richboro's home, Staten Island, hugs the New Jersey coastline, linked only by boat and by bridge to its New York City neighbors. Bulldozers are chewing up the last of the island's undeveloped land, but it's still a big place; 57 square miles, 300,000 people.

And one Southern Baptist church: Richboro.

"To be a Southern Baptist on Staten Island is definitely to be in the minority--an odd duck," says Oliver.

Until last year, the Richboro church depended for its strength on military personnel, some from the Coast Guard complex on Governor's Island, and some from the Army Chaplain's School, across the Verrazano Bridge in Brooklyn.

But when Oliver came last June, the church shifted its emphasis.

"We're tickled pink to have the military people," Oliver says. "They're usually well-trained and eager to be involved. But we have to remember we're living in a community that needs us."

Church members looked hard at their community, then rolled up their sleeves and decided to meet a few of the needs.

Nearby Willowbrook State School has been the brunt of negative publicity and numerous investigations on the living conditions for its retarded children. So Willowbrook officials were delighted when the church offered to start Sunday School classes. Parents of the retarded children gave their okays; members began picking up about 15 children each week for Sunday School.

The teachers are Willowbrook employees who work with the same children during the week, and already know their problems.

The class of 7-9 year olds can read and write a little, and understand a simple Bible story. With the more severely retarded teenage group, "we mainly just celebrate," a member explains,

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helping the boys clap to "Deep and Wide." "They really love music--that's our one way to communicate with them and tell them how glad we are to have them here."

If all goes well, the church hopes to start Saturday recreation and a "friend-to-patient" program. A church family would "adopt" one child, inviting him to their home, to movies, parks or whatever.

Richboro also sponsors a satellite psychiatric clinic, in cooperation with the South Beach Psychiatric Service. A team (psychiatrist, psychologist, three psychiatric workers and one trainee) comes to the church on Wednesdays and talks to people with problems (sometimes referred by church members). The problems range from depression about boring, dead-end jobs, to teenage insecurity.

"I augment the team and they augment me," Oliver says. "If they talk to somebody with a lot of problems about religion, they may refer him to me. If I encounter a person with problems I can't handle, I ask the team to help me." The team meets monthly with Oliver and a few church members to talk over specific psychological subjects such as suicide, and ways to help.

The church has also taken a tenuous foothold in the community through its youth activities--sponsoring a Cub Scout pack and offering one of the few free Bible schools on the island (other denominations charge). Oliver works with students at Wagner College and Community College, and the church is helping a Biafran college student whose funds from home were cut off.

Last fall the church invited its "VBS alums" to a Saturday drama workshop. Fifteen kids (12 of them from families outside the church) showed up. Charlotte Ware and Jane King led a two-hour session each Saturday for four months, teaching the basics of drama and self-expression.

To show off their skills, the budding playwrights (ages 7-11) put three Bible stories in their own words and produced dramas in contemporary settings. The parable of the lost sheep became the story of a daydreaming boy on a school field trip; the prodigal son was updated so he left home for the "piano houses" around Times Square.

Response to such programs has been encouraging, but New Yorkers don't always understand what Baptists are up to.

When members were recruiting neighborhood kids for VBS, several parents called the police to complain their children were being "kidnapped." No one was arrested, but the VBS drive stopped.

Most of the people on Staten Island are Italians. Conservative Roman Catholic Italians. So Richboro started a Bible study class in Italian. Teacher Ralph Manzi was born in Italy, came to New York and later became a Christian. He attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, then returned to New York to work with street gangs and kids in Harlem. He conducts the Bible study class once a week, and boasts eight "regulars."

Richboro averages 50-60 in Sunday School, but they're running out of room. Weston Ware teaches his adult class from the green couch in the parsonage living room, a block from the church building. He's occasionally interrupted by noise from the basement, where the young girls' class meets.

The church needs more room, but land is expensive. A 1 1/2 acre lot would cost about \$100,000. The mere thought of selling the present building and buying land staggers some, especially since the church's checking account stays in the hundreds.

"The building symbolizes stability and survival," Oliver says. "It's very easy for a small church like ours to be swallowed. But is survival all we're asking for, or should we ask for more?"

Oliver observes that in other NYC boroughs, "You know there's at least one other Baptist church you can lean on. But here, we're the only one. We put our emotional lives on the line any time we start a project."