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Florida Woman
Will Head WMU

DALLAS (BP)--Miss Carolyn Weatherford of Jacksonville, Fla., has been elected executive secretary of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Miss Weatherford, currently director of Woman's Missionary Union of the Florida Baptist Convention, will step into the top office of the Southern Baptist Convention auxiliary Oct. 1. She will succeed Miss Alma Hunt, who will retire Oct. 5 after 26 years in the position.

The WMU Executive Board elected Miss Weatherford to head the 1,100,000-member auxiliary in Dallas prior to the WMU national annual meeting and the Southern Baptist Convention. She was introduced formally during the WMU meeting.

Miss Weatherford will head WMU's publishing, field services and program design work, which is based in Birmingham, Ala.

Born in Mississippi, she was reared in Frostproof, Fla. After graduating from Florida State University in 1951, she served as a high school librarian in Florida schools. While a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, she served as Baptist Student Union director and librarian at what was then Southern Baptist Hospital's Mather School of Nursing.

She began WMU work with the Alabama state WMU office in 1958, serving until 1960 as Young Woman's Auxiliary director. She directed Girls' Auxiliary work for Florida Baptists during 1961-63, then returned to Alabama WMU as promotion division director until 1967.

Since 1967 she has headed Woman's Missionary Union for Florida Baptists. She writes regularly for WMU magazines and has contributed to other Baptist publications. She has led conferences in WMU work at Southern Baptists' two national conference centers.

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Briscoe, Criswell Cite
Political Abuses

6/10/74

DALLAS (BP)--Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe told 8,000 persons attending the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference here that government breaks down "when the faith and support of the people has been jeopardized by the questionable conduct of some in public office."

Without mentioning Watergate or any other scandal in government by name, Briscoe declared when government departs from the principles of justice, equality and morality "it ceases to serve the people and, as we have seen, the public response is strong."

Ministers play a vital, dominant role in building a state and nation that is "dedicated to the best interests of all the people," he said at the conference's opening session.

Briscoe was one of four speakers addressing what programmers of the pastors' conference billed as a "Sunday night spectacular."

A few minutes later, former SBC president W. A. Criswell, speaking on "The Old Time Religion," picked up where Briscoe left off.

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Pleading for men with changed hearts and changed lives because of allegiance to Christ, Criswell, pastor of the 18,000-member First Baptist Church of the host city, asked rhetorically about events in the lives of four prominent Americans.

"What if Spiro Agnew, instead of accepting bribes under the table and kickbacks from governmental contractors had taken it to God and asked God in prayer what he should do?

"I think about our President of the United States.

"What if, instead of using language that blasphemes the name of the Lord, and instead of chicanery that undermines and undercuts his opponents and his political enemies, what if he had read in God's book, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,' or what if he had read there, 'Pray for your enemies and for those who despitefully use you?'" Criswell continued.

"I think of one of the greatest governors Texas ever had and the most popular, a man who 'bid fair' maybe to become the President of the United States; I mean John Connally.

"Instead of being involved in those corporate financial maneuvers, what if our former governor and treasurer of the United States had taken it to God and asked God about it in prayer?

"I think of Senator Ted Kennedy, scion of that family. What if instead of abandonment, he had taken his heart and life to Christ and asked God to bless him?

"What the world needs is changed men who make for a new culture and a new society."

A California preacher urged fellow ministers to evangelize more through the pulpit, literature and lay involvement.

Harold L. Fickett Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Van Nuys, Calif., criticized pastors who conceive of themselves as pastor-teachers.

"This very nomenclature is such a sweet morsel to them that they love to roll their tongues as they refer to themselves. According to them, they are not responsible for an evangelistic thrust in their preaching."

In an appeal for more evangelizing through literature, Fickett said Southern Baptists have been slow. He held up as a model of speed Jehovah's Witnesses whom he claimed were producing 500 magazines a minute "with which to promote and foster doctrine that comes from the pit of hell itself."

Fickett placed lay involvement second only to the pulpit as a method of evangelization.

Henry Brandt, president of the Christian Leadership Training Foundation, Flint, Mich., advised pastors to look positively at having to live in the spotlight.

It provides a pastor an opportunity to demonstrate patience and a happy home life under close scrutiny of his congregation, Brandt explained.

"Give leadership as a pastor to bringing a proper balance in your life: Don't neglect your wife," he said. "Talk to your men about how they're too busy to give enough attention to their wives."

In other remarks, Briscoe said that "when power is abused, and when the public trust is abused, people soon lose their faith and confidence in their government.

"As people, we expect our representatives in government to do right.

"We may disagree on any number of issues or ideas but government does not break down over disagreements concerning policy," the Texas governor added.

"The overwhelming majority of the American people still expect, and demand, honest, forthright, honorable behavior in government. We should not, must not settle for less."

Briscoe said he believes in "our system of government, (which) while not perfect, is the best ever devised by man to govern himself."

He was "very optimistic" for the future. For one reason, "the youth of today is by far the finest and best in the history of our country.

"I'm optimistic, too, for I have the feeling from... visiting with people in every walk of life, that today we do have that Christian spirit spreading throughout this state and nation," Briscoe said.

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Black Preacher Urges Quality Education

6/10/74

DALLAS (BP)--A black Baptist preacher called on Christian people here to take a stand for equal, quality education for every child in America.

Gardner C. Taylor, pastor of Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, asked Southern Baptist women attending the opening session of the annual meeting of Woman's Missionary Union to face up to the fact that the neighborhood concept in education has often been a mask for preserving privilege and deprivation based on race.

In a major address to the Southern Baptist auxiliary at Dallas Convention Center, Taylor chastened Christians for failure to recognize needs of people.

"The church I know best has carried on a daily breakfast program for 290 children in a teeming area of Brooklyn. However, a non-Christian group had the compassion to see the need first."

Taylor said his congregation picked up the program when the non-Christian group couldn't sustain it.

Exhorting the women to listen to their world, Taylor said they faced twin dangers of failing to hear the cries of need or hearing only what some people have to say against their faith.

"We brush aside whatever may have been done by Christian people and echo only angry comment. We parrot that cry, forgetting that there were Christians in this country who resisted slavery and oppression."

More than 8,000 Baptists at the session were challenged to "listen to their world" at the two-day meeting.

The director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Convention reminded the women that there was no room in their lives for pettiness and prejudice if they planned to evangelize.

Speaking on "Sounds of Action in Evangelism," C.B. Hogue of Atlanta said there must be great cleansing if spiritual awakening is to occur.

"There is no room for pettiness, selfishness, estrangements, prejudices and bitterness in the demonstrative lives of Christians who want to share the good news for the regeneration of souls," declared Hogue, director of the evangelism division of the Home Mission Board.

Hogue told the women they were living at a time of moral and spiritual decay in homes, a decline of standards of decency in public and private life and a spirit of lawlessness.

"All this may be because the church has floundered in mediocrity and has allowed complacency to become the norm," Hogue surmised.

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"We are so preoccupied with material things that our supreme God seems to be technology and sex. We are so involved looking for our final security on earth that how we get there makes little difference--except that we get there."

Hogue urged the women to hear the sounds of concern and involvement and to recognize that the responsibility to evangelize was given to all Christians.

The evangelism director shared the podium with Mrs. James Fancher, a Jackson, Miss., columnist, and Porter Routh of Nashville, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Routh paid tribute to Miss Alma Hunt of Birmingham, retiring executive secretary of WMU.

During Miss Hunt's 26 years as chief administrative officer of the Southern Baptist women's auxiliary, Southern Baptist churches gave almost \$80 million to home missions and \$260 million to foreign missions through special offerings, Routh recalled.

Twenty-two newly-appointed foreign missionaries were commissioned for overseas service during the program.

"You have listened to your world," said Baker J. Cauthen, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, in his challenge to the new missionaries,

He cited the hungry children in the famine-stricken area of Africa as one need that missionaries are responding to.

Jesse C. Fletcher, director of the Foreign Mission Board's mission support division, told the women that the 22 missionaries represent over 200 who have been added to the overseas staff since the last annual WMU meeting.

"They represent 82 young college graduates gathered this night at Meredith College, Raleigh, N. C., in the missionary journeyman training program," Fletcher said.

He also said the 22 were representing more than 60 to be appointed by the board in July.

"You're their support," he told the women, citing understanding as "the real core support of Southern Baptist missionaries."

He said because the appointees had listened, "they heard God's call and they said yes."

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America Grasping for a
Future Says Lindaman

6/10/74

DALLAS (BP)--America is grasping for a future for reasons entirely apart from Watergate, a college president told the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association at the Baker Hotel here.

"Our country has lost its myth... its hope... its image... its future. It is grasping for a future," said Edward B. Lindaman, president of non-denominational Whitworth College in Spokane, Wash.

Describing himself as a "futurist," Lindaman said Christians should be the nation's best futurists because that is the message of the gospel.

Lindaman, a Presbyterian, noted he believes the "biblical message is that God is ever new."

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"If God is wholly ever new, as His grace is experienced through Christ... then we must cease to refer to the future as an elongation of the worst of the past or an extrapolation of the past. We must begin to refer to it as a new future with truly novel possibilities.

"I lose patience with Christians who do not see that God works in the future," Lindaman said. "The future begins now. The future IS now.

"Hope is believing in the future and faith is dancing to it."

In an interview following his address, Lindaman amplified on America's lack of faith in the future.

"I prefer to use the word 'myth'," Lindaman said. "A myth is how we understand things. We can't understand nature, but we have myths about it. Myths express something. Like my ring. It is a myth about the love I feel deep down. My love for my wife."

America's national myths have been things like "Go West, Young Man" or Industrialize, Produce Things, " or "Freedom and Independence."

"What is our myth today? We haven't decided on that yet," he said.

Asked if lack of credibility in Washington has caused the lack of myth, Lindaman replied: "I am talking at an entirely different level. I think that (the Watergate crisis) is a manifestation of our lack of future image."

He said America had a national goal in the 50s, after Sputnik was sent into space.

Then it was: "Wow! We've got to catch up with the Russians. In the 60s, we saw a lot of poor people in the cities and tried to do something for them," he added.

Lindaman said he hopes the national myth of the future will be "when we make a declaration of interdependence with our fellowman and with nature."

"I see it beginning to show up here and there. There are little chinks in the armor; cracks in the wall where the sun can come in," he said.

"The young people are leading the way... riding bicycles... eating simple food... recycling old houses. We simply can't continue the way we have been..." he said.

Lindaman criticized "average, typical Christians," for "limiting ourselves, limiting the future.

"We are afraid to fail. If we do nothing except that at which we can succeed, we will never do anything important."

Dr. Violet Sturgeon, a psychiatrist from Norman, Okla., giving a theme meditation, discussed love with the religious educators.

Weaving her remarks around First Corinthians, 13th chapter, she commented: "These are the times that try men's souls. The real purpose is to bring us to our knees. And the triteness of the statement shows that there have been times like these before."

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Grady Cothen Projects
"People-Centered" Approach

6/10/74

DALLAS (BP)--A people-centered approach to the administration, organization and program of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board was promised here by Grady Cothen.

Cothen, who will assume the presidency of the agency Feb. 1, addressed the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association in the Baker Hotel here.

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The religious educators were among four Baptist related groups meeting in advance of the 117th Southern Baptist Convention.

"It is a people-centered approach," he said. "But the emphasis will be on people related to God. That's the way people find their meaning in life.

"If there is somebody from one of the other agencies expecting me to say something about program assignment, forget it," the former president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary said.

"Let's forget the tensions of program statements. We (the Sunday School Board) will try to live by ours. If you fudge a little, I'll not lose any sleep over it. If we fudge a little, I hope you won't either."

Cothen spelled out his program this way: "I'm interested in seeing the Sunday School Board--people, programs and materials--help to grow the Saints of God. I'm interested in helping people find out who they are, why they are, where they are."

Cothen prefaced his remarks about the direction in which the Sunday School Board will take with some general remarks about the "temper of the times in which we live.

"One cannot live in this world without being sensitive to a sense of impending disaster. Never have so many been indicted so many times for so many crimes.

"You cannot watch without the sensation that everything is coming unglued, proved by whatever indices you use," he said.

Cothen's "straws in the wind" included an "unscientific survey" he has taken as he traveled across the United States.

"You find that in every major city there is a scandal of major proportions going on at a high level. The newspapers talk of malfeasance in office. They name names and talk of impeachment. Is there any wonder the people are disillusioned, disappointed?"

"I am interested in the Sunday School Board having to do with the quality of the people in our churches and the quality of life.

"I am interested that we be involved in the lifestyle, the choices, the tensions and the distresses of people. What can we do to bring to bear on the human dilemma the Gospel of Jesus Christ?"

In talking about program, Cothen added: "We probably will make emphasis on people and maybe not as much on program. We will make emphasis on people and maybe not as much on organization.

"I know organization and program are important. But the objective, the purpose, the hope and the end is to help God do in the human life what he has begun in the human experience."