

**--- FEATURES**
produced by Baptist PressSBC Executive Committee
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Nashville, Tennessee 37219
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July 7, 1975

75-101

**Inflation and Recession:
One-Two Punch for the Poor**By Tim Nicholas
For Baptist Press

The poor have taken the blows of inflation on the chin, and the unemployment of the recession in the solar plexis.

Poverty programs have been cut back. Regulations have tightened. Red tape has become ensnarled. Most of all, the job market for the poor and uneducated, sparse at best, has been drying up.

Bare living expenses, coupled with minimum fixed incomes, have made soap-opera dramas a reality in many poverty-stricken ghettos.

Fifty Baptist centers across the nation, located mostly in pockets of need where unemployment and inflation are worst, are surrounded by such dramas. Their personnel, including many Christian social ministry missionaries of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, face an awesome task.

For example, Larry Gardner, director of the Cincinnati Baptist Center in Ohio, reports economic conditions have caused a cut in churches' gifts to the center's food pantry.

"But they are saving us the discount coupons for items they have no use for," added Gardner. "This does help."

Centers, depending on volunteers from Baptist churches to carry on many of their programs, are getting varied responses toward their pleas for help.

Cincinnati has had no problems, but volunteers to Cass Park Baptist Center in Detroit, directed by Floyd Emmerling, are afraid to come into the inner-city to work.

"The demands on our services have increased, but help hasn't increased in proportion," said Ken Schmidt of Telegraph Community Center, Oakland, Calif. "A year ago, when I first came to Telegraph Center, we were running approximately 25 families a week. Now we're averaging 35 to 50 families requesting help each week.

"Just about every counseling session I'm involved in deals with the economy," he said.

Frank Thomas, who directs the Baptist Neighborhood Center in Albuquerque, N.M., believes inflation hurts his neighborhood's people more than the recession.

"You consider that Spanish-speaking people put most of their money into beans and consider that in the last year beans have gone up from 25¢ to about 90¢ a bag," said Thomas. "Nowadays, many of the women we work with eat no meat at all."

Utility bills are among the poor's major complaints. "Our gas company is extremely unsympathetic," said Thomas. "I know of a family with two small children whose gas was cut off when the temperature was zero."

"Our food spending has steadily risen," adds Harry Woodall, who directs a center in Hot Springs, Ark., "and 1973-74 doubled what we spent in 1972-73."

Food situations are bad, but so is housing. "You'll pay \$35-40 a week in this town for a house to rent I wouldn't put a dog in," Woodall said.

"We never thought we'd be in this type of ministry," comments Antoinette Anderson of an aggressive food distribution program to the poor operated by Baptist Friendship House, Newport News, Va. "January a year ago we had 17 people ask for food. This January we gave 126 people food and referred 75 to other agencies. We gave out one ton of food in one three-week period."

Along with food and clothes, sold once a week in the Friendship House basement at bargain prices, goes a scripture portion and the statement that the giving is done in Jesus' name.

"If it weren't for this place, my kids couldn't even go to school," commented one woman whose 10 children got all their school clothes from Friendship House.

Her situation is typical of the inflation crunch felt by hundreds who come by Baptist centers.

Out of \$329 per month in welfare income, she pays \$105 per month in rent. Her electric bill was \$52 in January. Every three months she pays \$25 each for water and sanitation service.

Each month she pays \$144 for \$310 worth of food stamps. But food stamps can't be used for non-food items such as washing powders, bandaids or toothpaste.

Mildred McWhorter, who directs two centers in Houston, has a work program for people in the community who do maintenance and cleaning for the centers in return for what they need most--"like school supplies and blue jeans, but not money," said Miss McWhorter.

Much of the work program's "salary"--which pays about 100 people in each of the two centers--comes from major companies in the area.

Not only has the economy hurt people, it has also hurt the institutions and agencies trying to help them, such as the Baptist centers and rescue missions themselves.

Baptist Men's Mission in New Orleans, which ministers to down-and-outs on skid row, this year raised prices for a night's lodging, shower, supper and breakfast from \$1.50 to \$1.60.

"I'd rather not raise the charge again," said Director Ed Lilly. "But the mission itself has felt the pinch of inflation. Our utilities bill has jumped about 50 per cent since last June."

The mission employs about 30 men in its rehabilitation program and pays incidental salaries to those who work in maintenance, food services and other areas of the operation.

Manny De la Rosa, an unemployed Mexican-American and former director of an urban coalition in El Paso, Tex., points to the inadequate support of the El Paso Baptist Mission Center and argues that the church really doesn't care about the poor.

While praising the work done by the director Willie Mae Giles, with minimal resources, De la Rosa points out that "there is a very conspicuous absence, a lack of visibility by the Baptist churches, except for Willie Mae.

"They don't give her any money to run a program. They put a beautiful building there, but from what I've seen, they've given it a very small budget and staff. They don't give her any money to run a program."

Vaughn Manning, El Paso Baptist Association's missions director, says the association, which has 37 churches, only 15,000 Baptists and a number of ministries to finance, is committed to continue a ministry to South El Paso in the Mexican-American neighborhood.

But he admits they have no money to add staff to the 19,000 square-foot mission center. Besides Willie Mae, the center employs only two pre-school teachers.

"It would take eight people to operate it properly. We don't have eight people or the money to pay for them," he says.

It's a thorny problem everywhere--from Telegraph Hill in San Francisco to Newport News, Va.--as financially-beleaguered Baptist centers try to help the financially-devastated poor. (BP)



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Operatic Tenor Dean Wilder
To Join William Jewell

LIBERTY, Mo. (BP)--Dean Wilder, a noted operatic tenor, will join the faculty of William Jewell College, a Baptist school here, in September as director of vocal instruction.

Wilder, who has sung with operatic bass-baritone Robert Hale in over 1,000 duet recitals (including many Baptist church and denominational gatherings), has professional operatic experience with the New York City Opera Company and the Goldovsky Opera Theatre. He has sung throughout the United States and all over the world.

Hale and Wilder performed at the Church Music Conference prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June in Miami Beach and have previously sung at SBC annual sessions.

Wilder holds a bachelor of arts degree in voice from Cascade College, Portland, Ore., and a master's degree in music from the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston. He has studied at several other schools.

Since 1972, he has served as associate professor of voice and chairman of the department of voice at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, N. J. Before that he was a visiting lecturer at Boston University and fulltime member of the voice faculty at New England Conservatory of Music. He has also served as an artist-in-residence at both Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho, and Eastern Nazarene College, Quincy, Mass.

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Bonding Company Settles
For Children's Home Loss

Baptist Press
7/7/75

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--The Illinois Baptist State Association has received checks totaling \$87,325.46 from the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company, as partial reimbursement for embezzlement of funds at the Baptist Children's Home in Carmi.

An extensive investigation of the Children's Home finances has taken place since August 31, 1974, when James E. Paynter, the home's business manager, disappeared.

Paynter, who reportedly is living in another state, has since been indicted on two counts by the White County grand jury. The first indictment was for converting a \$500 check intended for the children's home to his own use. The second indictment was for transporting \$36,721 across state lines which he deposited in an Evansville, Ind., bank. Paynter is now free on \$5,000 bond after pleading not guilty to a charge of theft.

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Renewal Specialists Urge
Flexibility Among Churchmen

Baptist Press
7/7/75

MEMPHIS (BP)--Southern Baptist vocational renewal specialists called here for more flexibility among church leaders, particularly more shared leadership among the clergy and laity.

The two needs were among those isolated at a two-day meeting of 20 vocational renewalists from seven states, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission.

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The renewal specialists also called for a greater emphasis upon personal renewal by the laity as opposed to church renewal.

Among the vocational renewalists attending the meeting were retreat center directors, renewal conference speakers, and other renewal specialists, who are independent of the Southern Baptist organizational structure, yet who are members of Southern Baptist churches and committed to the denomination.

The meeting was arranged so Southern Baptist renewal leaders and independent renewal specialists could report on the progress of their work and explore common areas of need.

David Haney, director of lay renewal, and Glendon McCullough, executive director, both of the Brotherhood Commission, and Reid Hardin, director of renewal evangelism for the Home Mission Board, addressed the group.

Haney told the vocational renewalists the Southern Baptist denominational renewal emphasis is upon a deeper spiritual life, commitment, fellowship, evangelism and ministry.

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Missouri Convention
Name's Interim Editor

Baptist Press
7/7/75

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Miss Elene Stone has been designated interim editor of the Word and Way, official publication of the Missouri Baptist Convention, until a successor to W. Ross Edwards is elected and begins work.

Edwards retired July 1 after eight years as the Word and Way editor. Before joining the Word and Way in Nov., 1967, he had spent 40 years in the ministry, the last 20 as pastor of Swope Park Baptist Church, Kansas City. He is a former Missouri Convention president.

Miss Stone, a native of Jackson, Mo., has been on the Word and Way staff for 27 years--20 years of that time as assistant to Editors H. H. McGinty and Edwards.

Rheubin South, the Missouri Convention's executive director, said she will continue as interim editor until Edwards' successor begins work.

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Lackey Named Consultant
For Broadman Press

Baptist Press
7/7/75

NASHVILLE (BP)--James V. Lackey, who has been president of his own consulting firm for the past two years, has been named a sales consultant for Broadman Press, publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board.

Lackey, former executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, will serve Broadman accounts in Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas and Virginia.

A native Oklahoman, he served on the Stewardship Commission staff, 1962-73. For nine years before joining the Stewardship Commission, he served as superintendent of young people's work for the Sunday School Board.

He earned a bachelor of arts degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and master and doctor of religious education degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Lackey has written numerous articles, brochures, and tracts for denominational use throughout his career and has been a member of denominational committees at both the local and national levels.

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(BP) Photo will be sent to state Baptist papers.

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