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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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75-142

**House Clears Food Aid,
International Development**

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate a bill authorizing \$2.9 billion over the next two years for food assistance, agricultural development, population planning, and disaster relief to the world's poorest nations.

In passing the measure, the House for the first time separated humanitarian aspects of foreign aid from military assistance. In the past, foreign aid bills have included both forms of aid, including provisions that most food assistance go to nations where the United States has strong military interests.

The bill, called the International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1975, states that at least 70 percent of U. S. food aid must go to nations "most seriously affected" by food shortages and that not more than 30 percent may be used for political purposes abroad.

In addition, the food aid section of the measure sets for the first time a minimum distribution of 1.5 million tons of grain annually through the Food for Peace Program

Passed by a vote of 244-155, the measure authorizes nations owing money to the U. S. for past food aid to use those funds for a variety of agricultural and rural development programs. Some \$200 million in development funds is earmarked specifically for the \$1.25 billion International Agricultural Development Fund proposed at last year's World Food Conference in Rome.

The population planning provision of the bill calls for spending \$5.3 million over the next two years, while \$50 million is targeted for disaster relief.

One important amendment to the bill, designed to forbid aid to countries which engage in a consistent pattern of serious violations of human rights, was passed during floor debate.

The amendment, proposed by Rep. Thomas R. Harkin (D-Iowa) and passed by a 238-164 margin, does allow the President discretion to send aid to such nations if the funds go directly to needy people instead of being administered through repressive governments.

-30-

European Baptist Body to
Launch Seminary ExtensionBaptist Press
9/11/75

ASCHAFFENBURG, West Germany (BP)--The European Baptist Convention (EBC), a body of English-language Baptist churches in eight European countries, will launch a center here in October to teach courses of the Southern Baptist Convention's Seminary Extension Department.

The center grew out of an earlier vote by the EBC's executive committee to sponsor a Seminary Extension program because of "a need for biblical training, primarily for service men and women overseas," said John W. Merritt of Heidelberg, the EBC's executive secretary. "Some men intend to prepare for the ministry," Merritt added.

Charles H. Truitt, pastor of Aschaffenburg Baptist Church and director of the center, said he hopes at least 15 branch centers will be in operation by the early part of 1976. Merritt, in a letter to Raymond M. Rigdon, Seminary Extension Department director, said most of the pastors in the 40 some EBC churches meet Seminary Extension Department teaching requirements of a master's degree or above.

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Members of EBC churches come mostly from a Southern Baptist background and now serve either with American corporations or the military in Europe.

The Seminary Extension Department is operated in Nashville, Tenn., by the Southern Baptist Convention's six theological seminaries. It has three curriculum series--the basic series for persons with limited formal training, the college-level series, and the personal growth/development series primarily for continuing education for seminary-trained persons. The department offers diplomas in pastoral ministries and educational ministries.

-30-

Churches Urged to Consider
Economic Uncertainty

Baptist Press
9/11/75

ATLANTA (BP)--Citing the possibility of severe fluctuations in the national economy, the director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's loan division cautioned churches to anticipate inflation and reduced income as they set programs and salaries and consider building projects.

Reporting to the board's church loans committee on "the current economic situation and its influence on the churches," Robert H. Kilgore said economic indicators point to rising incomes for church members but also to galloping inflation that will erode their purchasing power and the value of the offering plate dollar.

He cautioned churches to avoid incurring large building debts at the expense of meeting growing program needs.

"An insecure economy may produce wide fluctuations in church income," he said. "Churches need to be slow to create large debt and other long-range fixed obligations."

The loans director predicted future changes in the national economic cycles--booms and recessions--may be "more frequent, severe and widespread."

He also said he foresees the possibility that churches may have to sign variable interest rate notes for building loans with the interest rate going up or down with economic factors, such as prime rate or some economic index.

Another loan possibility is longer term loans with short-term maturities to be paid in full at the end of the short term or renegotiated on current economics.

"For instance, a church may have to get a loan for 25 years but with a short-term maturity of 10 years," he explained. "At the end of 10 years, the note will be paid in full or renegotiated on current economics."

The Home Mission Board also may be forced to consider such policies, Kilgore said.

For the last several years the board has made loans totaling some \$10 million each year to churches for buildings, building sites and renovations.

Tight money policies by the government that increased interest rates and cut off local funding almost doubled requests for Home Mission Board loans in 1974-75. The loans division was forced to call six-month moratorium on processing new requests, and the interest rate on board loans increased from 8.5 to 9 per cent.

In July, the board's directors named a special committee of five businessmen to counsel the loans division and the directors on future policies of the division in view of the economic conditions.

Members of the committee are Harmon Born, Atlanta; Bob Thomasson, Lake Worth, Fla.; Steve Neely, Nashville; W. Roy McCollum Jr., Atlanta; and Jim Cantrell, Dallas.

-30-

Home Board Names Staffer;
25 Missionary Personnel

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist Home Mission Board directors, meeting here, elected a new staff member and appointed 25 missionaries and missionary associates.

Eleven student interns, who will serve as missionary associates as they complete their education, were among those appointed.

Arthur B. Rutledge, the board's executive director, reported to the executive committee that receipts from Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions continue to run about 5.5 percent ahead of the 1974 pace.

The receipts to date, he said, were \$8,114,550, almost equal the amount received throughout 1974. Rutledge said that if they continue at the same pace "chances are good the full goal of \$8.5 million will be reached and hopefully exceeded."

Rutledge added that the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program unified budget receipts are running some 8.4 percent ahead of the 1974 record.

Kenneth Brooks, a pastoral missionary serving El Portal Baptist Mission, El Portal and Yosemite, Calif., was named associate director of the department of missionary personnel, filling a vacancy existing since Don Rhymes resigned last spring to accept a pastorate in Hawaii.

A native of Las Cruces, N. Mex., Brooks was appointed a pastoral missionary to California in 1973. He previously had served as chaplain intern at Baptist Memorial Hospital, San Antonio, Tex., and as pastor of First Baptist Church, Ingram, Tex. He is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Missionaries appointed included the following: --Pearle Gardner, wife of the director of missions for Miami Valley Southwestern Baptist Association in Ohio. A native of Early Branch, S. C., Mrs. Gardner is a graduate of Winthrop College and a public school teacher.

--David and Sue Meacham of Big Bear City, Calif., where they will serve as pastoral missionaries under appointment of the board's department of church extension. Meacham, a native of Renton, Wash., is a graduate of San Diego State University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Meacham, originally from McLeansboro, Ill., is a graduate of the Mather School of Nursing.

--George J. Sheridan of Decatur, Ga., appointed director of interfaith witness efforts in the northeast. A native of Elizabeth, N. J., Sheridan is a graduate of Eastern Baptist College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was associate editor of the Christian Index, Georgia Baptist state paper, from 1970-72 and was founder in 1972 of the Common Cup, an interdenominational coffee house in Atlanta. For the last year, he has been an editorial assistant in the Home Mission Board's department of editorial services.

The status of Paul and Beatrice Vasquez of Mineral Wells, Tex., was changed from missionary associate to missionary. He is pastor of Mexican Baptist Mission in Mineral Wells and is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Missionary associates appointed included the following:

--Bobby and Rosemary Cox of Fort Worth, Tex., to work in youth and family services for Tarrant Baptist Association. Both are Texans and graduates of Hardin-Simmons University. He is from Knox City and she is a native of Dallas. He is a graduate of Southwestern Seminary and since 1970 has been director of chaplaincy and institutional ministries for Tarrant Baptist Association.

--Murphy and Lorna Lum of Fullerton, Calif., to work with First Chinese Baptist Church, Los Angeles. Lum is a graduate of the University of Houston, Talbot Theological Seminary and has a doctor of ministries degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. He has been serving First Chinese Church as education director since 1973. He is a native of Lexa, Ark.,

--Allen and Elizabeth Morris, San Francisco, to work with the American Indian Baptist Church, San Francisco, where Morris has been pastor since 1974. Morris is a native of Stroud, Okla., and attended Oklahoma Baptist University. Mrs. Morris is a native of Pawnee, Okla.,

--Francisco and Lucinda Quintana, of Grapevine, Tex., to work as Spanish pastor at First Mexican Mission, Grapevine. Both are native Texans. Quintana attended the University of Texas and has a diploma in theology from Southwestern Seminary. Since 1973, he has been pastor of First Mexican Mission, Grapevine.

--James and Rosemary Underwood of Artesia, N. Mex., to work as pastor of First Spanish Baptist Church, Artesia. Underwood is a native of El Paso, Tex., and attended New Mexico State University.

Student interns appointed by the department of Christian social ministries were Virginia Fay Downs of Shelby, N. C., and Cheryl Sorrels of Los Angeles, both students at Southern Seminary; Glen Moritz of Kansas City, Mo., a student at Southwestern Seminary; Kenneth Taylor of Kansas City, Mo., a student at Midwestern Seminary; and Mrs. Kenneth Taylor, a native of Cainsville, Mo.

Student interns appointed by the department of language missions were David and Hortencia Longoria of San Antonio, Tex., students at Mexican Baptist Bible Institute; Edgar and Maria Morale of San Antonio, also students at the Bible Institute; and Miguel and Amparo Olmedo of Pomona, Calif. Olmedo is a student at Golden Gate Seminary.

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J. Chester Durham
Dies in Kentucky

Baptist Press
9/11/75

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Memorial services for J. Chester Durham, assistant to the executive secretary of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, were held here September 10. He died two days earlier at his home, following a period of declining health.

Durham had been a staffer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention since 1942, when he joined the convention as director of Baptist student work. He was recognized for his expertise in student work across the Southern Baptist Convention. He served as state student director until he became assistant to the executive secretary in 1972.

He had previously served as student director at Murray State University, a school teacher and an executive with Swift and Company.

Survivors include his wife, Vera Wilborn Durham, a son, his mother and a sister.

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Seminaries Hold Key to SBC
Success Leavell Declares

Baptist Press
9/11/75

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--"We shall either reaffirm our commitment to evangelism and missions or consign our successors to mediocrity and obscurity, Landrum Pinson Leavell II, declared here during his inauguration as the seventh president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Our seminaries are in the heart and heat of the battle. In large measure our denominational future depends upon our product. What students are taught, or perhaps its what they have caught, during seminary days will be the deciding factor," he declared.

Leavell said three prime facets--doctrinal, denominational, and devotional--comprise the task set before us.

Doctrinally, Leavell said, some people fear the "accusation that 'we are guilty of indoctrination and not education.' The truth is," said Leavell, "all education ultimately is indoctrination into the belief or lack of belief and the lifestyle of the teacher

Speaking denominationally, Leavell said, "Failures in our churches will in large part speak of failures in our seminaries. The Southern Baptist Convention is a vehicle created by the churches, and its success or failure is in direct response to the success or failure of churches.

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"If churches are weak and anemic, this is largely due to pastoral leadership, to a lack of world vision, to an absence of compassion for lost multitudes everywhere. I've often said, and I still say, show me a church that died and I'll show you a pastor or pastors who first died.

"Creeping paralysis begins in the pulpit. That's where it all focuses--the life of the one called of God to teach and to lead and to inspire. Our denomination is not perfect, nor is any other. It is in this context of imperfection that I live my life for I am conscious of my own imperfections."

He recalled that when he entered New Orleans Seminary as a student in 1948, he had already made his commitment to live his life and exert his influence for the Kingdom of God through the Southern Baptist Convention.

"I understood then that there could be little of no significance to my life standing alone, even if I built the nation's largest independent church; but that there was a contribution to be made through my identity with something far greater and longer lasting than myself."

Leavell recalled what his father told him that when he saw inconsistencies and imperfections in the denomination. "He suggested that rather than pull out of the denomination, that I try to get into the middle of the decision making process and use whatever influence I could to change things for the better.

"Educationally," continued Leavell, "I am a product of the (SBC's) Cooperative Program (unified budget). I have no patience with those who constantly criticize our program of mission support. I have no respect for pastors, educated in our seminaries and receiving the finest in theological education, who then, in turn, fail to lead the churches that they lead in missions support.

"I hold nothing but contempt for those wolves in sheep's clothing who accept the pastorate of a congregation composed of God-fearing, Christ-honoring, and missions-supporting Southern Baptists and then sow seeds of suspicion, distrust, and antagonism in the minds of those people toward the convention," he declared. "I have no patience with men like that.

"Some, after graduation from our institutions, then try to lead their churches out of convention cooperation. Inevitably, they do this under the guise of theological liberalism. Most often the culprit is a super-ego that refuses to cooperate with fellow Christians."

Quoting from the Gospel of John, Leavell gave numerous foundations for the devotional facet. "The one ever deepening conviction of my heart, across the years of my ministry is the conviction that no man, no man, can be wrong about Jesus Christ, and be right about the Christian faith. If a man is wrong about Jesus, he's wrong all the way down the line. If he has a low view of the divinity, or the uniqueness of Christ, that man will not be right about anything else."

"The wider our ocean of knowledge about him, the longer the shoreline of undiscovered truth," he said. "We have to get academic and practical tools, that's part of it, but seminary years must be more than this. They must be years of a deepening, widening relationship with Jesus Christ. Our benchmark, our point of reference is the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our purpose must be to exalt him who said, 'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' Our hope of lifting this weary, hell bound world, lies in our efforts to exalt Jesus Christ."

"The prophetic preacher, continued the native Tennessean, is not merely a foreteller but a forthteller, a proclaimer. To exalt Jesus Christ is to hold up the standard or righteousness found in Christ Jesus."

"The response of the hearer, is not the prophet's responsibility, but to faithfully preach so that even the lost will know they had listened to God's prophet."

The Evangelist Today:
His Methods and Money

By Toby Druin
For Baptist Press

With some 500 preachers and musicians now engaged in sharing the gospel of Christ full-time as evangelists and at least that many more moving periodically in and out of it on a part-time basis, the calling is probably a permanent fixture in Southern Baptist life.

But permanent or not, few Southern Baptist pastors--the persons who customarily determine who will do a church's revival preaching--have ambivalent feelings about professional evangelists.

Many praise evangelists and cite their ability to preach and to bring people down the aisles to professions of faith in Christ or to other commitments.

But those who criticize them question the methods used to get the decision-makers down the aisles, other practices and, almost invariably, the evangelist's heavy emphasis on the offering plate dollar--before, during and after the revival or crusade.

Much of the criticism about methods concerns manipulation of audiences. Evangelists, usually, are gifted speakers who have honed their oral communications ability to a fine art. Even without the aid of the Holy Spirit, many can spellbind an audience with their oratory. And when decision time comes at the end of the service, their persuasive power can flood the aisles.

But if evangelists use persuasive oratory to excess, some pastors insist, it may be because of pressures applied by the churches themselves to produce new converts to show consistently good results.

There is keen competition among evangelists for places to preach even though some receive hundreds of invitations. Many send out brochures advertising their abilities and soliciting revivals or crusades, and their invitations depend on their "track record"--how many decisions have been reported in their meetings.

Bob Saul, director of the Department of Personal Evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Evangelism Section and who has directed some 50 crusades for several evangelists, said the local church demands the evangelist to not only preach but also to produce.

"And if he doesn't do better than the last man there, then he's not as good." Saul added. "He may be invited back but it will be after the last man's been invited back,"

That demand for results prompts some evangelists to report as many decisions as they can. A survey of several Texas churches where evangelists led revival meetings and then reported decision totals to the state paper showed some reports had been inflated.

One pastor said that the evangelist who led the revival in his church and then reported more than 130 decisions for Christ apparently had gotten 100 of them from hands raised at a high school assembly where the evangelist had spoken.

But most criticisms about evangelists seemingly concern money.

Saul, who has served as a director or advisor for 22 evangelists' associations, said unequivocally that evangelism is not "profitable."

"I know of no evangelist, personally, who is getting anywhere near rich at his work," Saul said. But he added that while he has dealt with some evangelists who have made as little as \$5,000 a year, others have made more than \$25,000 annually.

One of the SBC's better known evangelists, an official of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, said he thinks an "effective evangelist" can expect to gross \$50,000 and net \$30,000.

But Saul, who said he knows many pastors who make \$50,000 a year, added, "Most of the evangelists I have known have actually taken out of their pocket. I don't know of a single one who has an adequate retirement program. (Evangelists are not included in Southern Baptist Annuity Board programs) Most struggle to purchase a home. Many get involved in supporting a team and that's very difficult."

There are some, however, who have expensive homes, plus other property in resort areas. One widely known evangelist is given a new Cadillac twice a year by an automobile dealer friend. Others are given other amenities, too.

Rationalizing the heavy emphasis many evangelists make on the offering, Saul said that the man who preaches week-long meetings covering two Sundays can preach a maximum of 26 meetings a year and his offerings must carry him through the "off" weeks.

Saul suggested that an evangelist form an association to underwrite his ministry, gaining tax-exempt status and low-cost non-profit mailing privileges to cut down expenses and thus ease the financial strain. The association, ideally, includes some well-to-do friends who bridge the gap between offerings and expenses in the early years.

Most evangelists who have formed associations are placed on salary, plus expenses, which partially eliminates their need to overemphasize the offering. But Saul acknowledged that most he is familiar with acting at the discretion of the evangelist in setting salaries, and if the evangelist wants more money, he gets it.

Honorariums--the money paid to the evangelist or his team--vary from church to church. First Baptist Church, Lubbock, Tex., has given from \$1,500 to \$7,000 depending on whether an individual or team was leading the meeting.

Richard Hogue told a revival audience at Rehoboth Baptist Church, Tucker, Ga., last spring that he needed \$1,000 each night--\$6,000 to \$7,000 for the week--to meet his budget. The same church gave \$5,200 to Bob Harrington for a four day crusade.

The James Robison Evangelistic Association has a 1975 budget, according to Robison, of about \$1.5 million that covers the cost of Robison's preaching and support of some 27 team members and a television ministry and retreat center and youth camp.

Robison recently, however, complained in a letter to people on his mailing list that "We are over \$100,000 behind on television station payments and production costs." He said that while crusade offerings were at an all-time high, mail offerings were down and if people didn't respond with more money 20 stations would be dropped from his television network.

Such mailing lists and appeals bring criticisms from some pastors. One Atlanta pastor complained that an evangelist who had led a revival meeting in his church three years ago, had compiled a mailing list from his membership and periodically appealed to them for funds. Other pastors registered similar complaints.

Many, too, complained that evangelists had excessively pushed the sale of record albums and tape recordings during revivals and had run up excessive telephone, cleaning and restaurant charges where the church was paying the bill. One pastor complained about excessive travel charges.

"But it would be a mistake to tar all evangelists with the same brush," said another pastor. And most agreed that the evangelists' effectiveness cannot--or should not--be measured in dollars and cents.

And apparently most churches, including those with some of the pastors complaining the loudest, are pleased with the ministry of evangelists--some evangelists, anyway.

Many evangelists preach repeatedly in churches, which is something of an endorsement. Daniel Vestal, Sr., who this year preached his 1,000th church revival, said he feels that he could go back to most churches where he has conducted meetings. (BP)