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'Doctor Muko' Dispenses  
Love with His Medicine

By Charlie Warren

TSAI TSINA, Ethiopia (BP)--Muko Okare has a head full of medical knowledge and a heart full of love for his patients in the Menz highlands of Ethiopia.

Ethiopians, traveling on foot or by donkey, bypass other medical people just to see "Dr. Muko," according to Southern Baptist Missionaries in this country.

"Those other doctors don't care whether we live," the Ethiopian villagers explain.

Okare was hired by the Baptist Mission of Ethiopia (organization of Southern Baptist Missionaries) in 1970 to assist medical missionary Dr. Samuel R. J. Cannata Jr.

He joined the Baptist medical work after three years of formal medical training with the Sudan Interior Mission.

Although he lacks the qualifications necessary to make him a bonafide doctor, Okare has a superior rating as a "dresser," a term used in Ethiopia to designate a medical assistant.

Unfortunately, the experience and medical knowledge absorbed through the years don't qualify Okare for a doctorate, but neither should one underestimate their value, Dr. Cannata noted.

"Muko can diagnose common diseases, suture wounds, treat obstetrical patients and even perform some types of surgery," the missionary said.

Okare also prays with patients and their families and preaches throughout the area.

One night, he was awakened when several people arrived at the clinic with a patient who had fallen into a canyon. The man had cracked his skull and had a severe head wound. He was also in shock from the fall and the subsequent trip to the clinic on a handcarried stretcher.

Okare immediately grasped the seriousness of the medical problem.

"I just prayed to God, 'Lord, you are great and I am so small. Please help me,'" Okare said.

He treated the man for shock, gave him the necessary anesthetic, cleaned the wound and sutured and bandaged it.

Calling the man's family together, he told them, "I've done all I can. It's in the Lord's hands. Let's pray to him right now."

Okare knelt with the family and prayed for the man's recovery. The man eventually recovered with no medical complications, Dr. Cannata said.

"The thing that impresses em about Muko is his compassion and the time he takes with his patients," said Southern Baptist missionary Judy (Mrs. Ron D.) Bodenhamer. "He talks to them and prays with them."

Dr. Cannata sees numerous advantages to using an Ethiopian like Okare to assist the medical work of the Baptist mission.

"He understands everything about the culture," Dr. Cannata said. "He understands the language better than we (the missionaries). He understands hidden meanings that I would miss, even when I might know the meaning of all the words."

Citing an example, Dr. Cannata told of the many patients who claim to be demon possessed or in some way have been influenced by witchcraft. He said Okare not only understands witchcraft but understands the fear it places in the minds of the people.

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Dr. Cannata believes there's a fine line between mental problems and demon possession, but he doesn't underestimate the power of Satan and witchcraft.

"Muko and I have conferences every once in a while," Dr. Cannata explained. "I say, 'what do you think this really is?'"

Together they decide what the problem is and what to do about it. The solution is not always an every day medical treatment. Sometimes, Dr. Cannata commands in the name of Jesus for the demon to come out. That generally "cures" the patient who sincerely believes he's possessed the missionary said.

Dr. Cannata also sees an advantage in Okare's Christian witness. "His preaching can be more specific. He can apply it to their daily lives.

"He can also do what none of us (missionaries) can ever do. He stays there (at the clinic) all the time. The missionaries couldn't do that."

Cannata's only concern about Okare is that he overworks himself. No problem is too small and nothing is too time-consuming for the young Ethiopian, according to Dr. Cannata.

"Once I told him, 'Muko, you let these people control your life,'" the missionary recalled.

With a smile, Okare responded, "I know it. They really do, don't they."

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(BP) Photos mailed to Baptist state papers.

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Baptist Coed Is New  
Miss Teenage America

By Toby Druin

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DALLAS (BP)--"I hope that you will always be directed by God and may he continue to shine through you. Best wishes always. Love in Christ, Becky."

Over the next year many autograph books and their owners across the nation are going to be blessed with this and similar messages.

The "Becky" who penned it for an admiring sixth grader sees it as one of the ways she can share her faith in Christ.

"Becky," is Rebecca Ann Reid, 17, of Dallas who in Tulsa, Okla., recently was named Miss Teenage America of 1977.

A senior at Dallas' W.T. White High School, she is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Reid. The Reids have another daughter, Lori, 15, and all are active members of Royal Haven Baptist Church here.

Becky was named winner of the Miss Teenage America title over 46 other girls, survivors in competition that attracted 20,000 young women across the nation.

The title gives her a \$12,000 scholarship, thousands more for personal appearances, a trip to Hollywood for the Bob Hope Christmas special, and places of honor in the Orange Bowl and Cotton Bowl parades.

She also will spend a lot of time over the next year on behalf of Easter Seals and National Cystic Fibrosis campaigns.

If the prospect of all that seems frightening, it didn't phase 17-year-old Becky who unfalteringly answered the questions posed by the contest judges and sang the hit, "I Honestly Love You," for a national television audience.

At least part of the credit for her remarkable poise, she feels, is that she is no stranger to critical--or admiring--audiences. The "critics" have been the countless recital audiences for whom she has played over the years. An accomplished pianist and vocalist, she is interested in a career in piano pedagogy and plans to attend either Southern Methodist University or Baylor University, a Baptist school in Waco, Tex.

Her admirers are legion and many of them are at Royal Haven Church where she has grown up in the graded choir program and is now a frequent soloist. She sang the weekend before going to Tulsa for the Miss Teenage America pageant and asked the church to pray that she might be a good witness for Christ.

"This honor couldn't happen to a nicer girl," says pastor Gene Colton. "Becky is a very gifted, talented, sweet-spirited Christian who is very anxious to use all her talents as a witness for Christ."

Richard Ross, the church's minister to youth, praised her for her faithfulness: "She is here every Sunday for Bible study," he said.

Becky won the title in her second year of competition. Last year, she was one of 10 semi-finalists in the Miss Teenage Dallas competition after entering on the last possible day at the suggestion of a friend.

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Her 1975 showing encouraged her, and she spent the next year working on the things she had learned in her initial try.

Of course, Becky and Lori and their parents knew when Becky won the Dallas title that she had a chance at the national title, but they didn't discuss it.

"We knew it would be very difficult," said Mrs. Reid. "That is a very talented, poised group of young ladies."

"We didn't even think she would get to the top eight," joked Lori.

"There are 46 other girls who would make great Miss Teenage Americas," said Becky, "so you don't ever let yourself dare think you would be the winner."

"And besides, they had impressed us with the fact that we were all winner, anyway. They say the purpose of the pageant is not to pick a Miss Teenage America but to make each girl a better person and to prepare her to go back to her community to be a better leader."

Becky said she never "prepared" herself to be Miss Teenage America.

"As I tried out for Miss Teenage Dallas," she said, "I thought about winning, of course, but I asked God to just take me and use me. And that's what I want him to do now with me as Miss Teenage America."

"...There are a lot of things that I don't know yet, and I am just trusting in him to lead me through each day."

"A long time ago I just dedicated all that I had to give to God. I want him to use my talent; that's the most important thing. And he has taken it and let me use it in wonderful ways."

"God deserves the credit for all of this; certainly not me."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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December 3, 1976

76-205

Foundation Earns \$1 Million,  
Urges Lessening of Limitations

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foundation meeting here paid tribute to its retiring executive secretary-treasurer, heard a report that earnings again topped the \$1 million mark and unanimously instructed its chief staff officer to work toward removing all limitations on the Foundation's work.

Kendall Berry, a Baptist layman, banker and former newspaper publisher from Blytheville, Ark., will officially retire Dec. 31, 1976, after more than nine years as the Foundation's chief staff executive.

He will be succeeded on Jan. 1 by Hollis E. Johnson III, previously a vice president of First American National Bank, Nashville, who has joined the Foundation staff as executive secretary-treasurer-elect.

In his final report to the Foundation, Berry noted that fiscal 1976 has been "a good year--not good enough, but good."

Additions to all funds for the year amounted to over \$2.5 million in a 12-month period, and earnings topped the \$1 million mark for the second consecutive year, he said.

Withdrawals of over \$2 million were the heaviest in the Foundation's 29-year history, Berry added. He attributed this to building projects in which the Foundation has helped many participating Southern Baptist agencies by managing their capital investments.

Although appreciation in market values was down somewhat, "It is still \$2 million more than at the beginning of fiscal '76," Berry said, "bringing market value near book value."

Total corpus of the various portfolios managed by the Foundation, he said, amounted to almost \$17 million in fiscal '76.

Berry applauded the Foundation's selection of Johnson, formerly financial adviser for the agency, and called for a "team effort" to ensure the success of Johnson and the Foundation in the agency's service to Southern Baptists.

In his report, Berry repeated some comments he made to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in September.

"I hope that my successor will be able to instill a spirit of cooperation that will lift the enthusiasm of this much needed, though often maligned, agency of the (Southern Baptist) Convention . . .

"My request is that you lift your appraisal of what this agency should be doing--increase its budget, its staff, its wherewithal and permit it to get out in the far reaches of the Convention and promote its services for the benefit of the total program," Berry repeated.

He decried the belief by some that the Southern Baptist Foundation is competing with Baptist state foundations and said:

"The Foundation should be a \$100 million agency and will need to receive the full cooperation of all agencies and individuals in the SBC." And, he continued, the Foundation "should be allowed to properly promote its services to all constituents of the Southern Baptist Foundation in cooperation with (Baptist) state foundations."

The (Southern Baptist) Foundation is restricted by its Convention-approved program statement to certain kinds of information dissemination.

The statement permits dissemination of Foundation information through contacts and reports to the various Southern Baptist agencies, and informing Southern Baptists on the "nature" and "availability" of the Foundation.

It permits the communication of information through "personal appearances, regular reports to the Convention, articles in Southern Baptist publications, and brochures, provided, however, that the information gives facts about its services and is not promotional in character or in method of dissemination."

In its Feb. 1975 meeting, the Southern Baptist Executive Committee approved a program sub-committee recommendation that in its opinion, ". . . the Foundation is fully empowered by its program statement to inform the membership of the Southern Baptist Convention of its services, and that the Foundation should do all it can to implement its program statement also keeping in mind the needs of the state foundations."

One Foundation member said the restrictions on the Foundation were not clear and asked that they be researched and clarified. He moved that the Foundation's board direct its executive secretary-treasurer to work toward removing all restrictions on the agency. The motion carried unanimously.

A financial review of the year shows that the agency's trust fund balance for fiscal '76 was \$16.89 million, or \$1.9 million more than 1975.

Income earned for 1976 was down slightly from \$1.06 million. Rate of return for the Foundation's general fund was 5.67 percent book value and 6.49 percent market value, down slightly from last year.

The agency's Cooperative Program (unified budget)-supported operating budget for fiscal '77 is \$126,586, compared with \$120,169 for fiscal '76.

In other action, the Foundation reelected its officers. Foundation President is G. Frank Cole Jr., a publishing company executive of Nashville. Serving with Cole are J. Thomas Bryan, a Nashville physician, vice president; and John O. Ellis, a Nashville banker, recording secretary.

Among other accolades and honors given Berry was a resolution from the SBC Executive Committee, read by its executive secretary-treasurer Porter Routh, at the Foundation directors' annual dinner.

The resolution expressed "continuing gratitude" for Berry's work and cited his many years of "notable" denominational service, including nine years as a member of the Executive Committee, SBC.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers.

# # # # #

Sunday School Tops SBC  
Statistical Projections

Baptist Press  
12/3/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--The largest Sunday School enrollment gain in 21 years and significant increases in total receipts and mission expenditures dominate the 1976 statistical picture for the Southern Baptist Convention, according to preliminary estimates compiled by the research services department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Projections also indicate slight increases in church membership and WMU, Brotherhood and church music enrollments.

The only decreases predicted for 1976 are in baptisms and Church Training enrollment, according to reports received from more than 26,000 Southern Baptist churches.

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The final official report will be released in February 1977, according to Martin B. Bradley, manager of the Sunday School Board's research services department. Approximately 35,000 churches will contribute to the final report, Bradley said.

Total Southern Baptist Convention receipts projected for 1976 will top \$1.6 billion, an increase of nearly 12 percent over last year's total of \$1.47 billion. The final figure is projected to be near \$1,651,209,000.

The Bicentennial year was a banner year for Sunday School, with an expected ongoing enrollment of more than 7,470,000 people. It marks the fifth consecutive year Sunday School enrollment has increased, and the additional 189,320 members over last year makes the enrollment gain the highest since 1955.

A. V. Washburn, secretary of the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, expressed personal gratification over the 2.6 percent increase, which he said represented "a growing commitment in our churches and denomination to the basic necessity of reaching more people for meaningful Bible study."

"This year, ACTION, a reach out enrollment plan for Sunday School, has provided a major and effective instrument for church outreach," Washburn said. "Approximately 1,700 churches have conducted an ACTION campaign and the increases in these churches have stimulated growth in many others."

Washburn also pointed out that for the first time in many years, the increase in Sunday School enrollment exceeded the growth in church membership.

"This is most wholesome, and if it continues, greater gains in baptisms, Christian growth and Christian discipleship should follow," he said.

According to projections, mission expenditures also recorded a large increase in 1976. Total expenditures are expected to be more than \$263,042,400, a gain of 10.7 percent over last year's \$237,617,406.

Estimates for church membership indicate an increase of 1.4 percent over 1975, with a predicted total of 12,913,962 members. Last year's figure was 12,735,663.

Baptisms, however, dropped below 400,000 for the first time in five years, with reports indicating approximately 388,486 baptisms in 1976. Last year's total of 421,809 baptisms was the third highest number in SBC history.

Church Training also experienced a decrease in 1976, according to projections. Ongoing enrollment dropped 1.4 percent to 1,859,171, which is 26,406 less than the 1975 total. Figures are not available for the number of people involved in New Member Training, Church Leader Training and short-term member training projects.

Projected Brotherhood ongoing enrollment jumped 1.7 percent over last year's figures, with an increase of 8,092 members, bringing its total to 484,094. Figures are not available for additional persons involved in short-term mission projects.

WMU recorded a slight gain, according to church reports, increasing its ongoing enrollment by 2,267 for a total of 1,135,854.

Church music's projected ongoing enrollment for 1976 is 1,375,268, which is 20,324 more than the 1975 total.