



**--- FEATURES**  
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77-88

Singapore Center--Working  
At Root Causes of Suicide

By Jim Newton

SINGAPORE (BP)--The man screamed as he fell. Another person had jumped from the top floor of Selegie House high rise housing unit.

A bystander covered the body, and it lay there almost six hours before government officials arrived.

A few feet away, residents went on buying food.

It happened right in front of the Baptist Center at Selegie House--where Singapore Baptists combat the loneliness and frustration of big city living, through a Christian social ministries program.

The center is in an area that has a reputation as Singapore's suicide center. Yet, most of the people who jump from the high rise building don't even live in the area.

As a result, the Baptist Center is able to do little to prevent such deaths, according to Mimi Ling, part young director of the Singapore Baptist Convention-sponsored program.

They do, however, distribute suicide-prevention literature urging people to seek counseling through Samaritans of Singapore, a suicide prevention organization, she said.

Ms. Ling estimated that until last year, an average of two suicides per month occurred at Selegie House. Now there seem to be fewer, she noted, but didn't know why.

Ms. Ling, a native Singaporean and graduate of the Singapore-Malaysian Baptist Seminary, confided that she really did not feel qualified to handle suicide prevention counseling.

What Ms. Ling and others at the center are qualified to do is to work at the root causes of suicide in Singapore--loneliness and frustration that come when people feel nobody cares.

"The greatest need of people here is to find someone they can share with and trust," she said.

As a result of the center's ministries, more than 90 persons accepted Jesus Christ last year," and that's the number of recorded decisions. There were many others whose names were not recorded," Ms. Ling said.

The center is reaching people through varied programs aimed at children, youth, and adults.

For children, the center offers handcrafts, Bible stories, Good News clubs, games, a Saturday Bible school, parties, and Vacation Bible School in the summer.

For youths, there are seminars, special parties, Bible studies, youth revivals, tutoring, study halls, workshops, handcrafts, and small group studies on such things as guitar strumming and how to study more effectively. Since the center is in an area where there is also a big problem with drugs, last summer they sponsored a seminar on drug abuse.

Some 40 Chinese women regularly participate in the center's adult Bible studies, and classes on cooking, guitar, sewing, knitting, crocheting, and charm courses.

The biggest response has been with the children and youth, since some of the adults have the idea that the center is for kids, Ms. Ling explained.

The center is one of few ways in which Singapore Baptists have been reaching predominately Muslim Malay children. Two such Malay children accepted Christ recently, but their parents opposed their coming to the center, Ms. Ling said.

Anna, a 14-year-old girl, also accepted Christ at the center recently. She then started two Bible study groups for her fellow classmates. "Despite her family's objections, she has been witnessing and sharing her faith with others," Ms. Ling noted.

Anna, like many of the youth who come to the center, was first attracted by the free guitar lessons that Ms. Ling teaches.

"The guitar classes have been the most effective way to reach people," she said. "Singaporeans are crazy about the guitar. It is the cheapest instrument to buy and play, but guitar lessons are very expensive in the schools and community centers.

"So many times, the students will ask, 'Why do you offer these lessons free?' They know the rent on the center is high, and that the center is not a business," Ms. Ling added.

"Everytime someone asks, we tell them this is the way Singapore Baptists have to show that we love you," she said.

The Singapore Convention, sole sponsors of the center, allocates \$16,000 from its total budget of \$30,000 for the program.

There was a time, after the Singapore Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) phased out its subsidy of the center, that some Singapore Baptists feared the center might be closed.

But the convention assumed the responsibility and the center's committee chairman Chan Wing Chone, an engineer for Shell Oil Co. of Singapore, spoke in eight churches to raise funds. Now the center is on firm financial ground.

"It's sad to think of what this high rise would be like without the center," Ms. Ling said:

"I've seen so much change in the lives of the people, especially the children."

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Adapted from the June 1977 issue of World Mission Journal

(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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May 13, 1977

77-88

Don Hammer Promoted By  
Home Mission Board

**ATLANTA (BP)**--Don Hammer has been named director of metropolitan missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Hammer, elected to the new post during the May meeting of the board's executive committee, succeeds Warren Rust, who accepted a post as assistant director of the department because of health problems.

In another action, directors elected John D. Meredith of Atlanta as coordinator of planning and budgeting, replacing Tommy D. Coy who resigned in April to accept the position of director of counseling for the Christian Broadcasting Network.

In February, Rust took a three-month leave of absence for health reasons. He moved to Phoenix, where he was "able to make real headway toward improvement of his health," said Loyd Corder, director of the division of associational missions.

"However, Warren's condition remains chronic and his doctors have recommended that he not come back to the work he was doing. We are pleased that he will be able to continue to work in the area of metropolitan missions," Corder added.

Rust, who will serve in the Western United States, will live and work in Phoenix. He will give half his time to writing materials, articles and books dealing with missions in the metro setting.

Rust came to the Home Mission Board in 1971 as director of metropolitan missions. Previously, he was pastor of churches in St. Louis, Tennessee and Kentucky.

Hammer, who joined the board in 1975, was associate director of metro missions before he was transferred to the evangelism staff in February. Previously he served as Urban Strategy Council coordinator for the Baptist General Convention of Texas and a staff member at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has also served on church staffs in Texas and Missouri.

"This is a challenging time for metro missions. We have become aware of the great opportunities--as well as the great problems--in our cities," Corder said.

Meredith, a native of Claremont, Okla., was a career officer in the United States Army, serving from 1949 until this year. His final assignment was in Atlanta, where he provided logistical training assistance to the National Guard and Army Reserve supply units in five southeastern states and Puerto Rico.

In his new responsibility, Meredith will develop and maintain a planning and budgeting process within the Home Mission Board and provide consultative services to the regional coordinators and state convention leadership in planning and budgeting.

Meredith is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, Georgia Institute of Technology and the Defense Language Institute.

In addition to serving in Atlanta, he also served in Vietnam and in the USSR. He is a deacon at Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta.

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Directors also were told E. Warren Woolf, director of the personnel division, has been named acting director of missionary personnel, replacing Cecil Etheredge, who has been reassigned in the department.

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38 Appointed By  
Home Mission Board

Baptist Press  
5/13/77

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board appointed 38 persons to mission service during the board's May executive committee meeting here.

Four persons--Robert and Ruth Tate of Gulfport, Miss., and Bob and Jean Nowlin of Louisville, Ky.--were named missionaries.

One person, Larry Erwin of Kansas City, was named missionary associate and 23 mission pastors were approved to receive aid. Thirteen of the 23 will receive language pastoral aid (LPA) and 10 church pastoral aid (CPA).

The Tates will continue to live in Gulfport. He will serve as director of Christian social ministries for the Jackson and Gulf Coast Baptist Associations, an appointment made by the Home Mission Board's department of Christian social ministries and the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Prior to appointment, Tate, a Texas native, was a U. S. Navy chaplain and adjunct professor for William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss. He received a doctor of ministries degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a graduate of Texas A & M University, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary.

Ruth Hunnicutt Tate, also a Texas native, is a graduate of the University of Texas and has taught school in Florida and California. The Tates have four children.

The Nowlins will serve in St. Louis, Mo., where he will be director of Christian social ministries for the St. Louis Baptist Association, an appointment made by the Missouri Baptist Convention and the board's department of Christian social ministries.

Prior to appointment, Nowlin, a New Mexico native, was director of social service for the Baptist Towers, Inc., in Louisville and minister of community missions for the Walnut Street Baptist Church.

He has also served as social worker for the Missouri Baptist Children's Home and as pastor-director of the Oklahoma City Baptist Mission Center. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Brown School of Social Work at Washington University and Oklahoma Baptist University.

Jean Bohringer Nowlin, a St. Louis native, is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and has taught elementary school. The Nowlins have three children.

Erwin will serve in Kansas City as a Christian social ministries student intern, an appointment made by the board's department of Christian social ministries.

Erwin, a native of San Antonio, Tex., is a student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He is married and has two children.

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Wong Urges Brotherhood  
To Supply Lay Resources

Baptist Press  
5/13/77

WASHINGTON (BP)--The president of the Baptist World Alliances (BWA) called on the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission here to supply Baptist men throughout the world with leadership, personnel and expertise.

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"Baptist men around the world continue to ask me to get material on how to organize themselves," David Wong, a Hong Kong architect, told trustees of the commission on opening night of a four-day meeting at the Capital Hilton in Washington.

"Our Baptist men are trying to serve the Lord, but they don't have the expertise to do it as well as they would like.

"The people outside the United States look to the Brotherhood Commission for leadership, personnel and expertise to help the men in their spiritual lives and general well-being," he said.

Wong shared the podium with Francis Dennis, the Liberian Ambassador to the United States.

Addressing the trustees on "The Role of an Ambassador Yesterday and Today," Dennis described himself as a Christian ambassador with a concern for humanity.

As a former ambassador to Russia, Dennis said he had "witnessed Christian qualities among the brethren in the Soviet Union which we know come from the Lord."

Dennis, a member of First Baptist Church in Washington, represented President William Tolbert of Liberia, a former BWA president.

"Our call is a commitment to the service of mankind," Dennis said.

"I can bear witness that the Baptist World Alliance, with Southern Baptist help, has not relented in carrying the (Christian) witness to men."

Robert Denny, general secretary of BWA who arranged the international program, told the trustees, "Men like Ambassador Dennis are invaluable in helping the BWA minister in other countries."

Wong, who has traveled 100,000 miles in a 32-country visit as the first lay president of the BWA, said Baptist men around the world are beginning to realize the important role of the laity in the churches.

Lay people are witnessing for their faith and ministering to others in mainland China, India, Kenya, Cuba, Burma, and Bangladesh, Wong said as he recounted a variety of lay ministries ranging from planting coconut trees to digging wells for the indigent.

During the four-day meeting, the Brotherhood Commission's trustees heard addresses by SBC President James L. Sullivan, had lunch with Baptist congressmen, and visited President Jimmy Carter, a former trustee of the commission, at the White House.

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Baptist Congressmen Urge  
Prayers For Representatives

5-13-77

WASHINGTON (BP)--Thirteen Baptist congressmen met here with trustees of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, requesting that Baptists remember to pray for their representatives in the U. S. Congress.

The Brotherhood trustees responded with a period of prayer, while the congressmen raced to the floor of the House to vote on a foreign aid bill before Congress.

The 13 Baptist congressmen present for the luncheon at the Rayburn House Office Building were introduced by the Brotherhood Commission trustees from their own states. Each congressman made brief remarks.

U. S. Rep. Gillis Long (D.-La.) told the Brotherhood trustees the congressmen "need both your prayers and your active assistance if we are to be successful in coming up with workable solutions to the problems we face in America.

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"We need you, and the country needs you," Long said.

U. S. Rep. James R. Mann (D.-S.C.) paid tribute to the Baptist laymen present pointing out, "We can't trust religion to the professional religionists anymore than we can trust the politics to the professional politician."

Several of the congressmen encouraged Baptists to contact them if they could be of service. "We are here willing to help you," said U. S. Rep. Jim Mattox (D.-Tex.).

"We members of Congress have a real opportunity and platform to spread the gospel as public servants," Mattox added.

U. S. Rep. John Buchanan (R.-Ala.) an ordained Baptist minister, pointed out that the apostle Paul no less than three times referred to public officials as "servants of God" in the 13th chapter of Romans.

Several congressmen, including U. S. Rep. Ronald (Bo) Ginn (D.-Ga.), U. S. Rep. Jack Brinkley (D.-Ga.), U. S. Rep. W. G. (Bill) Hefner (D.-N.C.), and U. S. Rep. Charles Whitley (D.-N.C.) told of their own involvement as guest speakers in Baptist churches, teachers of Sunday School classes, and participants in congressional prayer breakfasts.

Other Baptist congressmen bringing greetings to the Brotherhood trustees were U. S. Rep. Jack Hightower (D.-Tex.), U. S. Rep. James M. Collins (R.-Tex.), U. S. Rep. Tim Lee Carter (R.-Ky.), U. S. Rep. Albert Gore Jr. (D.-Tenn.), and U. S. Rep. Charles P. Pper (D.-Fla.).

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Jerden Resigns  
Colorado Editorship

Baptist Press  
5/13/77

DENVER (BP)-- Larry R. Jerden, editor of the Rocky Mountain Baptist here since March, has resigned, effective May 15.

The 33-year-old veteran of 10 years in Southern Baptist journalism, who succeeded O. L. Bayless as editor of the state newspaper of the Colorado Baptist General Convention, cited "marital and personal problems" as his reason for leaving in an editorial in the Rocky Mountain Baptist's May 13 issue.

Jerden has accepted freelance writing assignments in Texas.

His editorial praised the support given him by Glen Braswell, the Colorado Convention's executive director-treasurer, and other Colorado leaders and said his personal situation made it "best for myself and Colorado Baptists that I resign."

Previously Jerden had served as associate editor of World Mission Journal, SBC Brotherhood Commission, Memphis; assistant editor, Baptist Standard, Dallas; assistant editor of Baptist Men's Journal (predecessor of World Mission Journal), Brotherhood Commission; and staff writer, public relations department, SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Before joining Southern Baptists, Jerden had worked as a newspaper and wire service reporter. He is a journalism graduate of Texas A & M University, has done graduate work in journalism at East Texas State University and has attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Carter Expresses Thanks  
For Prayers of Baptists

Baptist Press  
5/13/77

By Jim Newton

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter expressed appreciation for the prayers of Southern Baptists during his first 100 days in office, telling trustees of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, "I've really felt the impact of your prayers.

"I not only need your prayers, I need your open criticisms when I make mistakes," President Carter told about 75 Baptists gathered informally in the White House Rose Garden.

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Earlier, the President had greeted personally 30 of the 36 elected trustees of the Brotherhood Commission, plus Southern Baptist Convention President James L. Sullivan and Brotherhood Commission Executive Director Glendon McCullough, in the White House Oval Office.

President Carter had served as a member of the board of trustees of the Brotherhood Commission for six years, resigning in November after his election as President.

The visit to the White House was a part of the four-day semi-annual meeting of the Brotherhood Commission's trustees, with sessions at the Capital Hilton, a few blocks from the White House.

President Carter milled among the crowd of Baptists gathered in the Rose Garden, shaking hands and exchanging greetings. Over and over, the Baptists present told him, "We're praying for you."

In his brief, informal remarks at the Rose Garden, President Carter said he felt very close to the group present, pointing out that McCullough had been married in his home (the governor's mansion) in Atlanta.

"I do need your continued friendship and support, your open criticism when I make mistakes, and your constant prayers that the judgments that I make will be compatible with our highest commitments, our highest faith, our highest beliefs," he said.

"We have a chance," he said, "to make our country greater than in the past. But it depends not on the identity of the President, but on the common trust and strength of our people."

"I am one of you, and you are a part of me," he told the Baptist group. "That realization gives me a quiet comfort that I can serve in such a way as not to embarrass you."

Both Americans in general, and Southern Baptists in particular are strong and independent people, who want to make our own decisions and who seek guidance from above, he said.

"We do not yield to the pressure from others, and I think that this is the essence of our strength," the President added.

President Carter also stressed that Baptists are among the most fervent advocates of separation of church and state, of religion and government.

"But, at the same time, we feel we have an obligation to our country to devote our lives to the furtherance of its finest ideals and commitments," he said.

"We also have an opportunity to serve our government and to try to elevate those standards to meet the standards set for us by Jesus Christ," he added.

"I don't see any incompatibility there," the President commented.

McCullough, who introduced President Carter, said he doubted there were a group of people anywhere who had prayed more fervently for the President.

"You've taken some good stands, and you've built a good image, and we're proud of you," McCullough told the President and the group present.

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Plane Arrives in Kenya  
As Evacuation Begins

Baptist Press  
5/13/77

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)--An airplane belonging to the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Ethiopia arrived safely in Nairobi, Kenya, as evacuation of some mission personnel from this country began.

Dr. Samuel R. J. Cannata Jr., missionary in Addis Ababa, told Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials the plane left that city and arrived at Nairobi Airport on May 11, piloted by Southern Baptist missionary Donald Kirkland.

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One other missionary family, two missionary journeymen and one volunteer couple will also evacuate within the next few weeks, due to unsettled conditions in Ethiopia. Five families will stay here at least until a July 11 agricultural missions conference in Nairobi.

Dr. Cannata told Davis L. Saunders, the board's area secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa, that unconfirmed reports said the Cannata's home in rural Ethiopia has been looted and burned.

Missionaries have not gone to see if these reports are true but have elected to remain in Addis Ababa on the advice of the Ethiopian government. The missionaries are doing evangelistic work in Addis Ababa, Saunders said.

Conditions in Ethiopia have made it increasingly difficult for the missionaries to continue their work in recent months, according to reports.

Four missionaries have been arrested or detained. Dr. Cannata was arrested and, detained for 16 days in early April on a firearms technicality. All charges were dropped. Three other missionaries were detained for 48 hours in late April without charges.

The Cessna 185 airplane, flown by Kirkland, has been used to fly missionaries to conduct clinics and do other types of community development in remote areas of Ethiopia.