



BAPTIST PRESS

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**BWA Reserves \$50,000 For
Theological Seminary in USSR**

MIAMI BEACH (BP)--The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) has designated \$110,251 from its relief fund for interchurch aid for the theological education of ministerial students speaking one or more of the Slavic languages in Eastern Europe.

A large portion of that amount--\$50,000--was "reserved for an institution of theological training in the USSR, to be paid to the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists promptly upon request after the necessary permissions are obtained from the authorities for the opening of such an institution."

The council also said that the BWA division of relief and development should "seek additional donations for the account for theological training of ministerial students of Eastern Europe," if the \$110,251 figure proves to be insufficient.

Robert S. Denny, general secretary of the BWA, said that the funds have been made available from investment earnings of a fund which originated in 1908 and was augmented at the Baptist World Congress in Philadelphia in 1911 with a special offering "to train Slavic candidates for the gospel ministry." The initial corpus was less than \$50,000.

More than \$68,000 has been spent in two attempts to start a seminary in Russia, Denny said, noting that \$44,473 was spent in 1922-23 for establishment of a seminary at St. Petersburg (now Leningrad). The school operated for several years and educated about 400 persons. An additional \$24,500 was remitted to Moscow for a theological school opened there, with a 40-year lease, in late 1928. The school was closed and the lease cancelled a short time later, but perhaps as many as 250 received training there.

A Bible Correspondence School currently operates out of Baptist Union headquarters in Moscow. In addition, a limited number of ministerial students are permitted to attend schools outside the USSR. Statistics show 5,500 Baptist churches in the USSR with 545,000 baptized members.

Theological schools, with small enrollments, operate in Warsaw, Poland; East Berlin, East Germany; Budapest, Hungary; Bucharest, Romania; and Novi Sad, Yugoslavia.

Approximately two thirds of the 1,172,000 Baptists in Europe live and witness in the Eastern section. However, most churches are led by lay persons without formal theological training.

Denny said that conversations with USSR Baptist leaders--six of whom were present for the Miami meetings--lead him to hope that the Soviet government will be receptive to the idea of the establishment of a Baptist Theological Center somewhere in that country.

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'American Way' May Strangle
Christian Way, Dunn Says

Baptist Press
7/20/77

MIAMI BEACH (BP)--The "American Way" and the Christian way are often erroneously entangled, according to one of the speakers at the annual meeting of the Baptist World Alliance's (BWA) Commission on Christian Ethics, held here in conjunction with the meetings of the organization's General Council.

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Speaking on "A Christian Lifestyle for 20th Century Baptists," James M. Dunn, secretary of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, pointed out several "inherent dangers" in confusing the popularly-accepted American way with the Christian life.

Other speakers at the meeting included Maynard P. Turner Jr., dean of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.; and Daniel B. McGee, associate professor of Christian ethics at Baylor University. Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, is chairman of the BWA commission.

"The popular understanding of the American way," Dunn told the commission, "includes certain false assumptions for personal economics, an idolatrous materialism as its fueling philosophy and a bundle of slogans that have somehow become more precious to many Americans than the truths of Scripture."

The Christian lifestyle described in the Bible and exemplified in Jesus Christ differs in many ways from the accepted lifestyle of today, Dunn pointed out.

Yet, he added, "the rhetoric of the American way has become so sacred in the minds of many Christians that it is dangerous to challenge it. The law of supply and demand is referred to as if it were holy writ and the radical nature of Christian stewardship is seldom seen."

The Biblical teachings about wealth are "frightening," Dunn claimed, because "by any stretch of the imagination we are the rich."

"If I insist upon the abiding relevance of the ethical teachings of Jesus," he said, "then I can't escape the powerful words about wealth in the New Testament."

He said the life of the Christian should be marked by rational acceptance of responsibility for others, a genuine commitment to caring and sharing, a sensitivity to human needs and hurt wherever it is found, freedom from anxiety about material needs, humility, and a theology of hope for the future.

These characteristics, Dunn explained, have important implications about the style of life for Baptists, and he offered several specific suggestions to help Christians "escape the rat race of grasping greed."

Christians, he said, should exemplify responsible stewardship of the world's resources by reducing the standard of living, approaching reproduction responsibly, reducing consumption of junk foods, dressing modestly, and taking proper care of their own bodies.

Studying and learning about the way Americans' living standards relate to world poverty and hunger and practicing "informed Christian citizenship" regarding government decisions is also essential, Dunn said.

"It will do very little good to eat less grain-fed beef and fail to act politically to change public policy," he explained. "Ignorance and apathy mark the behavior of Christian citizens, especially in regard to global justice."

"It is at least possible," Dunn concluded, "that nothing short of a radical new lifestyle can revitalize Baptists in the 20th Century. It is likely that the spiritual and moral health of the fellowship of Baptists believers is irrevocably, indissolubly caught up in the lifestyle question. Our wealth and the way we use it reveals who we are."

In his address on biomedical ethics, McGee said that Christians cannot play God in exercising "formerly undreamed of power to control life and death," but neither should they avoid the responsibility for dealing with the perplexing moral questions modern medical achievements bring.

In suggesting guidelines to follow in the field of medicine, McGee said, "I see a God who says to his stewards, 'Make medicine serve human needs and nothing else.' The temptation is for technology to serve itself--for medical institutions to serve themselves, for medical professionals to serve their professional advancement, for research to serve research, for social, medical and religious customs to serve themselves."

McGee also pointed out that although such difficult questions as genetic and behavior modification, organ transplants, and artificial insemination must be dealt with, the number one medical problem today is food.

"Food is the health need that touches most of the human race today," he said. "In deciding what we do first, it is important to remember that as we debate genetic modification to increase the I.Q. of future generations, many of the present generation's children are being retarded by insufficient protein in their diets."

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Child Porno Lies Outside
1st Amendment, Hollis Says

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7/20/77

NASHVILLE (BP)--Child pornography is child abuse and therefore lies outside the protection of the First Amendment, a leading Southern Baptist spokesman on family-related issues declared here.

The problem of child pornography is very real and very damaging, Harry N. Hollis Jr., director of family and special moral concerns at the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, emphasized in a recent public forum on "Morality, Censorship and the Law."

"We are not engaged in hypothetical speculation about what might someday happen," Hollis said. "Child pornography is already a dreadful reality. We are not talking about material available only on the West Coast or in the area of Times Square. It is being distributed in nearly every community.

"We are not talking about happy little children joyfully romping about without clothes and without a sense of shame," he continued. "We are talking about children being physically coerced and psychologically manipulated into exploitive scenes. We are not dealing with the healthy liberation of sexuality. We are dealing with the sickest kind of anti-sexuality."

Hollis said he believes the First Amendment is not absolute and was not intended to protect child pornography.

Determinations about "where to draw the line between what is legally acceptable and what is not" are difficult, Hollis said. "But," he added, "surely there can be no doubt about child pornography.

"Child pornography is child abuse," the author of Thank God for Sex claimed. "The scars may not be physical, but they are nevertheless excruciatingly real."

Children who are forced or manipulated into modeling for pornographic photos, Hollis said, are "psychically mutilated," and blocked from the possibility of healthy relationships.

Long range solutions that involve strengthening the family and providing wholesome sex education are insufficient in the area of child pornography, according to Hollis. He described the crisis as "immediate" and called for stronger laws to prevent child pornography.

"We need to support officials in their efforts to stop this abuse," he challenged. "We need to oppose those who exploit these children through the production, distribution and selling of this obscene material."

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One Family Plus One 18-Hour
Preacher Equals Crisis

Baptist Press
7/20/77

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--Most pulpit committees look for the 18-hour-a-day preacher who acts like a corporate president and can "make things grow," a North Carolina pastor declared here.

"The unspoken agenda for almost every pulpit committee when speaking to a prospective minister for their church is--can you make it grow?" Cecil Sherman told a conference on "The Bible and Moral Decision Making" sponsored by the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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"Super performance is demanded and the 18-hour-a-day preacher who turns a church around as one would a corporation is lionized and lifted up . . . in spite of the fact that his wife and family are hurt in the process," declared Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, N. C.

Sherman urged ministers, pulpit committees and church members alike to reexamine the place of family in their own lives.

"It's here," he said, "where we need to be preaching and giving a witness. This is the front line in America's real moral crisis and how we speak to this question will determine our divorce rate, our delinquency, our societal survival."

According to the North Carolina pastor, a primary problem in dealing with family priorities is that "we have communicated to our male children the illusion that one must be successful at all costs; that the family is important but professional success is extremely important.

"Because of this illusion the American male is a torn person," observed Sherman, "and the American Christian male is peculiarly torn. His assignment is to succeed professionally and he must also succeed at home, but these two sides of his life work against each other.

"I offer a non-medical opinion," said Sherman, "that one reason for the shorter life expectancy of the American male is that he lives out his adult life in this family-work tension."

For young ministers in this success-oriented society, Sherman suggested that it might be better, if they are committed to "super performance," that they should not marry. "Here is where we need to face this problem," he said. "If you're going to have children, you are obligated to give up a section of your life to rear them."

For married ministers, Sherman urged them to bring a balance to their ministries by spending more time with their families and less time trying to reach the proverbial "top of the denomination ladder" by hopping from one church to another to gain position, more money and power. "Too many new drapes, new sets of furniture, new homes are being paid for at the risk of a marriage or the risk of the child," he said.

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Southern Baptists Urged To
Part With Their 'Wealth'

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7/20/77

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--Southern Baptists at all levels play a dangerous game in the way they use their financial resources, Cecil Sherman warned at a conference here.

"We as Southern Baptists are a people of great wealth," Sherman said at a conference on "The Bible and Moral Decision Making" sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission.

"We've set out to double the giving to (the denomination's) Cooperative Program (unified budget) and that's a worthy goal," declared the pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, N.C. "But we have almost a glut of things, with many of our churches' and conventions' budgets swollen. How we conduct ourselves within this situation is vital to our very life as a denomination.

"The big question for us is--can we touch so much and not be distorted by it and have our discipleship diluted?" Sherman said. "Can we be the church that got fat but chooses now to live lean?"

"Our charity is not total," charged Sherman. "It is fickle--near casual. It is not costly. I believe in the concept of Bold Mission...which our denominational leaders have encouraged for us (to proclaim the message of Christ to all the world) but they have not asked enough of themselves nor of us.

"Bold Mission needs a type of sacrifice that we have not yet seen either on the part of our denominational leadership or from pastors like myself. Let me be specific about what I believe the Bold Mission thrust needs," explained Sherman:

"First, Bold Mission needs to ask individual Christians not for 10 percent but 20 and 30 and 40 percent of their income.

"Second, Bold Mission needs to ask churches for 50 and 60 and 75 percent of their income. Thirdly, Bold Mission needs to ask state conventions like my own North Carolina convention for 50 percent of their Cooperative Program receipts. Fourthly, Bold Mission needs to ask every denominational executive to live on \$30,000 a year or less.

"And then," Sherman concluded, "Bold Mission will have credibility. We will either give away our denominational wealth or the denomination will begin to come apart at the seams."

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Child Care Spokesmen
Clash At Senate Hearing

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--A spokesman for private, not-for-profit children's homes, including church-related children's homes, charged that a child care bill passed by the House and now before a Senate committee would seriously harm the quality of services to needy children.

Ian A. Morrison, chairman of the Public Affairs Committee of the National Association of Homes for Children and president of Greer Children's Services, Millbrook, N. Y., cited studies which counter the "anti-institutional bias" he claims is present in the Public Assistance Amendments of 1977 (H.R. 7200), an omnibus social services bill.

This measure is currently under consideration before the Senate subcommittee on public assistance of the finance committee. The subcommittee is chaired by U. S. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D.-N.Y.).

Among provisions concerning supplemental security income benefits, aid to families with dependent children, and other social services, the bill also would set a ceiling on federal money for foster care maintenance payments, prohibit use of federal funds for physical facilities for out-of-home child care, and place strict limits on the conditions under which federal money could be released for foster care.

The bill also would redefine child welfare services. Present law calls for public services which supplement, or substitute for, parental care and supervision to protect children. The proposed law would emphasize services designed to keep families together wherever possible.

Joseph A. Califano, secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), suggested modifications in the bill which would further reduce federal support of foster care.

"A lower federal matching rate for foster care in large institutions would discourage such placements, which are often inappropriate for the child and cost more than smaller, more appropriate foster care settings," Califano testified.

The HEW secretary also urged that funds for foster care maintenance be "capped" to create incentives for "deinstitutionalization of children in foster care."

Morrison countered the arguments of Califano and other witnesses by noting that studies in New York, the state with the largest number of children in foster care institutions, show that 90 percent of the children so located needed to be there.

He also stated that institutional care has been shown to be comparable in cost to other forms of care and no more or no less damaging to the children involved. "Children in institutional care remain in care only one-third as long as children in foster care generally," he pointed out.

Dee Everitt of the National Association for Retarded Citizens, told the subcommittee, "Many, if not most, of these institutional placements could be avoided if on-going supportive services were available to families to supplement their abilities to care for their disabled child at home." Representatives of the National Council of State Public Welfare Administrators, National Conference of Catholic Charities, and New York State Department of Social Services shared this point of view.

Supportive and preventive services are detailed in the bill: homemaker services, day care, 24-hour crisis intervention, emergency caretaker services, emergency temporary shelters and group homes for adolescents, emergency counseling, and training for foster parents with "special needs" children.

Abe Lavine, executive vice president, Jewish Child Care Association of New York, speaking on behalf of the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., testified, "We are troubled by the incentive offered to encourage 'deinstitutionalization.' Some children simply cannot be served effectively by either foster family homes or group homes. They must have at their disposal specialized care and the structure available in certain well-run institutions."

Carol J. Parry, assistant commissioner, New York City Department of Social Services, supported the "concept of deinstitutionalization" but suggested that more time be granted to develop "alternate systems of care."

In written testimony submitted to the subcommittee, William E. Amos, executive director, Kentucky Baptist Childcare Program, stated, "This bill appears to be calling for too much too quickly ... as I understand it, it calls for a basic dismantling of the foster care system in our nation before the whole network of preventive services is really intact and functioning... to do them in sequence would seem to be...more realistic and positive..."

Amos also noted that "there are a number of families who are tired of and no longer want to carry the responsibility of their children...There will be a large number of children who will need alternative living situations...for a short period of time...Some of the best preventive work that can be done with a family to reunite it is to have a neutral setting for a child to live for a short period of time as a way of having a cooling off time for the entire family."

Italian Church Baptizes
16 in Special Service

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Baptist Press
7/20/77

By Flora Holifield

NAPLES, Italy (BP)--People sat in the windows and stood in the aisles here as the Naples Baptist Church baptized 16 converts in a special service.

A capacity crowd of almost 300 watched pastor Graziano Cannito baptize candidates, ranging in age from 77 to 20. For Italy, the number of candidates was exceedingly high.

Most of those baptized were young adults. Two curious priests mingled with the emotion-filled congregation observing the service.

Forty-five minutes before the service began, the church began to fill. Each person greeted his friends and fellow church members with a "holy kiss" on the cheeks as is the custom in Europe and the handshake characteristic of the warm fellowship of the congregation.

Young people and pastor were busy before the service as they arranged tracts and Bibles--gifts for the newly baptized members--and checked to see that all the details for the baptismal service were in order.

Southern Baptist missionaries from Rome attended the special service in which Robert A. Holifield spoke. The two-hour service began with praise and ended with praise. The theme of baptism was carried throughout.

One of the candidates was a woman 77 years old; one a man of 75. The remainder ranged from 20 to 35 years old. The elderly lady had accepted Jesus Christ as savior after many years of rebellion.

One young man, the youngest in his family, is the first of his family to accept Christ. Another young man found a tract in an art museum, read it and found the church address.

He said he "watched, like a lion watches its prey, before entering." He watched the people to see if they were living up to what they profess. The pastor said he was not "just a passenger," but a "carrier" of the gospel. The young man was the only baptismal candidate who had no family member present to witness his baptism.

After the baptismal service the new church members returned to the sanctuary where the deacon who had won many of them to Christ presented each new believer with a book, chosen especially for his or her personal need. The pastor gave a charge or exhortation to each baptized member.

The 23-year-old pastor's son, the organist, said to one of the missionaries: "Many others are preparing for baptism, but they must finish the course on the significance of the Christian life, of baptism and of church membership. There is much work to be done here in Naples."

With that spirit, the Naples congregation looks toward the future but it will long look back to this joy-filled day as a high point in the life of their church.

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Flora (Mrs. Robert A.) Holifield is a Southern Baptist missionary from Mississippi, stationed in Naples, Italy.

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