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Dr. Mary 'Preaches'  
To The Preachers

By Jon Pedersen

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Her hair is closely cropped and brushed back out of the way, her face is lined with experiences, each with it's own story and remembrances of war, of peace and of patients.

She is constantly in motion, one minute sitting erect, the next striding across the room, all the while posing questions in drill sergeant-like tones. She is "Dr. Mary", resident physician and watchdog on the health of nearly 1,300 students, 40 faculty members and their families at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

A native of Bellevue, Ky., Dr. Mary Humbrecht received the B.A. and R.N. degrees from Ohio State University and the M.D. from the University of Cincinnati.

"Space for anyone in medical school was very limited in those days following World War II. If you could get in, you got in whether you were a man or a woman. There were no 'quotas' to be met regarding male or female as there are today. There were very few women in the medical profession who were doctors in those days," she recalls.

Dr. Mary served as a nurse for the U. S. Army in the Battle of Britain. Today she is still active in the Army Reserves as a Colonel.

Following the service years, she moved to South Louisiana because "I got froze out of the North. If you've ever been thrown in a lake in Ohio in the middle of winter by class mates, you will know what cold really is. The driving conditions were not all that great either.

"I am definitely a Christian," she states assuredly. "I was a nominal Christian when I first came to the seminary, but I have developed strength through doctoring the seminary family," observed Dr. Mary. "One student in particular did more doctoring on me during a crisis in his life than I did on him."

The biggest affliction that students and faculty carry to Dr. Mary is the illness of an overload of activities. "Students and faculty members take themselves to be 'superhuman'. They are in many ways, but not physically. They push and push their bodies and their strength, forgetting that they are called to be good stewards of their bodies as well as their time, money, and other things which God gives them," she declares.

"My most common prescription is: plenty of sleep...without pills!"

In the 13 years since Dr. Mary Humbrecht adopted the seminary family as her own special patients, she has treated everything from hangnails to leprosy. She observes, her usual quipping manner and constant motion subsiding, that in a comparison of seminary patients and secular patients, whom she still sees regularly, the seminarians are aware of the spiritual dimension which the "world" does not understand.

"Here the people realize the soul; the spiritual realm is reality. Seminarians understand that problems in their lives can be rooted in a spiritual condition. The secular world attempts to gloss over such problems as 'psycho-emotional'. Here (at the seminary) there really are fewer problems than in the secular world. But, when problems do come, the tendency is not to seek human help and that is when they really intensify."

"My biggest job, when it all boils down, is preaching to the preachers," says Dr. Mary as she again takes on her perpetual motion, having spotted another haggard minister of the gospel shuffling into the clinic.

"Sit down in the chair, I'll be right with you" comes the command as Dr. Mary Humbrecht, Col. U.S. Army reserves, prepares to minister to the body and soul of another of her parishoners.

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13 ABC Stations Refuse  
'Soap', Commission Says

NASHVILLE (BP)--Thirteen ABC affiliated stations located in 10 different states will not broadcast the Sept. 13 opening episode of "Soap," the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has learned.

The commission's list includes WYUR, Huntsville, and WKAB, Montgomery, Ala.; WJCL, Savannah, Ga.; WBAK, Terre Haute, Ind.; KDUB, Dubuque, Iowa, and KTVO, Ottumwa, Iowa; WJZ, Baltimore, Md.; WABG, Greenwood, Miss.; WCCB, Charlotte, and WRAL, Raleigh, N. C.; WOLO, Columbia, S. C.; WBBJ, Jackson, Tenn.; and WOWK, Huntington, W. Va.

In addition, the commission said that approximately 12 stations which have joint affiliation with ABC and another network will not air the controversial new show either because it is unacceptable or because it conflicts with other programs.

Earlier, the Christian Life Commission reported the names of 10 of 11 reported sponsors of "Soap" who told the commission they will not sponsor the show--at least temporarily. Reports indicate that at least the first episode is not fully sponsored.

Although ABC officials have predicted excellent ratings for the adult comedy series, "Soap" has drawn the wrath of a wide cross section of religious groups, led by the Christian Life Commission and the United States Catholic Conference.

Others joining in the protest include 10 members of a national "No Soap Coalition" and three recent additions--the National Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

Commission officials Foy Valentine and Harry N. Hollis Jr., who sent letters to every ABC affiliate asking them to cancel "Soap," praised station officials who have chosen to drop the show.

"We believe the managers of these stations have properly sensed the convictions of their viewers and we commend them for exercising responsible moral judgment by refusing to air a program that shamelessly treads on basic family values and the most elementary standards of sexual decency," the two Southern Baptist leaders said in a joint statement.

Reports indicate that a number of ABC affiliates will move "Soap" to a later hour, which commission officials view as "one of the clear signs that the program is in deep trouble."

Valentine and Hollis, who saw both the original and the revised episodes of "Soap," still see it as a "test case" in television and feel it is a "sex-saturated show" which will pave the way for additional "morally irresponsible programming." They say they will continue to urge Southern Baptists to express disapproval to local stations, advertisers and the network, if and when "Soap" is aired.

According to the commission, many station managers have indicated a willingness to replace "Soap" with different programming if audience reaction is predominantly negative.