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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Roy T. Edgemon Elected
Church Training Director

NASHVILLE (BP)--Roy T. Edgemon, director of volunteer projects coordination for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Home Mission Board, has been elected director of the SBC Sunday School Board's church training department, according to Grady C. Cothen, board president.

Edgemon, 43, who will assume his new post on Jan. 1, succeeds Philip B. Harris, who retired June 30 after 17 years as head of the church training program.

A native of Wichita Falls, Tex., Edgemon joined the Home Mission Board staff in 1975 as director of evangelism planning and consultation, following seven years' missionary service in Japan. Earlier, he served as pastor of several Texas churches.

He holds the bachelor of science degree from Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, and the bachelor of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

While a missionary overseas, Edgemon taught theology, preaching, homiletics and ethics to pastors and ministerial students in Okinawa. He was a regular guest lecturer for the U. S. Army in executive and middle management workshops and in international personal management for executives in Okinawa and Tokyo.

Most recently, he has coordinated the use of volunteers by the Home Mission Board and developed a system for making information concerning potential volunteers available to other SBC agencies. William Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board, noted that Edgemon "has been instrumental in helping us develop our Volunteer Involvement in Missions (VIM) procedure where we can gather information for literally hundreds of thousands of people interested in serving our nation and world for Christ."

Cothen said, "We have prayed long and earnestly and sought diligently to find the Lord's man for this difficult post. We welcome Roy Edgemon with his unique combination of gifts. With his coming, we rededicate ourselves to leading Southern Baptists into a new era of training that we may fulfill completely the commission of Christ."

With the possibility of using thousands of volunteers through the SBC's new Mission Service Corps, Edgemon said training in the local church will be of "absolute importance."

"I can see church training preparing these volunteers in an ongoing, basic training program," said Edgemon, "and in specialized training in all phases of Bold Mission Thrust" (SBC effort to proclaim the message of Christ to the world by the year 2000).

"I see church training as a lay seminary," he said. "The lay movement is the strongest movement in our denomination today. Perhaps never in history has church training been challenged as we are today to provide materials to train the laity. Training the laity in Bold Mission Thrust is the greatest potential we have."

"As I have travelled across the country, I have heard over and over again that we are facing the danger of an untrained generation of Baptists," said Edgemon. "The basic training, for a foundation, and the specific training, to meet the needs of this day are absolutely essential," he said.

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Two Missionaries in Asia
Victimized By Terrorists

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11/9/77

RICHMOND (BP)--Two Southern Baptist missionaries were released unharmed after becoming victims of separate acts of terrorism in Thailand and the Philippines.

The first incident, involving a missionary and a national pastor in Thailand, may have been harassment due to good response to the gospel in the area, according to William R. Wakefield, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's secretary for Southeast Asia. Money seemed to be the only motive for the Philippine incident, which involved a bus load of people.

Although Southern Baptist missionaries are serving in 89 countries throughout the world, including some areas where there is terrorist activity, very few missionaries have ever been victimized, Wakefield said.

The Thailand incident occurred in a rural village. Missionary Jack E. Mahaffey and Pastor Suthip found a log blocking the road. As soon as Mahaffey stopped the car, men with knives and guns emerged from surrounding bushes. He and the pastor were jerked from the car and robbed of watches, money, a driver's license and a Bible. They were then forced to walk through jungle for several kilometers.

While being herded through the jungle, the two repeatedly were asked what they were doing there. The national pastor replied they were telling others about Jesus.

One man in the group wanted to kill them, but was restrained by the others. He did fire his gun in the air. Eventually they were released and given enough money to get home. They were told the car would be held for ransom, but police found it abandoned and returned it.

In the Philippines, Samuel M. Waldron was on a bus trip home to Iligan City. Waldron, who fell asleep, woke up to see a man holding a grenade about two feet from his head.

The bus had stopped and the driver was being replaced. As the bus started rolling again, the new driver's cohorts, the one with the grenade and two with revolvers, systematically searched and robbed everyone on the bus. Waldron lost his watch and about \$20.

The driver turned the bus onto a side road near Iligan City and drove it up an unpaved mountain road until it became stuck in mud. After warning the passengers not to leave for 30 minutes, the robbers disappeared into the night. The passengers waited, then got off the bus, pushed it back onto the road, and drove into town to report the incident. No one was injured.

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Ohio Baptists Against
Homosexuality, For Bryant

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HEATH, Ohio (BP)--The State Convention of Baptists in Ohio took a stand against homosexuality and expressed appreciation for Anita Bryant during its annual session here.

The convention also reindorsed stands of past years against permissive abortion legislation and against the use of public tax funds for parochial school support,

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It adopted a record Cooperative Program unified budget for 1978 amounting to \$1,568,693 of which 37 percent will go to nationwide and worldwide mission benevolences of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Counting funds from other sources the state convention will operate on a budget of \$2,608,788 next year.

Another step was taken toward establishing a retirement center ministry with approval for employing a coordinator for work with the aging to be employed sometime in 1978.

The coordinator will serve as a resource person and will plan and develop a ministry to the aging and to the retirement center, including assisting local churches in retirement ministries.

However, the coordinator will not necessarily become the administrator of any retirement center which may subsequently be created. Called Ohio Baptists Benevolences Inc., the center ministry will be the first Ohio Baptist convention agency to function separately from the executive board.

A constitutional amendment barring state convention privileges and benefits to a church under certain conditions was withdrawn by its sponsor. Paul Payne of Dayton, immediate past president of the convention said the executive board had taken action during 1977 which covered the points raised in the amendment.

The amendment, introduced last year, would have withheld state privileges and benefits if an association withdrew fellowship from a church for doctrinal deviation or practices "contrary to those held by this convention."

The loss of state aid for the pastor's retirement and the loss of the right to send messengers to the state convention each year were involved.

The issue went back to withdrawal of associational fellowship from two Cincinnati churches in 1975 because of tongue speaking and other divergent doctrine in those churches.

Robert L. Bateman, Columbus pastor, was re-elected convention president. As such, he also presides over executive board quarterly meetings. The 1978 convention will meet November 1-3 in Toledo.

The resolution on homosexuality put the convention in opposition to "the so-called gay rights movement, the legalization of homosexual practices, and freedom to practice homosexuality."

A companion resolution commended Anita Bryant, a Southern Baptist, for her stand against "this evil" (homosexuality) and assured her of the convention's prayers and support in face of the "abuse and adverse criticism" she is still receiving.

The convention as its part in Bold Mission Thrust nationwide and the regional North Central Mission Thrust has set a goal of establishing 70 new missions around Ohio in 1978.

The convention also has the second highest registration in history with 961 messengers and visitors.

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Foreign Board Appoints 24,
Acts to Meet Dollar Decline

Baptist Press
11/9/77

RICHMOND (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed 24 career missionaries during its November meeting here. The board also appropriated almost \$250,000 to meet additional cost-of-living expenses of missionaries already on the field in areas of the world where the value of the American dollar is declining.

In another action, the board voted \$106,000 from relief and hunger contributions as the first step in a new program to assist people in drought areas of West Africa

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and started looking for a Mission Service Corps volunteer to aid in this relief program.

The 12 couples appointed here bring the total number of missionaries commissioned this year to 254--only 14 short of the record 268 for all of last year. One more group of missionaries is scheduled for appointment this year at a special out-of-town service, Dec. 13, at Spottswood Baptist Church in Fredericksburg, Va.

With the latest appointments, the total Southern Baptist missionary force stands at 2,793. As of Dec. 1, with the transfer of former Ethiopian missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Dale Beighle to Bophuthatswana, Southern Baptists will have missionaries in 90 countries or territories around the world.

Bophuthatswana is an African homeland of the Tswana Tribespeople which is scheduled to gain its nominal independence from South Africa in December.

Looking to the needs of those already on the field, Winston Crawley, director of the board's overseas division, said the additional appropriation for missionaries' cost-of-living allowances in 1978 was necessary because of a "marked decline" in the purchasing power of the U. S. dollar in recent months. He said this decline was especially evident in Japan and in several countries of Western Europe where Southern Baptists have missionaries, including Germany, Switzerland, Belgium and Scotland.

Some cost-of-living figures obtained in July, when the 1978 budget was prepared, are now out of date, Crawley pointed out. After obtaining later information, he asked the board members to approve an additional \$247,420 to cover increases in 25 different countries or territories.

The \$106,000 West Africa relief and hunger appropriation, part of which will come from relief funds specifically designated for Africa by the donors, will be used in Upper Volta. The money will aid in the purchase of cereal grains and assist in their distribution to needy people in the desert region of the country, according to W. Eugene Grubbs, hunger relief and disaster response coordinator for the board. He told board members that this appropriation is part of a large-scale hunger and relief program of \$300,000 to \$500,000 which he believes will be urgently needed over the next six months.

A Mission Service Corps volunteer is being sought to spend about a year working under missionary direction in purchasing, transporting, storing and distributing grain in this program, Grubbs said.

He and Lewis I. Myers Jr., the board's Mission Service Corps coordinator, suggested that this volunteer could be a third-year agriculture or college student who "doesn't mind getting his hands dirty." Myers said the volunteer actually needs to be on the field by Dec. 1.

Board members also:

1. Invited the Baptist General Convention of Texas to participate in Brazilian Baptists' nationwide evangelistic campaign in 1980.
2. Extended the furlough of Mr. and Mrs. James W. Cecil, missionaries to Hong Kong, through the first four months of 1978 and asked Cecil to work with the board's consultant on laymen overseas beginning Jan. 1. During the past year, Cecil has been in Richmond assisting the consultant on evangelism and church development.
3. Heard Eloise (Mrs. Baker J.) Cauthen report that her husband, the board's executive director, is continuing to show steady improvement toward full recovery from his Sept. 18 heart attack. She said that Cauthen is walking about two miles a day now and in general is applying himself patiently to "the job of getting well."

Newly appointed missionaries from Texas include Mr. and Mrs. C. Milton Allred Jr., assigned to Mexico; Mr. and Mrs. Jerry D. Burney, to Ghana; Mr. and Mrs. Joe D. Perkins, to Ghana; Mr. and Mrs. James M. Tilley, to North Brazil; and Mr. and Mrs. Morris R. West, to Chile.

North Carolina appointees were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Huneycutt, assigned to Austria; Mr. and Mrs. Larry R. McCoy, to Panama; and Mr. and Mrs. Larry E. Oldham, to Dominican Republic.

Also appointed were Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Pirkle of Georgia and Mississippi, assigned to Gaza; Mr. and Mrs. Jerry R. Robertson of Kentucky and Louisiana, to Ivory Coast; Dr. and Mrs. Danny R. Sawyer of Virginia, Missouri and Ohio, to Nigeria; and Mr. and Mrs. Jerry D. Spires of Arkansas and Mississippi, to Malawi.

In addition, the board approved three single men as medical receptors. They are Michael E. Fleenor, a student at University of Alabama School of Medicine, Birmingham; Daniel D. Nale, a University of Texas Medical School student in Houston; and M. David Stockton of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. A medical receptor is a third or fourth year medical or dental student who works with missionary physicians in Baptist hospitals or clinics overseas.

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Hampton Named To Field
Representative Position

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RICHMOND (BP)--James E. Hampton, Southern Baptist missionary to Tanzania, has been elected by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as the new field representative for Eastern Africa effective Jan. 1.

Hampton succeeds John R. Cheyne, currently on furlough serving as associate coordinator for hunger relief and disaster response at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's home office here.

As field representative, Hampton will provide a personal link between the board and about 300 missionaries in Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Rwanda, the Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. After completion of their current furlough in the States, the Hamptons will move to Nairobi, Kenya, where he will assume his new responsibilities.

In Tanzania, Hampton has worked as a missionary advisor for the Northern Tanzania Baptist Association and served as administrative secretary for the organization of Baptist missionaries in East Africa, which included Kenya and Tanzania. Since that time the missionaries have formed two organizations, one in each country.

The Hamptons, appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1956, did general evangelistic work in Mombasa, Kenya, and Tanga, Tanzania, before moving to Arusha in 1965. They taught part-time at the Baptist seminary of East Africa in Arusha in addition to their other duties there.

A native of Arkansas, Hampton was born in New Blain and lived in Paris and Mena while growing up. He was graduated from Ouachita Baptist College (now University), Arkadelphia, Ark., and from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex. His wife is the former Gena Ledbetter of Harrison, Ark., and Tulsa, Okla.

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(BP) Photo to be mailed to Baptist state papers by the Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.