



December 1, 1977

Texas President  
Comes Prepared

By Debbie Stewart

DALLAS (BP)--Milton E. Cunningham left Texas in 1957 for the mission fields of Africa. He came back 15 years later ideally prepared to lead the largest Southern Baptist state convention during the time of its greatest missions emphasis.

Cunningham became president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas after the death of his good friend James G. Harris, who was president, in July. Cunningham had been first vice president and was elected president in his own right at the annual Texas Baptist Convention in November.

It's now Cunningham's task to lead more than two million Texas Baptists into Bold Mission Thrust, Southern Baptists' plan to evangelize the world by the year 2,000. The plan is mobilizing the energies of Baptists at the national, state and local levels, all three areas in which Cunningham has ministered.

Missionary Cunningham returned to serve the Westbury Baptist Church in Houston as pastor in 1973. Texas Baptists elected him first vice president of their convention three years later.

Now, with a former missionary as their president, Texas Baptists have missions on their minds more than ever. Southern Baptist Convention President Jimmy Allen, also a Texas pastor, has called on his state to provide 1,000 of the 5,000 short-term volunteer missionaries needed in the Mission Service Corps. The corps, a major part of Bold Mission Thrust, will send 5,000 volunteers for one to two years of service at home and abroad by 1982.

Cunningham sees his role as Texas Baptist president as one of "responsibility to the people" in the state convention, and of cooperative work with other Southern Baptist groups to make Bold Mission Thrust a Texas-sized success. He wants Baptists in every church to enter Bold Missions with preparation to match their great faith.

"Bold Missions is exciting, and our people are going to respond with a special sense of urgency," Cunningham said. "A lot of people are going to consider mission service who never would have thought of it before. We must do the right kind of preparatory work to recruit them and utilize them. We have an army of people willing to serve."

The Mission Service Corps will involve many lay people in foreign missions work, which contributed to Cunningham's own sensitive social awareness. A champion of the local church, Cunningham believes that a Christian is on the scene of missions wherever he opens his eyes to people's needs.

"I believe the answer is in the ministry of the local church," Cunningham said. "If the local church cannot minister in its neighborhood, it doesn't have a chance to make much difference in the world."

The 49-year-old convention president, with a touch of gray hair at his temples, still generates a contagious youthful enthusiasm. Some of his friends know Cunningham as a missionary with a pastor's heart, others as a pastor with a missionary's vision. Milton Cunningham has both heart and vision as he encourages Christians to minister in a world full of neighborhoods.



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### NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355

W. C. Fields, Director  
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

### BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996  
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461  
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2000  
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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### Criswell Meets The Press At New Orleans Seminary

By Jonathan Pedersen

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The breakfast dishes are cleared away in the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary dining room as the personable, gray-haired pastor leans forward to answer questions from the press.

He is W. A. (Wally Amos) Criswell, pastor of the 19,000-member First Baptist Church, Dallas, the largest Southern Baptist church. He speaks almost as if he has known the interviewers for some time, calling each by first name as he responds to their queries.

The men of the media seem to sit spellbound by the preacher's matter-of-fact manner and dogged determination to state his beliefs simply and without compromise.

The questions come in rapid succession.

What about church and state separation, in light of recent actions by President Carter and his appointment of an envoy to the Vatican, which most Baptists disapproved?

"I see no threat to separation of church and state," responded Criswell, who openly supported Gerald Ford in the U. S. presidential campaign, rather than Carter, a fellow Southern Baptist.

"We need a Vatican representative. It's wise to stay in touch with the Vatican as it is in touch with many sensitive issues and areas," he declared.

Criswell did note a number of ways in which he believes government is attempting to make inroads on the freedom of religious institutions. He cited the currently pending suit by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex., over the issue of employment procedures and noted a conflict in Kentucky over the state's attempt to tax mission gifts made by Kentucky Southern Baptists.

"Dr. Criswell, what is your stand on the ordination of women?" reporter asked. "I believe the ordination of women is not to be found in the New Testament," he responded. "The New Testament makes no mention, or intention, for the ordination of women. You are outside of the Bible when you begin to carry on with the ordination of women. It is a repercussion from the world, the women's libbers and feminists...not God."

"How do you suggest women may serve in the church, Dr. Criswell?" another asks. "There are many areas of service open in our churches which are filled very well by women... but the most important area a woman can serve in is the home. As you know," continues Criswell, "our homes are going to pieces across America; the first responsibility that a woman should have is to be in the home. We will not have a nation without our homes."

The reporters are busily scratching notes as the Dallas pastor is questioned about his view of Anita Bryant and homosexuals in the church.

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"With unanimity, from beginning to end, the Bible condemns sodomy, and this sin lies under the judgment of almighty God. The homosexual person, in his expressive life, is no more different than heterosexuals who are tempted to adultery, fornication and lust. God commands both persons to be virtuous. I am convinced that the power of Jesus can change a homosexual. I am much in sympathy with Anita Bryant...she is a bold, fearless champion of the scriptures."

On the topic of abortion and "right to life" movements, Criswell stated flatly that abortion on demand is wrong, that the government should have no part in it. "There are times, such as in the case of rape, incest or when the attending physicians determine that there will be abnormalcy; that abortion is imminently acceptable," he said.

On the topic of euthanasia, Criswell asserted, "I am in favor of it. I don't think that Heaven is that bad! I would leave the decisions in the hands of the doctors; if the patient is very aged and in pain, or shows no signs of possible recovery, I feel death would be right."

When one reporter quipped about the possibility of Criswell's planned "Criswell Reference Bible" becoming simply the "Gospel according to Criswell," the 68-year old pastor gave a disarmingly broad grin and stated that the work will eventually replace the famed Scofield Reference Bible, which he said was published 50 years ago and is "very dispensational in nature."

Criswell addressed the media during the week-long Layne Lectures at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. The lectures are funded by a gift from the Layne family of Shreveport, La., and have, through the 53 years of its existence, brought many denominational leaders to the seminary.

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Grandson of Slave Elected  
Chicago-Metro Moderator

HARVEY, Ill. (BP)--A local Baptist minister, who is the grandson of a slave, was elected moderator of the Chicago-Metropolitan Baptist Association, at the organization's 25th annual meeting here.

Pastor Herbert L. Holmes of Universal Baptist Church here is the first black moderator of a local association affiliated with the Illinois Baptist State Association, a Southern Baptist body.

Holmes recently told a meeting of moderators and missions directors, "About three years ago, I learned about Southern Baptists in Chicago, was given information about how to come into the Chicago Metro Association, and found an open door.

"In less than three years, we've been accepted in the state convention, found Christian fellowship, and I've been elected moderator of the association," Holmes stated. "The Lord is doing things through Southern Baptists."

The Chicago Association has 11 predominantly black churches, among more than 90 churches in its fellowship.

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Bishops Stress Evangelism  
And Inter-Faith Relations

By William Bond

Baptist Press  
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WASHINGTON (BP)--A recent Catholic movement toward better relations with other denominations progressed further during the semi-annual National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) here.

Newly elected NCCB President John Quinn, archbishop of San Francisco, said he was especially encouraged by talks between Wake Forest University, a Baptist school, and Belmont Abbey College, a Catholic school, both in North Carolina.

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Movement toward better relations with other Christians continued as the bishops noted in a 250-page document that non-Catholic Christians may find salvation.

In other action, the NCCB doctrines committee warned that a study of human sexuality commissioned by the Catholic Theological Society of America is "pastorally dangerous" as a guide to moral principles.

Since its publication in June, the book "Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought" has come under solid attack by a number of individual bishops because it condones, for some people, adultery, masturbation, fornication and homosexuality--practices traditionally condemned.

The bishops meet twice annually to consider current aspects of church life. At this meeting bishops voted to consider unifying certain national collections. The move comes in the wake of a scandal involving misuse of funds by the Pallotine Fathers and would lower the amounts spent on administration nationally.

Outgoing NCCB president Joseph Bernardin, archbishop of Cincinnati, promoted the main missions thrust of the conference by calling for the evangelization of nonchurched Catholics. He said that until these Catholics are reached and revitalized Catholics would be sorely limited.

The bishops noted the need for church involvement of charismatics and women. The charismatics were asked to share their blessings and to work with the non-charismatic members of the church. A committee was established to help incorporate charismatics more fully into the church.

In a report on "Women in Society and the Church," the bishops noted with pleasure the increasing role women are taking in the church. They particularly showed interest in the larger number of women in decision making positions in such fields as education and social services. They did support, however, Pope Paul's decision against the ordination of women.

Beginning his three-year term as president, Quinn declared an "impending, unresolved moral crisis" in regard to sex, marriage and the family. He proposed specific ministries to the engaged, the married, parents, developing families, hurting families, and family-child relationships.

The most far-reaching action taken by the NCCB was the approval of the National Catechetical Directory. This document will serve as a guideline for manuals and teachers of the Catholic catechism (religious education) classes. In a catechism class, one learns the faith and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

The only other similar action by American bishops occurred in 1884 when they issued the Baltimore Catechism, consisting of questions and answers to be memorized. It has not been widely used for some time.

The new directory is not a catechism. It is the standard by which new catechisms will be written. Before it can be used, however, a final draft must be written, using amendments made at the meeting, and sent to Rome for Vatican approval.

The most controversial items in the directory include a statement that sexism, racism, and poverty are "social sins" of all people and that God continues to reveal salvation today, though not like it was revealed in Jesus Christ.

The directory also re-emphasized a report made to the conference on pro-life issues. The directory and the report condemned unnatural forms of birth control and labelled abortion as murder. The report recommended establishing more counseling centers to aid women in dealing with unwanted pregnancies and helping with adoption procedures.

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William Bond is a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and an intern in its Center for Urban Studies in Washington, D. C.

## Objectionable Programs Said Factor in TV Viewing Loss

NASHVILLE (BP)--While broadcasters and advertisers frantically search for reasons for the recently reported statistical decline in homes using television (HUT), they should not ignore the fact that many of the nation's viewers are disgusted with offensive television programming.

That observation comes from Harry N. Hollis Jr., director of family and special moral concerns for the Christian Life Commission, the Southern Baptist Convention agency which has played a major role in nationwide efforts to stimulate better programming and protest exploitation of violence.

An average decline of 3 percent in the number of homes using television, shown by both Nielson and Arbitron ratings, has caused a furor in the industry which "Broadcasting" magazine says "may be without equal in recent TV history." It has flustered both broadcasters, who produce programming; and advertisers, who must make decisions on expenditure of millions of dollars in advertising funds. All wait anxiously for further analysis of the situation.

"Broadcasting" quotes some industry sources as believing the decline resulted from a statistical measurement fluke and is not real, while others blame "stunting" for the loss. "Stunting"--the practice of infusing special programming and mini-series into viewing hours, is said to confuse viewers, who don't know what watch on a regular basis.

The magazine, however, quotes others as saying that "stunting" is not turning viewers off. They ask how one can account for lower HUT levels during programming hours when "stunting" is not a factor.

An editorial in the same issue of "Broadcasting" (Nov. 28) wonders if the decline is real or a technical fluke and then asks a question which Hollis considers important.

"We hope it is the latter (a fluke)," the editorial says, "but the evidence suggests otherwise... While waiting for the definitive word, we suggest that broadcasters--and especially broadcast programmers--assume for a moment the decline is real.

"The question then becomes," the editorial continued, "why did it happen? Addressing that question can be profitable. Time spent trying to make programming better suit the needs and wishes of the audience is never wasted--not even if done on the assumption that everybody hopes will be proved wrong."

Hollis, reflecting on the issue, said in a Baptist Press interview, "The decline in homes using television may be due to several factors; it's a complex issue. But I think the editorial in 'Broadcasting' hints at a point we and a host of other groups across the country have been making all along--television needs better programming. It has too much morally objectionable exploitation of sex and violence. That turns many viewers off.

"Certainly one cause for the decline is the unappealing combination of mediocrity and immorality which is found in so many current television shows. When will the networks finally tune in to the American people?" Hollis asked.

"What millions of viewers want is programming that is morally responsible," he continued. "The solution to this decline in HUT is not better statistical techniques but better moral content in programs. The solution lies within the industry itself."

Meanwhile advertising and television executives are awaiting additional surveying which they hope will prove October data of Nielson and Arbitron is in error. Nielson puts the declines at roughly 1.2 million day-time viewers and a quarter of a million at night since a year ago.

San Antonians Show Concern  
Over TV Programming

By Toby Druin

SAN ANTONIO (BP)--Some 1,500 San Antonians went on record here with their presence at an interfaith television consumer workshop that they are disturbed by television programming.

The Alamo City residents attended the workshop at First Baptist Church, sponsored by a broad cross-section of religious groups and conceived by Jimmy R. Allen, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president and pastor of the host church. Roman Catholic Archbishop Francis J. Furey and United Methodist Bishop J. Chess Lovern, both of San Antonio, were among those who introduced speakers.

"We are here because we feel responsible middle American needs to know what our role is in a media environment," said Allen, who presided over the meeting he hopes will be a prototype for others across the nation.

The audience heard national executives for Southern Baptists, Roman Catholics and United Methodists urge the networks to clean up their acts and the people to get involved in helping them get their job done. And they learned that their complaints to local stations, the networks and especially to sponsors pay off.

Harry N. Hollis Jr., of the SBC Christian Life Commission, said word has come from ABC affiliates that "Soap" is being radically altered. He said the battle has probably been won and that "diligent efforts" of people across the U. S. has caused "ABC to pull away from its goal to make 'Soap' the forerunner of things to come on TV."

All speakers emphasized they were not "anti-television," but want to see the medium used more responsibly and realize its tremendous potential for good.

"Every person in the United States, unless he is a monk in total isolation, is affected by television--even the person who doesn't watch," said Pat Sullivan, director of film and broadcasting for the U. S. Catholic Conference.

He decried the telecasting of so-called "adult" material, which would exclude children from its audience. Television, he said was conceived and built as a family medium of entertainment.

"All of prime time is family viewing time," he said. "By what right do the television networks decide a segment of viewing time is not for your children?"

The airways belong to the people, Sullivan noted. "The licensees' (stations') discretions are limited by the rights of the viewing public. The First Amendment rights of a licensee are circumscribed by the rights of the public he serves," he said.

Nelson Price, director of the division of public media for the United Methodist Church, echoed Sullivan's comments that everyone is affected by television.

Children are especially susceptible to it, he said, claiming the average child watches 26.5 hours each week. "At 8 p.m. every day an average of 63 million children are watching television," Price said. "And from the time the stations come on early in the morning until midnight at least one million children are watching."

Price, who has developed a workbook and program on "Television Awareness Training," said the problem can be dealt with in the home by turning the set off, selecting specific programs for viewing, being aware of what is being viewed and what values are being communicated.

Hollis said action to protest programming, such as "Soap," usually brings the cry that "pressure groups" are at work to stifle television creativity.

"Talk about pressure groups," he said. "There's a group of network television executives who are putting tremendous pressure on the American consumer to get us to acquiesce to the immorality and mediocrity so often seen on television."

He praised local network affiliates and their officials for resisting network pressure. . . Some 20 ABC affiliates have refused to air "Soap."

"There is a pressure group which the industry had better fear," Hollis said. "That pressure group is the American people. We are angry about television's immorality, and we are not going to take it anymore. Changes have already been made and we are just getting started. As consumers, we are determined to see that TV lives up to its potential for good."

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#### Cooperative Program Still Lags After Two Months

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Giving to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national Cooperative Program unified budget rallied during the second month of the 1977-78 fiscal year but not enough to offset the slow start in October.

Undesignated receipts, funneled to SBC causes from 33 state or multi-state Baptist conventions, amount to \$8,302,166 through the first two months--6.29 percent ahead of the same point last year. A total of \$3,956,261 in November registered 10.22 percent ahead of the same month last year.

Total giving for the year to date, including the Cooperative Program amount and another \$837,956 in designated gifts, total \$9,140,122. That represents a 5.86 percent increase over the same point last year.

Pointing to the need to meet the national \$55,080,000 operating and capital needs budget of Southern Baptist agencies and the additional \$8,400,000 challenge budget for unmet mission needs, Porter W. Routh urged Southern Baptists to remember the challenges of the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust.

Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, said the SBC is already gearing up to fulfill the effort to evangelize the world in this century and called on Southern Baptists to increase gifts to accomplish that purpose.

The SBC has voted to set a goal to double total Cooperative Program contributions (including both state and national levels) by 1982 and then double twice more by the end of the century to fulfill the Bold Mission Thrust goal.

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#### Family Problems Most Common South Carolina Ministers Say

COLUMBIA, S. C. (BP)--Family problems require more counseling than any other need, according to a new survey of Southern Baptist ministers in South Carolina.

Husband-wife difficulties were named by 60 ministers contacted as the major problems they confront in counseling. Parent-child relationship problems followed a close second.

The non-scientific survey was conducted by the South Carolina Baptist Convention's office of public relations in preparation for a series of locally-produced television and radio messages released in November.

Pastors of large and small churches in both rural and urban settings were included, as well as ministers who do extensive counseling among non-church members, according to Thomas J. Brannon, director of public relations.

Alcohol abuse was named most often as the cause of marital problems, followed by financial worries. Moral problems such as selfishness and lack of honesty also were listed as contributing factors, along with changing patterns of family life.

Ministers labeled parent-child relationship problems in terms such as conflict with parents, rebelliousness on the part of youth, lack of parental discipline, child neglect and a need for better parenting skills.

Problems with individuals on non-family matters most often involved confused values and priorities, along with emotional problems, particularly depression, guilt, lack of self-esteem and loneliness. Church members' apathy causes ministers the most concern, they said.

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Christian Scientist  
Loses Court Appeal

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--After nine years of fighting the state of New York for what she alleged to be religious harrassment, Miriam Winters lost her final appeal here when the Supreme Court refused to review her case.

On an evening in May 1968, Winters, a practicing Christian Scientist, was taken to Bellevue Hospital in New York City after being involved in a dispute with the manager of the hotel where she lived. After being hospitalized there for 11 days, she was judged by two physicians to be mentally ill and transferred to Central Islip State Hospital, a mental institution.

The state of New York contends that although she had the right to a hearing challenging her transfer, she failed to exercise it and, according to New York Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz, voluntarily consented to her confinement in the state hospital.

Winters contends, however, that her religious freedom was violated by constant medication in the form of tranquilizers forced into her system by medical personnel at both Bellevue and Central Islip. She further claims that doctors and nurses summarily dismissed her objections to the medication, which included intramuscular injections, calling her "irrational."

In a written legal brief submitted to Supreme Court justices, Winters said that throughout her hospitalization, she "made unequivocally clear to all her attendants that she opposed any type of medication" because of her faith in Christian Science healing.

After several months' confinement in the state mental hospital, she filed suit in federal district court for money damages against the directors of both hospitals, the New York state commissioner of mental hygiene, and staff doctors. The court dismissed her complaint for failure to state a claim upon which relief could be granted.

The U. S. Court of appeals for the Second Circuit reversed the lower ruling, however, sending it to a trial court for further action, with the instructions that her religious ass rtions be taken into consideration. Winters lost in the trial court in July 1975, moved for a new trial, and was denied in December of the same year. She subsequently appealed again to the district and appellate courts without success.

Attorney General Lefkowitz argued in his brief for the state of New York that no substantial federal question was at stake in the case because the doctors had acted in good faith and without awareness that their actions might be subject to First Amendment restrictions. By unanimously denying her petition for a hearing, the Supreme Court justices left standing the ruling of the lower courts, declining to comment on their reasons for ending Miriam Winters' long legal battle.

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Wayland Queens  
Hong Kong Bound

Baptist Press  
12/1/77

PLAINVIEW, Tex. (BP)--Hong Kong is the destination for the Wayland Baptist College Queens women's basketball team in May, 1978. The team will participate in a Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board witnessing thrust in that city, according to Roy C. McClung, Wayland president.

Wayland's Board of Turstees voted \$6,000 to cover one-third the tour cost. Another third will be provided by the team members, and they will try to raise the remainder in their home towns.

The Foreign Mission Board will provide lodging, food and transportation while the girls are in Hong Kong. This trip is part of a two-year missions emphasis and the Queens will be one of several groups traveling under the auspices of the board.

The team is no stranger to international competition, having played national teams from Mexico, the Soviet Union and Taiwan. The Queens are currently ranked first in the nation by several polls.

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