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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Federal Aid Sought  
For Battered Women

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--As many as 50 percent of all women living with men in the United States may be battered by those men according to testimony offered before a subcommittee of the U. S. House of Representatives.

Cheryl Beardslee, on the staff of Women's Advocates, St. Paul, Minn., cited that figure in testimony presented to the Subcommittee on Select Education of the Committee on Education and Labor. Other witnesses cited the same research and offered other evidence of widespread domestic violence in America today.

Legislation introduced by U. S. Reps. Lindy Boggs, D-La., and Newton I. Steers, R.-Md., (H. R. 7927) and U. S. Rep. Barbara A. Mikulski, D.-Md., (H.R. 8948) was generally supported by witnesses as a first step at the national level to deal with the problem.

The Boggs-Steers Bill, known as the Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Act of 1977, would provide \$60 million over a three-year period to finance emergency shelters, research, and training of professionals to provide family and legal counseling. The measure would also establish a national clearinghouse for information and referral on spouse abuse.

Rep. Mikulski's bill would provide \$25 million over a two-year period to coordinate services, funding and research through the federal government. It would also provide for volunteers to serve in selected local public or private nonprofit community organizations. It too would establish a national clearinghouse for information on the subject.

While the witnesses at the hearings did not dwell on case histories of beatings and abuse, several cases were described. Georgine Noffsinger, Gaithersburg, Md., told the subcommittee about a doctor's wife who was beaten so scientifically that he left no marks, and about the wife of a state department official who was beaten with a wooden coat hanger until her fingers were broken.

Another witness described her own experience. "My parents and the church taught me to fear men and then at age 18 told me to marry one." She described beatings she saw her mother receive and then told how her own marriage repeated the pattern.

Bonnie Tinker, of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, said, "To break the cycle of violence, these women must first free themselves from their traditional dependency upon others for their economic, social and psychological well being."

Larry J. Moss, an ordained American Baptist minister and also a policeman in Washington, D. C., detailed the difficulties of the police in dealing with domestic violence. Many legal and practical problems make it almost impossible for even a specially trained officer to cope with such situations, Moss said. He also noted that domestic violence is not an isolated problem. "Even with the best trained police officers as domestic crisis intervention specialists, the police cannot resolve domestic crises which have deep cultural, economic, social, and political roots."

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Witness after witness asserted that the most urgent need across the country is for emergency shelters where women and their children can be safe and receive help in making decisions about the future.

Sylvia Johnson, director of the Division of Women for the State of New Jersey, emphasized that "spouse abuse is not a narrow problem in isolation from the rest of society. It is related to a variety of issues...including child abuse, community mental health, unemployment compensation and job training, and countless others."

Rep. Boggs pointed out, "domestic violence includes child abuse and the battering and neglect of the elderly as well as spouse assault...in a family where serious violence occurs, every member of that family suffers physical or emotional damage."

Gerald R. Klerman, M.D., of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, cited statistics from a study conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health. They show that one out of six couples of the 2,143 surveyed had a "violent episode" during the year they were surveyed. Klerman defined "violent episode" as "any act intended to cause physical pain or injury to a spouse, ranging from slapping to severe physical assault."

Klerman also noted that use of a knife or gun was not uncommon and about five percent of the spouses in the study were severely beaten at some point in the marriage. He also told the subcommittee that the study found "as much violence in the families of the college educated as among those with less formal training."

Services offered by shelters vary with the resources available, but Johnson listed a representative sample from "Womanspace," a shelter in New Jersey. They include crisis intervention, counseling, transportation to social service agencies, financial and legal counseling, career planning and employment counseling, child care, anger control, Al-Anon (an organization for families in which one is an alcoholic), and other assistance.

Most shelters across the nation have been started by concerned individuals who have come to the federal government for the funding needed to keep going. Most of the witnesses foresee an end to federal funding when community involvement increases.

Rep. Mikulski said, "state and local money..., such as foundations, corporations and other community agencies, like the United Way, unions and church groups, must (also) get involved."

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Opinions Clash Over  
Tuition Tax Credits

By W. Barry Garrett

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WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter's administration and the Roman Catholic hierarchy clashed over the constitutionality of federal income tax credits for tuition paid to private and parochial elementary and secondary schools.

Attorney General Griffin B. Bell declared that such aids to parochial education, as provided by the Moynihan-Packwood-Roth proposal, are unconstitutional.

Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, general secretary of the United States Catholic Conference, disputed the attorney general's view. "The attorney general's opinion is neither binding nor universally shared...Mr. Bell's voice is only one among many and no more persuasive than any other."

This conflict of views is one of a series of events in the war between the Carter administration, the public school advocates and the private and parochial school forces. While President Carter is pledged to "constitutional" aid to private and parochial education, he and his spokesmen have expressed in strong terms that tuition tax credits are both unconstitutional and unwise public policy.

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The president is caught in the middle. He faces a rising demand for relief for middle income taxpayers, the forces for federal aid to parochial schools, the deepening financial plight of public schools, his goal of a balanced budget, and the advice of the office of the attorney general about the constitutionality of income tax tuition credits.

In Congress the battle lines are tightly drawn with the focus of attention centered in the House of Representatives. The Senate has approved some form of tuition tax credit six times in the past, and its finance committee has approved a modified version of the Moynihan-Packwood-Roth proposal.

The House of Representatives has consistently rejected tuition tax credit proposals. Now, however, the representatives are feeling the heat from a combination of pressure groups, including the Republican Party, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, irate taxpayers, and anti-public school sentiment.

The showdown in the House of Representatives has been sidetracked until after the Easter congressional recess. When the House returns the first week in April, the battle will resume between those pushing President Carter's proposals for extended college and public school aids and those fighting for income tax tuition credits both on the college and elementary-secondary school levels.

On February 8, Joseph A. Califano Jr., secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, wrote the attorney general for his opinion on the constitutionality of proposals before Congress on tuition tax credits. Bell, who referred the request to the Office of Legal Counsel in the Justice Department, and received a 10-page memorandum, replied on March 17 that such aid on the elementary-secondary levels is unconstitutional but that similar aid on the college level would be constitutional.

The attorney general asked for legal opinions on "income tax relief in the form of a credit for tuition payments to nonpublic schools," and "the extension of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) program to include nonpublic elementary and secondary school education."

After reviewing all of the pertinent court cases on the subject, the Office of Legal Counsel replied, "Under existing Supreme Court decisions both proposals would appear to violate the First Amendment guarantee against establishment of religion." The controlling cases cited were "Committee for Public Education v. Nyquist" (1973) and "Sloan v. Lemon" (1973).

In spite of the attorney general's findings, Bishop Kelly reacted by saying, "Instead of assuming with the attorney general that previous court decisions concerning other kinds of legislation create an insuperable barrier to a comprehensive program, the legislative and executive branches would render a service to the constitutional system itself by approving tax credits and so encouraging the Supreme Court to re-think an area of law where re-thinking is long overdue. The United States Catholic Conference strongly urges Congress to pass and the president to sign this important and needed legislation."

Among those contending for tax aid to public schools only are the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the National Education Association and other civil and religious liberty organizations.

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Missionaries Hospitalized  
After Automobile Accident

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3/23/78

KIBAHA, Tanzania (BP)--Two Southern Baptist missionaries to Tanzania were hospitalized, one in serious condition, after a car accident March 23 in this East African community.

The accident occurred as three missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Jack G. Partain and Marilyn (Mrs. Tom W.) McMillan, were enroute from Dar Es Salaam, about 20 miles east of Kibaha, to Arusha, where they are stationed. Traveling in an early morning rainstorm, they hit a truck which had stopped in the road.

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Mrs. Partain was listed in serious condition in the intensive care unit at Muhimbili Hospital in Dar Es Salaam. She was semiconscious and suffering from a broken nose and right arm. X-rays showed no skull fracture but a ruptured spleen was suspected.

Mrs. McMillan has been hospitalized with fractures in the left arm and left side of her pelvis.

Partain, who was driving, suffered lacerations, cuts and abrasions about the face but was not hospitalized.

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Baptists Aid Refugees  
Crowding Into Beirut

By Frances Fuller

Baptist Press  
3/23/78

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Baptists have undertaken neighborhood relief programs in the vicinities of their Beirut churches following an influx of refugees from war-ravaged Southern Lebanon.

The Ras Beirut Baptist Church began with a survey of surrounding apartment buildings and then purchased blankets and food supplies to help meet emergency needs of hundreds of families. Relief funds of the Baptist mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) were then donated to help the church continue supplying food to uprooted Lebanese.

The Musaitbeh Baptist Church also is using mission relief funds to feed hungry Palestinian and Lebanese refugees who crowded into the neighborhood a few days' after the Israeli offensive in Southern Lebanon. Church members are visiting the refugees and distributing cards entitling the bearers to receive help, and young people are packaging food supplies purchased by the men. The refugees bring their cards to the church to receive the packages.

The mission's relief committee, composed of Lebanese and missionaries, will review the effectiveness of these programs constantly and face new needs as they arise, according to J. Wayne Fuller, mission chairman.

Meanwhile, children of the Beirut Baptist School in the Musaitbeh area have launched their own campaign to bring food from their homes and give it away in the neighborhood.

Relief agencies estimate that fighting has uprooted 140,000 people. About 100,000 of these have crowded into West Beirut and existing refugee communities near Beirut. Others are in a tent camp near Sidon. Only a minority will be able to return to their homes soon.

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Southeastern Elects Faculty,  
Establishes Music Program

Baptist Press  
3/23/78

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary elected two new faculty members, adopted a record budget for 1978-79, and added a church music emphasis to the seminary's basic master of divinity degree during their semi-annual meeting.

G. Thomas Halbrooks, a native of Tupelo, Miss., was elected assistant professor of church history, effective in the fall of 1978. Presently visiting professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, Ky., Halbrooks holds the doctor of philosophy degree from Emory University, the master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary, and the bachelor of arts degree from Samford University.

Elected as professor of church music, James W. Good, a native of Roanoke, Va., holds the doctor of musical arts and master of sacred music degrees from Southern Seminary, and the bachelor of arts degree from Wake Forest University. Good, who will also begin teaching in the fall, is associate professor of church music at Southern Seminary, where he has taught since 1961.

Trustees approved a budget of more than \$2,845,000. The basic funding for the new budget comes from the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention, which will provide \$2,084,409.

Responding to a growing need for trained music leadership in the churches, the trustees voted to establish an emphasis in church music within the existing master of divinity degree program. The new three-year program will begin in the fall of 1978 with an initial faculty of three members. For the first time in its 27-year history, Southeastern Seminary will offer comprehensive training in church music leadership. Other trustee action included authorizing the administration to develop plans to construct 100 student townhouse apartments and electing John M. Rich of Wake Forest, N. C., as seminary attorney, succeeding John G. Mills Jr., who retired after more than 21 years in the position.

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