



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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79-23

2,866 Southern Baptists Serve As Overseas Volunteers In 1978

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--More than 2,860 Southern Baptists served overseas as foreign mission volunteers during 1978.

The total--2,866--includes 161 extended-service volunteers for six months to two years and another 31 Mission Service Corps volunteers going for one to two years. The extended-service and Mission Service Corps programs differ in the means of financing.

Medical volunteers accounted for another 184. These nurses, doctors, dentists and technologists, who worked through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's medical consultant office, served from one to six months.

The remaining 2,490 volunteers were short term--going either individually or in groups for less than six months to participate in special projects.

The board's office of evangelism and church development coordinated the efforts of 341 volunteers. Their work included major city evangelization campaigns, stewardship emphases and witness training.

Other short-term service, handled through the office for laymen overseas, included a range of projects from construction to sewing, from car maintenance to special musical concerts.

James W. Cecil, the board's associate consultant on laymen overseas, pointed out Southern Baptists have supported missions throughout their history by going, praying and giving.

"These same Southern Baptists who have provided these traditional supports have leisure time they want to use productively," Cecil said in explaining the interest in volunteer service. They want to use this leisure ability by volunteering for personal presence ministries with Southern Baptist missionaries on the field."

Cecil pointed to personal involvement as a key asset of the volunteer program.

"Volunteers not only make a major contribution to our missionaries in the ongoing work but are also very effective in sharing their missions experience when they return," Cecil said. He noted that churches which provide financial resources to volunteers also have increased their giving through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget.

Several firsts were recorded in the volunteer program during 1978. The board named its first volunteers for Mission Service Corps, the SBC plan to send 5,000 volunteer missionaries to supplement home and foreign career missionaries. The first Christian Arts Festival was held and the first sewing team was utilized, setting patterns for future projects. And women served on construction teams as construction workers as well as cooks and nurses.

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Baptist Claypool Delivers
Beecher Lectures at Yale

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NEW HAVEN, Conn. (BP)--John Claypool, pastor of the Northminster Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., delivered the prestigious Beecher Lectures at the annual convocation of the Yale Divinity School.

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Claypool, pastor at Northminster since 1976, gave four lectures over three days on "The Preaching Event."

Claypool previously delivered the Hester Lectures on Preaching at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1972, the Mullins Lectures on Preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1974, the Hester Lectures on Preaching at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in 1974 and the Shumate Lectures at Lynchburg College in 1978.

The Beecher Lectures were endowed by a gift in 1872 from Henry W. Sage in memory of Lyman Beecher, who graduated from Yale in 1797, for lectures on preaching.

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IRS Revises School Ruling;
House Panel Sets Hearings

By Carol Franklin

Baptist Press
2/13/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Internal Revenue Service, in response to protests from the educational and religious community, has issued a revised revenue procedure to limit tax exemption of schools considered racially discriminatory.

The original proposal by IRS, issued August 22, 1978, aroused a storm of protest. That proposed procedure would have required all private elementary and secondary schools to prove that they operate on a racially nondiscriminatory basis or risk losing their tax exemption.

Public comments on the new procedure must be submitted to the IRS by April 20, 1979. Congressional hearings on the procedure were scheduled in the House Committee on Ways and Means, Feb. 20-21. Among those groups scheduled to testify is the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The new procedure "gives greater weight to each school's particular circumstances... in determining whether a school is racially discriminatory," according to an IRS statement.

The new guidelines would affect schools held by a court or government agency to be racially discriminatory and those schools, formed or expanded about the time of public school desegregation in their communities, which do not yet have significant minority student enrollment.

The revised procedure retains the provision that "significant minority enrollment" is 20 percent or more of the percentage of the minority school age population in the community served by the school. This measure was called a "quota system" by some witnesses at hearings held by the IRS last December and therefore unconstitutional in light of recent Supreme Court decisions.

The IRS statement listed facts which would be taken into account in judging whether a school would be considered discriminatory. According to the revised proposed procedure, a school's formation or expansion would not be considered related to public school desegregation if the new students are not "to any significant extent drawn from the public school grades subject to desegregation."

Other factors include increased school age population in the community, merger with another private school, adding grade levels or some minority students, faculty, or board members when the growth occurred.

The IRS statement also noted that growth which took place "in accordance with a long-standing practice of a religion or religious denomination, which itself is not racially discriminatory, to provide schools for religious education" would tend to indicate that such expansion was not related to public school desegregation.

Facts which would tend to suggest to the IRS that a school discriminates racially would include the use of former public school facilities made available when desegregation

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took place, opposition by the school or its officers to desegregation of the public schools, or limiting of enrollment in the school to a geographic area with few or no minorities when such an area is subject to a desegregation plan.

The revised IRS procedure provides that schools which might be questionable in racial policy may retain tax exempt status if they show they have attempted to recruit minority students and professional staff, offer financial assistance on an equal basis to minority students, or clearly indicate to persons in the minority community that they are welcome at the school.

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Baptist Group Cautions HEW
About New Education Study

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press
2/13/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Baptist agency has cautioned the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) to take into account the principle of church-state separation in conducting a massive research project into the funding of both public and nonpublic schools during the 1980s.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, through executive director James E. Wood Jr., urged HEW's Office of Education officials to take note of the string of U. S. Supreme Court decisions over the past several years outlawing most forms of public aid to nonpublic schools. The statement also urged HEW to seek counsel from outside groups, including the Washington-based Baptist public affairs agency.

The HEW research project grows out of amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed last year by Congress. That legislation directed HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano Jr. to conduct what the huge federal agency calls "a comprehensive, three-year study of elementary and secondary school finance."

Office of Education specialists recently completed a first draft of the research plan and asked for interested parties to react to it. A one-day public hearing on the draft was held recently and HEW received formal written statements as well. The research plan must be submitted to Congress by March 1.

At least two sections of the draft research plan indicate that HEW intends to examine the propriety of increased support of nonpublic schools with public dollars, including a study of the feasibility of tuition tax credits or deductions.

Last year, both Califano and Attorney General Griffin Bell repeatedly held that the tuition tax credit alternative would violate the no establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution. Both of the cabinet officers, with heavy White House support, led the opposition in Congress to a tuition tax credit bill which was eventually killed.

Nevertheless, Washington church-state observers have long been aware that numerous HEW education specialists are committed to finding new ways to channel federal money to nonpublic schools, 98 percent of which have religious ties. Overall, private schools account for about 10 percent of the school age population in the U. S.

One reason for such a commitment on the part of some education officials lies in the fact that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, originally passed in 1965, has consistently provided for some forms of indirect aid to nonpublic schools, particularly in inner-city communities. Some states have resisted those plans, however, by citing state constitutional provisions forbidding any kind of aid, direct or indirect, to such schools.

In response to those states, HEW has tried the so-called "by-pass" method of funding private schools by going around state education officials to make funds available directly from the office of the Commissioner of Education in Washington. In Missouri, where the method was employed, church-state separationists have taken the government to court.

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The Baptist Joint Committee statement emphasized that the Baptist agency does not oppose nonpublic, parochial schools as such. It pointed out that the agency played an active role in original passage of the 1965 act. "We have objected," the statement continued, "to some of the amendments to that act and particularly to some of the administrative interpretations which have permitted public funds to be used in programs of religious nonpublic schools."

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Alabama Baptists Set
Bold Mission Blitz

Baptist Press
2/13/79

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Alabama Baptists will begin a half million dollar media blitz March 1 as their part in the Southern Baptist Convention's Bold Mission Thrust evangelistic effort to proclaim the message of Christ to the world in this century.

Produced and coordinated by the SBC Radio and TV Commission, the awareness campaign will follow the theme "Good News Alabama, God Loves You." It will feature 407 billboards, hundreds of 30-second television spots and thousands of newspaper and radio advertisements.

"Good News Alabama" is a cooperative effort of all Baptists, both black and white, to share the gospel of Christ with every person in the state by 1980, and encourage them to become part of a New Testament fellowship of believers.

"For the first time in our history as Alabama Baptists, we are mobilizing forces to carry out the Great Commission," of Christ to reach the whole world, said George E. Bagley, executive secretary of the Baptist state executive board.

Filmed on location, personal testimonies by Baptists from all walks of life will be featured in the advertisements which will also offer a toll-free telephone number for inquirers. Twenty telephone lines will be located in the Baptist state headquarters building in Montgomery and within hours of a call, someone from a Baptist church in the area where the caller lives will make contact, share a personal testimony, and seek to enlist the caller into the membership of a local church.

Task forces have been set up in every county in the state and churches have trained witnessing teams to knock on the door of every home in Alabama, March 1-April 6, sharing the gospel of Christ.

Simultaneous revivals are scheduled throughout the state during the weeks of April 8-22, to be followed by church growth workshops and new work planning for the remainder of 1979.

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Southeastern Seminary
Begins Apartment Construction

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WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--Construction has begun on 100 student townhouse apartments and an access street at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C.

Completion of 50 of the units is expected by the opening of the school's fall semester in September, with the remaining units ready by Jan. 1, 1980.

Total cost of the project will be \$2,743,620, including construction, streets, utilities, landscaping, architect fees and charges for short-term financing.

The new apartments will ease a four-year housing crunch for the seminary. With record enrollments over the last seven years, all available dormitory rooms and apartments on the Southeastern campus have been full.

For the past three years, the school has made special arrangements with two apartment complexes in Raleigh for additional housing for its married students, which make up 75 percent of the 1,120 presently enrolled.

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