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Foreign Board Expects

No Money From China Accord

By Anita Bowden

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board submitted no claims and expects to receive no money from the recently signed U.S.-China claims accord which states that China will pay \$80.5 million for American property seized by the communists in 1949.

Although the board holds deeds to millions of dollars in mission property in China, Baker J. Cauthen, executive director, said they will seek no settlement on property. In the 1950s when a claims committee was set up by the U. S. government, the Foreign Mission Board decided to submit no claims.

The American Baptist Churches in the USA, on the other hand, decided to enter \$2.5 million in claims. The ABC owned some property in China jointly with Southern Baptists, for which no claim will be made, a spokesman said, but also owned other properties outright for which claim will be made.

Commenting on the SBC Foreign Mission Board's position, Cauthen said, "It has been our hope that ultimately we may be able to have access to the properties to use them for their original purposes. Any financial settlement based on 41 percent of the estimated value as of 30 years ago is entirely unrealistic."

Announcement that the agreement between the U.S. and China had been signed came March 2 from Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal. China has agreed to pay 41 cents on the dollar to settle \$197 million in claims.

Among the properties for which the Foreign Mission Board holds deeds are missionary residences, school and hospital properties, and church properties which were not transferred to the local congregations or the Baptist Convention in China.

American Baptist properties include school, hospital and church holdings in east, west and south China, a spokesman said. He noted that the ABC doesn't know how much of the \$2.5 million it will receive after the U.S. and China actually settle accounts.

The Foreign Mission Board and American Baptists also jointly hold title to a downtown office building in Shanghai and to properties of the University of Shanghai, jointly sponsored by the two denominations.

Many titles to church property were turned over by Southern Baptists to the churches before mainland China fell to the communists, according to George H. Hays, board secretary for East Asia. This action is in accord with board policy to transfer titles of church land and buildings to individual congregations or the national convention as Baptist leadership in a country matures and the convention shows itself financially capable of maintaining the property, he said.

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Baptist Joint Committee
Joins Food Policy Group

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3/2/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has joined the Washington-based Interreligious Task Force on U.S. Food Policy, according to James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist agency.

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Wood designated Baptist Joint Committee research assistant Rosemary Brevard to represent the agency at the monthly meetings of the food policy task force.

The Baptist Joint Committee becomes the third Baptist group to join the task force, which lobbies for increased U.S. government allocations to world hunger relief and agricultural development, and works with government for reforms of domestic agricultural policy.

The American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. has participated on the task force since its founding in 1975, while the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention joined last fall.

Participants at last November's SBC Convocation on World Hunger, held at the Ridgecrest Conference Center, urged the Baptist Joint Committee and the Christian Life Commission to join the task force as an indication of the denomination's renewed commitment to combat world hunger. Messengers to last year's annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta had called for the hunger convocation.

Brevard, who joined the Baptist Joint Committee staff in 1967, is currently assistant to John W. Baker, director of the agency's research program. She is a native of San Antonio, Texas, and a political science graduate of the University of Texas where she won Phi Beta Kappa honors.

She, Wood, and Baker relate directly to Washington's interreligious community as representatives from the Baptist Joint Committee to the Washington Interreligious Staff Council. That group monitors a wide range of legislative issues of concern to the churches through various work groups and task forces, including the one on food policy.

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Racial Reconciliation
Awards Presented

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3/2/79

ATLANTA (BP)--Eighteen Southern Baptist leaders who have made "outstanding contributions to racial reconciliation" were honored during the first V. T. Glass Conference on Cooperative Ministries in Atlanta.

"Southern Baptists often have recognized great preachers, but this is the first time recognition has been given to men who have fought for reconciliation across racial lines," said Emmanuel McCall, director of the department of Cooperative Ministries with National (black) Baptists at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"We are honoring men who have been called 'Nigger lovers'...who bear on their bodies physical bruises and carry the psychological scars of the years of struggle," he added.

The awards, sponsored by the department of Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists, are named in honor of Victor Thomas Glass, who worked in the department, first as an associate and then as a director, 1957-74.

The first award was presented to Glass for a "lifetime of service to National and Southern Baptist ministries of racial reconciliation." When the award was presented, Glass received a standing ovation from the more than 300 persons who attended the ceremonies.

Also honored were seven other denominational leaders, six retired state convention workers and four National Baptist missionaries who will retire in 1979.

An award was presented to Roland T. Smith, "the first black to have an executive position with the Home Mission Board." Smith was appointed as an associate to the "director of Negro work" in 1942 and served until his retirement in 1949.

"During his tenure, he could not office in the Home Mission Board building because of the social code of the day," McCall said. "He officially was the first black staff member at the Home Mission Board, but he may not have been recognized as such."

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The six other denominational leaders honored are:

T. B. Maston, retired professor of Christian Ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; Henley Barnette, retired professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, whose "ministry has been a constant reminder to Southern Baptists that they are not really Christian until they have dealt with the matter of race."; Guy Bellamy, who served as director of the HMB work from 1949-65 "from the turbulent years after the Supreme Court decision in 1954 into the midst of the civil rights movement; W. R. Grigg, who was an associate in the department from 1965-75 and served as director of state convention work in Louisiana and North Carolina from 1953-65; McCall, who has been director of the department since 1974 and is said to be "the first black to really exercise staff authority."

The retired state directors of cooperative work of National Baptists who were honored are Julius Avery, who served in Florida; W. P. Davis, Mississippi; Durwood Cason, Georgia; Tom Pfeiffer, Louisiana; H. O. Hester, Alabama; and Murray McCullough, Florida.

Workers honored who will retire in 1979 are Alvin Daniels, home missionary who worked in Donaldsonville, La.; H. Wesley Wiley, former director of cooperative work with National Baptists for the District of Columbia Convention and staff consultant for the northeastern United States; Earle Stirewalt, director of cooperative work in Georgia; and Roy Interline, missionary in Tulsa, Okla.

Recipients of the awards were selected by the staff members of the cooperative ministries of National Baptists department but future recipients will be selected by the state directors of cooperative work National Baptists.

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Rebel From Colombia
Adopts Calmer Life

By Pat Gordon
Fort Worth Bureau of Dallas Morning News

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Hugo Ruiz has been rebelling ever since he was a child.

The Spanish programming director for the Baptist Radio and Television Commission has seen his life calm down since leaving his native country of Colombia 15 years ago, where he bucked the traditional systems of the church and government.

Ruiz, 50, may not attribute the way his life turned out to his upbringing, but he said it certainly was a factor.

His father died when Ruiz was 5 years old and when his mother remarried, he refused to live with her and her husband. He chose to remain with his aunt and grandmother, whom he described as workaholics.

The two women supported the family, he said, by a number of businesses ranging from making loans to selling charcoal. He and an uncle, who was his age, had to cook, take care of the house and perform other necessary chores.

Ruiz said he was surrounded by politicians and poets and raised in a "spirit of struggle," so even now he needs to be working to be happy.

When he was 13, Ruiz rebelled again when he decided to turn his back on his Catholic religion and become a Baptist.

On his way to a movie one afternoon, he heard singing and went to investigate. To his amazement, he found himself in a Baptist meeting. He never made it to the movie, but stayed at the meeting and listened to a missionary read from the Bible.

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"It was something I had never heard before," he explained. "I asked, 'What is this?' because in my environment of politicians and poets I really loved the literature."

Ruiz began questioning the priest about what he had heard and when the priest became angry and told him the book was only for the ignorant, the teen-ager took offense.

Living in a household enmeshed in Catholic traditions, Ruiz had to assert himself to become a Baptist. On Dec. 31, the night of his baptism, Ruiz found himself locked in his room. Undaunted, he climbed out the window, still wearing pajamas, and went to the mission. There he was loaned pants and a shirt and was baptized.

After it was all over, his relatives accepted his decision, he said, and later accepted his wanting to become a Baptist minister.

"I've always been very independent," he said, "and had a strong personality, even before I became a Baptist."

Ruiz attended college in Mexico City, Colombia, Cuba and the United States and played basketball one year in the Pan-American Games.

When he returned to Colombia, he was a pastor and teacher--and underground revolutionary.

At first, Ruiz said, he had no intention of becoming involved in the struggle against the dictator, Rojas Pinilla. Then a Baptist preacher and some church members were killed by the military.

Ruiz began publishing a pamphlet under an alias and broadcasting out of his car.

"I was a man with a mask on--like the Lone Ranger--working underground," he said. "The people knew me as a teacher at the university and seminary, and a pastor, but I had another role in my life. I was pushing for revolution."

The rebel led a dual life until one day a jeep tried to run over him, and after missing, the soldiers peppered the wall behind him with machine-gun bullets. Ruiz learned he was at the top of the hit list and decided it was time to leave the country.

Ruiz and his family moved to Fort Worth, where he received a master's degree in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and was pastor of the Brooklyn Heights Baptist Church, a mission church of Broadway Baptist. His part-time job at the commission eventually evolved into a full-time position. He now writes and produces all the Spanish programs heard on 313 radio and television stations in the U. S. and 19 South American countries. He is currently the pastor at Iglesia Bautista Central in Fort Worth.

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Cabot Gives Missionary Extra Day Every Week

CABOT, Ark. (BP)--First Baptist Church in Cabot, Ark., gave missionary Gilbert Nichols eight-day weeks.

When Nichols said the greatest need for his work in Paraguay was an airplane, First Baptist's pastor Keith Loyd and the deacons started a drive among the members that raised \$15,000 for the airplane in 10 days.

Nichols directs a seminary in Asuncion, the capital, that has four extension centers in the country's interior. Because of distance and unpaved roads, it takes 10 hours by car to get to one center. An airplane can travel the distance in two hours.

"I think, in all, it will give me about one day a week more in which I can work," Nichols said.

He had been getting to the centers about once every two weeks, but, with the plane, will be able to make the trip every week.