



March 14, 1979

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Seminary Course Exposes
Small Town Heart

CHANUTE, Kans. (BP)--R. Dale Webb went to the southeastern Kansas community of Chanute to earn two hours of seminary credit in exchange for a week of meetings and guided tours. It was as simple as that.

But halfway through the "Town and Country Exposure Program" for seminary students in the Kansas City area, Webb, 28, said the annual course helped make him "real again."

"Too many times in seminary you're taken out of the real world," said Webb, a student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Seminary people sometimes become like laboratory animals. This is like making you real again."

During the January program, 16 students from four Kansas City area seminaries visited Chanute businesses and met with community leaders.

The program began three years ago "to see what a town is made up of, to see how those persons related to the life of the church," according to Fred E. Young, dean at Central Seminary of the American Baptist Convention.

The fact that nearly half of the churches in the Baptist conventions are small, with 300 or fewer members, prompted creation of the program. "We've got to provide leadership in those kinds of settings," Young said. "We've got to have the cooperation of the community. We can't go it alone."

Chanute, population 10,000, supports the program. Churches from each seminary's denomination have provided meeting places for seminars and lodging for students. Local businesses have opened their doors for tours. And the media have published and broadcast stories about the program.

As Chanute learned about the seminarians, the seminarians were learning about the people of Chanute.

Following a cement plant tour Webb observed: "There is one guy loading 98-pound bags of cement onto a flatbed truck--eight hours a day. There was another guy out shoveling gravel with the wind chill at 15 below in the snow. That's a pretty hard way to make a living."

As a direct result of his observations Webb was convinced it is necessary for the pastor to know what his people do and to learn where they hurt. However, Webb noted that motivating the congregation might be difficult because most persons are primarily interested in earning a living.

"It's going to take creativity in turning people on," he said.

Webb, himself a smalltown native of Waynesville, N.C., plans to return to his native state and minister in a small town. He noted that he originally came to Chanute for what seemed to be an easy two hours of credit. The experience changed his perspective.

"That (the hours) was the primary reason for me signing up," he said, "but it turned out to be secondary. This is telling me things that I maybe forgot."

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Photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by Midwestern Seminary.

Lobby Disclosure Bills
Hit by Religious Groups

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--Lobby disclosure legislation came under attack from representatives of religious groups during a hearing of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told the subcommittee that the "major concern" of the Baptist Joint Committee about lobby disclosure bills is that "they fail to exclude bona fide religious organizations from coverage."

Wood pointed out that "involvement of the church in public affairs is an inescapable responsibility of the church" for many religious organizations.

He also noted that the proposed legislation would "unconstitutionally mandate excessive entanglement of government with religion." The requirements to register and report to the government would be unconstitutional regardless of the extent of reporting required, Wood said.

Also objecting to the inclusion of churches in such legislation was J. Elliott Corbett of the United Methodist Division of Human Relations. "We feel that the burden of record-keeping and reporting required... is so great that it would inhibit us from carrying out what is part of the church's mission, namely impacting Christian ethics on public policy questions," Corbett said.

Charles V. Bergstrom, of the Lutheran Council Office for Governmental Affairs in the U.S.A., told the subcommittee that "lobby disclosure legislation may jeopardize the fundamental constitutional rights of freedom to petition the government for a redress of grievances, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion... Congress must certify that these fundamental First Amendment rights have reached a dangerous level of abuse and that there is compelling interest for government intervention and regulation," he said.

Barry W. Lynn, of the United Church of Christ Office for Church in Society, charged that the bills under consideration contain requirements that are "monumentally impractical or intrusive upon legitimate privacy interests of religious organizations."

Lynn said that his office attempted to keep records on the costs of mailing, printing, advertising, telephone, and other expenses required by the legislation passed by the House last year as well as staff time for lobbying. "It is simply impossible," Lynn said. "We had to give up the effort after two days, and I was lucky to escape alive for having suggested it."

Six measures on lobby disclosure have been introduced in the House of Representatives. None has been introduced in the Senate.

HR 81, introduced in the House by U.S. Reps. Peter W. Rodino Jr., D-N.J., and George Danielson, D-Cal., is identical to the one that passed the Judiciary Committee last year. It would cover any organization that spends at least \$2,500 a quarter on lobbying or employs at least one individual who lobbies for a specified number of days in each three-month period.

HR 1979, introduced by U.S. Rep. Tom Railsback, D-Ill., contains a provision for the disclosure of names of major contributors. That provision, which passed the House last year, met with strong opposition from many sources.

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Board Offers To Aid Refugees
Stranded On Ship in Manila

Baptist Press
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has offered the use of its campgrounds in Luzon, Philippines, and \$50,000 in hunger relief money to help in a project to ease the plight of 2,000 Vietnamese refugees aboard the freighter Tung An in Manila Bay.

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If the Philippine government approves a proposal to move the refugees off the crowded ship, they would be housed for about a month at the Luzon Baptist Conference Grounds until they could leave to resettle in other countries or be moved to another holding camp.

Some assistance has been given to the refugees by another relief organization which is now seeking permission from the Philippine government for them to be admitted temporarily.

At its March meeting, the Foreign Mission Board approved use of \$50,000 from world hunger funds donated by Southern Baptists to help in feeding the refugees if they are moved to the 15-acre Baptist camp, located near the entrance of Manila Bay within sight of Corregidor.

Although its general relief funds are down to less than \$3,000, the board reallocated another \$50,000 originally set up for earthquake repairs in Romania to meet emergency needs of flood victims in Brazil. Up to this point, permission has not been received from the Romanian government for rebuilding seminary buildings damaged in the 1977 quake. In case the work in Romania becomes possible, efforts could be made to replace the funds.

The latest allocation for Brazil supplements \$235,836 approved in February for victims of the Brazil flood which has left more than 650 dead and more than 300,000 persons homeless.

The plight of the 2,000 Vietnamese aboard the Tung An first captured world attention early this year when the ship sailed into Manila Bay in a bid for freedom. Although the Philippines is temporarily housing 2,000 other such refugees, it refused to allow passengers on the Tung An to come ashore. But it spent more than a million pesos (about \$136,000 U.S.) feeding the refugees in the first six weeks after they arrived, Asiaweek Magazine reported.

Warned by Philippine Foreign Minister Carlos Romulo in February that the Tung An might be forced back to sea, the United States agreed to accept 1,200 of the refugees and five other nations offered to resettle smaller numbers. Philippine authorities expressed fear that the human waste and garbage tossed out of the ship directly into Manila Bay might be a health hazard to cities and villages along the shore.

Missionaries in the Philippines said a former Vietnamese pastor in New Zealand has offered to come at his own expense to minister to the refugees while they are at the camp. A doctor also may be needed.

In other actions, the board heard a report that contributions to the 1978 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions have reached \$26,557,267, more than 66 percent of the \$40 million goal and a \$3.7 million increase over the total at this time last year. Books on the offering remain open until the end of May.

Executive Director Baker J. Cauthen also informed board members that Carl W. Johnson had been elected as senior assistant treasurer and treasurer-elect. His name was approved at the February board meeting but election to the post was not announced until all board members not present at the meeting could be polled.

Johnson, vice president of a Richmond, Va., real estate management and brokerage firm, will join the staff May 1 and take over as treasurer after the retirement of Everett L. Deane at the end of 1980.

The board continued to wrestle with the rising costs of missionary support. It appropriated \$275,000 from current funds to help its 2,900 missionaries meet increases in the self-employment Social Security taxes this year. With the increase, the board will be paying \$465 per missionary, about half the tax amount.

Changes in the federal tax law also made it necessary for the board to appoint a special committee to study what assistance might be given to missionaries.

Until this year, the tax law has allowed an exclusion of up to \$20,000 per year of income earned overseas. The new law removes that exclusion and substitutes for it a number of special deductions, Overseas Division Director J. Winston Crawley explained.

To provide the same level of support for missionaries in 94 countries or territories, the board must provide widely varying amounts. Crawley said all of these factors must be considered by the committee, which met March 14 to begin its study of the complex problem.

The board also voted a 25 percent increase in the dollar allowances for missionaries traveling to and from their fields and for furlough freight expenses, effective Jan. 1, 1980. Crawley said no adjustment in these dollar allowances have been made in several years and the adjustment is needed to meet rising costs.

A total of \$122,692 was appropriated from world hunger funds for six projects in five countries. In addition to the \$50,000 refugee allocation for the Philippines, the allocations will fund nutritional rehabilitation in India and treatment for extremely malnourished hospital patients in that country; provide food and seeds for planting in Bolivia; finance a farm development project in Togo; and restore funds to work in North Brazil which had been re-allocated in February for use in the South Brazil flood crisis.

As a follow-up to participation by several staff and board members in the Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations last September, the board voted to hear an overview report in April on staff growth and the role of women in the organization.

It approved seven new Mission Service Corps volunteers for service in Venezuela, Zambia and Hong Kong and an equal number of other long-term volunteers for four other countries-- Turkey, Dominican Republic, South West Africa and Liberia. The service corps personnel bring to 59 the number approved for overseas service since the first such volunteers went abroad early in 1978.

Tentative approval was given to 22 young people who have volunteered for Mission Service Corps projects related to Brazil evangelistic efforts, pending further screening.

The board also voted \$70,000 for home Bible study projects in five major Korean cities as part of the major city evangelization program in Korea. Florida Baptists, cooperating in the Korean efforts, are providing volunteers and almost an equal amount over a three-year period.

The 15-member search committee seeking a successor to Cauthen is scheduled to present a progress report at the board's meeting, April 9-11, in Kansas City, Mo. Eighteen to twenty missionaries are expected to be appointed April 10 in a service at the municipal auditorium there.

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Foreign Mission Board
Names Treasurer-Elect

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has elected Carl W. Johnson as senior assistant treasurer and treasurer-elect of the board.

Johnson, 41, currently serves as vice president of administration, treasurer and director of Morton G. Thalhimer Inc., a Richmond real estate and brokerage firm. He succeeds Harold D. Richardson, who resigned January 31 to become vice president and treasurer and director of finance and accounting at the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, Dallas, Texas.

A native Richmonder, Johnson will assume his duties May 1. He will become treasurer after Everett L. Deane, the board's treasurer since 1950, retires in December 1980.

Johnson holds the bachelor of science and master of commerce degrees from the University of Richmond and the professional designation of certified administrative manager from the Administrative Management Society.

He is a trustee, deacon and treasurer of Bon Air Baptist Church, Richmond, and has been chairman of the finance committee and a member of the executive committee of the Richmond Baptist Association.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

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*460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

LYNN MAY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION HO
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37203

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