



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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79-48

Visa Problems Tighten
In Western South America

By Jennifer Hall

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Visa limitations in Western South America are causing concern for missionaries and personnel of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

No missionaries have ever been denied entry into Western South America, but J. Bryan Brasington, board secretary for Western South America, expressed concern about it in his March report to the board and urged prayer for granting of visas in Colombia and Peru.

In Colombia a meeting between evangelicals and Colombia's minister of foreign relations outlined what the government is considering in the future.

"Their plan now, though it is only verbal agreement, is to give one visa for every two visas for people who leave the country," Brasington explained. "The ultimate goal is to limit the presence of foreigners in Colombia--especially those who are working in the area of religion.

Brasington said, however, that Colombia generally plans to extend religious freedom. He asked Baptists to pray that Colombian Baptists would move quickly toward filling leadership positions.

The Peruvian government ruled in January that no evangelical mission could increase its number of missionaries. "However, if a missionary family has to leave the country permanently (as in the case of retirement) that family can be replaced with another," Brasington explained. "But no new visas will be granted for additional personnel. We need your prayers that this ruling will be changed to allow new families to serve in Peru."

Historically, Southern Baptists have weathered visa crises in South America, Brasington said. "But right now things are tightening up...this is a call to prayer. We're confident that God will lead in this matter and open the right doors on his schedule. Pray that we will have faith to follow God's leadership."

Also, board members were asked to pray for hundreds of Bolivians made homeless by heavy flooding. The flood which devastated Brazil also spread to its neighbor to the west in the Santa Cruz and Beni regions. The board approved a \$10,000 allocation for hunger relief in Bolivia.

In the same meeting, Brasington reported several items of a positive note. In Colombia, the Catholic marriage ceremony has carried weight over civil and other ceremonies. Changes are taking place which would give more authority to the civil ceremony, said Brasington. "And at the same time this opens up the possibility of the approval of a law which would make any kind of evangelical marriage ceremony equally legal along with those of the Catholic marriages," he said.

He also noted that in Peru there's a movement which would provide for the complete separation of church and state.

Brasington outlined what he calls a "contagious" evangelism project begun by the Venezuelan Baptist Convention. The three-year program of city-to-city marches has enlisted about 100 people divided into two-person teams to visit homes and share testimonies.

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When someone accepts Christ, he receives discipleship training from the team, and generally tells his testimony to his family. In a short time, a nucleus for a Bible study develops. Soon the new Christian is asked to join the team and the project moves to another area with a new team--two mature Christians and a new believer.

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Seminary Adopts Budget
Adds, Promotes Faculty

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Adoption of a record \$8.4 million budget, faculty additions and promotions, degree program changes, and dedication of the new Recreation/Aerobics Center highlighted the spring meeting of the board of trustees at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The budget, a \$1 million increase over the 1978-79 budget, will meet inflationary demands, cover costs of the new recreation center, and provide for faculty and administrative salary increases approved by the board at the meeting, a board spokesman said.

Byron A. (Pat) Clendinning Jr. was approved as associate professor of psychology and counseling effective in the summer of 1979. He currently serves as minister of counseling for the Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga.

Robert Wayne Brackney will become assistant professor of social work Aug. 1, 1979. He is professor of social work and human services at Wingate College, Wingate, N. C., and will receive his doctor of education degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in June.

George H. Gaston III will become assistant professor of pastoral ministry, June 1, 1979. He is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary and has served as pastor of the Parkview Baptist Church of Monroe, La., since 1974.

William Mac Davis, a graduate student at the University of Utah, will become an instructor in music theory and composition effective Aug. 1, 1979. He will receive his doctorate in August, 1979.

Sue Biggs King and Elizabeth Richmond McKinney were named assistant professors, effective April 1, 1979. King had served as resident teacher of voice since 1965 and McKinney had been resident teacher of piano since 1960.

Receiving faculty promotions were Jeroline Baker to professor of childhood education; Claude L. Bass to professor and department chairman of theory and composition; Robert O. Coleman to professor of biblical backgrounds and archaeology; and Derrel Watkins to associate professor of social work.

Three new master's degree programs were adopted by the trustees. The degrees will provide inter-relating programs among the seminary's three schools.

They include a master of divinity with church music minor; master of religious education with church music minor; and master of church music with religious education minor.

Trustees also voted to establish a doctor of education center at the Baptist Sunday School Board headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., which will offer doctoral seminars in conjunction with a board staff development program.

Persons participating in the program will be approved Sunday School Board personnel and will meet all requirements for the EdD.

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An increase in the student matriculation fee was approved beginning with the fall, 1979, semester. An increase of \$15 to \$165 per semester was approved, with the fee to increase to \$175 for the fall, 1980, semester.

The increase is in accordance with a move to establish a uniform matriculation fee at all six Southern Baptist seminaries, according to Southwestern officials.

Matriculation fees for students enrolled in the Houston and San Antonio off-campus centers will be \$200 beginning with the fall, 1979, semester. Students in the Shawnee, Okla., center will have an increase to \$165 per semester with the remaining \$35 paid by the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

In adopting the 1979-80 budget, trustees approved salary increases for all faculty and administrative personnel.

Faculty members will receive a 7 percent increase in addition to achievement increases and a "fast track" increase approved by the board.

The "career fast track" system was designed for the seminary by Executive Vice President Lloyd Elder and will provide Southwestern with a compensation pattern comparable to personnel within corporate or other business organizations.

The plan provides pay increases early in the career so raises can be enjoyed over a longer period of time, Elder said.

Administrative personnel will not be affected by the "fast track" system. Salary increases for administrative staff will average 7 to 9 percent.

Trustees participated in dedication ceremonies Monday, March 19 for the seminary's new \$2 million Recreation/Aerobics Center.

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Deaf Women Meet During
WMU Week at Glorieta

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--The first conference for deaf Woman's Missionary Union members will be held this summer at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center during the joint Woman's Missionary Union/Brotherhood Week, June 30-July 6.

The conference is planned for deaf women, but will also assist church staff members and others who work with the deaf. Topics of instruction will include the basics of missions, how to organize WMU age-level groups, and various teaching methods.

Doris Diaz, director of the language department for Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention, will coordinate the conference. Miss Diaz, a beginner in learning sign language, will be aided by conference leaders and three interpreters.

"More and more across the country WMU organizations for deaf women and girls are coming into being," Miss Diaz said. "We must find ways to minister to these organizations."

The deaf conference is open to anyone deaf or working with the deaf, she said, noting that potential participants should contact Glorieta Baptist Conference Center to make reservations for the WMU/Brotherhood Conference, since the deaf conference does not have separate registration.

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Crane Heads Missions
Division for Penn-Jersey

HARRISBURG, Pa. (BP)--The executive board of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey has elected Harold Crane as the board's missions division director, effective May 1.

Crane, a native of New Jersey, has served as missions director for the Michigan Convention for the last eight years.

As director of the missions division, Crane will serve as the chief liaison person in cooperative work with the missions section of the Home Mission Board and will give leadership to the promotion of Brotherhood and Royal Ambassador programs. He will also assist Ellis M. Bush, executive secretary-treasurer, in staff work related to planning, implementing and evaluating the ministries and programs of the executive board, and serve as the staff coordinator of church/minister relation services.

He is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Mich., and the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He has served churches in Texas, Louisiana and Michigan.

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New Orleans Pastor
Robbed at Gunpoint

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--"Give me your money and your keys or I'll blow your brains out," J. D. Grey, pastor emeritus of New Orleans' First Baptist Church, was told when he emerged from his auto recently in the church parking lot.

The gun pointed at him convinced him the man and woman meant business. "I've always wondered what I'd do if such a thing happened," Grey stated.

He had parked the 1973 Buick, given him as a retirement gift by the church, and was on his way to evening worship service.

"Go ahead," Grey said. "I'm ready to meet God. If you need money for food just let me go into the church and I'll get some for you."

Grey handed over his keys and the robbers left without taking his wallet.

He later received a telephone message that his car was parked in another part of town. When he got to it, the hub caps and transmission were gone.

When Grey learned some church members were taking up an offering to buy him a new car he requested them not to. "Lots of members of this church have had cars and property stolen. I want to swim through this like anyone else," he said.

The insurance company repaired the damage. The thieves have not been found.

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