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Editor's Note: This is the first of a five-part series on the energy crisis, Christians and conservation. Future stories will be mailed on Wednesday of each week for the next four weeks. All articles are illustrated.

First in a Series

Skyrocketing Energy Costs
Damaging Church Budgets

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Regular rate increases for electricity and natural gas, long lines for gasoline in many parts of the country and repeated calls for conservation from many fronts point toward an energy crisis in America, whether real or contrived.

Southern Baptist church pastors and finance committees, much to their dismay, are discovering that costs to heat, cool and light the church meeting house are demanding an ever-increasing portion of budgets which could be used for advancing the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust effort to evangelize the world instead of creature comforts.

Energy conservation is not an easy road to travel, primarily because of opposition from people who expect the situation to resolve itself when "big oil" or the "Arabs" quit gouging the world with astronomical price demands for fossil fuels.

Unfortunately, whether or not a majority of people believe our energy problems to be baseless, increasingly prevalent high prices, spot shortages and brownouts indicate a problem which must be dealt with decisively and with conviction.

Jerry Privette, supervisor of the church building program and promotion section in the church architecture department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, believes that energy conservation through better management is a matter of Bible-based stewardship for Christians.

"Southern Baptist churches must decide where our priorities are," Privette said, "and not wait to be coerced by some government decree or rationing plan. As Christians, under the doctrine of responsibility, we should take a lead in the community to encourage stewardship of God's created resources. The denomination, state and association must motivate churches to save energy."

The church architecture department is committed to helping churches become more energy conscious, according to Privette, particularly when churches inquire for free advice in planning new buildings or remodeling projects.

"Christians should not sit by apathetically while the world's energy is drained day by day," Privette said. "We should work with a sense of aggressiveness and confrontation and meet the problem head on."

Worship conditions in churches will undoubtedly be affected, Privette believes, and in some instances, the changes will not be easily accepted or backed enthusiastically.

In the colder months, church members will find it necessary to dress warmer and possibly put up with a certain degree of discomfort. Changes will need to be considered in construction, scheduling and transportation. Churches which maintain a large bus ministry may find shortages of gasoline, and pastors may experience rejection of the church because of conservation efforts.

One pastor told Privette of a woman who walked into the church's nursery with her child and discovered that the temperature was not as warm as she thought it should be. She refused to leave her child, and consequently left and went to another church down the street where the temperatures were higher.

While the energy situation may not be in crisis proportions in some areas of the country, Privette said some Southern Baptist churches are in the throes of a crisis now because of insufficient income and availability of fuel. At the same time, churches in warmer parts of the country in many cases are relatively unaffected by the crisis, except for increased costs.

Budgetary considerations are important in every Southern Baptist church, and steps should be taken to use the members' gifts as wisely as possible. However, he said our prime motivation must be more than saving money.

"No one has the right to squander natural resources," Privette said, "that eventually might cause discomfort of others because of a lack of conservation practices."

"Whether or not we all have reached a point of crisis or not," he continued, "we must look at it from an outlook of stewardship. The environment in which we live has only so much to give."

"Many Christians today endure a great deal of inconvenience, even hardships, in order to gather for worship," he pointed out. "By dealing positively with their conditions, they have become a part of their spiritual challenge and commitment. Their physical comfort appears to be of lesser concern than their fellowship and collective worship experiences. Perhaps they have already learned some valuable lessons that Christians in the United States will eventually face."

The changeover from a fossil fuel base will not be a quick, painless or inexpensive action. Only time will allow scientists the opportunity to search for efficient energy replacements, and only conservation will slow consumption of available resources.

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(Article two will deal with definite steps churches can take to improve energy management and lower costs.)

(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspaper editors.

Busing Amendment
Fails in House

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--Attempts to push a constitutional amendment forbidding all busing of students for racial purposes failed by 75 votes in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The actual vote was 209 in favor of the amendment and 216 opposing it, but a constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority for passage.

Rep. Ronald M. Mottl, R-Ohio, forced the vote on the House floor by getting a majority of his colleagues to vote to bring his resolution forbidding all mandatory busing of students out of the judiciary committee.

Debate on the issue was emotional. Rep. William H. Gray III, D-Penn., also pastor of the Bright Hope Baptist Church of Philadelphia, said, "We must not enshrine a narrow social dogma in the Constitution. This would officially sanction apartheid in our country... It would totally disregard the concept of equality under the law."

Rep. James M. Collins, R-Texas, also a Baptist, favored the amendment. "A mother called me last night in tears and said, 'You simply must support the Mottl amendment.'" He told an unusually crowded chamber that he considered the amendment "essential" to "quality education." "Forced busing has lowered our educational standards," he said.

Rep. John Buchanan, R-Ala., an ordained Baptist minister, said, "The Constitution should not be amended in this cavalier fashion. Would we amend the Bill of Rights with only one to two hours of debate?"

Rep. Peter Rodino, D-N.J., chairman of the judiciary committee, said after the vote that he expected any similar efforts to stop busing to "lie dormant for a couple of years now."

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Bryan Elected To
Commission Chair

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Margaret F. Bryan, a Nashville realtor, was elected chairman of the Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary at its annual meeting in Nashville.

She is the first woman to hold the highest elected position of any Southern Baptist Convention board or agency.

The 16-member commission acts as a liaison between the SBC and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. in matters relating to the American Baptist Theological Seminary, a predominantly black Nashville school.

Mrs. Bryan, a member of First Baptist Church, Nashville, has written numerous articles for denominational publications. An alumna of Vanderbilt University, she has done graduate study at George Peabody College. Her husband is Nashville physician J. Thomas Bryan.

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**Mission Trip Plane Crash
Kills Five, Injures Seven**

By Debbie Stewart

DALLAS (BP)--Five Baptists from west Texas were killed, and seven others injured, when a plane carrying them on a missions trip in the U.S. Virgin Islands crashed moments after take-off July 24.

Killed en route to ten days of Bible school, preaching and church pew building at the St. Kitts Baptist Church were: Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Connel Jr., ages 52 and 50; Jack Rosinbaum, 49; Stephen Sapaugh, 15; and Sharon Geye, 33; all members or former members of First Baptist Church, Clyde, Texas, near Abilene.

A co-pilot and two of the other 21 people on the capacity-loaded plane were reported to have been killed.

The other Baptists in the 12-member missions team were injured in the plane crash, which occurred at 9:22 a.m. Injured were Riley Fugitt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Clyde, and his wife Voncell; their son Mickey, an evangelist; Mrs. Preston (Murlene) Porter; Lisa Melton, 17; Caleb Watson, 15; and Pam Patton, 19.

Mickey Fugitt, Mrs. Porter and Miss Melton are members of Elmcrest Baptist Church, Abilene, where Miss Melton's father, T. C. Melton, is pastor. Miss Patton and Watson are members of the Clyde church.

The Clyde and St. Kitts Baptist congregations have developed a mission friendship in the past ten years, beginning with an evangelistic crusade by Fugitt in Puerto Rico. Pastor William Conner of St. Kitts and members from his church visited Clyde last year.

The pastor, members and friends of First Baptist Church, Clyde, were on the fourth missions trip the west Texas church has made to St. Kitts Island. About 1,800 children and adults had enrolled for Bible school, and weddings were planned in which the west Texas Baptists were to assist.

The Texas Baptists on the inter-island commuter flight of Puerto Rico International Airlines flight 610 were 125 miles from St. Kitts when the plane crashed at Alexander Hamilton International Airport on St. Croix Island.

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Executive Director Baker J. Cauthen praised the missions commitment of the two Texas churches and extended sympathy to and prayers for the families of those killed or injured in the crash.

Missionary Shelby A. Smith, serving in another Leeward Island, Antigua, was to go to St. Croix July 25, to assist the victims.

The five Baptists who were killed were going to St. Kitts to work as Christian laymen. Connel and Rosinbaum, deacons at the Clyde church, were to do carpentry work. Mrs. Connel was to work in the Vacation Bible School.

Stephen Sapaugh of Clyde, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Sapaugh was to help with the youth program. Sharon Geye, a home economics teacher and mother of two young children, was going to be a teacher and a lay witness. Mrs. Geye and her family recently moved to Rising Star, where they joined the First Baptist Church.

An eyewitness said the ill-fated plane, a DeHavilland Heron, "took off in a steep incline at first. It stalled and then it veered to the right before it crashed. The plane's nose and right wing hit the ground at the same time. There was no fire."

Mrs. Porter, the Elmcrest Baptist Church member who was injured in the crash, was seated on the right side of the plane.

"The wing went down and you could feel that the engine never fully revved," she said. "The plane dipped. Everybody yelled, 'Hey, don't kid.' They thought the pilot was playing with them, but I knew he wasn't."

Mrs. Porter had an interview after the crash with a radio reporter in the emergency room at Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital in Christiansted on St. Croix Island. She was successful in sending an appeal for Baptists of St. Kitts to come be with their friends from west Texas.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story mailed 7-24-79 entitled "Home Mission Offering Ahead of Last Year's" please change figure in the fifth paragraph to read "more than \$1,837,000 above the offering in the previous year." The original figure read \$700,000. Thanks, Baptist Press

Lobby Disclosure
Includes Churches

WASHINGTON (BP)--Churches would be covered by a new lobby disclosure bill introduced in the U.S. Senate.

Sen. Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., introduced a lobby disclosure measure which he said would cover only organizations whose primary activity is lobbying. However, churches are included in the bill's provisions with one exception. Churches which engage in lobbying activities would not have to disclose contributors of over \$3,000 as would other lobbying organizations.

A Chiles staffer told Baptist Press that churches are excluded from the disclosure of large contributors because of "First Amendment problems." The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees that the government will neither establish nor inhibit religion.

Attempts in the last Congress to push a lobby disclosure bill through failed in the Senate though the House of Representatives passed such a measure. Observers in the Senate feel the Chiles bill has a chance of success because his low budget campaigns have not tied him to big lobbyists. He is also regarded as an advocate of "open government."

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