

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Christian Life Spokesman
Supports Formula Control

By David Wilkinson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Proposed legislation that would regulate American companies which market infant formula in developing nations has drawn the support of a Southern Baptist authority on world hunger issues.

W. David Sapp of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission recently urged the chairmen of two U.S. House of Representatives subcommittees to back a bill introduced by Rep. Ronald V. Dellums, D-Calif., which has been referred to their committees.

At the same time, Sapp called upon leaders of a nationwide boycott aimed at Nestle, a foreign based infant formula producer, to demonstrate more "fairness" and "responsibility" in their campaign.

Titled the Infant Nutrition Act of 1979, the Dellums' bill (H.R. 4093) would strictly prohibit any U.S. company from promoting, directly or indirectly, the sale of infant formula in any developing country.

Under the bill's provisions, companies would be required to obtain an export license which would be issued only after they demonstrated that sales and distribution are aimed at consumers who have access to safe water, fuel and refrigeration and who can "afford" the product. The license could be revoked if it was determined that "the sale of infant formula would contribute to morbidity or mortality in early infancy."

Although he expressed reservations about a few specific points, Sapp praised the "general thrust" of the proposed legislation, claiming that it not only will provide needed protection for infants but also "will give those companies who feel that they have been falsely accused a clear standard by which to measure their behavior."

"Ordinarily, we would be reluctant to call for this kind of industry regulation," Sapp explained in a letter to the two congressmen, "but the lives of innocent children are at stake. The protection of their lives and well-being demands extraordinary precautions."

Sapp called for public hearings on the bill and recommended that it be more specific in stating how a company can meet the requirements of directing its formula promotion efforts only at those who can afford the product and have the means to use it safely.

Corporations which sell infant formula in Third World countries have been the targets of increasing criticism from religious leaders and others who are upset by the companies' marketing practices. A nationwide boycott of Nestle, which markets no infant formula in the U.S. but sells more formula in the Third World than any other company, has gained

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momentum in recent months. Organized by INFACT (Infant Formula Action Coalition), the boycott has won the official support of the National Council of Churches and a number of major denominations.

Critics of Nestle and other companies argue that media advertising and indirect promotion through give-away samples distributed through hospitals and health organizations have encouraged widespread misuse and abuse of infant formula, leading to severe malnutrition problems in countries where mothers are largely poor and illiterate.

In April, Nestle flew a group of American religious leaders to the corporation's international headquarters in Switzerland to discuss the infant formula controversy with company executives. Sapp represented then SBC President Jimmy Allen at the meeting.

While indicating strong support for legislation and other efforts to ensure corporate responsibility on the part of the producers and distributors of infant formula, Sapp also appealed for "equal responsibility" from boycott leaders who "have too often made charges which are exaggerated, unfounded, or outdated." One illustration, he said, is the "unverifiable and overstated" claim included in some boycott literature that "10 million Third World babies" are starving because of misused formula.

Despite such "overstatements," Sapp stressed that "too much is at stake for Southern Baptists not to take this issue seriously."

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Brotherhood Trustees Elect
Smith Executive Director

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--James Hillman Smith, executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist State Association, was elected without opposition as executive director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

At a special meeting of 36 trustees from 26 states at Memphis Holiday Inn Rivermont, chairman Jack Knox of Germantown, Tenn., nominated the Illinois clergyman with the unanimous blessing of his eight-man search committee and the 10-man executive committee of the agency.

Smith, 58, was chosen from more than 100 candidates to become the fifth chief administrative officer of the missions education agency, succeeding Glendon McCullough who died in a traffic accident Aug. 23, 1978.

In accepting the job, Smith told the trustees they honored and humbled him, saying, "The last three weeks have been the most spectacular expression of the will of God that I have seen." Smith agreed three weeks prior to his election to let his name be submitted as the search committee's choice.

"I'm excited about what God has in store for us," Smith said. "Just as this is the year of the child, I'm convinced that the next 10 years will become known as the decade of the laity."

Men with ability and means are asking Southern Baptists to give them handles to take part in sharing the Christian message, Smith added.

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"I'm a churchman. I believe anything that God does that's lasting is church related. The only reason that para-church movements are strong is that the church hasn't been strong in those areas," he said. "I believe these next 10 years will be the most exciting decade in the history of the Christian church."

Following the vote the trustees were applauded for their action by Harmon Moore, executive secretary of Indiana Southern Baptists; Forrest Sawyer, brotherhood director for Kentucky Baptists, and Wendell Belew, director of the missions division of the Home Mission Board. Smith's name was the second recommended by the search committee. In May, William E. Hardy Jr. of Columbus, Miss., a former chairman of the agency, asked the committee to withdraw his name only hours before the trustees were to consider his nomination.

Smith, who will begin his new duties on Sept. 15, will receive a salary of \$35,978. The trustees also approved \$7,600 for the purchase of a new commission car for Smith's use, and \$2,000 to operate it during the next 12 months.

The employment package also included agency funding of a retirement annuity in the amount of 10 percent of Smith's base salary, payment of premiums for hospitalization and a \$120,000 life insurance policy.

The commission provides guidance in missions for almost 500,000 men and boys in more than 15,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Memphis bureau of Baptist Press.

Committee To Recommend
Cauthen's Successor

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DALLAS (BP)--The chairman of the search committee to find a successor to Baker James Cauthen, retiring head of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, says the committee will have a recommendation Aug. 6.

M. Hunter Riggins Jr., chairman of the search committee, told Texas Baptist Standard Editor Presnall Wood his committee will bring a unanimous recommendation to the 80-member Foreign Mission Board in executive session at the Glorieta Baptist Conference Center. Board members will vote on the recommendation the following morning, Aug. 7.

"I doubt seriously that there has been a committee that has been more prayerful," Riggins said. The committee began work last October by calling on Southern Baptists to pray for them and to send suggestions and recommendations. Riggins got so much response he had to hire a fulltime secretary to handle the correspondence.

Riggins believes the reason for the large input of many Southern Baptists to the search committee was because "evangelism and missions tie Southern Baptists together."

The SBC Foreign Mission Board, probably the largest evangelical missionary sending body in the world, supports 2,904 missionaries in 94 countries. Cauthen, former missionary to China, has been the board's executive director for 26 years.

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Most Injured From Plane Crash Back in Abilene

ST. CROIX, Virgin Islands (BP)--Riley Fugitt, one of seven Texas Baptists injured in a plane crash while enroute to mission activities in the Virgin Islands, has been transferred to the U.S. Navy Hospital in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Five members of Fugitt's church were killed in the same incident when the inter-island commuter plane carrying them and 16 others stalled and crashed shortly after take-off July 24.

The other injured Baptists, from First Baptist Church, Clyde, and Elmcrest Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, have been flown by Air Force ambulance to Hendrick Memorial Hospital, Abilene. That number includes Fugitt's wife, Voncell, and their son Mickey; Mrs. Preston (Murlene) Porter; Lisa Melton; Caleb Watson and Pam Patton.

Killed were Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Connel Jr., Jack Rosinbaum, Stephen Sapaugh and Sharon Geye.

Bodies of the five dead were flown back to Abilene where seperate funerals were held over three days. Three other passengers, not with the Baptist group, were killed in the crash.

The Clyde Baptists had a 10-year mission relationship with St. Kitts Baptist Church in the Virgin Islands, where they were going to conduct Bible schools, preach and build church pews.

Bill Keck, minister of music at Clyde, said, "The accident will not curtail our participation in mission trips. The attitude of the church people is they must continue in this kind of mission in spite of the accident.

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Five Killed When Church Van Struck

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DALLAS (BP)--Five teenagers and sponsors on their way to a church training week at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center were killed when a truck hit their van and pushed it into flood waters left by tropical storm Claudette July 27.

The five, members of First Baptist Church and Calvary Baptist Church, Cleveland, Texas, are: teenagers Elizabeth Bazar, Pam Fitch and David Williamson; and sponsors Mr. and Mrs. Wayne McGee. McGee was driving the van in which seven others were injured, none seriously.

The accident occurred on Highway 7, three miles west of Centerville. Strong, swift currents from the flooding prevented officials from recovering the bodies for several hours.

Another van from the Cleveland church was traveling with the van that was knocked into the flooded area. The other van was hit, but not knocked off the road. A total of 24 teenagers and sponsors were riding in the two vans.

The disaster relief van of the Baptist General Convention of Texas was stationed in Alvin, Texas, by Friday noon, July 27, to do mass feeding at the request of the Red Cross.

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