



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

--FEATURES

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State Department Official Says
U.S. May Break With Chile

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--Diplomatic relations between Chile and the United States may be jeopardized by the Chilean supreme court's refusal to try or extradite three citizens involved in the assassination of former Chilean ambassador to the U.S. Orlando Letelier in 1976, an assistant secretary of state told participants in a religious liberty conference.

Patricia Derian, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, said that the whole question of diplomatic relations will be reviewed. "We will probably say that the situation is unacceptable, intolerable," she said.

Derian pointed out that Congress is readying legislation to oppose the Chilean action. "We probably will have more action than the Chilean government anticipated," she said. "We will probably have a fight (at the state department), but we're likely to wind up doing the right thing."

Derian also told the participants in the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs-sponsored conference on human rights that the pentecostal family presently living in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow hopes to receive exit visas from the Soviet government. "The Soviet government has promised that they will suffer no harm if they choose to return to their homes," Derian said, "But these people have been snake bit. They've had bad experiences in the past and don't trust their government. All papers are ready on our end. We are not holding up their emigration."

Derian challenged the Baptists to let their moral authority be heard firmly. "Liberty cannot endure if we look only to our own interests at home," she said. "God's people everywhere have no business saying, 'That's their business somewhere else.' We have a duty to get out and work for others."

Derian acknowledged that human rights in U.S. foreign policy has a long way to go but "How we do it is better now--because we used not to do it."

She noted that different viewpoints on human rights in the defense department cause some slowdowns. Despite the problems, she said that "the idea has penetrated that it's ludicrous for the United States to send police equipment to governments for use against their own people. That is one small sign of progress."

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Wearn to Speak at
Abe Lincoln Awards

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Wilson Wearn, president of Multimedia, Inc., in Greenville, S.C., will be featured speaker at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission's Eleventh Annual Abe Lincoln Awards Feb. 28, 1980.

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Wearn, a past-chairman of the National Association of Broadcasters, will also receive the Vincent T. Wasilewski Award, given to a broadcaster who raises the image of the industry in the eyes of the public.

Begun in 1970 as a local awards ceremony, the now national awards emphasize broadcasters and their efforts toward betterment of public life. Two top Abe Lincoln awards, one for radio and one for television, are given each year, with merit awards presented individuals for exceptional achievements as broadcasters and as citizens.

In addition, the Railsplitter Award will honor a broadcasting pioneer who broke new ground for the industry when it was in its infancy.

Wearn has served as president of the South Carolina Broadcasters Association, chairman of the Broadcast Rating Council and a board of delegates member of NBC-TV affiliates. He is presently on the board of directors of Broadcast Music, Inc.

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Apprentice Planters
Pioneer Program

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ATLANTA (BP)--Five apprentice church planters are pioneering a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board program designed to transform seminary graduates with limited pastoral experience into seasoned church starters.

William G. Tanner, the board's executive director-treasurer, commissioned the apprentices in Atlanta's Druid Hills Baptist Church.

"Yours is a task of highest significance," he told them. "You will play a vital role in Southern Baptist efforts to reach our world for Christ through Bold Mission Thrust."

The apprentices are Derald Frederick Adams of Elkhorn, Wis., who will serve in Greenfield, Ohio; Alan Gilley of Atlanta, Ga., assigned to Snellville, Ga.; Donald Wayne Hall of Pinehurst, N.C., sent to Oswego, N.Y.; Steven Burgi Moorhouse of Carroll, Iowa, who will work in Gunnison and Crested Butte, Colo.; and Dan Moseley of Carmel, Calif., sent to Hanover, N.H.

Pastors and missionaries who are experienced church planters will supervise the program, Tanner said. Terms of appointment are for two years, coordinated through the board's Church Extension Division. After the apprenticeship, the men will be eligible for church pastoral aid from the division.

The board hopes to assign 20 apprentice church planters by the end of the year and 20 more in 1980. They will be assigned to new work areas in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Churches Scored For
Human Rights Stance

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--Churches in the United States came under a barrage of criticism for their failure to lead the way in the effort to secure human rights during the 17th Religious Liberty Conference in Washington Oct. 1-3.

At the time when Pope John Paul II was pleading the cause of human rights before the United Nations and huge American crowds, speaker after speaker at a conference on "The Church, the State and Human Rights" sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs found the initiatives of the churches for human rights wanting. The conference was held in conjunction with the 40th anniversary observance of the Washington-based Baptist agency.

A pair of U.S. congressmen, one white and one black, told conference participants that the church in the U.S. must address domestic human rights problems before it can attain credibility in speaking to violations of such rights abroad.

John H. Buchanan Jr., R-Ala., keynoted the three-day meeting by declaring that while "Baptist Christians have done many good things in the world. . . we have not given the attention we should to civil rights."

An ordained Southern Baptist minister now serving his sixth term as congressman from Birmingham, Ala., Buchanan challenged fellow Southern Baptists "to get out of the caboose and into the locomotive" on civil rights issues.

In his sermon-like address, Buchanan praised Baptist concern for the plight of dissidents in politically restrictive nations, but urged greater attention to the plight of blacks and other ethnic minorities, as well as that of women and children.

Rep. John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., charged U.S. churches with being the "polite captive of the state" and expressed "serious doubts" about its willingness to be independent.

The Detroit congressman said that if his assumption is true, "It follows that it's exceedingly difficult to go as far" as the church should in changing the status quo.

Conyers, a black Baptist, said he sees his role in part to "help alleviate the pressures in the church against progressivism so that we can deal with redistribution of resources and opportunities which is what it's all about."

The strongest attack on churches came from a black Baptist pastor who charged that white churches in America have perpetuated the institution of racism.

William A. Jones Jr., pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church in Brooklyn and current president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, declared, "Many white clergy are mere puppets rather than prophets. . . . The white church historically and presently is an instrument of the American system, sanctifying its sins and giving inspiration to its iniquities."

The black leader identified the key components of the American system which perpetuate racism as "the American trinitarian formula of capitalism, racism and militarism."

An American Baptist executive and former pastor in Nicaragua warned that Protestant missionaries to most Latin American countries lose their credibility by identifying with the system rather than the people.

Roger Velasquez, director of bilingual services for the American Baptist Churches in the U. S. A., also scored the "neocolonialism" of multi-national corporations and the ever-growing military expenditures of western nations. He said despair in the third world can be attributed to the absence of the most basic of human rights, including hunger, malnutrition, low life expectancy and deficient housing.

John J. Gilligan, a Notre Dame University law and public policy professor, said the U.S. could transform the face of the earth if it directed its energies toward securing human rights rather than making speeches about human rights.

Gilligan, who was formerly governor of Ohio and chief administrator for the Agency for International Development, said that mixed-up American priorities are witnessed by the fact that "We lost more on gambling tables in Las Vegas last year than we spent to feed the hungry in other nations."

Another prominent public figure, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Patricia M. Derian, declared that while human rights considerations occupy an unprecedented place in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, "We have an endless distance to go."

Derian, the first highly placed state department official with a specific assignment for human rights issues, also predicted that the U.S. will likely break diplomatic relations with the right-wing government of Chile for its failure to put on trial or extradite to the United States three Chilean citizens accused of the murder of former ambassador to the U.S. Orlando Letelier. Letelier was Chile's representative to the U.S. during the regime of Marxist President Salvador Allende.

In another conference event, the Baptist Joint Committee received the Isaiah Award for contributions to justice from the Washington chapter of the American Jewish Committee.

At a joint luncheon, Rabbi Matthew Simon presented the two-foot-high iron sculpture of the prophet Isaiah, declaring that the Baptist Joint Committee has spoken for 40 years "on every concern that is our joint concern."

Accepting the award, Baptist Joint Committee Executive Director James E. Wood Jr. called on Baptists and Jews "to reach out to each other," saying that failure to do so "should be regarded as a denial of our common heritage and of our common affirmations of faith."

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N.C. General Board OKs
New Wake Forest Charter

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ASHEBORO, N.C. (BP)--The General Board of the North Carolina Baptist Convention and its executive committee have approved the proposed new relationship between the Baptist state convention and Wake Forest University.

Final approval must come with a two-thirds vote from messengers at the annual session of the Baptist state convention in Winston-Salem, Nov. 12-14.

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Wake Forest trustees and the state convention's Council on Christian Higher Education have already approved the relationship changes which will give the trustees some voice in electing their board, subject to approval by the convention.

Previously, all trustees of the school had to be Baptists from North Carolina chosen by the convention. If the new relations is approved, trustees will nominate their replacements and one-third of the 36 trustees can be Christians from outside North Carolina. Also, Wake Forest will be removed as a budget item from the state convention.

The general board also voted to release \$496,000 held in escrow for Wake Forest. Funds had been cut off Dec. 8 when the trustees amended their charter without convention approval. Wake Forest is scheduled to receive \$936,937 for 1979 from the convention's budget.

The new plan, which will be subject to review every five years, will go into effect Jan. 1, 1981 if approved at the convention.

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Prayer Day Could
Draw Million Women

Baptist Press
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WASHINGTON (BP)--A few scattered gatherings of European Baptist women praying for peace and understanding following World War II has grown into a massive Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer, expected to attract as many as a million women to thousands of prayer centers in a hundred nations Nov. 5.

The day of prayer, now an annual event, is sponsored by the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance. Marie Mathis of Waco, Texas, department president, said that women gather in groups "as small as two or three" or as large as a thousand.

Some meet in the shade of a tree in Kenya; some gather at a community center in the outback of Australia; others in a church auditorium in more affluent nations.

The things they have in common are their faith in God, concern for Christian witness, and a suggested program listing prayer requests and seeking God's blessing on their efforts in widely diversified situations in all parts of the world.

Robert S. Denny, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, views the worldwide participation of Baptist women in the annual day of prayer as "another amazing evidence of the oneness of Baptist people in their international love for one another and their common concern for Christian objectives."

Mrs. Mathis said that 200,000 copies of an English language program have been distributed for the meetings, and that uncounted numbers of other copies are being made available in a hundred other languages.

In addition to their prayers, the women contribute, often sacrificially, to a financial offering used for a variety of benevolent projects, and for bringing women from remote countries to international meetings such as the Baptist World Congress in Toronto in July 1980.

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