



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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## Wood Attacks Proposed Lobby Disclosure Bills

WASHINGTON (BP)--Churches accounting to government for their activities in order to enjoy religious freedom is unacceptable, a Baptist leader told a Senate committee here.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told members of the Committee on Governmental Affairs that lobby disclosure legislation pending before it assumes that government has the right to monitor all political activity. "We view such an interpretation of governmental powers with alarm," Wood said.

Wood assured the senators that he was not questioning the motive behind the proposed bills, "but we view the effects as alarming," he noted.

"Accounting to government in the closest, most minute sort of way constitutes entanglement for the churches," Wood pointed out. "What is the compelling state interest in requiring churches to report their activities to government?"

Sen. Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., sponsor of S. 1564, one of the measures under consideration, responded that complete exemption of religious organizations could lead to attempts by such groups as the Unification Church or the Church of Scientology to become state religions. "This could mean a breakdown of separation between church and state," he said.

Wood expressed dismay over Chiles' remarks. "Government has no power to regulate religion," he said. "To suggest that government has the power to police or monitor any religion, whether old or new, is frightening. The premise that government has the right to a full accounting of churches is distressing. We view with alarm this appearance of government monitoring of all political activity."

In response to questioning from Sen. David Pryor, D-Ark., Wood said that religious activity goes beyond rites and rituals. "Speaking out on human rights and social justice is just as integral to the religious mission of the church as eleven o'clock Sunday morning," Wood asserted.

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Missionary Resigns Post  
As Seminary President

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RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Isam E. Ballenger has resigned as president of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, effective April 30, 1980.

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The action came during a seminary executive board meeting in Ruschlikon. It followed a period of more than two years when Ballenger was both seminary president and Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board field representative. In the latter capacity, he served as a personal link overseas between Southern Baptist missionaries in Europe and board headquarters in Richmond, Va.

In accepting Ballenger's resignation, the seminary board "acknowledged with understanding" that Ballenger could not continue as seminary president and also as field representative on a long range basis.

The board expressed gratitude to Ballenger for "outstanding leadership given to the seminary during a period of severe financial crisis." It also thanked him for his part in the reduction and reorganization of staff at the seminary and in securing additional financial support. That leadership, the board said, has resulted in progress toward financial stability and increased student enrollment.

The board thanked Mrs. Ballenger "for the many days" she has helped the seminary during the staff reduction period.

The 30-year-old seminary has faced increased financial pressure in recent years as value of the American dollar has declined.

The European Baptist Federation Council agreed about a year ago to accept sponsorship of the financially troubled institution, and an executive board assumed administrative responsibility. Southern Baptists have continued to contribute substantially to the financial solvency of the school.

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Memory Lingers  
In Belize

By Otis W. Brady

Baptist Press  
10/16/79

BELIZE CITY, Belize (BP)--One year ago Belizeans--struggling with the problems of Hurricane Greta--received Southern Baptist assistance.

This year, Belizeans themselves are on the giving end.

Members and followers of two new churches in this small country south of Mexico--Ladyville and Calvary Baptist Churches--remembered how "unknown brothers and sisters in Christ" expressed concern for them in their time of distress.

Today, with prayers and deep sympathy for those now suffering from damages from Hurricane David in the Caribbean, the two churches have given \$200 out of their poverty in a special offering for Hurricane David relief.

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Otis Brady is a Southern Baptist missionary to Belize.

Abortion Foes Win Again In  
New Federal Funding Bill

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--Abortion foes appear to have won another point in the ongoing battle to stop federal funding of abortion.

In a compromise worked out between the Senate and House of Representatives in 1977, federal funding for abortions has been allowed when the life of the mother is endangered, in the case of rape or incest, or if "severe and longlasting physical health damage" to the mother would result from the pregnancy.

This year, after weeks of bitter negotiating, the Senate agreed to drop the provision allowing funding for abortions when the mother would suffer lasting damage to her health. Anti-abortion members of Congress, especially in the House, want to eliminate any federal funding of abortion and have been steadily chipping away at Senate resistance. The Senate has held a more liberal view of abortion than has the House.

The most recent action of Congress in this area was an emergency measure. The federal budget for the fiscal year 1980, which began Oct. 1, 1979, has not passed Congress. As a result, federal agencies and programs are operating without any funds. A continuing resolution to provide funds until Nov. 20 became the target for haggling over abortion funding as well as congressional pay raises, another controversial item.

Sen. Warren Magnuson, D-Wash., chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, objected strenuously to attaching what he called "hot potatoes" to appropriation bills. "Frankly, I am getting a little bit fed up," Magnuson said. "The abortion issue has been holding up the whole government. It does not belong on an appropriations bill and particularly a continuing resolution bill."

Rep. Robert Dornan, R-Calif., a consistent anti-abortionist, had said earlier in House debate that he intends to attach an abortion amendment to the Treasury Bill and "every other bill in this House that kills innocent human life."

The continuing resolution will provide funds for the District of Columbia, foreign assistance programs, and the Departments of Defense, Labor and Health, Education and Welfare. All of those programs have some funds designated for a variety of medical procedures, including abortion, for employees or other persons.

Also benefitting from the continuing resolution are Social Security recipients, those receiving Medicare or Medicaid funds, unemployment aid, supplemental security income and a variety of other federal programs which have no connection with the abortion issue.

The Senate also agreed to accept a 5.5 percent pay increase for members of Congress and many executive branch civil servants which the House had earlier voted. The Senate had gone on record earlier in opposition to a pay increase at this time. Accepting the 5.5 percent increase has the effect of replacing the 12.9 percent increase allowed by present law.

Baptist Agency Joins Fray  
In Worldwide Church Case

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a pair of developments in the controversy surrounding Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God, the U.S. Supreme Court has denied a request from the church's top legal official to avoid questioning by state authorities.

Meanwhile, the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee entered the case by asking the California Supreme Court to protect Armstrong himself from similar interrogation.

The Baptist Joint Committee, in a letter from its general counsel John W. Baker to the California court on Oct. 15, protested the efforts of state attorney general George Deukmejian to force Armstrong to submit to a deposition on grounds that "both the principle of religious liberty and the constitutional doctrine of the separation of church and state are jeopardized" by such an order.

Under Deukmejian's order, the state of California last January placed the Worldwide Church in receivership. In such a proceeding, the state appoints a person in effect to take over all business-related aspects of the church's operation. Under the unusual action, the state then proceeded to inspect at will all church documents and financial statements.

The action was taken after several former members of the Worldwide Church accused Armstrong and Stanley R. Rader, the church's attorney, of using funds for extensive travels and lavish entertainment rather than on church-related projects.

California, acting under the theory that a public charity is a public trust, has maintained that churches are included. The Baptist Joint Committee action challenges that assumption, declaring that the receivership action amounts to "a large-scale assault on religious liberty--an assault which is well documented in court transcripts and documents as well as in the press."

The Baptist agency also served notice on the California high court that if Armstrong is given a hearing challenging his interrogation, it intends to enter the case on Armstrong's behalf as a friend of the court.

The U.S. Supreme Court meanwhile denied a similar request challenging the state's efforts to question Rader, the Worldwide Church attorney and Armstrong's right-hand assistant.

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Work Teams Need Funds  
For Caribbean Relief Efforts

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--More than \$250,000 in relief contributions will be needed to follow through with plans for teams of Southern Baptist laymen to reconstruct houses damaged by Hurricane David, according to Eugene Grubbs.

Grubbs, coordinator of disaster relief for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said the money will be used to buy building supplies for 80 to 100 houses on Dominica and 300 to 500 houses on the Dominican Republic.

Even construction of those homes will solve only part of the need, said Grubbs, who noted that contributions may be marked for "Caribbean Disaster Relief" and sent to the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va. Lack of funds, he added, will delay the work projects.

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Work teams of Southern Baptist laymen from nine states are being lined up to construct the homes during the next three months, said Norman Godfrey, director of the ministries section of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Memphis, Tenn.

James Hatley, disaster relief specialist for the commission, was dispatched to the Dominican Republic to buy supplies for the first work team from Florida, which began construction on Oct. 15.

Godfrey said the first work team is using supplies bought by the Mennonites.

Brotherhood departments in eight other state Baptist conventions--Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Virginia, Texas, Louisiana, South Carolina and Georgia--are committed to send teams over a 12-week period. The teams, made up of 10 to 12 men skilled in construction, will pay their own travel expenses to and from the work sites and their living expenses during the seven to 14 day work stint there.

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Oklahoma Pastor and Wife  
Murdered in Their Home

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OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (BP)--A Southern Baptist pastor and his wife, Richard and Marilyn Douglass, were shot to death Oct. 15 during what may have been a robbery of their rural home near Okarche, about 20 miles northwest of Oklahoma City.

The Douglasses were both pronounced dead at the scene. Their two teenaged children underwent surgery in Oklahoma City. Leslie, a 13-year-old daughter, and Brooks, a 16-year-old son, were listed in "stable condition" at Deaconess Hospital in Oklahoma City.

According to unconfirmed reports by a deacon of Putnam City Baptist Church, Douglass, pastor of the church since 1972, apparently answered the door about 8 p.m. at his home. Two men asked for assistance. It's not known whether the men asked to enter or forced their way in, the deacon said.

All four family members were bound and gagged. Mr. and Mrs. Douglass were shot in the head. Leslie was shot two or three times and Brooks once. Leslie managed to get loose and untie her brother. The two drove to a physician's home in Okarche, where the doctor notified authorities, police confirmed.

Police are unsure of the motive. Canadian County Undersheriff Jerry Russell said robbery has not been ruled out but it has not been confirmed either. County Sheriff's officers and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation are working on the case.

The Douglasses are former Southern Baptist missionaries to Equatorial Brazil. Appointed in 1968, they were language students in Campinas, 1969-70. From 1970 until their resignations in 1972, they did evangelistic work in Belem, Para, Brazil.

Douglass, 43, an Oklahoma native, was a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He was pastor of churches in Oklahoma, Wyoming and Texas before missionary appointment.

A prolific writer, Douglass was awarded the 1969 George Washington Honor Medal from the Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, Pa., for an editorial he wrote. He frequently wrote for Southern Baptist publications and had a regular column in the Rocky Mountain Baptist, the Colorado Baptist paper. A popular speaker on local radio and devotional programs, Douglass was also listed in the 1969 edition of Outstanding Young Men of America.

Mrs. Douglass, 36, the former Marilyn Sue Lacy of Shawnee, Okla., was a graduate of Altus (Okla.) Junior College and attended Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Seminary.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.