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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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January 8, 1980

80-05

**Pacifists Lose in Bid To  
Avoid Taxes for Military**

By Stan Hasty

WASHINGTON (BP)--As millions of citizens received their income tax forms for 1979, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review lower court decisions denying pacifist citizens the option of refusing to pay that portion of their taxes which goes to the Pentagon.

Unanimously and without comment, the justices let stand rulings by the U.S. Tax Court and the Fourth Court of Appeals denying such tax relief to three pacifists, Howard L. and Barbara B. Lull and Peter W. Herby.

The three refused to pay that portion of their 1974 and 1975 income taxes which they estimated would go for military expenditures. After an audit by Internal Revenue Service personnel, they were ordered to pay taxes plus penalties. On appeal, the U.S. Tax Court ruled for the government. That ruling was upheld by the court of appeals.

The Lulls and Herby, without identifying their denominational affiliation, argued in a written brief that they are Christian pacifists. "The history of Christian conscientious objection and civil disobedience has been coupled with much suffering and struggle," they stated.

"In spite of this," attorneys for the pacifists continued, "the Christian conscience, at least in a remnant of that community, has held true to the belief that the all-pervading teaching of Jesus to love God and one another in the way he loved us mandates that a Christian cannot kill another person for any reason."

That belief, the argument continued, "includes the refusal to pay for killing in the form of taxes for war" for some Christians.

Besides their argument from religious grounds, the three also contended that the Ninth Amendment to the Constitution, which states that the enumeration of "certain rights" does not exclude other rights "retained by the people," protected them from the obligation to pay the taxes in question.

They also cited what they called an imminent "doomsday" of nuclear war by the mid-1980s, the "demonic character of the SALT agreement," the "Pentagon playground," "robbing the poor and hungry," and "waste" as valid reasons for refusing to pay taxes for military purposes.

"A properly filed Form 1040 carries the odor of blood," they concluded.

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Writing for the government, Solicitor General Wade H. McCree Jr. argued that neither the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion nor the Ninth Amendment cover the pacifists' claims.

Freedom of religion, he said, does not absolve even pacifists "from their obligations to comply with otherwise valid legislation of general applicability because they disagree on religious grounds with government policy."

McCree argued further that the taxes in question "are neutral and apply to all taxpayers without regard to their religious beliefs."

On the Ninth Amendment question, McCree likewise disputed the pacifists' contention, saying that the amendment "provides no basis for contesting the exercise of powers expressly granted to Congress by the Constitution."

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New Leader Says Jesus' Story  
Is Still Heart of Missions

By Mary Jane Welch

Baptist Press  
1/8/80

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The heart of foreign missions is still the telling of the Jesus story, said R. Keith Parks to those gathered for his installation as executive director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"We must never allow any other issue to diminish the basic issue to which we're committed," he said.

Parks endorsed the use of "interested, qualified laypeople" in the planning and projecting of foreign missions. He said that "the privilege of participating in meeting world hunger and other tragic needs of the whole man must be given."

He pledged to provide "as wide and deep a channel (for such ministries) as Southern Baptists will enable us to provide." But he added that "it is obvious that restrictions on finances and human resources will determine certain choices.

"Also," he continued, "convention actions and concerted efforts promoting specific interests will diminish or cancel out basic commitments unless more people and money accompany the demands for these new emphases. The heart of foreign missions is still the telling of the Jesus story and as people accept him as Saviour and Lord, indigenous churches emerge."

More than 300 Southern Baptist leaders, family, friends, Foreign Mission Board members and staff braved snow and ice Jan. 7 to attend the installation service at Monument Heights Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

Parks told them that he is convinced that "once Southern Baptists are aware of needs, aware of the opportunities, aware of the challenge, the resources will be provided."

"I am persuaded that this decade of missions will have built into it greater danger, more uncertainty, more difficulty, more intense persecution and greater opportunities and challenges than any we've experienced in a long time," he said.

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Parks, a veteran of mission service in Indonesia and work at board headquarters as secretary for Southeast Asia and director of the mission support division, made his remarks following a sermon by his predecessor, Baker J. Cauthen.

Basing his sermon on Jesus' teaching that what is impossible with men is possible with God, Cauthen urged Southern Baptists to seriously accept the challenge of the biblical Great Commission to go into all the world preaching the gospel.

"As Southern Baptists we have laid our hands to what the world would call an impossibility-- Bold Mission Thrust," he said. Bold Mission Thrust is the Southern Baptist Convention plan aimed at giving everyone in the world the chance to hear the gospel by the end of the century. "There's simply no other way for man's deep, basic problems to be solved," Cauthen said. "They're going to be solved God's way."

Cauthen said that no less than one-tenth of the \$2 billion expected soon to be given annually by Southern Baptists should go to overseas missions. "To whom does the tithe belong? To the Lord Jesus Christ... From the time money is laid on the altar until it is expended, every touch of that money must be flavored by the Great Commission," Cauthen said.

He also called for the Foreign Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission to walk hand-in-hand in the future, saying it would be impossible to give the message to the whole world without using radio and television.

Cauthen presented Parks his own Bible as a symbol of a new Bible he would receive later, saying it is a book "I know and you know to be God's trustworthy record of his revelation... You'll never go wrong as executive director when you follow what it tells you."

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### Small Church Gets Big Gift

VIRGINIA, Ill. (BP)--Little First Baptist Church of Virginia, Ill., received an unexpected Christmas gift of \$150,000 from the estate of David Needham, a Methodist.

Needham, a large landowner, was never married, and left most of his \$3 million estate to churches and church institutions. Each denomination in Virginia was included.

"Our budget calls for five percent to the Cooperative Program, plus five percent to associational missions," said James Seago, pastor of the 35-member church. "So both the Illinois Baptist State Association and the Sandy Creek Baptist Association are getting five percent checks for \$7,500 each."

Seago said the church, whose total budget for 1979 was about \$6,000, has voted to employ him as a full-time pastor, and to erect a new pastorium.

Before mailing the \$7,500 check to the Baptist offices in Springfield, Cooperative Program gifts from the Virginia church had totaled \$125 for all of 1979. The gifts from Needham's estate are eventually expected to reach \$187,000 for First Baptist.

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## Shepherds Seek Preservation For New York's South Bronx

NEW YORK (BP)--For years, the wolves have stalked South Bronx.

But the Shepherds are trying to change all that.

The Shepherds are a group of interdenominational ministers and lay leaders who are determined to rescue South Bronx from the wolves. Theirs is an ominous task: arson abounds, drugs flow freely, prostitution flourishes, hunger runs rampant. Depravity and neglect go hand-in-hand.

There are perhaps 1,200 abandoned and broken buildings in the area. As many as 3,500 fires are set annually. Banks and business have disappeared. Libraries and schools stand empty, if they stand at all. Squatters live in gutted structures, bathe in streets and build fires in oil drums to keep warm. Most of the world has turned away, leaving the community to self-destruct.

Yet churches remain, and it is from them that the Shepherds have started anew.

"The church is a stable element, a sign of continuing leadership and commitment," explained Stanton Eckstut, urban planner, Columbia University professor and Shepherd consultant. "There are a series of places in South Bronx which remain viable. You start with what is strongest--like areas around each church--and you build out from there."

The Shepherds realized, however, they could not build far beyond the membership rolls and sanctuary walls without outside help. They looked for federal funds, but they also called on the Evangelism Section of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Sam Simpsons, pastor of Bronx Baptist Church, talked to Dale Cross, the board's urban evangelism director, about Shepherd participation in the board's Key Cities plans. Cross put the Shepherds in touch with Reid Hardin, director of evangelism support. Hardin explained how N.E.S.T. (National Evangelism Support Team) could work in South Bronx.

The alliance resulted in a three-day convocation this fall in New York. There, a 10-person HMB resource group shared dreams and strategy with the Shepherds.

Most importantly, the meeting allowed both groups to establish relationships, define the term "evangelism" in the context of South Bronx and map strategy for the upcoming months, Cross said.

Building relationships was a vital concern because many South Bronx churches are not Southern Baptist, he explained. "We all had to learn to trust and understand each other."

Likewise, Shepherds and home board leaders discovered common ground through a working definition of "evangelism." George W. Webber, president of New York Theological Seminary, told the group: "Evangelism is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. We're to witness and demonstrate that his kingdom has come."

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Building on this foundation, both groups made plans for restoring South Bronx--spiritually and physically.

The strength of spiritual reconstruction is prayer, both from within and beyond the community. Participating pastors have agreed to work with at least two laymen in prayer and discipling teams. When the laymen are able, they are to each form new prayer groups, constantly dividing and multiplying. Also, board leaders are urging Southern Baptist churches, through missions organizations, to link up with Bronx churches in prayer groups.

Other opportunities for spiritual growth include personal witness training, lay renewal workshops and mission work projects. All plans are designed to help Bronx churches strengthen their individual forces so they may continue to work in the community, even after outside mission volunteers are long gone, Cross said.

To help with physical renovation, the board hopes to sponsor work groups to establish and equip a central office for the Shepherds. The groups also will work with all participating churches in months to come, supplying needed manpower to clean up adjacent areas. The board already has promised \$20,000 to help finance initial work.

In the long run, the Shepherds hope Christian businessmen will migrate back into the community. Stores, shops and manufacturing plants are needed to curb unemployment. Developers must come in and help build apartments that are comfortable, yet affordable.

"We need people who will help us wipe out programmed poverty," said Victor Ketchens, lay chairman of the Shepherds' evangelism committee. "We need people who will lift this community, who will help provide new housing, new jobs and new relationships with Christ."

"There are men and women all over the country who have the means and the ability to help us do this," he explained. "They can invest their money where it will really mean something, whether they get a large return on it or not. And there are others who have the time and talent to come here in advisory capacities and put their evangelism and business skills to positive use."

"We know there are Christians who have these abilities," he said. "And we hope the Lord will lead them to make South Bronx their neighborhood, too."