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Nation's Religious Leaders Asked To Join Energy Fight

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--Declaring that Americans have become "profligate wasters" of energy resources, President Carter called on representatives of the nation's religious community to help lead the way in conservation efforts.

Carter told 125 persons representing more than 30 religious groups at a White House breakfast that "the conservation of oil has a religious connotation" in that "we are stewards under God's guidance" who are called upon "to husband" natural resources for the good of all persons, especially the less fortunate.

The day-long conference on religion and energy in the 1980s was sponsored by five groups, including the Baptist Sunday School Board. Others were the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Synagogue Council of America, and the Interfaith Coalition on Energy.

The president's somber view of the energy situation was reinforced later by U.S. Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., who said that "This country is on the brink of a very serious, potential disaster" because of its over-dependence on unstable foreign energy suppliers.

Noting that Americans spent \$65 billion dollars in 1979 on foreign oil, the former New York Knicks basketball star warned that "We are sending the wealth of this country abroad to satisfy our appetite for oil."

Bradley distinguished between reliable foreign oil sources and "insecure" foreign oil, noting that at present the U.S. imports 25 percent of its petroleum from the unstable Persian Gulf area, while 45 percent of Europe's and 75 percent of Japan's supplies come from the same region.

That kind of dependence, he said, coupled with the expected shortfall of Soviet oil supplies by the mid-1980s, amount to a "prescription for conflict" in what he called the "tinderbox atmosphere" of the Persian Gulf region.

Other government officials who addressed the high-level religious leaders included Secretary of Energy Charles W. Duncan Jr., Dennis Hayes, director of the Solar Energy Research Institute, and Tina Hobson, director of the office of consumer affairs at the Department of Energy.

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, participated in one of two panels of religious leaders who addressed the group.

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Bennett enumerated four theological principles which ought to shape a proper response to the energy crisis. He pointed to the Old Testament and New Testament teaching that "the world is the Lord's," the fact that "man is God's creation," the teaching that "man is bound by God's creation," and the idea of man as God's steward of the world's resources.

Alluding to the late Southern Baptist Theologian Carlisle Marney, Bennett advocated adoption of Marney's "ethics of parsimony," the view that in the consumption of resources people ought to use "the least that will do."

Appearing on the other panel was J. Ralph McIntyre, director of the church and staff support division of the Baptist Sunday School Board, who reviewed guidelines devised by the board's church architecture department to help Southern Baptist churches conserve energy.

McIntyre said the Sunday School Board is committed to an "aggressive" approach to energy conservation in the convention. Its concept of "operational conservation" has the potential to help local churches save huge quantities of energy, releasing wasted money for more primary purposes. He said "at least 98 percent" of SBC congregations could benefit by reconditioning present facilities for energy conservation.

Other religious spokesmen addressing the consultation included M. William Howard, president of the National Council of Churches; Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee; William M. Cosgrove of the U.S. Catholic Conference; Albert Vorspan of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; and Boston University Theologian Elizabeth Bettenhausen.

During the day's final sessions, participants asked a steering committee to make specific recommendations on mobilizing the religious community toward a major conservation effort in the nation's churches and synagogues. One probable outcome of the Washington meeting will be a conservation weekend in which all churches and synagogues will be invited to participate.

Besides Bennett and McIntyre, other Southern Baptist participants included Grady C. Cothen, president, and James W. Clark, executive vice president of the Sunday School Board; A.R. Fagan, executive director of the SBC Stewardship Commission; W.C. Fields, director of public relations for the SBC Executive Committee; James H. Smith, executive director of the SBC Brotherhood Commission; Richard M. Stephenson, executive secretary of the Baptist General Association of Virginia; and Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the SBC Education Commission.

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Reconstruction Team
Arrives On Dominica

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The first of several Southern Baptist volunteer work teams assisting in a six-week reconstruction effort on hurricane-devastated Dominica has arrived on the Caribbean island as scheduled.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's laymen overseas office feared that the team from Mississippi might be delayed because of a threatened government workers' strike which could have paralyzed airport and dock operations.

The Mississippians arrived Jan. 7 and were scheduled to return to the United States on Jan. 13. Other volunteer teams are expected to help in reconstruction during January and the first part of February.

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Annulty Board
Sets High Rate

DALLAS (BP)--A record effective annual earnings rate of 8.84 percent will be credited in 1980 to the fixed fund administered by the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

The 1980 rate, up from last year's 8.19 percent, will be credited to the accounts of 31,211 Southern Baptist ministers, church employees and agency personnel who participate in the fixed fund.

Two other funds available through the Annuity Board's retirement program are the balanced and variable funds. All funds administered by the board are invested differently.

In 1979 the balanced fund's earnings rate was computed at 11 3/8 percent, compounded monthly. The rate was applied to the accounts of 4,352 participants.

The balanced fund is invested in a combination of common stocks and bonds. The investment ratio changes as economic conditions warrant. Because of this, performance can vary each year.

In 1979 the unit value in the variable fund closed Dec. 31 at \$2.28, up from \$1.94 at the end of 1978. It reached a record \$2.34 in September.

A total of 3,211 ministers, church employees and agency personnel are included in the variable fund. The fund's investments are related primarily to common stocks.

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Carrie Littlejohn
Dies in Asheville

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1/11/80

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP)--Carrie U. Littlejohn, educator of women in missions and a Christian social worker for Southern Baptists from 1915-1951, died Jan. 9 at a hospital in Asheville, N.C. She was 89.

Miss Littlejohn was principal and president from 1931-51 of the Woman's Missionary Union Training School in Louisville, Ky., which in 1952 became the Carver School of Missions and Social Work.

The training school was moved from downtown to the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1940 and became a part of the seminary in 1963.

Miss Littlejohn, a 1915 graduate of the training school, who earned a master's degree in education from Northwestern University, administered the education of hundreds of women who became missionaries, teachers, nurses, WMU or church staff members, social workers and pastors' wives. Southern Seminary records show that 29 percent of the active Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 1948 were graduates of the WMU Training School.

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MSC Volunteer Lewis
Builds Huntington Missions

By Erich Bridges

HUNTINGTON, Ind. (BP)--Clad in blue jeans, western shirt and hiking boots, 6-5 Mike Lewis props his massive legs up on his desk and grins.

He has reason. As pastor of the Huntington Baptist Mission, Lewis has watched his fledgling congregation grow from barely 20 to more than 50 regular worshippers in less than a year.

A 27-year-old native of Selma, Ala., Lewis began commuting to Huntington in 1978 from Louisville, Ky., while still a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary there. Upon graduation in December, he moved to Huntington and took up full-time pastoral duties at the young church.

The small congregation lacked funds to support a full-time minister, so Lewis agreed to come as a volunteer serving through Mission Service Corps, the Southern Baptist plan to place 5,000 volunteers on foreign and domestic mission fields for one to two years of service.

Huntington Mission pays half of Lewis' salary, and First Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga., picks up the rest of the tab. Within a year Huntington Mission members hope to support him fully.

A mission of Waynedale Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., Huntington Mission was born early in the spring of 1978 when several Waynedale families began traveling to Huntington to meet with local residents for Bible study and prayer.

The tiny group acquired an ancient, white-board church building on tree-lined Etna Avenue and started weekly worship services and Sunday School. Lewis arrived soon after.

In the year since, 37 people have joined the church, 15 by baptism. A recent revival drew 70 or more people nightly. Church members have already started a new building fund.

"Pastor Mike is a real leader," says one church member. "He's witnessed, and visited, and worked with adults and youth, and just built this church. We've never seen a mission grow so fast."

Lewis transfers the credit. "The people here have been so willing to work and do anything for the Lord," he says. "I'm just thankful that being in Mission Service Corps allows me to spend all of my time in church work rather than having to get a job on the side."

"I've got a vision for this church," he continues. "We want to be mission starters ourselves. We already have several satellite Bible studies going around the town. This area is big enough for two Southern Baptist churches."

"Pioneer missions gets into your blood," declares Lewis. "It's so exciting to see the growth. If I leave here, I'll probably go to another mission church. I'd like to challenge every seminary grad to consider Mission Service Corps. To me, it's a natural."

Census-Taking Pastor
Knows His Numbers

by Bob Hastings

WOODSON, Ill. (BP)--The town of Woodson has exactly 212 houses and mobile homes. And the exact population is 575.

You can depend on it, for Clark Llewellyn has counted them! And he should know how. He worked six months as a field operations assistant for the U.S. Census Bureau, getting ready for the 1980 census.

But his work in Woodson was as a church planter, not a census taker. He simply used the know-how Uncle Sam taught him to locate people for the Lord.

Llewellyn, 33, came to Illinois as a church planter in the fall of 1979, and immediately grabbed headlines by helping start the 3,000th Sunday school in the nation during the preceding 3-year period.

It was begun in a converted laundromat in Woodson where there had been no Baptist church of any kind.

"My first step was to knock on every door in Woodson," he said, "and I finished the job in nine weeks. I made my own map, and did my own survey. I wanted to get acquainted, to know everyone, and for everyone to know me. I call myself the town's pastor. However, I don't draw people from other churches. In fact, attendance at the other two churches in Woodson has increased since I started going door-to-door."

The training Llewellyn got with the U.S. Census Bureau is what gave him a head-start. "They taught me two basic principles--be systematic, and always work to the right," he explained. "By walking to the right, you are less likely to miss trailers, garage apartments, and the like in the back."

Llewellyn said he'd use the same tactic as a pastor of an established church.

"First thing I'd do is draw a circle around the church, and go door-to-door to at least the 200 nearest houses and introduce myself," he said. "My aim would be to meet people, to learn their needs and interests, and to give them a copy of Luke-Acts, the same as I do here in Woodson."

Llewellyn is not a "church-hopper." "I'm here to stay, until the Lord moves me," he said. "I want the people to know I'm their pastor, and put my roots down. Whenever a church has a high turnover of pastors, each has to start all over again."