

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 13, 1980

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**Women's Evangelism Board
Urges Prayer Covenant**

ATLANTA (BP)--A worldwide prayer covenant has been urged by the newly formed National Board of Advisors on Women in Evangelism at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The 29-member board, in its first meeting at Stone Mountain Park near Atlanta, passed a resolution calling on "Christian women in every time zone around the world to join in a concerted prayer movement for worldwide spiritual awakening."

The board also discussed specific ways to minister and evangelize women, and underwent training on leading lifestyle evangelism workshops in their home states.

They also took a public opinion poll among themselves on abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, ordination of women and their personal preferences for president of the United States.

In the resolution, the women said their call to prayer daily at noon comes as a "response to the urgency of the world and individual situations," and is a realization that a spiritual awakening is the only hope for the world.

The resolution noted that spiritual awakening has come during similar periods of world history "as a result of unified, explicit, extraordinary prayer on the part of all of God's people," and added that prayer is both the greatest need and greatest resource of Christians.

It said the movement should begin with Southern Baptist women who are living and serving around the world and expand to other groups.

Laura Fry of Atlanta, national consultant for women in evangelism at the Home Mission Board, said the board of advisors is to "help determine directions and to create innovative ways of helping women share their faith in Jesus Christ."

The 29 women who serve on the board are from 26 of the 34 Baptist state conventions, and "represent a cross section of the womanhood in the nation," Fry said. "They are from different lifestyles, geography, areas of responsibility in the church, age, education and marital status."

In their opinion poll, the women showed a marked preference for President Jimmy Carter, a Southern Baptist, to continue as president. Nineteen favored Carter while three nodded toward Republican Ronald Reagan and one said she favored George Bush.

On other issues:

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"Do you favor abortion?" Six said no; one said yes and 19 qualified their opposition by noting abortion was acceptable to them if the mother's life was in danger, in rape or incest situations or other individual cases.

The majority of the women voted neither for nor against the Equal Rights Amendment but said they questioned the impact of interpretation on the amendment.

Nine were against women being drafted and 13 said they should be drafted only into non-combatant roles. A slight majority did not want a woman pastor.

Strong majorities of the 29 respondents indicated their approval of women's ordination as chaplains and deacons and their general approval of women being ordained according to their calling. The majority also agreed that women can serve as ministers of music and education.

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Newcomers Causing Change
In Rural Baptist Churches

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
2/13/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Today's population shift to the country is causing unwelcome change in some small, rural Baptist churches where stability has been a way of life, a church planning and growth specialist told Baptist leaders.

Lyle Schaller, a well-known author and a parish planner with the Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Ind., told administration consultants, editors and supervisors from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission that "we have no practical experience in helping institutions with the influx of urban people to a rural setting."

Schaller said inherent differences between large and small churches account for some of the problems created by the influx of urban people, often from larger churches into rural churches, most of which are small.

"The smaller the church the more threatening change is to the old-timers," said Schaller. He noted that many city newcomers move to the country to enjoy a quieter lifestyle, but they want their church to have the same kind of programs and activities as their larger city church.

In a small church of 35 to 100 members Schaller said two unifying factors are worship services and shared experiences such as funerals and special churchwide celebrations.

"In the small congregation life centers heavily around relationships," he said. He noted therefore that crises in a small church usually center around relationships while crises in a large church are more likely to relate to the function of the church.

Other unifying factors in a small church, said Schaller, are the longtime members, Sunday School, and attachment of members to the church building and cemetery. Schaller noted that while in most denominations the role of the Sunday School goes down as the size of the church goes up, this is not true of Southern Baptists.

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Also, he said, "The more a church is built around a Sunday School, the tougher it is. The more it is built around the worship hour, the more vulnerable it is to change."

While 61.3 percent of Southern Baptist churches today have less than 300 members, Schaller predicted the trend toward larger churches will continue. "In the long haul small congregations are going to have a harder time getting replacement members," he said.

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HMB Staff Appointments
Indicate Emphasis Shift

Baptist Press
2/13/80

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist Home Mission Board directors filled two staff vacancies and named a consultant for multi-family housing during their February meeting.

Staff appointees were Hubert O. Hurt of Jacksonville, Fla., director of trans-cultural outreach for the language missions division, and Esther Milligan Burroughs of Birmingham, Ala., assistant director of the special mission ministries department. J. David Beal of Atlanta, Ga., was approved for the consulting post, an extension of the metropolitan missions department.

Hurt, who will assume his duties April 1, will help Southern Baptists cross cultural barriers by influencing churches to provide ministries for ethnic groups, said Oscar Romo, director of the board's language missions division.

"His appointment gives emphasis to the program of trans-cultural outreach," Romo said. "He will help churches meet ethnic needs by implementing missions strategy which involves such techniques as language classes and interpretive ministries."

Hurt, former missionary in Cuba, Panama, Louisiana and Florida, has been state director of language missions in Florida since 1974. He has also served as a pastor in Mississippi and a school teacher in Georgia. He is a graduate of East Central Junior College, Mississippi College, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Mississippi Southern College.

Burroughs will correlate and lead the ministries of Mission Youth Groups and Sojourners, mission action programs for high school groups and individuals. She also will provide leadership and direction to Baptist campus ministries and Woman's Missionary Union relationships.

"Esther Burroughs has an extensive background in youth work and involvement in campus ministries," Hammonds noted. "She has the ability and experience necessary to meet the needs of this task. Her appointment gives greater emphasis to high school ministries--an important part of our work."

She has been director of campus ministries at Samford University since 1971. Previously, she was minister of youth activities at First Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas. She is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University.

Beal, who has done extensive work in apartment ministries, will fill a position designed to meet the spiritual needs of increasing numbers of urban dwellers, said Don Hammer, metropolitan missions director.

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"Because the trends of the future will be to multi-family housing, the board created the position of national consultant for multi-family housing," Hammer said. "When he goes to work in April, he will confer with people in other denominations who have worked with multi-family housing. Thus, we can learn from their experiences," added Hammer. "We expect to develop a valid strategy for this ministry within the next year."

Beal has been weekday ministries consultant for the Atlanta Baptist Association since 1971, and has been a pastor, student missionary and Christian social ministries center director. He is a graduate of Southwest Baptist College, Southwest Missouri State College, William Jewell College, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Carter Receives Radio
And TV Commission Award

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
2/13/80

WASHINGTON (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission came to the White House on Abe Lincoln's Birthday to present the commission's 1980 Christian Service Award to Jimmy Carter for his continuing dedication to the cause of Jesus Christ.

Carter, responding warmly to his fellow Southern Baptists during a 30-minute ceremony in the Cabinet Room, received the award from Frederick W. Isaacs Jr., commission chairman from Cosby, Tenn., after remarks from commission President Jimmy Allen of Fort Worth, Texas, and Tommy J. Payne, a commission trustee from Greenville, N.C.

Payne, a member of the commission's Abe Lincoln Awards committee, nominated Carter for the Christian Service Award, which was to have been presented to him at the 11th annual Abe Lincoln Awards for Broadcasters, Feb. 28, in Fort Worth. Carter could not come to Fort Worth to receive the award because of current world crises.

The award cited Carter for "taking seriously his personal responsibilities to proclaim an unchanging Christ to a changing world and for establishing a spiritual commonality with people of all faiths." It also saluted him for his stand on human rights and his "conscientious efforts as a peacemaker."

"When I assumed the leadership of the Radio and Television Commission (Jan. 15, 1980), I discovered that this group of persons representing the largest evangelical body in the United States had unanimously decided (in October 1979) to recognize your contribution to Christian service through the field of communications," Allen told the president.

"It is appropriate that on President Lincoln's Birthday, we are here in this place to present this award to you because we believe that you, more than any other person, have put the matter of one's personal experience with God on this nation's agenda," Allen said.

Responding to the group made up of all 26 commission trustees, 25 of their spouses, and Mr. and Mrs. Allen, Carter joked that anything a group of Southern Baptists does unanimously is remarkable in itself.

Carter spoke of the current world crises, noting that the "stability of our Christian faith is like a rock in a changing world." He said the United States is strong and influential, but not infallible, and added, "We must listen to others with an open mind and open heart."

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The president re-emphasized his belief in the historic principle of separation of church and state in the United States. "I have never found any incompatibility between my duties as president and as a Christian," he said.

After urging his fellow Southern Baptists to pray for him, Carter moved around the room alternately shaking hands and embracing his visitors before being whisked off for a meeting with Vice President Walter Mondale.

Asked about criticism which might arise from presenting Carter the award during an election year, Isaacs told Baptist Press: "Jimmy Carter is not wearing his religion, he's living it. His religion and priorities transcend any politics, whether you agree with his politics or not.

"President Carter has a simple but strong faith, accompanied by unquestionable personal sincerity," Isaacs said. "In these times of tension, strife and wavering values, it is important that we, as Christians, recognize the one constant and positive characteristic that transcends all boundaries--an abiding faith in God and Jesus Christ."

The morning began for the commission trustees and their wives with breakfast in the presidential room at Washington's Mayflower Hotel, where they sang "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "Amazing Grace," heard Allen read scripture from Romans 14, and prayed for God to guide President Carter.

The trustees voted to transport themselves and their spouses to the White House presentation instead of to the Abe Lincoln Awards in Fort Worth.

The White House presentation to Carter was videotaped by a government camera crew to be shown during the Abe Lincoln Awards. The Radio and Television Commission will reimburse expenses for the videotaping.

Previous Christian Service Awards, the only Abe Lincoln award not necessarily presented to a broadcaster, have gone to entertainer Dale Evans Rogers; former astronaut James B. Irwin; Stan Freburg, comic satirist and advertising agency executive; country music personality Jerry Clower; and Tom Landry, head coach of the Dallas Cowboys.

Awards to be presented at the Abe Lincoln Awards ceremony in Fort Worth include those to eight broadcasters from across the nation who have provided community leadership through programming and personal involvement.

Wilson C. Wearn of Greenville, S.C., president of Multimedia, Inc., will speak at the ceremonies. He will receive the Vincent T. Wasilewski Award, given to a broadcaster who raises the industry's image in the eyes of the public.

Foreign Board Opposes
Proposed CP Share

By Jennifer Anderson

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board went on record to strongly oppose what it feels is an inadequate 8.11 percent increase in its share of the proposed 1980-81 Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program budget.

Board members in Richmond for a Feb. 12 meeting registered their objections to the slight increase coming at a time of spiraling worldwide inflation.

The Foreign Mission Board's action came about a week before the SBC Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee was to recommend the 1980-81 budget to the Executive Committee, which meets Feb. 18-19 in Nashville, Tenn. Final action on the 1980-81 Cooperative Program budget will be taken at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in June 1980 in St. Louis, Mo.

The proposed basic operating budget gives the Foreign Mission Board \$36,059,008, or an increase of \$2.7 million, over the 1979-80 budget. In comparison, last year's Cooperative Program budget was a 12.07 percent increase over the previous year's. The Foreign Mission Board will receive 48.84 percent of the 1980-81 total basic operating budget compared to 48.69 percent of the 1979-80 budget.

Expressing "extreme frustration and disappointment in the distribution of funds," Executive Director R. Keith Parks said, "ultimately everything we do will suffer" if the budget proposal is approved.

"This could cripple our work," said M. Hunter Riggins, chairman of the board's administrative committee. Several board members questioned the small increase in light of Bold Mission Thrust, the conventionwide emphasis to reach the world with the gospel by the year 2000 through "bold going, bold growing and bold giving."

Board members agreed that the board president and executive director write letters to denominational leaders registering concern over the proposed distribution of funds. Board members also agreed to contact state representatives on the Executive Committee and convey their concern.

Parks said he was aware the program and budget subcommittee of the SBC Executive Committee "has an impossible task." He added he did not believe in manipulation or high pressure politicking, but favored making the board's feelings known.

The board also expressed concern that the Foreign Mission Board had been allotted only 20 minutes of reporting time for foreign missions emphasis at the 1980 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis, Mo. Parks said he's "convinced that the whole Cooperative Program is carried by the enthusiasm of missions," especially at meetings such as the annual convention.

In other matters the board approved a total of \$223,500 in hunger and general relief funds for use among nine projects around the world. One allocation of \$115,000 from hunger relief funds will go toward well drilling projects and equipment in Haiti, and \$53,000, also from hunger funds, was designated for a farming irrigation and nutrition program on that Caribbean island.

Another well drilling project received a \$10,000 appropriation--this project will launch Southern Baptist work in the Sudan.

Asian refugee work was another point of concern as William R. Wakefield, the board's secretary for South and Southeast Asia, reported that "Baptists have filled a significant place" among refugee relief, meeting needs which cannot be met by larger relief organizations.

Wakefield told of growth and encouraging signs of increase in churches and baptisms in Southeast Asia. He also asked for prayer concerning the further granting of visas in Indonesia and Malaysia.