

**BAPTIST PRESS**

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**Ministries To Rich, Disaster
Victims Related To Conferees**

By Roy Jennings

GLORIETA, N.M.(BP)--Southern Baptists were introduced to two of their newer ministries at a Bold Mission Leadership Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Home missionary Robert Saul and his wife, Nancy, described their ministry to the affluent in New York City, while a trio of state Brotherhood leaders outlined how disaster relief ministries were leading tornado and flood victims to make professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

The Sauls, who live in an \$1,800-per-month apartment on the affluent East Side of Manhattan overlooking the East River, were among 20 home and foreign missionaries who gave progress reports on their work to 1,800 persons attending the conference sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Saul hastened to explain the Home Mission Board was providing them only the normal salary and housing supplement and First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas, was making up the rental difference in this new ministry to the rich.

The exclusive apartment is four blocks from that of former President Richard M. Nixon, across the street from Republican Sen. Jacob Javits, and near the United Nations Building.

A former personal evangelism department director at the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Saul said he felt a need for many years to witness and minister in New York City and would have taken a secular job there to serve God if the new ministry hadn't opened up.

From the three-bedroom apartment in a 33-story apartment building with its 26 doormen, the Sauls are making contacts with the wealthy with sit-down dinners, a series of Bible study classes, and by working in community activities.

The Sauls have entertained 750 persons in their apartment in less than two years, steering them into Bible study groups and into personal conversations about their faith.

The young missionary family conducts weekly Bible study in their apartment for 40 women and in other parts of New York City for singles, couples and businessmen.

"Another of my ministries is with rich elderly people," Saul explained. "They are so lonely. Several have made professions of faith."

Saul said he is praying for a community center in the neighborhood where he can provide weekday ministries for youth and elderly people.

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"We want to have a reading room, art shows and other activities which appeal to people who live in this area," Saul said. The home missionary reported he had the ideal building located and was in the process of finding the \$36,000 per year needed to lease it.

The Sauls reminded the missions leaders they are one of only a few organized Southern Baptist witnesses among eight million people in New York City, with the demise of Manhattan Baptist Church after spawning 230 churches and missions in the northeast.

From this assignment, the Sauls hope to develop a strategy of evangelism for urban areas, using personal evangelism to reach persons in an urban setting and organizing them into Southern Baptist fellowships.

John Winters, director of Brotherhood work for Louisiana Baptists; Laddie Adams, Brotherhood director of Oklahoma Baptists; and Robert Dixon, executive director of Texas Baptist Men, shared the emphasis on disaster relief.

From a meager start 13 years ago in the aftermath of Hurricane Beulah in South Texas, the disaster relief efforts have expanded to full-blown programs in state Baptist conventions with modern vans equipped with mass feeding facilities, shortwave radios, sleeping facilities for workers, chain saws, and other emergency equipment.

Winters told of rushing into Mobile, Ala., following a hurricane last fall and feeding 36,000 persons in 10 days as part of a ministry of Southern Baptists.

Only a month ago, the disaster relief team fed 10,000 flood victims in Lake Charles, La., following a 23-inch rain in 18 hours, Winters recalled.

Adams shared the testimonies of laymen who responded to pleas for help from mudslide victims in California recently. "Leaving their jobs and with no pay, the men with shovels in hand went to California and performed the unglamorous job of shoveling mud from the homes of elderly people," Adams said.

"The old people put their arms around the necks of the relief workers in gratitude and offered to pay them, but the men told them the only pay they wanted was to serve them in Jesus' name," Adams added.

Dixon told how Texas Baptist Men fed 260,000 hurricane victims in Honduras and of the 405 persons who made professions of faith in Jesus Christ following the operation.

Disaster relief work is underway today where childcare units are providing help to heat wave victims in Texas, Dixon revealed.

"We still need Baptist laymen to work in disaster relief, particularly professional truck drivers, ham radio operators and cooks," Dixon said. "We also need carpenters, plumbers, 'go fors' and women who will survey disaster relief areas and handle mobile feeding operations."

Court Declines To Move Beyond Hyde Abortion Ban

WASHINGTON (BP)--On the same day a narrow majority upheld a congressional ban on public funding of abortions, the Supreme Court declined to disturb a lower court ruling enjoining enforcement of a Massachusetts law which went even further.

In a related action, the high court affirmed a lower court's rejection of a Minnesota law excluding some organizations from abortion reimbursements.

Stating it had no jurisdiction to review the Massachusetts enjoining order, the court went along with a ruling by a circuit court of appeals that the state may not deny state reimbursement for abortions that qualify for federal reimbursement under provisions of the Hyde Amendment.

That statute, upheld by the high court 5 to 4 on June 30, restricts federal Medicaid funding of medically necessary abortions to those instances where the life of the mother is endangered or where rape or incest is promptly reported to authorities.

In the Minnesota case, the high court affirmed 6 to 3 a ruling by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals that a law excluding certain nonprofit organizations from a grant program if they perform abortions violates their constitutional rights.

Challenged by Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, the law authorized grants for pre-pregnancy family planning to hospitals and health maintenance organizations but prohibited them for other groups.

Such a distinction, the court agreed, violates the equal protection rights of groups such as Planned Parenthood.

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Eastern Europeans Participate In Ruschlikon Summer Session

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RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--Through SITE, eastern European Baptists are getting intensive study and interchange with international theologians that might otherwise be impossible.

SITE, Summer Institute of Theological Education, is a concentrated summer term of theological study held at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Although students come from a variety of countries, many of them are from eastern Europe, where travel restrictions will not allow more than one or two persons per year to attend the International Seminary fulltime. Of the more than 50 students participating in SITE this summer, the largest group, nine, came from Poland. Other countries represented include Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Egypt.

The month-long session offers classes in Old Testament, New Testament, church history, systematic theology and practical theology.

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For most of the students, SITE is a refresher course, although some participants have had only limited opportunities for theological training. "SITE is a blessing for me," said Gergely Vass, pastor of five churches in Romania. "I preach every day at one of these churches or a mission point. Then every week I teach at the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest," he said.

Brenda Champion, a deacon in the St. Andrews Street Baptist Church, Cambridge, England, wanted new dimensions for growth to offer those she works with. "As I have opportunity to interpret Christian truths and Baptist beliefs, to women especially, I want to avoid parochialism and offer new dimensions for their growth," she said. "Also, as I share in the pastoral ministry, I seek help for facing, with Christian insight and skill, the problems of persons."

A feature of SITE is the distribution of a mini-library of a dozen or more books to each student. Because of limitations on importing and publishing in some countries, this mini-library greatly enriches the resources of pastors and lay workers, according to William J. Fallis, interim director of European Baptist Press Service. Fallis is the former chief editor of general religious books in the Broadman products department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.

Another dimension of the program is a correspondence course which helps participants continue their studies after they return home. Also, in connection with SITE, some of the faculty present lectures at pastor's conferences and seminaries throughout Europe.

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

School Prayer Arguments
Stressed With House Aides

By Stan Hasteay

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WASHINGTON (BP)--More than 100 assistants to members of the House of Representatives heard a panel of religious leaders urge defeat of legislation to remove the sensitive issue of prayer in public schools from the jurisdiction of federal courts.

Battle lines in the fight over efforts by U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and U.S. Representative Philip M. Crane, R-Ill., to leave laws governing public prayer in schools to states and localities and exclude federal courts from reviewing challenges to such laws were drawn tighter at the July 1 meeting when some of Crane's supporters tried to take over the meeting.

One who claimed to be a staff member for Crane challenged the six-person panel for refusing to allow the other side to present its views to the large group of legislative assistants. "We are the other side," replied panel moderator Dean M. Kelley, director of religious and civil liberties for the National Council of Churches.

Another panelist, Rabbi David Saperstein of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, explained that the forum was convened after some 50 or 60 members of the House besieged Washington religious offices with requests for positions of mainline religious groups.

Most religious support for the Helms-Crane efforts has come from electronic evangelists and their followers.

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Porter W. Routh, interim executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told the congressional staff members that Baptist concern as reflected in recent statements opposing the Helms-Crane move by the Southern Baptist Convention and American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. lies in three areas.

Routh warned that if Congress "can by a simple act remove the protection of the Supreme Court from one small section of the Bill of Rights," such protection could then be removed from other First Amendment religious guarantees.

The veteran Southern Baptist leader said further that religious beliefs of individual students will inevitably be offended by state-sponsored prayer in schools. "How do you deal with a Moslem teacher who has been taught to pray to Allah in a classroom of Protestant or Catholic students?" he asked. "How do you deal with a Baptist teacher who has been taught to pray in the name of Jesus in a classroom of Jewish or Buddhist students?" Routh argued that "if prayer is meaningful, it must be related to the realities of the faith of the one praying; otherwise it becomes mockery and profanity."

He also questioned the role of the person leading state-mandated prayers in the classroom. "We believe that prayer must reflect the individual conscience of the minority as well as the majority," he declared. "It cannot be legislated down. It must come up from a grateful heart and a meaningful religious experience. Let us resolve not to place the weight of one feather toward destroying the conscience of a single boy or girl in America."