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Inferiority Complex Hampers
Women's Work: BWA Leader

By Beth Sayers Wildes

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Kerstin Ruden, president of one of the world's largest women's organizations—the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance—says one of the major obstacles women must overcome is their own inferiority complexes.

"I think women need to be encouraged to accept more responsibility and leadership. I would also like to see women not close themselves up in their church organizations, but become politically and socially active as well," says Ruden, leader of 14 million women around the world.

"The Christian influence in the life of a nation has to come through Christian men and women. And women need to be a part of this," she adds.

Ruden, from Stockholm, Sweden, was elected to a five-year term last July in Toronto, Canada, during the Baptist World Congress.

Although Ruden's primary work is with women, she says her main concern is "the situation among young people." They are rootless, searching for something to build their lives on. "We are losing our children, even children from Christian homes," she says.

She feels young people are rejecting parental values largely because of the influence of the media, especially films and television, and adds they "have lost hope for the future. They see all the nations preparing for World War III, so they say, 'We will take the day as it comes.'"

"But young people must be reached. They are the future of the nations."

Ruden, who describes her own family as close knit, is the mother of four, and the grandmother of six. Her husband, Erik, a former associate secretary of the BWA, is now retired.

On a visit to the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Ruden noted her life has changed drastically since she assumed office five months ago. For one thing, she's getting a lot more mail, which she has decided to answer personally.

She plans to visit each of the six continental unions which make up the BWA's women's department, during her term of office. On those trips, she hopes to motivate Baptist women all over the world to become more unified. "Baptist women need each other for support and inspiration. Fellowship is another real need for women in countries where Baptists are minorities. It can help them see that they are not alone in their struggles," Ruden says.

Ruden says she speaks from experience. When she became active in the European Baptist Women's Union and the Women's Department of the BWA, she was so surprised and comforted to learn there were "thousands of Baptists."

She admits fellowship with other Baptist women has helped her in her own spiritual struggles. "In the 1960s, I was struggling with my beliefs in God. I was reading some literature and liberal theologians who were saying 'God is dead.'"

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"In 1963, I went to a meeting where I met some Polish women. They had been in concentration camps in World War II. Some of them had scars on their bodies where they were burned. But I observed that their faith had not diminished, but grown.

"From that point on, I have never doubted God's love, or his message of Jesus Christ."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Ala.

Initial Reports Indicate
Outreach Efforts Success

By Gail Rothwell

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Preliminary results of Outreach '80, the nationwide simultaneous campus evangelism program launched this fall, indicate students are attending revivals and other events in large numbers and many are making professions of faith, rededicating their lives and making vocational commitments.

Outreach '80, part of Bold Mission Thrust, is designed to give every student on the 1,138 college and university campuses which have Baptist Student Unions the opportunity to hear the gospel and become involved in a local church during the 1980-81 school year.

Benton Williams, evangelism consultant in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's National Student Ministries, said 708 campuses have committed themselves to some type of evangelism emphasis this year. Of the more than 50 campuses which have already reported, he said, results have been even better than expected.

Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, Ark., with an enrollment of 400, reported an average daily attendance of 250 during their fall revival. Jackie Burton, BSU director at Southern, said five professions of faith and 35 rededications were made during the revival.

A five-day revival, climaxed with a concert by the religious singing group "Truth" netted four professions of faith and 500 rededications at the University of South Alabama, Mobile, according to Glenn Gring, campus director. More than 2,200 students attended the concert.

In preparation for Outreach '80, the Kentucky student department trained 300 BSU students from across the state to share their faith.

State directors in Kentucky and Oklahoma already have voiced commitments to future campus evangelism emphases.

Bob Lee, state director in Oklahoma, said his state campuses have intensified their evangelism outreach efforts, including a witnessing seminar and special week of visitation.

Five days of prayer characterized the religious emphasis week at Houston (Texas) Baptist University. Students and staff members met daily to pray for five minutes prior to the campus revival. Other students volunteered their time to participate in a 24-hour prayer vigil.

A concert by gospel and pop recording artist, B.J. Thomas, highlighted the Sunrise Festival, at Arizona State University at Tempe. The BSU, led by John Brooks, sponsored a faculty prayer breakfast, dorm Bible studies and several special speakers including Bill Glass, a former professional football player.

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All the activities were designed to make the local churches aware of the needs of the faculty and students and to lead students and faculty to the churches, Brooks added.

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville is one of the many campuses holding semester-long emphases. Outreach activities, in addition to regular BSU programs, include 12 witnessing seminars, a prayer retreat, luncheons and guest speakers. According to BSU director Bob Hall, more than 1,000 students are involved in the various BSU activities each week on the UT campus.

The idea for a simultaneous nationwide evangelism emphasis originated about three years ago when state directors met and voted to launch the program. Newer state conventions will be conducting their Outreach '80 campaigns in the spring.

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BWA Makes Appeal
For Italy Relief

Baptist Press
12/1/80

WASHINGTON (BP)—An urgent appeal for \$100,000 to help earthquake stricken Italy has been issued by Gerhard Claas, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

According to BWA spokesmen, the appeal for \$100,000 is one of the largest amounts ever requested by the worldwide alliance of Baptists.

"We share the sufferings of the Italian people and through the Italian Baptists want to express the compassion of Christ for all in need," Claas said. "Now is the time when the Baptist World Alliance can make a significant contribution to the ministry of the national union. Baptists are urged and encouraged to give now and give generously."

In the wake of the killer earthquake in southern Italy, the BWA sent \$10,000 to the Baptist Union of Italy for emergency relief.

The spokesman said contributions to the emergency fund will be sent directly to the Baptist Union of Italy for immediate relief.

Also, Italian and Austrian Baptists have joined with Southern Baptist missionaries and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to provide disaster and hunger relief aid. The Foreign Mission Board sent \$15,000 in hunger funds and \$15,000 in disaster relief funds immediately after the quake struck Nov. 23.

Contributions should be sent to the Baptist World Alliance office, 1628 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

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James Dunn, Olin Robison To Discuss
Human Rights on ABC's 'Directions'

Baptist Press
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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Two Southern Baptist leaders will discuss issues involving human rights at 12:30 p.m., Dec. 7 on ABC-TV's nationally aired "Directions" program.

The speakers will be James M. Dunn, recently elected executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and Olin C. Robison, president of Middlebury (Vermont) College.

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The two, both Southern Baptists, will participate in a conversation program hosted by Herb Kaplow of ABC-TV news. The program is produced by ABC-TV in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

As director of the Christian Life Commission for the Baptist General Convention of Texas for the past 12 years, Dunn has related to other secular and religious bodies in his active liaison on social concerns.

He has testified before various state and presidential committees on world hunger, family planning programs, and social ethics. In 1972 the New York Times referred to him as "a watchdog for religious liberty."

Robison, an educator, diplomat and authority on U.S.-Soviet relations, has been president of Middlebury College since 1975. He has served with the Peace Corps and spent four years as special assistant to the deputy undersecretary at the Department of State.

A frequent visitor to the Soviet Union, Robison has spoken before many Soviet audiences and has participated in United Nations-sponsored symposiums both here and abroad.

"Directions" is a half-hour program. A religious-cultural series, the program has received an Emmy award for excellence. Check local stations for time in your area.

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November Contributions
Decline Due to Calendar

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12/1/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Contributions to Southern Baptists' national Cooperative Program dipped one percent in November, a decline that can be primarily attributed to the calendar.

Undesignated receipts totaled \$5,927,447 in November, or \$54,158 less than in November 1979. But Tim Hedquist, director of financial planning for the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, says holiday mail delays and the last Sunday falling on the month's final day prevented all receipts from reaching Nashville in time to be counted in the November totals.

Despite the decline, undesignated gifts for the first two months of the fiscal year total \$11,778,314, or 7.5 percent ahead of the same period last year.

Meanwhile, designated contributions continued their vigorous climb. Money earmarked for special purposes increased 30 percent over November 1979, to \$950,071. For the first two months of the fiscal year, designated gifts are 85.4 percent ahead of last year.

Total undesignated and designated gifts are up \$2,094,185, or 16.8 percent, over last year.

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Black Woman, Church
Together After 15 Years

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
12/1/80

LAFAYETTE, La. (BP)--The first time Gwen Williams visited First Baptist Church, she didn't feel she could stay for worship. This fall, she spoke from its pulpit.

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The latest encounter occurred when Williams, a Southern Baptist home missionary in New Orleans, addressed church members and Louisiana college students during the state Baptist Student Union convention, held in the church's buildings. The incident reminded her of old times.

"Back in 1965, when I was one of the first black students at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Sunday came around, and I wanted to go to church," she recalls. "Since I came from a Baptist background, I looked for a Baptist church. A janitor at the BSU directed me to First Baptist. I didn't know if it was black or white; I just wanted to worship."

She arrived an hour before Sunday school was to start and thought the building was "one of the most beautiful black churches" she had ever seen. Then she spotted a television camera inside the auditorium and realized she probably wasn't in a black church.

"About that time, a black janitor showed up. He told me, 'You know, we've never had blacks before. I'll get the pastor,'" Williams says.

The janitor returned with pastor Perry Sanders. He didn't deny Williams the right to worship with his congregation, but he suggested she visit Good Hope Baptist Church, a National Baptist congregation—like the one in which she was raised in Alexandria, La.

"All I knew was that I didn't want to make a fuss," she remembers. "Civil rights didn't mean a thing to me, and I was too naive to believe some people have racial prejudices."

Williams joined the Good Hope church and later joined Emmanuel Baptist Church, a predominantly white Southern Baptist congregation. She became the first black member of the local BSU, served three terms as a summer missionary and worked for two years as a US-2 missionary in Detroit. Now she works at Baptist Rescue Mission in New Orleans. But all the while, she has kept an eye on First Baptist, Lafayette.

"Brother Sanders is still pastor of that church, and he's led in lots of ways," she says. "Back in '65, he suggested that I attend another church because he had to do what his congregation wanted—just like other Southern Baptist pastors. But he's helped his people. They have a warmth that wasn't present 15 years ago."

"Gwen helped us in that area," adds Sanders. "She wasn't cynical or bitter. Some people might have been, but she wasn't. She probably could have become a member, but she probably would have been uncomfortable."

Sanders says the church has "many black members and has had them for some time." He attributes some of the changes which have allowed blacks to join to Williams' life and testimony.

"Gwen has a sweet spirit, and her attitude helped us open doors," he explains, adding that her participation in another predominantly white church in the city caught the attention of his members. "She's a fine crusader in the best sense of the word," he claims.

Williams attributes most of that "crusading" to the work of God. "Fifteen years ago, I couldn't feel comfortable worshipping in that church, but now I've spoken there," she says. "It wasn't the civil rights movement, a riot or an act of Congress that made this change. It was the love of God that brought us together."

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