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**Hitler Soldier, Baptist
Pastor, Becomes Citizen**

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)—An Arizona Baptist pastor who was once a soldier for Hitler has become an American citizen.

Traugott Vogel, pastor of Twenty-Seventh Avenue Baptist Church in Phoenix, and his wife and daughter became naturalized citizens in December, six years after they moved to the United States.

"To me, it (citizenship) was the turning point in my life," he said. "For six years, I have been a man with no country.... Now I belong, I'm not an alien anymore."

Vogel grew up in Nazi Germany and was an ardent admirer of Adolf Hitler. His father was a major in Hitler's elite SS troops.

At the close of World War II, when the Allies closed in on Germany, Vogel was sent to the front to defend the crumbling Nazi regime. He was 15. When word arrived that an Allied unit soon would attack, Vogel was among the many exhausted soldiers who deserted.

He walked for four weeks to Reutte, Austria, where his family was living at the time. It was there he saw his father ambushed and killed by Austrian freedom fighters.

Vogel moved back to Germany with his mother and sister after the war. He had learned English as a child and got a job with the American military.

Although he hated Americans, his curiosity about the American way of life led him to a Youth for Christ rally on the base. While he was there to see what Americans do in church, he heard the Gospel and became a Christian.

His hate-filled life was changed by Christ's love. Several years later, Vogel even returned to Austria and asked one of the guerrillas who killed his father to forgive him for hating him for so many years.

Vogel had several opportunities to interpret for English speakers at religious meetings, and through this he felt the call to preach. He attended the Bible College of Wales in England and the German Baptist Theological Seminary in Hamburg.

Louis Krause, a Southern Baptist missionary, introduced Vogel to the First Southern Baptist Church of Bitburg, Germany, a church composed of American military people and Germans. Vogel made history as the first German to pastor an American church in Germany when he later became pastor at Bitburg.

"Within a few months I had become thoroughly immersed in the work of the English-speaking churches," he said. "In 1968-69 I served as vice president of the (European Baptist) Convention; and in 1972 I brought greetings from the European Baptist Convention, which was meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

The Vogels moved to Sterling City, Texas, in 1974, where he became pastor of the First Baptist Church.

In 1977, Twenty-Seventh Avenue Baptist Church in Phoenix called Vogel as pastor. While he enjoyed working with Americans, Vogel did not forget the German people. Shortly after he came to Phoenix, he took over the leadership of a German Bible study group which is now a part of the church.

Although Vogel doesn't think becoming a U.S. citizen has affected his ministry, it has made him feel more a part of the American people. "I wanted to be an American like everybody else," he said.

Holdine, his wife, echoed his feelings and said being naturalized means "a long dream and prayer come true."

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Smith Would Consult
Pressler, Sherman

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2/6/81

DALLAS (BP)--SBC President Bailey Smith would be willing to discuss his committee appointments with antagonists Paul Pressler and Cecil Sherman if it might help spare the convention any more bickering.

Smith told the Texas Baptist Standard he plans to represent the total denomination when he appoints the 1981 committee on committees and committee on resolutions.

Pressler, appeals court judge from Houston, and Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Asheville, N.C., lead groups with separate interests in the makeup of convention committees and boards.

Pressler and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, have led efforts to elect convention presidents committed to biblical inerrancy. Pressler said in Lynchburg, Va., last September they were "going for the jugular"—control of convention agencies by trustees—in future efforts.

Since Pressler made that "jugular" remark, Sherman has led in several meetings of pastors in the Southeast to organize "denominational loyalists" and "friends of missions" to send messengers to the 1981 convention in Los Angeles. Another meeting is scheduled in February in Texas where Sherman said a decision would be made on whether to offer an opponent for Smith in Los Angeles.

"I really would" be willing to sit down with Pressler and Sherman, Smith told Toby Druin of the Standard. "I said from the beginning and still say my desire is to try to be a person to bring us together...My whole desire is that the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole love one another and continue to be about winning this world to Christ."

Baptist Standard Editor Presnall Wood in an editorial Feb. 4 called for a "spiritual summit meeting" between Smith, Sherman, Pressler, the SBC vice presidents and Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee.

Wood said no such meeting should be a media event, neither should it be a binding practice for succeeding presidents prior to committee appointments. But he said such a meeting could be helpful, and "thousands would be in prayer."

Smith said he didn't know if any good could come from a meeting with Pressler and Sherman, but that he "certainly wouldn't be opposed to it."

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"The Southern Baptist Convention has elected me, and I am going to try to appoint people to the committees just like Jimmy Allen, James Sullivan, Jaroy Weber (all former presidents) or any of those did in consultation with the vice presidents, talking to executive secretaries where I don't know people.

"I am going to be as fair and honest as I know how. I was elected by a cross section of Southern Baptists and plan to appoint a cross section of Southern Baptists."

Smith appoints the committee on resolutions which will handle such matters that come before the annual meeting in Los Angeles. The committee can have great influence through its handling of the resolutions on the stance of the convention in session on various issues.

He also appoints the committee on committees which nominates persons for the committee on boards, the panel which makes recommendations to the convention for boards of trustees of convention agencies.

Smith said committee appointments are due in April and he would meet with vice presidents Jack Taylor and C. Wade Freeman in Nashville, during the meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, Feb. 16-18, to discuss them.

Pressler and Sherman are not strangers. They attended Princeton University—Pressler the university and Sherman the seminary—at the same time in the 1950s and have exchanged Christmas cards ever since, Pressler said.

Both Pressler and Sherman said they would be willing to sit down with Smith and discuss the issue but neither would speculate on anything being achieved by it.

Pressler, who emphasized he would initiate no such meeting with Smith because any attempt by him to contact the SBC president "would be distorted out of all reason, distorted extremely in the Baptist press," nevertheless, said he would be "glad to meet with anybody that asked me to meet with them."

Sherman said he would go, sit through and leave any meeting with Smith and Pressler "in good humor." "I am not enthusiastic because I have not said anything about them that requires I retract anything," he said. "The only way the meeting could be attractive to me would be for them (Pressler and Patterson) to withdraw their agenda they stated in Lynchburg."

Pressler insisted that his "going for the jugular" comment at the Lynchburg meeting, tape-recorded by Tom Miller of the Virginia state paper, the Religious Herald, had been taken out of context by the Baptist press.

He meant it only as a "metaphorical expression," he said, "in order to illustrate that we needed not to mess around with a few resolutions but needed to get to the basis of the problem.

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McIndoo Named Consultant
For Woman's Missionary Union

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Ethel McIndoo of Nashville, Tenn., has been named nationwide consultant for Mission Friends and Girls in Action for Woman's Missionary Union effective in March.

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Mission Friends is the Southern Baptist missions organization for preschoolers and Girls in Action is for girls in grades 1 through 6.

McIndoo, a consultant in children's work at the Baptist Sunday School Board, will help develop programs, write, and coordinate field services for leaders and members of the organizations.

McIndoo has served church staffs in Florida, Texas and Louisiana, and state Baptist convention staffs in Tennessee and Missouri. She is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a native of Independence, Mo.

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White House To Eliminate
Religious Liaison Post

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press
2/6/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--Among the many changes being made at the White House by President Ronald Reagan is the elimination of a presidential assistant for religious liaison, Baptist Press has learned.

According to a spokeswoman for Elizabeth Dole, assistant to the president for public liaison, White House relations with the nation's religious communities will be reassigned to an office with a larger agenda. Dole's representative said the assignment has yet to be made to a specific member of the president's staff.

Speculation about the post had previously centered on likely candidates for the religious liaison position, a post held during the final 20 months of the Carter administration by Southern Baptist minister Bob Maddox.

Although numerous past presidents assigned staff to deal with the religious communities, Carter is believed to have been the only chief executive to elevate the task to the level enjoyed by Maddox.

An assistant in Dole's office emphasized, however, that the change does not signal a decision to neglect public relations with religious organizations.

One possible explanation for the decision to abolish the position may be Reagan's desire to avoid a direct confrontation with leaders of the religious right, the fundamentalist coalition which claimed major credit for the new president's election.

Such a face-off would unquestionably result if the post of religious liaison were not offered to one of their own. By abolishing the position, the theory goes, the president will offend neither the religious right nor mainline denominations.

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Annuity Board Reports
Record Financial Year

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DALLAS (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board learned of unprecedented financial growth and honored board president Darold Morgan on his 10th anniversary as chief executive officer during their 63rd annual meeting in Dallas.

Trustees also elected Charles Holland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Longview, Texas, as their chairman, succeeding D. William Dodson Jr., pastor from Martin, Tenn.

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"Without a doubt, 1980 was a year of unprecedented growth in which we were able to credit record amounts to the accounts of our members," Morgan said.

He reported that funds held in trust for the more than 60,000 participants in the retirement programs of agencies and churches increased 17.4 percent to a record total of \$806,518,757, or \$139 million more than last year.

Morgan said figures showing that 591 churches joined the retirement program for the first time and 2,362 new members enrolled were "encouraging" because "they reflect how retirement planning is becoming a priority item to the participant and the congregation."

Trustees commended Morgan and the board staff for their efforts in passage of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act which enables agency personnel to continue participation in the Annuity Board programs.

At the 10th anniversary banquet, trustees awarded Morgan a three-month sabbatical for professional enrichment in the areas of his choice, and gave him a personalized set of golf clubs.

The board last year paid benefits totalling \$37,015,444 to retired or disabled ministers, church and agency employees or their widows. The board also distributed \$333,798 in relief, the money received for that purpose through the SBC Cooperative Program.

Records were established in participation. Some 53,734 church and agency members now participate in the "B" plans; 3,376 in the "C" plan; and 20,527 in the "A" plan which is closed to new members. Premium income exceeded \$87.9 million.

The Balanced Fund earned 20 percent interest in 1980; Old Pre-1977 B earned 13.25 percent and the Fixed Fund earned 8.5 percent, all compounded monthly. The Variable Fund ended 1980 with a record unit value of \$2.87.

The trustees also approved bylaw changes to conform with charter changes approved by the SBC last June.

The bylaws now call for every trustee to serve on a standing committee; that three full board meetings will be held annually, in February, July and October, and that an executive committee will consist of the trustees' chairman and vice chairman, chairmen of standing committees and two other trustees to be appointed by the chairman.