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Kim's Election Vote
For Ethnic Involvement

By Norman Jameson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Korean pastor Don Kim says his election as second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention proves Southern Baptists want to integrate ethnics fully into convention life.

"Southern Baptists seem to be saying 'We want you in our convention life,'" says Kim, pastor of Berendo Street Baptist Church in Los Angeles. "My election shows the awareness of Southern Baptists of ethnics, also their love and concern."

At the same time, Kim says his election, in June at the Southern Baptist annual meeting in Los Angeles, should spark ethnics to greater service.

Southern Baptists worship weekly in 79 different languages. Among the language groups, Koreans are the fastest growing.

Kim, whose comments came in an interview during the Southern Baptist Executive Committee meeting, says there are 190 Korean Baptist churches and a new church or mission is started every three weeks. The same week as his comments, a report issued from the Home Mission Board said Southern Baptists must expand ethnic work if they are to keep pace with population growth.

If ethnics are sparked to greater service, it will be by Kim's example as much as his election.

He spent nine months of the past year, including months preceding his election, in South America starting Korean-speaking churches.

After conducting evangelistic crusades in South America, Koreans asked Kim to help them establish churches. With the blessing of his own church, he began to spend three months at a time in South America, sandwiched around single months at home.

He has since baptized 102 at a new church in Buenos Aires, and 15 in Caracas, Venezuela, and has two mission points in Paraguay, including a church among the Maka Indians. He has baptized 30 Makas who were converted by lay missionary Kwang Chul Ko, a man Berendo Street supports. Kim plans to start churches in Ecuador and Bolivia where members from Buenos Aires have moved and now call for help.

"The Lord widened my vision and dragged me in," Kim says of his South American involvement. "I couldn't pull out."

Berendo Street Baptist, which Kim started from an international student ministry in 1957, has 1,200 members, about 600 to 700 regular attendance. "They take turns, you know," Kim says with a smile.

It holds services in Japanese, Korean and English and baptizes about 100 persons a year. Twenty nations are represented among its membership.

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The church bought a \$60,000 building for the new church in Buenos Aires and paid \$20,000 for a place of worship for the Makas.

Kim came to America in 1948 on an MIT engineering scholarship but went instead to Southwestern Seminary. He is enthusiastic about the service possibilities for Korean young people, who he says relate better to indigenous populations than do typical Caucasian Americans.

"Korean young people are on fire," he says. "We sent four college students to American Samoa this summer. We're winning so many Koreans and Korean young people are so zealous. Many of them can be effective foreign missionaries. Koreans seem to have better rapport with natives."

Kim feels there may be fewer cultural differences between Korean youth and indigenous populations. But even what remain "are not very important as long as our love is genuine," he says.

"We just deal with them as persons, you know. It doesn't mean we ignore differences or communication problems. You can have lack of communication between husband and wife, yet they eat the same food and sleep in the same bed.

"So it's not cultural differences that prevent communication. It's lack of personal, genuine love. Consider the Maka Indians. We don't know each other's language. We just hug each other. We are brothers."

Kim urges Southern Baptists to be aware of their ethnic membership when recruiting mission volunteers.

"Be aware of human resources of deeply committed young people among ethnics who are willing to go and lay down their lives for Christ, and use them," he says. "Maybe I have a bias, but they seem to be more fruitful."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers.

Chicago Mayor Declares
Oct. 4 Special Baptist Day

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CHICAGO (BP)--Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne declared Oct. 4 "Uptown Baptist Church Day" in honor of the recently-constituted church serving five language groups in inner-city Chicago.

In a letter read by Byrne's representative at the Sept. 27 dedication, the mayor said the church's work "inspires all who believe in faith and brotherhood."

The dedication culminated a five-year dream for Chicago Metro Baptist Association. Work in Uptown--10 square blocks with approximately 128,000 residents--began in 1976 as a mission of First Baptist Church of Palatine, Ill. The congregation now has 104 members, including Cambodian, Vietnamese, Hmong, Hispanic and English language groups.

Pastor Jim Queen, who grew up in Uptown, "came home" to work with the mission and help research needs in this area blighted by pockets of poverty and high crime.

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The congregation will meet in the old Lake Shore Church, a nondenominational church most noted for its neon sign "Jesus Died for Our Sins" shining above the building.

A neighborhood group protested the sign as too gruesome, but the local councilman considered it a Chicago landmark. It will continue to shine above Uptown.

"When I came here 11 1/2 years ago I had a storefront Bible school down the street," said Harold King, associational director for church development. "And I said then, 'What we need is that building.'"

King said the mayor's proclamation will do something for Southern Baptists because the 13,000 of them in that city of 7.5 million have received little notice. Chicago is second only to Rome among the largest Catholic dioceses in the world.

Volunteers from Wheaton College "are the backbone of our church," Queen said during the constituting service. "We never could have done it without them."

"The key work is joy," observed Dale Cross, metropolitan evangelism strategy director for the Home Mission Board. "Bringing the joy of Jesus Christ to a place like this. That's what we're celebrating today."

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Foreign Fields Seeking
1,700 New Missionaries

By Erich Bridges

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—More than 900 requests for new missionaries have come into the offices of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, calling for 1,700 persons to commit themselves to overseas ministries.

The requests listed 955 jobs for new career missionary couples and singles, missionary associates, two-year journeymen and special project workers. Because many of these jobs are filled by couples, the total persons involved add up to 1,700. They are needed for assignments as church planters, preachers, educators, medical workers, and for a variety of other positions ranging from business and communications specialists to social ministers.

Sixty-five percent of the requests call for missionaries to work directly or in partnership with national Christians in evangelism, preaching, church development and leadership training, according to Louis Cobbs, director of missionary personnel.

Other critical assignments, particularly in West Africa, Eastern Asia and Latin America, require physicians, hospital administrators, mission business managers and radio-television specialists.

"We've got to respond strategically where the harvest is taking place," overseas operations vice president Charles Bryan told personnel workers. "There are an incredible number of open doors right now, but how long will they stay open? We don't know how long the harvest will last."

In South and Southeast Asia, home for more than a billion people, the ratio of Southern Baptist missionary preachers to the population is one to 13 million. "That's like one pastor for the entire Southern Baptist Convention," said Bill Wakefield, area director for the region. Only three new preachers have been assigned to the nine mission fields of the area in the last year.

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But in spite of staggering numbers and profound cultural barriers in the region, people are increasingly responsive to Christian witness, Wakefield added. Baptist groups assisted by missionaries baptized 11,234 new believers in that area in 1980, a high number when compared to a total church membership of less than 65,000.

Wakefield outlined 90 requests for new missionaries, including church planters and leadership trainers for Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines, a hospital administrator for India, and a physician to treat Cambodian refugees along the Thai border.

In East Asia, Japan's mission force is requesting 38 new missionaries to work alongside an aggressive new generation of national leaders in church planting and discipleship training. The Japan Baptist Convention aims to double its 250 churches by 1989.

Korea missionaries likewise continue pleas for evangelists to help tap massive response to the gospel.

Response is also high in Middle America and the Caribbean Islands, according to area director Don Kammerdlener. He noted increasing requests from Mexico for pioneer and associational missionaries and openings for church planters, seminary teachers and mission business managers in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Grenada and Trinidad-Tobago. The Grenada and Trinidad-Tobago missionary organization requests must be met this year, he added, to maintain work in those nations.

Kammerdlener is also seeking preachers to "start from scratch" on two new fields, French Guiana and the Netherlands Antilles.

Again and again, area directors spoke of the need for "quality" missionaries—people prepared for adverse social or political conditions, committed to language study, equipped to resolve family and personal conflicts, and willing to work alongside and often under the direction of local Baptists.

"Quality is more than education," said Bryan. "We want missionaries who will go to the field, stay on the field, and do what it takes to get the job done."

Bryan also questioned the continuing shortage of missionary preachers. "Where are the preachers?" he asked. "A call to preach is a call to preach. It doesn't have geographical boundaries."

Of the 1,009 missionary job requests submitted in 1980, 405 called for preachers, pastors and general evangelist-church starters. Only 41 have been filled.

The overall decrease in requests for 1981, Bryan said, resulted from "more realistic planning" by individual missions, in light of budget restraints.

Through September, 249 new missionaries have been named in 1981, bringing the total active force to 3,073. Bold Mission Thrust calls for 5,000 foreign missionaries by the year 2000.

Kentucky Association Funds
Staff Unemployment Benefit

By James H. Cox

PRINCETON, Ky. (BP)—Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association in Kentucky, at the suggestion of a layman, will become the first known association to provide supplemental income to unemployed church staff members.

The association voted at its annual meeting to fund the unemployment insurance and ask the 35 affiliated churches to contribute. A spokesman for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board confirmed that the western Kentucky association is the first in the Southern Baptist Convention to advance the idea.

Theoretically, the plan could cover out-of-work church secretaries and custodians as well as pastors and other staff members.

Associational missionary Harold Greenfield believes his association generally has "longer tenures" than the average one. But he cites the fellow "who comes along now and then, reaches the end of the road, feels he is at a stopping place, isn't yet 65, and quits." There is also the classic example of those who are asked to leave by their congregations, for whatever reasons.

"These are often families in serious financial need," claims Greenfield. He says the typical staff member will—if he can't find another church—seek employment on at least a temporary basis in the secular world.

"But if minimum wage at the local variety store is the sole income a family of four, five or six has to pay its bills with, it simply can't be done," he says.

Greenfield underscores that the contribution from the association will be merely a "supplement" and not a full salary. "But it should help a distressed family get through a crisis," he reckons.

The association is maintaining a separate bank account for the fund, which it is calling MUST (Ministerial Unemployment Supplement Treasury). MUST will be supervised by a six-member board elected by the association.

A plan for dispensing the funds has not been finalized. "Our thinking at the moment is, there will be a base amount and that will be increased by the size of the family and the need," he says.

An Annuity Board official in Dallas confirmed that unless a former church employee continues to pay into the board's retirement programs on his own after he leaves a church employment, his coverage lapses.

Greenfield affirms that the MUST program is "an effort in our association to create more of a caring fellowship." He expects it to have positive implications "on all of our work, not just families of ministers without steady incomes."