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October 16, 1981

81-160

## Censorship Of School Books To Be Tested At High Court

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--The authority of local school boards to ban what they consider objectionable books from school libraries and classrooms will be tested in the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Court has been asked to decide if a Long Island school board violated the constitutional rights of students by banning books containing sexual terms, profanity and disparagement of religion.

Action removing the books came after some school board members attended a meeting sponsored by a conservative watchdog group. They convinced a board majority to thoroughly review books being used in their schools.

Among the works eventually banned were "The Naked Ape" by Desmond Morris, "Soul on Ice" by Eldridge Cleaver, "The Fixer" by Bernard Malamud and "Best Short Stories by Negro Writers" edited by Langston Hughes.

After the Island Trees Union Free School District took the censorship action five years ago, five students took the school board to court, arguing that their First Amendment rights had been violated.

Although a federal district court in New York upheld the school board, a federal court of appeals reversed and sent the case back to the lower court for further proceedings.

In appealing to the Supreme Court, attorneys for the school board argued that the board's action removing the books was in response to the "moral crisis confronting our nation today."

"The essence of a local school board's responsibility is to transmit community values to those in its charge," they argued.

The students, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union and its New York affiliate, asked the justices to refuse the appeal and permit a full trial on the merits of the case in the district court.

In their written brief to the high court, the ACLU attorneys said the case "presents fundamental questions regarding the capacity of a school board to impose ideological and cultural orthodoxy" on students.

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The clash between school board and students, they went on, is a "classic First Amendment confrontation between those who seek to deploy the force of majoritarian institutions to censor unpopular expression and those who seek to express--or to be exposed to--differing perspectives."

Briefs in support of the school board position have been filed in the case by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and Citizens for Decency Through Law Inc.

Although both sides in the controversy are expected to present oral arguments to the court on the merits and constitutional issues at stake, the justices may choose to decide the case on the narrower issue of the students' standing to bring such a suit.

No date has been announced for the hearing.

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Retiring Missionaries  
Leave Hearts Overseas

By Bill Webb

Baptist Press  
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Retiring missionary Hazel Moon's ulcer almost kept her from becoming a missionary nurse to Nigeria.

At a recognition service in Richmond to honor her and 22 other retiring foreign missionaries, Moon recalled the verdict from the Foreign Mission Board 34 years ago: "We can't send you out but come on down and watch the others be appointed."

Then just an hour before the service years ago, several members of the board asked if she would be willing to go to Nigeria on the condition that she release the board of any responsibility should the ulcer trouble her.

The Virginian gladly accepted and just this year completed 34 years' service in Nigeria. "I knew God would take care of my stomach and he's still taking care of it," she told the audience of relatives, friends, Foreign Mission Board members and missionary candidates.

For the honored retirees--with 695 years combined missionary service--perhaps the toughest thing about serving Christ on foreign soil was having to stop.

Though most did not say it aloud, they seemed to agree with Ardis Cross, of Texas, when she said, "The only difficult thing we had to do as missionaries was retire." She and her husband, Eugene, of Mississippi, served seven years in Hawaii (before it achieved statehood) and 27 years in the Philippines. He was not able to attend the service.

Cross had vowed to return to the Philippines after going there during World War II as an Army chaplain and helping secure the release of starving missionaries held captive by the Japanese. As it turned out, the Crosses' first assignment was to Japanese in Hawaii.

"It's good to have been a part of a big plan," Mary Frances Gould, of Kentucky, assured the audience. "I wish I were starting over, but I'm grateful for these years of service that I've had." She spent 28 years in Thailand.

Over and over again the retiring missionaries thanked Southern Baptists and the board for prayers and financial support through the years.

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Several, like Oleta Snell, of Texas, who worked 32 years in Chile, spoke with pride of Chileans who had matured under missionary leadership and are today church leaders themselves.

"One of my greatest joys was to see the growth of a church that began with a handful of Sunbeams, RAs and GAs," she said. "Today some of the deacons, Sunday School teachers and officers in that church are children of those first RAs, GAs and Sunbeams (missions organizations for children)."

One retiring couple, Hubert and Peggy Tatum, of Georgia and Tennessee, continue to live on the field where they served for 28 years--Hawaii. Like author Corrie Ten Boom, Mrs. Tatum said, "We're not retiring; we are getting new tires." The Tatums were in a special "on loan" category to Hawaii Baptists their last 18 years of service.

Jaxie Short will continue a stateside ministry to the Chinese, whom she served for four years in China and 31 more in Hong Kong.

"Just last week, at the request of some young adults from the People's Republic of China, I started a Chinese Bible study in Oklahoma among people who will be returning to the People's Republic of China," the Texan beamed. "So I thank the Lord because what you (Southern Baptists) have given and put into China is still bringing dividends."

Bonnie Moore, of Oklahoma, recalled the painstaking task of preparing a Bible concordance in the Hausa language during her 33 years in Nigeria. "I feel that though I am no longer in Nigeria, I still have a part in winning souls there because of the concordance that the Lord did through me."

"We are in the presence of classic missionaries," President R. Keith Parks assured the audience before he presented each retiring missionary with a scroll of recognition and a love gift. He defined as "classic" those with "lasting significance" and "recognized worth."

Other retirees present for the service were Catherine Walker, of Georgia, 34 years in China and Indonesia; Frances Talley, of North Carolina, 16 years in Japan; Wilfred and Esther Congdon, of Colorado, 44 and 43 years, respectively, in Nigeria and Malawi; Ben and Janie Welmaker, of Texas, 30 years in Colombia; Luther and Louise Copeland, of West Virginia and New Mexico, 14 years in Japan; Jarrett and Margaret Richardson, of Alabama and South Carolina, 37 years in Nigeria; and Neville and Emma Claxon, of Kentucky, 33 years in Ghana, Nigeria and Benin.

In addition to Cross, those unable to attend were Edythe Montroy of Mississippi, 25 years in Nigeria; and Ruth Miller Haltom, of Oklahoma, who with her late husband, William, served in Hawaii and the Bahamas for 19 years.

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Foreign Board Names 33;  
President's Son Included

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board named 33 new missionaries at its October meeting, including Randall Parks, son of Board President R. Keith Parks.

Parks, 27, a Texan, and his wife, the former Nancy Halbert of Texas, will join two other couples in Egypt, where Southern Baptist fraternal representatives were granted permission earlier this year to live in the country and assist Egyptian Baptists in church development.

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Also named were Stanley and Norma Baird Nelson, of Kansas and Colorado, respectively, who were employed as missionary associates to teach at the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho, Nigeria. Nelson, the board's auxiliary orientation manager, has worked 17 years with Southern Baptist young people going overseas for two-year terms as missionary journeymen.

Others appointed to mission service were Clay and Nancy Klyasheff Addison, of Illinois and Missouri, assigned to Hong Kong/Macao; Jim and Edna Harris Barnes, Arkansas, to Taiwan; Dennis and Janey Sample Barton, Texas, to France; Glenn and Patt McElhaney Bien, Tennessee and Arkansas, to Bangladesh; Paul and Carol Daniels Boone, Texas and Arkansas, to Burundi; David and Wanda Bayse Cartwright, California and Iowa, to the Philippines;

Bob and Babs Blass Dilks, Oklahoma and Alabama, to Japan; Merl and Vivian Heldreth Estep, Kentucky and Oklahoma, to Japan; Don and Edith Browning Kennedy, North Carolina and Texas, to Mexico; Bobby and Debbie Blackwelder Malone, Alabama and Georgia, to Equatorial Brazil; Monte and Linda Rogers Mills, Texas, to Transkei; Ben and Sandra Nobles Nash, Mississippi and Kansas, to Ghana;

George and Jackle Grimm Swan, Texas, to Mexico; Mark and Ann Root White, Alabama and Oregon, to Togo; and Caroline McManus Jones, North Carolina, to Chile. Mrs. Jones' husband, Archie Jones of North Carolina, was approved for reappointment. Jones served for 18 years in Ecuador, resigning in 1980 after the death of his first wife, Julia Hough Jones.

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Journeymen Trainer Nelson  
Becomes Missionary Himself

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press  
10/16/81

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--For 17 years Stan Nelson counseled young missionary journeymen getting ready for overseas ministry. Now it's time for him to take his own advice.

Nelson, auxiliary orientation manager at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, and his wife, Norma, were named missionaries along with 31 others during the October board meeting in Richmond. Early next year they'll head for Nigeria, where both, as missionary associates, will teach in the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary at Ogbomosho.

At 50, Nelson admits the move may be risky, but that fits his theology. "You can't stop taking risks," he contends. Norma agrees: "You've got to keep growing, keep expanding. A safe religion is the worst kind."

Nelson, a tall, lanky Kansan, and Norma, a Colorado native, led churches in Texas, Kansas and North Carolina following graduation from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

They applied for foreign mission service in the early '60s but were stalled by medical problems. Impressed by his abilities, however, the board invited Nelson to teach theology during the first orientation for missionary journeymen (college graduates assigned to two-year mission tasks overseas) in 1965.

Annual invitations followed, and in 1969 Nelson joined the board staff, assigned to enlist, select and train journeymen, volunteers and summer missionaries, and correspond with college students interested in career missions. In the years since, he has directed 13 journeymen orientations, preparing 1,326 young Southern Baptists for service in more than 50 nations. More than 100 journeymen have gone on to appointment as career missionaries.

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Meanwhile, Norma directed music at several Richmond area churches, earned a third master's degree (in social work), and became a caseworker for the city of Richmond.

But the attraction to mission service overseas never faded and when a short-term request for seminary teachers in Nigeria turned up, the Nelsons made themselves available. They talked it over with their teenage children, Lisa and Jim, and both responded positively. "Ours is a family of open discussion and decision making," says Nelson, "so we pulled together around that and got excited and committed."

Nelson requested a sabbatical leave and in 1979 the family went to Nigeria for a six-month stay at the seminary in Ogbomosho. He taught theology and Old Testament history; Norma taught music and social ministry, a program new to the seminary.

In Nigeria they discovered a highly developed Baptist work directed by skilled national leaders, a close-knit, dedicated band of missionaries, and 80 million people (one in every six Africans is Nigerian) to be reached with the message of Christ.

"I've never felt that all of me was used for service like it was there," Norma said.

Back in the United States, the Nelsons re-entered the application process for missionary service, requesting permanent assignment at the seminary in Nigeria. This month the Foreign Mission Board gave them the nod.

Again, the Nelson kids supplied a rally cry for commitment. Daughter Lisa, 18, will have to complete high school classes before the end of this year, missing many of the joys of her senior year. But according to her father, she'd rather head for Nigeria: "When we were making the final decision, she said, 'Let's go.' There was no hesitation."

Nelson will miss some things too--close friendships with co-workers, autumn in Virginia, Atlantic Coast Conference basketball, sports on television. Most of all, he'll miss working with journeymen training for foreign missions.

"I've wept about that publicly," he admits. "Leaving the journeymen is like a death. They're the finest young adults among Southern Baptists. But we're not starting over completely. We'll be working with the finest young adults among Nigerian Baptists."

The sports scene won't be a lost cause, either. He can play tennis with co-workers at the seminary and nearby Baptist Medical Centre, or jog around Ogbomosho (he's run several marathons), though that tends to draw a crowd.

"Kids line the streets and giggle and point and squeal, 'O yin bo,'" he says. "That means 'peeled yam.' They've never seen anybody white with legs this long."

Soon he'll be a familiar sight.

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

CORRECTION: In (BP) story mailed 10/12/81, "Southern Baptist Couple Leaves Home for Music," in graph three, line 2, please change "finally had" to "left."

Thanks,  
Baptist Press