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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
 460 James Robertson Parkway
 Nashville, Tennessee 37219
 (615) 244-2355
 Wilmer C. Fields, Director
 Dan Martin, News Editor
 Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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High School Students
 Lose High Court Appeal

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--A group of high school students seeking to hold prayer meetings at their upstate New York school lost their legal battle here as the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review two lower federal court rulings against the students.

The action, taken unanimously and announced without comment, came just one week after a major ruling that students at state colleges and universities have a constitutional right to worship on campus. In writing for an 8-1 court majority in that case, however, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. warned that the decision should not be interpreted as signaling a similar result in the New York case.

Six students at the Guilderland, N.Y., High School took their principal, superintendent of schools and school board to court nearly three years ago after principal Charles Ciaccio and the board refused to grant them permission to conduct prayer meetings inside the school either before or after the school day.

But twice, in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York and at the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, the students lost. They asked the Supreme Court last year to hear their appeal, claiming that the court of appeals decision "ignores the fundamental right of millions of students to be free of governmental control of their associations and the free flow of ideas."

They also claimed that in the use of school property for religious purposes, "a high school, during non-school hours, is identical to a college or university."

By rejecting those claims, the Supreme Court let stand the October 1980 court of appeals ruling which held in part that school officials had a "compelling state interest" in refusing the students' request. Sanctioning the prayer meetings, the lower court ruled, would have violated the no establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment "by creating an unconstitutional link between church and state."

Further, the Circuit Court of Appeals held in its unanimous ruling, "the prayer meetings would create an improper appearance of official support, and the prohibition against impermissibly advancing religion would be violated."

School officials were further justified in denying the request, the ruling went on, in that they would have been forced to monitor the student group to insure safety and order, and "more importantly...to guarantee that participation in the prayer meetings would always remain voluntary."

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Unlike the Dec. 8 Supreme Court decision holding that religious groups on college campuses have a constitutional right of free access to a public forum, the court of appeals held that "... a high school is not a 'public forum' where religious views can be freely aired."

The decision concluded: "We must be careful that our public schools, where fundamental values are imparted to our children, are not perceived as institutions that encourage the adoption of any sect or religious ideology."

By refusing to review the lower rulings, the Supreme Court technically did not endorse their findings but for reasons it chose not to disclose decided the time was not right for review of the issue.

Its action apparently means that the high court will avoid, at least for the time being, a major public flap over the sensitive issue of religion in the public school classroom such as that which followed its landmark 1962 and 1963 rulings that states may not require religious devotions in the schools.

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Moon Loses Battle Over
Charter For 'Seminary'

Baptist Press
12/15/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--Unification Church officials have failed to persuade the U.S. Supreme Court to review the denial of a charter to the group's Barrytown, N.Y., seminary.

In a one-line order, the high court refused an appeal brought by the controversial Sun Myung Moon and other church leaders, claiming that the school was the victim of discrimination by the New York State Board of Regents.

Nearly four years ago, the regents, charged by New York law with granting charters to institutions of higher education, refused a charter application from the Unification Theological Seminary on grounds it was academically deficient and fiscally questionable.

After losing in two state courts, church officials asked the Supreme Court to step in and accused the regents of conducting "an extraordinarily lengthy and unprecedentedly attenuated" investigation.

But the regents countered by saying that the church's religious beliefs were "irrelevant" to their investigation and said that church leaders "seek to use what they themselves call their 'unpopularity' as a sword to obtain the right to operate a college without meeting standard academic and fiscal requirements."

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Missionary Has
'Sweet Reunion'

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WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--When Walter T. Hunt spoke at Metropolitan Baptist Church, he got a big surprise.

Hunt, a Southern Baptist missionary to the Philippines, who is on furlough and living in Fort Worth, Texas, was speaker for the church's Foreign Missions Day.

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The surprise came when Mr. and Mrs. Herson Ramos stood up to sing the special music during the service.

Hunt and the Ramos' had worked together in Hunt's first assignment in the Philippines, as missionary to Cotobato City. He was the pastor; they were active members of the small congregation.

When Hunt left Cotobato City in 1959, the Ramos' stayed on. Gradually, across the years, they had lost contact. Hunt and the Ramos' hadn't seen each other in more than 20 years.

In the ensuing years, Hunt served in other capacities in the Philippines. He resigned in 1971, and served for seven years in Clovis, N.M. He was reappointed in 1978.

Earlier this year, the Ramos' moved to Wichita, where their daughter is a doctor with the U.S. Air Force, stationed at McConnell Air Force Base.

Phil Lineberger, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church, said the Ramos' visited soon after arriving in Wichita.

"They told me they had worked with some early Southern Baptist work in the Philippines, and that their first missionary was Walter Hunt. We had already invited Walter to be speaker for our Foreign Missions Day. We decided to surprise Walter by having the Ramos' sing the song they sung on his first Sunday in Cotobato City back in 1955," Lineberger said.

"He (Hunt) was really surprised to see them after all these years. It was quite a neat experience...a real sweet reunion," the pastor added.

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Seminary, Home Mission Board,
Join In Puerto Rico Courses

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NEW ORLEANS, (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the Baptist Home Mission Board will offer accredited theological education in Puerto Rico beginning in January.

In an arrangement worked out over 18 months, New Orleans Seminary will provide curriculum for the Home Mission Board personnel currently teaching at Puerto Rico Baptist Theological Seminary in Rio Piedras. Direct involvement of New Orleans faculty members will be established later.

According to information from New Orleans Seminary, it will have administrative, academic and financial authority of Puerto Rico Seminary. That organizational structure satisfies the accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for extension centers.

The Puerto Rico Seminary, through New Orleans' school of Christian training, will offer associate of divinity degrees in music, pastoral ministry, and religious education. Non-accredited diploma programs will continue in the same areas, as a continuation of the Puerto Rico Seminary Program.

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The Puerto Rico Seminary, which had 36 students in 1978, had 74 enrolled in the fall of 1981, according to Ed Richardson, Home Mission Board director of work in Puerto Rico. The island school is under the direction of Miguel Soto who will serve as an adjunct faculty member for NOBTS.

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Man Convicted; Sentenced
In Slaying of Jean Bulce

Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--Anthony Wiley, 22, has been convicted of the Sept. 21 beating death of Jean Bulce, but was spared the death sentence when a DeKalb County jury deadlocked 11-1 in favor of imposing the maximum punishment.

Wiley was sentenced to six consecutive life terms in prison, plus 45 years, by Judge Clarence Peeler. The sentences were the maximum the judge could give. In Georgia, only a jury can impose the death penalty.

Wiley was the first of three men to be tried in connection with the Decatur city park assault on Bulce, daughter-in-law of Atlanta pastor Lester Bulce, and her co-worker, Betty Ann Miles.

A seven-man, five-woman jury deliberated only one hour and 40 minutes before pronouncing Wiley guilty on a total of 10 charges, including murder, aggravated sodomy, aggravated battery, aggravated assault, kidnapping and armed robbery. But the jury could not reach a unanimous decision on the death penalty, forcing Superior Court Judge Peeler to issue sentence.

Wiley, maintaining his innocence throughout the trial, was implicated in the attack by testimony from his cousins, Rodney and Lapas Favors. The Favors brothers also were arrested and charged with the slaying of Bulce and the beating of Miles. The women, both employees of Decatur Federal Savings and Loan, were assaulted while eating lunch in Glen Lake Park.

Wiley claimed he had been job-hunting with two friends on the day the two women were attacked. Both men denied being with Wiley on Sept. 21.

Bulce, an active member of Rehoboth Baptist Church, where her father-in-law has been pastor for 34 years, died from blows to the chest sustained in the noon-time attack.

Phillip Bulce, husband of the slain woman, issued a statement through District Attorney Bob Wilson following sentencing:

"I still have faith in the justice system. I do not feel that full justice has yet been achieved. It will be very hard to tell my daughters that the man who brutally murdered their mother will be allowed to live. But Jean Bulce's love lives with us and our friends," he said.

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**460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219**

JM
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LYNN MAY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37234