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82-111

**Cothen's Retirement Accepted,
Search Underway For Successor**

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board have approved President Grady Cothen's request for medical retirement in March 1984 and elected a seven-member committee to search for his successor.

Also adopted were criteria for presidential candidates and procedural guidelines calling for a new president to be presented for election at the Feb. 1983 meeting or at a called meeting as soon thereafter as possible. The timetable will allow the president-elect to have several months of orientation with Cothen before assuming the presidency.

The guidelines are virtually identical to those used in 1974 when trustees elected Cothen.

Layman John J. Bryan, a pathologist from Bluefield, W. Va., was elected to chair the search committee. Trustee chairman Alton McEachern, pastor of First Baptist Church, Greensboro, N.C., and executive committee chairman John Daley, pastor of Brook Hollow Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn., were named voting ex-officio members.

Other members are: Loyd Batson, pastor of FBC, Pickens, S.C.; Warren Hultgren, pastor of FBC, Tulsa, Okla.; Raymond Langlois, pastor of Judson Baptist Church, Nashville; and Katy Stokes, homemaker from Waco, Texas.

The committee members were recommended by the trustee plans and policies committee following adoption of procedure guidelines.

Bryan said the committee invites any member of a Southern Baptist church to suggest candidates. He said recommendations should be made in writing and include a complete biographical sketch of the nominee and a concise statement of the reason for the recommendation.

"I am not a member of anyone's Baptist political party," Bryan said. "We will endeavor to earn your respect and trust."

Qualifications for presidential candidates were spelled out in five categories: personal, educational-intellectual, experience, denominational and spiritual.

An age range of 40-55 is suggested and candidates are to have "adequate formal education based upon significant native intelligence." Other criteria include "a man committed to the Bible as the Word of God, the diversity and integrity of churches, the doctrines expressed in 'The Baptist Faith and Message,' and a man 'in tune' with the total life of the denomination."

Spiritual qualifications stipulate "a man who is a born-again believer ... and faithfully involved in a local church in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention."

In his formal request for medical retirement to begin 18 months before he will be 65, Cothen said, "The Sunday School Board must have a chief executive officer whose health is robust and who can tolerate extended periods of extreme stress."

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Expressing hope a new president can be elected early in 1983, he said, "Neither I, the board officers nor the plans and policies committee believe it is wise to establish an interim presidency. I believe it is mandatory to have an orderly transition."

After first being urged by his doctor in the fall of 1981 to consider retirement, Cothen said further medical problems arose early in 1982 and "in consultation with my wife, I began to pray about what I should do both for the sake of the Sunday School Board and my family."

In February 1982, Cothen told McEachern he was considering requesting retirement at the August meeting of the trustees. In May Cothen confirmed his decision with McEachern and notified Daley and plans and policies committee chairman Harper Shannon, pastor of Huffman Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Calling Cothen "an authentic Southern Baptist statesman of unimpeachable integrity," McEachern said, "we hope to move with all deliberate speed to secure a successor and have him on board for a minimum of six months orientation with Dr. Cothen prior to his retirement in the spring of 1984. We welcome suggestions from across the convention."

Cothen said his eight years at the board have been the "most fruitful of the service God has allowed me to have. Excepting the churches, where obviously God's work is done, this board is one of the greatest forces for implementing the Great Commission in our world today."

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HMB Names Seventy
To Mission Service

By Patti Stephenson

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ATLANTA (BP)--Seventy persons were approved to fill mission assignments across the United States during the August session of the full board of directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The directors named seven missionaries and 13 missionary associates and slated 50 for pastoral assistance.

Appointed as missionaries were Clifton and Mary Davis of Bluefield, W.Va.; Richard and Debra Humble of Tulsa, Okla.; Charles and Dorothy Jolly of Honolulu, Hawaii, and Gwendolyn Williams of New Orleans, La.

Missionary associate appointees included David Allen of New Albany, Miss.; Elmer and Jacquella Goble of Arkadelphia, Ark.; Allen and Beverly Haynes of Elkhart, Ind.; Charles and Faith Kellar of Lincoln, Calif.; Barry and Marleen Robinson of Fort Worth, Texas; Michael and Nancy Strohm of Loveland, Colo., and Kenneth and Linda Townsend of Charlestown, Ind.

The Davises will remain in West Virginia where he will be director of associational missions for Mountain State Baptist Association in Princeton. He holds degrees from Mississippi College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and has been pastor of churches in Mississippi, Oklahoma, Indiana and West Virginia.

The Humbles will continue to live in Tulsa where he becomes director of Christian social ministries for Tulsa Baptist Association. He is a graduate of University of Tulsa and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and has been campus minister and youth minister as well as a Home Mission Board US-2 missionary and Christian social ministries intern. Mrs. Humble is a graduate of University of Tulsa and also served as a US-2 missionary. She is a registered nurse.

The Jollys will move to Seattle, Wash., where he will be church extension director for Puget Sound Baptist Association. A graduate of Mississippi College and Southern seminary, he has 42 years' experience as a pastor and is former president of both the South Jersey-Pennsylvania Baptist Fellowship and the Baptist Convention of New York. Mrs. Jolly is a graduate of University of Louisville.

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Williams remains in New Orleans to continue as director of weekday ministries for Franklin Community Baptist Center. A graduate of University of Southwestern Louisiana and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary she is former director of the women's unit at Baptist Rescue Mission in New Orleans and served as a HMB US-2 missionary.

Allen will work in New Albany as a church planter apprentice. He holds degrees from Blue Mountain College and Southwestern seminary and has been a mission pastor and associate pastor in Mississippi and Texas.

The Gobles will move to Los Angeles, Calif., where he will coordinate Olympics ministries. He has degrees from Baylor University and Southwestern seminary and has held the position of director of religious activities at Ouachita Baptist University since 1975. Mrs. Goble is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and works as a speech pathologist.

The Haynes remain in Indiana where he will direct associational missions for West Central and White River Baptist Associations. He earned degrees from Jacksonville State University and Southern seminary and has been pastor of churches in Indiana and Kentucky. Mrs. Haynes holds degrees from Jacksonville State University and Southern seminary and has taught home economics.

The Kellars will stay in California where he will become director of associational missions for Sierra Foothills and Feather River Baptist Associations. He has pastored California churches and founded Mother Lode Association. He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, as is Mrs. Kellar. She has taught seventh grade since 1963.

The Robinsons will move to Hinesville, Ga., where he will serve as church planter apprentice. He holds degrees from Mercer University and Southwestern seminary and has worked as a youth minister and summer church planter. She is a graduate of University of Houston and Southwestern seminary and is a music teacher.

The Strohm will remain in Loveland where he will work as a church planter apprentice. He is now pastor of Orchards Baptist Chapel and graduated from Cameron University and Southwestern seminary. Mrs. Strohm is a graduate of Baylor University.

The Townsends will move to Topeka, Kan., where he will direct associational missions for Kaw Valley Baptist Association. He has been pastor of churches in Indiana and North Carolina and graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University and Southern seminary. Mrs. Townsend has worked in the Preschool Department of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana.

Approved to receive church pastoral assistance were James and Darlene Barrington of Dearborn, Mich.; Perry and Patricia Brickley of Rocky Ford, Ga.; Keith and Teresa Corrick of New Orleans, La.; Kyle and Bonnie Cummings of Richland Hills, Texas; Robert and Janet Depp of Edgewood, Md.; James and Eula Douglass of Plainfield, Ind.; Don and Barbara Ertel of Hermitage, Pa.; Michael and Shirley Gibson of Chillicothe, Ohio, and Kenneth and Bonnie Gore of Paramount, Calif.

Galen and Sondra Greenwalt of Hercules, Calif.; Dwain and Marilyn Gregory of Security, Colo.; Melvin and Sharon Johnson of Fort Worth, Texas; Tommy and Nugget Karnes of Lusk, Wyo.; Ronald and Linda King of Clinton, Pa.; Donald and Elizabeth Lewis of Jacksonville, Fla.; William Loafman of Carlinville, Ill.; Donald and Linda McDonald of Dubois, Wyo.; David and Susan Moser of Ranson, W.Va.; Stephen and Mary Sue Rumer of Austin, Ind.; Richard Sanders of Louisville, Ky.; Steven and Marilyn Umbholtz of Washington, Kan.; Morris and Dora Wall of Waco, Texas, and James and Barton Wallace of Brantley, Ala.

Approved to receive language pastoral assistance were Mike and Keum-Dong Chiew of Bethany, Okla.; Sei Bok and Dong He Kim of St. Petersburg, Fla., and Tadayuki and Keiko Suzuki of San Diego, Calif.

French Chapel Survives After Years Of Trouble

LYONS, France (BP)—The inauguration of a Baptist chapel in a suburb of Lyons, France, climaxes more than three years of violence and vandalism for church members struggling to establish a meeting place.

More than 150 people celebrated the opening of Eglise Evangelique Baptiste of Bron, formerly Vaulx-En-Velin. The pastor, Southern Baptist missionary pastor Mark Sutton from Louisiana, commended the church for "its hard work and sweet spirit" during a time of difficulty.

Since 1979 the church has been under attack by unidentified persons. Once a gunman fired into the congregation but there were no injuries. On other occasions windows and doors were shattered. Also a member's car was stolen and destroyed.

A year ago police advised the group to leave its rented meeting place. The church held services in a member's garage while searching for another hall to rent.

Vandalism is not directed just at this particular group, Sutton said. It is a problem shared by other evangelical churches in the Lyons metropolitan area of 1.15 million.

The new chapel, in a former appliance store building, better meets the church's needs than did the earlier meeting place. Part of the remodeling was funded by the Southern Baptist Lottie Moon Christmas offering for foreign missions.

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U.S. Churches Gain Members, Lose Ground

By Norman Jameson

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—In classic two steps forward, three steps back routines, churches in the United States gained members but lost ground in 1980.

The 1982 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, published for the National Council of Churches, indicated U.S. church membership increased one percent in 1980 to 134,816,943. But the percentage of the U.S. population recorded on church membership ledgers slipped from 60.5 percent in 1979 to 58.7 percent in 1980.

"The numbers show we're really not making great strides forward in reaching the unconverted portion of the population," Justice Anderson, director of the World Mission/Church Growth Center at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said.

Southern Baptists gained 1.7 percent in membership in 1980. (In 1981 they gained 1.3 percent but comparable 1981 figures for all denominations are not available.) The 1980 growth, as encouraging as it is when compared to declines in four major mainline Protestant denominations, can be attributed primarily to biological and transfer growth, Anderson said.

"If we're going to increase our growth as we should we're going to have to start more churches," Anderson, who differentiates between growth through expansion and growth through extension, pointed out.

"If we're going to avoid what's happening to some of these other denominations we're going to have to have evangelism that is not just to an individual and having him come into my church, but to begin new congregations in extension growth," he explained.

Anderson contrasted growth by expansion—a single church growing fatter—with growth by extension—churches planting other churches. He feels a church's responsibility is to plant another church and that unless a large church is actively reaching into isolated pockets of people it can impede overall church growth in a community.

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Too often, he claims, worship in a large church becomes a "spectator sport" and members measure the church's value by what services it can provide the membership rather than how the members can serve God through the church.

To move Southern Baptists beyond their 1.7 percent growth of 1980, Anderson thinks the convention will have "to recapture our tradition of the past that has contributed to our great Baptist growth, the bivocational minister. If we're going to multiply churches in the city we're going to have to have bivocationalists."

"We need a radical change in our concept of professional ministry," Anderson said. "We're not really training people for this in our seminaries."

The image of a bivocational--holding a secular job to support a church planting effort--is not the stuff of dreams for most seminary students. Instead they see themselves as fast track professionals stepping quickly from small churches to more prestigious pulpits.

Southwestern's world mission/church growth center will address help to the bivocational with a conference in February in conjunction with a conference on prison chaplaincy.

Anderson, a missionary in South America for 17 years, listed several needs of Southern Baptists, a traditionally rural denomination if they are to increase their growth rate or even hold their own as the nation urbanizes.

Among them is the need for radical change in the concept of professional ministry: a need for church members to assume stronger roles in witness, decreasing their "staff dependency;" a need for spiritual renewal and dedication and a need to penetrate sectors of society that are untouched with the gospel because of ethnic, cultural, economic or social barriers that Christians allow to impede witness.

"Are we really being missionary and evangelistic?" Anderson asked. "Are we really reaching out to sectors of society that have not been penetrated with the gospel? What are we doing to really get out and reach people through conversion growth?"

"We've (Southern Baptists) got the money to back up all the church planting in the world but we're not giving it," he said.

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Rhonda Behms Living
With Maternal Aunt

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8/5/82

CHICAGO (BP)--Nine-year-old Rhonda Behms, orphaned when her parents were stabbed to death in Chicago earlier this month, is now living with an aunt, Mrs. Howard Brookins of Chicago, according to Metro Chicago missions director Everett Anthony.

Mrs. Brookins is a sister of Barbara Behm, who with her husband, Ronald, and their six-year-old son, Matthew, died in the tragedy. Behm was pastor of the South Shore Baptist Bible Church in Chicago.

Anthony said offers of help poured in from area churches when news of the slayings was announced July 1.

Two summer student missionaries who were living in the South Shore Church building have since moved out although they continue to work with the congregation. They are Steve McGlamery, from Illinois State University-Normal and Jeremiah Gardner from Little Rock, Ark.

Following the slayings, McGlamery and Gardner lived for a week in the home of a member of Cornell Avenue Baptist Church then moved into the home of a member from South Shore church.

Herschel L. Jackson, 26, Mrs. Behm's son by a former marriage, is being held by police on three counts of murder.

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