



**- - BAPTIST PRESS**  
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  
Craig Bird, 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** (Foreign) 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

May 25, 1983

83-81

**Court Denies Appeal  
Of Payne's Decision**

By Al Shackelford

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Tennessee Court of Appeals has unanimously affirmed an August 1982, ruling by Chancery Court that the property of Bethel Baptist Church, Estill Springs, should revert to the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Executive Board.

The three-judge Court of Appeals, Middle Tennessee Section, issued its unanimous opinion May 18, based on a hearing held April 4 in Nashville.

In August 1982, the Chancery Court ruled Bethel Baptist Church (formerly Paynes Baptist Church) had violated a "breach of trust" of being a cooperating Baptist church under the reversionary clause in the property deed. The trial was held July 29-30, 1981.

The deed requires the church "to adhere to, maintain, and propagate the doctrines, faith and practices of Missionary Baptist churches (and) to cooperate with the local Baptist Association, Tennessee Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention. If the church ceas d to fulfill this condition, the property would revert to the TBC Executive Board "to be used for church and mission purposes."

At the April 4 hearing, Gary Gober, attorney for Bethel Baptist Church, based the appeal to overturn the chancery court decision on two arguments: that the plaintiffs (minority members and the TBC Executive Board) had failed to prove Bethel Baptist Church was not a cooperating missionary Baptist church, and that reverted clauses are unenforcable because of their uncertainty, unreasonableness, and repugnancy to the nature of an autonomous Baptist church.

Clinton Swafford, attorney for the minority members, and Robert Taylor, Executive Board attorney, told the appeals court Henley had committed "no errors of law" in the trial and that the preponderance of evidence presented during the trail supports his decision.

"In our view the evidence is overwhelming that the existing congregation of what is now called Bethel Baptist Church went to great lengths so as to avoid cooperation with the structured Baptist organizations from which it was incarnated," the appellate judges wrote. "In fact, the record does not even reveal a future willingness to cooperate. Accordingly, we readily concur with the chancellor's finding of lack of cooperation.

"In our view the disputed language is neither vague nor ambiguous. As long as there are sufficient ascertainable standards by which a court can interpret the intent of a trust, it will be enforced.

"We wholeheartedly agree with the defendants' statement (Bethel Baptist Church) that they may 'choose' to cooperate with other churches or associations but (that they) cannot be compelled to do so. However, should the defendants choose not to cooperate, and the record is clear that they have so chosen, they they may not obtain benefit from the assets of charitable trust specifically designed to benefit a 'cooperating' church.

"Simply put, def ndants may be as unc operative as they wish, but must do so from a different location in light of the xpress terms of the original conveyance herein."

In reviewing the 1981 trial, the Court of Appeals found no attempt to interpret religious doctrine in this case.

In its concluding statement, the judges said, "The proof is that it (Bethel Baptist Church) simply has not cooperated in accordance with the trust.... Therefore as a matter of property law--not ecclesiastical or church doctrinal law--ownership must revert."

Bethel Baptist Church has 30 days to request permission from the Tennessee Supreme Court to appeal the decision of the Court of Appeals.

TBC Executive Secretary Tom Madden said he was pleased the courts had upheld the right of a cooperating Southern Baptist church to use property in the way it was intended. "It is my hope and prayer that now the two congregations can resolve their differences and unite in fulfilling the mission, education and ministry purposes which are so dear to all cooperating Baptist churches," Madden said.

-30-

SBC Missionaries To Enter  
Ninety-Ninth Country June 1

Baptist Press  
5/25/83

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--With the transfer of missionaries to Angola, Swaziland and Netherlands Antilles June 1, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board edges within one of having missionaries in 100 countries.

The board approved the transfer of Curtis and Betty Dixon from Portugal to Angola and the transfer of Roy and Patsy Davidson from Botswana to Swaziland during its May meeting. They had approved earlier the transfer of Leo and Margaret Waldrop to Netherlands Antilles.

The Dixons will return to a country they left eight years ago when civil war broke out just before Angola gained independence from Portugal. Transferring to Portugal, the Dixons maintained ties with Angolan Baptists, made several trips into the country and shipped Portuguese-language Bibles and literature to the African nation.

In March 1982, they gained permission to visit the Marxist-led country for five weeks to teach at theological institutes, a task they hope to resume as soon as they return. The Dixons plan to travel throughout the country, training pastors and church leaders who find it difficult to travel to the capital, Luanda, for training.

They also plan to import Bibles and church literature and Mrs. Dixon plans to assist Angolan Baptists with church music. She has ordered recorders and pianicas, simple musical instruments, to take with her.

During the Dixons' 1982 visit to Angola, there were 55 churches and 35 missions in the country. In a recent letter from Angola, they learned Brazilian Baptists have appointed a single missionary to Angola and are considering a couple.

The Davidsons will be going to Swaziland, a tiny monarchy perched on the border between South Africa and Mozambique. They will seek to establish an English-language church in the capital city of Mbabane and eventually, with reinforcements, start Siswati-language work as well. English and Siswati are the two official languages of the people. A majority of the people in Swaziland call themselves Christians, but many are non-practicing. A large segment of the people practice their traditional religions.

-30-

(BP Map to be mailed to state Baptist papers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)

Senate Panel Approves  
Tuition Tax Credit Bill

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP)--A divided Senate Finance Committee has approved President Reagan's tuition tax credit proposal but senators on both sides of the controversial measure agree it will face a much stiffer challenge on the Senate floor.

"It will take only 11 votes to get this out of committee," Sen. David L. Boren, D-Okla., reminded panel chairman Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., just before the final vote. "But it will take 60 votes to get it out of the Senate," Boren quickly added, promising a filibuster if the bill is brought up on the Senate floor.

On an 11-7 vote the committee approved essentially the same bill it passed late in the last Congress which was never considered by the full Senate. When fully phased in over three years, S. 528 would provide parents tax credits of up to \$300 for each child in private elementary and secondary schools. The maximum family income to qualify for the full credit would be \$40,000, with partial credits available until a family's income reached \$50,000.

Instead of attaching the tax credit bill to must-pass legislation such as the debt ceiling bill being handled by the committee, the panel passed S. 528 as an individual bill. That was considered by opponents as a "victory of sorts," according to an aide to Boren who said the Oklahoma senator "got a what he feels is a very firm commitment from Dole to send the bill to the floor as a free-standing bill."

During several sessions aimed at concluding committee action on the measure, proponents rejected almost all efforts to amend the White House draft.

The panel did agree to defy White House preferences by adopting a committee amendment as it did last year making the tax credits refundable to parents whose tax bill is less than the tuition tax credit available. However, the committee turned back an effort by Sen. John H. Chafee, R-R.I., to add refundability language to the bill coming out of committee instead of making it a committee amendment to be offered on the floor.

Chafee also unsuccessfully challenged the bill's declaration that its purpose "is to enhance equality of educational opportunity, diversity and choice in America." The primary purpose of the bill, Chafee insisted, is to provide federal financial assistance to private school children.

Also rejected were Chafee efforts to make private schools subject to the same requirements imposed on public schools receiving federal funding in the areas of bilingual education, teacher accreditation, compulsory attendance and discrimination based on sex, religion or handicap. Last year, the panel accepted Chafee's amendments on handicap discrimination and compulsory attendance.

The bill's single requirement on participating private schools is a ban on race discrimination. The committee turned down a Boren amendment to strengthen the enforcement provisions by eliminating the need for the Attorney General to demonstrate in court that a challenged school "intended" to discriminate by substituting a "results" standard for the bill's "intent" test.

Amendments pushed by supporters of the bill were also rejected including one by Sen. David Durenberger, R-Minn., to make tax credits applicable to public as well as private school students. Riders by Sen. John C. Danforth, R-Mo., to delay the bill's effective date until Congress earmarked funds to pay for it either through tax hikes or spending cuts and to cap the cost of the program at \$1 billion were also defeated.

Administration officials estimate the program's peak cost will be less than \$800 million annually, a figure questioned by several panel members, including Danforth.

Scheduling for floor action on the bill is uncertain but the level of opposition expected there is not. Boren, a former Oklahoma governor and state legislator, called the proposal "the single most damaging legislative proposal" he has seen in public office. Nonetheless, an aide said Boren is "very optimistic" opponents can keep the measure from being passed by the Senate.

Foreign Board Lays Cornerstone  
For New Mission Training Center

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP)--Board and staff members of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board laid a cornerstone May 24 at the site of the missionary training center they hope will boost the skills of new missionaries going overseas.

Nearly 500 people traveled to the Rockville construction site, near the board's Richmond offices, for the cornerstone ceremony. The stone, to be opened in the year 2000, contains historical materials documenting the development of the Baker James and Eloise Cauthen Missionary Learning Center and Southern Baptists' worldwide mission program.

"It's hard to believe that a little over two years ago we had 233 acres and a blank sheet of paper," said Sam James, missionary orientation director and one of the designers of the center's program. Ground was broken in May 1982 and construction is about 60 percent complete. The facility opens next summer.

Named for retired Foreign Mission Board leader Baker James Cauthen and his wife, the \$9.1 million learning center will house training for new career and associate missionaries, two-year missionary journeymen, summer and semester missionaries and volunteers. Missionaries returning from their first term overseas will attend debriefing sessions at the center.

The Rockville location will be used year-round, and easy access to board offices in Richmond will make missionary training more efficient. New missionaries and journeymen currently train at rented, overcrowded facilities in Georgia and North Carolina which are available only certain weeks of the year.

Almost \$10.8 million of the total \$15 million goal for construction and operating endowment has been given or pledged to date.

-30-

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

Economy Pounds Argentina;  
Baptists Hang in There

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press  
5/25/83

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (BP)--One year after a costly war with England battered Argentina's tottering economy, the average church member wonders if he can feed his family, much less support his church.

"We have any number of children who come without breakfast," says Sarah Wilson, a Southern Baptist missionary who helps run a church community center in Buenos Aires. One teenage girl has fainted from hunger several times in church. A worker at the community center, adds Wilson, "is asking me to pay her every day because she just can't get through the month. There is no way her salary can make it."

Churches set three- or four-month budgets because the plunging peso makes long-range planning pointless. Formerly strong congregations can no longer support a pastor. The Argentine Baptist Convention struggles to meet payroll for its 50-60 home missionaries.

The churches reflect the nation. After battling the British, Argentina has returned to fighting its old enemy--inflation. The annual inflation rate now orbits near 400 percent, probably the highest in the world. A year ago 10,000 pesos bought a U.S. dollar in the official exchange. Now it buys little more than a dime.

Unemployment climbs and production crawls. The enormous foreign debt--\$40 billion--cannot be repaid. It must be refinanced. If the government defaults on its loans an international banking crisis could result.

-more-

Wages can't keep up with inflation; the average worker's real earnings have been slashed in half since 1976 to about \$100 per month. About 90 percent of the work force staged a one-day strike in March to protest government wage controls. Even the prospect of free elections in October, the first in years, isn't generating much hope for the future. Soup lines are appearing on the streets of Buenos Aires.

But Baptists aren't despairing. Though pesos are worth less, church members are giving more of them so churches can survive. They're also helping each other.

"We've asked people to bring food as often as they can," reports John Divers, Southern Baptist missionary pastor in Buenos Aires. Members at the church he serves operate a food stock and clothes closet and lend money to needy people in and out of the church.

Several churches in Buenos Aires have launched informal "work agencies." Participants keep tabs on job openings and make the jobless members and friends aware of them.

"A lot of help is coming from Southern Baptists," adds Wilson. In 1982 and the first third of 1983 the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board sent nearly \$480,000 in hunger and general relief funds.

The money helped missionaries and Argentines finance food and nutrition education for some "villages of misery" (slums) that huddle around Buenos Aires and other cities; food, clothing, medicine and shelter for victims of chronic flooding in several northern provinces; a milk distribution program run by Argentine home missionaries and vocational training and the construction of two community centers in Buenos Aires.

Argentine Baptists and 61 Southern Baptist missionaries are also planning a five-year, nationwide evangelism program to confront a disillusioned people with the gospel message.

-30-

BGCT Hires  
Daehnert, Kirk

Baptist Press  
5/25/83

DALLAS (BP)--William Jan Daehnert, an associate in the Baptist General Convention of Texas' division of student work, has been named coordinator of personnel administration for the Executive Board. Also, Kendall Kirk has been named audiovisual director in the convention's department of public relations.

Daehnert, 42, will direct the development, implementation, coordination and maintenance of personnel administration programs for the Executive Board. Daehnert currently coordinates personnel for Texas Baptist Student Unions along with his other responsibilities in the division of student work.

Kirk, 30, will coordinate photographic and audiovisual services for the convention and Executive Board staff.

-30-