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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Ruschlikon Seminary Board  
Names Lorenzen Acting Head

By John Wilkes

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--Thorwald Lorenzen was named acting president of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, Aug. 30, two weeks after Clyde E. Fant Jr. unexpectedly resigned as president.

Lorenzen, 47, has taught systematic theology and ethics at the seminary since 1974 and was elected a full professor last year. From 1971-74, he taught New Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Fant, who resigned for "family and personal reasons" less than a year after his inauguration, agreed after returning to the States to teach the history of American preaching and sermon preparation at Southeastern during the 1983 fall term.

Lorenzen will head the seminary for 12 months while a search committee, expected to be named when the European Baptist Federation council meets in Sodertalje, Sweden, in September, seeks a president.

The executive board's action came in a special meeting with representatives of the seminary's administrative committee, faculty, students and staff just a week before the seminary began its 35th year with a record 83 students. They represent 22 countries and five continents, with students from Ghana, India and Korea enrolled for the first time.

Lorenzen interrupted several weeks of teaching and preaching at Baptist churches and colleges in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne, Australia, to accept the presidential assignment.

A native of Hamburg, West Germany, he holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Sydney (Australia), bachelor of divinity and master of theology degrees from Ruschlikon and a doctor of theology degree from the University of Zurich (Switzerland).

He has been a member of several Baptist World Alliance study commissions and has represented the BWA in human rights matters before the United Nations and other international commissions. He and his wife, Jill, have two children.

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Arizona Only Convention  
To Double CP Giving

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
8/31/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)-- Southern Baptists didn't reach the goal--but \$104,103,117 isn't a bad consolation prize.

The Southern Baptist Convention adopted a goal of doubling gifts to the Cooperative Program, the SBC's unified giving program, in five years by 1982. The 13.9 million member denomination responded with an 69.8 percent increase, jumping from \$150,760,050 in 1977 to \$254,863,167 five years later. Most of the increase came in the past three years.

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Cooperative Program contributions are voluntary from the 36,000 SBC churches. Each state convention then decides how much money to keep to funds programs such as children's homes, hospitals, hunger relief and universities within its borders and what percentage to send to the national level for worldwide mission and education programs.

Arizona was the only state convention to double its gifts. Arizona churches sent in \$1,781,459 to the Cooperative Program in 1982, up 109 percent from 1977.

However 29 of the 34 conventions increased more than 50 percent lead by Oklahoma (96.8 percent increase to \$14,267,863), Utah-Idaho (93.6 percent to \$273,897), Northern Plains (90.1 percent to \$506,601) and Louisiana (88.7 percent to \$13,503,870).

Bold Mission Thrust, the SBC's massive and ambitious commitment to share the message of Jesus Christ with every person in the world by the year 2000, will need increasing funding if it is to succeed. In response to that need the state conventions increased the amount of Cooperative Program gifts they sent to the national level at a greater rate than the church's contributions increased.

Five state conventions more than doubled the amount they sent to the national programs between 1977 and 1982. Overall CP receipts for the SBC agencies increased 87.8 percent during the period--which meant programs funded for \$52,808,911 in 1977 divided \$99,184,907 in 1982.

Arizona was again the leader, upping its contribution by 164 percent from \$168,398 in 1977 to \$444,951 in 1982.

Texas was up 120 percent--a figure made even more impressive since it translated into an increase of more than \$10 million (from \$9,092,740 in 1977 to \$19,994,746 in 1982). Alabama was up 113 percent (to \$7,334,023), Utah-Idaho increased 109 percent (to \$57,862) and Oklahoma increased 108 percent (to \$6,443,349).

State conventions and the increase of Cooperative Program gifts during the period and the increase in their contributions to the national programs were:

Alabama (67.8 and 113), Alaska (72.1 and 93), Arizona (109 and 164), Arkansas (64 and 72), California (62.8 and 71), Colorado (63.6 and 97), District of Columbia (22.4 and 12), Florida (80.3 and 96), Georgia (74.2 and 73), Hawaii (70.9 and 72), Illinois (61.1 and 53),

Indiana (51.2 and 56), Kansas-Nebraska (79.7 and 86), Kentucky (70.7 and 98), Louisiana (88.7 and 94), Maryland (49.6 and 49), Michigan (32.9 and 46), Mississippi (72.5 and 89), Missouri (59.7 and 68), New Mexico (67.1 and 78),

New York (48.7 and 70), North Carolina (57 and 62), Northern Plains (90.1 and 86), Northwest (64.3 and 94), Ohio (53 and 72), Oklahoma (96.8 and 108), Pennsylvania-South Jersey (63.9 and 75), South Carolina (51.7 and 75),

Tennessee (57 and 78), Texas (82.4 and 120), Utah-Idaho (93.6 and 109), Virginia (47.1 and 47) and West Virginia (74 and 91). The Nevada Baptist Convention was organized after 1977. Its churches gave \$261,974 to the Cooperative Program in 1982, of which \$43,585 was sent to the national programs.

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'Radical Theology' Challenges  
State Missions Ministers

By John F. Hopkins

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ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP)--More than 100 ministers met Aug. 5-6 for what was billed as the "first ever" meeting of Baptist state convention leaders relating to the missions ministry division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB).

The division contains the departments of Christian social ministries, black church relations, interfaith witness and special mission ministries.

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Missions ministries division director Wendell Belew pointed out the need to "preach and practice a radical theology. We have bound Christ to a pulpit, placed his effigy on high mountains, painted his face with the agony of prayer in the garden, hung him with blood stains from a cross--but we scarcely know him as a healer of lepers."

The ministers representing each of the Baptist state conventions also heard presentations from members of the HMB staff, took part in small group sessions and panel discussion and saw film presentations.

Each segment of the meeting was planned to help the state leaders become involved in the process of "breaking down the walls and touching the untouchables," Belew said.

In his address on "Creative Communications," interfaith witness department director Glenn Ingleheart pointed out the "basic" need for the minister is to be a "creative listener."

"We must listen to God, the Holy Spirit, others and to ourselves," he said, noting, the inability to take the time to listen is often caused by "laziness, prejudice and a lack of courage and love." He said "it is often hard to listen," because "when someone won't listen back, the listening becomes turning the other cheek, an application of the Golden Rule." Ingleheart told his audience "often we say let the Church be the voice of God in the changing world. I say let the Church be the ear of God."

Other participants on the program were Paul Adkins, director of the CSM department; Don Hammonds, director of special mission ministries, and Emmanuel McCall, director of black church relations.

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Corrie ten Boom Actress  
Now Brings Bible To Theater

By Mary Jane Welch

Baptist Press  
8/31/83

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--"Nobody would send an actress to the mission field--nobody but God and the Southern Baptists."

But that's just what happened, admits Jeannette Clift George, the actress best known for her role as Corrie ten Boom in "The Hiding Place."

Not only did Southern Baptists send her to the Caribbean island of Grenada to take part in a Christian arts festival, they invited her to teach Bible to college and career age adults and present a series of "reflections" during the Foreign Missions Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

George has had a successful stage career in New York and elsewhere, but she also feels she belongs in the Christian world--as an actress. Because she believes the theater has not taken its proper place in praising God, she has become one of the prime movers behind the growth of Christian drama in America.

The main purpose of Christian drama, she says, is evangelistic. It should focus on the Bible and help people understand it.

She gets excited when Christians realize what they can do evangelistically with the theater. One Missouri church, for example, invited her theater group, the After Dinner Players, to present an evening of Christian drama in their church. Members committed themselves to bring nonbelievers and witness one-on-one to them after the show.

Theater, she says, is one of the last places where the believer and nonbeliever can come together naturally and share ideas and viewpoints. Because the theater isn't threatening, the nonbeliever may welcome a message through the theater he would shun elsewhere.

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She saw this, she says, after "The Hiding Place" when she met people in grocery stores who said they had become Christians after seeing the film. And she saw it again when her theater group toured Europe recently, often staying in the homes of nonbelievers. Even church members, especially in England, were eager to stay after the show to discuss the Bible.

George points out most Americans are disciplined by the entertainment industry, controlled by a handful of people who hold views which are neither Christian nor much like those of the general population.

Groups like the After Dinner Players are changing that. George, who writes about 90 percent of the players' material, bases much of her work on the Bible. She says she tries to present Bible stories and truths like an illustrator drawing a picture. She wants the audience to feel the tensions and the dynamic conclusion of a passage.

Christian drama, especially "The Hiding Place," has played an important part in George's own life. Before the film, she says, she was an actress who was a Christian. But when she returned from filming in Europe she found she had become a Christian personality who was considered qualified to give others answers to their problems. She was made to examine her own convictions and pick out those that defined her, those she could stick with even if the consequence was that offered to the woman she had just portrayed.

The film on the ten Booms and their imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp for hiding Jews in their home affected her Christian life in other ways. It changed her world view. She was impressed by the fact "these two gentle ladies" were plopped down in the middle of the Nazi horror and "yet they stayed ladies." Corrie survived to become an internationally known lay evangelist before her death this spring, but her father and sister died in the camps and her brother died shortly after the war.

As George got to know women in London who played concentration camp victims in the film she realized many of them were prisoners in another way--prisoners in their own city. In Holland, she was struck by the proliferation of cults and the fact so few of the Dutch knew of Corrie ten Boom and what she had done. She came to treasure her privileges. She had grown up in a Texas home where her father, a Baptist deacon, lived out his convictions and her mother "enjoyed a healthy prayer life."

More than that, "The Hiding Place" affirmed the value of Christian drama and the need for excellence in it. She was nominated for Gold Apple and Golden Globe Awards and named "Most Promising Newcomer of 1977" by the British Academy of Arts and Sciences. The film won attention seldom given to Christian films. She felt it gave her an "assignment" to respond to new opportunities in Christian drama.

But George said it wasn't until a year ago as she traveled to speak at a vocational conference that she realized she was devoting more time and energy to Christian drama than secular drama. At the last minute, she changed her topic from acting to Christian theater, surprising her husband, who was in the audience expecting her usual speech.

She got affirmation of her commitment to Christian drama at Glorieta when R. Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board president, pleaded for preachers to go overseas as missionaries. Most of the world's preachers, he pointed out, remained in America, ready to fill the place of any who left.

George applied the lesson to herself. Every time she turns down a role in the secular theater, she said, there are hundreds eager to fill the spot. But so few have chosen to fill the role of striving for excellence in Christian theater.

C.E. Wiley: Starter  
Of Indiana Churches

By Beverly R. Scheland

ATLANTA (BP)--In the early 1950s C.E. Wiley visited Portland, Ind., and asked residents the location of the Baptist church. The response was "What is a Baptist church?"

Wiley vowed, "Wherever I find a town that doesn't know what a Baptist church is, we'll put one there." He found numerous such towns down through the years.

Indiana's recently retired state director of missions was instrumental in establishing 73 churches as a pioneering pastor and missionary. "C.E. Wiley blazed the trail in Indiana during those hard days when there was nobody else out there," says Ken Neibel, director of missions for Central Association in Indianapolis.

"We lived with the expectation of starting another church," Wiley says emphatically. "If you're going out to TRY and start a church, just forget it. You have to start them with the intent to stay with it. I've preached many times to two people, stayed with it, and now there are churches there."

He began driving 50 miles one way to Portland to preach to one prospect. Today, First Baptist Church of Portland has 500 members. Wiley was a "mover and a shaper in getting the work in Indiana going," says Harmon Moore, Indiana's executive secretary/treasurer emeritus.

Wiley was pastor of Grason Baptist Church in Kentucky when the call to Indiana came. He preached a revival at the beginnings of a Baptist church which met above a fire station in Connorsville. "Richmond Baptist Church then called me as pastor," explains Wiley, "and I became th pastor of the county." Four missions grew out of Wiley's work in Richmond and in 1958 six Connorsville churches formed the first Southern Baptist association in Indiana.

"Wiley had a part in getting three associations started that year," said Moore, "Southeastern Baptist, Southwestern Baptist and Northern Indiana."

H had been Eastern Indiana Association's missionary since 1956, covering one third of the state and supporting a wife and three children on a \$400-a-month salary. In 1958 he went to Evansville as southern Indiana's area missionary.

"As a missionary, Wiley had a strong conviction about the autonomy of the local church," says Clarence Brock, pastor of Coventry Baptist Chapel in Fort Wayne. "He never bypassed the church or pastor, but gave strong direction to new and existing churches. And, he was a pastor's friend. When I was hospitalized for three months due to a car accident, he stood by my wife like a brother."

"Between 4,000 to 5,000 people are now members of Indiana Sunday schools because of his direct involvement in organizing the church they attend," says R.V. Haygood, executive director-treasurer of the Indiana state Baptist convention.