

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 2, 1983

83-168

Laity Focus On Role As Ministers  
At Annual Lay Renewal Conference

By Patti Stephenson

HARRISBURG, Pa. (BP)--Proclaiming Christ's church was not created as a "two-party system" which levates clergy above laity, participants of the eleventh annual lay renewal conference explored the biblical meanings of ministry in an effort to "authenticate the calling of the people in the pews to minister."

The conference, sponsored by the evangelism support department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, drew more than 300 Southern Baptist laypersons. An estimated 250 remained in the Northeast after the meeting to lead lay renewal seminars in 30 Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, New York and Connecticut churches.

The lay renewal seminars focus on the laypersons' spiritual journeys and help them discover their gifts for ministry, explained Reid Hardin, HMB evangelism support director.

Jack Smith, evangelism director of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, reported "extraordinary revival and overflow crowds with many people renewing commitments" in Pennsylvania churches as a result of the seminars. More area churches are scheduled to hold the seminars next spring, Smith said.

The conference featured addresses by Kenneth Lyle, executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland; Owen Cooper, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Anthony Campolo, sociology professor at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa.; Robert Hamblin, HMB vice president of evangelism, and Dorothy Sample, national president of the SBC's Woman's Missionary Union.

Lyle described the church as a "new society of gifted people" whose structure should not be hierarchical. "The church today is like a cadaver, it needs rebirth of the priesthood of all believers," he said. "Christ did not ordain a two-party system."

The present distinction between clergy and laity is like a "cork in a bottle and the laity are ready to blow out the cork."

God's call is never to status but to service, he noted. "We need to stop asking whether we should ordain women and ask whether we should ordain anyone."

Cooper claimed the "greatest heresy in Southern Baptist life is not that we expect each other to believe the same way but that we have two classes of Christians--clergy and laity. Nothing in the New Testament justifies it."

Christ commissioned every follower, paid the same price for the salvation of each and requires the same commitment from clergy and laity, Cooper stressed. "The Christian army is the only one where you can join without submitting to training, discipline or duty," he charged. "It's the only army whose officers get 95 percent of the training and fight most of the war by issuing commands which are never carried out by the soldiers."

Hamblin warned the separation between clergy and laity "keeps us from evangelizing." Southern Baptists will never achieve Bold Mission Thrust goals "unless all of us become obsessed with doing what Christ ordered us to do--bring every person to himself."

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God's purpose in providing salvation is not "just to get us into heaven or in on the second coming" but to enable his followers to transform the world--including schools, corporations and governments, Campolo stated. But change in every sector of society must come through love, not power, he stressed.

"There are some who think we need a 'God squad' who'll force the country to conform to our standards," Campolo said. "But if you use power to transform a structure, you forfeit your ability to express love."

As laypersons, "our own wholeness is found when we take God's love in us to others," Sample noted. Decrying "90 percent of our human potential is never realized," she urged laypersons "not to stifle your gifts by comparing them to others'. God never gives any white elephant gifts."

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Yellow Fever Hits West Africa;  
Baptists Respond With Vaccine

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11/2/83

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--To help curb the worst outbreak of yellow fever in West Africa since the 1930s, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has ordered 100,000 doses of vaccine for Ghana and is looking for a volunteer to accompany it.

The vaccine, two immunization guns and volunteer are expected to be on their way within a week, John Mills, director for West Africa, said Oct. 31. He just returned from a trip to West Africa, where he learned of the yellow fever outbreak in Ghana and nearby Upper Volta.

Baptist Medical Centre, Nalerigu, Ghana, reported about 30 deaths from yellow fever and about 100 patients believed to have the disease but apparently recovering, Mills said.

Missionaries at the hospital are organizing a vaccination program requested by the Ghana government to help curb the outbreak in the Nalerigu area, he said. Area chiefs will encourage people to gather in main villages on the roads to speed the process.

The request for 100,000 doses of vaccine was based on a recent measles vaccination campaign in which missionaries administered 50,000 doses to children under 12. The yellow fever vaccine will be administered to people 30 years old and younger. Older people have not caught the disease, probably because of previous vaccination campaigns or a naturally acquired immunity, Mills said.

In Mali, he and missionary Norman Coad visited the country's minister of health, who requested help with a vaccination campaign on Mali's eastern border with Upper Volta. Mills said the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended encircling the outbreak with vaccination and then moving into the center to wipe it out. No yellow fever has been reported in Mali, but the vaccination campaign would help reach the WHO goal.

Mills said he was awaiting further word from Coad before initiating a shipment of vaccine for Mali. In Upper Volta, he heard reports the yellow fever outbreak east of the capital city, Ouagadougou, might be worse than that in Ghana.

He anticipates a vaccine request from missionaries leading the Sanwabo development project using Tennessee volunteers in the area. Missionaries and volunteers in West Africa have been vaccinated against the disease. The last missionaries who died from yellow fever were Frances Jones and Lucille Reagan, who died in Nigeria in 1937, about the time an effective vaccine was produced.

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Low-power TV Lottery  
Again Favors ACTS

WASHINGTON (BP)--For the second time in as many months, the American Christian Television System (ACTS) has won a government lottery for a low-power television station, this one in Anchorage, Alaska.

The random selection procedure was first used by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in September as a way to decide between two or more applicants for the same low-power channel. That first lottery gave ACTS permission to build a low-power station in Brownwood, Texas. The FCC's second lottery again favored ACTS, choosing its application for channel 20 in Anchorage over one other competitor despite a 2-3 disadvantage in the complicated procedure.

The FCC will now grant ACTS a construction permit for the Anchorage station, although anyone who objects to the decision has 15 days to ask the FCC to reconsider. Once the construction permit is granted, ACTS has one year in which to build the station.

The Anchorage and Brownwood channels are the only ACTS applications to come up in the lottery so far. The FCC plans to hold at least one lottery per month until all 12,000 low-power applications are decided.

ACTS has applied for 131 low-power TV stations in 35 states. The network will begin next May delivering family entertainment, inspirational and informational programs daily to cable television systems and TV stations nationwide. The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission is developing the network and programming.

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Centurymen Receive Warm Response  
On First Stop Of China Tour

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press  
11/2/83

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The Centurymen, nationally known men's choral group, received repeated ovations from an audience of Chinese musicians and guests at the Shanghai Music Conservatory Oct. 28, giving new evidence of the Chinese music community participation in recently established cultural exchanges.

Directed by Buryl Red, composer and conductor from New York City, the Centurymen are 100 choral directors from Southern Baptist churches in more than 30 states. The group's weekly program, "Sounds of the Centurymen," is heard on more than 200 radio stations. They are sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

The group's 17-day tour of China is sponsored by the Radio and Television Community of China through Shanghai Television and China Travel Service. It includes mutual exchanges with the top music organizations of China.

Television crews from NBC and the American Christian Television System (ACTS) are accompanying the group to produce a documentary for NBC and other programming for the ACTS network. The NBC documentary is scheduled for airing Feb. 26, 1984.

Prior to their performance at the Shanghai Conservatory, the musicians had an informal exchange with the Shanghai Philharmonic Society, directed by Si Tu Han. The groups performed jointly and alternately under the direction of Red and Si Tu Han.

One of the musical numbers, "Ode to Music," was composed by Red and sung by the combined groups. Another composition, sung in Chinese by the Centurymen, was arranged by Ma Ge Shun, a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and a professor at the Shanghai Music Conservatory.

The repertoire of the Centurymen included examples of Western music, both classical and folk, and a number of Christian songs.

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The Centurymen will perform Oct. 31-Nov. 6 in the national capital of Beijing. The concerts will include performances with the Central Conservatory of Music and the Beijing Philharmonic Society.

"One of the exciting challenges is the exchange performance with the conservatory, which emphasizes traditional Chinese music," Red said. "We will be experimenting with new music forms in which traditional Chinese instruments will accompany Western choral music. We hope to open new avenues of musical expression which will also reflect new efforts of mutual communication between the peoples of our countries."

While in Hangzhou Oct. 30 the Centurymen worshipped with the Drumtower church, an active protestant evangelical congregation of the Three Self Movement. The Three Self Movement is the officially registered and allowed movement of Christian churches flourishing under the new constitution of China.

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CORRECTION--In (BP) story "Key Administrators Removed At Baptist College At Charleston," mailed 11/1/83, in ninth paragraph please insert million after \$11.

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Baptist Press

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House-Senate Panel Clears  
Vatican Ambassador Rider

By Robert Dilday

Baptist Press  
11/2/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--Legislation permitting President Reagan to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican gained quick approval from a House-Senate conference committee Nov. 1, but not without some opposition from several legislators concerned about its constitutional implications.

Conferees working out House-Senate differences in a State Department authorization bill agreed to keep a Senate amendment overturning an 1867 statute prohibiting funds to maintain a U.S. embassy at the Vatican.

The action was included in a block of amendments passed at the beginning of the conference. However, Rep. Mark D. Siljander, R-Mich., insisted on some discussion of the issue before the conferees considered the rest of the bill, even though he said he knew, "we don't have the votes to take it out."

Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., argued the purpose of the amendment was merely to repeal the 1867 law and would not require the President to appoint an ambassador. But he fueled speculation the administration would eventually take that action when he said, "The White House does not object to this amendment and privately would welcome it."

Lugar also pointed out more than 100 countries recognize the Pope as a head of state. That statement prompted Rep. George W. Crockett Jr., D-Mich., to ask quietly, "Do those countries have the same First Amendment restrictions we do?"

Lugar shrugged his shoulders and didn't respond.

A congressional aide told Baptist Press the conference report could be completed within a week and would then move quickly to the House and Senate floors for final approval. If the report passes both houses, the President would be authorized to appoint an ambassador to the Holy See at any time.

Only further congressional action forbidding the expenditure of funds for setting up an embassy in Vatican City or federal court action would then stand in the way of the resumption of full diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

Initial reactions from staff members of the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs included criticism of the manner the Vatican ambassador issue has been pushed through Congress and the threat of legal action.

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BJCPA Executive Director James M. Dunn declared "the hurried, virtually hidden action of the conference committee is unworthy of the U.S. Congress. The Senate, without hearings, debate, discussion or record vote, tacked on to the authorization bill this major reversal of U.S. foreign policy, denying the House of Representatives an opportunity for consideration."

Compounding the frustration felt by opponents of the move, Dunn said, is "the fact that the secular media have ignored this critical issue."

"It's shocking to think the United States would establish diplomatic relations with the Roman Catholic Church," he added. "Surely all those who believe in church-state separation will express their strong disapproval to their Senators and Congressmen immediately. I hope they'll use the telephone and telegrams since time is so short."

John W. Baker, BJCPA general counsel and director of research services, raised the specter of legal action challenging the proposed expenditure. "This action violates the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment and threatens to spawn divisiveness along religious lines," he declared. "It invites a court challenge."

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Tulsa Foundation Gives  
HSU \$750,000 Challenge

Baptist Press  
11/2/83

ABILENE, Texas (BP)--Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, has received a \$750,000 challenge grant from a Tulsa, Okla., foundation toward the construction of a \$1.5 million visual arts center.

The grant was made by the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation Inc., of Tulsa as a part of the university's \$15 million "Forging the Future" endowment and capital needs campaign.

HSU must raise another \$750,000 by Aug. 31, 1984 to receive the Mabee money. The Tulsa foundation has given the Baptist General Convention of Texas university \$1.75 million since 1951, not counting the most recent gift.

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'Average' Missionaries  
Have History, Too

Baptist Press  
11/2/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Lottie Moon, and other "household names" across the Southern Baptist Convention, don't have a monopoly on historical significance, according to Bill Sumners.

Rather, "average missionaries" who didn't have annual offerings named in their honor, provide Southern Baptists a wider perspective on missionary life, said Sumners, archivist for the SBC Historical Commission and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Such was the case of Fleeta Stephens (Columbia, Mo.) who recently gave the archives a letter and photograph Lottie Moon had sent to Stephen's father-in-law and missionary to China, Peyton Stephens.

Shortly after Stephens donated the Lottie Moon letter, Sumners asked her to consider donating the rest of her missionary father-in-law's belongings.

Included among the donated Stephens' possessions are Peyton Stephens' handwritten autobiography, written in third person; a Woman's Missionary Union circa 1910 "star card" with a picture and biographical sketch of Stephens; a Chinese Bible and documents and a faded photograph album depicting the Stephens' missionary work in China.

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