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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Draper Says Churches Are
Drifting Without Purpose

By Jim Newton

BOSTON (BP)--Drifting like plankton in the sea, too many churches in America have lost their sense of purpose and mission, Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., said.

"If we don't have that sense of mission, any theology we embrace we will take to the point of heresy because it will keep us from being what God put us on earth to be," Draper said.

Speaking to a national conference of Southern Baptist evangelism directors, Draper said the church today is facing the greatest conflict in history. "The church is increasingly irrelevant to the average person," he explained.

"The church must suffer the pangs of brokenness and renewal, or it will face the inevitable consequence of being unable to survive," Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, observed.

The church has become a defender of cultural values rather than challenging culture and realizing it was intended to be God's change agent in society, he said. "We have turned away from reconciling the world, thinking it is enough for us to be reconciled ourselves," Draper added. "We have thought, 'if we just get saved, that's the most important thing.'"

Most church members have no idea they are supposed to be God's change agents of reconciliation, he lamented.

"We're afraid of mission, and we ought to be, because the mission of the church is to lose itself in a world of suffering, evil and injustice," Draper said. "Without a sense of mission, the church has become like plankton drifting aimlessly in the sea, without power to change direction."

Draper also compared American society to plankton, the microscopic vegetable life of the sea, saying America has lost its sense of mission nationally in the areas of education, industry, morality, emotional stability and industry.

"We have become hollow men and women whose inner life has withered away," he declared.

Internationally, the world is in the greatest crisis it has ever faced, Draper added. He said one national newsmagazine recently reported there are currently 70 wars in the world, many of them involving brother against brother.

"It is into this kind of world the church has been thrust," Draper said. "Are we (in the church) dealing with issues that don't really count? Are we answering questions no one is asking?"

The church, Draper observed, is facing the greatest conflict in history from atheism, pleasure, false faiths, and materialism.

"We are in a war of extermination with atheism," Draper declared. "The church has been caught up in detente with atheism."

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He predicted the day will come when churches will have to pay taxes on all property, "because that's what atheists want."

Saying the church is in a "vicious conflict with pleasure," Draper warned whenever pleasure takes God's place, it becomes a destructive force in society and life.

On "false faiths," Draper said the trend today is toward an amalgamated religion that honors all religions alike. "The demand for easy religion demands it and the rise of cults confirms it."

On materialism, Draper said there is a great movement among Baptists and other conservative demoninations saying if you trust God, you can drive two Cadillacs, be rich, be president of your own company and have everything you want.

Draper told the evangelism directors the real crisis facing the church, and all Southern Baptists, is a crisis of evangelism.

"My heart is broken when I realize," said Draper, 14 million Southern Baptists have not baptized as many last year as in 1955 when there were only 8.5 million Southern Baptists.

He pointed out there were 6,000 churches in the SBC which did not baptize anyone last year, and 95 percent of them did not report any baptisms the previous year. Out of 36,000 churches in the SBC, 28,000 reported fewer than 15 baptisms.

Draper told the evangelism directors he did not want to appear to be overly critical, but added, "it's a sad day when we are afraid to criticize ourselves. I love the Southern Baptist Convention, but I am concerned about it because it is not what it ought to be."

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First Baptist TelNet Program
Taped In New Studio

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--After 18 months of using rented facilities, the Baptist Sunday School Board's telecommunications network, BTN, has begun taping in its own studios.

The 1,240-square-foot studio, complete with control, editing and engineering rooms, was constructed in existing conference room space in the board's West Wing building.

The first program was taped in the new facility Dec. 1 and is titled "Grouping and Grading Adults in Sunday School."

According to Dennis Conniff, supervisor of the Broadman division's supplies and audiovisuals section, use of the studio is scheduled from January through May, with only two days' maintenance time planned each month.

Taping for BTN programming began in June 1982 at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center and has continued since at various locations, including conference centers, the board's Church Program Training Center and in rented studios in Nashville.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press

Headquarters For United
Nations Ministries Dedicated

By Patti Stephenson

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12/6/83

NEW YORK (BP)--Nine years after it began, a Southern Baptist outreach ministry to the international diplomatic community has a home three blocks from the United Nations.

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Offices for Christian Ministries to the United Nations Community, directed by Home Mission Board missionary Elias Golonka, were dedicated Nov. 29. The headquarters, rented by the HMB, provide space for Bible studies and fellowship with U.N. personnel, English classes and counseling, Golonka explained.

Previously, the ministry was housed in the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association office, three miles from the U.N. The new location will lessen the staff's difficulty with commuting and parking and is more accessible to U.N. personnel, according to Wallace Buckner, HMB director of the multiethnic ministries department.

Present for the ceremony, along with SBC leaders and U.N. visitors, were 11 members of River Oaks Baptist Church in Houston, which donated furnishings worth \$8,000 for the office.

A luncheon honoring the Texas group and Golonka was held Nov. 28 in the U.N. diplomats' dining room. Plaques of appreciation were given to River Oaks Pastor Doug Tipps by Oscar Romo, HMB language missions director, and to Golonka by Gerald Palmer, HMB vice president of missions.

Palmer noted the Houston church's participation in the ministry demonstrates the relationship between the Home Mission Board and local churches. "What we do depends on what they do, not only financially but through personal involvement," he said.

Palmer also lauded Golonka's "commitment to a dream" and noted he has "led Southern Baptists into new frontiers of ministry which will touch people around the world."

Robert Muller, assistant secretary general in the U.N. Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters, expressed appreciation for Southern Baptists' interest in ministering to the U.N. community.

"Our goal of making of all nations a holy family raises the basic questions of 'why are we on this planet? What is the objective of humanity?'" Muller said. "In seeking answers, we must not only develop our knowledge of science but also nurture the heart and learn how to get along with each other."

An open house preceding the dedication attracted U.N. officials, representatives from the New York association, Baptist Convention of New York and the HMB, and guests from local Southern Baptist churches. Also present was SBC President James T. Draper Jr., who described the U.N. ministry as "one of the best-kept secrets in the country."

The dedication was highlighted by scripture readings in six languages--English, Spanish, Italian, Hindi, Polish and Russian. Golonka described the biblical admonition to serve as "ambassadors for Christ" as the ministry's mandate.

Roy Gresham, interim director of the Baptist Convention of New York, said "the most significant place for a missionary, either home or foreign, is here." The U.N. ministry "has the potential to be the most significant point of Southern Baptists' world outreach."

Palmer added, "While we are going into all the world with the good news of Christ, the world is coming here to us at the U.N." He called the U.N. ministry office "a symbol of the love and commitment of millions of Southern Baptists who cooperate in order to advance the cause of Christ."

The ministry's staff reaches out to the U.N.'s 35,000 personnel from 158 member states primarily through "friendship evangelism," Golonka explained. He and his wife, Nancy, often open their home to U.N. personnel and their families.

Joanne Jones, serving as a HMB US-2er, directs the ministry's English classes for members of diplomats' families and other internationals. Weekly Bible study is also held at the ministry center.

Scripture distribution is another strong aspect of the ministry, Golonka noted. "We very often get requests from U.N. translators for Bibles in their own languages," he explained. "No one has ever refused our offer of a free Bible."

Because U.N. personnel "have the same problems as other people do," Golonka counsels those struggling with personal and family problems. He also finds help for families with crisis needs, usually from area churches.

"If there's a coup in a diplomat's country, he and his family may be stranded here without funds," explained Ted Mall, Golonka's assistant. "The former diplomat has to find work and usually cheaper housing and has to take his children out of the expensive private schools. It can be very traumatic for them."

Tipps noted the U.N. outreach is like a jewel, with a "tremendous amount of influence packaged into one small space." He expressed hope that the ministry "will help transform those who now grasp for power into persons who grasp for peace."

The River Oaks congregation's involvement in the U.N. ministry "has made us aware of the need to reach out to the international community wherever we are," Tipps said. "Our laypersons have seen how business travel provides an opportunity to represent Jesus Christ as they go."

The church has plans to forge ties with the 47 consulates in Houston and has begun recruiting members to serve as hosts for international students. Members already support English as a second language classes for 60 internationals.

"We don't want this to be a one-shot effort but something that will spill over to other Southern Baptist churches as well," Tipps said.

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

Launch Of ACTS May Be
Largest Ever For Cable TV

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press
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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--When the American Christian Television System (ACTS) goes on the air next May, it may be the largest launch of any network in the history of cable television.

Ten of the top 25 cable TV corporations in the country have agreed to carry ACTS, giving the new network the potential of reaching eight million homes through cable. Agreements are in process with these first 10 companies, while other pending agreements could bring the total number of potential homes to 16 million, according to projections by ACTS planners.

ACTS will use cable television, low-power TV and full-power TV stations to deliver 16 hours of family Christian entertainment each day. The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) is assembling the network.

"On any given Sunday, Southern Baptists are fortunate to have four million people in Sunday school," RTVC President Jimmy R. Allen said. "But when ACTS becomes available to these cable homes, Southern Baptists will have access to 40 million people every day of the week."

While attention has been focused on the low-power and full-power stations in the ACTS strategy, the initial impact of the network will be felt through cable television, according to Ron Dixon, vice president of media services for the RTVC.

ACTS has been presenting its case to the national cable TV corporations that hold cable franchises in numerous cities, called multiple system operators (MSO), to get them to carry the network on their local systems. Bill Nichols and Lloyd Hart of the RTVC broadcast services department have been spearheading this work.

Those multiple system operators that have agreed to carry ACTS include American Television and Communications, Cox Cable, Group W and Storer, each of which have more than a million subscribers. Others are Daniels and Associates, MetroVision, Heritage Communications, TCA Cable, TeleCable and Vision Cable. These 10 MSOs report a total 8,045,332 subscribers in 669 franchises across the country.

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The Nashville Network, which premiered with seven million cable subscribers in March, is considered the largest network start-up to date. The Disney Channel, which attracted a lot of attention when it kicked off earlier this year, started with only about 300,000 homes.

Once ACTS agreements are signed with the MSOs, each of their local systems will be authorized to include ACTS in their service to subscribers. The relationships between MSOs and their local systems vary within the cable industry. Some local franchises must carry what the MSO dictates. Others can pick and choose.

ACTS is training consultants in each state to contact the local systems owned by the first 10 MSO affiliates to ensure ACTS is carried on each local franchise. The consultants also are helping churches form local ACTS boards, which will promote the network, provide local programming and supply the cable franchises with the necessary equipment to receive ACTS via satellite.

"In order to reach our record-breaking potential, it is imperative that we secure these local agreements and get local ACTS boards moving to purchase these satellite dishes," Nichols said. "We may very well have the largest network launch in cable history next May, but it also may take several months to get all the pieces in place.

"Our consultants are emphasizing Baptist strengths in each area to convince local cable operators of the benefits of carrying ACTS," Nichols said. "The network offers them local programming, free network programming and more subscribers."

A survey of seven cities indicated 14 percent of residents not receiving cable would subscribe if ACTS were offered. That same survey showed 85 percent of residents would like to see ACTS offered on their local cable system.

ACTS will unveil its strategy to the rest of the cable industry during the Western Cable Show in Anaheim, Calif., Dec. 13-15, Dixon said. The charter MSO affiliates will be announced during a news conference and reception Dec. 13.

ACTS strategists also will use the trade show to enlist other MSO affiliates, as well as independent cable operators. Dixon said ACTS hopes to add the potential of another eight million homes through future MSO agreements.

ACTS will use a 20- by 40-foot exhibit to tell the network's story at the Western Cable Show. The display was created by Los Angeles master designer Darrel Howe, whose architectural and design work has been featured in "Time," "Life," "People" and "Home Magazine." Howe is donating his time and much of the material for the exhibit.

"I recommended Darrel for this job because of his commitment as a Christian and as a designer who wants to use his talents in God's work," said Jess Moody, pastor of First Baptist Church in Van Nuys, Calif. "He's doing a wonderful job in the renovation of our church and I know he will help ACTS make an impact on the cable TV industry."

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Sisk Calls For Increase
In Federal Alcohol Taxes

By Tim Fields

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--An alcohol education specialist is calling on Southern Baptists to support an increase in federal excise taxes on alcoholic beverages.

Ronald D. Sisk, director of program development for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said a "nationwide movement is growing to reinstate sanity and responsibility into American alcohol policy by requiring those who use alcoholic beverages to pay a portion of what alcohol use costs our society."

Sisk said groups calling for the increase in alcohol taxes include the Social Security Advisory Council which has made recent recommendations to the Secretary of Health and Human services, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the National Research Council and the National Council on Alcoholism.

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"With one family in every three affected by the drinking of a family member, alcohol abuse is a serious social and moral problem," he said. "While the basic goal of Southern Baptists should be to educate individuals and families to abstain from alcohol, we should also support reasonable control measures such as raising the federal excise tax,"

Sisk said there are four basic reasons why alcohol taxes should be increased.

First, there has been no increase in federal alcohol taxes on wine and hard liquor since 1951. Taxes on beer have not been increased since 1964.

"The Consumer Price Index has risen by 238 percent since 1951 and as a result, taxes on liquor and wine are approximately two-thirds less than they were 30 years ago," Sisk said. "Current federal levies are only about three cents per bottle on wine or beer and about \$1.70 per fifth of liquor," he said.

Second, alcohol use costs American society approximately \$120 billion each year in alcoholism and related problems. "It is entirely just and logical to place the burden for a portion of these costs on those who use and abuse alcohol and a user's tax is the most efficient way of doing this," Sisk said.

Third, the Medicare system which is responsible for caring for many people who suffer from the effects of alcohol use needs \$300 billion in additional revenue from now until 1995. Groups which support the increase in alcohol tax argue adjusting the tax for inflation since 1951 and raising the tax on beer and wine to equal that on liquor could produce between \$25 and \$30 billion in additional revenues annually, Sisk said.

"Designating that revenue for Medicare would go a long way toward underwriting the fund," he said. "Every problem drinker costs society an estimated \$5,000 per year in alcohol-related medical expenses. Why not let the excise tax cover part of that burden?"

Fourth, some of the groups contend alcohol taxes would raise the price of alcoholic beverages enough to discourage some drinking. Sisk said a researcher with the Duke University Institute of Public Policy Studies says for every one percent increase in retail price, alcohol-related auto deaths would drop by .7 percent and deaths from cirrhosis of the liver would drop by .9 percent.

"While no legislation has yet been introduced to support an increase in federal excise taxes on alcohol," Sisk explained, "interested Southern Baptists should contact their legislators with the message the time has come to increase alcohol excise taxes."

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Baptists Thrive Under
The Sun In Puerto Rico

By Phyllis Thompson

Baptist Press
12/6/83

SAN JUAN, P.R. (BP)--In some ways, Puerto Rico is a paradise where the sun always shines, even on days the forecasters predict rain. But, at times, the sunny weather also seems a mockery, an irony against the island's poor.

On this tiny island are 3.2 million people--1,000 per square mile. Only Bangladesh has a higher density. Most of Puerto Rico's people are squeezed into metropolitan areas--San Juan has 435,000; Bayamon, 196,000; Ponce, 189,000.

Here houses sit on top of one another in a disorganized mishmash of colors, sizes and shapes; a tangle of wood, tin, cement and anything else salvageable.

Away from metro areas is a completely different Puerto Rico. Cows graze peacefully by winding mountain roads where one can drive for miles without seeing another car or person.

Amidst Puerto Rico's panorama of extremes, religions of all kinds seek supremacy. The largest denomination, Roman Catholic, claims 75 percent of Puerto Rico's population, while mainline Protestant groups have small numbers of adherents.

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Southern Baptists have been on the island for only 25 years. SBC churches have found it difficult to maintain stability; members were often transferred back to the States. Puerto Ricans preferred to remain with faiths that had been on the island since its discovery, faiths which understood their customs and held services in Spanish.

In many ways, accepting Southern Baptist doctrine was to reject family ties and heritage, a difficult decision because many on the island resented their U.S. Commonwealth status and sought independence.

As time passed, barriers slowly crumbled. Today, only six percent of all Puerto Ricans favor independence. And Southern Baptist missionaries realized a long time ago that services must be held in Spanish, Spanish customs must be adhered to in worship and church activities. Moreover, they grew to understand that for Southern Baptist work to become stable, natives must serve as missionaries and pastors.

Southern Baptist work in Puerto Rico has undergone a drastic change in size as well as in outlook. In 1981, Southern Baptists numbered only 3,000. Today, numbering more than 6,000, they are the fastest growing denomination on the island.

Many credit Ed Richardson, who became Puerto Rico Baptist Association's executive secretary in 1978, with the transformation. Despite Richardson's inability to speak Spanish, he is deeply devoted to training local leaders and he has restructured the association's organization, shifting many responsibilities from appointed missionaries to laypersons.

The six home missionaries serving on the island work out of the association's office in Rio Piedras but serve as pastors only when a crisis arises.

Central to the success of lay ministry development on the island is the Puerto Rico Baptist Theological Seminary. Miguel Soto, the first native Puerto Rican to be appointed a hom missionary, serves as its director. Richardson described the seminary as "the very heart of our plans for the future."

Throughout Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, Baptist congregations have many things in common. All struggle with problems of money and space. Land is a priceless commodity. And since most have little to spend, congregations must find unusual places to meet.

Puerto Rico Southern Baptists have adjusted well to makeshift facilities, perhaps because that's all most have known. In every church or mission, the services are jubilant, festive, full of thanksgiving and praise. They rejoice over small victories in jobs or family lives; they unite in prayers for sick or unchurched. Many are willing to give everything they have to see their church and association grow.

Southern Baptist work is reaching the stage of leadership by the "incargado, the layperson," said missionary Hiram Duffer. "Throughout the association, laypersons are giving sacrificially and doing everything they can to fill important leadership roles."

"We've really come a long way," agreed Richardson. "Even up to two or three years ago, people in the churches relied on the missionaries for everything. Now we have many training in our seminary; before long they'll be pastors and church leaders."

He smiled. "And when a problem arises, someone in the church will be able to meet the need. I might not even know there's a problem. If I do, it's already been solved."

Richardson tapped his fingers on the worn map which shows Baptist work on the island, a map he knows well. "I'd say there have been some big changes in Puerto Rico. Some mighty big changes. And I'd also have to say that I like those changes. I'm proud of them. I think we're headed in the right direction."

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(Adapted from the July-August issue of Missions/USA, the Home Mission Board's magazine)
(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press

'Wilderness Therapy' Gives
City Kids A Lesson In Living

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Taking eight inner-city youth backpacking for five days on a rough mountain trail helps define the word "challenge."

Christian Challenge Adventure (CCA), a special project sponsored by the Home Mission Board, transplants inner-city kids into a wilderness setting to help them discover their own worth, the worth of others and the value of a relationship with God.

Jim Gamble and Dianne Reel, trained outdoors experts, recently guided eight youth from Louisville's Jefferson Street Baptist Center through the rocky trails and muddy rivers of Daniel Boone National Forest in Kentucky.

Reel is a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and Gamble attends Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas.

The purpose of the hiking trips was "to get the kids out of the city and into a good learning environment in the wilderness," Reel said. "Then we introduced them to the gospel."

From the beginning campers discovered the importance of group cooperation. At the Red River they formed a human chain, making it easier to wade across; they helped each other with footing while descending steep mountain trails.

There were times when leaders were discouraged by campers' negative attitudes. Explained one member of the group, "most city kids are brought up to believe they shouldn't trust anyone. It's a matter of survival."

But survival on the trail depended on group interdependence and trust. "By the end, we were volunteering to help each other" said another member. "We didn't have to be told."

Trail life demanded each member take responsibilities for the group. Daily tasks included cooking meals on a camp stove and setting up and taking down camp. The group left the forest the way they found it.

Gamble described the trail as "a microcosm of life. We concentrated on solving problems out there which parallel problems of everyday living. Then we applied spiritual truths to situations the youngsters faced."

In addition to learning about camping, the campers learned about God. They studied the Good News Bible, many reading a Bible for the first time. By the end of the trip, one girl made a decision to become a Christian, and, in the midst of God's creation, others discovered the reality of a loving Creator.

CCA's approach is similar to that offered by Christian High Adventure, directed by HMB consultant Chuck Clayton.

Clayton and Bill Berry, director of the Graffiti Baptist Ministry in New York City, developed CCA to make "wilderness therapy" available to disadvantaged youth.

"CCA can be used to break through to otherwise unreachable kids," Berry explained. "Southern Baptists need fresh, innovative ways in dealing with this type of youth, and Christian Challenge Adventure is one way that works."

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(Adapted from July-August issue of Missions/USA, the Home Mission Board's magazine)
(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press

Canadian Baptist Leaders
Talk To SBC Study Group

By Dan Martin

DALLAS (BP)--Recognition "would definitely benefit us," a Canadian Southern Baptist pastor told a select SBC Study Committee, but added, "we don't want something selfish for ourselves."

Eugene A. Laird, pastor of Royal Heights Baptist Church in Delta, British Columbia, was one of five Baptist leaders who addressed the second meeting of the 21-member committee studying the implication of seating messengers from the 62 SBC-affiliated churches in Canada.

The committee, chaired by Fred Roach, a Dallas homebuilder, was appointed following the 1983 meeting of the SBC in Pittsburgh, after C.B. Hogue, pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church of Tulsa, Okla., made a motion to change the constitution of the SBC to allow seating of messengers from the Canadian churches. Currently, membership in the SBC is restricted to churches in the United States and its territories.

The motion was amended to refer the matter to the 21-member study committee composed of four persons each from the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Executive Committee and Northwest Baptist Convention and five at-large members.

"There is no question but that seating would benefit us," Laird said. "But we have read seating might damage mission work in other parts of the world. My first desire is to see us seated, but we are not so myopic that we would want only what would benefit us."

Laird, who moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, 10 years ago "with no invitation, no salary, no support, no recognition," to begin work where no SBC congregation existed, said Canadian Southern Baptists often "claim sonship when the convention won't confess fatherhood."

Prior to coming to the meeting, Laird said he talked with several other Southern Baptist pastors in Canada, and said their feeling is that "we don't know if it is wise to be seated as messengers." He added the motion to seat Canadian messengers "was a "beautiful, beautiful, thoughtful gesture, but "some of us might not have initiated it at this time. Maybe later, but probably not now."

When asked if action to decline to seat Canadian Southern Baptists would hurt the work there, Laird responded: "One of the things that concerns me the most is that we would go to the convention floor and messengers would vote 'no.' As long as there is no 'yes' vote, that is okay, but if there is a 'no' vote, then that would hurt us the most."

In addition to hearing Laird, the committee also heard from three representatives of the Baptist Federation of Canada, a representative of the Baptist World Alliance and SBC President James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas.

R. Michael Steeves, executive minister of the BFC, told the committee the federation is composed of two conventions and two unions, three of which are English-speaking and the other French speaking.

"We are an evangelical denomination, deeply committed to winning Canada to Christ and discipling them in the local church he said," but admitted the 1981 census showed the largest growth in religious statistics was among those who indicated no religious preference.

"Clearly, there is a large field of unreached souls in this country and it is equally clear Canadian Baptists do not have the resources to complete the task by themselves. We need all the help we can get," he said.

Steeves noted, however, that the proposed action of seating Canadian messengers in the SBC "does raise the possibility of the SBC becoming an international denomination in direct competition with the ministry of the Baptist World Alliance."

William H. Jones, editor and manager of the BFC publication, The Canadian Baptist, was more specific when he referred to the development of SBC churches in Canada as the "Southern Baptist invasion," and said "one of the possibilities" of seating messengers is that "Canadian Baptists would withdraw both from the North American Baptist Fellowship and the BWA."

Douglas N. Moffat, executive minister of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, told the committee he wanted "to say one thing. I want it recorded and noted that in 1983 a man from a small denomination issued a challenge to a big denomination. That challenge is to help us forge a partnership and do the job together."

He added that "whatever conclusions...decisions" the committee makes, they should take no action which would "scuttle, compromise or jeopardize a partnership with your brothers and sisters in Canada."

Moffat also said Canadian Baptists "recognize we have not met the challenge" of evangelizing the nation, but pointed out Canadian Baptists "never considered going to Louisiana or North Carolina or South Carolina to augment your work."

Archibald R. Goldie, associate secretary of the BWA, told committee members the BWA is "concerned about the fellowship" within the world-wide organization of 127 Baptist groups in 140 nations.

However, he said the BWA "makes no pretense to be in competition with a convention. We are a fellowship for the mutual support of one another."

Goldie, a former member of the Baptist Federation of Canada, said the "issue is not an easy one for you," and added: "Canadian Baptists do not have an exclusive prerogative to preach the gospel in Canada. That task goes to whomever God has raised up. I don't think anyone can say God has given them an exclusive prerogative to preach an exclusive gospel in an exclusive piece of real estate."

He said he would be "bitterly disappointed" if the BFC were to withdraw from NABF and BWA if SBC messengers opt to give full membership to Canadian Southern Baptists.

In his presentation to the committee, Draper traced the process by which they were selected, and said: "The convention did not want a committee which would come out with a predetermined conclusion. If messengers had wanted that, they would have voted in Pittsburgh."

Draper told them a "simple 'yes' or 'no' answer will not be sufficient...and it could tend to polarize the convention. You must make a substantive recommendation...one which can be acted upon by the convention."

He encouraged them to "be extremely careful" in coming up with their recommendation, which he said must be "interpreted in the light of the great commission" and consider "what is best for the Southern Baptist Convention."

Reflecting on the presentation by Canadian Baptists, he said: "Greater cooperation should be a desired goal, but it is not our only consideration."

Following the day-long discussion, chairman Roach told the committee he felt they were "coming toward a consensus" and that he believes the group "will come up with a unanimous recommendation."

He called another meeting for Feb. 10, in Dallas, and asked committee members to submit proposed reports to him. "The Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board will be working together to develop a joint proposal," he said.

Roach said he also will receive reports from the Baptist Sunday School Board, the SBC Annuity Board on retirement benefits, and from legal experts on the constitutional and other legal aspects of seating messengers from Canada.

"Then, we will form a committee to begin the drafting process," he said, explaining he plans to hold regional sub-committee meetings on the proposal before coming together for what is hoped will be the final meeting of the study committee.