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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
400 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

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C-N

84-91

Baylor President Refutes
Ziglar Attack On University

By Craig Bird

WACO, Texas (BP)—Zig Ziglar's election as first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention doesn't make him knowledgeable about Baylor University, according to Herbert Reynolds, president of the Baptist school.

The June 17 issue of the Dallas Times Herald carried an interview with Ziglar in which the motivational speaker criticized two Baylor professors: a Mormon teaching in the Spanish-Portuguese department and a religion professor who, he said, believes evolution played a part in the creation of the world.

Reynolds, in a formal statement released by the Baylor public relations office, answered the charges while discounting Ziglar's qualifications as critic.

Ziglar has "never been on the Baylor campus to my knowledge," Reynolds said, but is part of a "priestly and self-anointed group" which "is smart enough to know that if they can control the educational system of Baptists and our publishing houses, they can be effective in producing the kind of clones which will make willing followers of demagogues who seek to change the essential characteristics of the Southern Baptist denomination."

Ziglar, who says he believes the Bible, "from Genesis to maps" has not been a voting messenger to a national, state or association Southern Baptist convention prior to this year, according to the Times Herald, but said he decided to become involved recently after learning about the Baylor professors.

He said he was asked to run for vice-president of the SBC four to five months ago by a member of the inerrancy group within the convention led by Paige Patterson of Dallas and Paul Pressler of Houston. Not long afterwards, he said, he was told, "I was the first choice of Dr. Stanley" as a running mate.

Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Atlanta, was elected president of the SBC on the first ballot. Patterson is an associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Dallas where Ziglar is an active lay member.

Ziglar urged that Phillip Johnson, a Mormon who has taught at Baylor since 1977, be removed from teaching duties. "I think since they've made the colossal mistake of putting him on tenure, he needs to be put in a caretaker position or in the registration office, away from students," Ziglar said in the interview.

Reynolds defended both Johnson and the unnamed religion professor, saying Ziglar "is a political candidate in terms of our convention" whose concern is "to identify issues to attempt to discredit not only Baylor but our Baptist-related agencies."

A Baylor policy against hiring Mormons went into effect in 1982 after the Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board deemed Mormonism a "cult," Reynolds said.

"We are not going to treat this individual to be the totality of Mormonism," he continued. "He has never in anyway tried to share his belief with anyone and he possesses a letter of instruction from me that any such action would result in action being taken against him.

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"The best witness we can be is to treat him in a Christian fashion. He doesn't have a thing to do with religion. No Southern Baptists applied for the position."

Reynolds also said Johnson, a Phi Beta Kappa scholar, is very much respected by his students and faculty colleagues.

"If Baylor, as a 140-year-old institution with 60,000 alumni, 10,000 students, 1,500 faculty and staff and the undergirding of three million Texas Southern Baptists is not strong enough to prevail in the face of one single individual whose activities have been circumscribed, we are not as strong as I fully believe us to be," he added.

The religion professor, "who has spoken of evolution in relation to God's revelation of His creation, has been a deeply committed Christian since he was a boy," Reynolds said. "He has never stated or alluded to the fact that there is any creation apart from God and makes it very clear he is committed to 'the Bible as God's Holy Scripture given to us by revelation and inspired by the Holy Spirit.'"

He and all members of the Baylor religion department voluntarily signed the Baptist Faith and Message in October 1979, Reynolds said.

Ziglar told the Times Herald he is convinced he has an important role to play in the 14-million member SBC. "Mostly I see myself as the individual who will reach the lay people," he said. "I think God has put me in this position for this purpose."

Reynolds said, "I don't think he (Ziglar) is going to have an impact on Baylor. He's a Johnny-come-lately on the Baptist scene," but if the "group" of which he is a part is successful, Reynolds warned, "our (Baptists') historical commitment to the priesthood of the believer would be replaced by the belief that we need a priestly group of inerrant interpreter because the rest of us are not considered sufficiently capable of reading the Word of God for ourselves and responsible for our own souls on that day of judgment when each of us must stand alone before Him."

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BTC-N

Conferees Narrow Senate
Clergy Housing Rider

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press
6/25/85

WASHINGTON (BP)--Conferees reconciling House and Senate versions of a large deficit reduction package significantly narrowed the scope of a Senate amendment extending housing tax breaks for clergy and military personnel.

The Senate amendment addressed a 1983 Internal Revenue Service ruling (Rev. Rul. 83-3) which disallowed ministers normal real estate tax and mortgage interest deductions to the extent these housing expenses were paid by tax-exempt housing allowances. The Senate language would have prevented IRS from implementing the ruling before Jan. 1, 1986 and from issuing any similar ruling in the case of military housing before the same date.

However, conferees drafting the final report for the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 agreed to extend the effective date for the clergy housing ruling to Dec. 31, 1985, only for those ministers who owned and occupied or had a contract to purchase a home before Jan. 3, 1983.

For other ministers, Rev. Rul. 83-3 which reversed long-standing IRS policy on clergy housing, took effect July 1, 1983. IRS had earlier extended until Jan. 1, 1985, the effective date for clergy in their houses or who had a contract to purchase houses before Jan. 3, 1983.

Conferees also dropped the Senate language on military housing. IRS has not issued a ruling on military housing but has the issue under consideration.

Meanwhile, the Senate has added a broader clergy/military housing amendment to its version of the 1985 Defense Department Authorization bill now in conference with the House.

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Sponsored by Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the Senate amendment would by law bar IRS from implementing Rev. Rul. 83-3 or similar rulings for both clergy and military personnel.

Warner told colleagues his amendment "merely serves to make explicit the longstanding intent of Congress for our service people and clergy."

In pushing for Senate passage of his amendment which was agreed to by a voice vote, Warner argued that the Treasury could experience a net loss of revenue as a result of Rev. Rul. 83-3 because the increase in tax deductible contributions by church members "may well exceed the new tax revenue gained from the minister."

Chances of the Warner amendment surviving in conference remained uncertain due to some opposition to the idea in the House, according to an aide to the Virginia lawmaker.

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Education Commission
Adopts Record Budget

By Lonnie Wilkey

Baptist Press
6/25/84

*Ed. Comm.
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DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (BP)—The Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention approved a record budget for 1984-85, despite an increase of only 2.79 percent in Cooperative Program receipts.

Action took place in the commission's annual meeting at Daytona Beach, Fla.

Commission members approved a budget of \$490,280, a 6.2 percent increase over the previous year's total of \$461,500. Additional income will come from the sale of publications, interest-bearing accounts and the current reserve funds.

In other action, the commission approved an expenditure of up to \$25,000 from the reserve fund to cover additional moving expenses, including furniture and draperies to the new SEC building currently under construction. The anticipated date for the move to 901 Commerce Street in Nashville, Tenn., is January 1985.

Commission members also adopted budget amounts of \$75,000 for the National Congress on Leadership at Gatlinburg, Tenn., June 4-7, 1986. Of this amount, approximately \$30,000 will come from the Education Commission budget; \$10,000 from the commission's reserves; \$10,000 from registration fees, and \$25,000 to be raised by the funding subcommittee of the steering committee for the National Congress on Leadership.

Thomas S. Field, president emeritus of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., and president of the Missouri Heart Institute, Columbia, Mo., was elected chairman of the Education Commission for 1984-85.

Other officers are: John E. Johns, president of Furman University, Greenville, S.C., vice-chairman, and Tom J. Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Brentwood, Tenn., secretary.

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Brazilian Farmers Reap Crops
As Five Year Drought Eases

FMB-N

Baptist Press
6/25/84

FORTALEZA, Brazil (BP)—Many farmers in northeastern Brazil are reaping their first substantial crop in years after soaking rains this spring indicated a possible end to the country's worst drought in more than a century.

The rains, which this year arrived four months later than the traditional start of the wet season, were expected to end in June, right on schedule for the traditional six months of dry weather.

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At the height of the drought, the infant mortality rate climbed to 50 percent in some dry pockets and bands of starving rural families abandoned their homes to search for food in towns. The soil that once produced cotton, corn and black beans became a seared expanse, void even of rats and lizards, which had either died or been eaten.

Baptists sent the area about \$1.5 million in relief funds during the past three years for projects related to a five-year drought. One state is the site for a massive \$3.1 million Living Water Project designed to bring irrigation, health care, community centers and new churches.

Rain started falling in April, spreading inland from the Atlantic coast. Now officials are calling the condition a "wet-drought." Though rivers are running full, reservoirs are still far below capacity.

The respite has given rural families a chance to grow crops. Farming is the only significant economic activity in much of the inland area.

Shirley Harner, a Southern Baptist missionary, said the corn season now is underway. "Prices have just started going down on corn," she noted. She and her husband, Fred, both from Illinois, live in the state of Ceara.

She said families are planting small gardens in beans, which is the basic food, and then corn, which also provides a lot of food for the family.

Harner said the drought is not completely broken, but the signs are good. "For the last year, we here in the city were without water for three days at a time until the last two months," she said. "But now they've stopped rationing the water, and we're getting it every day."

"They still say if we're not careful we might not have enough to carry us through the next year."

Buying water from tank trucks and going hungry have become common place for many during the last five years. All but one of the 141 townships in Ceara were in a state of emergency at the height of the drought.

At least 24 million Brazilians in an area more than twice the size of Texas have been affected. Doctors predicted 250,000 people would die from problems associated with dehydration and starvation before the drought ran its course.

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South Carolina Baptists
Rebuilding Homes

By Larry Crisman

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6/25/84

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)—South Carolina Baptists have begun construction of 26 houses in an effort to help families in five South Carolina towns whose homes were destroyed by tornadic-type storms which swept through the state in late March.

Ben J. Connell, director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department, said volunteers are building houses in McColl, Bennettsville, Kershaw, Westville and Winnsboro.

"We are already building 26 houses from scratch," Connell said. "We wanted to make sure the 75 families, whose houses were destroyed in the storm and who needed help in rebuilding, have adequate shelter. We also are putting roofs on numerous other houses, as well as making other repairs."

Connell said relief efforts are being coordinated by the Brotherhood and missions departments of the South Carolina Baptist Convention in Columbia.

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Hubert Line, layman from St. Matthews, is leading the work of Southern Baptist volunteers. To date, some 50 South Carolina Baptist churches have joined in the rebuilding work.

"We are rebuilding houses where they are needed," Connell said. "We also are renovating houses where such work is practical. We plan to help rebuild at least one church building for St. Luke's A.M.E. Zion in Marlboro County, northwest of McColl. We have helped repair two other churches. We plan to continue this activity as long as there are needs."

Other building efforts will continue into next year, he said.

In response to the needs of storm victims, the South Carolina Baptist Convention activated a Disaster Relief Fund in the Baptist Building in Columbia. So far, some \$117,000 has been contributed to the account.

"Every penny that comes into this account goes for direct aid to disaster victims," said Connell. "Nothing is taken out to cover administrative costs."

"When we rebuild a house, the individuals involved are asked to provide as much money as they can get toward payment of the materials," Connell explained. "They may get the money from various sources, such as insurance, loans, personal savings and such. In cases where families do not have money to pay for enough materials to complete the job, and as a last resort, money is taken from the convention's Disaster Relief Fund to pay bills for materials."

Connell said houses built by Baptists are "simple, rectangular structures with few frills, such as porches or carports."

"Our primary concern is to provide livable accommodations so that people will feel good about where they live," he said.

He explained rebuilding efforts began a few weeks after the tornadoes. Line, coordinator of volunteer ministries for the state convention's Brotherhood department, has been recognized as coordinator not only for the Brotherhood department but also for the American Red Cross, McColl Area Ministerial Alliance, Mennonite Disaster Services and the Christian Reform World Relief Committee.

Besides building, other help for victims includes the distribution of food and clothing through churches in areas hit by the storms and pastoral counseling and training, Connell said. The counseling is offered by Baptist pastors and agency personnel in the state.

Connell identified the biggest need as manpower. He said anyone wanting to volunteer to help with residential construction should contact him in the Baptist Building in Columbia. The telephone number is (803) 765-0030, ext. 257.

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Southern Baptists Top
List Of Gifts To ABS

By Michael Tutterow

HMB-N
Baptist Press
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NEW YORK (BP)—Southern Baptists ranked highest in gifts to the American Bible Society during 1983, according to a report released here.

Convention churches contributed \$324,377 during 1983, the largest denominational contribution total. Gifts for last year, however, fell \$235 from 1982 SBC total of \$324,612. Only three other denominations contributed more than \$100,000 each.

Two million total of all gifts to the ABS by churches in the United States during 1983. copies of the scriptures during 1983 in more than 180 countries and territories.

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