

**(BP)****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

August 13, 1984

84-114

FMB-N

German Baptists Issue  
'Declaration of Guilt'

By Johnni Johnson Scofield

HAMBURG, West Germany (BP)—Baptists in the Federal Republic of Germany have for the first time made an official "declaration of guilt" for their behavior during the Hitler regime.

More than 4,000 European Baptists from 25 countries listened in hushed silence as Guenter Hitzemann, president of the West German Baptist Union, read the brief declaration at the European Baptist Federation Congress meeting in Hamburg, West Germany.

"At that time, notwithstanding, there were among us those who detected the real nature of that regime, who warned against it and opposed courageously the injustice," he read. "Nevertheless, we did not publicly join the strife nor the sufferings of the Confessing church, and failed to withstand more consciously the violations of divine commandments and injunctions."

The Confessing church formed in 1934 with representatives from Lutheran, Reformed and United (including some Lutheran and Reformed) churches who refused to accept the religious ideas and policies of Nazi rule. After World War II, in October 1945, the Confessing church issued what has become known as the "Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt."

"Through us inestimable suffering was inflicted on many peoples and lands," it said in part. "Indeed we have fought for long years in the name of Jesus Christ against the spirit that found horrible expression in the National Socialist regime of force, but we charge ourselves for not having borne testimony with greater courage, prayed more conscientiously, believed more joyously, and loved more ardently."

The Baptist Union declaration, adopted by the union's council a day before the start of the Aug. 1-5 European Baptist Federation Congress, emerged as the union reviewed the 150 years of German Baptist history the congress was helping celebrate.

"We must not omit the disconcerting period of time of oppression under the National Socialist government," Hitzemann read. "Not only through but also among our people much injustice came to pass. In this connection, shame and grief fill us, especially when we consider the persecution and the mass extermination of the Jewish people."

"Being conscious of this, our nation's guilt, we remain dependent on God's forgiveness.... We, the German Baptist Union, are humbled by having been subordinated often to the ideological seduction of that time, in not having shown greater courage in acknowledging truth and justice. Even after the collapse of the Hitler regime, only a few individuals—but never the Baptist Union—took a stand to the aforementioned events," he continued.

"As people of a generation who experienced only a part or nothing of that time, we nevertheless see ourselves involved in the guilt of our nation and of our denomination and take part in carrying it," he read. "We also confess this before you, our brothers and sisters of the European Baptist Unions."

Later in the week, resolutions committee chairman David Russell, Great Britain, read a response he drafted with Peter Barber, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Scotland.

"As we listened (to the West German declaration) we became all the more aware that the burden of history lies heavily upon us, but at the same time that there is mercy and forgiveness through the cross of Christ," Russell read.

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"As brothers and sisters in Christ we join our fellow German Baptists in their earnest prayers, knowing that we also stand in need of the mercy and grace of God. We see all the more clearly our need to be vigilant and not to be seduced by the subtle influences that make for evil and war and to pursue with determination the things that make for peace."

After reading the statement, Russell invited German and non-German Baptists in the auditorium to stand and shake hands with those around them. "I think that, in this moment, a very dark page of history has passed," he said. "Let us never take it up again."

The congress focused on an injunction of Jeremiah in its theme, "Seek the Welfare of the City," as Baptists from Eastern and Western Europe faced contemporary challenges and recalled the work of pioneer pastor Johann Gerhard Oncken.

The Oncken connection made Hamburg the most appropriate site for the 1984 meeting. There, 150 years ago, Oncken and six fellow Christians were baptized in the Elbe River. At Easter this year the Johann Gerhard Oncken Church celebrated the event.

The congress theme was developed from an Oncken statement that Christians are to work "for the honor of God and the welfare of the people."

Oncken's own compassionate service on behalf of the people of Hamburg is credited with gaining acceptance for the free church movement and for evangelistic outreach which spread the Baptist message—one faith, one Lord, one baptism—across the continent.

Addresses, study groups and resolutions during the meeting, which is held every five years, focused primarily on social ministries and ethical concerns among European Baptists.

Resolutions included calls for stronger relationships between the Baptist unions of Europe, for peace and nuclear disarmament initiatives, and a ban on the use of torture by governments.

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C-N

Cooperative Program Hits  
\$10 Million Mark Again

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
8/13/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The second \$10 million month in Cooperative Program history has boosted the national unified budget of the Southern Baptist Convention to \$90.6 million after 10 months of the fiscal year.

July receipts for the worldwide mission and educational programs of the SEC were \$10,030,979, the second highest one-month figure in the 59 year history of the Cooperative Program. Last January's mark of \$10,233,923 is the leader.

The July 1984 figures represent an 83 percent increase in five years. July 1979 contributions were \$5,503,55.

The 38 Southern Baptist state conventions which voluntarily support the national programs have pushed the Cooperative Program to four of its five highest months since January. March (\$9.621 million) is the third highest month and June (\$9.444 million) is fifth. January 1983 (\$9.541) is fourth.

After 10 months of the 1983-84 fiscal year, the national Cooperative Program is 6.29 percent (\$5,664,372 million) ahead of the same period in 1982-83. Even though the figures are well head of the present inflation rate income is likely to fall short of budget income.

In order to underwrite the 1983-84 budget of \$114.5 million, contributions would have to average more than \$11.8 million in August and September, the final months of the fiscal year.

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The mission boards of the Southern Baptist Convention stand to lose the most since the vast majority of Cooperative Program contributions are budgeted to them. The Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., will lose about \$1 for each \$2 the budget is not funded and the Home Mission Board in Atlanta will lose roughly \$1 for each \$5 of budget shortfall.

None of the 38 state conventions are in the top 10 in both dollar giving and percentage increase over last year as the newer of "pioneer" conventions continue to be percentage leaders and the Southern states continue to be the total dollar leaders.

Arkansas, Kentucky and Illinois are the only conventions which have contributed more than \$1 million to the national Cooperative Program while increasing gifts more than 10 percent from 1982-83. Arkansas is seventh in percentage increase (10.4) with total gifts of \$3,327,788; Kentucky is ninth (10.09) at \$3,949,118; and Illinois is eighth (10.31) with \$1,237,917.

Kansas-Nebraska is the percentage increase leader (32.51) and Texas is the total dollar leader at \$15,961,473—almost 18 percent to the total Cooperative Program receipts. Other increase leaders are: Nevada (2—20.1), Hawaii (3—17.94), Arizona (4—14.3), Colorado (5—12.25), Ohio (6—10.41) and Michigan (10—9.15).

Other total dollar leaders are: Georgia (2—\$7,571,282), Florida (3—\$7,072,972), North Carolina (4—\$6,293,392), Alabama (5—\$6,096,564), Oklahoma (6—\$6,048,914), Tennessee (7—\$5,359,810), South Carolina (8—\$5,071,590), Mississippi (9—\$4,596,212) and Louisiana (10—\$4,196,110).

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BTC-N

Congress Passes Tougher  
Child Support Legislation

Baptist Press  
8/13/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—Both houses of Congress have unanimously approved get-tough legislation aimed at parents who try to avoid court-ordered child support payments.

The bill strengthens enforcement of child support laws by allowing automatic withholding of wages from a parent who fails to make a support payment after 30 days. It also provides for intercepting federal and state tax refund checks to cover past due payments.

Another key provision, interstate enforcement of child support orders, will make it more difficult for a parent to dodge support payments by simply moving to another state.

The bill also provides protection for all families, not just those eligible for welfare. Studies indicate neglect of child support payments is a growing problem at all social levels.

According to Census Bureau estimates, children in one-parent homes lose a total of \$4 billion a year in unpaid child support. Government figures indicate only 60 percent of all families with single parents have been awarded child support, and less than half that number—about 28 percent—receive the amount due them.

In 1982, there were an estimated 8.4 million women who were single heads-of-household with at least one child under 21 living at home.

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FMB-F

Julia Lowe, Oldest Missionary,  
Celebrates 100th Birthday

By Mary Jane Welch

Baptist Press  
8/13/84

CHEVY CHASE, Md. (BP)—Julia Lowe's mother feared her daughter wouldn't live through the voyage to China in 1908. She not only lived, but, as an emeritus Southern Baptist missionary, celebrated her 100th birthday Aug. 10.

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Her mother also feared Mrs. Lowe would have a baby in China. She had four, and she gathered with her three daughters, eight grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and other relatives, totaling more than 40, to celebrate the day after her birthday. Her son, Jackson, died a few months ago.

George Hays, the Foreign Mission Board's director for East Asia, and his wife joined the crowd to present the board's oldest missionary a plaque, a framed photograph of Mrs. Lowe made shortly before her birthday and a single red rose, "for the first century."

After his presentation, family members brought in a birthday cake saying "Mema," with three candles, which her great-grandchildren blew out for her.

Mrs. Lowe retired before some of today's missionaries were born, and remembers younger emeritus missionaries, such as Cornelia Leavell, former missionary to Hong Kong, and Mary Lucile Saunders, former missionary to the Philippines, as the children of her fellow China missionaries.

Although she hasn't been on the mission field in more than 40 years, she stills prays daily for missionaries and she is active in the Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church in nearby Washington. In fact, she's associate teacher of her Sunday school class, which includes Reba Campbell, the daughter with whom she lives in Chevy Chase.

But her church membership is still with First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., where she lived until her children decided she should no longer live by herself. She lived in Nashville longer than any other place in her life and wants people "to know I love Tennessee still."

Mrs. Lowe uses a walker to get around with the help of her daughters, who love to brag on her age. In a shopping mall in Montgomery, Ala., one young man was especially eager to get the answer to the question everyone asks: "What do you have to do to live such a long life?"

"I told him never in my life had I had a glass of any kind of alcoholic beverage, and I have never smoked a cigarette. But I said, 'That's not what has given me the long life. It is God that does it,'" she says. "That's what I tell everybody. It's the Lord. It's because it's his will. I belong to him."

Although she's reluctant to talk about her early background—she seems to feel nothing before China rates mention—Julia Lowe admits she's a native New Yorker, a northern Methodist who fell in love with a Southern Baptist she met at a Bible conference. Less than a month after their wedding, she and Clifford Lowe sailed for China.

Thus began one of the happiest experiences she's ever had—to be able to tell the Chinese people "there is a living God who loved them and a Savior who died to save them."

They landed in Hong Kong on Dec. 24, 1908, "a marvelous Christmas present," she says. From there they went to Macao, where they were thrilled to get their first glimpse of the little Baptist church during its Christmas service. "Of course, we didn't understand a word of the service," says Mrs. Lowe, "but we understood the smiles of the people."

The Lowes went out as missionaries for an independent Baptist society, but within two years the society merged with the Southern Baptist mission and the Lowes headed to Wuchow as Southern Baptist missionaries. The years that followed raise doubts about current beliefs that stress erodes health and longevity. During the next 30-plus years, Julia Lowe lived in a country touched by two world wars and the ferment of multiple revolutions which eventually ended in Communist takeover in 1949.

From Wuchow, the couple moved to Kweilin to start Southern Baptist mission work there, and then to Shanghai to help with publication and radio ministries. Mrs. Lowe has vivid memories of those years.

On an afternoon walk in Kweilin, they found the land they wanted for a mission compound. The Plum Garden was a beautiful walled piece of property where they picked wild violets. But the Chinese told them they would never be able to buy it because it belonged to a whole clan.

The Lowes were undaunted. They simply prayed for the property and eventually were able to buy it. Clifford Lowe built the house which later became home to another China missionary, Baker James Cauthen, future executive director of the Foreign Mission Board.

More missionaries joined them in Kweilin; churches, schools and medical work grew. Mrs. Lowe started a girls' school with eight girls and a couple of women. They rented a house on the city's main street for a bookstore and church. A woman in Knoxville, Tenn., asked her father for her inheritance early so the Kweilin missionaries could purchase a chapel across the street from the bookstore.

Lowe, who died in 1963, shared his wife's zeal for telling the Chinese people about Jesus. One evening during supper, the family heard eight shots at the criminal execution site outside the city near their home. The next day when Lowe went out, he saw a soldier with a Chinese woman who was lifting each body to look at the face.

"Your son?" he asked. "Yes," she said.

"You know, he said he was glad he went to China even if it were just for telling that one woman about a living God who loved her," says Mrs. Lowe.

During much of their time in China, Lowe held street evangelistic meetings most evenings. Mrs. Lowe especially remembers one of the Chinese preachers who worked with him in those services. Liu Huantin was a man who "just went around talking about Jesus to people and led many people to Christ." But he was also a short man and had to stand in his sock feet in a chair when he preached.

Lowe noticed that his co-worker always prayed at the meetings with his eyes open. When he asked him why, Liu Huantin answered that the Bible instructed him to watch and pray. But then he admitted the real reason. He'd found that if he closed his eyes to pray, his shoes disappeared. After losing several pairs of shoes that way, he decided to "watch and pray."

After 18 years in Kweilin, the Lowes moved to Shanghai, where Lowe worked with publications and then became manager of a Christian radio station. Mrs. Lowe taught at Eliza Yates Girls' School. They were on vacation in Tsingtao when the Japanese invaded Shanghai.

When Lowe returned to the city to check on their home, the Japanese first refused to let him visit it. When he finally did, he learned that the home had been bombed and all the furniture taken except Mrs. Lowe's sewing machine cabinet. Even the sewing machine had been removed. The Japanese soldier accompanying him asked as they approached the house, "Your house?" Lowe said yes. "I'm sorry," said the Japanese soldier.

The Lowes moved to a house in another section of the occupied city, refurnished it and returned to America. "We came home on furlough in 1940 expecting fully to go back. I had dishes in the dish closet and pictures on the wall, but we never did get back," says Mrs. Lowe.

The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor just before they were slated to return. By that time hostilities ended Lowe was too close to retirement age to justify the expense of their return. They did "deputation" work, speaking in churches and Baptist meetings until their official retirement in 1948.

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

CORRECTION--In (BP) story, "Missions Week Participants Challenged to Let Light Shine," mailed 8/8/84, in second paragraph, third line, please put a period after the word "believe," delete the word "because" and insert "In Romania" before sentence beginning "'There is no difference...'"

In fourth paragraph please end direct quote after "'God have mercy!'" Rest of paragraph is an indirect quote which should be attributed to Moldovan.

Thanks,  
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AUG 3 1984

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Cotton Patch Gospel

Begins National Tour

By Michael Tutterow

ATLANTA (BP)--Cotton Patch Gospel, the toe-tapping, hand-clapping musical which depicts the life of Christ and his followers in a contemporary South Georgia setting, began its national tour here amid rave reviews.

The tour, sponsored by the Dallas Theatre Center, opened in Atlanta's Alliance Theatre, drawing sell-out crowds. Cotton Patch is slated to wind its way through Baptist strongholds after leaving Atlanta in mid-August.

Based on "The Cotton Patch Versions of Matthew and John" by Clarence Jordon, a Southern Baptist theologian who established Koinonia Farm near Americus, Ga., the two hour musical captures on stage the life of Christ as if he had been born in the modern deep South. The drama is basically a one-man show with the lead character, the narrator Matthew, portraying more than 30 different roles.

Cotton Patch Gospel weaves an upbeat mix of country-western and bluegrass music, performed by a quartet called "The Cotton Pickers," through Jordon's compelling adaptation of the miracles and parables of Jesus.

The musical, which broke theatre records in both Atlanta and Dallas when it first opened two years ago after highly-acclaimed performances in New York City, includes 18 songs by the late singer/songwriter Harry Chapin. He died in a car accident in New York one month before Cotton Patch opened there.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

Tom Key, a former Southern Baptist now active in the Episcopal Church, wrote the play and starred in the original cast. An all new cast will accompany the musical on the national tour.

After the Atlanta run, the two-hour musical pushes on to Memphis, Tenn., for a three-day engagement Aug. 16-18.

Dates for performances of Cotton Patch Gospel are: Atlanta, Ga.--July 24-Aug. 11; Memphis, Tenn.--Aug. 16-18; Fort Smith, Ark.--August 21-26; Corpus Christi, Tex.--Aug. 29-Sept. 2.

During September the musical will make one-night appearances in Tifton, Ga., Anderson, S.C., Winston-Salem, Raleigh, and Charlotte, N.C., before beginning a tour of New England.

Cotton Patch Gospel also will run October 3-21 in St. Louis, Mo., and Oct. 25-26 in Savannah, Ga. Another company, starring Tom Key in the lead role, will perform the musical from August through the first half of October in Tulsa, Okla., before moving to Nashville, Tenn., for performances from the latter part of October through December.

Tentative performances have been slated for Denver, Colo., and Kansas City, Mo., in November and December, with Spring performances scheduled in Texas, Colorado, Louisiana, New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New England.