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# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 2, 1984

84-158

## Severe Drought Draws Response From Baptists Eager To Help

By Mary Jane Welch

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists showed their concern for drought victims in Africa by flooding the Foreign Mission Board with calls after television newscasts graphically depicted famine conditions in Ethiopia.

Oct. 30, after newspapers and television news told about starving Ethiopians, staffers in the board's human needs and Eastern and Southern Africa offices stayed busy fielding calls from Southern Baptists asking how they can help.

Callers were especially interested in helping people in Ethiopia, where Southern Baptist ability to help is limited, but they learned Southern Baptists are already helping in other African countries where drought is also critical.

During October alone, the Foreign Mission Board allocated almost \$600,000 for hunger and relief in Africa, much of it drought-related. High priority was given to food distribution in Kenya and Rwanda, other East African countries where drought has made food scarce.

In Ethiopia, Southern Baptists have only three missionary couples, one volunteer and one journeyman, said Jimmy Maroney, associate director for Eastern and Southern Africa. Their work permits do not allow them to travel outside the capital into the drought-stricken countryside. But he said they have been able to provide books for a veterinary school, repair a well in Addis Ababa and provide water storage tanks for a lepers' village.

Board President R. Keith Parks said he has great concern for the people of Africa and has experienced tremendous frustration at the political, geographic and economic realities that have made it difficult to "meet some of the needs that we are aware of." He praised the response many Americans are making through various organizations to provide help in the crisis.

Although Southern Baptist efforts to help in Ethiopia and other countries are sometimes hampered by government restrictions and a lack of roads to reach some of the worst-hit areas, Parks said the board is seeking to do what it can in countries stricken by drought.

"We are eager to channel all the funds Southern Baptists make available to help provide food and other assistance to these people whose needs are so great," Parks said.

Southern Baptist hunger and relief funds have already helped in a number of drought-stricken countries, such as Kenya, located just south of Ethiopia. Because rains have failed in some areas of Kenya for two years, Baptists drive in and unload their trucks into waiting arms, said Maroney. "We're just giving them the food to keep them alive."

Investigating needs in the Meru, Kenya area, missionary Darrell Wise saw children whose hair had turned red from malnutrition. He saw dead cattle on the side of the road and learned of one family who had eaten all their chickens. "This is only done as a last resort as flocks are a sign of wealth," he said.

The need for water, as well as food, is critical in drought areas, said Maroney. Southern Baptists have sponsored water projects in countries like Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Burundi. In some countries, such as Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) and Togo, water development has been combined with a range of development activities designed to prepare people to cope with the effects of drought before it hits.

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

In Mozambique, where 100,000 are believed to have died in 1983 because of the drought, Southern Baptist missionaries have been able to take in food from neighboring Malawi, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. An interracial team, including Southern Baptist missionaries Dwight and Lila Reagan, carried more than 15 tons of maize and other products financed by South African Baptists into Mozambique this summer.

One man told the South African Baptists his monthly ration of food lasted him only 15 days. The 300 loaves of bread they carried in were received as though made of gold, said Reagan. At one town near the capital, dozens of youthful arms reached up for each load.

On the other side of the continent, where the drought is also taking a terrible toll, Southern Baptists helped solve one of the toughest problems in famine relief by providing transportation for 5,000 tons of grain secured for Mali by a group of interested Baptists in the Washington area. There, as in most of Africa, poor roads and a shortage of good transport often make it difficult to get food from the ports to the people.

Because Southern Baptists have missionaries in so many African countries, they are in a better position than some agencies to secure transportation and plan grassroots distribution systems in rural areas, often through local Baptist churches.

Although many Southern Baptists want to send food directly to Africa, overseas conditions make money about the only feasible way to help, said Parks. Most governments have restrictions on importing food, and foods preferred by the African people often can be purchased closer to the areas where they are needed.

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Mahanes New Ohio President;  
National CP Upped To 40.5 Percent

Baptist Press  
11/2/84

PARMA, Ohio (BP)—Kenneth L. Mahanes, pastor of the state's largest church and the state's member of the SBC Executive Committee, has been elected president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.

Far Hills Baptist Church, Dayton, where he is pastor, leads the state in amount of Cooperative Program giving and is among the leaders in percentage.

Outgoing president Arthur L. Patterson of Mason counseled messengers before adjourning the convention: "Let's not have one note of division (in the coming year). Give everything you can to the Cooperative Program. Witness and win as many to Christ as you can."

The resolutions committee reported out only resolutions which thanked everyone who helped make the convention a success.

It was the third meeting in 30 years of Ohio convention history in the Cleveland metropolitan area. One of the Home Mission Board's Megafocus cities, Cleveland joins other areas of the state in a continued emphasis on planting new churches.

Ohioans adopted a record budget with the highest share ever to go to national and world missions through the SBC. From the 1985 Cooperative Program budget of \$2,756,493, the SBC will receive 40.5 percent. Ohio is adding one-half percent per year, moving toward a 50-50 division between state and SBC causes.

The Ohio convention is targeted to receive \$764,000 from various SBC agencies in the coming year, including \$690,000 from the Home Mission Board.

However, contributions from Ohio "to" SBC national programs through the Cooperative Program and the special offerings for Home and Foreign missions is projected to be more than \$1,844,000.

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Moore Reelected  
By Acclamation

DALLAS (BP)—Texas Baptists, in their annual convention in Dallas, approved a plan to begin 2,000 new churches by 1990, adopted a \$60 million Cooperative Program budget and reelected W. Winfred Moore of Amarillo president.

Messengers to the 99th annual Baptist General Convention of Texas agreed to support Mission Texas Emphasis, a plan to begin new works throughout the state and bring about spiritual awakening. To help support Mission Texas, Texas Baptists adopted a \$57 million basic budget plus a \$3 million challenge phase.

More than \$20 million (36.3 percent, an increase of 0.2 percent over last year) of the budget is allocated for worldwide Southern Baptist causes through the national Cooperative Program.

Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, was reelected without opposition for a second term as president of the Texas convention. He is thought to be the first president of the BGCT to be elected by acclamation for two terms.

In a press conference following his reelection, Moore refused to be labeled as the candidate of any political faction within the denomination, saying, "I would be concerned if anybody controlled the thinking of Southern Baptists. I didn't consider myself a candidate of anybody last year or this year."

At a press conference after his election, Moore told reporters Southern Baptist Convention President Charles Stanley has been too involved in the denominational dispute between the fundamentalists and moderates and should not be reelected next June when the SBC meets in Dallas. Also, Stanley has shown a lack of support for Southern Baptist agencies and institutions, he said.

Moore, who has been mentioned as a possible candidate to oppose Stanley added he does not consider himself a good candidate because he, too, has been politicized in the media.

Lester Collins, pastor of Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston, was elected first vice-president over Dallas layman Eli Rodriguez.

B O Baker, pastor of Plymouth Park Baptist Church, Irving, was elected second vice-president over Paul Sadler, pastor of Meadowbrook Baptist Church, Robinson.

In the wake of the resolution at the Southern Baptist Convention last year opposing the ordination of women, Texas Baptists adopted resolutions expressing appreciation for "women who labor for the Lord in the churches and places of special service" and saying ordination is a practice of local churches, rather than a denominational authorization for ministers.

Other resolutions called on Baptists to help alleviate hunger, encourage Baptists to seek to overturn the establishment of the United States diplomatic relations with the Vatican, urged the 69th Texas legislature to reject the legalization of pari-mutuel race track gambling and other gambling bills, encouraged Texas Baptists to develop prison ministries and to "work with state officials to curb prison violence, alleviate overcrowding and enhance rehabilitative efforts in this state."

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Claas, Dunn Condemn Abduction  
Of Central American Baptists

Baptist Press  
11/2/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—The chief executive officers of two Baptist groups, with memberships of 25 million and 27 million respectively, have condemned the recent kidnapping and arrest of fellow Baptists in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

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In a joint statement Nov. 2, Baptist World Alliance General Secretary Gerhard Claas and Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs Executive Director James M. Dunn decried the Oct. 5 kidnapping of Nicaraguan Baptist youth leader Marcia Chamorro and the Oct. 28 arrest of Baptist leader Miguel Castro Garcia of El Salvador.

"Such abductions of religious leaders mark gross violations of basic human rights, the primary of which is religious liberty," Claas and Dunn declared.

Chamorro was among a group of volunteer government teachers kidnapped by "contra" forces opposed to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. During the Oct. 5 incident, some 60 armed contras killed one of the teachers and kidnapped five others, including the 18-year-old Chamorro. The fate of the five remains unknown.

Castro, 30-year-old pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Salvador, reportedly was abducted by plainclothes policemen as he was driving home from church services Oct. 28. He was released two days later and immediately deported to Sweden.

The statement by Claas and Dunn, while not siding with any of the warring interests in the two troubled Central American nations, said they nevertheless: "...condemn categorically every act of terrorism aimed at persons whose sense of religious calling includes addressing the pressing social and moral issues of their societies. Civilized people everywhere surely mourn and protest the lot of those who are terrorized for the sake of conscience."

In addition, Claas and Dunn called on Baptists worldwide "to be constantly alert to such deprivation of basic human rights and to be prepared courageously to stand in the gap when religious liberty and other fundamental freedoms are denied fellow believers."

Claas and BWA Deputy General Secretary Denton Lotz protested the arrest of Castro in Oct. 29 telegrams to President Reagan, El Salvador President Jose Napoleon Duarte, U.S. ambassador to El Salvador Thomas Pickering and to El Salvador's ministry of defense.

The Baptist World Alliance, headquartered in Washington, is a worldwide organization of 35 million Baptists in 131 national Baptist groups.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, also located in Washington, is the church-state arm of nine North American Baptist bodies with a combined membership of 27 million.

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Famine Bill  
Dies In Congress

Baptist Press  
11/2/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—While Congress in its final days debated and raised the national debt and approved "pork barrel" legislation, a comprehensive African famine aid bill got lost in the shuffle.

H.R. 6203, the Africa Relief and Recover Act, called for emergency funds to aid millions of starving Africans suffering from drought-inflicted famine.

The legislation, which supporters hope to resurrect in January, would have provided \$450 million in food and non-food assistance to 28 African nations where approximately 150 million people face severe food shortages.

The U.S. Food for Peace program would have received \$265 million for food aid. Another \$185 million would have been directed toward assistance for health, transportation and refugee services, seeds and agricultural rehabilitation.

W. David Lockard, who directs hunger education and action for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, pointed out unless new legislation is approved, Africa will receive less U.S. food relief in 1985 than in 1984, even though conditions have worsened dramatically.

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"Despite almost daily reports of the incredible suffering in Africa and despite the efforts of many hunger activists in support of H.R. 6203, Congress elected not to act on this vital piece of legislation," Lockard said. "Millions of lives—most of them children—depend on swift appropriations by the new Congress in January."

In hardest-hit Ethiopia, about six million people face possible starvation. In Mozambique more than 100,000 people are already dead, and more would have perished if sizeable emergency supplies had not been distributed in 1984.

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SBC Agencies Plan  
Missions Curriculum

Baptist Press  
11/2/84

ALANTA (BP)—For the first time in history, representatives of five Southern Baptist Convention agencies planned a coordinated missions education curriculum for the local church during the years 1988-89.

"This is an historic meeting," said June Whitlow, associate executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, who presided over the meeting held at offices of the SBC Home Mission Board. During the two-day meeting, representatives of the Home and Foreign Mission Boards made presentations outlining their long-range plans for the years 1988-89.

Following the presentations, representatives of the Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission drafted proposed curriculum topics for members of their organizations to study during 1988-89, reporting the topics to the whole group for evaluation and discussion. The curriculum ideas were not finalized, however, since they must go through an established approval process at each agency.

Morton Rose, vice-president for church programs and services at the Sunday School Board, said such a meeting to develop a coordinated missions curriculum would not have been possible 20 years ago. He added that Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust emphasis has not only made it possible, but desirable and essential. "We've been doing a great job in missions and missions education for years, but we're only beginning to do what we really ought to be doing in coordinated curriculum development," he said.

Although each agency's curriculum will differ, the major coordinated emphasis on foreign missions for the years 1988-89 will be on leadership training and the major emphasis on home missions for the same period will be on cooperative participation in missions. About 75 representatives from the five agencies attended the two-day curriculum coordination meeting.

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Louisville Firm Gets  
Evangelism Contract

Baptist Press  
11/2/84

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has signed a two-year, \$198,000 contract with a communications firm which handled media relations for the recent presidential debates in Louisville, Ky., to develop a mass media campaign as a part of nation-wide simultaneous revivals scheduled in 1986.

The company, Jolly Communications, is a "Christian-oriented" communications firm headed by Alan G. Jolly, an accredited member of Public Relations Society of America and an active member of Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville, according to Robert L. Hamblin, evangelism vice-president for the Home Mission Board.

Preliminary consultation work on the simultaneous revivals has been done by Timerite, the SBC Radio-Television Commission subsidiary, but an overload of other responsibilities prevented Timerite from developing the media campaign, Hamblin said. Theme for the revivals scheduled March 16-April 27, 1986, will be "Good News America: God Loves You."

Hamblin said Jolly Communications will develop a three-tier mass media campaign for each state, offering options of a minimum, basic and desirable media campaign. "This will assure maximum benefit to all states, associations and convention agencies as we use mass media to tell the people of America the good news that God loves them," he explained.

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