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**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
 SBC Executive Committee  
 901 Commerce #750  
 Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
 (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

January 16, 1985

85-3

Hundreds Turn Out For  
 Wallace Memorial Service

By Erich Bridges

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Bill Wallace came home to Knoxville, Tenn. in January, half a century after he first left for China.

The ashes of the Southern Baptist missionary doctor, who died in a Chinese Communist prison in 1951, were brought to Knoxville by retired missionary Cornelia Leavell Jan. 11. Leavell and two other missionaries went to China in December to claim Wallace's remains with the assistance of Chinese government and church officials.

As Wallace came home, Knoxville remembered her native son, the subject of a best-selling Baptist book, "Bill Wallace of China," and a movie with the same title.

"Bill Wallace, a Christian hero, is coming home," declared the Knoxville News-Sentinel in an editorial Jan. 7. Old friends, family members, retired missionaries, local media and hundreds of people who never met him packed the large sanctuary of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church Jan. 12 to welcome him home.

Wallace, who worked for 15 years as a surgeon and administrator at Stout Memorial Hospital in Wuzhou (Wuchow), China, was arrested and falsely accused of espionage by the Communists in late 1950. He died in prison Feb. 10, 1951. Prison authorities claimed he hanged himself, but witnesses said his body bore signs of torture.

The Chinese death certificate Leavell brought to Knoxville with Wallace's remains stated only that the missionary's death resulted from "external injuries."

But people attending the memorial service Jan. 12 looked beyond Wallace's tragic death to celebrate the way he lived.

"I enjoyed playing tennis with William, but I enjoyed praying with him so much more," recalled W. W. Grogan, a close friend of Wallace's and former associate pastor at Broadway Baptist Church in Knoxville, the missionary's home church. "He was a man of prayer. He didn't talk very much to God. He let God talk to him. And he listened."

Grogan remembered the day 50 years ago when a crowd of well-wishers showed up at the train station to see Wallace leave for his first term in China. "He was astounded when he saw the crowd. He didn't know we were coming. He said, 'Who are all these people, Mac?' And I said, 'They're here to tell you how much they love you.' His lips quivered a little...and he said, 'They didn't have to do that.'"

Other folks from Broadway remembered the quiet young man who dreaded public speaking. All the church matrons labored to match him up with pretty young ladies, both before he went to China and during furloughs at home, recalled one Broadway veteran. But Wallace stayed single.

Everley Hayes, the missionary nurse who worked with Wallace during his last years and identified his body in prison, remembered a man who enjoyed fishing, boating, picnic and, most of all, the Chinese patients and medical workers he loved.

"Dr. Wallace was a martyr. Many think of martyrs as those long-faced people. But I knew a Dr. Wallace who was very much interested in everything around him," Hayes said. "He was a martyr not because he died in service but because he so identified with the Chinese people that they considered him one of them. And they loved him."

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James McCluskey, pastor of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church for almost 26 years, spoke of the missionary's ongoing impact on the church and community. "The remains of William Lindsey Wallace cannot be contained in a box in a grave in Knoxville, Tenn.," McCluskey said. "This church is the remains of his life."

The church didn't exist when Wallace last left Knoxville. Formed after his death, it now counts almost 3,000 members, including some 100 who have worked in short-term foreign mission projects. Several foreign missionaries now on the field emerged from the church.

"I can't imagine this church being the same if we had been called, for instance, the Merchants Road Baptist Church. This congregation would be here regardless of the name, but there's no way I can conceive of us being the same in spirit, commitment and mission emphasis without the rich heritage of Dr. Wallace as a motivating factor behind us," said McCluskey.

The Wallace legacy influences other churches in the area, too, like Cumberland Baptist Church, once a mission of Wallace Memorial. Cumberland was built on prime property once owned by a man who for years stubbornly refused to sell it to commercial developers. McCluskey visited the man and tried to convince him to sell, saying he would feel good about having a church built on his property rather than a supermarket or the like.

"Somehow I happened to mention that our church was named for Dr. Wallace," the pastor related. "When I did his whole countenance just changed and he began to cry. He said to me, 'That man saved my life in 1935. He operated on me at the old Knoxville General Hospital.' There was never any doubt after that that he would sell us the property."

Wallace's sister, Ruth Lynn Stegall, said all the hoopla surrounding the memorial activities probably would have embarrassed her shy brother. "But he would have loved the food and fun," she said. She still lives in Knoxville with her husband, Sydney.

Mrs. Stegall recalled the last time Wallace left Knoxville headed for China: "He said, 'I guess I'm the happiest person in the world. Sydney, take care of Ruth and Syd (their son), and I'll take care of whatever has to be done where I go.' That was the last thing he said when we went to the airport. So it was sweet that we were the three that went to the airport, and we were there when the body was returned."

The Stegalls privately buried Wallace's ashes beside his parents' graves at Greenwood Cemetery in the city. There was no graveside service, said Mrs. Stegall. "We just said goodbye."

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

BJCPA's John W. Baker  
Succumbs To Heart Attack

Baptist Press  
1/16/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—John W. Baker, general counsel and director of research services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, died Jan. 12 at his home in Bethesda, Md.

Baker, 64, considered one of the nation's foremost specialists in church-state law, had been ill since suffering a heart attack Christmas Day. He died of congestive heart failure.

Baker, born in Austin, Texas, Aug. 6, 1920, was graduated from the University of Texas (BA), the University of California, Berkeley (Ph.D.) and The American University, Washington (JD). He was a college political science professor 22 years. Teaching posts included Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas; University of California, Berkeley, University of Florida, Harvard University, Humboldt State College in California, and The College of Wooster, Ohio. At Wooster, he was chairman of the political science department.

During 1967-68, when he was a visiting scholar at The Brookings Institution, he was asked by the late C. Emanuel Carlson to join the staff of the Washington-based BJCPA, a post he assumed in 1969. He earned his law degree at American University's Washington College of Law in 1977.

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During the 15 years he was with the BJCPA, Baker wrote or filed 21 friend-of-the-court briefs at the U.S. Supreme Court and other federal panels. The latest was on Jan. 7 in a challenge to the Reagan administration's decision last year to establish full diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

He was a member of the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court, and of numerous professional societies. Baker was known for his ability to bring together attorneys representing churches and other interested parties in causes ranging from opposition to state-sponsored religious exercises in public schools to support for equal access legislation.

Baker, a member of First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md., was an active lay leader both in his own church and in the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

He acted on several occasions as an unofficial consultant to the resolutions committee at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, and at the time of his death was a trustee of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

He is survived by his wife, Mary E. Posey Baker; four sons, Robert S. of Beckley, W. Va., Frederick D. of San Francisco, Brian Lee and John P., both of Washington, and six grandchildren. Other survivors include his mother, Mrs. William Lloyd Baker of Fort Worth, Texas, a brother and four sisters.

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#### Missionaries Limit Activities After Colombian Drug Threats

Baptist Press  
1/16/85

BOGOTA, Colombia (BP)--Threats by Colombian drug dealers against U.S. diplomats and businessmen in the South American country have prompted Southern Baptist missionaries in Colombia to limit their activities.

"We have asked our missionaries in Colombia to stay at home as far as possible for the time being," said Bryan Brasington, Southern Baptist Foreign Board director for western South America, who recently returned to Richmond, Va., after a visit to Colombia.

Four Colombians were extradited to the United States Jan. 5 to face drug smuggling charges as part of the Colombian government's effort to counter the extensive drug trade.

The drug dealers have said they would retaliate and already have threatened U.S. Embassy personnel and U.S. businessmen in Colombia. A number of diplomatic personnel and businessmen have returned to the United States, Brasington reported.

Because of the unsettled conditions, the Foreign Mission Board has placed a temporary hold on sending new missionaries or volunteer groups to Colombia.

"Our missionaries are being very prudent and are taking necessary precautions," Brasington said. "At the same time, if it is at all possible, they plan to stay in Colombia in order to share the love of Christ with the people there."

A Jan. 5 robbery of a Southern Baptist missionary in Medellin is not believed to be related to the threats, Brasington said.

Richard Rolfe, from Longview, Wash., was robbed by six men at a dump site and later treated at a hospital for a cut on his head and right leg. About \$70 was taken, along with his watch. But the men did not take his vehicle because the keys fell to the ground during the scuffle.

While Brasington was in Colombia, he met with the government official in charge of granting visas. None has been granted to missionary personnel there for more than a year.

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Brasington, John Ratliff, administrator of the Colombian mission, and Lynn Terrill, the business manager, were told no new visas are being granted for religious work at the present. But visas will be allowed for new missionaries replacing others no longer in the country.

Five new missionary couples and a journeyman are waiting to join the 67 missionaries currently in Colombia.

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'Realistic Compassion'  
Urged In Hunger Aid

By David Wilkinson

Baptist Press  
1/16/85

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Reports of questionable use of funds by an international hunger relief organization are a "poignant reminder" Christians should get the facts before responding to any group's appeal for money, according to a Southern Baptist hunger specialist.

Robert Parham, director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission, said Christians must act with "realistic compassion" in response to the African hunger crisis.

News accounts on national television and in several daily newspapers have alleged International Christian Aid, a California-based organization, used misleading advertising in its fund-raising appeals for Africa and little if any of an estimated \$20 million raised in recent months has been allocated in direct aid to Ethiopia.

Reports also claim ICA in the past fiscal year spent only 41 percent of its solicitations on the hunger programs advertised. The remaining 59 percent was spent on promotional and administrative cost and other activities.

In response to any group's appeal for hunger relief funds, Christians should practice the "realistic compassion" called for in Jesus' admonition to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves," Parham advised. "To be 'wise as serpents' means to be hard-headed," he explained. "Hard-headedness refers not to mental mulishness but to mental toughness. It means we must think realistically before reaching for our checkbooks.

"To be 'innocent as doves' means to be soft-hearted. This does not imply blind romanticism but authentic compassion. It is to maintain a compassionate heart for the broken hearted and an open hand for the empty handed."

While evidence of unethical behavior by hunger relief groups "certainly does not help the cause of hungry people," Parham noted Southern Baptists can take heart in the confidence every dollar sent to hunger relief funds administered by the Foreign and Home Mission Boards is spent on the hungry.

"No money is spent on fund-raising appeals," Parham emphasized. "No money is spent on the administrative overhead. No money is spent on other hidden items.

"With this kind of program in place, there is no reason for any Southern Baptist to be exploited by flim-flam artists who think they can make a fortune by feeding off the hungry."

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Model Leans On God  
After Amputation

By Bonita Sparrow

Baptist Press  
1/16/85

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Anyone careless enough to call Ivy Gunter physically handicapped had better back off and bite their tongue.

Because Gunter, a fashion model who lost her right leg to cancer four years ago, will look you in the eye and correct your unfortunate choice of words. It's not physically handicapped, dear heart. The term is physically challenged. And don't you forget it.

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Gunter was in Fort Worth, Texas, recently to explain her reasoning and her positive outlook to Jimmy R. Allen and Rudy Hernandez, co-hosts of "Life Today," on the ACTS network. She also visited with producers of "Master Control," the half-hour talk show produced and distributed in the public interest by the Radio and Television Commission.

"Life Today," a talk show designed to communicate from a Christian perspective, is seen daily on ACTS. "Master Control" is aired weekly on 812 radio stations across the country.

Gunter has been modeling since high school, and in her 20s was working on top notch assignments in Atlanta, Chicago and New York.

"The modeling industry is ruthless," she told Allen. "It's survival of the fittest. I was very self-centered, I never stopped to smell the roses. When this happened I turned to the Lord and discovered he does not hold grudges. God had been trying to get my attention all the time."

She gives God credit for today. "God's response to my need was a tremendous source of strength. I am very aware that he left me here for a reason and if what I have gone through—amputation, the year of chemotherapy and working to get where I am today—can be shared to get another physically challenged person out of a dark corner into the sunlight, then it's worth my effort."

Losing her leg was unthinkable but, when it became fact, Gunter made up her mind no one would tell her what she could or could not do because she only had one leg.

"I am whole," she told herself. "I am a more complete person than ever now that God has come into my life."

So she set about turning negatives into positives. Six months after the amputation she was modeling again. She showed up for assignments on crutches—but on crutches lacquered black and decorated with sequins as a signature of her determination.

Even during the difficult year of chemotherapy she continued to work, scheduling photo sessions on the alternate weeks when she wasn't sick.

"When my hair fell out, I had my head shaved and posed for high-fashion, avant-garde photos in the 'Star Trek' mode," she said. "I also acquired a wardrobe of wigs and became more v rsatil , more in demand than ever before."

She decided to do fashion shows again, even though it meant mastering the runway on the prosthesis.

"My husband, Don, who had married a fashion model and found himself with a bald-headed, one-legged wife, is an encourager and God was there for us," she said. He applauded the loudest when she achieved her goal.

And her victory was recorded for the nation by a crew from "That's Incredible," the national TV show which spotlights special achievements. Her story also has been featured in Guidepost Magazine.

And she has learned to snow ski so well that she teaches it to other physically challenged people. She also plays tennis, when she has time from her duties as a spokesperson for the National Cancer Society.

"Cancer is devastating but it does not have to be the end," she said firmly. "My husband and I look at this as a life education, as a challenge and an adventure. You are only imprisoned if you decide you are. There's a support group out there. If you reach out to others you get it back 13 times."