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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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85-70

## Long-Term Help Sought In Bangladesh Disaster

By Marty Croll

DHAKA, Bangladesh (BP)--The Bangladesh government has asked Southern Baptists to provide long-term relief to the country following a hurricane May 26 that killed tens of thousands of people and washed away the homes of hundreds of thousands.

Missionary R.T. Buckley, coordinator of relief and rehabilitation for Southern Baptist missionaries in Bangladesh, planned to examine the area of destruction, including the coastal village of Char Alexander, May 31. In Char Alexander all the members of a new Baptist congregation are homeless after winds up to 140 miles per hour whipped up a tidal wave that swept over whole islands.

No members of the new congregation were killed, and Southern Baptist missionaries were not affected. But in Geneva, Switzerland, the International Committee of the Red Cross numbered possible dead at 40,000, and in Dhaka the English-language Bangladesh Observer said up to 50,000 people might have been killed, according to missionary Jim McKinley of Albany, Ky.

McKinley, chairman of the Bangladesh Baptist Mission, and Buckley, from Picayune, Miss., met for three hours May 28 with the government's minister of relief and about 90 to 100 non-government agencies. The government asked Baptists to do long-term development, McKinley said. "We have people left who are just stripped of everything--no animals, no plows, no seed, no drinking water.

"They're (government officials) thinking about getting them ready for crops, rebuilding houses, putting down wells or providing goats and ducks and cattle to rehabilitate them."

The government acted speedily in helping the Bangladeshis who survived, McKinley added. "They had their army and navy right out there, and helicopters with the air force. I would say they're doing a good job--better than any of us could do."

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## ABC Seminary Professor Says Pluralism Causes SBC Problems

By Jim Newton

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ATLANTA (BP)--Current Southern Baptist Convention controversies are caused, not by theological differences, but by a head-on confrontation with pluralism and an inability to handle diversity in an urban society, observed Ray Bakke, professor at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago.

In a question and answer period during the Spring Urban Evangelism Forum sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Bakke said Southern Baptists are grappling with the same kind of urban problems Northern (American) Baptists faced 100 years ago.

"I don't interpret Dallas (the upcoming Southern Baptist Convention) as a doctrinal or theological conflict," said Bakke. "To some extent there are some liberal-conservative elements to that, but as an outsider, I am convinced the most powerful aspects of the (SBC) dynamic are ideological rather than theological."

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He said the real problem in the SBC is that Southern Baptists are being hit by urbanization and pluralism, "and you don't know how to handle it."

Bakke said Southern Baptists have not yet learned how to live harmoniously with differing cultural, religious, and ethnic groups in a complex society. Instead, Southern Baptists want to make others "just like us," he said.

"Pluralism will kill you if you don't have enough ego-strength," Bakke said. "It will threaten you to death if you don't know who you are." He said only those with a clear understanding of self-identity can handle pluralism.

"Much of the church (world-wide) does not know who it is," Bakke added. "It has lost its sense of identity and mission. Therefore it is huddled in a sinking boat...just trying to survive."

Southern Baptists have been held together, he said, by a concern for evangelism and missions, and by the Cooperative Program. "But now Southern Baptists are in a much more complex environment and need to be doing more than just evangelism," he said.

As the predominant religious group in the South, Southern Baptists have become very much like Roman Catholics who are the predominant religion in many other parts of the world. "You need a Vatican II to help you sort out the differences between faith and culture," Bakke said.

"You've been packaging Southern Baptist culture as a part of your missions (program), and now you need to step back and ask: 'Now what, really is the gospel, and what is culture?'"

He told of visiting the First Baptist Church in New Orleans several years ago and being amazed at how Southern culture had infused worship styles. "You are so used to this as an insider you don't see it," he observed. "Southern Baptists need to realize the culture of the South has very little to do with the gospel."

American Baptists will be watching and praying for Southern Baptists as they meet in Dallas and struggle with the pain of pluralism, Bakke said. "We've been there before and we didn't do it very well either," he confessed.

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Moore's Deacons, Church  
Refute 'Liberal Tool' Charge

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AMARILLO, Texas (BP)—In response to accusations their pastor is a "tool for the liberal faction within the SBC," the deacon body and congregation of First Baptist Church of Amarillo has affirmed, their pastor, W. Winfred Moore, in his decision to allow his nomination for president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The SBC will hold its annual meeting June 11-13 in Dallas.

A statement mailed to all state Baptist newspapers May 31 by the 10,000-member church, said since Moore, "did not intend to become engaged in the rancor of responding to charges of 'liberalism leveled by supporters' of current SBC President Charles F. Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Atlanta, the deacon body and congregation both pledged "unreserved support of him through our prayers, influence and resources..."

Maston C. Courtney, former chairman of the Amarillo church's fellowship of deacons, said the statement was triggered by the accusation of Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas and associate pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, that Moore was a "tool of the liberal element" of the SBC.

Courtney also said it was the feeling of the deacons and congregation that since "Dr. Moore felt obliged not to respond to the charges of liberalism" that some response be made. "We felt this was the most logical way of handling that response," he said.

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"The statement, which was unanimously approved by both deacons and congregation called for "preceived divisions" within the SBC to be quickly healed so the convention can direct its energies toward "its historical mission of cooperation, education and world missions."

The document stated questions which would divide the SBC are not ones of liberalism versus conservatism or inerrancy of the Scriptures.

The statement said the problems centered on basic questions of "whether Baptist will reaffirm their heritage of church cooperation through the Cooperative Program (SBC's unified effort to support world missions), and recognition of the priesthood of every believer and support of world missions through Bold Mission Thrust (an effort to reach every person with the gospel by the year 2000) or return to the days of church creedalism."

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Television, Telephone  
Reach Taxi Driver

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NEW YORK (BP)—New York taxi drivers are known for their ability to maneuver cabs through crowded streets and for their willingness to tell you what they think.

Harold Irving Goldman, New York taxi driver, also is a new Christian—a product of ACTS (a Texas-based television network) and a long-distance telephone line.

Goldman now tells others what he thinks about Jesus Christ. It is a powerful witness.

A product of a Jewish background, Goldman was interested in learning more about "religious" things. On a recent Sunday, Goldman—off-duty from a 12-hour shift behind the wheel of the cab he shares with his best friend—was watching television and thinking about some of the religious material he had been reading.

He liked what he saw on "Invitation to Life" and he was interested in what John Bisagno, the speaker, had to say about Jesus and the Christian life.

Goldman called the telephone number listed on the screen and talked with a Fort Worth, Texas, counselor who answered the telephone. She described, very carefully, the plan of salvation. Goldman made up his mind. Jesus Christ was for him.

With his permission, the Radio and Television Commission's counseling department contacted a local pastor—Edward Davis, of Farmingdale Baptist Church—with Goldman's name and telephone number. Goldman accepted Davis' invitation to visit the church, made a profession of faith and was baptized. Davis also baptized Goldman's wife, Sherrel, when she became a Christian. Now, the Goldman family, complete with two little girls, are in church for every worship service.

Excited about the changes in their lives and eager to share their faith, the Goldmans have brought other members of their family to visit their new church.

Goldman also was quick to tell his best friend about his new best friend, Jesus.

"That friend was the man who share Goldman's cab during the other 12-hour-a-day shift," said Davis. "He heard what Harold had to say and decided to become a Christian. I've now baptized him and he's an active church member."

Together they make a formidable witnessing team, said Davis. "They have a tract rack in their taxi and they tell everybody who will listen what they have learned about Jesus Christ."

The Goldman family has been an exciting addition to Farmingdale Baptist Church.

"With th exception of a deaf church, we're the only Southern Baptist church in this county of more than a million people," said Davis. "Farmingdale is located east of New York City practically on the border of Suffolk and Nassau counties.

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Davis, who came to the church in January, says it is that field, "white unto harvest" that caused him to consider the church when he graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

"We have 100 members in the church now and I came here because with that population, the sky's the limit. We're going to grow and make a difference for Jesus. And having ACTS on cable up here can only help us by bringing people like the Goldmans to us. ACTS is going to make a difference, for good, for us."

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'Contemporary' Retiree  
Keeps CSM Up To Date

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press  
5/31/85

ATLANTA (BP)—Even at 80, Jewel Beall keeps Southern Baptist Christian social ministries contemporary.

Ask her what she's read and she'll recite a litany of the latest books on theology, sociology, psychology or history, complete with suggestions for ways Southern Baptists could implement theory into practice.

Whether attending Southern Baptist Home Mission Board conferences or visiting the Atlanta-based missions agency's office, Beall is quick to offer observations on society and the church which challenge people to think. In short, concedes Paul R. Adkins, associate director of the board's missions ministries division, "She keeps us contemporary."

That's why the board has named a new award for Beall, who turned 80 this May. The Jewel Beall Church and Community Ministries Award annually will recognize a church, pastor or a layperson who displays unusual sensitivity to Christian social ministries.

The first award will be presented during the Home Missions Conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center this August. It's one more way to say Beall always has been one step ahead of the crowd, points out Adkins.

In the 1930s, Beall and her husband, Noble, became the first whites appointed as Southern Baptist home missionaries to work with blacks, despite comments from friends that it would "ruin" their reputation in the denomination. Later, as a consultant for the board's missions ministries division, Beall pushed for professional organizations for Baptist social workers.

"We were dealing with hurt people and we needed to stay up on social sciences in order to be the best help to people," she explained. She secured professional training for Christian social ministry (CSM) missionaries, which helped them view themselves as professionals. It also earned them respect from social work peers and grassroots Southern Baptists.

As a consultant, Beall coordinated the work of a handful of "Good Will Centers," the forerunners of Baptist centers and other board CSM ministries.

Beall also recruited an innovative and controversial missions force for the centers—women. Her key role was support and encouragement, explained Beverly Hammack, director of the board's church and community ministries department. But Beall's choices proved to be the building blocks for Southern Baptist Christian social ministries.

Today her hand-picked recruits are well-known in social work circles. C. Anne Davis now is dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Carver school of social work. After 27 years as director of Baptist centers in Houston, Mildred McWhorter has become one of the best known CSM missionaries in Southern Baptist life. And Hammack, who, although not recruited by Beall worked directly with her, now heads the HMB's new church and community ministries department, which works with churches and associations in developing local CSM programs.

Beall's induction into missions began in rural, deep-South Alabama, where she understood early the divisions between whites and blacks and the "haves and have nots." Though her parents were church-goers, blacks were required to use the back door when visiting their home.

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"I knew almost instinctively it was wrong that anyone would have to come to the back door to enter your house," recalled Beall.

Encounters with furloughing foreign missionaries who taught missions at Baptist Young People's Union (B.Y.P.U.) summer camps nurtured Beall's interest in missions. A summer worker at the camps, Beall recalled the daily contact with missionaries "gave us a strong sense of the importance of missions."

While attending a junior college in Alabama, Beall met and married her husband; later they both attended Southern seminary in Louisville. Only a decline in denominational missions gifts during the early 1930s prevented the Bealls from foreign missions service.

But Noble's interest in African missions made him sympathetic to Southern blacks. While he was pastor of churches in Alabama, he became involved with local black pastors. The couple soon found themselves in the center of black Baptist work and racial controversy.

The Bealls discovered many black pastors who lacked formal Bible training, so they began an extensive education program with them. Though criticized by whites, "we played like we didn't know any better," recalled Beall. They even held classes at the church building.

Although out of step with the social code of the day, she admitted, "they (the pastors) wanted help; we decided to give it. They understood the Scripture promised learning to those who worked for it."

Their work drew the Home Mission Board's attention and in 1934 they were appointed home missionaries. After more than a decade with the board, they moved to Florida, where they continued to work with blacks.

Noble died shortly after the move and Jewel returned to the board two years later, first as a field worker and later as consultant for the Good Will Centers.

Though she retired in 1970, Beall continues to act as a special consultant to the board's missions ministries division.

Beall still practices what she preaches. An active Sunday school teacher at Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, she has earned the title of "the unpaid counselor." Many church members turn to her for help in resolving personal and family crises.

Beall has seen more than her share of changes in Christian social ministries, many implemented by her. Initially, CSM faced great opposition from local pastors, who viewed it as para-church work, she recalled. Ministries coordinated outside the church building were viewed with suspicion, she explained.

But CSM, said Beall, was designed "to find fresh ways of relating the gospel to those for whom the whole thing was alien." Actually, she said, the work of the Good Will Centers, American Indian missions and increased emphasis on race relations "saved" home missions.

"We were able to help Southern Baptists move from a closed tight view of ministry to an open ministry," she explained. Gradually, she added, CSM provided church leaders new ways to "involve Christians in missions."

The same is true today, maintained Beall. Churches often fail to set concrete missions goals. "People want to do mission work but do not know where to start," she claimed. "We are cheating that person if the church does not give them well-designed assignments in missions."

But Christian social ministries allows church members to "turn good intentions into intelligent goodness," she concludes.