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November 8, 1985

85-141

Missionary Criticizes 'Country Club' Churches

By Karen Benson

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)—Southern Baptists are middle to upper middle class Americans who have isolated themselves from the poor of the land, a foreign missionary says.

Their latest "million-dollar fad" is to build big buildings—"Christian country clubs" of family life centers, bowling alleys, saunas and gymnasiums—while only giving "crumbs from the table" to missions, said Sam Cannata, a medical missionary in Africa, who with his wife, Ginny, is missionary-in-residence at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Cannata spoke during the final session of the Texas Baptist Men convention at First Baptist Church, San Antonio.

"We say these buildings are built for the glory of God, but they're basically for us—it's for ourselves," Cannata said. While acknowledging some individuals have been saved through the ministries of "Christian country clubs," he charged there are "thousands, perhaps ten-thousands," who drive by those buildings every day who are angry at the injustice those buildings represent.

As a whole, Southern Baptists are not caring for those poor in the country, Cannata said.

"We don't want to help them, and we get mad when the government does," he said. "A lot of churches have soup kitchens where they dole out soup, or have closets where they dole out clothes. But it's a paternalistic type of giving—not a loving, lifting kind of giving."

What Southern Baptists give for mission offerings (both home and foreign missions), compared to what they give for buildings and for their church staffs, "is like crumbs from the table," Cannata said. "I tell you this: God is going to judge us."

He also lambasted Southern Baptists for arguing and fighting during the current convention controversy. "This crazy controversy in our convention is causing our people to argue about the word of God, while the Murle (tribe in Southeast Sudan) are crying out for the first copies of the New Testament that we worked on last summer," Cannata said. He and his wife spent last summer translating the New Testament into the Murle tribal language.

"We don't need to argue about the word of God. We need to obey it."

Cannata said he is more afraid of the selfishness within Southern Baptist churches than he is the convention's controversy, or anything else. "If we don't watch it, we are giving to ourselves, to our children, to our children's children. We act like we're building an empire that's going to last forever."

He reminded TBM participants of the New Testament disciples who were "not really too concerned" about material things.

"We're at a crossroads. We need to decide if we're New Testament Christians or if we're going to let our culture dictate how we live," he challenged. "I pray that we'll come back" (to the fact that only two things in the world are eternal—people and the word of God).

"I'm not saying churches shouldn't have buildings. I'm saying we've gone overboard. We as individuals need to learn what it means to invest our lives in people and in the word of God."

Christians, Including Women,
Are Ministers, Gregory Says

By Sherri Anthony Brown

ARROWHEAD SPRINGS, Calif. (BP)—"If you are a Christian woman, you are a minister," former SBC Woman's Missionary Union President Christine Gregory told the national Southern Baptist lay renewal evangelism conference.

"I am proud to be a woman, because Jesus liberated women into the power of the gospel," Gregory continued. "Jesus, himself, has given you credentials for ministry. No man's hands laid on your head or withheld from your head can make a difference in your personhood."

Gregory, elected first vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance in July, stressed, "In Jesus Christ, an individual finds God's decisive call."

In an interview, the former first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "I am disturbed we talk about the theology of the laity. Is that any different from the theology of the clergy? We need to be talking about gifts God gives to every Christian." All Christians have a gift and are responsible to God for what they do with their gift, she explained.

Because of cultural backgrounds, especially Southern culture, it isn't easy for women to take an initiative in ministry, continued Gregory, "but we have been freed and we need to take the initiative and perform the ministry (God) has given us."

In another session, Robert Hamblin, SBC Home Mission Board evangelism vice-president, said, "We have symposiums about ordination. But, who cares about ordination when we're all priests in God's kingdom. Whatever your ministry is, you do it in the power of the resurrected Lord."

Let "God do the loving through you," Hamblin encouraged participants, predicting, "This year more people will be won to Christ than ever before. For it to continue, Southern Baptists have to get a vision for all lay people to witness."

Michael Wright, pastor of Turlock Community Fellowship Baptist Church, Turlock, Calif., interpreted the conference theme, "Crucified with Christ."

"The most violent place on earth is the local church, because that's the place of the hottest contests. We are a crisis-oriented people. And I thank God for it. It is God's way of showing us how evil we are—and how we need his mercy and grace."

Wright also warned lay renewal leaders of claiming "their" ministry, instead of God's ministry through them. "Whatever it costs, let God finish the job in you. Let him break you." However, he concluded, "The resurrected Jesus doesn't eradicate your uniqueness. You will be most like him when you are most naturally you."

Also speaking at the conference were Henry Blackaby, director of missions, Vancouver, British Columbia; Dean Finley, Home Mission Board evangelism consultant for youth, and Fred Roach, president, Centennial Homes, Dallas.

A new film on lay renewal, "Where in the World Is the Church," produced by the Home Mission Board, was premiered at the conference.

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Missouri Baptists Release
Farm Crisis Documentary

By James Preston

Baptist Press
11/8/85

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—As the video monitor flickered into focus, an open country church comes into view. Voices beckon to the viewer from within. They are welcoming and soothing voices singing of a higher plain, of fields white unto harvest and of our harvest home.

The faces within are of rural people, mostly farmers and their families. But there also bankers and merchants, school teachers and implement dealers—all of whom share a common faith. They share a common fate as well, for the rural lifestyle they have known for generations has entered a time that some sociologists and economists have labeled a crisis.

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From the furrow to the factory, farming and agri-business are going through their most difficult days since the Great Depression.

The documentary, "Come Before Winter: Missouri Baptists Relate to the Farm Crisis," is a 30-minute video produced by the Missouri Baptist Convention. It examines the role of the church in the current situation.

Missouri Baptists are predominantly a rural denomination and a lot of their members are involved in this hurting, according to Don Evans, an associate in the Missouri Baptist Convention missions department. Evans, who is in charge of the project for Missouri Baptists explained, "We got involved because there is a need out there."

The need "out there" has been to bridge the gap between the facts about the crisis and some relief for the victims. One farmer described the farming situation by comparing it to an injured hand, "You go to bed with it hurting and you wake up with it hurting."

The need to bridge the gap was also the major reason KOMU-TV in Columbia offered their services in the production of the video. Tom Gray, KOMU station manager, shared although the station had done a number of series on farm problems, the Missouri Baptist video not only addresses the major concerns, it discusses how to cope with them. "This is a facet we felt hadn't been shared." Gray continued, "It is in our interest and the interest of the viewing audience to help get it on the air."

Addressing the issue is just a part of what the documentary does as it cataloges the recent history through the words and experience of rural people.

The documentary traces the downward trend in farm prices since the boom years of the seventies and examines some reasons why this happened. In the process it takes a close look at the personal plight of rural people across the state.

One farmer agonized over the prospect of filing for bankruptcy. "Even if I file for bankruptcy, I still feel like I need to pay those bills." Another shared this struggle with the same question, "It's a matter of a person's selfworth...gotta keep that in sight."

Another aspect the documentary traces is the effect the crisis has on related business and community. A school superintendent has noticed a sizable drop in enrollment since 1980 because of farm families and young people moving away to find jobs.

Another man interjects that implement dealers can't make it, local merchants can't make it, schools are hurt--all because their buying public has no cash flow.

The documentary climaxes with its appeal that churches can be a help through the stress that results from crisis.

One farmer put it this way, "We don't just need somebody with money in hand--just someone who shows he cares." Another makes the statement, "We're still hanging on--I don't see how anyone without a good church connection can make it (because) it's a matter of faith."

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(James Preston is a communications consultant for the Missouri Baptist Convention.)

Ireland's Baptists May Open Door
To Southern Baptist 'Co-Workers'

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
11/8/85

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--In Ireland, there's "a suspicion of most things American," according to Rea Grant, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Ireland.

Irish evangelicals are among the suspicious, partly because of the impression left by some American evangelists who visited Ireland after World War II, Grant said in an interview during an October visit to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. "The high pressure, glossy methods of (the visitors') evangelism left a lot to be desired, and I'm afraid that image sticks."

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Grant cited a second reason for the suspicion. "We've been plagued by ever so many independent American missionaries. They come and do their own thing and won't work with anyone."

The Baptist Union of Ireland encompasses 85 churches in Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, and 10 churches in the independent southern Republic of Ireland.

Southern Baptists have no missionaries in Ireland, but Grant is not opposed to seeing one or more come. Because the Foreign Mission Board has a partnership outlook toward overseas Baptist bodies, its missionaries would be "co-workers with us," he said. They might help "restore confidence in American missionaries," he added.

"There have been a few sad situations" involving independent missionaries in Ireland, Grant said. "A few missionaries came to Killarney (a small town in southwest Ireland) a few years ago (and) opened a seminary. I think they had two students and both were from America. They suddenly packed their bags and they've gone home.

"What kind of impression does that make on the local people?" Grant asked. "I could quote other instances."

Missionaries coming to work in Ireland must be prepared to "leave the U.S. situation behind," Grant said, because Irish Baptist congregations, in numerical strength, are "not the success story according to the standard of many Americans." Many churches have only five to eight strong members. But, without such churches, "there would be no gospel life" in many Irish towns, Grant said.

For many Irish Baptists, "success amounts to faithful work, just plodding away...sowing the seed all the time. The work (in Ireland) has never grown phenomenally, but it has grown steadily." The union's membership stands at 8,200, up from 3,500 in 1940. But participants in Irish Baptist congregational life number more than 20,000, Grant said.

"The membership (of a church) is always smaller than the congregation," he commented. "It's a bit healthier than having a larger membership than your congregation."

Grant estimates there are 1.5 million people in Northern Ireland, the majority of whom are nominal Protestants, and three to four million in the Republic of Ireland, the vast majority of whom are Roman Catholic.

Thanks to the Baptist stance on separation of church and state, the union can encompass Irish believers who are "unionist" or "loyalist," favoring allegiance to the British government, and others who are "republican," favoring a united Ireland. "We can sit down very happily together united in Christ," Grant said.

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

Western Directors Plan
Church Renewal Strategy

By Bill Bangham

Baptist Press
11/8/85

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (BP)—"Southern Baptist denominational life is a skeleton," said Reid Hardin, evangelism support director for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "If we are to make sure Bold Mission Thrust doesn't become Bold Mission Bust, we are going to have to make sure we put some flesh to that skeleton. That flesh will have to come from the lay people from our churches if we are serious about winning our world to Jesus Christ."

Hardin's comments came during a special meeting on church renewal for evangelism and Brotherhood directors from eight state Baptist conventions. They met prior to the 1985 national renewal conference in the shadow of the San Bernardino mountains to formulate church renewal strategies for their states.

Church renewal is a church-based strategy for calling lay persons to evangelism and ministry. It seeks to help lay persons discover involvement in evangelism within their own communities and beyond, while revitalizing the life of the local church. It is a joint program of two SBC agencies: the Brotherhood Commission and the Home Mission Board.

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Participants heard from evangelism directors in states where renewal is a significant part of their evangelism strategy. "I spend more time on church renewal than any other program," said Harry Williams, director of evangelism for California, "because I see results."

Williams reported on surveys comparing California churches involved in renewal with those not involved. "Between 1967 and 1976 churches involved in renewal registered 20 percent more baptisms in each of the three succeeding years than all other California churches."

Statistics for 1976-83 showed California churches involved in renewal registered more than 14 percent increased in baptisms compared to an average of three percent statewide. "That tells me something is working," he said. "I cannot document similar claims for anything else I do—not lay evangelism schools or even revivals. I see no increase in baptisms from them."

Jack Parrot, director of evangelism for New York, sees renewal as a means of providing support for pastors and lay persons in his state. "When I came to New York I found people discouraged, both ministers and lay persons alike," he said. "Yet we had the assignment of sharing the gospel with our 25 million people and needed encouragement. I see the renewal process as a way of accomplishing that."

Each of the participating directors spent time with national renewal leaders and began formulating a strategy for his state. Douglas Beggs, director of the adult department of the Brotherhood Commission, sees great hope in that. "Over the past 13 years renewal has been allowed to just happen," he said. "Now we're beginning to plan for it."

L.E. "Chief" Lawson, evangelism and Brotherhood director for New Mexico, also sees a need to plan. "If we're going to win our world, it has to be through our lay people," he said. "If what we're doing doesn't lead someone to Christ, we'd better back off and look at it again."

Henry Blackaby, director of missions from Vancouver, British Columbia, commented, "Whatever God is in is as big as he is. This whole renewal focus can help us put some handles on what God is doing."

Conference participants included Bill Duncan, Alaska; Blackaby, British Columbia; Williams, California; Beryl Henderson, Hawaii; Gail Zimmerman, Minnesota-Wisconsin; Lawson, New Mexico; L. Robertson, Utah-Idaho, as well as staff from the Home Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission.

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(BP) photos available upon request from the Brotherhood Commission

Youth Ministry Potential
Increases With New Role

By Jim Lowry

Baptist Press
11/8/85

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (BP)—New responsibilities, expanded ministries and longer tenures on the church staff seem representative today of a new role for Southern Baptist ministers of youth.

More than 100 ministers of youth gathered in Williamsburg for a Youth Ministry Wide-area Conference to share information and ideas, examine failures and study the effectiveness of their ministries.

In the past, youth ministers have been thought of in terms of several myths, most of which are not true today, said Richard Ross, coordinator of youth ministries in the church administration department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and conference director.

Church members used to expect youth ministers to be at or near the age of youth in the church, Ross said. His contact with 1,400 ministers of youth over the past year reveals a different picture.

"The trend today is toward a higher median age among youth ministers," he said. "Church members are seeking youth ministers who will work with the entire family to minister to youth. The ministry to parents is a relatively new area for youth ministers, but one in which great gains can be realized."

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Because churches are accepting and expecting a higher median age among youth ministers, tenures and salaries are increasing, Ross said. He added there will be a major research survey released in 1986 on ministers of youth.

Another myth which has followed youth ministers over the years is they need to speak the slang language of youth and serve as a cheerleader who provides a steady schedule of events and activities.

Youth ministers attending the conference agreed that the events and activities route was a major reason for short tenures in the past. After a youth minister completed a one-and-a-half to two-year list of activities, he needed to move to another church to go through them again.

Adults as youth ministers can be successful over a longer period if they will communicate to the youth "unconditional love, unconditional acceptance and affirmation. There are very few places in life where teens come into contact with adults who accept them for what they are," Ross said, pointing out, "One of the joys of staying in a church a long time is the satisfaction of watching the spiritual growth of a teenager over a period of years."

"Leaders who stay a brief time only see effort, not any results," Ross continued. "It takes time to build relationships with youth and families which are deep enough to be the context for ministry. You can't do that going from church to church." As a result, he said, "Churches seem to be increasing salaries for ministers of youth to enable them to build a long-term ministry, because "parents have seen teens suffer from youth ministers who come and go quickly," he said.

Ministers of youth attending the conference were equally anxious to share information and get new ideas for improving their situations. Because of the dual role in which many youth ministers are also responsible for music or education, concern was expressed repeatedly for the lack of time to give to youth and their families.

Ross said youth ministers should schedule at least the equivalent of two evenings and one full day off every week for family or personal business. Worry about church youth and families is done at the expense of the minister's family many times, participants commented.

Even though tight schedules and outdated myths can hinder youth ministry efforts, participants agreed that increased responsibilities and contributions are more likely as youth ministers assume new leadership functions and blend their goals with others from the church.

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Outreach Bible Study
May Be Key To Growth

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press
11/8/85

NORTHBOROUGH, Mass. (BP)—Starting new units will be a priority for the Baptist Convention of New England for the next five years and a new involvement with Outreach Bible Study may be a key element in that effort.

Outreach Bible Study is an eight-week study designed to involve non-Christians in Bible study and introduce them to the plan of salvation. Churches in New England are participating in a pilot project for the materials produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board that are to be available in October 1986.

The study is a way for "our churches to reach outside their four walls," said Al Riddley, Sunday school director for the Baptist Convention of New England. The study may be conducted in homes, apartments, community centers or other locations away from the church where non-Christians would come who might not be willing to attend a Bible study at church.

Riddley said some churches are looking at Outreach Bible Study to increase Sunday school enrollment. Others will use it as a catalyst to new work in a satellite Sunday school approach. It also is being considered by some churches as a tool to reach specific groups such as ethnics, singles, and apartment or condominium complex residents.

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Adrian and Neva Nelle Burk, Mission Service Corps volunteers in Northborough, started an Outreach Bible Study which they hope will help develop a singles ministry for Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church. Six persons attended the first session after the Burks sent letters inviting more than 30 persons to attend.

A Korean couple attending Massachusetts Institute of Technology made professions of faith after entering an Outreach Bible Study group conducted by David Draper, a church planter, and his wife, Betsy, Baptist campus ministries director at MIT.

The Drapers plan to continue the Bible study with the Vietnamese couple and hope to start other projects for students at MIT and as part of their church planting efforts.

Three persons are attending an Outreach Bible Study class in Surry, Maine, conducted by Mary Beth Caffey, a Mission Service Corps volunteer in youth Sunday school work in Maine.

Caffey said she believes there will be professions of faith from the Bible study. "I believe this is the best material the Sunday School Board has put out," Caffey said, acknowledging she wasn't interested in it until she read the material.

It is the first material that is simple and easy to understand for persons without a biblical background, she feels.

Caffey drives two and one-half hours from her home in Auburn, Maine, to the weekly Bible study in Surry. "There are three people there who want it and we don't have a Southern Baptist witness there," Caffey said. She hopes the Bible study project will help establish a Baptist work in the Bar Harbor area of Surry.

Ten to 12 Bible studies possibly will be conducted during the pilot project. The New England area offers varied situations for testing Outreach Bible Study, including metropolitan, suburban and rural areas as well as groups using English as a second language and other language groups. The New England convention is translating the Outreach Bible Study materials into French for use by the French Haitian congregations in the Greater Boston Baptist Association.

Mavis Allen, who coordinated the Outreach Bible Study projects, was in New England for five weeks leading conferences on conducting Outreach Bible Study. She is optimistic about the possibilities for the concept, but "these things won't just spring up overnight," she said.

Although the materials will not officially be available until October 1986, Riddley said he hopes to have 50 groups in New England next year. "Outreach Bible Study is a traditional way to do what we've been doing before. It relies on the basis of evangelism and Bible teaching."

Riddley plans for Outreach Bible Study to be a priority in New England for the next five years as the convention attempts to start new units. Sunday school enrollment almost doubled in the past five years from 6,000 to nearly 12,000. Outreach Bible Study will help reach a goal of doubling enrollment again in the next five years, Riddley predicted.

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Instrumental Church Music
Should Lead Persons To Jesus

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
11/8/85

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Church instrumental musicians must face the danger that their music is only bombarding listeners' ears rather than bringing them to Jesus, Camp Kirkland warned in New Orleans.

Kirkland, minister of instrumental music at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., spoke at a recent workshop sponsored by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department.

Everything that takes place in Southern Baptist churches should be directed toward two priorities, bringing unbelievers to Christ and drawing Christians closer to Christ, Kirkland said.

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While acknowledging instrumental musicians may spend many hours rehearsing for church worship services, he said "all of the pragmatic things, like organizations and preparation, are not just to be sure the group plays well, but to be sure people meet Jesus for the first time or that they receive the healing touch of Jesus in their lives.

"All that we do is not worth anything unless we are meeting those two goals," he said.

Kirkland, who was the first person to serve as a full-time instrumental director in a Southern Baptist church, said he measures success of his work in terms of changed lives. Notes of appreciation and testimony from persons in the congregation, he said, provide some indication that instrumental music is meeting those goals.

Providing a spiritual and emotional experience for the instrumentalists concerns Kirkland as much as reaching the congregation does, he said, citing the need to be "inwardly and overtly open to meeting people's needs."

Kirkland said he has seen an increasing ministry to instrumentalists and to congregations across the Southern Baptist Convention since he began an instrumental program 15 years ago. Currently there are some 20 persons in Southern Baptist churches who hold full-time positions similar to Kirkland's.

"While we are seeing growth, more groups, more people wanting instrumental music programs to work effectively, we are also expanding from the group to the individual. Smaller ensembles and instrumental solos are being used as well as larger groups and full orchestras."

Kirkland administers a standard-of-performance audition for those who wish to participate in the junior high, senior high and two adult orchestras at First, Jacksonville.

"Virtually every player who has the ability to keep up with the group is used," he said, but successfully passing the audition provides instrumentalists with "a feeling of success and fulfillment.

"My sermon to my players is faithfulness," he reflected. "My sermon to myself is discipline so that I have time to have a listening ear. As we develop our ears toward being better musicians, we must develop our ability to listen to God. We want to be better disciples for him first, and then to be better musicians for him."

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CORRECTION—In (BP) story, "Professor Says SBC Calendar Supports Abortion Protests," mailed 11/6/85, in the 19th paragraph, James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, is listed as "head" of Southern Baptist For Life. Draper is on the advisory board of the pro-life organization but the president is Rich Moore, an attorney from West Plains, Mo.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

More Than \$1 Million Pledged
In First Month Of ACTS Campaign

Baptist Press
11/8/85

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—In October, the first month of a five-year fund-raising campaign for the American Christian Television System (ACTS) network, the Radio and Television Commission received pledges of \$1,020,787 from nearly 500 donors.

The pledges resulted from a series of 33 dinners which launched the ACTS TeleMissions campaign. Dinners were held in 14 states on four separate evenings.

The financial campaign for ACTS was approved by the SBC Executive Committee during its September meeting in Nashville, Tenn. Dinner guests viewed a closed-circuit television program beamed by satellite from the Radio and Television Commission studios in Fort Worth.

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Featured on the program were Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board; William G. Tanner, president of the Home Mission Board; Hollywood actor David Soul; several people whose lives have been changed through the ministry of ACTS, and a report from Mike Huckabee, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Ark.

Parks, in a taped statement, said he hopes "every Baptist home will have access to the ACTS network. Foreign missions will only be understood when people see the world as missionaries see the world." Tanner, in a statement also taped earlier, called the network one of the most exciting things to happen in Southern Baptist life.

Huckabee described the network's acceptance and success in Pine Bluff. Soul hosted a televised presentation of ACTS programming and philosophy. "ACTS' mission is missions," Soul said. "The network is designing and producing more new programming formats than any other cable system in America. It is a tool for evangelism. It is an opportunity for local churches to promote a Christian witness."

"Southern Baptists came late to the network game," Allen told the dinner audiences. "No denomination has fashioned a tool which will get into the homes of all the people with the gospel. Southern Baptists have done that."

Allen said the ACTS network, which reflects local communities and their spiritual resources, will reflect the denomination at its best. "The local churches are fashioning the character of ACTS in their communities, determining what goes on the air there. We believe this will reflect the diversity of all Southern Baptists."

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Reagan Hosts 18 Religious Leaders
In Pre-Summit Prayer Luncheon

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
11/8/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Charles F. Stanley and 17 other religious leaders had lunch with President Ronald Reagan at the White House Nov. 8 and prayed for the success of the upcoming arms negotiation talks in Geneva.

Reagan spent nearly one-and-a-half hours with the religious leaders who included Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy, Jewish rabbis and representatives of Orthodox faiths in the United States.

Stanley said afterwards he had asked the president if he would feel free to implore the prayers of the American people before his departure for Geneva. Reagan's immediate answer, said Stanley, was yes.

Stanley told reporters outside the west wing of the White House that Reagan specifically requested prayers for himself and asked the group not to forget to pray for Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, reminding them, "he is loved too."

Stanley and Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Bernard Law both emphasized Reagan's attention to human rights inside the Soviet Union. During the luncheon meeting, the president said he intends to raise human rights issues in the Geneva talks and expressed concern for persecuted Christians, Jews and other religious and ethnic minorities. According to several participants, human rights was the dominate theme of the unusually long session with Reagan.

Arms control issues were also discussed, but only briefly.

Other leaders included: Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York; Cardinal John J. Krol of Philadelphia; Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago; Ralph Bohlmann, president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; Rabbi Israel Miller, Yeshiva University in New York City; Thomas Zimmerman, superintendent of the Assemblies of God; Elder Neil A. Maxwell, an Apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and seven other representatives of important religious-ethnic groups with heavy membership in the Soviet Union.

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Before the meeting with Reagan, the group was briefed for two hours by several White House officials including National Security Advisor Robert C. McFarland. Subjects addressed in the preliminary briefing included both arms control issues and human rights concerns.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, recently had to cancel public appearances after becoming ill during a hunting trip to Alaska. He told Baptist Press he had recently spent eight days "on the beach" and is feeling "much better."

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Church Planters Realize
Need For Student Work

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press
11/8/85

AMHERST, Mass. (BP)—When Bob and Mary Douglas arrived in Amherst a year ago as church planter apprentices, they were unaware of the overwhelming need for student work in the area.

In an effort to deal with that need Mary has become a Mission Service Corps volunteer to do campus ministries on the five campuses in the Amherst area.

"It was a real struggle trying to decide whether to work to help support the family or spend full time in student work," she said.

Although the Douglases had anticipated depending on her income, "I just couldn't work full time after seeing the work that needed to be done to reach students," she said.

Amherst, with a population of 32,000, counts 23,000 students at the University of Massachusetts. That does not include the students at four private colleges in the area.

Much of the Douglas' early work with students focused on internationals. Now they are continuing to develop relationships with internationals while also developing Bible studies for other students.

Bob is now pastor of First Baptist Church, Shutesbury, near Amherst. The 158-year-old church voted last summer to accept Bob as pastor and constitute as a Southern Baptist church rather than continue its status as an American Baptist and Congregationalist federation.

The Douglases hope the church will help provide a base for reaching Amherst and the students. The cost of housing in Amherst has forced many people into the rural Shutesbury area, creating a greater potential for the church.

The Shutesbury church will provide a Southern Baptist presence in the area while the Douglases continue to hold home Bible studies in Amherst in attempts to establish a congregation.

A goal of the Douglases is to get the church involved ministering to students and students involved with either the church in Shutesbury or a new congregation in Amherst.

"We just don't know what will be possible. God is opening doors for us," Bob said.

The Shutesbury church placed the couple in an established situation much quicker than they had expected. "We're about two steps ahead of where we thought we would be," Bob said.

But, the Douglases believe both the student work and the church development will take time.

Surveys indicate no more than two percent of Amherst's residents are associated with any church. "Church is not a part of people's lives here and things change slowly in rural New England," Bob said.

More than 100 MSC volunteers in campus ministries are working in new convention areas. National student ministries of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board recruits and places MSC campus ministries volunteers in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

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

(BP)

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NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION