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85-158

Mexican Pastor Loera
 No Longer 'Macho'

By Bobby Hill

JUAREZ, Mexico (BP)—Misael Loera, once too proud to let anyone know he read the Bible, now is a leader in Baptist mission efforts in Juarez, Mexico, and surrounding areas.

Loera, pastor of Peniel Iglesia Bautista in Juarez and president of the North Chihuahua Baptist Association which is comprised of 14 churches and 29 missions, was converted at age 20 after finding a New Testament in the belongings of his deceased mother.

"I would sneak and read my mother's New Testament because the words spoke to me but I was still so macho I didn't want anyone to know," Loera said. "One day I read Matthew 11:28-30, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor...take my yoke...and learn of me...and I will give you rest,' and on that day I committed that Scripture to memory and my life to Christ. I looked for a church but no one invited me."

After visiting two churches he found uncomfortable, Loera found Gomza Palacios Bautista. "I felt the mission spirit of this church and at the end of the service I made my profession of faith public," he said. "Very soon after, they made me the youth pastor. The church had five missions and three of these were directed by the youth."

He later received training at Lomas Verdes Seminary in Mexico City. He began his pastoral ministry at Hermosillo near the coast and has been in Juarez for 14 years, the last seven at his present church.

Next to Loera's church on the northside of Juarez looking toward Interstate 10 running through El Paso is an orphanage. He and his wife presently sponsor 14 children in the orphanage ranging in ages seven to 15. At one time they had thirty-five children.

The Loera's own seven children plus his "adopted children" are all active in the church; teaching, leading the music, youth activities and maintenance.

Loera is a strong believer in missions. With the aid of several Texas Baptist churches, including Immanuel Baptist Church, El Paso; First Baptist Church, Austin and University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Loera's church has begun seven missions in Juarez.

Some of the Texas churches, Loera said, visit two to four times a year and hold Bible schools and provide medical personnel for a clinic. These efforts usually attract 500 or more people, he added.

In 1984 Loera was elected president of the North Chihuahua Baptist Association and his quiet pastoral way is seen as a unifying force among the churches.

Because of recent projections which predict Juarez's population will reach 1.5 million people by the end of 1985, Loera has recognized the importance of long-range planning. As a result the association has adopted a goal of each member church establishing 1.3 missions each year for the next 10 years. "This is not nearly enough to provide for this type of growth but it is realistic because of the lack of funds to purchase already inflated property," Loera said.

He emphasized the greatest need facing Mexican Baptists in Juarez is securing funds to purchase land in the growth area. "Our people are poor financially but eager to work for Christ's glory," he said.

Wake Forest Trustees
Set Self-Perpetuation Board

By R.G. Puckett

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)—Trustees of Wake Forest University, in a regular December session, voted to elect all their successors—thus establishing a self-perpetuating board of trustees which would not be elected by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The move raised objections from some Baptist leaders, including expressions of regret and questions of legality.

According to Russell Brantley, spokesman for the university, the action by voice vote passed by "a large majority." All but two of the 36 trustees were present.

WFU trustees took the action in response to action last month when messengers to the annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina approved a new covenant relationship with the university but failed to give the two-thirds majority necessary to change some language in the convention's constitution to accommodate the new provisions of the covenant.

The convention and the university have been functioning with a covenant relationship which was approved in 1979 and was subject to review and evaluation each five years. The review in 1985 resulted in a change whereby one-third of the trustees would be elected by the university's trustees and the remaining two-thirds would be elected by the convention.

"The trustees have an inordinate desire to maintain close ties to the Baptist State Convention," President Thomas K. Hearn Jr., told the Biblical Recorder, the newsjournal of the state convention, "They committed themselves to maintain programs and services to Baptists and Baptist churches.

"They desired to settle the governance question and to establish our relationship to Baptists and Baptist churches on the basis of our service and programs," he concluded.

The number of trustees will be increased from 36 to 40 and will include the General secretary-treasurer of the convention, the executive secretary of the Christian Higher Education Council and four ministers of churches cooperating with the convention. Two-thirds of the trustees will be residents of North Carolina and members of churches cooperating with the convention.

Roy J. Smith, general secretary-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said, "I have two reactions in this matter. First I am sorry that our convention, meeting in Charlotte, did not complete the constitution and bylaw provisions for the renewed covenant relationship with Wake Forest University. The revised covenant was approved by 63.4 percent of the messengers, just short of the necessary two thirds. The disappointment of our friends at the university is shared by convention leadership.

"Second, I regret the decision of the Wake Forest trustees. Many of us have labored faithfully to make the covenant relationship work to the advantage of both Wake Forest and the convention.

"When Bob Mullinax and I met recently with President Hearn and trustee chairman Harfield, we stated clearly our opinion that a self-perpetuating board of trustees would not be acceptable to the convention. We must now carefully consider our responsibilities in light of the trustee action.

"What we do now will become the recorded history of an important era in Baptist life. We must act with intelligence and courage in responding to the university trustees," Smith said.

T. Robert Mullinax, executive secretary of the Council On Christian Higher Education, said, "I am disappointed in the decision of the Wake Forest trustees. Serious questions must now be addressed, as they were in 1978, when similar unilateral action would have removed the convention from its historic role in the election of trustees.

"The critical question is whether the trustees have the legal right to alter the university's relationship with the Baptist State Convention.

"When the convention was founded in 1830, Wake Forest College was already a daring dream in the minds of Thomas Meredith and Samuel Wait. North Carolina Baptists founded Wake Forest in 1834. For more than 151 years Baptists have proudly nurtured Wake Forest with a vital relationship intact.

"That relationship is now severely threatened. We owe it to Baptists of the past, present and future to question and to challenge the unilateral action of the trustees," Mullinax said.

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J. Winston Pearce
Dies Thanksgiving Day

Baptist Press
12/17/85

BUIES CREEK, N.C. (BP)—J. Winston Pearce, 78, a retired minister, seminary professor and writer-in-residence at Campbell University in Buies Creek, died Thanksgiving Day.

A North Carolina native, Pearce began his pastoral ministry at First Baptist Church, Nevada, Mo., in 1937. In 1940 he became pastor of First Baptist Church, Durham, N.C. After 14 years of ministry there he was called as pastor of Seventh church in Baltimore, Md. In 1957 Pearce became pastor of First church, DeLand, Fla.

From 1961-1970 he was professor of preaching at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. Following early retirement from the seminary, Pearce and his wife, Winnie, went to Ruschlikon, Switzerland, for a year where he was guest professor at the Baptist seminary.

In 1971 Pearce returned to Buies Creek where he was named writer-in-residence at Campbell University.

Pearce was a graduate of Campbell (Junior) College, Wake Forest College, University of Chicago, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He was granted honorary degrees from Wake Forest and Campbell universities.

During his ministry, Pearce was active in North Carolina life. He was president of the general board, chairman of the executive committee, and a trustee of Wake Forest University. Pearce also was a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and a preacher for "Baptist Hour."

Surviving are his wife of 49 years, Winnie Rickett Pearce; daughters, Mrs. Patricia Dutton of Middletown, N.Y., and Mrs. Paula Hinton of Buies Creek; a son, Perry Pearce of Santa Fe, N.M.; a sister, Mrs. Robert Frazier of Wake Forest; and five grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to the J. Winston and Winnie R. Pearce Scholarship Fund, Campbell University, Buies Creek, N.C. 27506.

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Nathan Pillow Elected
Evangelism President

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LAS VEGAS (BP)—Nathan Pillow, director of evangelism for Arizona Southern Baptists, has been elected president of the Fellowship of Southern Baptist Evangelism Directors.

Pillow, a native of Missouri who has worked with the Arizona convention for 10 years, succeeds Clarence Shell, director of evangelism for Arkansas Baptists, as head of the organization of state convention evangelism directors and associates.

Elected vice-president of the group during its recent meeting in Las Vegas was George Worrell, director of evangelism for the Missouri Baptist Convention, and named secretary-treasurer was Dan Agee, evangelism director for Virginia Baptists.

The evangelism directors will meet next year in Atlanta, Dec. 1-4.

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House Turns Down Report
Containing Postal Subsidy

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--The House of Representatives has rejected the conference report on a continuing resolution to provide funds for a number of federal agencies, including the U.S. Postal Service.

House leaders cited defense spending increases and the possibility of a pay raise for congressional members as major reasons for the conference report's rejection during a late-night session Dec. 16.

Senate and House conferees spent nearly a week attempting to reconcile differences in the two houses' versions of the continuing resolution. Following its defeat in the House, the measure will have to return to conference for further reconciliation.

Among the various issues reconciled during the resolution's first round in conference was the level of federal subsidy to provide reduced mailing rates for non-profit publications, including state Baptist newspapers and some church newsletters. The Senate had proposed a subsidy of \$748 million, while the House called for \$820 million.

The conference committee agreed to include the Senate's figure, which was consistent with Congress' Budget Reconciliation Act, said a Senate Appropriations Committee aide. The \$748 million figure, however, would have fallen \$233 million short of what the Postal Service says it needs to maintain the present level of subsidy.

During the initial reconciliation process, Congress passed a stop-gap measure to extend funding of the involved agencies through Dec. 16. A similar measure is expected to be passed Dec. 17 to continue the agencies' operations through midnight Dec. 19.

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Piland Urges Sunday School
Commitment To Bold Mission

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press
12/17/85

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Outreach and evangelism must have greater emphasis in the Sunday school if Bold Mission Thrust is going to work, Harry Piland told state Sunday school leaders meeting in Nashville.

In the closing session of a three-day meeting with state Sunday school directors and associates, Piland, director of the Sunday school department, said Sunday school is not reaching its potential as the outreach arm of the church.

The planning session began with a celebration of the successes of the 8.5 by '85 enrollment campaign. That campaign created a foundation for continued growth, achieved six years of increases in enrollment and four years of record enrollment, Piland pointed out.

But, even greater gains will be needed to reach the goals of Challenge 10/90: The People Challenge, an emphasis for a Sunday school enrollment of 10 million by 1990, he said, noting "We are ready to move to the new challenge with the same enthusiasm of the last goal."

Piland frequently expressed his concern that much of the growth in Sunday school enrollment can be attributed to transfer and biological growth. "We cannot achieve Bold Mission Thrust by biological and transfer growth," he said.

Statistical reports released during the meeting indicate the number of baptisms in Southern Baptist churches declined last year from the previous year.

Piland said the Sunday school must bear much of the responsibility for that decline. "If the Sunday school is the outreach arm of the church, our declining baptism rate is testimony that we are not reaching our potential. The bottom line is the Sunday school must give accelerated priority to outreach and evangelism. We must not neglect teaching. We need reaching and teaching."

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Piland cited several elements of the Sunday school plans for 1985-90 as ways to help the Sunday school achieve its mission.

Outreach Bible Study is an eight-week evangelistic program to be introduced in October 1986. The study is designed for use with non-Christians in a non-traditional setting. Called "Invitation to Life," the study is an introduction to the plan of salvation.

"Training Sunday School Workers in Evangelism" is an equipping center module developed by the church training and Sunday school departments and the evangelism section of the Home Mission Board as part of a five-year effort to train one million Sunday school workers to witness.

New Sunday schools will be needed to help Southern Baptists reach into communities without a Southern Baptist witness, Piland said. A goal of 1,200 new Sunday schools has been set for the 1985-86 church year.

Challenge 10/90: The People Challenge focuses on people, not numbers, Piland told the state Sunday school leaders. "People are still the reason for the Sunday school emphasis on growth. That hasn't changed and it won't change," he said.

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High Court Rejects Appeal
From Fundamentalist School

By Stan Haste

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WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand lower rulings upholding an Iowa law that exempts the Amish community, but not independent fundamentalists, from sending their children to public schools or to private schools with state-certified teachers.

According to Iowa officials, that portion of the state's compulsory school attendance law was designed for groups such as the Amish who are "isolated from the mainstream of American life." All other children, the state contended in a legal brief asking the high court to reject the case, must attend a public school or a private institution with certified teachers because of the state's "compelling interest" in insuring the education of its citizens.

Ten parents of children enrolled in a Christian day school operated by the Calvary Baptist Church, Charles City, Iowa, brought a suit challenging the law after the state board of education approved a recommendation by superintendent of public instruction Robert Benton to reject the parents' application for exemption from the statute.

They contended that by limiting the exemption to groups such as the Amish, the state unconstitutionally established religion by creating a "suspect classification" of religions exclusively entitled to be exempted. But at trial in a state district court and in the Iowa Supreme Court, the parents lost. Their unsuccessful appeal to the nation's high court marks the end of a three-year battle for exemption.

In asking the high court to take another look at the case, attorneys for the parents insisted the Iowa law discriminates against their clients by favoring one religion over all others and by denying free exercise of religion. They also asked the court to review the case in order to clear up "national confusion" over the issue of enforced teacher certification in sectarian schools.

In the state's brief, however, Iowa deputy attorney general Brent R. Appel argued the court had no jurisdiction to review a state supreme court decision interpreting state law. He also contended review of the Iowa law would not settle the issue of teacher certification nationwide in that the Constitution does not require state-by-state uniformity in educational standards. (85-671, Pruessner v. Benton)

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CORRECTION--In Baptist Press story, "\$50,000 Hunger Funds Sent To Aid Missouri Farmers," mailed 12/12/85, the farm acreage figures in the fifth paragraph refer to land acquired by the Farm and Home Administration through default, not total acres under cultivation in the state.

Thanks, Baptist Press

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NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION