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December 26, 1985

85-161

Griffin Bell Named  
 For Crowder Lawsuit

**ATLANTA (BP)**---Former United States Attorney General Griffin B. Bell has been retained by the Southern Baptist Convention to represent the convention in a lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia in Atlanta.

On Dec. 5, a retired Birmingham, Ala., couple and a retired Navy chief from Windsor, Mo., filed suit against the SBC and its Executive Committee, claiming they were "irreparably harmed" by rulings, presiding and events at the 1985 annual meeting of the convention in Dallas.

The suit, filed by Robert S. Crowder and his wife, Julia, and Henry C. Cooper, seeks to have the election of the SBC Committee on Committees, Boards and Standing Commissions declared illegal and to prevent the 52 persons elected to the body in Dallas from serving as the nominators of persons to serve as trustees of the national agencies of the denomination.

Papers in the suit were served on the SBC just before Christmas, according to SBC attorney James P. Guenther of the Nashville, Tenn., lawfirm of Guenther and Jordan. Guenther said the SBC must file a response to the 18-page complaint by Jan. 20.

Guenther said Bell and the Atlanta lawfirm of King and Spalding will be the Georgia representatives of the convention and Executive Committee. Guenther and SBC Executive Committee President Harold C. Bennett have had a conference with Bell, planning the response.

Bell was attorney general during the presidency of fellow Georgian Jimmy Carter, serving as the attorney for the government 1977-79. Previously, he was judge of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Civil Appeals from 1961-76.

Bell is a member of Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, has been a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and Mercer University, Macon, Ga.

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Five New Missionaries End  
 Worker Drought In Lebanon

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
 LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES**  
 Historical Commission, SBC  
 By Frances Fullen  
 Nashville, Tennessee

Baptist Press  
 12/26/85

**BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)**---Five Southern Baptist missionaries have begun language study in Lebanon, a country that hasn't had that many new missionaries in a decade.

Karl and Thelma Weathers of Arkansas, Gary and Jeree White and Russell Futrell of Louisiana all have come to Lebanon with a firm conviction that it is God's place for them, in spite of the daily hazards of living here.

Jeree White grew up in Lebanon as an MK (missionary kid) and always had an inclination to come back, but her husband, Gary, used to say, "I would never go to Lebanon." It took a long process of prayer and thinking to change his mind.

The Weatherses feel God gave them no choice. "We waited 11 years for a mission appointment, and the first time a job that suited our qualifications opened up, it was in Lebanon. So we didn't doubt that we were supposed to take it," they said.

They were appointed to work with the Beirut Baptist School. They have two children, Eddie, 13, and Elizabeth, 12.

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Futrell first came to Lebanon as a journeyman in 1978. God had used many different people and events to bring him to that step. For two years, he worked among university students in west Beirut. They were tumultuous years in Lebanon, but Futrell, who had friends of all political persuasions, rarely let the tension and violence prevent his moving around and being with people.

But he did have a few narrow escapes. Once late at night he almost drove into the middle of a small-arms skirmish on a Beirut street. To avoid it, he turned into a driveway, where he suddenly found a pistol at his temple as a man demanded to be driven out of the area. Futrell escaped out the other side of the car and into an apartment house.

When he left Lebanon, he promised everyone he was coming back. By the time he finished a master's degree in linguistics at Louisiana State University and a year at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, the situation was more uncertain than ever in Lebanon.

Futrell was strongly encouraged to go to some other country. Even the mission in Lebanon didn't think it wise for him to live in Beirut and sent him to Jordan for a year of language study. (Two years of language study routinely are required in the Arabic-speaking world.)

At the same time, the Weatherses, also under appointment to Lebanon, were asked to go to Jordan for their first year of language study. They went, but deep inside they felt that everyone concerned should understand that they were called to Lebanon and should be permitted to go there.

They already had faced a lot of open opposition from well-meaning family members and friends who felt they would "get themselves killed" or that it was unfair to take two children into a war zone. Such statements also caused the children to become apprehensive.

Living in Lebanon turned out to be the best antidote to those fears. Eddie and Elizabeth study by correspondence under the supervision of a young American teacher. Their main problem is the lack of friends their own age who speak their own language. A little gunfire now and then doesn't upset them.

The Whites first were appointed to Jordan and spent a whole term there before asking for a transfer. "The easiest thing," Gary says, "would have been to go back to Jordan. We have deep friendships there. Our two children are Jordanian. (The Whites have adopted children, Susan, two-and-a-half years old, and John Bill, six months.) We did a lot of praying and thinking before we knew we were called to Lebanon."

White adds, "You have to be called to Lebanon; otherwise, you wouldn't come."

Five days after the Whites arrived in Lebanon, there was an afternoon of heavy shelling. Two shells fell in the front yard, and Gary threw himself across the baby to protect him from flying glass.

Jeree, daughter of Bill and Vivian Trimble, missionaries in Lebanon since 1961, says, "It takes a certain kind of person to live here." With a laugh, she says, "a crazy person," and then becomes serious again. "We live here with the basics--just life and death. Even the mission has narrowed everything down to the basics. But the Lord has given us a love for these people that I can't explain. I want to be an encourager."

In fact, their presence already is doing that. In meeting new missionaries in the Mansourieh Baptist Church, a young believer commented, "It encourages us to have new missionaries coming, when a lot of other people are leaving."

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(Frances Fuller is a missionary press representative in Lebanon.)

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

Chowan Freshman Practices  
Patriotism In Daily Life

By Herman Gatewood

MURFREESBORO, N.C. (BP)--Patriotism is more than a discussion subject for Suzie Hughes, a Chowan College freshman who has hopes of teaching the deaf and working with handicapped people.

It is a way of life and something she incorporated in her daily routine first in high school and now at Chowan, a two-year Southern Baptist college in northeastern North Carolina.

The young teenager begins and ends her day by paying tribute and respect to the American flag, and passersby see her at dusk and dawn reverently raising and lowering "Old Glory."

During the summer months, when Hughes visited the campus for freshmen orientation, she noticed the college flag pole was empty. "This bothered me greatly," she said, "because I'm very proud of our freedom and all the things which make our country great."

Returning in late August to begin studies as a pre-education major. She again quickly noticed on some days the flag was not raised and on others, when it was displayed, it was raised and lowered at irregular times.

Hughes learned one of the student organizations previously had assumed the flag responsibility, but it was difficult for members to maintain a rigid schedule in raising and lowering the flag. She volunteered for the job.

Hughes leaves her residence hall at daybreak each morning to raise the flag. When the day draws to a close, she diligently returns to lower the flag, fold it properly and reverently take it to her room for safekeeping through the night.

"A lot of people think I'm crazy to do this," she said. "Some of my friends jokingly call me 'the flag lady' or 'Miss Betsy Ross,' but I don't mind. I'm proud of my country and I love America dearly."

Pride in her native country is instilled deeply in her even though she has faced many hardships in her nineteen years of life. She was born in nearby Aulander, but grew up in five different foster homes and recalls some unhappy experiences as a foster child.

Hughes said during her childhood she had no place that she really could call home even though several relatives maintain a room for her in their homes. She appreciates this and the Baptist Kennedy Home where she resided during her high school years.

"When people ask me where my home is, I tell them I feel at home at Chowan College," she related. "Here I have my own room, I have friends, a nice place to take my meals, and I have come to know what it must be like to have a family." She has two brothers but she rarely gets to visit with them.

Hughes graduated from North Lenoir High School, near Kinston, where she was active in several clubs and maintained a good academic record. The American flag received correct attention at the high school, because Hughes received permission from the principal to raise and lower the school's flag each day and performed the duty throughout her four years as a student.

"Our high school flag was in poor shape," she related, "and I asked several times if a new one could be purchased." When no new flag was received, Hughes saved money from her part time job as a waitress and purchased a flag to fly over the high school she appreciated so much.

Hughes plans to major in deaf education and history during college. Already proficient in deaf sign language, she says "I hope someday to work full time with the deaf and I also hope that one day I will be able to adopt a deaf child for my very own!"

Her use of hands in the sign language has not come easy. She had an accident during high school, and two tendons in her right hand were cut as well as a nerve severely damaged. Surgery followed, but doctors gave little hope for regaining the use of the fingers and hand.

"I sure wasn't going to let a cut hand keep me from doing what I wanted to do," she explained, "and I told my doctors that I would so use my hand again." She worked diligently exercising the fingers and hand to gain complete recovery. "I sure can't teach deaf people unless I can use my hands to talk," she states.

The future teacher loves life and people, but she says her greatest love is for her country and its flag. "We take so much for granted and we sometimes fail to appreciate what we have. I guess my flag is a reminder that I have so much to be thankful for, and so much to live for."

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(Herman Gatewood teaches communications at Chowan College.)

\$1 Million Donated  
For Baylor Law Chair

Baptist Press  
12/26/85

WACO, Texas (BP)—Joseph L. Allbritton and his wife, Barbara, have honored Baylor University President Emeritus Abner V. McCall by donating \$1 million to the Baylor School of Law to establish an endowed chair in McCall's name.

The Allbrittons, who live in Houston and Washington, have donated the money to establish the Abner V. McCall Chair of Evidence. The chair is the seventh endowed chair in the Baylor School of Law, according to Charles W. Barrow, professor of law and dean of the law school.

McCall has been at Baylor more than 50 years as a student, professor, law school dean, president, chancellor and now president emeritus. He received his bachelor's and his juris doctor degrees from Baylor and earned his master of laws degree from the University of Michigan. He joined the faculty of the Baylor School of Law in 1938 and from 1948-59 was its dean. In 1956, he served for several months on the Texas State Supreme Court, receiving the appointment from former Gov. Allan Shivers.

From 1959-61 he was executive vice-president of Baylor and was president from 1961-81. He became only the second chancellor in Baylor history in 1981 before becoming president emeritus upon his retirement.

Among the various courses McCall taught at the law school was "Law of Evidence." "Evidence was his specialty," Barrow says of McCall. "For those of us who were privileged enough to be in his class when he was a professor, we will always remember him as a truly great teacher of evidence. He always said, 'Evidence is the key that opens the door to justice.'"

Allbritton, a native of Houston, received his law degree from Baylor in 1949. He is active in numerous business activities, including banking, insurance, newspapers, television and other interests. In 1962, Baylor awarded him an honorary doctor of laws degree, and in 1974, he was named a Distinguished Alumnus. He is a former Baylor trustee.

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Missionary Facilitates  
Volcano Victims' Reunions

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press  
12/26/85

IBAGUE, Colombia (BP)—For nearly two weeks, Deison Valderrama, age five, coped with loneliness and pain.

No relatives came to visit at the hospital where he was taken after mud and debris destroyed the town of Armero, Colombia. Strangers—doctors, nurses and Southern Baptist missionaries—comforted him after his injured left foot was amputated because of gangrene.

Mary Nell Giles' gift of a toy truck nudged a smile from the boy who mistakenly was identified as Edison Ortiz or Edisson Ortis. Unknowingly, the missionary was in the process of engineering a far greater gift.

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Giles' one plea to "everybody that I thought had any pull" during several days of visiting at the state hospital in Ibague: get pictures of the injured and presumably orphaned children on TV. She was convinced this publicity would help reunite them with any relatives who survived the mudslide that killed up to 40,000 people after volcano Nevado del Ruiz erupted Nov. 13.

If the children can be reunited with family members, Giles reasoned, "they'll get well twice as quickly."

Her suggestion was heeded. Deison's mother, Rosa, happened to see her son's picture on TV and rushed to the hospital. Moreover, as one nurse at the six-story hospital put it, "mucho" (many) family reunions took place.

Giles learned of Deison's good news when she returned to the hospital Nov. 26. She went to meet his mother and was astounded.

"I was staring into the face of a young mother I had been consoling the previous week. We were in a state of shock for a few seconds. Finally we both came to and just stood there hugging each other."

Giles and her husband, James, and fellow missionary Ellis Leagans had taken a small stove, pots and pans and dishes to an apartment where the woman and 25 relatives were staying. The woman had told of losing her husband and three of four children. Another woman there had lost her husband and all three children.

The missionaries left a Bible, with the address of First Baptist Church of Ibague, at the apartment. The following Sunday, Deison's grandmother and aunt made professions of faith. After the reunion with Deison, other relatives also were in church.

In subsequent visits with Armero victims, Mrs. Giles has written names of missing family members in a notebook. She started the practice after missionaries encountered a young man roaming the hospital in Ibague, showing a picture of his wife and two sons to everyone he met. They transported the man to other hospitals and shelters in the area, but learned nothing about his family's whereabouts. "As far as we know, he didn't find them," Mrs. Giles said.

However, she has participated in two other providential reunions.

She visited a crying, heartbroken 13-year-old in the hospital who had just been told by a woman from Armero, "Don't look for your mother anymore. I saw her die." The youth also had lost his father, two younger brothers and two younger sisters.

The same day, Dec. 5, Mrs. Giles visited a shelter housing 400 Armero victims and said to the first people she met, "I feel so sorry today. Somebody came in and told this boy not to look for his mother anymore, and he was so upset."

When she told them his name was Miguel Soto, they couldn't believe it. They were Soto's grandparents, an uncle and a teen-age cousin. She immediately took them to the hospital for a reunion.

A bout with flu forced Mrs. Giles back to Cali, where she and her husband live in southwest Colombia. She spent Dec. 13 organizing her notebook and, just before finishing, she noticed that two survivors had given her the same name of a seven-year-old missing brother. Both thought they were the only survivors in their family. Their last names matched, Martha Espinosa, 16, an Armero survivor in a large Cali hospital, and Margarita Espinosa, 20, at the Ibague hospital.

By telephone, Mrs. Giles confirmed that they are sisters.

Martha was happy to hear the good news, but asked, "What about my mother, Marina (an 11-year-old sister) and John (a seven-year-old brother)?"

"I couldn't say, 'Well, I guess they're dead,'" Mrs. Giles recounted. "All I said is, 'We're going to keep looking for them.'"

NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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