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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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U.S. Giving To Charity  
May Experience Decline

By David Wilkinson

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—American generosity, measured in terms of charitable giving, has increased steadily during the last five years. But as a new year approaches, signs indicate the upward trend may be stalling.

One major channel of charitable giving — hunger relief for the world's starving — already is facing the painful dilemma of expanding needs and dwindling resources as Americans show a new reluctance to reach for their pocketbooks.

In 1985 Americans gave \$79.8 billion to charities, a 28 percent increase over the 1980 total of \$6.3 billion. Four out of every five of those charitable dollars came from individuals.

About \$38 billion — or 47 percent — of the 1985 total went to religious organizations. Other major recipients were education and health, \$11 billion each, and social services, \$9 billion.

While many charitable organizations worry about the future impact of tax reform on giving, hunger relief organizations already are feeling the pinch.

Some examples:

— At the end of November, Southern Baptist contributions to overseas hunger relief ministries through the convention's Foreign Mission Board lagged 31 percent behind the 11-month total for 1985.

— UNICEF's emergency appeal for Africa last year raised \$102 million. This year's appeal has raised only \$13 million.

— Africa income for Lutheran World Relief has dropped 25 percent since last year.

— Save the Children has received only \$368,000 for Africa this year, compared to \$6.7 million in 1985.

— World Vision has cut its African relief budget from \$42.7 million in fiscal year 1986 to \$17.2 million. World Vision's donor base went from 892,000 in 1984 to 1.2 million in 1985 and then fell to 878,000 this year.

Despite stepped-up international aid, the United Nations estimates 17 million Africans are still dependent on food aid.

Robert Parham, director of hunger concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said reasons for the sharp drop in hunger gifts are numerous: economic hardships in some areas of the United States, a decline in news media coverage of ongoing hunger needs and reports of the return of rain to parts of Africa which "have caused many people to assume mistakenly that Africa is now well down the road to recovery."

"Also," he said, "the quick-fix mentality of many Americans has led people to misunderstand the long-term nature of hunger relief and development work. Many people do not understand that reducing hunger in Africa and elsewhere around the world is going to take years of hard work."

Executed Murderer Andrade  
Knew Christ, Chaplains Say

By Orville Scott

DALLAS (BP)—Convicted killer Richard Andrade, who was executed in Huntsville, Texas, Dec. 18, became a Christian during the national Prison Invasion Dec. 5-7, prison chaplains reported.

Andrade was one of more than 17,000 inmates in 500 prisons in 46 states who became born-again Christians during the revival, said ex-inmate Paul Kramer of Dallas, national administrator for the event, the largest such effort in history.

A chaplain who was with Andrade when he died said the 25-year-old man admitted he had done wrong but said he had asked God for forgiveness and had accepted Christ as his Savior.

"Don't feel sorry for me. I'm going with God. I'm going to paradise," Andrade said.

The National Prison Invasion was held on the 45th anniversary of the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor, but instead of guns and hate, about 8,000 volunteer counselors went into the cells and the cellblocks armed with the Bible and Christian love, said Kramer.

Another ex-inmate, Paul Carlin of Crockett, Texas, director of Prisoner's Bible Institute, coordinated the revival efforts of 950 volunteers in 25 federal and state prisons across Texas. Carlin said the Texas volunteers, about 80 percent of them Southern Baptists, were overwhelmed by the response of so many inmates.

Carlin, a former Southern Baptist pastor, said, "The tendency is to lock up convicts and forget about them, but we can't forget about them, because most of them are coming back (to their home communities.) How much better it is to have them come back as new people in Jesus Christ."

Prison ministry was one of Jesus' foremost commandments, said Carlin. "When Jesus died on a cross, he died a convicted felon between convicted felons, and his last act was to save a convicted felon and take him to heaven."

First-time prison ministry volunteers said they could hardly wait to go back into the prisons again to share their faith.

Scott Moneyham, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and one of 55 volunteers from First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, was in Ellis I Unit near Huntsville, Texas, talking to a death row inmate about Christ when he noticed Andrade in the adjoining cell listening eagerly.

"Is there time for me?" the inmate asked, "I just have 14 days to live."

Moneyham assured him there was time, showed him in the Bible how to become a Christian, and the condemned man received Christ into his heart.

Carlos McLeod, one of 25 Texas Baptists who preached in the prison chapel services, said, "My weekend at Eastham Prison gave me a fresh insight into the opportunities to change the face of our society from behind prison walls."

McLeod, director of the Texas Baptist Evangelism Division, said he was impressed with the giant step made earlier by Texas Baptist Men, the Texas Baptist State Missions Commission and Tryon Evergreen Baptist Association in building the hospitality house at Huntsville to minister to inmate's families.

"Now I am elated to see the response of the inmates to the gospel. The road of rehabilitation is open for the thousands who experienced new life in Jesus this weekend," McLeod said.

Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "I really believe this is the answer.

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"If we don't do something to change what happens to them (offenders) when they get out, there's no hope," added Draper, who served as a counselor and preached during chapel services at Ellis I.

Draper said he would like to see Southern Baptists plan a greater, organized ministry in the prisons.

Positive reports on the effects of the revival have also come from prison chaplains and wardens. Avery Timmons, senior chaplain at Ellis I prison near Huntsville, Texas, said, "The revival was fantastic. Several prisoners have accepted the Lord since the revival."

Among the numerous incidents of changed lives across the country were two inmates who were planning an escape but went to the revival and gave their lives to Christ.

A chaplain at the state prison in Moundsville, W. Va., told of a prisoner who had been there for more than 20 years who always verbally abused the chaplain and his family. During the revival, the man walked into the chaplain's office and told him, "I've been away from God for 30 years and been bitter, but now I'm looking forward to being part of the prison church."

Inmates were not the only people affected. In Georgia, two guards and a prison nurse gave their lives to Jesus, said Kramer.

George R. Waldron, senior warden at Texas' Eastham Correctional Unit, described by Newsweek magazine as "the toughest prison in the United States," said he and his staff feel positive about the revival.

"What impressed me," said Waldron, "was that someone out there cared and took the time to minister to this population." Eastham is noted for housing hardened criminals and those with life terms.

"I like to help in projects that help me operate the institution," said Waldron. "If one inmate's behavior is changed for the better, we're just that much blessed." About 200 inmates at Eastham received Christ into their lives during the Prison Invasion.

Dick Kastner, chaplain at the Wynne unit near Huntsville, Texas, echoed Waldron's reaction, saying, "We would welcome it again."

He said that in addition to the impact on new converts, there are Christians who received encouragement to help them live out their faith in the prison.

Among the prison ministry volunteers was a former Southern Baptist pastor from Gulfport, Miss., Rick Edwards, who was released from federal prison last April after serving more than two years on conspiracy charges.

"There is no real rehabilitation except through Jesus Christ," said Edwards. "The only hope for inmates is lay people like this reaching in from the outside to set the captives free. I know from experience that men who are incarcerated can find freedom through repentance of sin and coming to know Jesus Christ as reality in their lives."

Joe Gaudette, an inmate of Eastham, said, "I feel the Lord allowed me to get an aggravated life sentence to break me, to get my attention so he can use me." Although he is serving a life sentence, Gaudette hopes to be released and have a Christian ministry to other inmates.

Kramer called the revival a giant step towards increasing involvement of churches in regular and consistent prison ministry and decreasing crime.

He said that, on the average, 60 percent of offenders will return to prison after release, but studies show a recidivism rate as low as 12 percent when inmates have a genuine life-changing encounter with Christ and become involved in church programs.

Without support of family, church or other resources when he is released, there is an 85 percent likelihood that an offender will return to prison, Kramer added.

Carson-Newman College  
Wins NAIA Championship

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)—Carson-Newman College won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics football championship Dec. 20, with a 17-0 victory over Cameron University of Lawton, Okla.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention school has been NAIA football champions or co-champions three times in the past four years. The Eagles won the 1983 and tied the 1984 title games.

The Eagles finished the season with 12 wins and one loss.

The game at Burke-Tarr Stadium on the Carson-Newman College campus provided two firsts — the first college football championship game held in the state and the first sporting event to be televised live by the ACTS network of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

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Georgia's Rutland  
Dies In Atlanta

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ATLANTA (BP)—Guy W. Rutland Jr., leader of one of the most active Southern Baptist families in Georgia, died in Atlanta in mid-December at age 73.

Rutland died of congestive heart failure. He had been in poor health since suffering a stroke in 1964.

Rutland was executive vice president of Motor Convoy, Inc., from 1935 to 1968. He became chairman in 1978. The company gained national attention for its industrial chaplaincy program.

Rutland was chairman of board of First Baptist Decatur Foundation which financed church and mission projects around the world. He was chairman of trustees at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., for several years. He served on the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, was chairman of trustees at Tift (Baptist) College in Forsyth, Ga., and was treasurer of the Haggai Institute of Atlanta.

His father before him, Rutland himself and their children have given millions of dollars to Baptist causes. Buildings are named for them at Tift College, Golden Gate Seminary and Georgia Baptist Medical Center in Atlanta.

His widow, Marie Simpson Rutland of Decatur, has chaired committees for the Home Mission Board. He spent 11 years as a member of the Georgia General Assembly and was speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives in 1963-64. His son, Guy Rutland III, has been on the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

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Georgia Baptist Medical Center  
Adding \$13.2 Million Facility

Baptist Press  
12/22/86

ATLANTA (BP)—Georgia Baptist Medical Center has received approval to build a \$13.2 million office building in downtown Atlanta.

Approval came from the Georgia Baptist Convention executive committee in Atlanta.

The medical center will have doctors' offices, an outpatient diagnostic and surgical center, a women's health center and senior adult services. It will be financed by a tax-exempt bond issue, amortized over 25 years at 7 percent interest.

The committee also elected William T. Neal III as associate editor of the Christian Index, the Georgia Baptist state paper, effective Jan. 1. Neal has been assistant to the director of the Georgia Baptist education division for two years.

He was a Baptist campus minister in Columbus, Ga., for 11 years. He was news director at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., 1972-74.

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Leaders Pledge Support  
Of Evangelism Priority

By Linda Lawson

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Five Southern Baptist program leaders and an agency president pledged increased cooperation and support in stepped up efforts at calling Southern Baptists to make winning non-Christians to Christ their number one priority.

They called on pastors to use Witness Commitment Day on Jan. 11 as a launch pad for training people to witness and providing regular witnessing opportunities.

Lloyd Elder, president of the convention's Sunday School Board, and Robert Hamblin, vice president for evangelism of the Home Mission Board, met Dec. 15 for a four-hour prayer and strategy session.

Other participants in the meeting were from the Sunday School Board and included Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school department; Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department; Joe Stacker, director of the church administration department; Wesley Forbis, director of the church music department; and James Williams, assistant to the president and director of the office of planning and research.

"Our only agenda was to pray and talk together about our burden for the lostness of America and how to develop an atmosphere, a tone, a spirit of concern," said Edgemon. "We talked together about what we can do individually and jointly."

In the first nine months of the 1985-90 Bold Mission Thrust goal of training 1 million Sunday school workers to witness, Edgemon said, estimates indicate 8,465 churches trained about 111,000 people. Therefore, more than 28,000 churches have not yet conducted witness training, he said.

"The whole aim of this goal is for 1 million Sunday school workers trained as witnesses to be a base, but deacons, church training workers, missions leaders and others also need to be able to tell someone how to accept Christ as their Savior," Piland said.

Piland, Edgemon and Hamblin urged churches to observe Witness Commitment Day Jan. 11 and then begin witness training immediately thereafter. They recommended using the church training equipping center module, "Training Sunday School Workers in Evangelism," jointly developed by the three programs.

"Somehow we must preach and teach the lostness of mankind and create a caring spirit for those who are lost," or non-Christians, said Hamblin.

Elder pledged to structure the Sunday School Board to keep evangelism "at the heart of its purpose," to employ people committed to the priority of evangelism, to work cooperatively with the Home Mission Board and "speak out about the need to set a tone of urgency for winning people to Christ."

"Make no mistake about it," Elder added, "the New Testament reports the spiritual and numerical growth of the churches. Without Jesus as Savior, people all around us are lost. I am confident other SBC agency leaders are ready to make biblical evangelism the heartbeat of our service to Southern Baptists."

Stacker said the thrust of efforts by the church administration department will be to help pastors develop the spiritual and emotional health they need to effectively and aggressively lead their churches to evangelize their communities.

He said church administration periodicals will emphasize the priority of evangelism and the department will work with the Home Mission Board in sponsoring more pastoral leadership conferences on reaching people.

Forbis said the church music department will work with the Home Mission Board and others to make available music that clearly communicates an evangelistic message.

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Edgemon, Piland and Hamblin cited the jointly sponsored Witness Training Clinic set for April 24-30, 1987, in New Orleans as an attempt in six days to help Southern Baptist churches in one city to locate lost persons, train Baptists to witness and then go out and witness to those who are not Christians.

All participants in the meeting agreed to implement initial commitments and continue working together on other plans.

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Ingathering, Member Training  
Top Church Training Priorities

By Terri Lackey

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Baptist Press  
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Reclaiming inactive church members, gaining new members and keeping them once they join are all tasks that will receive top priority in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department during the next few years.

"Studies indicate people drop out of church either because of lack of theological foundation or because they have been hurt emotionally by their fellow church members," said Roy Edgemon, church training department director, following a three-day annual planning meeting for state church training directors in Nashville, Tenn.

Edgemon said he hopes two new programs, Ingathering: Reclaiming Inactive Church Members and New Church Member Training, will serve to reinstate non-participating church members and give them a stronger theological base, as well as teach faithful attenders how to be more compassionate toward fellow members.

"We lose people because of neglect," Edgemon said. "Ingathering teaches people to be sensitive to others' needs. To my knowledge it is the first course developed that will teach people how to just listen and try to find out why that person left the church in the first place.

"I think ingathering will prevent active members from becoming inactive," he added.

He said when half of the Southern Baptist Convention's 14.6 million members are inactive and have not shown up at their churches for at least 12 months, "the problem is beyond serious."

Edgemon said he believes New Church Member Training also will combat much of the problem churches are having with loss of membership. New member training basically is designed to teach new Christians or new members Baptist beliefs and heritage, he explained. It also is designed to equip new members with knowledge about their new church, about what they might expect from that church and what it can expect from them.

Henry Webb, planning coordinator in the board's church training department, said about 350,000 people became Christians last year and an additional 500,000 joined Southern Baptist churches.

"These are our prospects for new member training," Webb said. "If only half of those 850,000 received new member training, we would have a 17 percent (340,000) increase in church training enrollment in one year."

Webb said only 11,000, or 30 percent, of Southern Baptist churches reported new member training last year. "Over 25,000 churches in the SBC need to start new member training," he noted. "If people aren't taught early on, it's a good chance they'll drop out of church."

State church training leaders also discussed ways to help churches start new church training programs, ways to promote associational work in their states, dated and undated curriculum uses and the 1987 Baptist doctrine study, "The Doctrine of Prayer."

Edgemon and the church training department also honored Joe Davis Heacock, retired Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor, with the 1986 Friend of Church Training Award, an honor bestowed on leaders who have spent a large portion of their lives working with church training.

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