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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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### Parks Invites 36 Mission Groups To Trade Ideas, Talk Strategy

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Leaders of 36 denominations and organizations active in world missions have been invited to discuss their concerns "in reaching all the people of our generation for Christ."

R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, is proposing that the discussion take place this fall in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

In his letter suggesting the meeting, Parks expressed "a deepening concern for more communication" among U.S.-based missions groups. In seeking to spread the faith, he asked, "Is there a way to share information or plans that would avoid wasted effort and lost time?"

Among the denominations queried about the initial meeting are Conservative Baptists, National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Christian and Missionary Alliance, Assemblies of God, United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Interdenominational organizations contacted include the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, American Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Campus Crusade for Christ and North American Charismatic Renewal.

The initial meeting will include a maximum of two representatives from each group, including the Foreign Mission Board. But it may lead to further consultations encompassing additional staff members as well as representatives of other denominations and organizations, Parks said in an interview.

"None of us is large enough, strong enough, wise enough to make a significant impact on the whole world," Parks said. "We need each other. If we can help each other have a more effective part in world evangelization, we're having a greater impact than if we lived and worked in isolation."

Parks said he envisions a "networking" among the groups -- "information sharing, learning from each other, the kind of sharing that will allow each of us to retain our identity." He said he is not proposing anything involving detailed theological concepts or church ordinances.

"We want to talk about how each group can more effectively carry out the Great Commission," Jesus Christ's command to share the gospel worldwide, he said.

In discussing their present activities, future plans and information-gathering efforts, the groups might move toward "a deliberate strategy ... being certain that all of the world's people groups have somebody praying for and working toward witnessing to them," Parks said.

Many of the people groups -- totaling more than half of the world's 5 billion people -- are in communist-bloc, Islamic and other countries where foreign missions work is either prohibited or restricted.

Through the proposed meeting, Parks said: "I believe we can learn something from the other groups, and they may learn something from us. If we can learn from each other's strengths, we end up all being strengthened."

He said some groups may want to study Southern Baptists' strength in career missionaries -- 3,800 in 110 countries, the vast majority of them fluent in the languages spoken where they live. Southern Baptists, meanwhile, may want to study the methodology of groups with mobile personnel. Also, Parks said, "Some of the groups are active in countries where we're not."

Barrett Urges Coordination  
In World Evangelization

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Some 300 plans to evangelize the world have been formulated since Christ's death and resurrection. Missions researcher David Barrett says 250 of them "collapsed or fizzled out within five, 10 or 15 years."

The remaining 50 plans, those of modern-day Christians, include Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust. Likewise, these "seem barely possible of achievement," Barrett says, unless Christians coordinate their efforts in a way that is "completely new and unprecedented."

Barrett, a widely quoted Anglican, is the author of a new book on world evangelization, "Cosmos, Chaos and Gospel," which contains a chronology of past scenarios and possible future ones. He spoke on the "Future Faces of Missions" during the American Society of Missiology's mid-June meeting in Pittsburgh.

He has been a consultant at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board since 1985. Among his previous works are the "World Christian Encyclopedia" in 1982, and "World-Class Cities and World Evangelization" in 1986, both studies of Christian numerical strength worldwide.

Numerous contemporary plans for world evangelization, in addition to Bold Mission Thrust, focus on the year 2000. One is spearheaded by several international Christian radio ministries. A Roman Catholic plan encompasses satellite TV. One interdenominational organization wants to take Christian literature "Into Every Home by 2000." Roman Catholic charismatics have adopted a plan; charismatics in mainline Protestant churches have adopted still another.

Noting that such plans have failed in the past, Barrett says, "In almost all cases, Christians and their churches were directly to blame: administrative fiascos, personality clashes, irrelevant doctrinal disagreements, prayerlessness, apathy, shortages of funds, embezzlements, absence of workers, rise of other agendas, diversions to other interests."

Worse, "the overriding problem" continues to be a failure among Christians to coordinate their evangelistic plans, Barrett adds.

Broadcasting alone will not evangelize the world, the researcher notes. Radio ministries touch only 200 of the world's 7,000 languages. Christian TV extends to only 50 languages. It would be "logistically impossible" for media workers to add even 200 more languages by the year 2000, Barrett insists.

Targeting Christian literature for every home also is an inadequate method of world evangelization. There are 1.7 billion homes on earth, 1 billion of them unreached, according to the interdenominational organization focusing on Christian literature. The number of homes is increasing by 30 million annually. Meanwhile, the organization's literature is reaching only 6 million homes. Thus, it is losing ground by 24 million homes a year.

Barrett regards Bold Mission Thrust as "the best example of a properly organized global plan ... highly developed in all kinds of directions," including an emphasis on the stewardship necessary to evangelize the world.

Still, by Barrett's estimate, there are 1.3 billion people in the world who have not yet heard the gospel. Bold Mission Thrust's goal is for Southern Baptists to do their part toward reaching them by the year 2000. This means Baptists, along with others sharing this concern, must reach 100 million people annually -- in addition to the 137 million who are born each year.

Christians in Third World and communist-bloc countries, Barrett adds, are but minimally involved in these initiatives, yet they comprise 64 percent of the world's believers.

Barrett sees no easy solution to the problem. But he believes a meeting of denominations and organizations "ranging across the entire spectrum of global Christianity" would be a good first step toward effective coordination of world evangelization. Such a meeting, he notes, is being proposed by Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks.

Fostering cooperation, however, is not the only challenge ahead. Barrett reports some futurists envision 100,000 cities, each with 10 million people, by the year 2200. "What does all this have to say about the future face of urban mission and ministry?" the researcher wonders.

Some futurists predict women will comprise 25 percent of all ordained ministers by the year 2000, and 50 percent by 2050. Life expectancy may reach 150 years for half the western world by 2001; some even say it may soar to 800 years three decades later. One futurist predicts that Third World Pentecostal-charismatic churches may spread like wildfire through media churches within 75 years.

"If you're a missions futurist, you don't know any better than anybody else what's going to happen," says Barrett, who has been collecting predictions of the future for a decade. But an awareness of the possibilities ahead "gives us the chance to start working now" that the best ones might come to pass.

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Dilday Discusses Peace Report  
With Seminary Faculty And Staff

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--How the Southern Baptist Peace Committee report is interpreted will determine the document's effect on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, President Russell Dilday told the school's faculty and administrative staff.

In separate meetings with the two groups, Dilday reviewed the report, which was overwhelmingly adopted by messengers to the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. The Peace Committee was formed in 1985 to identify problems and answers in the nine-year-old denominational controversy.

"From the very first paragraph to the last, the report gives itself to a wide range of interpretations," Dilday said. How the seminary's faculty and staff will be affected depends upon how trustees and others interpret the document, he said.

But Dilday found more in the report to agree with than to disagree with. He cited 18 things he was pleased with and only eight problem areas.

"Our response to the continuing controversy in the convention will be to go on doing the best job we can," Dilday said. "Southwestern has the respect and enthusiastic support of the vast majority of our convention. It has maintained a steady course in its effort to combine constructive, conservative theology with excellence in practical scholarship.

"Our faculty and staff have been sensitive and responsive to the issues of these past nine years and having learned from these developments, they have made significant adjustments in our work in order to do a better job," he said.

"Southwestern Seminary is poised to become the major influential institution in Southern Baptist life," Dilday said. "The effort to lead out is going to belong to that institution that retains its integrity and commitment to practical, unapologetic biblical scholarship."

Dilday took his staff and faculty through the six-page report column by column, pointing out the "constructive features" he agrees with:

-- "We should find ways to bridge our differences and work together."

-- "It is proper for trustees and administrators to preserve the Baptist heritage of our agencies and institutions using the Baptist Faith and Message as a guideline."

-- "We ought to discontinue political activity."

-- "We ought not impose certain views of Scripture on individuals and churches."

-- "There should be no effort to eliminate any doctrinal view among us which is consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message."

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-- "The seminaries should continue to affirm their commitments to the Baptist Faith and Message and the promise of fairness and balance in the Glorieta Statement."

Other areas of agreement included reaffirming a high view of Scripture, calling for SBC appointments representing the diversity of Southern Baptists, striving for denominational reconciliation and supporting the Cooperative Program, the convention's unified budget.

But Dilday said he still disagrees with the report's conclusion that the source of controversy is theological: "I don't see Baptists in disagreement over our basic theology. We are practically unanimous in our belief in the total trustworthiness of Scripture."

Rather, he said, differences arise over issues such as whether Southern Baptists will be cooperative or independent and how certain passages of Scripture should be interpreted.

Dilday also said he is troubled by the report's description of doctrinal diversity. The report illustrates this diversity with four points, such as that some faculty members believe the miracles were historical events while others believe they were parabolic.

"This implies that our seminary faculties are divided 50/50 over these positions," Dilday said. "That is not true. Those who hold the 'liberal' views illustrated in the report are very, very few. I don't know any here at Southwestern who do not accept the conservative position on such issues."

And where there is diversity among Southern Baptists, "it is usually expressed within the general framework of conservative theology," he said.

Also, the report "does not come down hard enough on the shameful political manipulations of the past few years," Dilday said. "There's not much in the report to strongly discourage further political activity."

Another problem is that the report "comes dangerously close to codifying or canonizing a list of Scriptural and textual interpretations as addenda to the Baptist Faith and Message," Dilday said.

He referred to the report's conclusion that "most Southern Baptists see 'truth without any mixture of error'" as affirming a specific interpretation of four points of Scripture -- Adam and Eve, authorship, miracles and historical narratives.

"While as simple biblicists we readily agree with those interpretations, the danger is that we as Baptists have never lifted certain interpretations to that level of authority," Dilday said. "What will be on the next list -- eschatology or national political issues?"

Such additions make the Baptist Faith and Message "a different statement," he said. Since faculty members were employed upon acceptance of the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message, making them sign something else would create problems, Dilday said.

Other problem areas in the report include "legitimizing the takeover success of the militant party," applying the conservative label to only one group, setting a precedent of avoiding discussion on divisive subjects and the "unwise" continuation of the Peace Committee for another three years.

Dilday thanked the faculty and staff for being responsible in the heat of the debate. "I've not had to apologize for anybody," he said.

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BWA General  
Council Wrap-Up

By John M. Wilkes

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

AMMAN, Jordan (BP)--The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance approved a slate of resolutions on religious liberty and world peace, a report urging a new organizational structure study and a million-dollar budget during its annual meeting in Amman, Jordan.

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From the opening sessions, the council members were welcomed by the Jordanian people -- both officially and unofficially.

The Jordanian cabinet's minister of occupied territory affairs, His Excellency Marway Doudin, told 300 council members, committee personnel and study commissioners that the Jordan River, less than a half-hour's drive from Amman, must evoke a wide range of religious sentiments and historical anecdotes.

"It is not only our duty but our pleasure to make your short stay among us a pleasant and memorable one," said Doudin.

The resolution of appreciation to the Baptist Convention of Jordan, the council's spiritual hosts during the week, included gratitude to the Jordanian people and recognition of Doudin's representation of the prime minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Fawaz Ameish, president of the Jordanian Convention, welcomed the guests "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer," and on behalf of the Baptists and Christians in Jordan.

"We, the Baptists, are a very small number in this country, but we worship the Lord in freedom and peace under the patronage and wise leadership of the king of this county, King Hussein Ibn Talal, and his wise government," Ameish said.

Baptist World Alliance President G. Noel Vose of Perth, Australia, who chaired the council sessions, replied: "It is part of the unique contribution of Baptists to the church as a whole, that we hold to the separation of the affairs of the church and the state ... we believe the church should govern its own affairs but that we should be good citizens and loyal to the country to which we belong."

The BWA council voted to approve the membership application of the Evangelical Baptist Church of the Ivory Coast, a body with some 3,000 church members. The new organization brings to 137 the number of alliance affiliates in 144 countries. The Ivory Coast affiliate was the only one of eight applicants approved.

The BWA men's department requested that it take the initiative in raising \$250,000 to help send 100,000 Russian-language Bibles to the Soviet Union next year. The BWA has been assured that its Soviet affiliate, the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the Soviet Union, received in writing an import permit for legal delivery of the Bibles.

It will be a joint project of the BWA and the United Bible Societies in Stuttgart, Federal Republic of Germany. The amount represents one-half the total needed.

The newly-approved budget is the first million-dollar budget in BWA history.

In other actions, the council gave approval to preliminary plans and budget figures for the 16th Baptist World Congress in the summer of 1990 to be held in Seoul, Korea, and heard words of welcome from the Baptists of Korea.

Also meeting were the BWA's four divisions and six study commissions, as well as its men's, women's and youth departments.

The council approved a recommendation that a new division of promotion and development be added to the existing Baptist World Aid, communications, evangelism and education, and study and research divisions. The new division will direct its attention to fund-raising activities which, in addition to the operating budget, will help finance the ministries of BWA divisions and departments.

In a closing business matter, general council members accepted a report from the BWA structure committee calling for a wide-ranging study of the world organization. Andrew McRae, president of Acadia Baptist College in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada, presented the committee's report saying, "...in this review there can be no exempted areas."

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Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board personnel in Jordan found enough pizza to feed nearly 30 Southern Baptist members of the council, commissions and committees. They provided a picnic at the Baptist School of Amman, which included an orientation to Southern Baptist work in the country.

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John M. Wilkes is director of the BWA department of communications.

Soviet Union Open  
To Baptist Bibles

By John M. Wilkes

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

AMMAN, Jordan (BP)--Baptist men of the world will ship 100,000 Russian-language Bibles to the Soviet Union.

They will lead in raising \$250,000 during the next six months to support a Baptist World Alliance/United Bible Societies joint Bible project.

The project was approved by the BWA General Council at its annual meeting in Amman, Jordan, July 5-12. Baptist men worldwide will provide about one-half of the \$500,000 needed. The remainder will come from United Bible Society support funds.

The BWA action followed a motion by James H. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, at a conference of Baptist men the previous week in Cardiff, Wales. Smith urged that the BWA men's department take responsibility for the Baptist share of the project's cost, and that the effort be a memorial to the late Owen Cooper, former president of the department.

The Russian Bibles will cost about \$5 each for paper, printing and shipping.

"Five dollars is a small amount to pay for a Bible anywhere," Smith said. "There has been so much talk in recent years about underground means (of getting Bibles into the Soviet Union), many people think that is the only way. Now here is a way to send the Bible through the front door. And since Baptists are a law-abiding people, we feel it's our responsibility to go through this open door."

The Bibles will be delivered early in 1988 to The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the Soviet Union.

The All-Union Council received an import permit in June after BWA General Secretary Gerhard Class sent a letter outlining the proposal to Konstantin M. Kharcher of the Soviet Union Council of Ministers.

The gift is to mark the 1,000th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church, organized in 988, a celebration which will be observed by all Soviet Christians.

All-Union Council General Secretary Alexei M. Bichkov said: "A few years ago Soviet Baptists began praying to receive 2 million Bibles. Since 1976, through the Bible societies with BWA help, we already had been given more than 150,000 copies of the word of God. This latest development brings us fully one-fourth of the way toward achieving our prayer goal."

"Southern Baptists have been saying a great deal about the Bible," said Smith of the project. "This is our opportunity to demonstrate our faith in the power of the Bible."

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Congressman Speaks Against  
Taxing Investment Income

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

WASHINGTON (BP)--During a hearing to gather U.S. House of Representatives reaction to proposed revenue-raising options, a congressman testified in opposition to the possible imposition of a 5 percent excise tax on the investment income of tax-exempt organizations.

Rep. Pat Williams, D-Mont., told members of the House Ways and Means Committee the proposed excise tax would directly affect many of the nation's institutions of higher education.

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The excise tax, as proposed in a staff report issued by the Ways and Means Committee and Joint Committee on Taxation, would be levied on the net investment income of all tax-exempt organizations, including religious, charitable and educational organizations. Such action would generate more than \$15 billion in revenue for the federal budget over a three-year period, according to the report.

Williams, who chairs the House Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education, emphasized the importance of endowments to colleges and universities.

"Endowments are established solely to support the tax-exempt purposes of education and research," he said. "This country depends on our educational institutions to train its scientists, its workers, its manufacturers. Endowments can and do offset some of the costs of higher education, a use we have in the past considered proper."

Williams reminded the committee of a recent \$1 billion reduction in federal spending for higher education purposes and of the effects of recent tax reform efforts on postsecondary institutions.

"I urge you not to make additional changes until we are able to determine the effects of the rather major changes already imposed on America's colleges and universities," he said.

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House Committee Votes To  
Continue Postal Subsidy

By Eric Fox

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

WASHINGTON (BP)--The House Appropriations Committee has voted to maintain current levels of postal rates for non-profit mailers through fiscal year 1988.

The committee passed an amendment to the Postal Service Appropriation Act of 1988 to appropriate \$556.5 million in federal funds to subsidize reduced postal rates for non-profit publications, including Baptist state newspapers and some church newsletters, through September 1988.

In previous years, Congress has approved an annual revenue foregone appropriation to subsidize the difference between what the Postal Service would receive at full unreduced rates and what it actually receives at the reduced rates. However, the Reagan administration repeatedly has called for the elimination of the subsidy and the House Treasury, Postal Service and General Government Subcommittee voted in June to do away with the revenue foregone.

Rep. Edward R. Roybal, D-Calif., subcommittee chairman, proposed the amendment to restore the revenue foregone after a recently passed House budget resolution raised the Appropriations Committee's ceiling and provided an additional allocation.

A Postal Service spokesman said postal rates for non-profit publications will remain the same until the next general rate increase, which likely will take place next summer.

If approved by the full House, the appropriations bill will go to the Senate for action.

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Legislation To Determine If  
FTC May Restrict Unfair Ads

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

WASHINGTON (BP)--If pending legislation is approved by the U.S. House of Representatives, a congressional conference committee will have the task of negotiating whether the Federal Trade Commission can restrict unfair advertising.

In question is the FTC's "unfairness" rulemaking authority, which has allowed the federal agency to prohibit unfair commercial conduct.

The FTC's unfairness power allows restriction of advertising that might injure consumers through means other than direct factual errors. Without that authority, the agency would be unable to address advertisements that might contribute to unsafe or unhealthy activity by children, the elderly or other vulnerable groups. Examples include:

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- Requiring all cigarette advertisements to include health warnings.
- Restricting alcoholic beverage advertising that targets und r-age drinkers.
- Protecting children from ads showing unsafe behavior, such as reckless use of electrical toys.

Although the agency's unfairness authority originated in 1914, Congress in 1980 enacted a temporary restriction prohibiting the FTC from using the authority. The restriction was scheduled to expire when the agency came up for congressional reauthorization in 1982. But Congress has failed to agree on reauthorization legislation, thus leaving the restriction in place.

The Senate recently passed an FTC reauthorization bill that would make the temporary restriction permanent. But legislation approved by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and awaiting action by the full House would eliminate the restriction. If the House version receives approval, the two bills will go to a conference committee for reconciliation.

"The House bill restores important authorization to the Federal Trade Commission," said N. Larry Baker, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "Baptists and other citizens concerned about the negative influence of some media advertising should encourage their representatives to pass this bill without allowing the unfairness exemption to be added."

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Missionary Leads Ugandans  
To Fight AIDS With Bible

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP)--A Southern Baptist missionary doctor is leading Ugandan Christians to fight AIDS with the Bible.

Missionary Rick Goodgame believes spiritual teaching will stem the spread of AIDS -- acquired immune deficiency syndrome. But more than that, it could present the gospel to as many as 1 million people reached in schools, factories and businesses, and at religious and political meetings.

Ugandans of many denominations are coming forward and saying, "Hey, I want to be a part of this project," Goodgame said.

He foresees hundreds of evangelicals banding together and planning a series of hour-long seminars throughout the nation of 12 million people. Early efforts would be in English, later ones in a national tongue, Luganda, and other local languages.

During the seminars, participants will be given a Bible with special printed inserts aimed at discussing marriage and morality, telling AIDS patients that eternal life is real and reminding Christians how to respond to hurting people.

He expects the evangelicals to distribute about 90,000 Bibles during the first six months and believes the program could become as extensive as any other AIDS education system planned in Uganda.

In Africa the fatal AIDS plague has infected up to 2 million people, primarily through heterosexual contact, according to published reports of World Health Organization studies. However, authoritative statistics have become hard to secure because some African governments have pressed AIDS researchers not to publicize their findings.

Goodgame has received favorable response for his Bible education program from the Uganda government's Health Department, Catholic and Protestant leaders, and Christian groups, including medical organizations and student unions. In addition, the plan has been approved by the health education subcommittee of Uganda's Committee for AIDS Prevention.

"In the word of God, there are many powerful and eye-opening passages about sex and marriage and spiritual insights controlling man, especially for someone confronting the Scriptures for the first time," said Goodgame. The Clearwater, Fla., native and former Texas physician has taught medicine in Kampala, Uganda, since 1980, when he and his wife arrived as missionaries.

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AIDS patients will find comfort and eternal life as Christians examine the Scriptures with them, Goodgame believes.

His missionary colleague Jim Rice also believes the AIDS crisis offers the church in Uganda unequalled opportunity. "It could be our very finest hour as a church, or it could be a time when we lose any right in the future to be heard again," Rice said. At a time when AIDS patients are open to the gospel, Christians must treat them as they would Jesus Christ himself, he added.

Goodgame's plan has received wholehearted support from the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Uganda. The program will run alongside Uganda's own efforts, which include a mass media campaign stressing the use of condoms and reducing the number of sex partners.

In addition, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has approved buying 165,000 Bibles and the special printed materials to be glued on the inside of covers and on flyleaves. The printed insert Baptists are to provide will be mounted on the inside of the Bible cover and will say, "Medical Science Answers Five Questions Related to AIDS." It will answer questions such as what AIDS is, whether it is a big problem in Uganda, how AIDS is spread and who gets it.

A second sheet, however, will point to answers not found in the secular world. Mounted on the flyleaf opposite the first insert, it will use about 25 Scriptures to outline what God's plan is for sex and marriage, how a person can control sexual tendencies, how one should treat a person with AIDS, how an AIDS patient can find comfort and hope, and how a dying AIDS patient can know he has eternal life.

AIDS cripples the body's immune system, leaving it vulnerable to fatal infections. It has so invaded all levels of African society that world development agencies fear the virus will stunt Africa's future.

In a news story published in late May by the Washington Post, Uganda's health minister, Ruhakana Rugunda, was quoted as saying AIDS in his country has spared neither the ordinary worker nor the professional.

But specific information about AIDS in Uganda is difficult to obtain. The Uganda government has made it clear that no person living in the country except those designated by the Health Department can talk to foreign journalists regarding AIDS, Goodgame said. In support of this, Goodgame said he would speak neither about the severity of AIDS in Uganda nor about specific Ugandans suffering with AIDS.

Another subject Goodgame refuses to discuss is the early clinical research and analysis he pursued until about nine months ago. Goodgame had been working with Ugandan doctors to define the extent of the AIDS problem, but last fall he left research in the hands of Ugandans.

He said he is more excited now than he has been for some time concerning his role in the midst of AIDS: "I've got a freedom in my own heart about the AIDS thing, more than I have had in the two or three years that I've been wondering what my role is. This thing I'm initiating is more in keeping with my calling, and with a positive impact on the country. I feel like God's given me a new direction. This might touch more lives than anything I've done here."

Goodgame plans for the project to begin in August. The first 4,000 inserts have been printed and 1,000 Bibles found in Uganda. Next, 100 Christian volunteers will be educated on the medical and biblical aspects of AIDS and sent to 20 primary schools and 10 secondary schools in Kampala. Similar groups will visit hospitals, where they will educate doctors, nurses and paramedical staff about how Scripture can give comfort and hope to AIDS patients.

Eventually Goodgame hopes to use 200,000 Bibles in English and the rest in Luganda and dialects. He expects that securing Bibles as they are needed will be the most difficult part of the project.

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Missionaries Underscore  
Necessity Of Risk-Taking

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press  
7/16/87

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--When terrorists in Colombia grabbed headlines for their violent acts, a few of Larry Booth's relatives and friends reached for pen and paper.

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"Find a safer mission field," they urged him.

"There isn't such a place in this world," the Southern Baptist missionary told 1,400-plus Foreign Missions Week participants at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Booth, noting that thousands of Americans would die in traffic accidents during the July 4 weekend, reminded, "Risk-taking continues throughout our lives until the day we die."

"Risk-Takers and Rope-Holders," the theme of the early-July meeting, was underscored with the sobering news that three American missionaries from other denominations and a British missionary had been kidnapped in the Sudan.

R. Keith Parks, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board president, acknowledged an increased emphasis in recent months on the risk involved in evangelizing a world marked by unrest. "It just seems that this has been laid on our hearts by the Lord," he said.

Missionaries aren't the only ones who confront risk, Parks said. Anyone who refuses God's claim on his or her life is "literally running the risk of botching up an eternal soul."

Some pastors, for example, have never considered missionary service. "How can anyone preach from this (Bible) and say to a congregation, 'You do whatever God wants you to do, wherever he wants you to do it,' and never once say, 'Lord, I also am willing'?" Parks asked. "You risk effectiveness as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ by refusing to look at the full implications of the gospel you preach."

Southern Baptists at-large must risk tradition to share their faith with the world, said Bill O'Brien, the board's executive vice president. "What if this denomination moved to a biennial convention?" he asked. "Do you know how much money we spend on annual conventions? What if we said, for the sake of the evangelization of the world for the next decade, we'll get our business done once every two years?"

"Then, in that off year, we'll free up those preachers and other staff members and lay volunteers, and all the money they would have spent at the convention, and send them in partnership evangelism around the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, both in the hard places as well as the responsive places.

"What if every believer doubled the tithe in the next 10 years?" O'Brien continued. "(You) couldn't keep up with the latest fashions, couldn't eat the gourmet foods every week."

Otherwise, he said: "The United States churches don't have much to teach the world anymore. If you could stand alongside those who have been oppressed and through the fires of persecution and literally given all they have, what would you say?"

Indeed, countless Christians abroad have made such sacrifices. Dwight Baker, a retired missionary who worked in India and Israel, said Christians in northeastern India, for example, are being persecuted by Hindu extremists. Numerous believers have been killed, others have been attacked or endured job discrimination, and worship services have been disrupted.

Wayne Thorpe, a missionary to Nepal, told of two farmers and a housewife who were candidates for baptism there in the mid-1970s. They were reminded they might go to jail for a year. The farmers were reminded they might lose their land. The housewife was reminded that her husband and children might abandon her. Still, each proceeded to be baptized. Before long, one farmer had been jailed, the other had lost his land and the woman had lost her family.

Such Christians, Thorpe said, "show the way for us in the West to know God by bearing our crosses. These people indeed counted all as loss to know their Master."

Southern Baptists must not think of prayer as "less important" than the dangers overseas believers and foreign missionaries face, Parks said. Things happen as a result of prayer "that would not happen otherwise. God's power needs to be prayed forth on nations, on Christians, on missionaries serving around the world."

More than 100 people made public decisions during the Foreign Missions Week, including 92 sensing a call to missions-related work.