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August 21, 1987

87-127

Trustees To Approve  
Commentary Editors

By Linda Lawson and Dan Martin

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board reserved the right to approve consulting editors for a new conservative multi-volume Bible commentary during their summer meeting.

As the first of six consulting editors to work on the new commentary to be written by inerrantists -- which was authorized during their February 1987 meeting -- trustees named Paige Patterson, president of Criswell College in Dallas and a leader in the nine-year effort to turn the Southern Baptist Convention to a more conservative direction.

In other matters, trustees opted to stay with two full board meetings per year and adopted a 1987-88 budget of \$164.8 million, an increase of approximately \$9 million over projected 1986-87 income of \$155.6 million.

The recommendation to continue having two annual meetings but lengthened to allow more time for business was adopted after a substitute motion by Rick Forrester, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lilburn, Ga., to move to four annual meetings failed by a vote of 35-25. Forrester had requested in February 1987 that consideration be given to four meetings.

Trustees overwhelmingly approved a recommendation from President Lloyd Elder to elevate the Sunday school department to division status with Harry Piland, director of the department, becoming division director, effective October 1987.

They also voted to create a new marketing department in the office of church programs and services to include the materials services department and stepped-up efforts in advertising, promotion, market and product planning and other facets of marketing. Charles Livingstone, a 24-year employee of the board and director of the materials services department since 1981, will head the new unit.

Trustees also voted to "assure the Southern Baptist Convention that we will operate the Baptist Sunday School Board in compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Peace Committee report... ."

A two-paragraph response to the Peace Committee was adopted by trustees after they declined to act on a longer version proposed by the board's Plans and Policies Committee. The shorter version -- written by Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church of Morganton, N.C. -- was adopted by a narrow margin over the more detailed response which spelled out that the board has been using the Baptist Faith and Message as a primary doctrinal guideline since 1969. Employees also have signed a statement of agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message since 1969.

Following the divided vote, trustee Joe Courson, director of the Gulf Stream Baptist Association of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., asked trustees to make the action responding to the Peace Committee "unanimous." Trustees voted without opposition to express support of the Peace Committee report. Chairman Lloyd Batson said the record would reflect both votes.

A church literature average rate increase of 4.5 percent, effective April 1988, and a 1988 conference center average rate increase of 4.3 percent also were approved.

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A recommendation to include sanctity of human life and opposition to abortion in the list of social and moral concerns referenced in literature was adopted without discussion. Also, the board will promote Sanctity of Human Life Sunday beginning in January 1989 and will consider, as part of a Sunday school curriculum study currently in process, an annual lesson on sanctity of life.

C.B. Scott, a new trustee and pastor of First Baptist Church of Pound, Va., earlier had presented a motion which would have included a two-page advertisement of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in all curriculum beginning in winter 1988 and required the inclusion of special lessons on abortion and sanctity of life in all quarterlies by the winter quarter of 1989.

The action on the new Bible commentary began in the Tuesday morning session when trustee Jodi Chapman, a homemaker and member of the SBC Peace Committee from Wichita Falls, Texas, asked the board to name Patterson general editor and Carl F.H. Henry, former editor of Christianity Today magazine, as consulting editor.

Chapman's motion would have moved the current general editor, Michael Smith, chief editor of Broadman books at the board, to managing editor of the commentary.

Chapman, however, withdrew her motion Wednesday morning in favor of a recommendation by the Broadman Committee to name Patterson one of six consulting editors.

Courson, who said he had no problems with Patterson being a contributing editor, questioned whether it is the role of trustees to approve editors for the new commentary.

Dean Mathis, pastor of Taylor Memorial Baptist Church of Hobbs, N.M., and a member of the Broadman Committee which brought the recommendation, introduced an amendment calling for the remainder of the proposed slate of consulting editors to be presented to trustees in February 1988 for final approval. If the administration needs to move faster, Mathis said, a special session of the full trustee board should be called.

Despite a warning from administrators that trustees were making administrative decisions and after a further effort to amend the action, trustees voted to approve the amended motion.

Earlier in the meeting, trustees heard reports from the administration on a marketing/ministry study and the status of the Baptist Telecommunication Network, the board's satellite telecommunications network to churches.

As part of efforts to cut costs of the network, Jimmy Edwards, vice president of church programs and services, said efforts are underway to sublease more of the board's satellite transponder time or to sell the transponder and lease back only the time needed for daily transmissions.

One recommendation from the marketing/ministry study which will be implemented March 1, 1988, will be 1-800 telephone lines where customers can call the Sunday School Board and, with one call, order anything the board produces or sells.

Two motions by Larry Holly, a physician from Beaumont, Texas, concerning Sunday school literature were debated and substitute motions adopted.

One asked that a nine-member committee of trustees be allowed to develop one quarter of adult Sunday school literature as a demonstration project. A substitute motion by Courson, adopted 36-26, asked the administration to bring recommended changes from the two-year Sunday school curriculum study for consideration at the February 1988 meeting.

A second motion by Holly asked that a letter from six Sunday school workers expressing concerns about preschool Sunday school literature be included in the minutes but referred to the Bible teaching committee for response. A substitute motion by J.B. Flowers, pastor emeritus of West Hampton Baptist Church in Hampton, Va., asking that the matter be referred to the administration passed 37-29.

Twelve trustees attended their first meeting of the 85-member board. Also, 13 trustees were unable to attend the meeting and one resigned because he is moving to another state.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Separate stories provide additional information about trustee action on the Sunday school program and the Nashville properties plan.

Sunday School Program  
Elevated To Division

By Linda Lawson

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Southern Baptists' program of Sunday school work was elevated from department to division status by the trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board during their Aug. 17-19 meeting at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Harry Piland, 58, director of the department since 1978, will continue to direct the program as division director and will become a member of the board's executive staff. The division will continue to be located in the office of church program organizations.

SSB President Lloyd Elder said Sunday school is the priority program of the board with other programs committed to working with Sunday school to strengthen the organization in local churches.

"The focus of the Baptist Sunday School Board, if we're going to make a difference, has to be Bible-based, evangelistic Sunday school work in the local churches. This was a primary purpose of the board's reorganization earlier this year," he said. "The spirit and single-minded commitment of Harry Piland make him an outstanding leader of this program."

Earlier in the meeting, Piland presented to the trustees an update on Sunday school work in the local church.

He said Southern Baptists are standing at the base of their own Mount Everest -- the 155 million Americans who are not Christians -- and facing the challenge of scaling its heights by witnessing, teaching the Bible and caring as never before.

"Any Southern Baptist church that really begins to live up to its potential mobilizes the laypeople," said Piland. "I am thankful to God I can have a part in a denomination that believes in a Sunday school that helps to carry out the mission of Christ."

Tracing the history of Southern Baptist Sunday school enrollment, Piland noted that enrollment doubled or tripled every 40 years from 1880 to 1960. Between 1960 and 1980, enrollment climbed only 100,000 from 7.3 million to 7.4 million. From 1980-86, the denomination experienced six consecutive years of growth of approximately 500,000 with a slight decline of about 17,000 in 1986 to a present enrollment of 7.94 million.

"What we have seen take place is a change in direction, but we have not seen any kind of breakthrough," said Piland.

Even with enrollment increases, Piland said some churches are under the illusion they are growing and reaching people when they may be experiencing only transfer growth, new members coming from other Baptist churches.

"Our challenge is to witness to the lost, not just re-sort the converts," Piland emphasized. "If a church is growing and moving, people think it's evangelistic. But the test is whether it is reaching people for Jesus Christ."

He cited as a positive trend increasing numbers of non-Christians being enrolled in Southern Baptist Sunday schools, a gain from 469,000 in 1980 to 572,000 in 1983.

Breakthrough growth will require increased emphasis on evangelism through the Sunday school, along with Sunday school enrollment and attendance, said Piland.

To support these emphases, he said Sunday school curriculum changes are being planned to make evangelism more central and the Bible more visible. At the same time, the materials will be easier to use and improvements are being made in applying Bible truths to life.

Improvements and changes in Sunday school curriculum are being finalized after a two-year study of materials in all age groups which included massive research using personal and telephone interviews, direct mail questionnaires and informal conferences by board personnel in connection with field service events.

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Trustees on four committees who heard a presentation of the study and proposed changes by Sunday school personnel indicated strong support for the direction of the study. Recommendations will be presented to trustees in February 1988.

Beginning in 1988 Sunday school curriculum for all age groups will include the plan of salvation each quarter to make it easier for Sunday school workers and members to share their faith, Piland said.

With two-thirds of the American population who are not Christians, Piland said Baptists could give up, believing there is no hope, and feeling they are drowning in a sea of lost people.

On the other hand, he urged, churches can accept the challenge to reach out to people with the good news of the gospel.

"Friends, the mountain is high but God is higher," said Piland. "I would give my very life to see that mission done in this nation of ours and I want the Sunday school to have a great part in doing it."

Piland came to the board in 1978 from the First Baptist Church of Houston, where he had been minister of education. He returned to the church in 1983 for about nine months as administrative pastor and minister of education. He resumed his position at the board in October 1983.

"Because I did love the church I came back to this place (Sunday School Board) because God called me to love 37,000 churches," said Piland.

A native of Texas, Piland is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and holds the master's and doctor's degrees in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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Sunday School Board Trustees  
Approve Master Properties Plan

Baptist Press  
8/21/87

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--A Nashville Properties Master Plan for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board was approved by trustees of the board along with approval for preliminary work on phase one, which includes expansion of the warehouse and construction of a six-story office building.

The plan was developed by the board's administration in conjunction with a Trustee Space Study Committee appointed in 1985 to look at long-term space needs through the year 2000.

Approval of the plan includes a commitment for the board to remain at its downtown Nashville location. A 51.3-acre property site several miles from downtown purchased in 1985 for a possible warehouse/distribution center is appreciating in value and will not be sold for the present, according to the report.

Projections for future space needs of the board were made on the basis of serving the needs of a denomination including approximately 17.5 million members by the year 2000, according to David Turner, director of the management services division. Present SBC church membership stands at slightly more than 14 million.

Phase one, a \$14.2 million project approved by trustees for "direction, overall concept and preliminary cost range," includes building a multi-story office-conference building above the center area of the operations building, expanding that building and expanding parking on a remaining roof area of the building.

In response to a question from a trustee, Turner said the project can be paid for with funds already set aside in budgets of the last two years and from fixed assets reserve funds.

While the office-conference building will include six stories, only four stories will be completed in phase one.

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Turner said expansion of the operations building can be completed with the purchase of one piece of property currently under negotiation and purchase of land underneath a portion of the building for which the board owns air rights and an option to buy. That land is expected to become available in the next few months.

Turner said present plans call for completing warehouse expansion by the end of 1988 and construction of the office-conference tower by early 1990.

With approval of the overall plan and preliminary work on phase one, each major development of the plan will be presented to trustees for future action.

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Tanzanian Officials Tell  
Volunteers To Leave Area

Baptist Press  
8/21/87

KYELA, Tanzania (BP)--Plans for eight Southern Baptists to help Kyela Baptists in an evangelistic crusade ended abruptly Aug. 15 when Tanzanian officials told the group to leave the border district.

The volunteers had just arrived to participate in a crusade scheduled in the Kyela district of Tanzania, which is located in the southwestern part of the country and borders on Malawi. Southern Baptist efforts in the district have resulted in more than 40,000 baptisms during the past nine years.

The group included four pastors and two lay people from Virginia, an associate pastor from Alabama, and a pastor from Ohio.

They were restricted to a Baptist compound before being told to leave by Tanzania's Home Affairs Department. The volunteers also failed to receive an expected letter that would have allowed them to visit churches in the area. The actions followed an incident in which local officials pointed out the volunteers apparently failed to follow orders from immigration authorities in Dar es Salaam.

After the volunteers received permission to leave the Baptist compound, mission personnel drove them to a Baptist conference center in Iringa. As of Aug. 19 they were waiting to see if Southern Baptist missionaries working in Iringa and Dar es Salaam could secure permission for them to speak in churches there, according to one of the volunteers, Louis R. "Bobby" Cobbs Jr., a layman from Roanoke, Va.

Despite the loss of Americans as guest speakers, the evangelistic crusade proceeded with the scheduled involvement of Tanzanian Baptist pastors. More than 360 Tanzanians accepted Jesus Christ as Savior during the first three days of the crusade, according to Southern Baptist missionary Evelyn Knapp. Other decisions from extremely remote areas near the border with Malawi had not been reported.

The group included Cliff Knight, associate pastor at Lakeview Baptist Church, Auburn, Ala.; Al Griffin, pastor at Floyd (Va.) Baptist Church; Danny Davis, pastor at Melville Avenue Baptist Church, Danville, Va.; Carol Kammeter, a member at Culpeper (Va.) Baptist Church; Philip Parker, pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Va.; Phil Taylor, pastor at First Baptist Church, Westerville, Ohio; Gerald Melton, pastor at Sycamore Baptist Church, Stuart, Va.; and Cobbs, a member of Melrose Baptist Church, Roanoke.

All of the volunteers except the Virginia woman, Carol Kammeter, were scheduled to speak to many of the 185 congregations in western villages of the Kyela district between the time they arrived and the time they were scheduled to leave the area Aug. 30. Kammeter was to help with cooking.

The group had landed in Dar es Salaam Aug. 13 and had driven directly to a demonstration farm run by agricultural evangelist Doug Knapp, Cobbs said. The volunteers were staying at the Knapp home on the farm compound in Makwale awaiting a letter from government offices in Dar es Salaam authorizing them to speak in churches.

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But officials from the immigration office and the district commissioner's office visited them two days after they arrived in Makwale, visibly upset that they had failed to report to government offices in Mbeya, Cobbs said.

"Apparently this is something new and had not been required before," Cobbs said. "The immigration officer (upon their arrival at Dar es Salaam) wrote on our passport, 'Report to Mbeya,' but did not say anything to us. We were in such a rush and fatigued that we did not notice it until the two officials arrived at the Knapps' home and pointed it out."

Tanzania has a long tradition of religious freedom. Kyela has been one of the most responsive areas where Southern Baptist missionaries work in eastern Africa. Even without Americans the crusade will involve all of the 360 congregations in the 32,000-member Baptist association in Kyela district.

"We find that guests from the United States are a great help in increasing attendance at evangelistic meetings," Doug Knapp said. "It is also an encouragement to our church members here to know there are Baptist churches in America who care enough to send their pastors all the way to Tanzania to preach."

But, he added, "we have (Tanzanian) men here who can preach the gospel." The crusade is expected to continue until Sept. 23 and another group of volunteers is scheduled to participate in September.

Cobbs said the situation "has been very difficult for us, because we have not been able to share experiences with the Tanzanian Baptists. We feel badly for the church members and pastors, and for the Knapps. They had put so much planning into this, and for all of this to happen, it's just a big disappointment."

During the past nine years Knapp and a group of Tanzanian Baptists who work with him have baptized so many people that the area has drawn attention from throughout the Christian community for its responsiveness to the gospel. In 1986 the number of baptisms in Kyela totaled 8 percent of those recorded through Southern Baptist foreign mission work. Knapp has made extensive use of volunteer teams from the United States.

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Personal Evangelism Needed  
To Reach People, Lewis Says

By Joe Westbury

Baptist Press  
8/21/87

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists are losing the world faster than they are winning it to Christ because they are not evangelizing it God's way, participants at a national mass evangelism conference were told.

Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, told the conference goers at First Baptist Church in Atlanta that the difference between the church in the book of Acts and contemporary Christians is that early Christians made a daily commitment to sharing their faith.

The week-long conference attracted nearly 300 participants from across the nation for seminars on music evangelism, revival preparation and area crusade preparation. The event was sponsored by the mass evangelism department of the Home Mission Board.

"I'm excited about the prospect of 50,000 Southern Baptist churches winning a million people a year to the Lord by the end of the century. That is an incredible goal because we have yet to baptize even half a million in one year," Lewis said.

"But I believe it is possible if we follow the early church's example by daily sharing our faith door to door, house to house. Every Christian needs to live with that daily expectation that God will lead them to someone who needs to hear the gospel that day," he added.

Lewis also stressed the need for every church to have a lay witnessing program.

"No one denomination or agency will usher in the kingdom by single-handedly winning the world to Christ. Likewise, there is no division of labor in the church, no hirelings assigned to win the world.

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"The nutshell to evangelizing the world is getting people saved and training saved people to win others. I believe we have a responsibility before Christ to teach people how to share their faith," he added.

Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., told the pastors, evangelists and music directors at the first national conference that "faith, courage, and biblical strategy will help godly parents overcome the evil generation in which we live.

"The church cannot do it all by itself. We can underscore, encourage and assist, but the proper institution for educating our children about God is the home. With a home that is right, parents can have a positive impact on our pagan generation."

Andy Stanley, son of pastor Charles Stanley of the host church, challenged the evangelists to keep Christ at the center of their evangelistic preaching and not to complicate the gospel message.

The Atlanta resident cautioned the crowd against redefining what is needed to become a Christian and against demanding more than a simple belief in Christ.

"Many preachers today are adding conditions to the biblical admonition that belief only is required for salvation. The word 'believe' does not mean 'obey' -- immediately giving up smoking, or drinking, or whatever. I'm all for obeying scriptural admonitions to that effect, but that's not what we're supposed to preach. Belief precedes obeying," he stressed.

Stanley said that too often Southern Baptist evangelists are guilty of presenting salvation "not as a gift but as a contract -- you must first give up your sins before you receive it.

"If you define faith as giving and surrendering and obeying ... any way you cut it you're teaching salvation by works. You won't say that outright but that's what you're implying. If we need to be clear about anything, it is that Christ died for our sins, rose from the dead, and a person is saved by placing his trust in that simple word from God."

Stanley then cautioned the evangelists to also present truthful messages to Christians when delivering evangelistic sermons.

"It's ridiculous the restraints I hear evangelists placing on the gospel message. Over and over I hear sermons where speakers list the sins of adultery, fornication, murder and others and then say you can't be saved and commit those sins.

"What right do we as preachers have to distort the gospel? Of course Christians can commit those sins ... that's why Paul warned against them so much in the early church."

Richard Harris, director of the mass evangelism department of the board, noted that contrary to popular belief, revival meetings are regaining popularity among Southern Baptists.

"Some people today are saying they are on their way out and will no longer work, but 47,000 revival meetings were conducted for each of the past few years with the exception of 1986. That was when about 27,000 were held in conjunction with the Good News America national revivals and increased the year's total to 56,000.

"Revival is first and foremost for the Christians, and when the Christians get revived the overflow will be evangelism. They are not one and the same," he stressed.

"From personal observation, the vast majority of Southern Baptists live in the realm of marginal obedience or little or no obedience to God. That is an atrocity against God," he said, but it can be corrected when revival meetings are used as a tool to call people back to renewal and repentance.

5 Arizona Baptists  
Die In Plane Crash

By Karen Merrick

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Five Arizona Southern Baptists died in the Northwest Airlines Flight 255 crash that claimed the lives of 155 people Aug. 16.

The Arizona Baptist victims were Susie Cody and her daughter, Jennifer, of The Church on Mill in Tempe; Mary Scott of Foothills Baptist Church in Ahwatukee; and Dan and Karen Pursley of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix.

Jennifer Cody didn't know it at the time, but she made the most important preparation for a summertime trip more than a month in advance.

The 16-year-old girl made a decision for Christ during a Centrifuge youth camp in early July, about five weeks before boarding the fated Flight 255 after a visit with relatives. The crash was the nation's second-worst aviation disaster. It occurred less than a minute after the plane, which was headed for Phoenix, took off from Detroit Metropolitan Airport.

Gary Hardy, youth coordinator for The Church on Mill, said Jennifer had attended Centrifuge, a youth camp sponsored by the church recreation department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, "through a series of miraculous events."

The high school sophomore, who had been a part of the Tempe church's youth group for about two years, had not signed up for the camp originally, Hardy said, and missed the registration deadline. About 10 days before camp was to begin, a boy cancelled his registration, allowing Jennifer to go in his place. Various members of the church contributed the money she needed to attend the six-day camp, held in Prescott, Ariz.

"We had tried for a couple of years to get her involved (in youth activities)," Hardy said, but the girl, whom he described as very quiet, had never expressed interest in the activities. At camp, though, "she got involved right away" and late one evening prayed to receive Christ after talking with a youth sponsor, Hardy said.

According to Betty Allen, Jennifer's Bible study teacher for the past year, other members of the youth group were shocked to find out about the girl's death and "are going through some guilt because she was so quiet and hard to get to know." They are asking themselves, "'Why didn't we try harder?'" Allen said.

Jennifer's mother had been an active member who was involved in Sunday school, outreach and preschool nursery work, said fellow church member Marsha Lincoln.

The Church on Mill's Sunday evening service Aug. 16 was interrupted shortly after Mrs. Cody's husband, Bill, received word of the crash. Cody, a new Christian but not a member of the church, came into the service after hearing a news bulletin about the crash.

"We just stopped the service, and we all went up front and started praying," one member said, adding that the congregation knew that the mother and daughter were on the flight but not that they had died in the crash.

Scott, 52, and her nine-year-old son, Sam, residents of Ahwatukee, were returning to Arizona after a vacation with relatives in Michigan when the plane crashed. Foothills Baptist Pastor Henry Smart said Scott had joined the Ahwatukee church, the community's first Southern Baptist work, during its first service March 15. "She agreed with what we were doing and joined the church," Smart said. "I counted her my friend."

The Pursleys had been returning to Phoenix following a family reunion in Ohio when the plane crashed. Mrs. Pursley, 26, had been a part of the sanctuary choir since Nov. 1986 and occasionally had performed as a soloist during Wednesday evening services. Her husband, 28, also was involved in the church's music program, playing cello for the orchestra. The couple had been members of the church since July 1985.

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"Dan and Karen Pursley were fine, young Christian adults who had a faithful commitment to the local church," said North Phoenix Pastor Richard Jackson.

"Like all of us who are Christians, Dan and Karen were subject to the events of human experience," he said. "Even during this time, there is no reason to ask, 'Why?' God is not on trial. He did not cause this event to happen."

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Mozambican Rebels Free  
Southern Baptist Nurse

By Jerilynn Armstrong

Baptist Press  
8/21/87

DALLAS (BP)--Southern Baptist Kindra Bryan was released Aug. 18 by guerillas in Mozambique three months after her abduction May 13.

The Texan was released along with the six other people seized from a rural missionary clinic in the central province of Mozambique. Bryan, 28, was serving as a nurse on a Youth with a Mission team. She is in the custody of the U.S. State Department in Malawi.

Bryan, along with an Australian and five Zimbabweans, including a baby, were released after trudging 300 miles to Mozambique's border with Malawi. For two weeks the group walked 12 hours a day through jungles and rugged land.

Newspaper reports said Bryan's parents, Claude and Mary Jo Free of Bryan, spoke with their daughter Aug. 18 and 19.

"She said she was well and doing OK. She talked like she was exhausted and very weak," Free said.

The 5-foot-2 missionary who weighed about 125 pounds before her abduction lost more than 25 pounds during the three-month ordeal and is being treated for malaria and dysentery, her mother said. In addition she also suffered heat exhaustion two weeks before being released.

The State Department is keeping information confidential on where the hostages were held before the two-week trek, and the Frees have not been told where their daughter is staying in Malawi.

Tentative plans are for the nurse to fly into Houston Wednesday evening, Aug. 26, accompanied by James R. DeLoach, associate pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, where she is a member.

DeLoach spent several weeks in Malawi in May attempting to expedite the release of Bryan.

"The congregation has constantly been working with the State Department and U.S. congressmen to have Kindra released," said Betty Brockman, assistant to Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist.

"We have had a 24-hour-a-day prayer vigil since Kindra's capture, and it will not stop until she has landed in Houston. She is one of our own, and we are so grateful about the good news," Brockman said.

Bryan had been working for a little more than a month with the mission organization when she was kidnapped.

The armed guerrillas of the Mozambique National Resistance denied earlier that the seven were kidnapped. The guerrillas said they evacuated the group to safety from an area of heavy fighting.

The rebels also said Bryan was taken in order to keep the Mozambique government from abducting her and blaming it on the rebels.

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