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87-145

Baptist Pastor, Senator  
Tangle At Bork Hearings

By Stan Hasteley

WASHINGTON (BP)--An American Baptist pastor and a Southern Baptist senator crossed swords over Supreme Court nominee Robert H. Bork's views on school prayer during confirmation hearings for the 60-year-old judge, whom President Reagan has nominated to succeed the retired Lewis F. Powell Jr.

The clash between Kenneth L. Dean, pastor of First Baptist Church of Rochester, N.Y., and Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., marked a tense moment during Senate Judiciary Committee hearings over Bork's fitness to serve on the nation's highest court. The hearings were expected to end Sept. 30.

Dean, a Tennessee native and a former Southern Baptist, related an incident during a Bork appearance before a group of religious leaders at the Brookings Institution two years ago. After Bork presented an address, Dean said he asked the judge to respond to an experience involving religious devotional exercises he had had as a junior high school teacher on Merritt Island, Fla., in 1961, one year before the Supreme Court first ruled states and localities may not require such practices.

Dean related that when a 13-year-old Jewish boy told him his parents did not want him to take his scheduled turn to lead the daily devotional, he excused him, "aware that the young boy was caught between the authority of school and teacher on the one hand and parents and home on the other."

After relating the incident, Dean said he asked Bork "if he thought a 13-year-old Jewish child should have to be submitted to this kind of conflict, hurt and social embarrassment in order to participate in public education."

Dean said Bork responded, "in a terse voice, and with a stern look on his face ..., 'Well, I suppose he got over it, didn't he?'" After a moment's silence, Dean said, Bork said further that as a youngster "he had been exposed to a vareity of religious beliefs and that it did not seem to do him any harm."

After first passing on his turn to question the Rochester pastor, Thurmond later demanded that Dean apologize to the committee for suggesting Bork favors school prayer. Dean refused, saying: "I have no apology to make whatsoever. I am testifying here under oath, and I testified that what I have reported to you is, in fact, true. If Judge Bork wants to explain himself ... you have the freedom of calling him back here."

Thurmond then countered, "It was hardly worth your while to come here, was it?" Dean replied: "It was very important for me to come here. Even if my testimony is rejected completely, I have spoken the truth as I experienced it."

Immediately before Thurmond's reprimand, Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., suggested Dean was not telling the truth. "With regard to what you say you heard," Humphrey said, "I just want to clear the air ... once and for all about any lingering doubts that Judge Bork is anti-Semitic."

He then noted that Bork's first wife, who died of cancer in 1980, was Jewish, and that the organizer of the Brookings event, Warren Cikins, also is a Jew. Cikins earlier had written a letter to the Washington Post disputing a Post reporter's account of what was said at the Brookings event, including a Bork declaration of support for organized school prayer.

(A transcript of Bork's Brookings speech reads in part: "A relaxation of current rigidly secularist doctrine (of the court) would ... permit some sensible things to be done. ... I suspect that the greatest perceived change would be in the reintroduction of some religion into public schools and some greater religious symbolism in our public life.")

Humphrey, a Bork ally on the 14-member judiciary panel, concluded: "I don't know whose idea it was to call Rev. Dean, but if the idea was to create the impression of anti-Semitism, it's rubbish. If the idea is to create the impression that ... Robert Bork called for some kind of state-sponsored religion, that too is rubbish. I find this whole episode ... easily the most distasteful of this entire two weeks of hearings."

In his responses to Thurmond and Humphrey, Dean said he did not intend to suggest Bork is anti-Semitic, but that the Brookings incident gave evidence Bork "espouses a philosophical understanding of government ... which leaves open the door for others to be anti-Semitic."

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Baptist Colleges Team Up  
To Aid 'Strategic' Nations

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press  
9/29/87

ATLANTA (BP)--Leaders of 26 Southern Baptist colleges and universities set up the Cooperative Services International Educational Consortium during a meeting in Atlanta Sept. 21 and 22.

The new consortium will offer the combined educational resources of Southern Baptist higher education to China and perhaps dozens of other countries, said Lewis Myers, director of Cooperative Services International, who will be secretary-treasurer of the new organization.

Southern Baptists formed CSI in 1985 to provide services to countries where traditional missionary work is not possible.

The consortium's charter members elected Daniel R. Grant, president of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., their first chairman. Elected vice chairman was Bob R. Agee, president of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee. Two at-large members completing the group's executive committee were also elected: Treva K. Gibson, dean of students and director of the Center for International Studies at Grand Canyon College, Phoenix, Ariz.; and Ronald G. Midkiff, chairman of the education division at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn.

"The idea of strength in cooperation has taken root in an exciting way in this consortium for international education and exchange," Grant said in a prepared statement. "Our Baptist colleges and universities, with the strong support of Cooperative Services International, have taken a long step toward significant involvement in meeting educational needs in strategic areas of the world."

Consortium members want the organization to function in four ways:

- Provide a clearinghouse for information on educational needs and opportunities abroad and projects involving member institutions.
- Stimulate the establishment of educational programs in international settings.
- Assist participating institutions in developing and maintaining quality control for all their instructional, research and public service activities abroad.
- Cooperatively meet educational needs which cannot be met by individual member institutions alone.

"As we've interacted with the representatives of government bureaus and institutions in these countries, we've seen that one of the best ways to help is through their educational systems," Myers said. "It will greatly strengthen our hand if we could present to these educational authorities a 'collage' of Southern Baptists' educational resources playing to the strengths of each of the educational institutions."

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Myers envisions "student exchanges, faculty exchanges, exchange of educational resources ... in the belief that as this interaction takes place there would be an enrichment of all parties involved."

The consortium's first project already has begun. Officials at August First Agricultural College in Urumqi, a city in far northwestern China, have signed preliminary agreements with consortium representatives to form the International Cooperative Graduate Center on their campus.

American and Chinese co-directors will oversee a program through which Chinese students coming to Urumqi can pursue a number of different master's degrees accredited by participating Southern Baptist colleges and universities. Cooperative Services International will provide long-term faculty chairmen and professors in each academic discipline, along with library, laboratory, classroom and computer resources. Participating Southern Baptist institutions will send additional faculty members for shorter terms.

Chinese officials at August First, aided by the provincial government of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, have committed themselves to building faculty housing, student dormitories, classrooms and administrative facilities for the graduate center. Until the new facilities are completed, faculty and students will share existing buildings with the college.

"There are all sorts of things to be worked out, but it looks promising," Myers said of the center. The consortium also plans to establish "what amounts to a prep school" on the Urumqi campus, he added. "We're calling it a skills major, so if Chinese students coming don't meet all the requirements for entry for a master's program, then this program will bring them up to speed."

Charter member institutions of the Cooperative Services International Educational Consortium are Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Belmont College, Nashville, Tenn.; California Baptist College, Riverside; Carson-Newman College; Chowan College, Murfreesboro, N.C.; Furman University, Greenville, S.C.; Georgetown (Ky.) College; Grand Canyon College; Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas; Judson College, Marion, Ala.

Louisiana College, Pineville; Mercer University, Macon, Ga.; Mississippi College, Clinton; Missouri Baptist College, St. Louis; Mobile (Ala.) College; North Greenville College, Tigerville, S.C.; Oklahoma Baptist University; Ouachita Baptist University; Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.; Shorter College, Rome, Ga.; Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo.

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton, Texas; the University of Richmond (Va.); William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss.; William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.; and Wingate (N.C.) College.

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Baptists File Suit Against  
Missouri Lottery Commission

By Trennis Henderson

Baptist Press  
9/29/87

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Missouri Baptist Convention legislative consultant Bart Tichenor has filed suit against the Missouri State Lottery Commission.

The suit charges that "participation by the State Lottery Commission in the multi-state lottery 'Lotto America' ... is in violation of public policy, Missouri law and the Missouri Constitution."

The suit was filed Sept. 25 in Cole County Circuit Court a few hours after the state's three-member lottery commission voted to include Missouri in a multi-state lottery currently being organized. Iowa, Kansas, Oregon, Rhode Island and the District of Columbia already have joined the multi-state effort.

Missouri's lottery commission vote followed a formal opinion issued by Missouri Attorney General William Webster on Sept. 24. Webster's opinion says, "The decision whether to enter into an agreement with other states for operation of a joint on-line game ... rests solely with the State Lottery Commission ... provided that the proposed ... game complies with the restrictions in the Missouri Constitution and applicable state statutes."

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Compliance with constitutional restrictions is a concern in Tichenor's case. Insisting that the state constitution prohibits the lottery commission from joining or participating in a multi-state lottery, the suit notes the term "Missouri State Lottery" is used eight times and the term "state lottery" is used 11 times in the constitution. "The term 'multi-state lottery,'" Tichenor's argument continues, "is totally absent from the Missouri Constitution."

Tichenor's attorney, Duane Benton, also noted lottery proponents seeking approval of participation in a multi-state lottery earlier this year "went to the legislature and lost." House Committee Substitute for House Bill 69, which read in part, "The commission may cooperate with other states in the establishment of a multi-state lottery and may participate in the operation of such multi-state lottery," was defeated in the state Senate by a 19-13 vote on the final day of the 1987 session.

"When they go to the legislature and fail," Benton emphasized, "it's presumed they know they needed legislative approval."

Other charges in the suit are that federal law makes it illegal and against public policy for anyone to transport or mail across state lines "equipment, tickets or material concerning a lottery" and that the multi-state agreement Missouri is seeking to enter contains no provisions to assure that advertising and use of money received from sales will conform to requirements in the state constitution.

Tichenor, whose legal fees in the case will be paid through Missouri Baptist Convention contingency funds, declared Missouri Baptists "have been, from the outset, the only group that has consistently opposed the expansion of gambling in Missouri. I think it's incumbent upon us to take this step."

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Puerto Rico Renewal  
Renders Results

By Jim Burton

Baptist Press  
9/29/87

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (BP)--Day in and day out, Puerto Rico is where international tourists come for a little "R & R."

In late September, more than 85 Southern Baptists from nine states brought a third "R" in the form of renewal.

Eight churches in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands conducted lay renewal weekends with coordinators and team members from the mainland.

In addition, 10 pastors and their wives from Puerto Rico attended a renewal meeting in San Juan. Each pastor now plans to invite a renewal team to his church, said Don Gibson, director of lay ministries for Texas Baptist Men.

The purpose of a lay renewal weekend is to allow church members to evaluate their relationship with God.

"All of us need at periodic times as we reach a plateau in our spiritual life to renew what God has done and to be open about what God is doing and what our needs are," said George Russ, urban evangelism consultant with the Baptist Convention of New York, who coordinated the renewal at Bethel Baptist Church in Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

"These people have a very strong faith in God. He has met their needs, yet there is a hunger for the word of God," said Russ. "There is a desire for revival in this church, for a genuine, fresh experience of God's grace that will enable the mission of this church to grow."

Team member Ann Parker of Eden, N.C., said Bethel Baptist was "the most New Testament style church" she had experienced. Still, there was need for renewal.

Evangelist Jim Huskey of Spartanburg, S.C., also was a team member in Arecibo. It was his first opportunity to serve as a church renewal team member.

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"This church wants revival," said Huskey. "Their definition of revival is to see lost people become Christians and come into the church as members. They want a greater bond among the church as a whole, and they want to see the individuals of the church to grow in the Lord, to learn to love one another more and to feel more like a family."

Church renewal has a strong biblical foundation, he said. "Lay renewal approaches the professing Christians in a local church and asks them to face where they are in their relationship with the Lord and to recognize the fact that they need to refuel to deal with any problems that are there while opening up to what the Lord has for them."

Normally, Huskey assists local churches by preaching revivals. Church renewal placed him in a new role: "It was a new experience for me. The role that I had was to get things started and then move into the background and let them share and minister to one another as opposed to my evangelistic work being the center of everything. But I liked it because I saw how they responded to one another's needs."

Nazareth Baptist Church is the largest Southern Baptist church in San Juan, with more than 300 members. Nazareth is a strong church but faces problems, said Michael Thomas of Belton, Texas, who coordinated the renewal weekend at the Spanish-speaking church.

"The attendance is high, but the needs are great, and both the pastor and the church members feel that they are stale," said Thomas. "There is a lot of apathy. People say they need to get off dead-center and move out. That is what we feel is happening this weekend."

In the tropical rain forests of central Puerto Rico, a church renewal team found the members of First Baptist Church of Utuado, to be open to God's leadership.

"On Friday night people broke the ice, opened up and shared a lot of requests they have in their lives about friends and family members who are not Christians," said Charles Shelton, a sales development manager with a soft-drink company in Spartanburg, S.C. "The pastor was overwhelmed with the response of the people."

Sunday morning the small sanctuary had an overflow crowd. The pastor, Federico Fernandez, has invited Shelton to bring another team next August for an evangelism project.

John Schexnayder, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, an English-speaking congregation in San Juan, said the Sunday evening service lasted more than two hours, following the departure of the renewal team. As a result of the weekend, three people made professions of faith in Christ, and another joined by letter.

"There were a few people who shared some things that had never said very much," said Schexnayder. "The members seem to want to get to know each other better."

In addition, he said, several church members want to become renewal coordinators and team members. Each renewal team member was a volunteer and responsible for individual expenses.

"It's not uncommon at all when you have a mission like this to have people come from that many states," said Gibson, a layman who joined the Texas Baptist Men's staff in January. "There is a real desire today in a lot of laypeople's hearts to be on mission for God wherever that opportunity comes, whether it is in Puerto Rico or Alaska or Ohio."

"I think you will see more and more laypeople wanting involvement in a real meaningful ministry. Certainly church renewal is one of the things where you can tangibly see results."

Russ said the commitment of the renewal volunteers was significant.

"Despite the fact we live far away from each other, we have the same needs as people," he said. "All of us can do something to serve the Lord. God has gifted each one of us and for people to come all this distance for the church members to see ... the sacrifice that they've made ... encourages them that they too can serve God and that they have something significant to give in the life of the church."

Church renewal is a program emphasis of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board. It utilizes a strategy called "Journey into Lifestyle Evangelism and Discipleship."

Three states -- Texas, South Carolina and New York -- formed agreements with the Puerto Rico Baptist Association last November for the renewal strategy.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Brotherhood Commission.

Penn-South Jersey  
Elects Williams

Baptist Press  
9/29/87

HARRISBURG, Pa. (BP)--Wallace A.C. Williams was unanimously elected executive director-treasurer of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey during a called meeting of the convention's executive board Sept. 19. He will assume the position Nov. 1.

Williams is pastor of the Madison (N.J.) Baptist Church and will be the fourth executive since the formation of the Pennsylvania-South Jersey convention in 1970.

He has been a pastor in the Northeast for 13 years, serving Wilton (Conn.) Baptist Church prior to the Madison pastorate. The Wilton and Madison churches were leaders in gifts to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, as well as contributions to Metro New York Baptist Association and state Baptist missions offerings. Madison Baptist Church has helped start 12 chapels.

Williams is a graduate of Georgetown (Ky.) College, the University of Kentucky in Lexington, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Williams was president of the Baptist Convention of New York in 1978-1980 and was on the executive board of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. He has been vice chairman of the Northeast task team on theological education.

His wife is the former Judith Wilson of Mayfield, Ky. The Williams have a daughter, Cynthia, and a son, Peter.

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