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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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88-9

CLC Requests Study  
Of Program Change

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission's executive committee has voted to ask the SBC Executive Committee to study the expansion of the commission's responsibilities if the convention severs ties with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The CLC executive committee, acting on behalf of the 31-member commission, approved the request 3-2 during its winter meeting Jan. 19 in Nashville. The proposal would ask the SBC Executive Committee to "undertake a study of the feasibility and advisability" of expanding the CLC program statement to include responsibilities of both the Baptist Joint Committee and the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee.

The CLC is the convention's Nashville-based moral concerns agency. The PAC is a standing committee of the convention that also relates to the Baptist Joint Committee, a Washington-based religious liberty organization comprised of nine Baptist conventions.

Three CLC officers and four PAC leaders originally met Dec. 12 in Nashville to consider the possibility of merging the two organizations. They developed a proposal that asked the SBC Executive Committee to study the feasibility and advisability of:

- Expanding the CLC program statement to include responsibilities of the PAC and the Baptist Joint Committee.
- Dissolving the PAC.
- Expanding the CLC trustee membership to include the 12 at-large members of the PAC.
- Dissolving "formal organizational and financial ties" with the Baptist Joint Committee.
- Affirming cooperation with "other Baptist denominations and others of good will" and encouraging the expanded CLC to work "when advisable and possible" with the Baptist Joint Committee and others on religious liberty and church-state issues.

However, the CLC-approved version limited itself to the first and fifth items -- expansion of the CLC program statement and affirmation of cooperation with other groups. Also, it specifically indicated the request is being made only "if the SBC does in fact sever ties with the Baptist Joint Committee."

The CLC/PAC/Baptist Joint Committee issue has its roots in recent Southern Baptist history. Some Southern Baptists have been critical of the Baptist Joint Committee, particularly for its refusal to support school prayer and anti-abortion amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

In October, the 18-member PAC voted 8-4 to recommend the SBC "dissolve its institutional and financial ties" with the Baptist Joint Committee. That action followed by a few weeks the opening of a CLC office in Washington and a CLC request for an additional \$150,000 to expand its legislative efforts regarding moral, ethical and social issues.

At the time of the CLC executive committee's January meeting, members of the CLC and the PAC were being polled concerning the officers' Dec. 12 joint proposal on merger.

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CLC Chairman Fred Lackey of Athens, Ala., reported 22 of 31 commissioners had responded, with 15 in favor, five against and two abstentions. He also summarized a Mailgram from former CLC Chairman Lynn P. Clayton of Alexandria, La., requesting no action on the proposal. CLC executive committee member Richard Elkins of Albuquerque, N.M., reported he had 15 signatures supporting Clayton's request.

SBC Executive Committee President/Treasurer Harold C. Bennett, whose office has conducted the poll on behalf of the PAC, told Baptist Press that poll was incomplete.

The CLC's poll, conducted by Lackey, already had drawn criticism from CLC Executive Director N. Larry Baker, who expressed his "dismay at this action." He called on Lackey "to halt this improper and illegal course of action," claiming the poll "contradicts and violates the commission's bylaws."

In a letter to Lackey, Baker listed six ways he said the poll was "out of order." In the CLC executive committee meeting, Vice Chairman Joe W. Atchison of Rogers, Ark., criticized Baker for that letter. Atchison read a letter he said he had written to Baker, with copies mailed to the commissioners.

"After reading your letter to Fred Lackey ... I am amazed at the objections you stated to the meeting," Atchison said. "If you had not been physically present in the meeting, I would be tempted to think you were not there at all. I find it incredible that you did not raise any of these objections at the two-hour meeting" Dec. 12.

Atchison responded to each of Baker's six objections and concluded: "I think your letter to Fred was uncalled for and completely out of step with the spirit in which the meeting took place. Further, I think your letter is designed to confuse the commissioners and divide this board. I regret that you have taken such a course of action. ..."

Baker told Atchison: "You're making a judgment about what I did and didn't do which I think is inappropriate on your part. ... What you have done is you have moved beyond evaluating the action that I took to judging the motives for my action. ..."

"You have called my integrity into question. You have said that my letter was designed to confuse the board and to divide the board. That is a judgment of my motives, and that is out of order."

"No, it has happened," Atchison responded.

"It may have happened," Baker said. "That was not my intention."

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Southern Baptist College  
Enrollment Remains Stable

By Lonnie Wilkey

Baptist Press  
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NASHVILLE (BP)--Dire predictions of declining enrollments failed to materialize once again at most Southern Baptist colleges and universities.

Enrollment figures for the 1987 fall semester show 101,159 attended Baptist junior and senior colleges, a 3.8 percent increase over 1986 totals.

According to figures released to the Southern Baptist Education Commission, 39 of the 51 junior and senior colleges reported increases ranging from 0.2 to 46.4 percent. The enrollment percentages include both full-time and part-time students in credit courses. The figures do not reflect students taking non-credit classes.

Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis reported the largest increase among senior colleges (37.2 percent) while Truett-McConnell College in Cleveland, Ga., had the largest increase among junior colleges (46.4). The increases at both institutions, however, were in part-time students.

Bluefield (Va.) College reported the largest decline in fall enrollment (3.9 percent).

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Education Commission, expressed guarded optimism concerning the report:

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"It speaks well of our Baptist institutions that they have been able to maintain, and in some cases, increase enrollment. Yet, at the same time, we must face the inevitable that within the next few years there will be fewer students, traditional and non-traditional, attending college. This is based on statistics which are already a reality and must be faced."

In terms of total enrollment, Baylor University in Waco, Texas, remains the largest Southern Baptist college with 11,656 students. Other schools in the top 10 in enrollment are: Mercer University, Macon, Ga., 5,942; Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C., 5,209;

University of Richmond (Va.), 4,737; Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., 3,936; Campbell University, Buies Creek, N.C., 3,915; Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., 3,488; Furman University, Greenville, S.C., 3,078; Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., 2,841; and Belmont College, Nashville, 2,677.

Following is the 1987 fall enrollment figures and the percentage of increase or decrease at all Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges.

Alabama -- Judson College, 387, (7.2); Mobile College, 909, (3.7); Samford University, 3,936, (2.7);

Arizona -- Grand Canyon College, 1,641, (4.4);

Arkansas -- Ouachita Baptist University, 1,428, (1.8); Southern Baptist College, 512, (2.8);

California -- California Baptist College, 659, (0.6);

Florida -- Palm Beach Atlantic College, 1,153, (1.7); Stetson University, 2,841, (-0.5);

Georgia -- Brewton-Parker College, 1,349, (8.6); Mercer University, 5,942, (3.0); Shorter College, 750, (3.0); Truett-McConnell College, 1,477, (46.4);

Kentucky -- Campbellsville College, 671, (11.1); Cumberland College, 1,931, (0.2); Georgetown College, 1,411, (3.6);

Louisiana -- Louisiana College, 1,023, (4.1);

Mississippi -- Blue Mountain College, 312, (-0.3); Mississippi College, 3,488, (-3.1); William Carey College, 2,019, (0.7);

Missouri -- Hannibal-LaGrange College, 813, (11.4); Missouri Baptist College, 903, (37.2); Southwest Baptist University, 2,428, (4.2); William Jewell College, 2,041, (-1.0);

North Carolina -- Campbell University, 3,915, (7.3); Chowan College, 914, (2.9); Gardner-Webb College, 1,926, (3.2); Mars Hill College, 1,319, (-0.3); Meredith College, 2,025, (4.0); Wake Forest University, 5,209, (3.1); Wingate College, 1,686, (-0.6);

Oklahoma -- Oklahoma Baptist University, 1,776, (7.3);

South Carolina -- Anderson College, 1,031, (-2.4); Baptist College at Charleston, 1,925, (7.3); Furman University, 3,078, (3.8); North Greenville College, 509, (8.3);

Tennessee -- Belmont College, 2,677, (13.2); Carson-Newman College, 1,901, (13.1); Union University, 1,760, (13.8);

Texas -- Baylor University, 11,656, (0.9); Dallas Baptist University, 1,866, (7.1); East Texas Baptist University, 716, (3.6); Hardin-Simmons University, 1,866, (3.4); Houston Baptist University, 2,566, (-2.0); Howard Payne University, 1,105, (12.8); University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, 1,341, (-0.5); Wayland Baptist University, 1,935, (5.9);

Virginia -- Averett College, 965, (-0.7); Bluefield College, 348, (-3.9); University of Richmond, 4,737, (0.7); Virginia Interment College, 389, (-1.0).

Baptist Missionary Led  
Taiwan President To Christ

By Michael D. Chute

TAIPEI, Taiwan (BP)--The new president of the Republic of China (Taiwan), Lee Teng-hui, is a Christian who was led to faith in Christ by a Southern Baptist missionary 29 years ago.

As former vice president, Lee succeeded Chiang Ching-kuo, who died Jan. 13 of a heart attack. The 64-year-old Lee is the first Taiwanese, a native of the island, to become president. He will serve out Chiang's term in accordance with the constitution. Presidential elections will be held in 1990.

Southern Baptist missionaries say the new president professed faith in Christ through the work of a former missionary to Taiwan, Richard Morris.

"He (Lee) was introduced to Christ in an English Bible study class Richard was teaching," said Mary Sampson, a Southern Baptist emeritus missionary who retired in 1983 after 31 years in mainland China and Taiwan. Morris, who died two years ago, was working at the time with Mi Loh Geh Chapel, a Taiwanese Baptist congregation.

Another missionary, Faye Pearson, explained that Morris and a Chinese pastor, Paul Chen, had begun a Bible study in a Taiwanese suburb of Taipei. The Morrises, the first Southern Baptist missionaries to study Taiwanese, were just finishing language school.

Lee was a regular member of Morris' study group and "had been studying various religions," said Morris' widow, Tena, from her home in Tucson, Ariz. "His wife was already a Christian." Morris' efforts led Lee to accept Christ. Lee was an agricultural teacher in a Taipei university at the time.

The Lees and Morrises remained close friends until Morris' death from Lou Gehrig's disease in 1985 and Mrs. Morris' return to the United States.

On her wall in Tucson is "an 8-by-10 picture of him (Lee) and Richard taken in his office in November 1984," said Mrs. Morris. "I was to begin teaching his wife English after we returned from furlough (in 1985)." Mrs. Morris now is executive director of the ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, commonly called Lou Gehrig's disease) Association in southern Arizona.

"He once told Richard that if he retired early from politics that he was open to becoming an evangelist," Mrs. Morris said. "He is an active speaker in churches and other religious gatherings all over the island. His wife is a very active Christian also."

Five years ago, Lee gave a testimony about his Christian faith on national television, said Judy Robertson, associate director of East Asia for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He was the governor of provincial Taiwan at the time.

Lee's testimony, in a 30-second TV spot, was one of several by influential Chinese Christians broadcast during a three-year "Bold Mission Taiwan" evangelism campaign in the early 1980s. The campaign was a joint venture between Baptists in Taiwan and the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Earlier in the evangelistic campaign, while he was mayor of Taipei, Lee was host for a breakfast for the first large group of Missouri Baptists involved in the project. That group led Witness Involvement Now schools throughout Taiwan. Lee presented the group with the key to the city.

Chiang was the son of famed Nationalist Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek. The younger Chiang's death ended the family's six-decade dynasty under which the Nationalists rose to power in China but fled from the mainland in 1949 as the Communists gained control.

In a national address after assuming the presidency, Lee urged his countrymen to unite in fulfilling the goals of his Nationalist predecessors.

A Christian president is not unusual for Taiwan although less than 5 percent of the population is Christian. Chiang Kai-shek openly professed faith in Jesus Christ. When he died in 1975, a prominent Baptist pastor, Chow Lien-hua, performed the funeral ceremony.

Chiang's son was not as open in his religious conviction, which led some to question his Christianity. But a Chinese pastor, Yang Shu, who operates a Baptist children's home in Liukuei, told missionaries Chiang related to him that he was a Christian. The president often visited the children's home and offered support on various occasions.

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Campus Minister Returns 'Home'  
Through Brazil Mission Project

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press  
1/20/88

CATALAO, Brazil (BP)--From the moment he stepped from the plane into the warm, muggy December air of Brasilia, Danny Miller felt he was home.

A welcoming hug from Southern Baptist missionary Dorothy Lott reinforced his feeling that Brazil was where he belonged.

As an associate director of student ministry at the University of Texas at Austin, Miller participated in the Global Student Missions Encounter -- Brazil-U.S.A., Jan. 1 - 12. Brazilian and American students worked side by side in evangelistic projects in 26 locations throughout the country.

Miller was first in Brazil from August 1979 to April 1980 in a pilot project for a Texas missions partnership. Since then, he has maintained his Portuguese language skills in hopes of a chance to return.

"I wanted with all my heart to communicate with Brazilians in their language," Miller said.

With only nine months in Brazil eight years ago, Miller has a command of the language that often takes missionaries years to develop, Lott said.

His language ability, along with his zeal for witnessing, attracted the attention of Lott and other missionaries who have prayed that God would return him to Brazil.

Despite his desire to return, Miller for a while thought it was never to be. After the partnership pilot, he moved to California to attend Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley.

"If I had been in Fort Worth (at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary), I would have had other opportunities to return to Brazil in the Texas partnership project. But I know God wanted me to be at Golden Gate," Miller said.

"When we heard of others from Texas going to Brazil in the partnership, my wife could sense me chomping at the bit to be able to go. I wanted so much to be part of it," he explained.

But, by the time Miller returned to Texas three years later as a campus minister, the Brazil project had been completed.

"As soon as I heard about this project (the Global Student Missions Encounter), I wanted to be involved in it. From the very start, I knew this was my opportunity to come back," Miller said.

He was assigned to a team in Catalao, a city in Goias -- the state where Miller had worked previously.

He said he saw people hurting more economically than before as they struggle to cope with a 400 percent annual inflation rate. He compared this to the 143 American students changing \$100 and more into Brazilian currency to have spending money during their two weeks in the country.

"We got the money for souvenirs, Cokes and snacks. That's two months' salary for a Brazilian. They use it to feed their families," Miller said.

His empathy and compassion for the people are tied to his feeling that God may be calling him to become a foreign missionary.

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"God may be calling me somewhere else, but with the language skill and love for this place, I think Brazil is where I belong," he said.

As Miller returned to the United States, his wife, Joyce, was two weeks from the expected delivery of their second child.

"She knew when I left the trip could mean I would decide this is where we belong," he said.

"Although she has never been outside the United States and is uncertain about that, she has no qualms about going," Miller said. "We both are feeling the possibility of God's call to missions."

Miller's experience is one of the benefits of mission projects such as the Texas partnership and the Student Global Missions Encounter, explained Bill Richardson, area director for Brazil and the Caribbean at the Foreign Mission Board.

"Many people experience missions for the first time in a short-term project and realize that's where God wants them to be," Richardson said.

"Even if they don't feel called to missions, they have a better understanding and appreciation for mission work. They become better prayer and financial supporters," he said.

Miller said he has realized the responsibilities of missionaries through his contacts with them. "There is more of a load and strain on missionaries than I ever realized. You wouldn't know about the strain unless you know them."

An awareness of the responsibilities was on Miller's mind as he returned to Texas to talk with his wife about their role in foreign missions -- as supporters or participants.

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