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January 22, 1988

88-11

'Don't Change Direction,'
Seminarists Tell Committee

By R.G. Puckett

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Alumni, students, administration and faculty of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary have told the school's presidential search committee they neither see the need nor have the desire for any changes in the 37-year-old seminary.

Robert D. Crowley, chairman of the trustees and its search committee, responded by comparing that attitude to the Middle Ages before the Renaissance, when Europeans were satisfied with things as they were.

The search committee held its first full meeting on the seminary's Wake Forest, N.C., campus Jan. 21-22 to develop a profile for the school's fourth president.

W. Randall Lolley announced his plans to resign from his 14-year-presidency in October and made it official Nov. 17 in a special meeting of the full board of trustees.

Sharp exchanges took place between some trustees and students, faculty and alumni during the recent search committee meeting.

Beverly Hardgrove, president of the Student Council, accused some trustees of running ahead of the procedure outlined in seminary documents, giving some groups advanced opportunities for input as to the type of person and his or her style of leadership.

The accusation, voiced by others, partially was prompted by reports in the secular media that 19 people had been nominated and five were considered front runners.

"If the profile has not been determined, how can there be front runners?" Hargrove asked.

Todd Ackerman, staff writer for the Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, was asked about the sources of materials for some of his articles and the opinions expressed in them, such as the phrase "front runner."

Crowley said he had never indicated front runners and only confirmed the names Ackerman had included in his article. Crowley shared the names of nominees with the entire body of trustees, he added.

"Perhaps you need to check with 30 trustees to find out who leaked information to the secular press," Crowley said.

Also, an exchange of letters between Crowley and Lolley was made public in January through the secular media. "I certainly did not make the correspondence public, and I challenge the person who did to have enough integrity to admit that they gave copies of the letters to secular reporters," Crowley said.

The exchange of letters between the chairman and the president dealt with a request of Crowley for Lolley to vacate the position of president earlier than the agreed date of July 31, 1988, and Lolley's refusal to do so.

Nena L. Domingo, a student from Goose Creek, S.C., who heads up Seminary Students for Academic Freedom, told the trustees and observers the relationship between "trustees and all members of the Southeastern community, which was based on trust and fostered through open dialogue and participation, has been breached and destroyed."

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"We are only left to conclude that our attempt at input is futile, our opinions are unwanted and our position in this community, from the standpoint of the fundamentalist-conservative trustees, is expendable," she said.

In a printed statement distributed at the meeting, Southeastern Students for Academic Freedom supported Lolley in response to Crowley's charge, made in the December correspondence exchange, that Lolley has been a source of disruption and intimidation.

"It has been our first-hand experience as students on this campus that Dr. Lolley has been a stabilizing influence, who has calmed rather than inflamed student reaction. In his communications with students, both private and corporate, Dr. Lolley has been articulate, deliberate, impassionate and conspicuously honest. In our opinion, this type of reasoned response is to his credit and a credit to the Lord he serves," the statement said.

David D.C. Taylor, a student from Lumberton, N.C., rejected the situation: "Students use inflammatory words like 'evil' and 'wicked' to describe the trustees. And the actions of trustees have been insensitive and uncaring. We're not living what we believe. I ask you, would Jesus do it this way?"

A flap developed over the schedule, which was adjusted to give groups 45 minutes for their presentations, rather than an hour and a half Crowley first had indicated to group leaders.

Hardgrove asked for more time because several students had come prepared to make statements, including a litany of Old Testament passages on the captivity of the Israelites.

Theology professor Robert H. Culpepper protested the unannounced change in schedule: "I have a class from 2 to 3 o'clock. I am under the impression that my first responsibility is to meet my classes but when I arrived here, I find that the time for faculty presentations has ended."

Some reports were shorter than the 45 minutes allotted, which enabled faculty members and others to have time to speak.

T. Robert Mullinax, executive secretary of the Christian Higher Education Council for North Carolina Baptists, chairs the Advisory Task Force, including representatives from the alumni, student body, faculty and administration. The seminary documents call for the task force to have input into the process of electing the president:

Each of the four groups had prepared written statements for distribution. Mullinax summarized the points all four reports had in common concerning what the next president of the seminary should be:

-- A mature Christian and practicing Southern Baptist with a commitment to the authority of Scripture who has a history of denominational service.

-- A person who understands the history of the Southern Baptist Convention and appreciates the role of theological education in that history.

-- An educator and theologian with appropriate credentials in terms of education and experience.

-- A person who appreciates the Southeastern tradition of openness in education and who would attempt to carry out his office within that tradition.

-- A person who is committed to freedom of conscience and academic freedom for all faculty, staff and students within the parameters of the school's Articles of Faith.

-- An administrator who would utilize a participatory style in working with the present faculty and staff, as well as with the new majority of the board of trustees.

-- A person who would respond positively to and identify with the school's original and present statement of purpose, "to prepare men and women for Christian leadership in various ministries" within the Southern Baptist Convention and "the whole Christian movement." The statement was in the first seminary catalog in 1952 and has been in every one since, including the 1987-89 catalog.

Each of the reports made points in addition to the seven items they held in common.

Central States Mission Rally
Takes On Revival Atmosphere

By Ferrell Foster

OAK BROOK, Ill. (BP)--With people gathered around him on their knees, Avery Willis prayed that God will do "whatever it takes" -- even if that means a stock market crash or war -- to bring spiritual awakening in America.

In the unlikely setting of a hotel ballroom, the 1988 Central States Mission Rally became something akin to a revival Jan. 12-14.

The preaching brought echoes of "amen" from the large hall. The teaching applied biblical truths to modern life. The music brought hundreds to their feet in praise. And prayers were offered to God. The rally ended with the altar call and the prayer by Willis, author of the MasterLife discipleship training program. More than 600 ministers and laypeople from seven states -- Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin -- met at a suburban Chicago hotel.

The rally was part of the North Central States Mission Thrust begun in 1974 with a goal of doubling the work in measurable areas -- such as number of churches and baptisms -- by the end of 1990. Progress toward original goals has been slow, and sights have been lowered.

But because of the impact of the recent meeting and at the request of Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis, mission thrust steering committee President Tal Bonham said the thrust may be extended to the year 2000.

The rally's theme was "Storming the Gates of Hell for Jesus' Sake," and it stressed the biblical command to discipleship and the result it will have in evangelism and church planting.

Perry Sanders, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lafayette, La., was the main preacher; and Willis, of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, led four Bible studies. Others on the program were Lewis; Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school department at the Sunday School Board; Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department at the Sunday School Board; and Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Sanders preached the theme sermon from Matthew 16. He said churches are not to maintain the status quo: "We are Panzer troops out there on the move, surging. ... You're not supposed to be holding the fort ... get out of the fort, and kick down the gates of hell. ... We need to recapture that spirit of aggressiveness."

In Bible studies, Willis spoke on "how we develop gate stormers for Jesus." The key is being filled with the Holy Spirit, he said, noting, "The power and work of God must be done in the power and work of the Holy Spirit." The filling of the Spirit is "to equip you for service, and you need it every time you go out for service."

It takes "a certain kind of soldier" to do battle for Christ, and there must be an army of soldiers, Willis said. "The only command in the Great Commission" is to make disciples, he noted, adding, that is done by being a model for ministry.

The two weapons of a gate stormer are prayer and the word of God, Willis said. Christians must seek God, remember he is "big enough" for anything, claim his promises, trust and obey him, worship him and do what he says.

As for the word of God, it is perfect, profitable and purposeful, Willis said. The Bible gives doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. It can "change people's lives. ... You don't have to defend the word of God. Just use it."

Edgemon repeated the importance of being disciples and making disciples. He said a disciple must love Jesus more than anyone else, live his life for Jesus, forsake all possessions, be a learner, love others, bear fruit and disciple others.

Lewis cited three desperate needs in Southern Baptist life -- more soul winners, more church planters and spiritual awakening.

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"We are smitten with a subconscious universalism," he said. Christians are not convinced that people without Christ are separated from God and headed for hell, he added, noting, "When we are not convinced, you can be sure we'll have no overarching zeal" to share Jesus Christ.

Piland said Sunday school's basic purpose is evangelism, and it "ought to be at the heart and center" of a church's evangelistic efforts. It mobilizes the laypeople, and "when you put preachers and laymen together ... you've got something."

Weatherford said Baptist women are "partners in gate storming." Baptist women must be committed, imaginative, willing to risk and relevant, she said, adding, male-female partnership requires mutual trust and mutual respect to go with their mutual purpose.

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Stan Moore Joins Southwestern
Faculty As Music Missionary

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press
1/22/88

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Accepting a stateside ministry has not taken missions out of Stan Moore's music.

Moore, recently elected to the music faculty, has been a music missionary to Brazil since 1978.

"I still have a very strong call to missions," Moore said. Although it was "a thrill" to be asked to join Southwestern's faculty, Moore said he never would have accepted if missions wouldn't have been part of his work.

Moore, 35, sees one of his major tasks as reminding music students they can do missions. "We so underestimate the power of music to evangelize our world," he said.

Most of Moore's lessons on music missions come directly from his experience in Brazil. In addition to heading the music department at the South Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary, Moore led music and preached in local churches and worked in a variety of roles with the Brazilian mission.

Music missionaries are first missionaries, Moore said. "The music happens to be the means they use."

He said music can be used to evangelize, strengthen churches and nurture believers. "We don't realize how much doctrine is taught in our hymns," he said. "Knowing God's Word is so vital to worshipping him."

And in many mission settings, music can "win a hearing for the gospel" that preachers may not receive, Moore said. "Music not only draws them to the gospel, but they hear the gospel through it."

All ministries -- whether church planting, evangelism or social work -- can be enhanced by music, Moore said. "No matter what your gifts are, you must understand the importance of music in your ministry.

"Music can't be just an option. Any tool that is worthy must be used," Moore said.

And musicians must apply that same lesson, he said. "If we're going to win our world, we're going to have to become all things to all men."

In Brazil, Moore discovered that although music was an effective tool, it was not the only tool needed. He was often the only person available to do other ministries, even though he had not been trained for them.

In his classes and on campus, Moore hopes to be a living example of what a music missionary is. He wants to encourage music students to consider missions and missions students to consider music.

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Moore is a new voice in an emphasis begun by T.W. Hunt and the late Robert Douglass. Hunt, who now heads a nationwide prayer emphasis at the Baptist Sunday School Board, originated Southwestern's music missions courses, which Moore will now teach. Douglass, professor of musicology for 37 years, was instrumental in fostering missions awareness among music students.

The Moores' own missions awareness was awakened while students at Southwestern. Moore sensed the missions call first, but his wife, Mary, had not.

During a home missions emphasis at a local church in 1978, the Moores heard Southwestern President Russell Dilday speak. Through Dilday's sermon, Moore became convinced that God was calling him to foreign missions. But because he didn't want to pressure his wife, he gripped the pew firmly and kept his seat during the invitation.

On their way to the car after church Moore struggled to find the right way to tell his wife of his commitment. But before he could speak, she said, "I don't know how to tell you this, but God has called me to missions this morning."

Within four months, they had been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board.

And now, under Dilday's leadership, the Moores have answered a new missions call.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Six Robbed At Church;
Suspects Arrested

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
1/22/88

DALLAS (BP)--Six women were robbed of their purses at gunpoint during a Jan. 20 evening Bible study at Leland Street Baptist Church in south Dallas, but their property was recovered when police apprehended two suspects a short time later.

The two men were charged with committing armed robbery at three churches in the area, said James Carroll, pastor of the Leland Street congregation, a black mission of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Carroll, a bivocational pastor, was working overtime at his secular job and was late in arriving at the Wednesday night service. Consequently, the six women were conducting the Bible study alone when two men came to the door of the church.

One of the suspects told the church member who answered the door he was a minister and would like to come in. Once the door was unlocked, he and his partner forced their way inside and robbed the women of the congregation at gunpoint.

Witnesses saw the men run from the church to an apartment several blocks away. Police arrested the pair at the apartment within hours after the robbery.

"When I saw the men later on the news, I realized they were the same ones who showed up at the church Monday night when we were having a business meeting," Carroll said. "That time, when they saw men there in the church they said, 'We're in the wrong place,' and left."

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