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88-16

Senate Approves Civil
Rights Restoration Act

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--Legislation that would restore broad application of four civil rights laws has won U.S. Senate approval following a four-year struggle.

Debates over abortion stalled previous legislative efforts that in effect would have overturned a 1984 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Grove City College v. Bell*, that limited the enforcement of those civil rights statutes.

In that decision, the high court held an education anti-discrimination ban applied only to the "program or activity" receiving federal funds, not the entire institution. Although the ruling directly applied to Title IX of the 1972 Education Act Amendments, it also restricted the enforcement of three other civil rights statutes that contain the same "program or activity" language.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act, as approved by the Senate 75-14, would again broaden the civil rights laws to cover entire institutions. Thus, if a college's English department received federal aid, the entire institution, including its athletic program, would be forced to comply with Title IX's anti-discrimination ban.

Abortion again dominated Senate debate on the legislation, with senators disagreeing over the bill's potential impact on abortion rights. Similar debates are expected when the U.S. House of Representatives takes up the measure.

Although neither the legislation nor Title IX mentions abortion, 1975 regulations -- promulgated by the then-Department of Health, Education and Welfare -- specify that schools receiving federal aid "shall treat pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom in the same manner and under the same policies as any other temporary disability" in regard to leave, health services or insurance for students or employees.

In response to charges the legislation would expand abortion rights, Sen. John C. Danforth, R-Mo., introduced an amendment he called "abortion-neutral."

It states: "Nothing in this title shall be construed to require or prohibit any person, or public or private entity, to provide or pay for any benefit or service, including the use of facilities, related to an abortion. Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit a penalty to be imposed on any person or individual because such person or individual is seeking or has received any benefit or service related to a legal abortion."

Sponsors of the legislation opposed the amendment, claiming it made substantive changes in existing law rather than just restoring previous coverage. But proponents of the Danforth amendment said the measure was necessary to ensure that colleges or hospitals religiously or morally opposed to abortion are not forced to fund or provide abortion services.

Following almost 10 hours of debate, the amendment passed 56-39.

The Southern Baptist Convention, during its annual meeting last June in St. Louis, passed a resolution calling for Senate approval of the Danforth amendment and urging the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission to support the amendment.

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"Victory on the Danforth amendment demonstrates what Southern Baptists can contribute on a social issue where widespread consensus prevails within the convention," said N. Larry Baker, CLC executive director. "Our staff's direct action and coordination of the lobbying effort by state Baptist leaders influenced six of the nine uncommitted Southern senators we targeted. A number of clergy and laity deserve credit for exercising responsible Christian citizenship."

An amendment to expand the bill's "religious tenets" exception was rejected. Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, unsuccessfully proposed expanding the legislation's provision to exempt "any operation of an entity which is controlled by a religious organization" to include an exception for any operation "which is closely identified with the tenets of" a religious organization.

Under current regulations, religious colleges and universities may apply for exemptions. To date, no school's application has been rejected and at least six Southern Baptist institutions have been granted exemptions.

"To the extent that this bill makes it possible for the victims of discrimination to obtain justice in a court of law, it is a wonderful bill" said Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. "But it raises a number of problems that may need to be addressed in the future.

"For example, the bill makes no distinction between direct federal subsidy and indirect financial assistance in the form of student aid. It seems patently unfair to treat a college that accepts a multi-million dollar federal grant in the same manner as a college that has steadfastly refused federal funding but simply has a student who is on the GI bill. There should be no religious exemption for those who receive direct federal aid. There should be a broader exemption for those that refuse it."

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Correspondence Institute
Passes 'Examination'

N-CO
(SEED)

Baptist Press
2/1/88

NASHVILLE (BP)--For the fourth time since 1972, the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute has passed its test to gain continued accreditation.

The accreditation process was conducted by the National Home Study Council. It included a comprehensive self-evaluation report on every aspect of the institute's work, and an on-site inspection by a four-member team sent by the accrediting commission. Course materials, testing procedures and financial practices were among areas of review.

Acting on the recommendation of the examining team, the accrediting committee granted the institute re-accreditation "without stipulation of any kind," meaning that no major deficiencies were noted. The council's accrediting commission is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a recognized accrediting agency for correspondence programs. The commission also is a member of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation.

"Accreditation signifies that our institute operates according to accepted national standards," said George Knight, director of the institute. "We feel it is particularly important for a correspondence program to be able to demonstrate that level of quality."

The institute is the correspondence arm of the seminary extension department. The department is part of the Seminary External Education Division, sponsored jointly by the six Southern Baptist seminaries. Last year more than 2,000 persons took pre-college or college-level ministry education courses through the institute.

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(Editor's Note: Following is the second of a three-part series on Jewish believers in Israel.)

Jewish Believers Weather
Multitude Of Challenges

By Art Toalston

F - FMB

JERUSALEM (BP)--Messianic Jews are battling for their Jewishness.

No longer are they truly Jewish, their critics claim. The issue is their belief in Jesus, or Yeshua (ye-SHU-uh), as they call him in Hebrew.

"Any rabbi will tell you there is no room within traditional Judaism for any such belief," says Pinhas Peli, a Jerusalem Post columnist and professor of Jewish thought and literature at Ben Gurion University in Be'er Sheva. "Claiming to be both a Jew and a Messianic believer is a contradiction in terms and an aberration of Judaism. Once you leave the Jewish religion or add to it something which is not genuine, you stop being a Jew."

But this small minority -- about 3,000 in a nation of 4.4 million people -- is intent on "remaining Jewish in a meaningful sense," says Baruch Maoz, leader of a Messianic congregation in the Tel Aviv area. And they are unwavering in their conviction that Jewish Scriptures, in Maoz's words, "find fulfillment nowhere else but in Christ as described in the New Testament."

"We live our lives as Jews in every sense, except those that deny Christ," Maoz says. He and his family observe Passover, for example, because "it's part of our history. I'm glad that my forefathers left Egypt. God brought them out, and that is something to celebrate."

Jewish believers "cannot, in the end, turn to the rabbis to find the ultimate definition of being Jewish," says Avner Boskey, one of the leaders of a Jerusalem congregation. "Rather, we need to turn to Yeshua the Messiah to do that. The leaven of the Pharisees that Yeshua talked about is the same leaven which refused to accept his divinity and Messiahship, and these people ended up writing the Talmud," ancient writings interpreting the Jewish Bible.

"God's Judaism," says Ari Sorko-Ram, an elder in a congregation near Tel Aviv, "is not the Babylonian Judaism we see here," the Judaism that emerged after Babylonian captivity and centuries of rabbinic writings.

"God is restoring his Judaism," Sorko-Ram says, pointing out the Messianic new birth is pivotal to the Exodus 19 prophecy that Israel will be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." In Old Testament times, priests came from the tribe of Levi; to create a national priesthood, another covenant was needed.

And as Israel becomes a nation of priests through the new covenant, the Genesis 12 prophecy to Abraham will be fulfilled, that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

It's through the Holy Spirit, Sorko-Ram adds, citing Jeremiah 31, that God writes his law on people's hearts. Scripture study, including the Old Testament, is "the ink, so to speak," that God uses, he says.

But theology fails to impress at least a dozen organizations devoted to assailing Messianic Jews. Several leaders in the best-known group, Yad L'Achim, refused to be interviewed for this story. Believers say Yad L'Achim periodically harasses congregational leaders by gathering information about them, often meshing it with falsehoods, and disseminating the mishmash in neighborhoods and to municipal and national officials.

A poster with a photo of one Messianic couple and their toddler son warned: "Watch out for these people. They love you because they want you to love Jesus." Yad L'Achim's tactics also include demonstrations. And some believers claim the group bugs telephones, opens mail and breaks into homes.

Another antagonist is Shmuel Golding, known for various booklets, cassette tapes and weekly debates at his Jerusalem Institute of Biblical Polemics that target some 180 New Testament fulfillments of Old Testament prophecy. Golding's skepticism, believers counter, could be equally destructive if applied to Jewish Scriptures.

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Golding also offers training for dissuading young Messianic Jews, and "counselors" now are in place in several countries. In his own counseling, Golding claims a 75-percent rate of Messianic Jews "coming back to their Jewish roots."

Antagonists often label Messianics as missionaries, which in Israel is "only slightly more positive than being called a child molester," one believer says. The term has been twisted to mean "a soul robber," one seeking to "steal Jews away from their heritage" or "make Jews into Gentiles," believers say.

Messianic Jews face an even more intense challenge from ultra-Orthodox or Hasidic Jews, also known as blacks because of the black hats and coats the men wear. They comprise only 5 percent to 7 percent of the population, yet wield a disproportionate amount of clout because they are wooed by Israel's two major political parties. Far more vehemently than mainline Orthodoxy, they oppose the Messianic movement -- and any other departure from rigorous Judaism.

Ultra-Orthodox Jews hurled stones into a Tiberias congregation's worship services during a six-month period in 1985. On several occasions, believers have been roughed up. Newspapers, fearing Hasidic protests, will not accept Messianic advertisements, a congregational leader says.

And Ultra-Orthodox Jews often pressure local officials to use zoning regulations against Messianic congregations. A congregation near Tel Aviv struggled more than two years to reverse a municipal injunction against meetings in a building they were renting. No injunctions were placed against nearby synagogues.

The blacks especially are hostile toward Messianics because believers do not give the credence to their religious authority that many other Jews do, Sorko-Ram believes. "That's the same problem as in the first century," he adds, when believers chose Yeshua as their authority.

"Nobody enjoys being harassed," one believer says, but it does "generate a tremendous amount of interest" locally and sometimes nationally. More and more, believers are scraping together the money to take their grievances to Israeli courts -- and often winning.

Tim King, financial director and one of the founders of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, says Israel has "religious freedom as no American could understand it," housing holy sites and followers of three world religions "in a very grand way. There's religious freedom in this country the likes of which doesn't exist in any Arab country I know of."

Open-mindedness is another matter. Evangelism of Jews, Peli says, is "chutzpah ... something which is not acceptable in any way." To anyone wanting to carry the gospel to the Jews, he admonishes: "Hands off. Not now. You want to talk to us, give us another hundred years, another 50 years. Let's heal the wounds that are still bleeding from the Holocaust. We lost a third of our people," 6 million Jews to Nazi exterminators. "Every Jew is important to us."

Peli acknowledges a religious void in Israel, but urges, "If you want to be a true friend of Israel ... if you want to help people who are looking for spirituality, help them find it within their own religion."

Nor are Messianic Jews open-minded when it comes to pleas to refrain from evangelizing. "We do not have the right to compromise on ... the Great Commission which the Jewish Messiah gave to us in Matthew 28," Boskey says. The Apostle Paul in Romans 1 said the gospel should go "to the Jew first," he says. And the Apostle Peter in Acts 4 told Jews "there is no other name under heaven" for salvation. To fail to take the gospel to the Jews would be the "Great Omission," Boskey says.

Some Messianic believers have begun moving beyond one-on-one evangelism in recent years. "We're no longer satisfied with one here and one there," says Ya'akov Damkani of Jaffa, one of three full-time evangelists spearheading the use of tracts to reach the masses. "The prophets were never satisfied with one here and one there," nor were the apostles, he says. "All the nation is familiar with the Christianity of the pope, the crusaders, the inquisitions. We just need to plow the heart of the nation."

Believers see Ezekiel 37's imagery of dry bones as symbolizing God's unfolding plan. The dry, scattered bones are like Jews scattered from their homeland. The bones come together, much as Zionist Jews began returning to Palestine in the 1920s. Flesh is restored to the bones, akin to the founding of Israel in 1948. Finally comes the breath of life, which is the Messianic movement's message.

Each new believer, says Shaul Zuela, one of the leaders of a congregation in Tiberias, "fills my heart with joy because I see the fulfillment of prophecies before my eyes ... the promise that God will redeem his nation."

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

SBC Missions Agencies
Present At Urbana '87

By Carolyn Blunk

Baptist Press
2/1/88

N-HUMB

URBANA, Ill. (BP)--For the first time, the Southern Baptist Convention's home and foreign mission boards sent representatives to the largest student missions convention in North America.

The two missions agencies jointly sponsored a booth at Urbana '87 to provide registered delegates with information on short- and long-term mission opportunities within the denomination.

Despite rain, snow and ice, 18,661 people registered for the conference's 15th triannual missions festival held on the University of Illinois campus at Champagne-Urbana. Nearly 700 of the delegates were Southern Baptists.

Record-breaking crowds packed the assembly hall for morning and evening plenary sessions and ventured to more than 100 afternoon seminars. Two large buildings housed exhibits from more than 200 missions agencies, schools and organizations.

During the five-day conference, delegates learned the biblical basis for missions and were given opportunities to talk with missionaries and denominational representatives.

"The significance of our participation at Urbana," said Bill O'Brien, SBC Foreign Mission Board executive vice president, "is recognition of the comprehensiveness of the world Christian mission. Southern Baptists have an appropriate share in that task, but we must always understand our share in the context of the master mosaic.

"Our participation with other Great Commission Christians guards us from either the arrogance of going it alone or the fear of being alone."

Prior to arriving at Urbana '87, Southern Baptist delegates who had expressed a commitment to missions were invited to visit the booth and meet with agency representatives.

At the exhibit, home and foreign missions staff answered questions related to educational preparation and the application process for missionary service. But the underlying concern of most delegates was finding a place of service on the mission field.

Urbana's mission placement database, "Fishpond," which contained resumes of hundreds of candidates, was used to locate delegates, prescreen their applications and arrange for on-site interviews. Many delegates considered the conference a turning point to their decision in serve in missions.

Southern Baptists had high visibility on the program as well as in the crowds of conference participants. Dwight Nordstrom, a Southern Baptist layman in China, shared his testimony and commitment to global evangelization, and Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham delivered the opening address.

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Seminary Couple Enjoys
'Wheel of Fortune' Trip

By David Wilkinson

F-10
(SBT9)

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Familiar with the popular TV game show "Wheel of Fortune?" Then take five seconds to solve this puzzle. It's a six-word phrase: _ _ _ _ _ T _ _ N _ _ N _
_ _ _ T _ ' T _ _ N _ _ N _ .

Solve it? Becky Daniel did.

The elementary school teacher, whose husband, Mark, is a theology student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., appeared as a contestant on a segment of the show to be aired nationally in February. The 25-year-old South Carolinian solved two of the five puzzles.

The \$2,000 she won will pay for their "mini-vacation" to Burbank, Calif., where the program is taped. Mrs. Daniel says it also will help the Daniels "finish up the nursery" in their apartment and "buy a lot of diapers" for their first child, due in September.

In addition, the trip provided an enjoyable break after several months of painful recuperation for Daniel following surgery in November for a ruptured disk. While "trying not to overdo it" for his sake, they did take a day to tour Universal Studios and to drive by several stars' homes.

At the elementary school where she teaches, Mrs. Daniel now enjoys stardom status herself. Students have dubbed her "The Two Thousand Dollar Woman," a take-off on "The Six Million Dollar Man."

Of course, teaching colleagues and friends at seminary all want to know about the two stars of "Wheel of Fortune." For the record, she reports host Pat Sajak is "smaller than he looks on TV" (naturally), but he's handsome and personable. While Vanna White "is very nice," she thinks White is "older, skinnier and not quite as pretty" as her television image. (Her husband, it seems, disagrees.)

The whole experience could have been soured by the frustration of failing to win more money. Mrs. Daniel knew the answers to two other puzzles but never got a chance to take a turn. In one case, another contestant guessed enough letters in a single turn to solve "The Empire Strikes Back." During a break she turned and asked, "What was that?" After learning it was a movie title, she confessed she had not been to a movie theater in 25 years.

The same woman later missed her chance for \$25,000 in the "bonus round," failing to solve another puzzle Mrs. Daniel recognized immediately. Although they were "a little disappointed at first," she says she and her husband have decided "to enjoy the experience and not worry about what could have been."

Indeed, Mrs. Daniel always can be proud that she got on the show at all. Out of more than 1,200 people from the Louisville area who participated in two days of tryouts a year ago, she was one of about 30 people chosen to compete on the show.

Oh, yes. As for the puzzle she solved in five seconds, the answer was: "Are You Thinking What I'm Thinking?"

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(BP) photo available upon request from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

CORRECTION: Please change the 13th graf of the 1/26/88 Baptist Press story titled "Baptists, Mennonites Send Commentaries to U.S.S.R." to read:

The project cost of more than \$500,000 is being shared equally by the Baptist World Alliance division of Baptist World Aid and the Mennonite Central Committee, through designated gifts.

Thanks,
Baptist Press