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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2353
Alvin C. Shackelford, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Marv Knox, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 720-0550
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hasteley, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

February 16, 1988

88-27

Americans Want President
To Have Religious Beliefs

N-BJC

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--An overwhelming majority of Americans think the nation's president should have strong religious beliefs, according to a new public opinion poll.

Although 70 percent agree with that position and 62 percent would be unwilling to vote for an atheist for president, more than half of the public do not necessarily want candidates for public office to talk about their religious values. Of those surveyed, 34 percent think candidates who do so are hypocrites, and 22 percent are not sure.

The Williamsburg Charter Survey on Religion and Public Life also revealed most Americans are willing to vote for presidential candidates of different faiths that are part of the Judeo-Christian heritage. Only 8 percent would refuse to vote for a Catholic simply on the basis of religion, 10 percent for a Jew and 13 percent for either a "born-again" Baptist or a Greek Orthodox.

When compared with results from a 1958 Gallup poll, those figures reflect an increasing trend toward toleration. In 1958, 28 percent said they would not vote for a Jew and 25 percent said they would not vote for a Catholic.

The only increased hostility was recorded toward Baptist candidates. The 3 percent who in 1958 said they would not vote for a Baptist has increased to 13 percent.

Most Americans expect candidates to display traditional moral values. Sixty-five percent would be unwilling to vote for a homosexual, and 43 percent would be unwilling to vote for a married candidate who "has been having other love affairs."

The survey was conducted for the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, a private, non-partisan, non-denominational organization concerned with the place of religion in public life.

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NFBM Executive Committee
Affirms Interim Director

N-CO
(B'hood)

By Jim Burton

Baptist Press
2/16/88

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--The National Fellowship of Baptist Men's executive committee affirmed the appointment of Larry Cox as NFBM interim director Feb. 13.

Cox, who has been the fellowship's associate director since last summer, will be presented to the NFBM general council for consideration as NFBM director. The council will be polled by James H. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, and NFBM President Norman Wiggins.

The general council elects the director in consultation with the Brotherhood Commission.

Cox is a former foreign missionary whose commitment to missions is but one asset necessary to lead the fellowship, said Wiggins, president of Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C.

"I think the thing that impresses me most about Larry is he is willing to ask other people to help him," Wiggins explained. "You can do a lot on your own, but you can do a whole lot more if you get other people to join you.

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"I think (Cox) is the type of person who will generate a volunteer spirit on the part of people. He senses the overall magnitude of the work of the fellowships, sees what those possibilities are and realizes that perhaps they are not all going to come to fruition in the first year."

Cox was named interim director in January by Douglas Beggs, director of the Brotherhood Commission's adult division. Cox replaced Ed Bullock, who was the fellowship's first director from February 1986 to Jan. 4, 1988.

Bullock was instrumental in the formation of the fellowship, but a change in leadership will further the concept of volunteer missions, Smith said.

Cox joined the Brotherhood Commission last summer after working for more than 11 years with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as an agricultural missionary in Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast. In Burkina Faso, he utilized about 650 missions volunteers.

The fellowship was restructured within the Brotherhood Commission in January. The fellowship now is related to the commission's adult division. Previously, the fellowship related to the office of the president. The new structure will give the fellowship closer correlation to commission programs as well as state Brotherhood departments, Beggs said.

During their February meeting, the NFBM executive committee approved this year's budget, authorized a review of the bylaws and approved three national coordinators.

The committee approved a maintenance budget of \$58,500 through December 1988. The Brotherhood Commission will guarantee funding for staff salaries and office maintenance through September while the fellowship seeks to erase a \$32,000 deficit. In October, staff salaries and office maintenance will be included in the annual commission budget, announced Norman Godfrey, commission vice president.

Wiggins appointed Cox to head a committee to bring bylaw revision recommendations to the general council which meets June 3-4 in Memphis, Tenn.

"There were some gray areas in the bylaws concerning membership of the general council and the executive committee," said Cox. "The other major changes will come in the term of office. It never has been spelled out what the term of office is.

"Any organization that comes through a start-up period after it has been functioning for a limited period of time will see some opportunities to modify and make changes."

New fellowship coordinators are Michael Richardson of Seminole, Fla.; Sam Haskins of Nashville; and Robert Adams of Waco, Texas.

Fellowship coordinators are volunteers who manage and encourage various fellowships that enable laymen to use their vocational skills and avocational interests on mission fields. NFBM provides the coordinators' travel funds. Fourteen fellowships represent various disciplines and interests.

Richardson, editorial page editor of the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times, will coordinate the communications fellowship.

Haskins will coordinate the National Fellowship of Baptist Volunteers in Criminal Justice. He is the director of volunteer services for the Tennessee Department of Correction.

Adams will coordinate the agriculture fellowship. He is director of the Center for the Study of Famine and Agricultural Alternatives at Baylor University.

NFBM coordinates missions volunteers and assignments with the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign mission boards. NFBM also works with state Brotherhood directors to fill volunteer requests.

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(Bill Bangham also contributed to this report.)

Hispanics Plan Rally, Workshop
For San Antonio SBC Session

By Joe Westbury

N- HMB

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--A trend among Hispanics to take a greater role in Southern Baptist life will surface prior to the denomination's annual session in San Antonio, Texas, June 14-16.

A central crusade tentatively has been scheduled for June 5-8 and will be followed by revival meetings June 9-12 in about 40 Hispanic churches. The emphasis will climax on the afternoon of June 12 with an evangelistic rally expected to attract 1,500 Hispanics.

The rally will be co-sponsored by the San Antonio Baptist Association and the Texas Baptist evangelism department and will be supported by the newly-formed Southern Baptist Hispanic Ministers' Conference.

But the strongest indicator of the ethnic group's growing denominational involvement will be a one-day seminar scheduled for June 13, the Monday before the annual SBC session begins. The workshop, with the theme "Equipping Hispanic Ministers for Growth," will be the first such venture sponsored by the national Hispanic fellowship.

Daniel Sotelo of Fresno, Calif., president of the conference, said the seminar will educate Hispanics on biblical principles of church growth and will dovetail with Southern Baptist Home Mission Board goals of starting new churches. The workshop will be held on the campus of Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary in San Antonio.

Sotelo, pastor of Templo Bautista, said the seminar is "the first national effort to bring Hispanics into the mainstream of Southern Baptist life and will strengthen the pastors in their roles in associations and state conventions."

The Hispanic ministers conference, founded in November, was formed to channel more Hispanic pastors into an active role in the denomination and does not operate outside of Southern Baptist life, Sotelo said.

The birth of the organization came at a time when the denomination has sought to enlist the nation's largest language group in reaching America with the gospel. Hispanic pastors have been encouraged to take an active role in the upcoming "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals, sponsored by the Home Mission Board in 1990.

For the first time, Spanish New Testaments will be included in the 400,000 marked copies to be distributed for witness training prior to the 1990 revivals.

Leaders of 16 other ethnic groups, as well as Hispanics, have taken the lead in pledging their support for the revivals and are laying the groundwork for the establishment of 18,000 new congregations by the year 2000.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanics are the nation's fastest-growing ethnic community, increasing at a rate five times greater than the rest of the nation.

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Public Has Little Knowledge
Concerning First Amendment

By Kathy Palen

N- BJC

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WASHINGTON (BP)--When it comes to the U.S. Constitution and First Amendment, the American public has a "high level of veneration, but a relatively low level of knowledge," according to a recent nationwide survey.

While 71 percent of citizens surveyed said they knew freedom of religion was in the Constitution, only 33 percent remembered the First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion.

When asked what pops into their minds when they hear the term "First Amendment," only 4 percent cited freedom of religion. In contrast, 32 percent said they think of freedom of speech and 7 percent responded freedom of the press.

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Thirty-nine percent said they either did not know or could not think of anything specific.

The survey was conducted for the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, a private organization concerned with the place of religion in public life.

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Fruit Of Appelman Ministry
Seeds Future Of Southwestern

By Elizabeth Watson

N-10
(SWBTS)

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Fruit from the evangelistic ministry of the late Hyman Appelman is seeding the future of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Verna Cook Appelman, widow of the Southern Baptist evangelist who died in 1983, has donated the remainder of Appelman's campaign funds to Southwestern. The money has been added to the previously established Hyman J. and Verna Cook Appelman Endowment Fund.

Southwestern has also received Appelman's sermon manuscripts and books, which are available to students in the A. Webb Roberts library.

Mrs. Appelman, who holds two degrees from Southwestern, said she gave the funds and the materials to the seminary because Southwestern always meant more to the couple than any other school they attended.

The Appelmans enrolled at Southwestern in the 1940s when Lee Scarborough was president. Scarborough, known as a powerful evangelist, encouraged Appelman to pursue full-time evangelism and helped get him started.

Appelman, born to Jewish parents in Russia in 1902, was called "the dean of evangelists," said Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern. Appelman became state evangelist for Texas Baptists in 1934. After eight years, he began his own nationwide evangelistic ministry, leading 10,000 people to faith in Christ each year until his death.

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Team-Building Administrator
Sharpened Board's World View

By Art Toalston

F-FMB

Baptist Press
2/16/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Charles W. Bryan posed some tough questions in his missionary newsletter years ago.

"Will funds be available for entering new cities and new areas with the gospel?" What about radio and TV programs "to present the message of Christ to the masses?"

He pondered the evangelistic potential of the printed page, outreach to university students, hospital ministries and social work. Then he asked his readers: "... what would you do?"

Two decades later, Bryan is retiring after more than 37 years with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Tough questions still are on his mind.

"What additional steps can we take to accelerate world evangelization?" he asked fellow staff members during his last year as senior vice president of overseas operations. "How can we effectively meet the challenge of the cities? How can we reach neglected people groups? How can we provide the most appropriate training for missionaries of tomorrow?"

But he never loitered in his questions. His interest was in making headway. And he relished making headway through teamwork and planning.

Via teamwork, Bryan helped bring the world's need for Christ into sharper focus, colleagues say. More and more, Foreign Mission Board priorities were decided from a worldwide perspective; more attention was given to where the needs were most pressing and to strategies that proved most productive.

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At the same time, the Whitesboro, Texas, native kept colleagues mindful of the basics. It wasn't what he said, but the example he set. Bryan never lost his passion, as one colleague puts it, "for one lost soul."

In a Bangkok hotel several years ago, an Indian tailor invited Bryan into his shop. It was 9:30 at night and Bryan was leaving at 5 a.m. He had been through several days of missionary meetings and an afternoon of viewing Buddhist shrines.

Bryan agreed to spend a few moments examining the garments but said he did not plan to buy any. Just before leaving, he reiterated to the tailor and his wife, "I don't need anything on the outside," then added, "I have something within." They asked him to explain.

Their religious confusion soon surfaced. They asked Bryan to baptize the business. He said he couldn't, "but I can introduce you to Jesus Christ."

The couple were open to adding Jesus to the other gods they worshipped. The encounter stretched to two hours. After a time of prayer, Bryan told them about a nearby Baptist church. They attended the next Sunday, quickly read their first New Testament and soon professed faith in Christ and were baptized.

"You were an angel of God who came into my shop," the tailor wrote to Bryan last year.

One friend says Bryan "could never stop being a missionary" after 10 years of evangelistic work in Costa Rica and Peru. He became a field representative for Baptist work in several Latin American countries in 1961, then director of work in Central America and the Caribbean in 1968 and director of all overseas work in 1980.

Says one colleague of his regard for Bryan, "I have always felt that those individuals who are in leadership positions should never rise to the point where they cannot simply share the gospel with people on the streets."

Missionaries sensed Bryan always was a little ill at ease as an administrator, says another colleague, "because he was no longer officially a missionary. That is where his heart continued to be. Times on the field, even with impossible schedules, were always renewing and refreshing to him."

His wife, Martha, a native of East Point, Ga., literally went to great pains to also maintain contact with missionaries. Several years ago, battling colon cancer, she was able to accompany her husband on a trip by scheduling chemotherapy treatments at Baptist hospitals in Bangkok, Thailand, and Bangalore, India, and blood tests at various local clinics. She went with him to China in 1986 three weeks after a fall that required surgery for a ruptured spleen. She also broke an arm in the fall.

She underwent additional surgery for colon cancer last November but went with Bryan in January to visit with Baptist leaders in the Caribbean. She is to begin chemotherapy and radiation treatments while her husband is on a one-week trip to Africa related to a new job he accepted Feb. 1 leading the Baptist General Association of Virginia's partnerships with Baptists in Tanzania and New England.

Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks credits Bryan and his staff with enhancing the coordination of overseas efforts and refining input from Baptists abroad, missionaries and administrators into a cohesive forward thrust.

Bryan led the board in establishing priority concerns with dated, measurable goals. Input from "as broad a spectrum as possible" helped the board select "the best possible goals to which to give our energies," he explains. "We ... set them out clearly for everyone to see ... so that we could be accountable." Such planning, he adds, yields a unity of direction and a continuity that runs beyond a single personality.

One colleague says Bryan, as an administrator, had a gift for team-building. He chose creative and assertive associates. He built consensus by sharing his own dreams as well as incorporating the visions of others. He gave staffers a sense of mutual loyalty and a wide range of autonomy. Consequently, he derived the benefit of leading a group of turned-on leaders, the colleague notes.

Another colleague admits mixed reactions to Bryan's what-ifs, explaining, "Some I heartily subscribed to, others I felt were questionable, some seemed impractical." Ultimately, Bryan was "much more often right than wrong."

Bryan says his brand of leadership was fashioned during various eras in his life. Among them: When he was 16, his father died, leaving responsibility for running the family's grocery store to Bryan and his older brother. Later, he trained for two years to be a PT boat commander, a task cut short when World War II ended in 1945. And he puts into practice principles gleaned from a two-week executive management seminar at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board nearly 20 years ago.

Bryan's tenure in leading Baptists' overseas work also included heightened emphasis on tapping the talents of volunteers from local churches. He increased the number of staff members assigned to deploy volunteers overseas from three to 10.

He spearheaded an increase in funds to train both missionaries and Baptists abroad in meeting key challenges in their cultures. Emphasis was placed on discipleship, to the point where MasterLife, Southern Baptists' discipleship program, has been translated into nearly 50 languages. Nearly 40 percent of the missionaries have taken MasterLife and 8,000 overseas Baptists were enrolled last year.

Years earlier, as area director, he launched a survey of openings for Baptist work in the Caribbean, at a time when just six missionaries were assigned to the Bahamas. The survey ultimately led to missionary efforts in some 20 Caribbean countries.

For one who has utilized such an array of administrative approaches -- teamwork, planning, priorities, goals, training -- Bryan has even a weightier "central strategy: follow Christ."

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