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BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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April 20, 1988

N-CO
(Calif.) GGBTS

88-65

Golden Gate Requests
\$7.8 Million Endowment

By Eddy Oliver and Herb Hollinger

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary trustees have appealed to the Southern Baptist Executive Committee for \$7.8 million in endowment.

In the spring meeting April 11-12 on the Mill Valley, Calif., campus, they also adopted a report to the Southern Baptist Peace Committee.

The Executive Committee had requested Golden Gate to present a documented request for a special allocation over and above the present formula for seminary funding. That request is for an allocation from the convention's Cooperative Program unified budget, spread over a five-year period.

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The report states that every person teaching at Golden Gate has been asked to sign a statement to "teach in accord with and not contrary to the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message Statement." Since 1978, trustees also have signed a document that indicates they will operate the seminary in the same manner.

Additionally the report, which was adopted with one dissenting vote, details other activities which reflect hiring policies and affirms the 1986 Glorieta Statement by both the faculty and trustees.

"It is our belief that Golden Gate Seminary has in the past and will continue in the future to employ persons who clearly reflect the dominate convictions of Southern Baptists," seminary President William O. Crews said.

In other business trustees adopted a \$5.7 million budget for fiscal year 1988-89. The new budget is an increase of less than 1 percent from the current year and provides a 4 percent salary increase for faculty and staff.

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-- Approved advancement of eight professors.

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(GGBTG)

Baptist Press
4/20/88

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Honeycutt, 50, is currently the visiting professor of missions at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He has been a missionary since 1977 with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He has been professor of church history and missions at International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, Colombia.

He earned degrees from Mercer University; Midwestern Seminary; International Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland; and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Both will begin their duties in the fall semester.

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FMB For \$141 Million

N-FMB

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Diana Wade, 38, and her husband, G. Thomas Wade Jr., 47, were missionaries in Kenya and Botswana from 1976 until their return to the United States in 1984. The board requested Mrs. Wade's resignation after her husband voluntarily submitted his resignation in August 1985. The resignations were effective Jan. 31, 1986. The couple is now divorced.

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Mrs. Wade filed one suit for herself and one for the four children.

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AT MWBTS World Missions Day

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"We simply cannot say that we love Jesus and live in indifference to those who are being ground under the wheel of life," said Baker, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, during a World Missions Day chapel address. "The power to curse evil and the power to bless the hurting are tied together in the religion of our God and in the life of our Lord."

Baker, who was vice president for academic affairs and dean of the Midwestern faculty before accepting his CLC post in January 1987, was the keynote speaker for World Missions Day. The quarterly program is designed to inform students about the reality of the Christian mission around the world.

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"Jesus saw a temple that was mired in materialism of the crassest kind," Baker said. "Instead of hearing the quiet murmur of prayer and the jubilant sound of praise, he heard the sounds of people haggling over the prices of animals."

The Bible indicates Jesus experienced two emotions at that moment -- indignation and compassion, Baker said.

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"Here were the little people who were the victims of the money changers. They were fleeced regularly and systematically. ... Jesus was set against exploitation."

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After driving out the money changers, Jesus turned with compassion to heal the hurting, Baker pointed out: "As we look at Jesus in Jerusalem, we see the one who suffers with the blind and the broken, with the dying and the diseased. He is moved with compassion."

Christians today need to realize, "Religion that does not have the power to damn exploitation, does not have the power to say to the hurting, 'In the name of God, rise up and walk. Be healed,'" he said.

The capacity to challenge evil opens doors to acts of compassion. "Jesus will not let any one of us 'hit and run' and leave the hurting untouched," he said. "Religion that is willing to confront evil must also be willing to comfort the broken and the hurting.

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"On the streets of Jerusalem, Jesus calls us to renew our sense of humanity. He challenges us to say, 'Ride on, King Jesus, and I am riding with you into the face of exploitation and exploiters and into the arms of hurting people.'

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Handed To National Baptists

By Tim Nicholas

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JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's executive committee has approved a plan to turn over the entire work of Mississippi Baptist Seminary to National Baptist trustees.

The seminary, which operates a central campus in Jackson and 23 extension centers around the state, has been since its inception in 1944 a center of theological education for black ministers and laymen.

Southern Baptists in the state have aided in its funding and have jointly operated it with National Baptists. The seminary has had two black presidents and three white ones. Richard Brogan, who is white, is the current president.

The executive committee approval follows passage of a plan put forth by the bi-racial commission that operates the seminary. That plan calls for the Mississippi Baptist Convention to hand over primary operation to the nine National Baptist trustees Dec. 31, 1988. The bi-racial commission will be dissolved.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will fund 75 percent of the seminary's operational budget through the end of 1989, when all funding will cease. That amount is just under \$120,000. The Mississippi Baptist Convention and Home Mission Board also will split the payoff of half the seminary's building debt, with a total not to exceed \$80,000.

The bi-racial commission has elected seminary Dean Hickman Johnson, who is black, as president-elect. Brogan will return to the convention board staff next January as a consultant in the cooperative missions department, dealing with black church work, metropolitan missions and seminary extension.

Johnson, who is pastor of Farish Street Baptist Church in Jackson, is a graduate of Tennessee State University and earned master's degrees from Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Seminary in Atlanta and Mississippi College in Clinton.

The executive committee's recommendation will be presented to the full convention board in August. The white representatives of the bi-racial commission are elected from the convention board.

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Earlier this year, according to a report to the executive committee by Mississippi Executive Director Earl Kelly, some of the black supporters of Mississippi Baptist Seminary began diverting funds to Natchez Junior College, which is operated by the black General Baptist Convention. One of the black trustees of the seminary had asked to be relieved of his duties because of differing philosophies at the seminary.

In recent years the seminary, which is unaccredited, had stopped awarding degrees and granted certificates. About 500 black students are enrolled yearly at the central campus and at the extension centers. From 1977 through 1986, 883 people received either certificates, diplomas or degrees from the seminary, Brogan said.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary operates an extension program, which has a majority of white students enrolled, at the Mississippi seminary. That program will continue in Jackson, perhaps at the seminary, perhaps elsewhere.

Kelly and Chester Vaughn, Mississippi Baptist Convention program director, met with several seminary and National Baptist leaders to discuss resolution. Kelly noted when the seminary began, no blacks were able to attend Mississippi's public or private colleges or a Southern Baptist seminary. All of those doors are open today. "The Mississippi Baptist Seminary was created to address a problem which no longer exists," said Kelly in a background paper prepared for the executive committee.

At that point the discussion revolved around transfer of operation of the jointly-built seminary facilities on Lynch Street in Jackson to the black trustees, making it a totally black institution. The 18-member bi-racial commission voted on the recommendations which were also approved by the Mississippi Baptist Convention executive committee.

Kelly reported Mississippi Baptists have budgeted more than \$3.8 million for work with National Baptists since the mid-1940s, most of which was channeled to the Mississippi Baptist Seminary.

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Ethics, Power Of Media Discussed
At Religious Communicators' Meeting

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N-Texas
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DALLAS (BP)--Media compete with religion for the souls of society and exercise the greatest teaching power in modern life, a national interfaith gathering of religious communicators in Dallas was told.

"Television, Religion and the Shaping of Culture" and "Ethics in Communication" were among topics discussed at the 59th annual convention of the Religious Public Relations Council, in mid-April.

William Fore, assistant general secretary for communications for the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., maintained television has assumed the role previously held by religion in shaping culture.

"Television, rather than churches, is becoming the place where people find a worldview which reflects what to them is of ultimate value and which justifies their behavior and way of life," Fore said. "Television today, whether the viewers know it or not, and whether the television industry knows it or not, is competing not merely for our attention and dollars, but for our very souls."

To combat the new media "religion," denominational religions should not follow the example of televangelists in the "electronic church," Fore warned.

"If you can't beat them, don't join them," he said. "What we don't need is a Methodist Jimmy Swaggart or a Catholic Jerry Falwell."

Too often, Fore said, the electronic church reinforces the myths of secular society through its images of prestige, power and wealth.

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"These programs simply do not recognize that all their good words in all their sermonettes are overwhelmed by the images and symbols of the programs themselves -- the parade of worldly success, the beautiful women, the endless stories of material success, the political ambition," he said. Instead, religious communicators should make "pre-evangelism" their goal.

"You cannot be the church on radio and television. I doubt that you can give the answers to serious religious questions satisfactorily on radio and television, but you can raise the right questions," he said. "All you can do through mass media -- and I think it is a great deal -- is prepare people to receive the gospel."

"Ethics in Communication" was the subject of a panel discussion involving Bill May, distinguished university professor of ethics at Southern Methodist University in Dallas; Laura Miller, metro columnist for the Dallas Times Herald; and Peggy Wehmeyer, religion reporter at WFAA-TV in Dallas.

"In the 20th century, for better or worse, the mass media serve as the ranking teachers to the nation," said May. Unlike other professionals, journalists do not dispense technical services from their own base of knowledge, he added. Rather, they simplify and explain the knowledge of other professions to non-professionals.

"Journalists teach to a wider audience knowledge that other professionals tend to horde," he said, noting doctors, lawyers and other specialists see reporters as a threat because the journalists interpret their exclusive information base to laymen.

However, professionals should not fear competent reporters, because the educational task is an important part of every good professional's job, and the reporter can assist in that task, he said.

Miller said ethical decisions faced by reporters center around three issues: how to collect information, how to assemble information and what to do with information after it is assembled.

Wehmeyer drew on her own experiences as the first full-time religion reporter for a network affiliate in a major television market to examine cases of ethical propriety.

She mentioned questions of fairness and balance, and she asked whether a religious or non-religious person makes the better religion reporter.

As an evangelical Christian herself, Wehmeyer said, she enters religious stories involving evangelicals with a better understanding of some nuances and terminology than a non-religious reporter would have. Every reporter has some belief system, and the goal should be to honestly and fairly report news, not to become personally neutral on all issues, she added.

"I have to ask myself, 'How well can I separate myself personally from my role in reporting this story?'" she said. "As a religious person, my 'mission,' if you want to use that term, is to be an honest reporter."



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LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
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"Television, rather than churches, is becoming the place where people find a worldview which reflects what to them is of ultimate value and which justifies their behavior and way of life," Fore said. "Television today, whether the viewers know it or not, and whether the television industry knows it or not, is competing not merely for our attention and dollars, but for our very souls."

To combat the new media "religion," denominational religions should not follow the example of televangelists in the "electronic church," Fore warned.

"If you can't beat them, don't join them," he said. "What we don't need is a Methodist Jimmy Swaggart or a Catholic Jerry Falwell."

Too often, Fore said, the electronic church reinforces the myths of secular society through its images of prestige, power and wealth.

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"These programs simply do not recognize that all their good words in all their sermonettes are overwhelmed by the images and symbols of the programs themselves -- the parade of worldly success, the beautiful women, the endless stories of material success, the political ambition," he said. Instead, religious communicators should make "pre-evangelism" their goal.

"You cannot be the church on radio and television. I doubt that you can give the answers to serious religious questions satisfactorily on radio and television, but you can raise the right questions," he said. "All you can do through mass media -- and I think it is a great deal -- is prepare people to receive the gospel."

"Ethics in Communication" was the subject of a panel discussion involving Bill May, distinguished university professor of ethics at Southern Methodist University in Dallas; Laura Miller, metro columnist for the Dallas Times Herald; and Peggy Wehmeyer, religion reporter at WFAA-TV in Dallas.

"In the 20th century, for better or worse, the mass media serve as the ranking teachers to the nation," said May. Unlike other professionals, journalists do not dispense technical services from their own base of knowledge, he added. Rather, they simplify and explain the knowledge of other professions to non-professionals.

"Journalists teach to a wider audience knowledge that other professionals tend to horde," he said, noting doctors, lawyers and other specialists see reporters as a threat because the journalists interpret their exclusive information base to laymen.

However, professionals should not fear competent reporters, because the educational task is an important part of every good professional's job, and the reporter can assist in that task, he said.

Miller said ethical decisions faced by reporters center around three issues: how to collect information, how to assemble information and what to do with information after it is assembled.

Wehmeyer drew on her own experiences as the first full-time religion reporter for a network affiliate in a major television market to examine cases of ethical propriety.

She mentioned questions of fairness and balance, and she asked whether a religious or non-religious person makes the better religion reporter.

As an evangelical Christian herself, Wehmeyer said, she enters religious stories involving evangelicals with a better understanding of some nuances and terminology than a non-religious reporter would have. Every reporter has some belief system, and the goal should be to honestly and fairly report news, not to become personally neutral on all issues, she added.

"I have to ask myself, 'How well can I separate myself personally from my role in reporting this story?'" she said. "As a religious person, my 'mission,' if you want to use that term, is to be an honest reporter."

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