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O'Brien explains  
'70-30' plan

By Sheila Sullivan

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's "70-30" plan is the victim of bad press, not bad planning, according to FMB Executive Vice President William R. O'Brien.

The board's 10-year plan to have 70 percent of its missionaries devote at least half their time to evangelism is "intensification of what we already do anyway," O'Brien said during a question-and-answer session with students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. About 60 to 65 percent of current missionaries devote a minimum of 50 percent of their time to evangelism, he estimated.

Southern Seminary's student forum was conducted as part of Foreign Missions Emphasis Week at the Louisville, Ky., school.

Prejudices against the mission board's 70-30 strategy heightened when "outright misinformation" was reported in a Washington Post news account of the FMB trustee meeting in July, O'Brien said.

He also acknowledged the FMB staff had failed to clearly explain the plan after it was unveiled late last year. "We had a flawed communication system, and now we're doing damage control within our own missionary family," he said.

The plan is not a trustee-imposed concept, nor was it trustee-initiated, he added.

It is not meant to cause more paperwork or introduce more rigid evaluations, he said, noting the emphasis will be on function, not procedure, and strict figures are not expected to account for missionaries' time.

"There's no real way to evaluate some functions," he said. "The proof is in the results of mission work."

Area administrators, missionaries and the board all will help in the continual evaluation process, although "not all will have equal weight," O'Brien said.

The FMB administrative staff will not check over people's shoulders, but it will walk beside them to give support, he said.

All missionaries will be considered equals, he said. "There have been questions about those in the 70 percent being treated like first-class missionaries and the 30 percent being treated as second-class," he noted. "That's not true. It's all a matter of gifts and functions for global strategy -- not classism."

The board realizes the potential hazards for the 70-30 plan, but it will not base its future on what may or may not happen, O'Brien said.

"My prayer and hope is that time will prove what I'm saying here is basically right," he said.

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Sheila Sullivan is a communications intern at Southern Seminary.

Midwestern trustees  
OK endowment goal

By Brenda J. Sanders

KANSAS CITY, Mo.(BP)--Trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have voted to raise \$50,000 to support the Leonard Sanderson Professorship in Evangelism.

During the Oct. 17-18 semi-annual meeting, trustees and former trustees of the school were asked to accept a challenge to raise a minimum of \$1,000 each from outside sources and/or personal contributions.

A formal effort to raise \$250,000 in total contributions to establish the Sanderson professorship was approved during the April trustee meeting.

The first named professorship in Midwestern's 30-year history honors Sanderson, a leader in Southern Baptist evangelism who has been a visiting professor of evangelism at the seminary since 1983. A minimum of \$250,000 in endowment funds is required to establish the professorship, which will provide about one-half the salary of a full-time professor of evangelism at Midwestern.

Milton Ferguson, president of the Kansas City, Mo. seminary, challenged trustees to take the lead in raising the endowment funds within the coming year: "Now is the time for us to demonstrate that we believe what we talk about -- that we believe in this seminary, in Southern Baptists and in evangelism. It's easy to talk; it's tough to walk. The time has come to do it and not just talk about it."

Sanderson, a former Southern Baptist Home Mission Board evangelism director, addressed trustees during a trustee-faculty-staff dinner, Oct. 17. He said his dream for Midwestern is the employment of a full-time professor of evangelism to equip students to lead church members in personal evangelism.

"My ambitions in this regard are to seek Holy Spirit leadership in the area of teaching people to pray and commit themselves to God in the matter of evangelism," he said. "My concerns are especially in the area of learning how best to enlist laypeople in evangelism at the marketplace where they live and work."

In other action, trustees approved a proposal to enter a relationship with the Home Mission Board for the establishment of ethnic leadership development centers.

Trustees adopted in principle a draft proposal -- yet to be formally approved by the Home Mission Board -- on the cooperative effort between the board's language missions division and Midwestern Seminary. If implemented, the centers would enlist and train ethnic ministers and lay leaders to establish and develop ethnic/language-culture churches.

The trustees' instruction committee told board members about a faculty-instruction committee retreat Sept. 22-23.

Committee member Kerry G. Powell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Forrest City, Ark., said: "We appreciate our faculty and have come to love them and appreciate them more as we had a chance to get to know them better through this retreat. It was a deep encouragement to my own life. I think that as we shared our testimonies together, we came to understand the common ground that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Al Bean, associate professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, explained that Doyle Smith, instruction committee chairman and pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Great Bend, Kan., asked retreat participants to share significant aspects of their personal spiritual experiences.

"We began to tell one another, faculty members and instruction committee members alike, how God had spoken to us along the way and what had brought us to where we are today," Bean said. "We recognized that we did have a common vocabulary ... that God had called us, first of all to a salvation experience and then to various areas of Christian service."

"We still do not all think the same, and we do not all have the same expectations and ideas, but we all have a common bond in our relationship to Jesus Christ."

Coalition working to develop  
religious liberty curriculum

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--In an effort to help the nation's schools feel their way through a "minefield of controversies" surrounding the question of religion and education, a diverse coalition of educators, scholars and religious leaders has joined forces to develop curriculum on religious liberty and its role in a pluralistic society.

The group -- working in cooperation with the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-profit project concerned with the place of religion in public life -- is working to develop a five-lesson curricular unit titled "Living with our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society."

During a news conference announcing the curriculum project, Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and chairman of the project's editorial review board, said: "For far too long, we've had a remarkable silence on teaching about religion in the nation's public schools. This silence is not because of a conspiracy, but because of confusion about what such a curriculum should include and a genuine concern that to discuss religion in the classroom might be viewed as indoctrination or a violation of the conscience of students, as well as a violation of the fundamental principles of the Constitution."

"The problem is that this silence has led many to conclude that public schools are, at the very least, indifferent to religion or, at the very most, actively opposed. Most importantly, perhaps, the failure to include systematically the study of religion in the school curriculum has reduced the quality of the education we are providing to our children."

Project leaders said the curriculum will be developed around three goals:

-- To explain the history and significance of the First Amendment religious liberty clauses and their decisive contribution to individual and communal liberty and to American democracy.

-- To examine the advantages and responsibilities of living in a modern pluralistic society and to demonstrate how practical dilemmas can be answered in terms of tolerance and mutual respect rather than bigotry and violence.

-- To deepen each student's appreciation of the principles of religious liberty for peoples of all faiths or none and to establish a strong civic commitment to the groundrules by which all citizens can contend robustly but civilly over religious differences in public life.

In addition, the leaders said, curriculum materials -- which are to be written for students in fifth, eighth and 11th grades -- will be developed so as to be non-partisan and non-sectarian, constitutionally permissible, educationally sound, politically constructive and stylistically strong.

"Religious liberty and the separation of church and state are far too important to leave to happenstance whether they will be passed on to the next generation," said Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and one of nearly 50 project participants, who represent diverse perspectives on education, religion and politics.

"This curriculum project is critically important because it seeks to equip perhaps our most important public institution -- the public schools -- to teach these cherished doctrines to our children," Thomas said.

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Deaf participation in missions  
aided by new telephone link

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Using a TDD, a combination telephone-typewriter, deaf Southern Baptists can contact the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board by dialing (804) 254-9402.

The Foreign Mission Board TDD number reported in an Oct. 5 Baptist Press story contained a typographical error.

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More than 70 percent of deaf Americans have a TDD, or telecommunication device for the deaf, for typing messages back and forth over the telephone lines.

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HMB endorses 22 chaplains  
in 1st bilingual service

By Joe Westbury

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board endorsed 22 chaplains Oct. 23 in the agency's first bilingual commissioning service.

The 90-minute service at First Hispanic Baptist Church in Atlanta was translated into English and Spanish by Pastor Bob Sena.

HMB President Larry L. Lewis challenged the chaplains to be faithful to the gospel and compassionate in ministry: "We should all be soul winners. No one has ever done anything more important for us than pointing us to Jesus."

Lewis urged the chaplains to "store up crowns in heaven" through sharing Christ and ministering to others. "The greatest crown any of us can have in eternity is to hear Jesus say, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant,'" he explained.

Cuban native Conrado Navarro, who with his wife, Nilda, now is chaplain at Patrick Air Force Base near Cape Canaveral, Fla., said he was first introduced to Christ through attending Royal Ambassadors, the Southern Baptist missions program for boys.

He first heard the gospel when his family fled Cuba in 1962 and moved to West Newark, N.J. Navarro, who was 7 at the time, began attending a local Southern Baptist church to participate in RA-sponsored athletic events.

Navarro eventually accepted Christ and later decided to become a chaplain through the influence of his chaplain in the U.S. Marine Corps.

"The men and women in today's military need to hear the gospel just like the civilians walking the streets. Pray for me as I share Christ with those serving our country," Navarro said.

Of the 22 chaplains endorsed in Atlanta, 10 will serve in the military, four at institutions and eight at health-care facilities.

About 2,000 Southern Baptist chaplains now serve across the nation and in 19 foreign countries, said chaplaincy division Director Huey Perry.

The Home Mission Board does not appoint chaplains as missionaries or pay their salaries but instead "endorses" them to the employing agencies. In addition to endorsement, the board provides them with pastoral and professional support.

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Brotherhood trustees  
cut annual budget

By Tim Nicholas

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10/25/88

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission trustees heard a report on ways to improve the commission's image, voted a budget reduction to reduce its deficit and elected new officers during their meeting in Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 21-22.

The trustees, commission staff, and state Brotherhood leadership met jointly for several sessions, including one to honor Norman Godfrey who died in May. The commission named its media center after the late first vice president and hung his portrait in the center.

The 76-page image improvement report was an administrative communications audit, said Brotherhood President James Smith.

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Included in the report were concerns about the commission's accessibility to the public and responsiveness to Baptist state leadership and trustees. Specifically, the report noted that more than 5,400 phone calls per year are being received on Fridays when the building is closed. Already, the staff has begun to have a person on hand to receive product orders on Fridays. The report also addresses marketing effectiveness and readability of materials produced by the commission.

The report indicates that the organization has a poor self-image and that "we have not realized our own competency," Smith said.

In a banquet after the report was discussed by trustees and staff, Smith made a commitment to competency, accessibility, responsiveness and excellence. For too long "Southern Baptists have equated missions and women," he said, noting the commission must not lose track of magnifying missions as its challenge.

In addition, trustees approved Smith's proposal for redefining the office of vice president. The change moves responsibility for program services from the first vice president to president. The new structure makes more people directly answerable to the president.

The new vice president's responsibilities will include development of church and associational Brotherhood work, directing world mission conferences, and directing Black, Hispanic and ethnic church relations. The vice president also will coordinate Brotherhood age-group work within the agency.

The trustee's executive committee met behind closed doors to discuss prospects for the new vice president.

In other business, trustees approved a \$150,000 budget reduction for the current year. As of Sept. 29, the commission was \$159,402 over its budget with another \$100,000 borrowed and \$35,000 owed to its printer. Some new products cost more than estimated, and the commission is selling several products at a loss, Smith said.

The commission is asking the Southern Baptist Executive Committee for \$986,800 from the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget for 1988-89, a 4 percent increase. Smith told trustees no increase could be expected, however, because of a zerogrowth proposal for the overall Cooperative Program.

A committee consisting of state leadership and commission staff chaired by Lloyd Jackson, Brotherhood director from Virginia, updated a 1984 "Missions Impact 2000" report aimed primarily at curriculum and training. Included in the update were recommendations to ask the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to fund new commission staffers to work in both Hispanic and Black relations.

New officers are Chairman Billy Summerlin, a hospital administrator at Baptist Medical Center in Gadsden, Ala., and a member of Twelfth Street Baptist Church; Vice Chairman Don Varnado, a medical group administrator in Alexandria, La., and member of Calvary Baptist Church; and Ellis Norris, a program analyst with the Federal Drug Administration in Washington, D.C., and member of Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church. The officers and 12 other commissioners serve on the executive committee. All current executive committee members are laymen.

The next trustee meeting will be held April 21-22 in Memphis.