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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 3, 1989

89-18

CP has 2nd-best month;  
best 2-month combination

N-CO

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program enjoyed its second-best month in January, completing its best two-month combination in its 63-year history.

The convention's national unified ministry budget received \$15,083,953 in January, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the denomination's Executive Committee. The monthly record is held by January 1988, with a \$15,514,367 total.

The latest December-January combination totals more than \$27.2 million, almost \$500,000 more than the previous two-month record, set in January-February 1988.

January 1989 receipts brought the Cooperative Program year-to-date total to \$47,242,141 after four months of the current fiscal year, Bennett said.

The year-to-date total represents a 3.53 percent gain over the amount for the same period last year, he reported. That compares to a current U.S. inflation rate of about 4.4 percent.

The Cooperative Program must average \$12,294,732 per month for the balance of the fiscal year to meet its \$145.6 million overall goal. It must average \$11,295,982 per month to meet the \$137.61 million basic operating goal.

"It is my sincere hope that by year's end we will reach the basic operating budget," Bennett said.

The Cooperative Program funds Southern Baptist evangelistic, educational, missionary and church-starting ministries worldwide. It is funded by individual Southern Baptists, who channel their money through churches and state Baptist conventions and on to the national and international causes.

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Missionaries still  
barred from Lebanon

By Art Toalston

N-FMB

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Agony continues to mount in Lebanon, but another year or more may pass before Southern Baptist missionaries can live and work there again.

American passports cannot be used to enter Lebanon for a third consecutive year, said William Wharton, director of the U.S. State Department's Office of Citizenship Appeals.

Official notice of the continued U.S.-imposed ban was to be announced Feb. 3, he said.

The ban took effect in March 1987, prompting an exodus of Americans, including 24 Southern Baptist missionaries, from the war-ravaged Middle East nation.

New Secretary of State James Baker "has concluded that conditions in Lebanon have not improved from the standpoint of reducing the danger to U.S. citizens," Wharton said. Nine Americans remain hostages of Muslim extremist kidnappers.

Baker made his decision before a Jan. 31 appeal from R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, arrived at the State Department.

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Parks asked that "American citizens who are engaged in charitable and humanitarian service" be allowed to reside in East Beirut.

"We and our missionary personnel desire as soon as possible to resume our work in Lebanon," Parks wrote, noting the board's "continuing concern for the people of Lebanon and for those who wish to serve the citizens of that troubled land."

East Beirut and a section of Lebanon east and north of the city are populated by Maronite Catholics and several Christian minorities, such as Baptists.

Twenty of the 24 Southern Baptist missionaries lived in the region before the passport ban, and they said no American there had been kidnapped or feared such a possibility.

Virtually all of the kidnappings have occurred in predominantly Muslim West Beirut. One occurred in southern Lebanon. But Wharton said the State Department's ban makes no exceptions for East Beirut.

Only "a small number" of groups have expressed interest in their personnel returning to Lebanon, he said.

Eight Southern Baptist missionaries remain intent on moving back to Lebanon, and several others would give the idea serious consideration, said John Deal, the Foreign Mission Board's associate director of work in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Four members of the Lebanon mission have transferred to Gaza, another Middle East hot spot. They are Nancie Wingo, Karl and Thelma Weathers and retiree Mabel Summers.

Most of the other missionaries have remained on Cyprus, where they went after departing from Lebanon. They use the mails, telephone calls and other means to continue assisting Beirut-based media and publications ministries and Arab Baptist Theological Seminary.

Jim and Leola Ragland and David and Maxine King are scheduled to retire later this year. The Raglands worked in West Beirut for more than 30 years. The Kings lived in East Beirut, but he has been sending sermons on cassette tapes to a Baptist congregation in West Beirut for more than three years.

The 14-year civil war, which has claimed more than 125,000 lives in the country of 3.3 million people, has fragmented "into civil wars within civil wars," one Arab journalist said.

Animosity runs deep between the so-called Christian and Muslim factions, although exchanges of bullets and artillery shells have abated. Now, however, warfare has broken out among Shiite Muslim factions favoring an Islamic state akin to Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran and others opposed to the notion.

Tensions also abound among the Christian factions. Even the International Committee of the Red Cross has been affected. Death threats prompted the agency to order 25 Swiss staff members in the committee's West Beirut headquarters to leave the country. A Red Cross spokesman in New York said the agency hopes its workers will be able to return.

Lebanon's government, which once encompassed representatives of all religions, has broken into rival Christian and Muslim entities struggling to take root, one in East Beirut and one in West Beirut.

Lacking a unified central government, the economy has continued a tumble spanning several years. Medical, electrical and water services are in shambles.

"It is not a happy place to be," said missionary Mack Sacco, now on furlough in California. "There hasn't been as much fighting" in the past two years, said his wife, Linda. "But a lot of people say that it's worse now, because there are so many hardships in just day-to-day living."

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Yet Lebanon's Baptist churches have continued to grow despite the country's turmoil, Sacco reported. Several new churches have been organized, two or three more may be chartered within a year and 14 preaching points are being sponsored by the Lebanese Baptist Convention's 16 churches.

Also, one church is finishing a new building and another is constructing an addition, both with the help of funds from Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"All of the churches have been involved in one way or another in relief," Sacco said. The projects range from distributing food to elderly people and families left hungry by the country's inflation to helping Christians from four villages renovate and return to homes they fled in the midst of warfare.

About \$175,000 in Southern Baptist relief funds were spent in Lebanon last year, Sacco said.

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Annuity Board trustees dedicate building;  
receive retirement, insurance reports

N-CO  
(A. Bd.)

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

DALLAS (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board dedicated a new headquarters facility and heard reports of increases in Southern Baptist retirement funds and losses in medical insurance plans during their Jan. 30-31 meeting in Dallas.

A gathering in the new leased headquarters building included tours of the seven-floor structure and a dedication dinner in its conference center. The building is owned by Equitable Real Estate.

The staff will move from the board's 511 North Akard building during the weekend of Feb. 10.

The Annuity Board has a 20-year lease on most of the new office space. Rent will be paid from Annuity Board earnings on invested assets. No Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget funds are used directly in Annuity Board operations.

Trustees re-elected B.J. Martin of Pasadena, Texas, as chairman.

John Robert Jones of Dallas, who came to the board Jan. 17 as director of investments, was elected a vice president. He worked seven years with the bank now called NCNB Texas. Since September 1987, he had been head of the bank's trust employee benefit department, which managed \$3.8 billion in assets and generated fee income of \$14 million.

During his formal report to the trustees, board President Darold H. Morgan noted growth in assets and earnings of retirement funds and losses in the medical insurance funds.

Growth in retirement funds was attributed to the successful launch of expanded features in the Church Annuity Plan, which became effective Jan. 1, 1988.

"The Church Annuity Plan has been well received throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, and I believe it may be the single-most important development in our history in the area of church retirement plans," Morgan told trustees.

By Dec. 31, 1988, 34,057 members and 20,310 churches were participating in the plan, Morgan said. Contributions to the plan totaled \$74.5 million, almost \$26.2 million more than was contributed in 1987. Total retirement and relief contributions reached \$155.5 million at year end, an increase of 17.6 percent over 1987.

Harold D. Richardson, executive vice president and treasurer, reported total assets by year end reached \$2.38 billion, an increase of almost \$270 million, the largest gain ever in a 12-month period.

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The board distributed almost \$71.35 million in retirement and relief benefits in 1988, nearly 28 percent more than in 1987. Most of the money was paid to 18,873 annuitants. More than \$640,000 was distributed to needy annuitants and widows through relief programs funded by the Cooperative Program.

An additional \$238,000 in supplemental assistance was distributed through the board's "Adopt An Annuitant" program. At year end, 443 people were receiving monthly checks through this relief effort, funded by the board's endowment department.

The Cooperative Program also provided \$400,000, which was rechanneled to state Baptist conventions for use in promoting annuity and insurance programs.

Investment income of the board totaled \$228 million, more than double the \$112 million of 1987, when earnings were affected by the October stock market crash.

The most difficult challenge in 1988 was the cost explosion in the medical insurance plans, a problem which is universal in this field, Morgan said. Despite rate increases in 1988, the imbalance between premiums and claims has eroded reserves, he told the trustees.

Nevertheless, the board paid \$83.7 million in health insurance benefits during the year. Plan participants paid \$69.8 million in premiums. In two years, the board has expended \$23 million from reserves to cover the excess claims. Trustees were told reserves in the Church Comprehensive Medical Plan have sunk to almost \$5 million.

A rate increase effective Jan. 1, 1989, raised medical insurance premiums an average 30 percent in the Church and Group Comprehensive Medical plans. A rate increase was effective Sept. 1, 1988, in two medical plans for seminarians. Benefits were altered in all medical plans to minimize the rate increase and to slow the rising cost of providing health care to plan participants, he said.

"Back-to-back increases have triggered strong protests and reinforced our staff's diligence to monitor the situation and plan for the future," Morgan noted in his report.

Trustees were briefed about changes in the Medicare program that will affect Southern Baptist ministers working beyond age 65.

As a result of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986, the Health Care Financing Administration has ruled that Medicare will provide secondary coverage of medical benefits for people 65 and over who are employed. Medical insurance rates for the working aged could increase from 30 percent to 300 percent April 1.

Treasurer Richardson was asked by trustees to predict the condition of the medical plans next year and the year after.

"The national prediction is that cost of medical care will have an inflation factor of 15 to 20 percent per year," said Richardson. "That was the basis of our corrective actions. If we have raised rates higher than the actual inflation rate, or if we have extra-good experience (decline in claims), then we may rebuild some reserves.

"But if we have missed on the inflation and it is higher, or if we have bad experience (more claims), we would see a loss and premiums will go up to cover the loss and preserve the plan."

The board's relief committee reported retroactive approval of 28 people for Adopt An Annuitant supplements. The committee also approved 18 applications for assistance. Eleven people who receive assistance receive no other benefit from the Annuity Board.

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Morgan warns of misstep;  
board OK's successor guides

By Toby Druin

N-10  
(Texas. Std.)

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

DALLAS (BP)--With a warning fresh in their ears that a misstep could undermine integrity and trust and bring a ruinous "instant exodus of major agency accounts," trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board approved guidelines they will follow in seeking a successor to President Darold H. Morgan.

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Trustee Chairman B.J. Martin of Pasadena, Texas told the Baptist Standard, Texas Baptists' weekly newsjournal, he expects to name a search committee within a week or 10 days to seek a new president. The trustees met Jan. 30-31 in Dallas.

Morgan, who will be 65 next March, announced last fall his intention to retire. The trustees' administrative policies committee was given the responsibility to draw up a set of guidelines the board would follow in seeking his successor.

The committee, with the assistance of Hay Management Consultants of Philadelphia, brought its recommendations to the board at its Dallas meeting. The recommendations included a new organizational structure as well as the presidential guidelines, which were approved unanimously.

The guidelines specify that the president will be an ordained Southern Baptist minister, recognized and capable of broad acceptance and support within the convention. He should have a demonstrated understanding of financial management, be approachable while not intimidating, with exposure to issues in insurance, investments or annuities on an institutional basis.

His experience should indicate management breadth or high potential, and he should have outstanding public presentation and public meeting skills. He should be able to negotiate in conflict situations and defuse charged situations and should be clear in vision and have the ability to communicate that vision.

He should be a respected and cooperative Southern Baptist with a solid record of service and have potential for several more years' service.

The new president should be able and willing to distinguish between spiritual and financial activities, have empathy with board participants, have a lifestyle that conforms with the Southern Baptist value system and a professional image and spiritual conviction to assure continuing positive relations with large institutions and agencies.

The only educational guideline laid down was that his credentials be "satisfactory."

Much of the trustees' discussion was about the first guideline, that the new president be an ordained Southern Baptist minister. Layman Pat Baughman of Hilton Head Island, S.C., who chaired the administrative policies committee that drafted the guidelines, said that in the initial discussions the committee felt the new president should be an experienced financial person.

"It would be simple if we were dealing just with the outside (non-SBC) world," he said, "but as we talked with trustees around the convention, it became more apparent one of the key credentials was that he be a minister."

And although some laypeople might be otherwise qualified, the interviews the committee held with trustees, both laypeople and ministers, led the committee to feel Morgan's successor must be a minister, he said.

Morgan, who was pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas when he was elected to succeed R. Alton Reed at the Annuity Board in 1972, noted the president of the board, founded in 1916, always had been a minister, although nothing in the charter or bylaws dictates it.

"The trustees have always said that we have to have the highest professional expectations in the staff," he said, "but at the heart of it is spiritual sensitivity." However, he added, "I don't think they are mutually exclusive."

In adopting the new organizational structure, the board had strengthened the internal operation, he noted. Under the new structure, the chief operating officer, currently layman Gordon Hobgood, oversees the entire Annuity Board operation while answering to the chief executive officer, the president.

"I don't want to be misunderstood," said Morgan, "but it takes a preacher to understand preachers." He also observed that most of the other Southern Baptist agency heads, with whom the Annuity Board president has a vital relationship, are preachers.

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The guidelines are not "wooden" and would serve only as guidelines, trustees noted. They would not rule out consideration of people employed by other institutions, they said.

In his president's report before the report of the administrative policies committee, Morgan noted the board has been blessed with unusual harmony during the last decade of controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention.

The board is strong and growing stronger, he said, "but is extremely vulnerable and fragile in this peculiar world of denominational currents which ebb and flow in such unpredictable ways."

He cautioned the board about its selection of a new president, urging members to lay aside "personal bias" and to make decisions based only in view of "the Lord's will for what is best for the Annuity Board."

Tens of thousands of Southern Baptists are secure in their confidence in the board, he said.

"The entire denomination has a vested interest in what the Annuity Board does," he said, adding that all eyes would be on it as it selects a new president.

"One misstep, one confrontational board meeting, one publicized liability suit emerging out of what some construe to be poor fiduciary responsibility -- just one -- and I predict you will see an instant exodus of major agency accounts which would be devastating, ruinous, an irretrievable loss and an immediate stoppage of significant amounts of money from the churches," he said.

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New rule requires working elderly  
to pay higher insurance premiums

N- (CO  
(A. Bd.)

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

DALLAS (BP)--Medicare rules now require people 65 and older employed by churches or related organizations to receive primary medical coverage through a private carrier, such as the Southern Baptist Annuity Board's Church Comprehensive Medical Insurance Plan, board trustees learned during their Jan. 30-31 meeting in Dallas.

Medicare will provide secondary coverage.

"This is another way the federal government is shifting costs from the drain on Medicare funds to the private sector," said board President Darold H. Morgan.

Of 2,107 people participating in the board's church Medicare supplement insurance, an undetermined number will be affected by these changes and may see premium increases effective April 1, Morgan said.

Up to 100 other participants with dependents age 65 or older also will be impacted by the change in Medicare benefit rules, he added. The board now is notifying individuals who could be affected by these changes, he said.

Rate increases range from 30 percent to 300 percent per month, he reported. New rates will be reflected on the statements mailed in March for April's coverage.

In the past, Medicare was the primary medical coverage for people 65 and older, Morgan noted. Medicare coverage resulted in a major reduction in monthly insurance premiums for people who turned 65, whether they were employed or retired.

Under the new federal rules, if a person is working 20 or more hours per week for a Southern Baptist church or related organization, Medicare considers that person as actively employed and Medicare becomes secondary insurance coverage for all family members.

Primary insurance pays for the majority of medical expense claims when a person is covered under two programs, Morgan explained, noting secondary coverage is considered "supplemental," and generally pays far less than primary coverage.

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CLC solving financial  
woes, trustees told

N - CD  
By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission will be back in the black financially by late March or early April, Executive Director-Treasurer Richard Land told commissioners during their called semi-annual meeting Jan. 30-31.

Land, who was elected to head Southern Baptists' moral and social concerns agency in September 1988, said he found the agency "\$60,000 to \$80,000 in the hole" when he assumed day-to-day direction Oct. 24, 1988.

Financial woes were brought about by a "combination of factors," he said. "We (the commission) had been consistently in the red for about a year. That came about because of the unusual demands on the resources of the commission."

Land said among the unusual demands were expenses for a consulting arrangement with Foy Valentine after he gave up the office of executive director. Details of that arrangement were not made public, but commission sources said the CLC paid Valentine in excess of \$100,000 for salary, office expenses and travel.

Another unusual demand was the coming of N. Larry Baker as executive director-treasurer, in March 1987 and a severance package of \$41,835.45 when he left June 10, 1988, after 15 controversial months. Baker's severance package and performance in the job were discussed for more than five hours during a closed-door meeting of the commission in September 1988.

When Land arrived, he said, he faced a bank note and a number of bills which were at least 90 days past due. He said many other bills were 30 or 60 days past due. "We are now current," he said.

Another problem he faced was in trying to correct an imbalance of about \$15,000 in designated accounts of the agency. Details of the problems with the designated accounts were not made public, and reportedly were discussed at length during the September closed meeting.

Land told trustees in January the "integrity of the designated accounts" has now been restored.

Contributing to financial troubles was "flat Cooperative Program" support. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified giving plan which supports educational, missions and other work of the Southern Baptist Convention.

For the first quarter of the 1988-89 budget year, the CLC was \$30,427 under projection in contributions, including a deficit of \$14,029 in Cooperative Program funds.

The good news, Land said, was that the agency was below budget in spending by \$74,547.

"We have been very, very careful," Land said. He also pointed out the commission did not replace staff members who had left during that period.

In other matters during the meeting in Nashville, commissioners elected one new staff member, approved another on a temporary contract basis, adopted a new bylaw calling for two meetings per year, heard reports on upcoming seminars and approved distinguished service awards for two people.

-- Lamar Cooper, dean of graduate studies and professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at Criswell College in Dallas, was elected associate director of the CLC, with responsibility for conferences, seminars, and church and denominational relations.

Cooper, a native of New Orleans, is a graduate of Louisiana College in Pineville and received master and doctor of theology degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a former pastor of churches in Louisiana and Texas and has been an associate pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas and teacher and administrator at Criswell College since 1978.

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-- Louis Moore, former religion editor of the Houston Chronicle, will work with the commission on a contract basis until mid-summer 1989, assisting with media relations, communications, publications and product development.

Moore will work 40 hours per month on various projects, and a determination will be made later whether he will join the staff on a full-time basis.

Moore, a native of Texas, grew up in Oklahoma City. He is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He was with the Houston newspaper 14 years before resigning to join the Plano (Texas) Star Courier, where he was editor 1986-88. Moore now is a freelance journalist and professor at Collin County Community College in Plano.

-- Commissioners adopted a bylaw change giving them two meetings per year, one in September and the other in March. Previously, the commission had only an annual meeting, held in September. The new bylaw will take effect in 1990.

-- Land reported on the annual CLC seminar, to be March 27-29, 1989; on a proposed conference on abortion, to be held in Dallas in December 1989; and on the March 1990 annual seminar, scheduled in Birmingham, Ala.

The 1989 seminar, Land said, will have a theme of "Life in the Balance," and will deal with abortion, pornography, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, hunger and euthanasia. Also, during the meeting, Land will be installed as executive director-treasurer.

-- Distinguished service awards, given annually by the commission, were approved for Fred Lackey, pastor of First Baptist Church of Athens, Ala., a former chairman of the CLC, and Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Lackey, who will rotate off the CLC in June after having served eight years, has "given service above and beyond the call of duty to the commission and the Southern Baptist Convention. He also has a long interest and involvement in ethical issues," Land said.

Lewis "has a long-standing involvement in the defense of unborn children," Land said and noted Lewis, as pastor and college president prior to becoming HMB president, was involved in combatting abortion, pornography and working for racial reconciliation.

In other matters, commissioners approved a proposal to print a pamphlet written by Lewis on alternatives to abortion and to make copies available at cost to the Home Mission Board.

They also adopted a proposal concerning presentation of future distinguished service awards, assuring input from commissioners and concurrence by the commission's executive committee.

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Northeast seminary centers  
plan opening this fall

By David Wilkinson

N-CO  
(SBTS)

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry plans to open this fall, providing seminary education through centers in Pittsburgh and Boston.

The centers will offer two master's degrees and two diplomas under the auspices of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. The centers are awaiting state licensure and approval of accrediting agencies, school officials reported.

The goal of the Northeastern school is to provide more accessible training opportunities for ministers and more trained ministers for Southern Baptist churches in the Northeast, according to leaders who have been instrumental in starting the school.

The school of ministry is the result of a partnership in theological education involving the five Baptist conventions in the Northeast related to the Southern Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the six SBC seminaries.

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The school was proposed by the Northeast Task Team on Theological Education, created in 1984 by the five Southern Baptist conventions in the region: New England, New York, Maryland-Delaware, Pennsylvania-South Jersey and the District of Columbia.

Funding for the program is to come from student fees, individual donations, the five Baptist conventions, the Home Mission Board and the SBC Seminary External Education Division. SEED, through the presidents of the six SBC seminaries who comprise its governing board, also will assist in planning the centers' educational programs.

Southern Seminary, one of those seminaries, has been designated as the "lead" seminary through 1993. Southern Seminary will offer two degree programs, the master of divinity and master of arts in Christian education. Also, diploma programs in theology and Christian education will be offered for students without college or university degrees.

Admission requirements and standards are the same as those for students who study on Southern Seminary's campus, seminary administrators said. The application process will be administered by the Northeastern school under the authority of Southern Seminary and subject to the seminary's admissions office.

Instruction will be provided by Southern Seminary faculty and people from the centers' areas with academic degrees comparable to professors who teach at Southern Seminary.

Doran McCarty, SEED executive director and coordinator for the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry project, emphasized that the centers will offer "ministry training as a mission strategy."

"This venture will provide contextualized education for ministers who come from the Northeast and plan to serve in the Northeast," said McCarty. He added he hopes to "see the stabilizing of existing churches and the beginning of new churches as a result of an educational project being located in the area. I expect to see churches being served in large part by persons who are native to the area."

The centers will offer flexible scheduling for bivocational ministers and laypeople, an emphasis on practical on-the-field experience and the freedom for experimental educational projects, McCarty said.

"We are excited about the prospects for this educational endeavor," added Southern Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt. "It wedds missions strategy and theological education in an innovative way. And it addresses creatively the practical need for indigenous trained leadership in the churches of the Northeast."

The Pittsburgh center is housed in the offices of the Greater Pittsburgh Baptist Association, and the Boston center is located at the Luther Rice Center in Northboro, Mass.

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Georgetown College tops  
\$7.5 million campaign goal

N-CO

Baptist Press  
2/3/89

GEORGETOWN, Ky. (BP)--Georgetown College has received \$7.8 million in its "Investing in People" development campaign, President W. Morgan Patterson told trustees Jan. 27.

The campaign began in 1985 and will conclude in 1990, said J. Richard Carlton, vice president for development. The campaign had a \$5 million original goal and a \$7.5 million challenge goal.

The college, located in Georgetown, Ky., is affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. It has about 1,500 students from 23 states and seven foreign countries.

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Ethnics talk missions  
with foreign board leaders

By Eric Miller

N-FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist ethnic leaders expressed frustration with missionary appointment policies during a meeting with Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials Jan. 29-30.

But many of the two dozen leaders representing Hispanic, Asian and European Southern Baptists in the United States said they felt good about progress made after their complaints were heard during the conference at the mission board's offices in Richmond, Va.

The ethnic leaders named a study committee representing a range of ethnics, as well as Southern Baptist Convention agencies and seminaries. It will look at the concerns voiced by the leaders and make recommendations to the Foreign Mission Board.

The leaders' main concern is the board policy that says "persons born or raised outside the United States are generally not considered" for appointment as missionaries in the country of their origin. Under current policy, these ethnics are assigned to other countries.

Board President R. Keith Parks said the policy is necessary to encourage cross-cultural missions and discourage overseas Baptists from coming to the United States just to seek missionary appointment back to their homeland. A "brain drain" would occur among overseas Baptists if many of their leaders left to become citizens, he said.

On the other hand, immigrants "get here and meet Christ" and "immediately become burdened for people back home and want to see their people back home saved," said Hispanic leader Richard Vera, a consultant in evangelism for Texas Baptists.

Chinese leader Peter Kung, director of the language unit at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, said the Bible does not prohibit ethnic missionaries from returning to their homeland.

"The Bible says, 'Go unto all the world'" to share the gospel, Kung said. "But you put a disclaimer on that and say, 'You can't go back to Korea since you were born in Korea.'"

Some other missionary-sending agencies in the United States are willing to assign foreign-born ethnics as missionaries to their homeland, Kung said.

Bill O'Brien, FMB executive vice president, urged the ethnic leaders to take a global view of missions rather than focusing on their native lands alone. "How are we to reach the 1.3 billion people who have never heard the gospel for the first time?" he asked.

Projections indicate 100 countries, containing about 83 percent of the world's population, will be closed to traditional missionaries by the year 2000, O'Brien noted.

He called for a "redrawing of the map of reality to take advantage of each component" and ethnic group in the Southern Baptist Convention to promote world evangelism. "We can't live without each other," he said.

Current policy allows ethnic Southern Baptists born in the United States to return as missionaries to their parents' homelands. Also, ethnics can work in their country of origin as volunteer missionaries for short terms. Several ethnic leaders unaware of these options said they were pleased to hear about them.

More than 10,000 Southern Baptist volunteers served overseas in 1988. James Cecil, representing the mission board's volunteer enlistment department, distributed a list of volunteer job opportunities to participants at the conference.

Brazilian-born Jerry DeOliveira, who heads the board's ethnic church relations office, noted that several dozen ethnic Southern Baptists are seeking missionary appointment.

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Some of the ethnic leaders reported sending their own missionaries to Asia and South America. Despite their frustration with FMB policy, several said they felt guilty about diverting funds from the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions to support their own missionaries.

Isam Ballenger, board vice president for work in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, said the "Lone Ranger style" of missions is not the way to go. "No one church can do what we can do together," he said.

During the meeting, the ethnic leaders made plans to attend Foreign Mission Board trustee meetings.

"Trustees will see, hear and feel our heartbeat and minds now," said Daniel Sotelo, president of the Hispanic National Fellowship. "There is an open door that was not open before."

However, Bob Sena, pastor of a Hispanic Baptist church in Atlanta and member of the Hispanic fellowship's executive committee, said, "I will stand on the sidelines waiting to see what takes place." He said he had attended similar conferences unrelated to the Foreign Mission Board which had instigated no action.

Other concerns expressed by ethnic leaders at the conference included:

-- None of the 80-plus Foreign Mission Board trustees is ethnic; nor does the board staff have ethnic vice presidents. About 2,500 Hispanic congregations are in the Southern Baptist Convention, yet none of the board's employees other than DeOliveira is Hispanic.

-- Ethnics want brochures and videotapes about foreign missions to be produced in languages other than English. The Southern Baptist Convention is composed of about 88 language groups.

-- Furloughing missionaries should speak in ethnic churches as well as English-speaking churches.

-- Newly appointed missionaries could work with ethnic churches in the United States before going overseas. Many missionaries already are doing this before appointment, Parks said.

-- Some missionaries maintain obviously American lifestyles overseas rather than lifestyles like those around them, several leaders claimed. However, Harlan Spurgeon, board vice president for mission management and personnel, asked ethnics not to judge more than 3,800 Southern Baptist missionaries based on the example of a few.

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