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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE  
SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #7  
Nashville, Tennessee 372  
(615) 244-23  
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  
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201  
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 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

July 16, 1990

90-90

\$1.56 million verdict returned  
against Foreign Mission Board

By Art Toalston

*N-7ms*

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A Richmond Circuit Court jury has awarded \$1.56 million to four children of a former missionary couple in a lawsuit against the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The jury's verdict July 13 followed a five-day trial.

The lawsuit, filed by the children's mother, Diana Sue Wade, contended board officials learned her husband, G. Thomas Wade Jr., was sexually abusing their oldest daughter but did not disclose it to the mother so she could halt the molestation. The lawsuit contended Wade continued to abuse the daughter as well as a second daughter, who was adopted, and that he began molesting a third daughter. The couple also has a son. The sexual abuse began in 1979 in Botswana, Africa, when the oldest daughter was about 10 years old.

Defense attorney Lewis T. Booker of Richmond argued that board officials who handled the family's case acted reasonably under the circumstances. The first official to learn about the abuse confronted the father, who agreed to tell his wife and undergo counseling with his family, according to testimony in the case. The missionary subsequently failed to act on the promise. The official then ordered the missionary to return to the United States with his family for counseling.

Mrs. Wade, 40, of Anchorage, Alaska, had sought \$141 million when she filed suit in April 1988 in Virginia, where the board is located.

The jury awarded \$850,000 to the adopted daughter, \$350,000 to each of the other two daughters and \$10,000 to the son, for a total of \$1.56 million.

An Aug. 20 hearing is scheduled in the circuit court on motions by the Foreign Mission Board to dismiss the verdict. One key contention is that missionaries do not have written contracts stipulating specific expectations of the board.

If the court denies the motions, the Foreign Mission Board will have 30 days to file a notice of appeal with the Virginia Supreme Court and three months to file its formal petition.

Mrs. Wade, a missionary with the board from 1976 until her resignation in February 1986, filed suit in behalf of her four children, who now range in age from 17 to 22. Virginia law permits Mrs. Wade to file another suit on her own behalf within a year of the start of the children's trial.

She and her husband, an agriculturist, worked in Kenya and then Botswana. They returned from Africa in April 1984 on a furlough and then went on leave of absence. Wade, now 49, was arrested for sexual abuse of his daughters in June 1985 and is serving a 12-year sentence in Highland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River, Alaska. Mrs. Wade divorced him after the arrest.

During the trial, Mrs. Wade claimed that the Foreign Mission Board promised to protect the family's "health, welfare and safety" when she and her husband were appointed as missionaries. Under cross-examination, she acknowledged that such care may be limited by the information and resources available to board officials.

Mrs. Wade's attorney, John C. Lowe of Charlottesville, Va., argued that the family had a contractual agreement with the board. Lowe cited various provisions in the board's "Manual for Missionaries" as evidence of its concern for their well-being.

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The former Foreign Mission Board official in Africa who first handled the family situation, Marion "Bud" Fray, testified he sought to help the family as a whole by arranging psychiatric counseling for them. Fray was associate to the area director of Foreign Mission Board work in eastern and southern Africa and was based in Johannesburg, South Africa. He now is a missions professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Fray testified that the Wades' oldest daughter, now 22, who was attending high school in Johannesburg, alleged in the fall of 1983 that her father had sexually abused her. Fray said he knew very little about sexual abuse and sought counsel of a professor of pastoral counseling and a psychiatrist. The professor, C.W. Brister of the Fort Worth seminary's faculty, was in Johannesburg to teach several courses at a Baptist college. The psychiatrist was Isac Gelderblom of Pretoria, South Africa.

Fray testified that both experts advised him to deal with the father to get the family into counseling to address the sex abuse allegations and other problems. Brister also testified during the trial, affirming Fray's account.

Fray testified that he confronted Wade with the daughter's allegations in December 1983. Fray said Wade admitted to fondling and kissing the daughter two years earlier but said it had not happened since. Fray said he told the missionary to admit to his wife what had happened and to make arrangements for the family to travel to Pretoria for appointments with Gelderblom.

Fray testified that Wade told him at the end of the month that he could not tell his wife and could not follow through on family counseling. Fray said he then ordered the missionary to return to the United States with his family to obtain counseling.

Fray said the matter then became the responsibility of Davis Saunders, the area director who since has become the board's vice president for work in Africa. Saunders testified he assumed the Wades had entered family counseling after they left Africa in May 1984 and settled in Alaska. He said he wrote the couple two letters that noted the board's recommendation for such help.

In cross-examining Fray and Saunders, Mrs. Wade's attorney, Lowe, posed a number of questions that challenged the adequacy of their follow-up with the family and their failure to disclose the alleged sexual abuse to Mrs. Wade.

Lowe contended that Fray became aware of the sexual abuse in December 1982, not the fall of 1983. The oldest daughter testified in court and Wade testified in a deposition videotaped in prison that they met with Fray about the matter in Fray's office.

Both Wade and his daughter testified the abuse became known to Fray after the daughter confided in a family with whom she lived while in school in Johannesburg. Mrs. Wade said the family could not be located to testify.

Lowe charged that Fray tolerated Wade's inaction for more than a year, during which time Wade also continued to abuse the couple's adopted daughter, now 17, and began to abuse their youngest daughter, also now 17.

Mrs. Wade learned of the sexual abuse and had her husband arrested in Alaska in June 1985 when the oldest daughter confided in an aunt who said she also had been molested by Wade when she was a child, according to testimony.

Delay in halting the abuse and the trauma of the arrest significantly aggravated or resulted in numerous psychological problems afflicting the children and their mother, testified Greg McCarthy, their psychiatrist in Anchorage.

The adopted daughter, who had never experimented with alcohol or drugs, became an addict, McCarthy said. She spends most of her life on the streets and has been raped twice in the past year, McCarthy said. "As we talk, I would not be surprised if she is dead," he added.

The oldest daughter suffered a miscarriage two days after Wade's arrest and became an alcoholic, McCarthy said. The son, now 20, became addicted to drugs and alcohol and suffered his first episode of schizo-affective disorder, a schizophrenic-like illness, he said. The youngest daughter has yet to cope with inward trauma, he said.

Mrs. Wade suffered severe depression and has been unable to function as a mother, McCarthy said.

The adopted daughter needs a year or two of psychiatric hospitalization that will cost \$20,000 to \$27,000 per month, McCarthy said. The other children may need several days of psychiatric hospitalization once or twice a year, along with weekly therapy sessions for several years, he said.

In his closing arguments, Lowe urged the jury to "send a message to this world, certainly the Foreign Mission Board, that you value these children." Booker, the board's attorney, maintained that the family's tragedy stems squarely from the "awful conduct on the part of the father."

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Kenya's President Moi meets  
current, former SBC presidents

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
7/16/90

*N. JMB*

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--Morris Chapman, recently elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and a former SBC president, James T. Draper Jr., met with Kenya's head of state Daniel T. arap Moi for 30 minutes July 12.

The two Americans, in Kenya to participate with Southern Baptist volunteers in an evangelistic crusade in Mombasa and other coastal cities, thanked Moi for his part in creating a responsive spiritual climate in the country, shared information about Southern Baptist involvement in Kenya and prayed for him as leader of the nation.

They joined some rather impressive names on Moi's appointment calendar -- sandwiched between France Albert Rene, president of the Indian Ocean island nation of Seychelles, and Nelson Mandela, deputy president of the African National Congress in South Africa.

"President Moi has the gift of appearing unhurried in the middle of a very hectic schedule," said Draper, SBC president, 1982-84, and pastor of First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas. "He met us in the hall on the way in, appeared totally interested in visiting with us, then walked us to our car."

Moi expressed his appreciation of Southern Baptists' "great emphasis on reaching unbelievers," since often, "Christians get caught up in trivialities."

Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, said the half hour visit was "a most positive experience for us. Because of his background, the president readily identified with our heartbeat. He spoke favorably of Southern Baptists and then went on to speak of his own church and his love for the Lord." Moi is a highly visible member of the African Inland Church, an evangelical, Protestant denomination.

A letter of introduction for Chapman and Draper from Tom Jones, administrator of the Baptist Mission of Kenya, informed Moi that Kenya Baptist churches baptized more than 47,000 people in 1989. It also said the number of churches has increased from 650 to more than 1,600 in less than five years.

During the past three years, Southern Baptists, through the Foreign Mission Board, have invested almost \$4.3 million in programs for Kenya, not including salary and support funds for 115 missionaries assigned to Kenya.

The two pastors presented Moi with an American flag and a Texas flag, each flown in his honor over their respective capitols the previous week, along with a proclamation from the mayor of Hurst, Texas, and a key to his city.

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Travel arrangements for 536 Southern Baptists in the Kenya Coast Crusade were coordinated through a Hurst travel agency and First Baptist Church in Eules. From June 25 through July 9, 256 volunteers and 27 career missionaries organized 24 new churches and reported 20,814 made "commitments to Christ." Another group, with 280 volunteers, arrived July 9 and will continue the crusade through July 23.

At the end of the session with Moi, Chapman asked if it would be appropriate to pray. Moi agreed. He "thanked God for the opportunity Southern Baptists have to witness in Kenya, for the strong Christian witness already in the country, and for divine wisdom for Kenya's president."

No mention was made of current tensions between the Kenyan government and the United States over the arrest of several advocates of a multi-party democracy for Kenya. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has a firm, written policy against political involvement by its missionaries.

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Southern Baptist agency warns  
Congress on NEA legislation

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press  
7/13/90

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission will call for abolishment of the National Endowment for the Arts unless Congress implements stands which will prohibit the funding of obscene, highly offensive, morally repugnant and sacrilegious art, the Commission's executive director said.

In letters to members of Congress, Richard D. Land, executive director of the CLC, said, "We are aware of several proposals which would significantly revise the method of grant-making and establish standards to restrict the content of what the NEA may and may not fund. Other proposals would completely abolish the NEA."

Land said in coming weeks the CLC will decide based on which approach Congress takes in dealing with the NEA whether to support abolishment.

"Each week seems to bring new revelations about the activities of the NEA," Land said. "Last year Robert Mapplethorpe and Andreas Serrano became household names. This year America has learned about the NEA's funding of Annie Sprinkle, the 'Tongues of Flame,' and the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival."

Land said, "Some have argued that some of the abuses of the NEA are not clear cut because the offensive programs and exhibits were not directly funded by the NEA and that most of the abuses occurred under a previous administration of the NEA. We believe these claims miss the point."

Instead, Land maintains, clearly those who are responsible for awarding grants at the NEA have and will continue to fund activities which most Americans find highly offensive." In recent weeks, the NEA has come under fire from a number of religious and public policy groups because of offensive artwork it has sponsored or helped fund.

Land included with his letter to Congress a copy of a resolution on the NEA drawn up and passed unanimously by the Southern Baptist Convention's Resolutions Committee in New Orleans last month. That resolution called for an end to NEA funding for "obscene, highly offensive, morally repugnant and sacrilegious art." The convention itself was unable to adopt that resolution because of a lack of a quorum on the day the resolution was scheduled to be acted upon.

"We have no doubt that if the convention had been given the opportunity to act upon this resolution, it would have overwhelmingly approved it, as reflected by its unanimous approval within the convention's Resolutions Committee," Land said.

The Christian Life Commission is the moral concerns and public policy agency for the Southern Baptist Convention -- America's largest Protestant denomination with nearly 15 million members in more than 38,000 churches nationwide.

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U.S. Embassy in Philippines  
warns missionaries of threat

By Mary E. Speidel

N-7MB

MANILA, Philippines (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries were among about 20 mission groups told by the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines that they could be targets of attacks by communist guerrillas.

Embassy officials told missionaries that the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Philippines' Communist Party, had reportedly issued a threat to an American missionary organization July 3 in Manila. The organization is not affiliated with Southern Baptists, according to officials of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The U.S. State Department has declined to identify it.

The warning came during a meeting at embassy headquarters in Manila July 5 with about 45 representatives of American missionary organizations in the Philippines, said Phillip Anderson, treasurer of the Southern Baptist mission, organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

Embassy personnel are taking the threat seriously, said Sam Waldron, administrator of the Southern Baptist mission. But for now, at least, mission work will be affected only minimally, with missionaries planning to stay in place and projects by volunteers from Tennessee expected to go on as planned.

"At this time, we don't think the situation is dangerous enough to remove any of our missionaries," said Waldron. "We're continuing with almost normal operation." Missionaries are being "as cautious as possible and we're trying to keep a low profile. We're just going on with our work as best we can."

Anderson said the meeting had a "very serious" tone. "They didn't say we were targets. They did say we might be considered targets now." Until now, Southern Baptist missionaries have repeatedly said they have not felt they were being targeted by the NPA, despite threats to other Americans.

U.S. Embassy officials advised missionaries to "keep a low profile" and to take precautions such as avoiding traveling alone, at night or in areas of known NPA activity.

After the meeting, mission administrators notified the 170 Southern Baptist mission workers of the situation, said Waldron. Missionaries in more remote areas were offered the option of moving into missionary housing in areas considered more secure if they feel in danger, he said.

Missionaries and Philippine Baptists plan to host a Tennessee Baptist volunteer group headed for the southern Philippine island of Mindanao Aug. 2-15. Also, eight Foreign Mission Board journeymen are scheduled to begin two-year terms of service in the Philippines in early August.

John Ingouf, a Foreign Mission Board administrator for Southern Asia and the Pacific, has sent a detailed advisory explaining the Philippine situation to journeymen and to Clarence Stewart, the Tennessee coordinator for the volunteer project.

"Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines are continuing their work but being more cautious in light of recent developments there," the advisory states.

Ingouf outlined events related to security in the Philippines since May, when Philippine Baptist leaders recommended that 41 Baptist Student Union summer missionaries cancel planned service in the country. That decision was prompted by violence and threats against American service personnel.

The Foreign Mission Board advisory cited a U.S. State Department warning that "private Americans clearly identifiable with American organizations may also be at risk" from attacks by communist rebels. It also cited the threat issued to the American missionary organization in the Philippines and a decision by the U.S. Peace Corps on June 27 to remove 261 volunteers. Peace Corps volunteer Timothy Swanson, 26, was apparently abducted by communist guerrillas June 13 from his home in the village of Patag.

Stewart plans to give background information to the volunteers, but said he expects them to go to Mindanao as scheduled. The 24 volunteers from Tennessee and one from Texas will divide into eight teams working in about 10 churches on Mindanao in crusades and various outreach ministries.

Ingouf has explained to Stewart and to journeymen that their work will be in areas not considered major risks, but "no one can guarantee any area is without risk," he said.

"We're taking the advice and the counsel of the leadership at the Foreign Mission Board and of our missionaries in the Philippines," said Stewart.

Including this volunteer group, Tennessee Baptists will have sent 152 volunteers to the Philippines since the partnership began in April 1989. Previously, Tennessee Baptists "who have gone in have had great experiences and have come back feeling no insecurity or no threats," said Stewart. "We're looking toward having the same experience. Also we're looking to minister to people even though there may be some unrest."

Waldron said the Tennessee project has not been canceled because volunteers plan to work directly with missionaries in areas considered safe. The canceled summer missions project included mostly "inexperienced college students" who would have lived in Filipino homes in more remote areas, he said. "There was just too much risk."

Waldron traveled recently on Mindanao and said he found missionaries there feeling "quite safe and confident in the areas where they are and where most of their work is being done."

The State Department has issued travel advisories for certain areas of the Philippines, but travelers have not been advised to stay away or leave.

For two decades, the NPA's guerrilla units have conducted raids in an effort to disrupt the Philippine government. Activity has increased during the recent renegotiation of contracts for U.S. military bases in the country.

The Philippine military said in late June that rebels in Manila plan to target Americans and other foreigners for assassination and kidnapping during the next six months. A month earlier, the NPA had targeted American service personnel and was linked to killings of two U.S. military personnel, according to news reports.

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Foreign Mission Board staff writer Donald D. Martin contributed to this story.

Directors of missions consider  
their role in SBC controversy

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
7/13/90

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--In the midst of denominational conflict, some Southern Baptist associational directors of missions see themselves as the "glue that can keep churches on track for missions and ministry."

About 25 DOMs met for a church conflict management seminar during home missions week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. The last hour of the two-day seminar became an informal dialogue among participants as they focused on their response to the Southern Baptist Convention controversy.

Because of the pressure they feel from conflicting churches, none of the participants would allow their comments to be attributed for this story.

"How can we address this (in the association) intelligently and maintain our integrity?" one DOM asked the group.

Another reported that churches in his association are saying, "We're no longer represented; why should we keep giving?"

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One man responded: "We have to ask ourselves why we are giving to missions. Because I am not recognized at the top does not relieve me of my responsibility to give to missions."

Such answers did not seem to satisfy at least one man who said that attitude was like "sticking your head in the sand."

Their concern about missions giving centered around the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' unified budget. Together, the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board and six Southern Baptist seminaries receive about 90 percent of the convention's \$137 million annual Cooperative Program receipts.

Some moderate churches have announced plans to reduce or withdraw giving to the Cooperative Program because they believe moderates are no longer represented on the convention's governing bodies.

In the conflict environment, one DOM asserted that "we can intervene to be the glue that holds us together. We have to try to keep our churches on track for missions and ministry."

George W. Bullard Jr., the seminar's leader, said, "As denominational servants, we have to find ways to work with all the churches. I must do everything I can to keep everyone I serve on mission for God's kingdom." Bullard is state director of missions for the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

To be effective, Bullard said associational directors of missions should refrain from taking a side in the convention controversy. "If we become identified with one group, we lose our right to be servant of all."

The key to associational integrity, Bullard said, is to maintain fellowship among pastors and churches.

The group applied principles from the seminar to the past 12 years in the Southern Baptist Convention. To simplify the discussion, participants used the terms "fundamental conservative" and "moderate conservative."

Bullard said when the conflict began, "moderate conservatives acted as though fundamental conservatives would be willing to stop with balance." However, people in extreme positions on each side of the issues have "belief systems that are so intense they won't allow for balance," Bullard said.

One thing that prevents the conclusion of the controversy is the lack of a middle ground, Bullard suggested. "Southern Baptists have clearly defined the difference between a fundamental conservative and a moderate conservative. But no distinction between a moderate and a liberal has been defined. Without it, the middle has no way to emerge."

Bullard said both fundamental conservatives and moderate conservatives are loyal to the Southern Baptist Convention, noting "many denominations split in fewer years of controversy."

He said the fact that the SBC has not split "shows a high level of commitment to what we're about as Southern Baptists."

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Time management changes  
distress to healthy stress

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press  
7/13/90

N-SSB

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Healthy job stress can become life distress when ministers do not manage their time well, according to a state music leader.

Harry Taylor, music director for the Kansas/Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, said he believes poor time management can affect both work and home life for ministers. Unchecked, healthy stress can become distress that can result in burnout, job resignation, unwanted career change or divorce.

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"All of life contains stress," Taylor said, "and some of it is natural and good. Stress is a normal function of life, but when stress becomes distress, our bodies begin to malfunction. Ulcers, heart problems or behavioral changes can be extremely detrimental to ministry and family life.

"Poor time management at work can cause defensiveness and irritability that carry over into home life," he continued.

Taylor told participants in the Church Music Leadership Conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center that poor delegation is a contributing factor to poor time management.

"They're not going to do it like I'd do it" is a common defense some persons use for trying to do everything themselves, Taylor said.

Five basic time wasters Taylor has observed among ministers include paperwork, telephones, drop-in visitors, poor organization of life priorities and poorly organized meetings.

Taylor recommends handling papers only once.

"If I can write a note of reply on correspondence, I do it to save my time and secretarial time," he said. "Have your secretary deal with anything she can," he said. "Have the secretary organize your mail by first class, less important mail and junk mail. Ask yourself, 'What will happen if I don't deal with this?'"

Ministers who pick up a telephone should pick up a pencil at the same time, he said.

"Write down questions before you call," he said. "Stand up while you talk rather than getting comfortable. Chances are, you'll spend less time talking."

Drop-in visitors should be met by the minister on the other side of the desk. When the visit needs to end, he advises ministers to stand and thank the visitor for coming by.

Taylor said establishing an office door policy can be helpful.

"If the door is closed, no one comes in. If the door is partially open, you are busy but can be disturbed. An open door indicates anyone is welcome to come in. For those who do not have a secretary to enforce the policy, put a note of explanation on the door."

Distress can be prevented by determining the importance of life priorities, Taylor said.

"Is the prize worth the price you have to pay in conflict? A bulldog can whip a skunk," he observed. "But is it worth what it costs him?"

Taylor urged ministers to let committees do their work and provide an opportunity for reports at regularly scheduled business meetings.

"Prepare and distribute lengthy or heavy material to be considered ahead of time. People need to know in advance, and meeting times can be shorter and more productive when people have the facts to study."

Taylor said music leaders who are unprepared for rehearsals cause themselves and others distress.

"If you are not prepared, the choir will go home disenchanted, and this will cause you stress because you know the choir knows you are unprepared.

"You are what you take the time to become," he said.

Church Music Leadership Conference was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department.

Missouri executive board  
delays funding changes

N-CO  
(MO)

JEFFERSON CITY, MO (BP)--The Missouri Baptist Convention executive board has delayed adopting future convention budget funding formulas for at least three months.

In regular session July 9-10, the 49-member governing body postponed until their Oct. 22 meeting action which would have established percentage allocations of contributions to the Cooperative Program through 1996.

The Cooperative Program is the unified budget plan used by the MBC and Southern Baptist Convention.

A study committee had recommended that the percentages for state and national allocations remain the same, with 35.75 percent to be sent to the Southern Baptist Executive Committee for distribution through the national Cooperative Program budget.

The current allocation plan ends in 1991.

In the board's administrative committee, which operates under background rules prohibiting direct quotations, members expressed concern about the timing of any action which would commit the convention to support of national agencies and programs.

Several committee members expressed concern about actions being taken by trustees of SBC agencies which might affect giving patterns in Missouri churches. Some noted actions taken by messengers to the 1990 SBC meeting in New Orleans as their concern for questioning the allocation formula.

One committee member expressed concern that the committee not take any action that might be considered retaliatory in nature.

After lengthy debate, the committee voted to report to the larger executive board that further discussion and action would be delayed at least until the October meeting.

The board also unanimously adopted a resolution on "Baptists' right to know." The resolution was prompted by announced plans to terminate two top professional staff members of Baptist Press, the denomination's news service based in Nashville.

The SBC Executive Committee has a called meeting scheduled July 17 in Nashville with the announced purpose of considering the termination of Alvin C. Shackelford, director, and Dan Martin, news editor, of the news service.

The resolution asked SBC Executive Committee members not to terminate the two "without a fair and open forum for any and all charges against them."

It also reaffirmed the MBC board's commitment "to the full and free flow of news and information" and urged the SBC Executive Committee to "uphold freedom of the press as a bedrock of Baptist life."

Wade Paris, pastor of Swope Park Baptist Church, Kansas City, Mo., said he fully supported the resolution but that board members should "accept the fact that its going to be meaningless."

Doyle Sager, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sedalia, Mo., and an MBC board member, said through the resolution "Missouri Baptists can go on record as defending religious liberty and freedom of the press."

Board member Wally Jones, pastor of Fee Fee Baptist Church, St. Louis spoke "as one of three Missouri members of the (SBC) Executive Committee."

"I see it (the resolution) as a strong means of expressing the strong feelings of Missouri Baptists in this matter," Jones said.

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In an otherwise routine business session, members approved with little discussion a variety of recommendations from the board's six committees.

Board members adopted a record \$15.2 million budget. Of the total, 64.25 percent will be used by the Missouri Baptist Convention and its agencies and 35.75 percent will be sent to the SBC. The budget must be ratified by messengers to the state convention in October.

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CORRECTION: IN BP story "Courageous dreams yield unlikely miracles" mailed 7/10/90, please make the following correction in the second paragraph:

"We should never quit in the face of adversity," ... (not diversity as written).

Thank you,  
Baptist Press

Churches need to prepare  
for aging of baby boomers

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
7/13/90

*N-HMB*

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Issues facing older Americans will be key ministry areas as baby boomers age, a Southern Baptist home missionary claimed.

In the year 2011, the first of the baby boomers will be 65 years old, noted B.J. Dier, a national missionary based in Florida. The 77 million Americans born in the two decades after World War II "are going to be faced with a panic situation in the very near future," Dier said during the annual home missions conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

One of the greatest needs will be for adequate housing, Dier said. "There are plenty of houses for people who can afford them, but what about the widow who lives on \$500 a month?"

Dier acknowledged that providing housing is expensive, especially if medical care is needed. But he said, "If others can do it for profit, I think churches can do it for love and break even."

As parents age, usually their oldest daughter becomes their care giver. However, Dier said an estimated 20 percent of baby boomers will have no children, leaving them without the typical care givers in their later years. Another 25 percent of baby boomers will have only one child, he said, basing his facts on a book titled, "Age Wave" by Ken Dychtwald.

Apart from housing, churches could be involved in other programs to help senior adults remain independent. For example, Dier suggested that churches participate in programs such as Meals on Wheels which provide a daily hot meal and communication.

Another program churches could provide is senior adult day care, he said. This is designed for senior citizens who live with their children or other adults. Social activities are provided during the day while care givers are at work.

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Sound doctrine linked  
to effective evangelism

By Terri Lackey

N-55B

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Southern Baptists who do not study the doctrines of their own denomination will stray into false beliefs and will not be effective evangelists, Daniel Vestal and Roy Edgemon said at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

"Effective evangelism is impossible apart from sound theology," Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta said during Discipleship Training Leadership Conference June 30-July 6. He led daily sessions on the 1990 Baptist Doctrine Study theme, the doctrine of creation, for which he wrote the textbook.

Edgemon, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department which sponsors the annual Baptist Doctrine Study conducted in many churches each spring, was interviewed during the conference which drew about 1,200 participants.

"Without sound doctrine, it is possible for our piety and our spirituality to become harmful and hurtful and stray into error," Vestal said.

He said one problem of Christian society is "we have people who do not want to hear doctrinal preaching or teaching."

Instead, he noted, "Christians say, 'Give me something that makes me feel good, or give me something that makes me wealthy or something that can help me cope.'"

Roy Edgemon, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department, said "doctrine is what holds us together as Southern Baptists."

Edgemon compared doctrine to a human skeleton.

Without a strong knowledge of doctrine, Edgemon said, Southern Baptists have no structure for their beliefs and are "apt to fall for any false teaching that comes their way."

One false doctrine churches of today are grappling with is the doctrine of universalism, he said.

"Here, the idea is evangelism is not important. Christians believe that somehow people will hear about Christ and accept him without personal evangelism," he said.

Under this so-called doctrine, church members dismiss the importance of one-on-one witnessing.

One noticeable result of the presence of universalism in Southern Baptist churches has been the decline in the number of baptisms, Edgemon said.

"Churches in the Southern Baptist Convention which did not report any baptisms at all increased last year to 21.2 percent or 8,003 churches," he said.

In another area, Southern Baptists need to study important doctrines inherent to their denomination to "counterattack the new-age movement and cults that are taking over America," Edgemon said.

He said some important Southern Baptist doctrines include the doctrine of God (understanding the nature of God), the doctrine of atonement or salvation, the doctrine of holiness or holy living, the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of the lordship of Christ.

The doctrine of the lordship of Christ, "which refers to the absolute sovereignty of Jesus Christ over every area of life," is the 1991 doctrine study topic, Edgemon said. Doctrine study books are produced annually by the discipleship training department.

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More than 12,600 churches reported conducting Baptist doctrine studies in 1988, according to the Uniform Church Letter. Churches studying doctrine were not recorded on the 1989 UCL but will be on the 1990 letter, according to Edgemon.

Vestal said Christians should study doctrine so they might "know God, love God and serve God."

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Annual home missions conference  
provides training, encouragement

By Sarah Zimmerman

N-HMB

Baptist Press  
7/16/90

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Southern Baptists absorbed a week of training and encouragement during this year's home missions conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

One of the few public comments about the Southern Baptist Convention controversy was made during the final evening service. Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., urged Baptists to "pray for our boards, agencies and committees -- that whatever they do will be done in love.

"We are diverse, but let us not be divided. Let us be united by the seemingly impossible task of reaching our nation for Christ," said the member of the board of directors for the Home Mission Board.

In other sermons during the week, Price illustrated that God provides stability in life's storms and he works through all of life's situations. Price said living by faith means accepting God's plan and protection.

Price encouraged participants to renew their call to serve God and become "crocodile Christians." Like crocodiles, Price said Christians need to "never quit growing, right up to the day they die."

HMB President Larry Lewis began the week by urging leaders to train every group within the church, from deacons to bus ministry workers, to be evangelistic.

Daily conferences provided specialized training in chaplaincy, evangelism, church extension and mission ministries.

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf met at Ridgecrest the same week and registered 449 participants. Its program included seminars such as being a Christian in the deaf culture, soul winning and parenting by grace.

Registration for the home missions conference totaled 2,755, including 572 in the youth program and the deaf registration. The Sunday offering, which was given to the Cooperative Program, was \$1,608.87.

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Mass. judge rules in favor  
of churches in land use case

By Mark Wingfield

F-HMB

Baptist Press  
7/13/90

BOSTON (BP)--Churches should not be required to provide off-street parking in the same manner as shopping centers and office buildings, a Massachusetts court ruled.

The decision was handed down June 28 by Justice George N. Hurd Jr. in Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The court case was the result of a three-year battle between the town of Needham, Mass., and three church groups who planned to share a new building. It would be the first new church constructed in the town in 30 years.

Greater Boston Baptist Association will have offices in the new facility where Mennonite and Messianic Jewish congregations will meet on Saturdays and Sundays.

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The court also ruled that churches using moveable chairs rather than pews should not be subject to a different occupancy standard for zoning purposes. The building inspector in this case had required the churches to provide more parking spaces because the sanctuary would contain interlocking padded chairs rather than stationary pews.

Although this case will have clear implications in Massachusetts, it could also impact zoning in other parts of the country, said Larry Martin, director of missions for the Boston association.

At a Home Mission Board sponsored conference in May, church growth consultant Lyle Schaller said land use restrictions should be the No. 1 concern of anyone in metropolitan ministries that require buildings.

"There are examples across the country where government is creating all kinds of barriers to construction of new facilities, use of existing facilities and expansion of facilities," he said. "Municipal authorities all over the country are running amuck."

Schaller said most cities know church groups don't have the money or time to pursue lengthy court fights. "They say, 'We've got plenty of time; sue us.'"

That's exactly what the Boston churches did when they were twice denied a building permit and twice denied an appeal.

"I'm glad we did it," said Art McFee, pastor of Good Shepherd Christian Fellowship, the Mennonite church. "It will certainly set a precedent here and maybe beyond Massachusetts. We felt we needed to do it for the sake of other Christian churches."

"Most newly planted congregations couldn't spend that much money. But we felt we had enough people interested that we could raise the money, even from other states," he said.

The heart of the dispute was over the number of parking spaces required for the new building. The judge declared that by "unreasonable if not arbitrary" rulings, the town of Needham had prevented the churches from building a worship center.

In 1986, Greater Boston Baptist Association, Good Shepherd Christian Fellowship and Ruach Israel Congregation jointly purchased 1.78 acres of land. They planned to construct a 14,592 square-foot building with 266-seat sanctuary and 98 parking spaces.

The three groups would not overlap use of the building since the association would use it primarily on weekdays, the Messianic congregation on Saturdays and the Mennonite congregation on Sundays.

In determining the number of parking spaces, the church applied a standard formula of one space for every three seats in the sanctuary. However, because the town of Needham did not have specific regulations in its bylaw for church parking, the building inspector applied a "mixed use" standard, which assumes that every room in the building will be used simultaneously.

He required one parking space for every seat, including the toilets.

The inspector first required 284 spaces, reduced it to 189, then to 169 and later raised the requirement to 203.

Although the town had no bylaw stipulation for church parking, it follows the one-to-three ratio for theaters, gymnasiums and other public assemblies.

The judge ruled it "unreasonable" for the building inspector to apply the mixed-use standard to a church building. He wrote: "The evidence is uncontroverted that the national standard for parking space requirements for churches is one space for every three sanctuary seats, inasmuch as experience has shown that churches do not use all the rooms of their facilities simultaneously."

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With his decision, the judge required the town to give the churches a building permit no later than July 30. The town has not said whether it will appeal the decision.

Once the building permit is granted, the churches plan to begin construction by November, using volunteer labor from each faith group.

Charles Chaney, vice president of the HMB's extension section, said churches are "just getting started in this problem," especially in urban areas.

It could also become a problem in rural areas as towns react to cults acquiring property, he predicted.

Land use restrictions, along with the high price of real estate in urban centers, will require more new congregations to be creative in finding meeting places, Chaney said.

Martin knows that fact firsthand. Of 32 Baptist churches started in his association in the past seven years, only one has secured property. That one task took five years, he said.

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Southwestern graduates 133  
at summer commencement

N-CO SWBTS Baptist Press  
7/16/90

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Reaching all kinds of people for Christ, anywhere, must be the focus of ministry the executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention told summer graduates at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during commencement ceremonies July 13 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Southwestern Seminary President Russell Dilday conferred 141 degrees during the ceremonies, including 13 in the school of church music, 47 in the school of religious education and 73 from the school of theology.

John Sullivan, a Southwestern graduate and executive director-treasurer for the Florida Convention, told graduates they must see that "missions is not crossing the sea, it's seeing the cross" in order to take the gospel to everyone.

Using Ephesians 4:11-16, Sullivan challenged graduates to make missions a vital part of their ministries. "Regardless of where we are, God's revelation puts missions as the center of all we do," he said. Making a deliberate decision to share the gospel to both "poverty pockets and prosperity pockets," is a necessary focus for ministers, he said.

"There is no way to reach the people but through our churches," Sullivan said. He called the local church our "basic unit" in which God does his work.

Another component important to ministry is the Bible. Sullivan said he had learned to love the Bible at Southwestern Seminary after not ever having held one in his hand until the age of 18.

"There's not one tool that I needed for ministry that I did not find at Southwestern Seminary," Sullivan said.

Sullivan gave the graduates "standards of the gospel" which he said can be used to measure their effectiveness. The first is a consistency in outreach and ministry, he said.

Second, Sullivan said there must be a unity in our beliefs, emphasizing the importance of "preaching the Christ of Scripture. We should not only know the Bible, we must love it and believe it," Sullivan said.

Third, Sullivan said there must be a responsibility in relationships as ministers represent "God to man, and man to God." "The integrity of your Christian relationship cannot be taken from you, it can only be surrendered by you," he said. In the hostile environment surrounding us, "cooperation with the people of God is absolutely essential."

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7/16/90

Page 15

Baptist Press

Sullivan encouraged the graduates to remember that they are "in this mission together."

When someone is touched by Christ, Sullivan said, "may we be able to say, Southwestern Seminary touched you," and moreso, "the ministry God has given me, touched you."

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