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October 30, 1990

90-148

Brotherhood president
announces retirement

By Jim Burton

N- CO
(BROOD)

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--James H. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, announced his decision to retire June 30, 1991, at the fall commission trustee meeting.

The decision to retire is not related to the Southern Baptist controversy, said Smith, who will turn 70 in May 1991.

"There has never been a time when Southern Baptists have been as divided as they are now," Smith told trustees. Under his tenure, the Brotherhood Commission has maintained a position of neutrality, "not that we have compromised any convictions, not that we believe any less than anyone else believes. But we are an agency of the convention and committed to serving all of the churches."

Smith came to the Brotherhood Commission in 1979 following the accidental death in 1978 of former president Glendon McCullough. Prior to leading the Brotherhood Commission, he was executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist State Association for 13 years.

Other Southern Baptist service includes two years as associate executive secretary of the Missouri Baptist Convention, and pastorates in St. Louis, Kansas City, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Smith has spoken in revivals and special meetings around the world.

Raised in Somerville, Ala., Smith and his wife, Nona, reside in Bartlett, Tenn. They have four children and 10 grandchildren.

Outgoing trustee chairman Billy Summerlin of Gadsden, Ala., has served 10 years, which covers most of Smith's tenure. There is sadness that Smith is retiring as president, Summerlin said, but, he added, the Brotherhood Commission is in good shape.

Summerlin said Smith's major accomplishments include a Missions Impact 2000 study which sets the course for the Brotherhood Commission into the next century. In addition, Summerlin cited the financial turn around two years ago following the production of 31 books for new programs started in 1987, and the growth and quality of the Brotherhood Commission staff.

"I feel good about the future of the Brotherhood Commission, what we are about and what we are going to do," he added.

The trustees appointed a search committee to begin the task of finding a new president. The five member committee includes: Wendell Reed, layman, Salem, Va.; Tommy Knotts, director of missions, Aiken, S.C.; Robert Hill, pastor, Cleveland, Miss.; Joe Lenamon, layman, Fort Worth, Texas; and Summerlin.

Ex officio members are: Don Varnado, layman and newly elected trustee chairman, Alexandria, Va.; Cameron Byler, Tennessee Brotherhood director, Brentwood, Tenn.; and Grace Atchley, Brotherhood Commission administrative assistant, Memphis.

In other commission business, trustees voted to:

-- Continue World Changers as a program of missions projects and to further study its viability in Southern Baptist life. World Changers is a co-ed missions education program targeted primarily at an estimated 750,000 Southern Baptist youth who currently are not enrolled in missions education.

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-- Affirm the expenditures of the 1989-90 budget which resulted in \$54,000 of income over expenditures.

-- Affirm the Cooperative Program unified budget with a resolution that discourages the withholding of Cooperative Program gifts from Southern Baptist missions causes and negative designation. It calls for continued support of the Cooperative Program.

-- Form a task force of five trustees to work with the children and youth division to target Southern Baptist pastors and encourage their support of Royal Ambassadors and High School Baptist Young Men.

-- Elect the following trustees to next year's executive committee: Varnado, chairman; Ellis Norris, layman, Washington, vice chairman; Willard Finch, layman, Winterville, N.C., secretary; Tim Brown, layman, Columbia, S.C.; Robert Stroup, layman, Spruce Pine, N.C.; Walt Barnes, layman, Birmingham, Ala.; Miles Seaborn, pastor, Fort Worth, Texas; C.L. Bowe, layman, San Jon, N.M.; and Knotts;

Nine new trustees joined the Brotherhood Commission. They are: Keith Corrick, pastor, Lisbon, Md.; Ozzie Berryhill, layman, North Little Rock, Ark.; Donley Brown, layman, Jefferson City, Mo.; Daniel Hunt, pastor, Austintown, Ohio; Donald Long, pastor, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Alan C. Todd, pastor, Fairport, N.Y.; Joe Wedan, pastor, Chanute, Kan.; and Comer Williamson, director of missions, Americus, Ga. New trustee Nathan Pillow, state evangelism director, Fountain Hills, Ariz., was unable to attend.

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(BP) photo of Smith mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Brotherhood Commission

Peace, harmony, enthusiasm
characterize ISBF annual meeting

N - CO (Iowa) Baptist Press
10/30/90

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa (BP)--Messengers to the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship elected a new president, passed a record \$1 million, and passed resolutions on prayer and sanctity of life during their 19th annual meeting Oct. 19-20.

In addition to 126 messengers, 78 visitors attended the meeting.

Berry Stewart, pastor of Albia Road Baptist in Ottumwa, was elected president of the fellowship.

Elected as vice-president was Jerry Elmore, a layman from University Baptist Church in Iowa City. Eugene Linn, pastor of Sioux Rapids Baptist Church of Sioux Rapids was re-elected recording secretary.

For the first time in the history of the fellowship the approved budget exceeded \$1 million. A budget of \$1,002,155 was approved unanimously upon recommendation of the administrative committee without debate.

The budget includes \$38,515 for world missions through the Cooperative Program unified budget. This represents 18 percent of proposed Cooperative Program budget, an increase of 1 percent over last year.

The resolution on the sanctity of life, after affirming that man is created in God's image, that scriptural evidence and personal experience affirm God's love for man, and that the laws of country and state "disregard the sanctity of preborn life," stated that "the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship stand with the Southern Baptist Convention in honoring God's wisdom in creating each human life both born and preborn."

The resolution on prayer for the world said that, because of the lostness of the world and the threat of war and because of the power of Christ, "we commit ourselves anew to the work of intercessory prayer."

Next year's meeting will be Oct. 18-19 at Crestwood Baptist Church in Des Moines.

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Shared governance key to
Southeastern trustee meeting

N-CCO (SCBTS)

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--"Shared governance" was the predominate theme of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's semi-annual trustee meeting held Oct. 16. The meeting was at the North Carolina Conference Center at Fort Caswell, near Wilmington.

Faculty members were invited to officially observe the workings of the board of trustees. This was believed to be the first time in Southeastern's history that faculty was invited. Furman Hewitt, professor of Christian ethics, and Michael Hawn, professor of church music at the Wake Forest, N.C., school, were elected by the faculty to attend the sessions.

Observers said due to the significant role of "shared governance," trustees worked their motions in such a way to allow faculty input on issues that would affect the faculty.

"We are all novices in the issue of shared governance. It takes practice. I saw trustees, I think very sincerely, struggle when motions came to the floor to frame them in such a way that there could be faculty input on those motions that affected (the faculty)," Hawn said.

Roger Ellsworth, newly elected chairman and pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Benton, Ill., said, "I think the new spirit of cooperation between faculty and trustees will continue and increase. I think the trust level is coming back."

When asked to give his impression of the board of trustees and the seminary in general, Clarence Brock, new trustee and pastor of Coventry Baptist Church in Ft. Wayne, Ind., said, "In many ways it looks healthier than I expected and the congeniality of the board was much greater than I anticipated."

As a "coming together point," a statement of mission was established which will require input from every sector of the Southeastern community. The statement will be developed in the context of "shared governance."

A statement of mission is foundational to and more detailed than a statement of purpose, said Robert Cooley, president of Gordon-Conwell Seminary and Association of Theological Schools Facilitator, who was invited to help guide Southeastern's first trustee/faculty retreat.

"A statement of mission comprehends several things. It takes into account biblical, theological, ecclesiastical, social, and even economical issues. It make a statement including and comprehending these things from which one can derive a statement of purpose," added Ellsworth.

New officers, all elected without opposition, are: Ellsworth, chairman; Jack May, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., vice chairman; Wendell Page, pastor from Lee's Summit, Mo., secretary; and Cecil Rhodes, physician from Wilson, N.C., treasurer.

In other business, trustees passed motions and resolutions which included:

- Recommissioning the Task Force on faculty selection in order to develop a process for conducting a "special" faculty search. This process would allow the school to pursue an acclaimed leader in a particular field.

- Instructing the president to establish a statement of missions using the principle of shared governance.

- Instructing the faculty and administration to develop guidelines for the use of tape recorders in classrooms. These guidelines will be presented for adoption at the trustee meeting in the Spring of 1991.

- Instructing the president and dean of the faculty to formulate a student performed teaching effectiveness evaluation process for all classes.

- Instructing the president to investigate students' reports that they are being required to use feminine terminology for God in classroom discussions and required papers.

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-- Announcing their support for the Cooperative Program unified budget.

-- Resolving that they believed in the right to and sanctity of life, where the only exception for abortion given was in the case of clear danger to the mother's life.

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Southeastern's faculty and trustees
work to build new relationships

N-CO
(SEBTS)

Baptist Press
10/30/90

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--As a forerunner to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's fall trustees meeting Oct. 16, faculty, trustees and some administrators gathered for a 2-day retreat at the North Carolina Conference Center at Ft. Caswell, located near Wilmington, Oct. 14-15.

Upon the suggestion of the Association of Theological Schools, one of Southeastern's accrediting agencies, Robert Cooley, president of Gordon-Conwell Seminary and ATS facilitator, helped guide Southeastern's first faculty/trustee retreat. Cooley helped faculty, trustees and administrators define the concept of shared governance, a exigent issue on which ATS had criticized the seminary in its previous accrediting investigations.

"We need more contact of this kind, where there is the structure that allows and encourages discussion of substantive issues and where we are not limited by the context of a trustee meeting," said Furman Hewitt, professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern, and one of two invited faculty representatives.

Former board chairman Bob Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md., said he was impressed with the way, "trustees as well as faculty entered into the retreat in a very open way." He added, "I believe that much of the tension that has existed between the trustees and faculty has been erased. If a retreat such as this had been held five years ago, we would have saved ourselves a lot of personal grief and saved the institution from a great deal of problems."

Cooley re-educated the trustees and faculty in terms of their interactions and relationships.

"It was not from a confrontational perspective, but it was from an educational perspective," said James Deloach, 1989-1990 board chairman and retired associate pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, regarding Cooley's approach in leading the retreat.

"I learned more of what my role as a trustee is at this retreat in the first session with Dr. Cooley than I had in the five years I have been a trustee," said trustee Jack May, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Newly elected trustee chairman Roger Ellsworth, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Benton, Ill., said he was pleased with the enthusiasm individuals took with them as they departed the retreat. "I think both the trustees and faculty realize that it is a new day for Southeastern. There are many positive thing already going on. We have a desire to make it work and to do everything that we can to make Southeastern the best it can be."

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Porter removed as editor,
reassigned at SSB

N-SSB

Baptist Press
10/30/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--As a result of remarks made during the 1990 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter has been removed from his position as a design editor of adult Sunday school lesson materials at the Sunday School Board and assigned to a non-editorial position.

Porter, 61 and a 14-year employee of the board, is now projects consultant in the Sunday school youth-adult department. Porter has written a letter of apology to the administration and the board of trustees.

Porter, who has been registration secretary since 1977, conducted a Wednesday afternoon session June 13 in New Orleans with a seminary class from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

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During the two-and-one-half hour dialogue session held in the messenger registration area at the Louisiana Superdome, Porter made critical interpretations and personal comments on a wide range of issues in the 12-year SBC controversy.

Board officials reviewed the matter and concluded, according to an administrative report, that Porter "violated the established parameters of the Baptist Sunday School Board for acceptable employee conduct. His use of inflammatory language has impacted his performance as an employee and the board's relationship with its Southern Baptist constituency."

Porter has clarified his position satisfactorily on essential issues and has said: "I want to emphasize my deeply felt apology and ask forgiveness for the words I have spoken and for any pain and disruption my remarks have brought to any person. I accept the decisions of the Baptist Sunday School Board and will seek to serve faithfully in the tasks assigned me." He also has affirmed his total allegiance to the trustworthiness of the Bible. "The whole Bible has been the book of my life," he added.

Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder said, "This has been dealt with fairly and firmly as a personnel matter. The Sunday School Board deeply respects the work of the churches and wants to move on with the challenging tasks assigned to us."

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Mega Focus associations outpaced others in 1980s, study says

By Mark Wingfield

F-WMB

Baptist Press
10/30/90

ATLANTA (BP)--Associations participating in Southern Baptists' Mega Focus Cities program reversed downward trends of the 1970s to outpace other associations during the 1980s, a new study says.

The study analyzing results of the Mega Focus Cities program at the end of its first eight-year cycle was conducted by Clay Price, director of the Home Mission Board's program research department.

In the 1970s, associations in America's largest cities were losing ground in Sunday school enrollment, Sunday school attendance, WMU enrollment and Brotherhood enrollment. The big city associations also trailed behind other associations on seven other statistical measures.

However, by the end of the 1980s, Mega Focus Cities associations had outpaced other associations in all areas except Brotherhood enrollment. And while baptisms were down 16 percent in 1989 compared to 1980, the drop was not as high as the 19 percent loss recorded for non-Mega Focus Cities associations.

Mega Focus Cities is a joint effort between the Home Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union and Stewardship Commission. It began in 1982 as a program of strategic planning for associations in the 44 largest metropolitan areas in the United States.

Price's study analyzed data from 67 associations as reported on the SBC Uniform Church Letter in 1971, 1980 and 1989. The 11 indicators studied were number of churches, total membership, resident membership, baptisms, Sunday school enrollment, Sunday school average attendance, WMU enrollment, Brotherhood enrollment, total receipts, Cooperative Program giving and missions expenditures.

Mega Focus associations showed larger gains than other associations on eight of the 11 items studied.

Comparing the 1980s to the 1970s, the metropolitan associations experienced turnarounds in Sunday school enrollment, Sunday school attendance, WMU enrollment and Brotherhood enrollment. Only total membership, resident membership and baptisms did not grow faster in the 1980s than in the 1970s.

"Were it not for the gain in Sunday school average attendance among Mega Focus associations, overall SBC average attendance may have shown a net loss for the 1980s," the report states.

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Mega Focus associations in the Southeastern U.S. showed the most gains, recording increases in all 11 items studied. The Northeastern region ranked second, with only WMU growth in the 1980s not exceeding growth of the 1970s.

Both the Western and South Central regions registered advances in seven of the 11 categories. The Western region did not advance in total membership, Sunday school average attendance, baptisms or Brotherhood enrollment. The South Central region did not gain in resident membership, baptisms, Cooperative Program or mission expenditures.

The North Central region registered advances only in WMU enrollment, total receipts and Cooperative Program. However, three of the seven associations in this region did not begin the Mega Focus Cities planning cycle until 1989 or 1990.

Despite the overall growth found in Mega Focus associations, not every association's record could be termed a success, the report states. Some associations have shown little change despite extensive strategy planning.

But even the smallest gains in some associations are significant because of the severe losses they were experiencing before starting the Mega Focus program. "It is unlikely these gains would have occurred without some form of special denominational attention given to the major urban areas of the country," Price reports.

Also, results of the Mega Focus strategies take several years to achieve, the report concludes. Associations which began the process earlier showed better growth records than those that began later.

Mega Focus cities account for 41 percent of the U.S. population. However, the 67 associations contain only 11 percent of SBC churches and 18 percent of SBC membership.

Similarly, the ratio of churches to population in these metropolitan areas still wanes in comparison with associations outside the Mega Focus areas.

Southern Baptists have 4,115 churches to reach the 101 million people living in these big cities, for a ratio of one church to every 25,000 people. Outside the Mega Focus cities, Southern Baptists have 33,670 churches to reach 149 million people, a ratio of one church for every 4,400 people.

On an individual basis, 21 associations registered advances in at least nine of the 11 areas studied.

Five associations advanced in all 11 areas: San Fernando Valley (Los Angeles); Miami; Atlanta; South Metro (Atlanta); Greater Boston.

Seven associations advanced in 10 of the 11 areas: San Francisco Peninsula; Gulf Stream (Fort Lauderdale); Roswell (Atlanta); Gwinnett Metro (Atlanta); Central Leeward (Honolulu); Pilot Mountain (Winston-Salem, N.C.); and Norfolk, Va.

Eight associations advanced in nine of the 11 areas: Birmingham, Ala.; Los Angeles; District of Columbia; Palm Lake (West Palm Beach, Fla.); Fairburn (Atlanta); Baltimore; Metropolitan New York; Greater Pittsburgh.

Some of these association still had negative trends in the 1980s, but the losses they experienced were less severe than those of the 1970s. "One possible argument is that Mega Focus Cities planning helped these associations avert more extensive losses," the report concludes.

George Bullard, currently missions director for the South Carolina Baptist Convention, was the first Mega Focus manager. He was succeeded by Larry Rose, who recently resigned his HMB post to become director of missions for Tarrant Baptist Association in Fort Worth, Texas.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Africa correspondent Craig Bird wrote the following stories after a trip to Angola, a nation struggling to emerge from a 15-year civil war.

Long-suffering Angola looks
toward brighter postwar future

By Craig Bird

F-FMB

LUANDA, Angola (BP)--A bleeding civil war has left Angola near-comatose. But the 15-year hemorrhage may soon end, many Angolans believe.

Even as the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the opposing National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) jockey for advantage in peace talks, Angolans talk of a prosperous future.

Sharing that outlook, even as they have shared the pain and hardships, are Angolan Baptists and six Southern Baptist missionaries in Angola. (Curtis and Betty Dixon develop churches and do Theological Education by Extension. Mark and Susan Hatfield do agricultural evangelism. Nick and Teri Comminellis are medical missionaries. Another couple is studying language in Portugal, preparing to work in Angola.)

Earlier this year the Baptist Convention of Angola joined other evangelical groups in a call for the MPLA to guide the nation to multiparty democracy. They insisted an end to fighting would allow a return to economic strength Angola knew before 1975, when it was a leading exporter of coffee and oil and a net exporter of food. The MPLA announced Oct. 26 it will accept a multiparty system by March and hold elections within three years.

"When farmers can grow and transport their crops without fear of attack we will soon be able to feed ourselves again," the churches argued, pointing out that the major problems the country faces are rooted in the war waged on the one-party state by UNITA.

The nation's spiritual prospects glow brightly also. "I suppose -- no, I know -- the future will be joyful," insisted 75-year-old Baptist pastor Daniel Correia, using a Portuguese adjective that literally means laughter. "When the war ends Baptists will be able to work freely all over and soon we will reach all of Angola for the Lord. After that we will start reaching across our borders to other countries."

Such attitudes seem to contradict the bleak surface of Luanda, Angola's capital. The once-beautiful Atlantic Ocean seaport suffers almost constant electricity and water shortages as UNITA pushes its aim of "making the capital unlivable." Amputees, usually in combat fatigues, seem uncountable.

The reddish hair that signals malnourishment in children grows on many small heads. The railroad, once throbbing with commerce as it hauled in products from Zambia and Zimbabwe along with Angolan goods, now runs only 20 kilometers beyond the Luanda city limits.

The "parallel market" (a euphemism for black market) flourishes openly. Crowds jam fences outside the three food stores that accept American dollars to buy products from those fortunate enough to have hard currency. The same goods are sold again at technically illegal markets. Uniformed soldiers and police, often driving government vehicles, are regular customers. The "parallel market" is the only place where medicine is available.

The official currency exchange rate of 29.6 Angolan Kwanza to one U.S. dollar has been frozen since 1976. On the street that same dollar is worth 3,000 Kwanza. And prices, other than in severely understocked government stores, reflect the real exchange rates. That means missionaries who function on the official rate cannot afford to buy vegetables in the market or baskets from a woman weaving under a tree along the roadside.

Before the dollar stores opened about a year ago, it was tough for missionaries to follow the Biblical command (and Foreign Mission Board policy) to "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" by following government regulations.

"It wasn't mainly for our own convenience, either," said Curtis Dixon.

"It hurt to know we could divert funds to the black market and buy more food to feed hungry people, teach more students at the Bible institute, build more churches," he said. "But the Bible is pretty plain on that, and ultimately our Christian witness has to come first."

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A snapshot of the Baptist Convention of Angola also looks grim. "We have about 80 churches and 150 missions," said David N'Kozi, convention executive secretary. "Numbers are hard because about half of our churches are in areas controlled by UNITA. We haven't had contact with some of them since 1975."

War-driven inflation rates keep budgets under siege. Training of leaders is disrupted or destroyed by travel restrictions. Worship services are canceled by the government so people can attend political rallies. And soldiers, women and children are killed and maimed by bullets and bombs.

Maybe the only way to maintain hope is to look beyond the present and focus on that shifting horizon called "peace."

N'Kozi can hardly wait for Angola to reach that horizon so the convention can see what the believers in UNITA territory have been doing all these years.

"It's going to be just like China!" he exclaims with a grin, his eyes sparkling. "People couldn't believe how the Chinese church grew during decades of isolation. And I believe God is still working in churches we can't contact. When peace comes we'll find that God has been with us all the time."

God hasn't been absent in churches N'Kozi does have records on. Since 1978, despite civil war, Baptist work has spread from six to 12 of Angola's 18 provinces. The number of ordained pastors has increased from 12 to 55.

In Luanda in that period, under the watchful eye of a Marxist government that didn't even grant legal recognition to the Baptist convention until 1987, Baptists grew from two struggling churches to seven churches and 15 mission congregations in 1990.

Many of them overflow. Latecomers sit in the balcony of First Baptist Church. Redemption Baptist Church, where N'Kozi is pastor, crams 600 people into its "being-completed-by-stages-as-we-can-pay-for-it" building.

And a commitment to stewardship has thrived in the hard times.

"The convention had a cooperative program where churches pooled funds for common work, but after Angolan independence from Portugal it collapsed," N'Kozi said. When it was reorganized in 1977, each church was encouraged to give 20 percent of undesignated income to the national convention.

"And most churches do," N'Kozi reported. "It's hard, but our people and our pastors see the importance of it. Plus, most of the churches give another 10 percent to their local Baptist association. That means the convention is very much self-reliant and people are excited to give. Think what will happen after the war, when the economy lets our members have more money!"

Currently the convention supports 10 home missionaries and underwrites a church loan program, according to N'Kozi.

But a bright future does not mean an easy future. A peace treaty will stop destruction, but it will not rebuild automatically the destroyed national infrastructure, heal the maimed or stabilize the currency. Neither will it mean a vacation for Baptists.

"There are so many needs and we have so few things in place to meet those needs," N'Kozi admitted. "Before independence we were developing a seminary, a communications center, a media program and an agricultural project. All of that was done away with by the war. But we need a seminary to train pastors, a media program to produce literature within an Angolan context. We need an orphanage and medical program to minister to war victims. We'll have to pray much and work hard to take advantage of the opportunities God has for us."

"Materially, we're much behind but spiritually we're far, far ahead. The Bible says if we put the spiritual first all the other things will come. After 15 years we're financially poor -- but our God is still going to look upon us and bless us."

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

Hatfields planting lives
in Angola; crops still fallow

By Craig Bird

F-FMB

LUANDA, Angola (BP)--Mark Hatfield hasn't been too successful yet at growing crops in Angola. Fighting between troops of the ruling MPLA party and anti-government UNITA forces restrict him to the capital city of Luanda.

"An agriculturist can't do much good if he can't get into the rural areas, but we've been told it's too dangerous for that," explained Hatfield, a Southern Baptist agricultural missionary from Ashland, Ky. "There's so much we could do if we could get out of Luanda. We just pray peace will come soon so we can get on with what we came to do."

But the ex-soil conservationist and his wife, Susan, have made a good start on planting their lives in the southwestern African country.

And despite constant water and electricity shortages, widespread hunger, economic hardship and nights punctuated by gunfire, they chose to begin a family. Their first child was due any day as October came to a close.

The couple went to Zimbabwe for the birth; the United States and Angola do not maintain diplomatic relations, so it is extremely difficult to secure an American birth certificate for a baby born in Angola.

With five years of marriage, the trauma of leaving families, friends and careers to become missionaries and the stress of Portuguese language school all behind them, the time seemed appropriate.

They are well aware of the risks of family life in Angola. The most vivid reminder is a paperback book in their home. The front cover and first 324 pages are home to a 2-inch rifle bullet that penetrated the roof and ceiling before burying itself in the book lying on the couch.

"When we have overnight company who sleep on the couch, it's a good conversation starter," Hatfield quipped.

Actual fighting has not come close to them, however, probably because they live near two military camps, one Cuban and the other Angolan. Their close friendships with Angolans -- and the courage with which the average Angolan family faces life -- also reinforce the Hatfields' faith.

Grafinil church gave the Hatfields another focus. "We're strongly committed to ministry through the local church," he said. "We felt called to go overseas to share our Christian faith but were convicted that's best done through churches. We also wanted to be involved in a church close to our home so we could present a constant witness in our neighborhood. We were thrilled when we got here and found a mission a couple of blocks away."

They have assisted as Grafinil has matured from a mission congregation into a church with 160 members and attendance around 200.

And they have become part of the neighborhood.

They walk the dirt roads of Grafinil for door-to-door evangelism and to visit friends (Angolans Christians escort them back home to shield them from possible harassment by soldiers). Children flash them thumbs-up signs. They are an accepted part of a community where white faces are seldom seen.

That status brings sad responsibilities in a hungry nation at war. The Hatfields keep scrap lumber and nails on hand to give to people building coffins. The missionaries' truck is the most-used hearse in Grafinil.

"I've carried way too many little coffins in that truck, with the family walking slowly behind," Hatfield said, trying to hold his emotion in check. "I don't think I've ever been in a sadder place than that cemetery. Usually the only grave marker is a small toy or a spoon that belonged to the child."

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Because of the steady encroachment of death, Hatfield's most satisfying current activity is hauling water.

"The people call it 'the clean water' because it doesn't make them sick," he said. He spends hours, sometimes days, waiting in line at a government water storage tank to fill barrels and containers jammed onto his truck. He's such a regular customer that the workers at the tank are his friends.

"The supervisor prefers Bibles with white covers instead of black; I know because when I gave them out there he asked to trade," Hatfield said.

The missionary carries water to areas around Grafnil when electricity shortages shut down pumps and cause water lines to run dry. But he makes a weekly trip to a desolate village an hour's drive from Luanda called Quengela.

The Luanda Baptist Association surveyed all the neighborhoods where Baptist had work. "Quengela was the unanimous No. 1" in need, Hatfield said. "An oil company in the area had built a distribution system to pump its untreated waste water to different villages. But the man in charge was mad at Quengela for some reason and had turned off the line to the village."

People in 70 mud-and-thatch houses were so desperate they walked miles at night to steal water before Hatfield began bringing 250 gallons a week. Later the man who had turned off the water supply heard what Hatfield was doing and confronted him -- to apologize. "He was really ashamed of what he had done and the village gets water now, but often it's pretty polluted and unsafe," Hatfield said.

The water distribution has boosted the profile of Baptists. An evangelist from First Baptist Church of Luanda comes to Quengela on Saturday to visit, spend the night and lead worship on Sunday. He returns to Luanda before darkness, when UNITA attacks become more likely. On a typical Sunday 50 people will gather to sing, pray and listen to the sermon.

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

Dixons make splash
as traveling teachers

By Craig Bird

F-FMB

Baptist Press
10/30/90

LUANDA, Angola (BP)--The main thing you have to learn about being a missionary in Angola, Curtis and Betty Dixon insist, "is the proper way to take a spit bath."

At least that was the main thing they had to learn, since they arrived already knowing how to be flexible, keep priorities in order and live without such things as a normal house, a permanent address, adult-sized furniture and surroundings not dominated by AK-47 automatic weapons, bombers and wall-sized murals of communist heroes.

From 1983 until 1989, the Dixons, of Stroud and Guymon, Okla., constituted the entire membership of the Southern Baptist mission in Angola. During that time they called seven different places "home," even though they spent most of their time living out of trunks and suitcases as they traveled around a country at war, teaching Theological Education by Extension (TEE).

Government officials of the Marxist ruling party often subtly made things difficult for them. Pastor friends disappeared in the violence. Mail service was inconsistent and telephones nonexistent. Bombs exploded down the street. Bullets slammed into their office. Angolans suffered and starved and died.

Through it all they dug into their spiritual reservoirs, checked to see if they were still in God's will and, as Dixon likes to say, "kept on keeping on." So the only important thing left to master was the art of stretching a few cupfuls of water into a bath to wash off after the 16-18 hour days they put in.

Relief has arrived, however, both in the form of fellow Southern Baptist missionaries and -- the Dixons hope and pray -- a possible end to the 15-year-old civil war that has devastated Angola.

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The new missionary colleagues, agriculturists Mark and Susan Hatfield and medical workers Nick and Teri Comminellis, "have been a real joy since they got here last year," Dixon said. "They've come to a tough place but bring talents that can do much good." Another couple is expected to arrive in 1991.

But while new missionaries are an encouragement, prospects for peace really excite the veteran couple.

"We expect an exciting time," Dixon said. "From what we've heard about how Baptist work on the Angolan side of the Namibian border (controlled by anti-government UNITA forces) has grown, we're looking forward to seeing what's happened to churches cut off for years. I hope to be reunited with some TEE students who got drafted and haven't been heard from since."

New problems will surely come if the government and UNITA agree to peace, but "major problems we've faced would go away overnight," Mrs. Dixon agreed.

In 1973 the Dixons were seeking reappointment as missionaries to Brazil, where they had worked from 1966 to 1971, when they heard of an emergency request for a Portuguese-speaking couple in Angola. They responded to the call, but their African career did not get off to a promising start.

They arrived in Angola in September of 1974 and plunged into work. But in July 1975 -- while they were in South Africa for medical treatment -- the other missionaries then in Angola evacuated. The nation had gained independence from Portugal, but civil war was beginning.

In the chaotic days after independence, as three rival Angolan armies battled for control, looters hauled off practically everything the Dixons owned -- including a lifetime collection of slides, wedding pictures and several irreplaceable mementos from their time in Brazil.

Unable to re-enter Angola, the Dixons spent six months in South Africa working at Angolan refugee camps and at two Portuguese-language churches. Then they lived for 11 months in Zimbabwe, where he was acting director of the Baptist media center. In Zimbabwe they were assigned to a massive house, "so big you needed a golf cart to get from the bedroom to the kitchen," Dixon recalled. (New regulations now limit the size of missionary homes.) If they had known what was in store when they got back to Angola, they might have appreciated the accommodations more.

The years 1977-83 were spent in Portugal, where Dixon built a Baptist communication center and they both taught at a seminary. They also worked with a church of Angolans who had fled to Lisbon. But always they kept trying to get visas for Angola.

Angolan Baptists were working for the same thing, and in 1981 they got government approval for Mrs. Dixon to visit for the dedication of a new church. She discovered it was easier to get visa requests processed from inside the country, so the Dixons made two trips from Portugal as tourists to teach Bible institute classes in Uige and in Luanda, the Angolan capital.

The missionaries were thrilled by the obvious commitment of the 136 Angolan Bible students, but distressed by the price students had to pay to get to the classes. Most spent the week of classes eating peanuts and cassava they had brought with them.

On the long flight back to Portugal, they decided, "If we ever get to come back, the students need a mobile school -- and we're the ones who'll have to be mobile." They didn't realize how much truth was packed into that vow.

When they finally returned to Angola to live in 1983, they began a teaching circuit. They loaded up metal trunks full of books, kerosene lamp repair parts (for night classes), food, and a suitcase each for clothes and teaching materials, then set off for five- to nine-week stints in cities around the country. They spent weekdays and nights teaching and weekends preaching and visiting for local churches. Between trips they lived in Luanda.

"We've talked many times about how the Lord worked it all out," Mrs. Dixon said. "By the time we got back in the country our children were all grown so we could live like that."

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"Like that" included living in a primary Sunday school classroom at First Baptist Church in Luanda and sharing a kitchen and bathroom with the pastor and his family, or in apartments borrowed from missionaries from other denominations on furlough, or in a typical two-room Angolan house (with bullet holes in the walls).

Yet Angolan churches are strong today -- and many of their leaders spiritually equipped -- because of Curtis and Betty Dixon and their mobile Bible Institute.

And the Dixons have survived pretty well. In fact, Mrs. Dixon now prefers Portuguese-designed bathrooms to the American variety.

"It's a lot easier to take a bath with a bucket and a cup when you don't have to worry about splashing water," she explained. "Americans don't build bathrooms with a hole in the floor. And the Portuguese do."

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

Dream, nightmare merge
in medical mission vision

By Craig Bird

F-FMB

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HUAMBO, Angola (BP)--Nick Comminellis' lifelong goal was to be "a typical rural missionary doctor." Physical therapist Teri Comminellis' special interest was amputees.

Both wanted to get in on the "beginnings of a work."

From those perspectives Angola looks like an answer to a dream for the Southern Baptist missionary couple from Kansas City, Mo. From other angles it resembles a nightmare.

The Baptist Convention of Angola has worked for years to get more missionaries into Angola. Medical ministry was a top priority. They wanted to operate two clinics -- one in Huambo and one outside the city in a pastoral setting where the nation's first Baptist church was organized in 1920.

Huambo, like any Angolan city, is a ready source of patients who have lost legs. Fifteen years of civil war, often fought with land mines, is the reason why. They have no way to prove it, but the Comminellis have been told Angola has more amputees per capita than any other country in the world.

Limbless victims are plentiful, leaning on storefronts and hovering around the market asking for (or demanding) handouts since they can no longer work.

Huambo, a once-beautiful city of perhaps 200,000 people, has fallen on hard times since rival factions turned on each other in 1976, after Portugal cut its former Angolan colony loose. Early in the conflict anti-government UNITA forces took control of the surrounding countryside, regularly venturing into the city itself to strike at military targets.

Gasoline has averaged \$15 a gallon, when you can find it. Government food store shelves often are bare. Completing a phone call is extremely difficult. Emergency flights are practically impossible -- UNITA rebels require three weeks' advance notice of any flight in areas it controls to ensure the plane won't be targeted by their surface-to-air missiles.

That's the general outlook. The specifics of life in Huambo for the missionaries amplify the theme. When they moved to Huambo, they found no locks on six outside doors of their house. The water tap produced a thick, brackish liquid. The garage was a foot shorter than their truck. In the week it took to fix the flaw, the theft alarm on the truck went off every night.

But things have improved -- all things being relative.

They now bypass city water and haul clean well water from across the road. They've learned the barter system well enough to get fruit and vegetables in the market. They can't afford cash prices since missionaries live on the official exchange rate of 29.6 Kwanzas to one U.S. dollar, while prices in the market reflect the black market rate of 3,000 Kwanzas to the dollar.

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Thanks to a two-week working visit from fellow missionaries Curtis and Betty Dixon and Mark and Susan Hatfield, numerous improvements have been made in their house.

Their 4-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, charms Angolans with such linguistic feats as calling a caterpillar by its Mbundu name (the local dialect). Son James, age 1, sails through his days full steam ahead, apparently not impeded by the lack of Sesame Street, McDonald's playgrounds or American playmates. The latest family member, Joshua, was born Oct. 4.

Mom and Dad struggle with fear over their children's safety. The doctor and the physical therapist also struggle with frustration at not being able to use fully the medical skills and training they brought with them.

"If we had three things in Huambo we could start making a difference," Comminellis explained. "We need food. We need water. And we need everyone to stop shooting. But until that happens we won't make much impact."

Make no mistake. They came to make an impact.

Comminellis, a former Greek Orthodox, became an evangelical Christian in the eighth grade through Youth For Christ at his school in Parkville, Mo. In high school a book entitled "Deliver Us From Evil" by Tom Dooley provided him his first image of a missionary doctor and left him "completely fascinated."

Six years at the University of Missouri-Kansas City got him a medical degree and his first missions experience. During his studies he spent several months in Honduras working in a mission hospital. Upon graduation he was invited to spend a year (1982-83) at a teaching hospital in Shanghai, China.

"I went to China, even though it was a secular program, with the intention of sharing the gospel. And I got to lead lots of Bible studies," he said. "But I also got to compare working in a metropolitan city in a teaching situation with the rural work I had always dreamed of. It was quite a struggle to decide which direction to go." Zondervan will publish his account of his time in China in 1991. The tentative title is "Shanghai Doctor."

Still wrestling with the direction he should take, he entered the residency program at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas. That brought him into contact with two people who would change his life.

One was fellow medical resident David Fort, who had grown up in Zimbabwe as a Southern Baptist missionary kid and was preparing to go himself as a missionary to west Africa. The other was a nurse who had already gone to Brazil as a summer missionary -- Teri Huddleston.

Comminellis and Huddleston married and applied for missionary appointment. They learned the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board had medical missions requests from all over the world. They had to choose between the rural dream inspired by Tom Dooley and the urban attraction he had felt in China.

Rural won, and they headed for Angola. "I'd been to Burkina Faso and knew Angola couldn't be as bad a situation as that," Comminellis said with a laugh.

After a year of language study in Portugal, they arrived in Angola in 1989 to find their house was not yet vacated. They quickly made arrangements to work at a mission hospital in Kalukembe, sponsored by the Evangelical Church of Southwest Angola and staffed by Swiss Christians.

"When we were at missionary orientation in 1988 I found a 1965 directory of mission hospitals in Angola listing 150 institutions," Comminellis said. "Kalukembe is the only one left." Eight months there left vivid memories.

One Sunday Comminellis was called to the hospital for an emergency. As he approached he saw the lawn was covered with 80 wounded government soldiers, fresh from a fire fight with UNITA forces.

"We had to assign priority numbers and took four or five at a time into surgery," he said. "We had a scene from 'MASH' like that about once a week."

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A crop failure sparked widespread starvation, since the UNITA blockade kept trucks from bringing in food. For weeks the 150 patients at the hospital were fed two ounces of corn mush a day.

So many starving people hovered outside their house that Mrs. Comminellis and a neighbor eventually organized a soup kitchen. For three months they fixed 20 to 30 gallons of soup for lunch; by Christmas they were feeding 150 people a day. Finally the church got a shipment of grain and fed 1,200 people a day until February, when the next harvest began.

Then they moved to Huambo. The Comminellis were the only foreign family in town. A few Brazilian missionaries and some Red Cross workers are single. So are other non-Angolans in town: numerous Russians, Bulgarians and Cubans -- the targets of night attacks inside the city by UNITA.

So the Comminellis wait and work. They have Christians in Huambo to encourage, Bible studies to lead, discipleship classes to teach. Medical work happens when supplies and opportunity meet.

The Angolan nightmare is very real. But so is the Comminellis' dream.

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Social work prof says
children need advocates

By Pat Cole

F-^{CO}
(SBTS)

Baptist Press
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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The biblical call to care for children demands that Christians address structures which oppress the youngest members of society, stressed a Southern Baptist church social work professor.

People find it difficult "to look beyond the lovable children that touch us to systems that hurt children," said Diana Richmond Garland, associate professor of social work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Yet Jesus confronted societal structures: "He not only took children in his arms, but he attacked the systems of his society that burdened people to the point they could not care for one another," she noted.

Societal systems that affect the welfare of children today involve a variety of "complex issues" often related to public policy decisions, she said.

Garland addressed a conference on child advocacy for Southern Baptist denominational workers who deal with children and family-related issues. Staff members from the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Christian Life Commission and the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children participated in the meeting sponsored by the seminary's Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry.

Garland, director of the Gheens Center, maintained that churches must understand their tasks in biblical and theological terms before embarking on ministries involving child advocacy. "Unless our churches understand what they are called to do in ultimate theological terms, unless a task genuinely disciplines the saints and pulls them to deeper levels of commitment, we ought not to be about it," she said. "As we provide leadership to the church in child advocacy, we must first consider ways in which we can nurture spiritual growth through the ministries to which we are beckoning people."

In another address, Kathy Guy of the Washington-based Children's Defense Fund, said people are "sadly mistaken" if they believe children in the United States are "the most blessed in the world."

"Children are poorer in the United States than in any other industrialized nation in the world," she said. "We have by far the highest child poverty rate and the deepest."

One out of five American children lives in poverty and that 17 other nations have a better infant mortality rate than the U.S., said Guy.

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