

(BP)

-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFF

SBC Executive Comm:
901 Commerce #
Nashville, Tennessee 37
(615) 244-2
Herb Hollinger, Vice Presic
Fax (615) 742-8
CompuServe ID# 7042

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232
NASHVILLE Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

February 9, 1993

93-25

NASHVILLE -- SBC statistics up in 8 key categories.
VIRGINIA -- WMU, FMB trustees disagree over cooperation with other groups.
NASHVILLE -- Draper cites concerns, actions in 'state of the board' address.
IRAQ -- Southern Baptists give life to Kurds of northern Iraq; photos.
IRAQ -- Doors for healing Kurds kept open by allied forces.
IRAQ -- Northern Iraq: a dangerous place to be.
WASHINGTON -- Brotherhood, BWA team up for international training.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

SBC statistics up
in 8 key categories

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
2/9/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists registered gains in eight of 10 key denominational reporting areas in 1992 while posting the first decrease in baptisms in five years.

Increases were registered in number of churches, church membership, ongoing Sunday school enrollment, discipleship training enrollment/participation, ongoing music ministry enrollment, Brotherhood enrollment/participation, mission expenditures and total tithes, offerings and special gifts.

Baptisms totaled 367,847 in 1992 compared to 396,668 in 1991, for a decrease of 28,821 or 7.3 percent. Woman's Missionary Union enrollment also showed a decrease.

The denomination showed a net gain of 237 churches to reach a new total of 38,458.

The number of new churches started in 1992 was considerably higher than in recent years, 497 compared to 454 in 1991, but the number of churches which ceased to exist also was higher, 277 in 1992 compared to 231 in 1991. This resulted in a net increase slightly lower than the 247 of 1991, according to Mary Frances Jones, corporate performance and customer research specialist in the Baptist Sunday School Board's corporate market research department.

Church membership, which topped 15 million in 1991, increased by 0.8 percent or 127,203 in 1992, for a new total of 15,365,486. The 1992 increase was smaller than the 1991 gain.

Ongoing enrollment in Sunday school increased 78,720 or 1 percent, marking the fourth consecutive gain and increases in 10 out of the last 13 years. The new total of 8,262,521 is a record enrollment.

Discipleship training enrollment/participation increased by 1.1 percent or 23,486, to reach a new total of 2,226,013. The total represents the highest enrollment/participation in discipleship training since a new records system was instituted in 1990.

Ongoing music ministry enrollment increased by 0.6 percent or 10,511, to a new total of 1,886,121. Though the increase was smaller than the 1991 gain, it marks the 27th consecutive year of growth.

--more--

Brotherhood enrollment/participation increased by 2.1 percent or 12,672, for the second consecutive gain since the enrollment/participation system was implemented in 1990. The new total is 614,366.

In financial categories, mission expenditures increased 2.7 percent or \$19,682,479 to a 1992 total of \$751,773,457, for the largest increase since 1989.

Total tithes, offerings and special gifts totaled \$4,899,015,605, an increase of 4.1 percent or \$194,028,885 from 1991 and the second largest increase in dollar amount since 1986.

Ongoing WMU enrollment decreased by 0.8 percent or 9,805 to a new total of 1,190,908. The loss follows a small increase in 1991.

The statistics were compiled from 37,606 Uniform Church Letters processed by the board's corporate market research department.

--30--

Southern Baptist Statistical Summary, 1992-1991

| | 1992 | 1991 | 1992-1991 Change | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| | | | Numerical | Percent |
| Churches | 38,458 | 38,221 | 237 | 0.6 |
| Baptisms | 367,847 | 396,668 | -28,821 | -7.3 |
| Church Membership | 15,365,486 | 15,238,283 | 127,203 | 0.8 |
| Ongoing Sunday School Enrollment | 8,262,521 | 8,183,801 | 78,720 | 1.0 |
| Discipleship Training Enrollment/Participation | 2,226,013 | 2,202,527 | 23,486 | 1.1 |
| Ongoing Music Ministry Enrollment | 1,886,121 | 1,875,610 | 10,511 | 0.6 |
| Ongoing WMU Enrollment | 1,190,908 | 1,200,713 | -9,805 | -0.8 |
| Brotherhood Enrollment/Participation | 614,366 | 601,694 | 12,672 | 2.1 |
| Total Tithes, Offerings, and Special Gifts | \$4,899,015,605 | \$4,704,986,720 | \$194,028,885 | 4.1 |
| Mission Expenditures | \$751,773,457 | \$732,090,978 | \$19,682,479 | 2.7 |

 EDITORS' NOTE: State totals in the 10 reporting areas will be faxed to state Baptist newspapers Feb. 10 by the BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

WMU, FMB trustees disagree over cooperation with other groups By Erich Bridges

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Leaders of the Woman's Missionary Union and Foreign Mission Board -- sister agencies for more than a century -- strongly disagreed Feb. 8 over recent changes in WMU policy.

During a tense two-hour session, board trustees questioned WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien, WMU President Carolyn Miller, Associate Executive Director June Whitlow and Ellen Teague, WMU leader and president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. The questions focused on the WMU executive board's January vote to assist mission groups other than the Southern Baptist Foreign and Home Mission boards.

A clear division of opinion quickly emerged.

WMU leaders believe they are responding to a changing society and a changing Southern Baptist scene, where churches and individuals are exploring a variety of choices in mission participation.

They said they have no intention of backing down on what they have done in the past -- supporting Southern Baptist missions and helping raise millions of dollars annually for the two denominational mission boards. But they said, at the same time, they want to help all Southern Baptists do missions.

Foreign Mission Board trustees, in contrast, feel the WMU is abandoning the long-cherished unity of Southern Baptist Convention-sponsored mission efforts to aid splinter groups like the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

In January the WMU executive board considered changes proposed from an ad hoc committee named last year. The board adopted a plan to expand WMU's base and activities by cooperating with Southern Baptist mission groups other than the Home and Foreign Mission boards -- and perhaps with some other evangelical missions groups.

Such aid would come in the form of literature, prayer and other resources, not in helping raise offerings for missions, according to WMU leaders.

WMU also voted in January to become more involved in promoting mission volunteerism, to renew a tradition of speaking and acting on social issues and to accept financial contributions for "WMU and related missions needs."

Much of the FMB trustees' concern focused on the WMU's decision to provide prayer support and resources for additional Southern Baptist mission groups -- presumably including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The fellowship is not specifically mentioned in WMU's approved recommendations.

That move, said trustee Bill Blanchard, a Tennessee pastor, is "a radical departure from our past cooperative efforts" in supporting only "Southern Baptist Convention-sanctioned" mission work.

Blanchard repeatedly asked if WMU's study committee had attempted to poll or inform local WMU leaders about the "sweeping decisions" it was contemplating and if the decisions really represented grass-roots opinion.

WMU is by nature a grass-roots organization, O'Brien responded. Its executive board is made up of state WMU leaders who come to meetings with the "freshness of the local church." Advance surveys, letters and requests for prayer also were distributed widely, the WMU leaders said, and listening sessions were held at the Jericho missions festivals.

"It's hard to say" how closely the final decisions mirror every local WMU, O'Brien acknowledged as Blanchard pressed the question. "But (the new policy) is different only in that our denomination is different."

The Southern Baptist Convention once rallied around the Home and Foreign Mission boards alone, she explained. But many churches now send their own missionaries and volunteers across the nation and the world, and numerous groups within the denomination sponsor mission prayer efforts and projects.

"We didn't cause it; we are only recognizing it's there," O'Brien said. WMU wants to broaden its base in hopes "people who choose to do missions a little differently" will stay involved.

Trustee Don Purvis, a South Carolina pastor, said he was partly a product of WMU, which sent him to Royal Ambassador camp as a boy, and he had nurtured a good relationship with the women's organization for 30 years as a pastor.

"But I'm concerned," Purvis said, "about (WMU) relationships with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship," an organization Purvis believes draws support away from the Southern Baptist Convention. "It's the same concern I had for 25 years when my friends to the far right took their churches out of the convention."

WMU spoke against those earlier efforts to divide, he said. "Give me some assurance WMU is not going to be supplying something that will be pulling churches away from the Southern Baptist Convention and Foreign Mission Board."

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, O'Brien replied, was never discussed by the ad hoc committee. "We were looking at far broader issues than that," she said. The fellowship is "only one of a number of organizations that might come to us."

Asked for her personal assurance of commitment to Southern Baptist Convention programs, O'Brien said when she was elected to lead WMU she was told "I no longer have a personal opinion. When I speak, I speak for WMU . . . But as a (former) missionary of this Foreign Mission Board, I have a deep commitment to it."

O'Brien was a missionary to Indonesia for 12 years with her husband, Bill, the board's former executive vice president.

Phyllis Malcom, trustee from Georgia, asked with emotion what she would teach her young Girls in Action mission group if WMU changes. If WMU no longer supports SBC causes only, they won't know "what their roots are," Malcom said.

"God showed me we don't need to be concerned about the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship," she continued. "We need to be concerned about the words coming down from you . . . Ladies, I love you, but I'm afraid of your words."

Several other trustees echoed her anxiety, despite assurances from the WMU leaders that support for SBC missions would not change.

The anxiety was crystallized by Missouri trustee Mike Goodwin, who said he sensed "almost a disdain" among WMU leaders for the current, conservative stance of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"It's a sense of wanting to stay within the context (of the SBC), but not walking with (it)," he said. "My concern is that with some of the directions of the moderate conservatives in our denomination -- the CBF and others -- that for you to be in harmony with them and in harmony with us creates a great deal of problems in my heart."

Because the FMB isn't in agreement (with CBF) "we can't walk together," he said. "I'm not assured -- and I'd certainly have to be more deeply assured than what I've heard today -- that we can in deed and in truth come to a kind of understanding in which there can be a sense of trust."

A chorus of "amens" followed Goodwin's words. Trustee Phyllis Randall of Virginia then quoted retired WMU executive director Alma Hunt, who once wrote in a history of the WMU that the organization "has no program of her own. Our program is that of the Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board."

Randall said she felt that statement "used to be valid but is no longer. A Scripture that I learned in GAs said we can't serve two masters, that we'll love one and hate the other."

Alma Hunt, sitting near the back of the board chapel, rose to respond.

"When I wrote that, I believed it with all my heart," Hunt said. "Today is a different day. But I do not believe that God intends for us not to be able to walk together. I think under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, Christian people the world around can walk together."

"I've had some of the richest experiences of my life with Christians who are not Baptist but who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior," Hunt said. "I pray the day will never come that we as Southern Baptists will say we cannot walk with another Baptist or another person who believes in Jesus Christ." A number in the room applauded.

After the dialogue, the WMU leaders appeared a bit shellshocked by the tense atmosphere.

"I was surprised that there were so many negative perceptions," O'Brien said. "There didn't seem to be a tendency toward trying to understand where we were. I don't think we got a good hearing. The questions seemed more designed to express frustration than elicit information.

"I think it was significant that there was not a kind word for WMU" after a century of WMU support for the Foreign Mission Board, O'Brien said. "Rather, we were treated with suspicion. I think it would be safe to say it was unfriendly."

Where do the two agencies go from here? "It's up to (the Foreign Mission Board trustees)," O'Brien answered. "We're committed to do what we've done in the past. And we're hopeful they'll want to continue the partnership" and, after frustration subsides, "give us a chance to show we have no intention of backing down on what we've done in the past."

O'Brien acknowledged the timing of WMU's policy changes -- soon after the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship promoted its first mission offering and signed on former FMB President R. Keith Parks to lead its mission arm -- make the woman's agency vulnerable to criticism.

But to have delayed "would have put us farther behind in responding" to changes in Southern Baptist life, O'Brien reiterated. "The time is gone when we can expect women to come just because we have a program in the church."

--30--

Draper cites concerns, actions
in 'state of the board' address By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
2/9/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--A short-term future "ripe with opportunities and challenge" will lead the Baptist Sunday School Board to a long-term future of greater business and ministry effectiveness than ever before, President James T. Draper Jr. told the agency's trustees Feb. 8.

In a "State of the Sunday School Board" report, Draper said while he is "extremely optimistic about where we're headed," administration concerns need trustee understanding, support and assistance to reach "the potential that is ours for touching lives with the gospel into the 21st century."

Acknowledging "many good things are happening now," Draper said his message focused on problems and concerns so trustees can "join with us in understanding them in order to most effectively take action to deal with them."

The nine concerns he listed are:

-- flat to declining sales. After factoring out price increases, the board's total revenue has experienced real growth in only four of the past 10 years, with growth periods attributed to single products such as The Baptist Hymnal, published in 1991.

-- declining dated church literature unit sales. From 1982-83 to 1990-91, unit sales of dated church literature products declined 8 percent or almost 4.4 million units. For 1991-92, overall dated church literature experienced a decline in unit sales of 2 percent from 1990-91. The trend continued for October-November-December 1992 when overall church literature dated unit sales declined 6.5 percent. Changes in church buying patterns of curriculum, from buying for numbers of people enrolled to buying for numbers attending church programs, were among related trends cited.

-- profitability. Only four of the board's 17 programs -- Sunday school, church music, church administration and family ministry -- have generated a net contribution in each of the last three years. While some areas provide materials without the expectation of being self-supporting, others designed to contribute to the board's support have not done so. The board receives no Cooperative Program funds, and contributes annually to Southern Baptist Convention support and state Baptist conventions.

--more--

-- a poor track record for new business ventures. The board must step up efforts in new ventures within the context of what it does best, accompanied by sound business planning.

-- contribution of products. Seven percent of board products provide 94 percent of product financial contribution. In 1990-91, 5,679 products were produced under six sales classifications. Approximately 1,900 products generated no net financial contribution.

-- the image of the board among customers. Research in a recent image study showed frustration with the board on the part of some customers. Among comments from respondents was the observation that the board is a tremendous resource for Southern Baptists that will have less influence in the future if it does not change. At the same time, comments by respondents indicated a strong desire to continue to be supportive.

-- products which sell well but don't generate income. Some recent projects which could be viewed as successes in sales have actually failed as yet to generate a net contribution due to production expenses, poor pricing, inefficient or ineffective marketing plans and other factors. Three products which have sold well but have not yet contributed financially to the board are the "Holman Bible Dictionary," Anita Bryant's "A New Day" and "The New American Commentary."

-- consistent mechanisms to secure, organize and evaluate feedback. Improvement is needed in obtaining feedback and using it effectively.

-- accountability for results. Decentralizing functions such as marketing and business in strategic operating units enhances accountability.

"While we have done many things well, there also are areas where improvement is needed," Draper told trustees. "Already we are taking steps to address these and other concerns."

Among those he cited are 1) development of a corporate vision statement, core values, operating principles and business and financial objectives; 2) a move from heavy emphasis on operational and budget planning to beginning with strategic planning and business planning; 3) development of a business planning process; 4) restructuring the financial analysis task force to identify problem areas in products and services that need attention; 5) placing priority attention on the image of the board among customers; 6) adoption of a leadership profile to identify potential leaders and invest in equipping them for greater responsibility; and 7) monitoring resources and their use.

One major resource to monitor is the number of employees, especially in the aftermath of the retirement of 159 in the fall of 1992 under the terms of the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program, Draper said.

As of Jan. 31, the number of regular, full-time employees was 1,683, compared to 1,767 on Aug. 15, 1991, when Draper became president, for a net reduction of 84.

Draper said other actions being taken to deal with concerns include: reducing the number of policies and procedures to simplify work; restructuring of the retail division; planning for better products and better-managed processes for producing them; emphasizing a team approach to church growth in the church growth and programs area; seeking and listening to customer feedback on every facet of work and ministry; and cooperating, inside the board, with other agencies and with other Christian groups.

Draper said he sees "a vital, ministering, serving institution" as the board's future. "We must believe in faith that this is the future before us," he continued. "We must understand that the challenges are great, but the opportunities are even greater."

Draper called on trustees for greater contributions "of your insights and gifts and skills to enhance our ministries, more of your time to represent us to our customers, more of your prayers on our behalf."

"We must be concerned about today and tomorrow," Draper concluded. "But, seeking God's presence and his guidance, we must also dream of what can be into the next century and beyond. And we must pray and work to make those dreams reality."

EDITORS' NOTE: Mike Creswell, overseas correspondent for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, wrote the following three stories after a trip into northern Iraq to follow up on ministries among the Kurdish people. They may be used individually, as a series or as a package.

Southern Baptists give life
to Kurds of northern Iraq

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
2/9/93

ZAKHO, Iraq (BP)--On a rolling plain in northern Iraq a freshly drilled water well spews out about 160 gallons of clean water per minute.

That delights Southern Baptist worker Art Baker and several Kurdish workers -- it's their well.

The men wrestled with an ancient, rickety drilling rig for a month to coax the precious liquid out of the tough, rocky ground. Soon they will erect a small building to cover the spring and keep the water clean.

Then the well will belong to a small cluster of houses that constitute a village outside Zakho. That means Kurdish women in the village can stop hauling water in big plastic jugs -- and maybe their children will stop being sick all the time.

Doctors say parasites found in unclean water cause up to half of all children's sickness. So drilling wells provides more than convenience -- it gives life.

Baker, a 23-year-old civil engineering graduate, is a long way from his home in Georgetown, S.C. But he and a succession of other Southern Baptists, working with Global Partners, have come -- for weeks, months or years -- to help as much as they can while they can.

Home for them is a two-story house on a Zakho side street that has accommodated up to 18 helpers at a time, said Paul and Virginia Smith of West Monroe, La., and Farmington, Mo. The Smiths lead the Zakho operation for Global Partners, an international humanitarian aid organization based in England.

If Global Partners manages to get two more drill rigs to Zakho, Smith hopes they can drill 150 water wells a year. Larger cities like Zakho and Dahuk have water systems that provide clean water, but outlying villagers often must rely on polluted streams, Smith said.

One village hooked up to Zakho's water system now gets no water because so many people have tapped onto the water line running to the city. When Kurdish officials tried to cut the "unofficial" tap-ons, the homeowners brandished guns and warned them away.

Global Partners also conducts medical work in five outlying villages. A physician is training a man with medical experience to serve each village. The medics can handle simple emergencies and dispense limited medicines provided by Global Partners. They are trained to recognize more serious problems and refer them to hospitals.

A bus has been equipped as a medical clinic and a pickup truck as a rolling pharmacy. Medical personnel see between 50 and 200 patients a day. Although the mobile clinic meets needs, Smith feels the village health centers they're establishing will have long-term results because villagers can support the effort themselves.

"Some of these villages are snowed in during the winter with five or six feet of snow. But they'll have somebody caring for medical emergencies," Smith said.

Seeing little shoots of green showing on the rolling fields around Zakho, Smith smiled. It will be a crop of winter wheat.

"We helped do that," he said proudly.

Global Partners has helped distribute 500 tons of wheat seed, which will help put badly needed bread on Kurdish tables in a few months.

--more--

Last year they gave seeds to produce six types of vegetables to 7,000 families -- each averaging eight members. The families had plenty of vegetables to eat, and much of the produce found its way to local markets. That helped lower prices and assure that more people had vegetables to eat.

If funds permit, a similar project may be carried out this spring, Smith said.

"I think -- without being too boastful -- Global Partners has established a very solid record of genuine aid to needy people," Smith said.

"They know that when we tell them we're going to do something, we do it. If we tell them we're going to distribute 500 tons of wheat seed, they know they can believe it."

--30--

(BP) photos (two vertical and two horizontal) mailed Feb. 8 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. They may be used in any combination with the story above and the two following stories. Outlines available on SBCNet Newsroom.

Doors for helping Kurds
kept open by allied forces

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
2/9/93

ZAKHO, Iraq (BP)--A roughly lettered sign greets visitors arriving from across the Turkish border: "Welcome to Kurdistan."

But on most American news maps, this is a "no-fly zone" in northern Iraq. And that's the rub.

As long as American and allied warplanes keep Saddam Hussein's forces at bay, this can be Kurdistan under Kurdish control. If air cover goes, Iraqi troops likely will attack, as they did so fiercely in 1991, forcing 2 million Kurds to flee through rugged 12,000-foot mountains to Turkey and Iran.

Thousands died along the tortuous trails and suffered indescribable horrors to avoid being killed or tortured in Iraq.

Southern Baptists sent workers who served with the England-based Global Partners humanitarian aid organization. Food programs set up in northern Iran's mountains fed thousands of Kurds during that critical time.

Back in Iraq -- when napalm, poison gas and bombs failed to kill all the Kurds -- Saddam Hussein's forces destroyed 5,000 to 6,000 villages. Ruins of some are visible around Zakho, a town in northern Iraq. What had once been home for hundreds of people became a field full of jumbled stones.

Once the allied-imposed security zone was put in place in northern Iraq, however, the Kurds began returning.

Southern Baptists responded again with aid and feeding programs. Global Partners workers labored in the camps, distributing food and drilling wells for clean water. That effort continues, with financial support and personnel from Southern Baptists, the United States government and others.

Through early February, the winter of 1993 has been blessedly mild, with less of the deep snow which beset the region last year. American military personnel airdropped food to villagers more than 150 times last winter to stave off starvation. "We haven't had that problem this year," said Col. Robert Young, commander of the Military Coordination Center in Zakho.

Food is available in the stands of Zakho's downtown streets, but the Kurds complain prices are so high they have trouble affording it. "People are hungry but not starving," said Steve Wilson, a relief officer with the United Kingdom division of Save the Children Fund.

Kerosene, needed for heating, is expensive. Trees on the outskirts of town have been stripped for firewood. A UNICEF worker said some Kurds have died from carbon monoxide poisoning when they used kerosene heaters in closely sealed rooms.

--more--

While the American air strikes against Iraqi positions in northern Iraq captured headlines during January, the U.S. military carried out day-to-day distribution of more than 30,000 tons of food and millions of liters of fuel. Young and his allied counterparts work not only with the United Nations but also with more than 100 assorted non-governmental agencies serving in northern Iraq -- such as Global Partners.

Although a few people still live in tents around Zakho, most have rebuilt houses -- often modest mud-brick affairs, with mud roofs they must constantly roll and treat to keep waterproof.

Building houses is almost a continual process for Kurds; one man in Zakho has just finished rebuilding for the seventh time. Weak currency, which has declined rapidly during the past two years, complicates such efforts.

Amid such uncertainties the Kurds also are busy trying to piece together a government that can establish some degree of order in the troubled land.

Kurds are caught in a tremendous dilemma, Young said.

They bask in a fragile bubble of freedom, supported for the moment by international military might. But most, farmers who left the running of day-to-day government to the Iraqis, don't have the skills to run it themselves.

"When the Iraqis pulled out, they cut the umbilical cord from the south," Young said. "The Kurds and the people of northern Iraq have had to start from scratch" in becoming self-sufficient. "That doesn't happen overnight, and it won't happen in five years. They didn't have people who knew how to be town councilmen or municipal leaders or planners."

Kurdish government offices function in former Iraqi government buildings, but without desks, filing cabinets or telephones. "They're just going on their own will," Wilson said.

Young doubts the north will ever become self-sufficient because of its poverty. But Saddam Hussein's tactics likely will alienate the north further and it may "develop an enormous sense of self-sufficiency out of necessity."

Rapid deterioration of the area's electrical and road systems complicate matters. Frequent power and telephone outages plague Zakho. Roads in several directions have been damaged by weather and go unrepaired.

Further, neighboring countries, who have Kurdish populations of their own to contend with, may oppose long-term development projects which would make the Kurdish area more self-sufficient.

They support humanitarian relief, but "the minute you start seeing any kind of development, immediately the brakes come on and they get very concerned," Young said. "You're not going to see Western companies come into northern Iraq for a lot of reasons."

Oil is thought to be under the ground of northern Iraq, and some Kurds have asked Global Partners to explore for it with their water-drilling rig. That's not technically possible. But observers say it illustrates the Kurds' dilemma. Even if they discovered oil, Western companies would not come into northern Iraq to get it because of the political-military stalemate. And neighboring countries probably wouldn't let Iraqi Kurds export it.

In the end, the future for the region depends on what happens in Baghdad, Young said.

"It's a constant trade-off by the people in the north between the ecstasy of freedom and the agony of no future," he said.

"Kurds are scared of the future. No international political decision has been made on their status," Wilson said. "They're secure, but it's a short-term feeling of security. It's hard to mobilize them to think long-term."

Still, the Kurds seem to be digging in for the duration, making the most of the current lull. "This time we'll make it. This time it will last," declared a shopkeeper in Zakho with a map of Kurdistan posted in his shop.

Meanwhile, the music and dancing of traditional three-day wedding feasts enliven Zakho's nights -- another sign of some hope for the future.

Northern Iraq: a
dangerous place to be

By Mike Creswell

DAHUK, Iraq (BP)--Paul Smith approaches his white pickup truck, but before climbing in he looks carefully underneath all sides -- for bombs.

The night before in Dahuk someone stuck a bomb under a car; it went off during the night when the vehicle was empty. It's unclear who did the bombing or why. Northern Iraq is a wild and woolly place these days.

Sniper fire has taken its toll in Dahuk recently -- killing a CARE worker from Australia, wounding a Red Cross worker while he sat in his house and spraying the apartment of a United Nations worker. In Erbil a car loaded with TNT blew up and killed 18 or 20 people and wounded more than 100 people.

"That's a new turn in terrorist attacks. We're watching closely to see if this is part of a new pattern," said Smith, who works with Global Partners, a humanitarian aid organization based in England.

Kurds say Saddam Hussein has offered snipers 150,000 dinars if they shoot any foreign non-government organization worker, a lower price than the 500,000 dinars he reportedly has offered for shooting an American military person.

But rank-and-file Kurds, even hardy "peshmerga" warriors who bristle with pistols and AK-47s, give relief workers a cordial reception.

A Kurdish repairman spent 45 minutes working on an oil heater for the Global Partners office during January. When Smith offered to pay, the man refused his money.

"You're doing so much to help us, this is the least I can do to say thanks," he said.

An American who visited a roadside sheep market was greeted by smiles -- and offers to pose for photos. When two Americans and a German showed up uninvited at a Kurdish wedding, a gun-toting peshmerga guard ushered them to the circular dance under way and invited them to join in. Others offered them "chai" -- strong tea laced with sugar and served in small glasses.

At a downtown gun market in Zakho, would-be sellers and buyers examined automatic rifles, shotguns and pistols as they stood about on the muddy street. Even here, visiting foreigners were welcomed.

"You wanta buy a gun?" one seller asked, holding up an ancient shotgun with a wobbly breech.

Despite such acceptance, danger can come in several ways.

American air attacks on Iraqi positions in northern Iraq concern Smith and the assistants from the United States serving there. Several Southern Baptists are among that number. They work within artillery range of Iraqi guns and are ready to evacuate across the Turkish border on short notice.

But the outbreak of hostilities is only one worry.

Even drilling water wells is risky because about 30 million land mines are planted in surrounding plains. A British relief agency that specializes in disarming mines has unearthed thousands of the coffee can-size mines, but thousands remain.

Typical plastic-bodied land mines, with trigger prongs on top, are deadly to anything within 50 yards. Some of the smaller ones will only blow off a foot. Larger ones will take out a tank -- as twisted metal scattered over 100 yards of open fields indicates.

A Kurdish man was killed in November 1991 as Global Partners drilled a well near the Tigris River. Hired to guard the drilling rig at night, he tried to recover a mine to use in fishing. He wanted to throw the mine in the river to stun fish and make them float, but it exploded in his face.

"The biggest piece of him left was the size of a bowling ball," Smith said.

Tragedy struck again in May 1992 when Chiquita "Chickie" Hood, a Southern Baptist working with Global Partners, died in a traffic accident outside Diyarbakir, Turkey. A minibus struck her taxicab, also killing its driver.

--more--

Diyarbakir, an ancient walled city atop a hill, is the travel point for personnel headed to Zakho. Workers fly into Diyarbakir and then make a four-hour trip by car to Zakho. The winding, two-lane road through rugged New Mexico-like terrain often bustles dangerously with a variety of vehicles, farm tractors, loose livestock and pedestrians.

Other dangers are harder to see. Contaminated water, diseases and other medical problems are common. Workers must chlorinate drinking water when they are away from their home base in Zakho.

Simple stress from living in such a pressure cooker environment also creates problems. Smith talks of the "intensity of the work" in which one must stay fully alert for conditions which can change rapidly without warning.

Other than swapping video movies with other workers in town, there's no recreation here. Television is limited to an abbreviated program in Kurdish. "Everybody takes off Friday, but what can you do for recreation? You can't fish or ski or swim because of land mines," Smith said.

But Smith and other relief workers still believe they're within acceptable safety limits -- and that they're making a difference in the Kurds' lives.

That's why they're there, and "Chickie" Hood symbolizes their efforts. The 29-year-old nurse from Birmingham, Ala., had worked for Global Partners only eight months when she died.

But her selfless devotion left a lasting impression with a people who had felt they had no friends.

Today in Zakho, photos of her hang in hundreds of Kurdish homes -- often inscribed: "Martyr for the Kurdish people."

--30--

Brotherhood, BWA team up
for international training

By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
2/9/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and the Baptist World Alliance men's department are teaming for international Baptist Men's and Baptist Young Men's training May 27-30 at the Baptist World Center in Nashville.

Hosted by the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., of Nashville, the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men will include Baptist Men's University, the Brotherhood Commission's triennial training event for adult division programs.

"This is a new approach for us," said W.J. Isbell Jr., BWA men's department director. "By combining these meetings, Baptist Men and Baptist Young Men from around the world will have the benefit of training in the Southern Baptist program while the Southern Baptist participants learn about international men's work.

"We've designed the meetings to be mutually beneficial to both BWA and the SBC while offering participants the maximum amount of training," he added.

Featured BWA speakers will include:

- E.V. Hill, pastor of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles.
- Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary.
- Theodore J. Jemison, president National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
- J. Rea Grant, secretary, Baptist Union of Ireland.
- Jack Stanton, an evangelist from Bolivar, Mo., who directs lay evangelism for the BWA men's department.

-- Jerry Clower, Christian comedian and Baptist layman from Yazoo City, Miss.

The BWA conference will include a 12-hour management course for business and professional Baptist leaders. Fred Roach of Dallas and James Williams of Memphis, Tenn., will lead these sessions.

Roach is a retired chief executive officer of Centennial Homes, a division of Weyerhaeuser. He now directs the leadership training division of the Baylor hospital system and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

--more--

Williams is president of the Brotherhood Commission, the missions education agency for men and boys in Southern Baptist churches. Before joining the Brotherhood Commission in September 1991, he was executive vice president at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. Before his tenure at the BSSB, he taught church administration for 22 years at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

The BWA conference will target any Baptist whose vocation requires working and managing people.

Baptist Men's University will include how to develop disaster relief response teams, train men's leaders, start and strengthen local units and conduct missions projects. Other areas of study include the biblical basis for missions, moral ethics in business and preparation and involvement in lay evangelism.

Registration for Baptist Men's University is \$100. The fee includes access to all BWA conferences and training materials for Baptist Men's University. Registration for just the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men is \$75. Both fees include meals; lodging is separate.

For more information or to register for Baptist Men's University write: Baptist Men's University, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104. For more information or to register for the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men write: BWA Men's Department, Conference Registration, 2300 Quail Dr., SE, Bessemer, AL 35023.

HOUSE MAIL



BAPTIST PRESS

901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

So. Baptist Library & Archives
901 Commerce
Nashville, TN 37203

HOUSE MAIL