

(BP)

-- BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8919
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Martin King, 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) 821-5232
NASHVILLE 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

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee
93-122

July 27, 1993

NASHVILLE -- Bennett gets good report after prostate surgery.
WASHINGTON -- Elders appears headed for Senate confirmation.
ATLANTA -- Atlanta's First Baptist cautious after property buyer's bankruptcy.
NASHVILLE -- (BP) Brites.
NASHVILLE -- Correction.

**Bennett gets good report
after prostate surgery**

**Baptist Press
7/27/93**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Harold C. Bennett, president emeritus of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, has received "good news" after prostate cancer surgery July 27, according to his wife, Phyllis.

No cancer was found beyond the cancerous prostate that was removed, Mrs. Bennett said. Nashville urologist John Warner performed the surgery.

Bennett is expected to remain in Nashville's Baptist Hospital five days.

"We hope to get down to see our children later this fall," she said, referring to their daughter, Cynthia, and her husband, Paul Howard, Southern Baptist missionaries to Swaziland, Africa. The cancer forced the Bennetts to cancel a trip they had planned to make there recently.

"We are grateful for the prayers of so many people," Mrs. Bennett said. "We could feel the prayer and know that it helped us through."

--30--

**Elders appears headed
for Senate confirmation**

By Tom Strode

**Baptist Press
7/27/93**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Controversial Surgeon General-designate Joycelyn Elders appeared headed for confirmation after facing tough questioning from only one senator during her confirmation hearing.

The Senate Labor and Human Resources is expected to vote July 30 on Elders, whose views on abortion and sexuality have produced opposition from some religious and conservative organizations. Action by the full Senate probably will occur the first week of August.

While not retreating from her support of abortion rights, Medicaid funding of abortion, sex education and condom distribution in public schools, Elders seemed to temper some of her previous comments. She also contended some of her statements had been taken out of context or she had been misquoted.

"You know, when those statements are just statements out there, out of a context of a whole speech," Elders said, "... the flavoring becomes very different."

Elders, director of the Arkansas Department of Health since 1987 until resigning the weekend before the hearing, was responding to a few of her own quotations, such as:

--more--

-- Abortion opponents need to "get over their love affair with the fetus."
-- "We taught them what to do in the front seat (of a car). Now it's time to teach them what to do in the back seat."

Such statements, as well as her public health positions, have resulted in opposition to her confirmation from several groups, including the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Concerned Women for America, Family Research Council, Christian Coalition and American Family Association.

"Dr. Elders epitomizes everything that is wrong with federal public policy on abortion and sex education," said James A. Smith, the Christian Life Commission's director of government relations. "She is an evangelist for abortion and the so-called safe-sex policy which has been such a miserable failure. As such, she will be an aggressive advocate for federally funded, school-based health clinics, which will give away contraceptives and abortion referrals."

Elders said she supports teaching abstinence and does not focus on abortion as the prime solution.

If "you can't be abstinent, I want you to be responsible," she said. "If it happens, certainly use a condom. Don't go and take the risk of AIDS or a sexually transmitted disease or a pregnancy.

"I've never been about abortion. I'm about preventing unplanned pregnancies. I think we know if we could prevent the pregnancies, then abortion, as such, would become a non-issue."

Sen. Dan Coats, R.-Ind., who grilled her extensively on financial and public health issues in his two rounds of questioning, said he was pleased to hear her affirmation of abstinence but all the emphasis he had heard from her previously had been on "condoms as the primary preventive."

That "discourages some of us for a couple of reasons," Coats said. "One, I think it totally avoids the moral question.

"Secondly, we know that condoms are not fail-safe, and we know that sexually transmitted diseases can pass through condoms."

The average failure rate of condoms is 15.7 percent in regards to pregnancy, according to figures from the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, a statistic which Coats noted.

The "last thing we want to do is leave a message that all you've got to do is use condoms and you're safe," Coats said. "You may be safer, but you're not safe.

"And I think an awful lot of young people in our society today think that the solution to AIDS, STDs, pregnancy ... is condoms."

While she agreed only abstinence is failure-proof, Elders said she feels "we have to protect, and we use the best resources we've got."

"And I want you to know that given a choice between a young woman coming in saying that 'I'm pregnant' and whether or not they use contraceptives, most mothers I know would get up at midnight and go out and buy them for their children themselves," Elders said.

Coats told her she would have "an opportunity to exert moral leadership."

"So I hope you're eloquent on the subject of abstinence, knowing that is a message not everyone is going to heed, but maybe some will," he said. "And maybe some of those who will avoid the tragic consequences that come from even failure of preventive measures."

While financial questions about Elders seemed to be answered at the hearing, Coats pressed her on the Arkansas Department of Health's failure to warn recipients of potentially defective condoms in 1992. The condom supplier recalled the condoms after department complaints and threats of seizure by the Food and Drug Administration. FDA tests showed the condoms had a defective rate 10 times greater than the agency's limit.

Elders and her senior staff decided not to issue a public warning about the condoms already distributed for the "greater public good."

"It may have been the wrong decision, but that was the decision. ... we felt that really creating a major scare over the whole state would make everybody afraid of the condoms and not use the condoms of the health department," Elders said.

Elders told Coats she still believes it was the right decision.

"Dr. Elders gave no ground during the hearings, even over her extraordinarily irresponsible decision to not recall the defective condoms," the CLC's Smith said. "Even more disturbing was her unwillingness to retract her three-year-old statement regarding the so-called beneficial public policy aspects of abortion on the number of Down's syndrome children born."

In 1990 testimony before the same committee on the Freedom of Choice Act, Elders said abortion had an "important, and positive, public health effect." She cited a 64 percent decrease in births of Down's syndrome children in 1976 in the state of Washington to support her assertion.

When asked by Coats if she believed Down's syndrome children are not as worthy of life, Elders said she did not, but she did not apologize for her comment.

In addition to three congressional Democrats who presented Elders to the committee, Sen. Mark Hatfield, R.-Ore., also did so. Hatfield, a Southern Baptist, said the surgeon general nominee and he did not agree on abortion but they did agree on seeking to eliminate abortion through prevention and education.

--30--

Atlanta's First Baptist cautious
after property buyer's bankruptcy

Baptist Press
7/27/93

By James E. Dotson

ATLANTA (BP)--The sale of the downtown property of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, part of plans for the church's relocation to a north Atlanta suburb, appears still on track despite the buyer's recent bankruptcy.

On July 5, Lars Gullstedt, the Swedish developer buying the property through the limited partnership GLG Limited, was declared bankrupt by Swedish courts, according to George Morgan, the church's administrator. But Morgan said that as of July 20, the buyers had informed the church U.S. assets of the corporation should not be affected by the bankruptcy and plans for the purchase and development of the site have not changed.

Morgan said the church is "moving forward with cautious optimism," accepting assurances the sale will be completed but preparing for the possibility the property would have to go back on the market. Morgan said other potential buyers have expressed interest in the property since news of the bankruptcy was announced.

"We are optimistic, but still cautious to maintain a position that we could recover from," he said.

First Baptist sold the 14 acres of property to GLG in 1990 for a reported \$43.5 million under an arrangement that allowed them to continue to occupy the property until 10 months after the final payment, due in April 1994. Under that arrangement, the church would move to its new facility being developed in the north Atlanta suburb of Dunwoody by early 1995. Plans for the new property include a 7,000-seat sanctuary, the largest in Georgia.

--30--

(BP) Brites
Compiled by Art Toalston

Baptist Press
7/27/93

Nurse, preemie reunited in Brazil

RECIFE, Brazil (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Tracy Beedy in Brazil was visiting in the home of fellow missionaries Clifford and Peggy Dane last year. Beedy mentioned she was born in Plainview, Texas, and the Danes noted they had lived in the city as newlyweds. The more they talked, the more they discovered a key link in their past: Beedy was born as a tiny premature baby in December 1959 -- and Mrs. Dane was among the nurses in the same hospital's newborn nursery who gave round-the-clock care for several weeks to the infant they called "Ity Bity Beedy Baby." Nurse and infant are now Southern Baptist colleagues in north Brazil.

--more--

Opportunities keep him at the drugstore

NEWELLTON, La. (BP)--Several years ago Ed Britt was wondering and praying whether he should follow in his father's footsteps and become a Baptist minister. The Newellton, La., pharmacist believes he got an answer: "It hit me that I had a better opportunity to witness and to minister to people for Christ than just about any preacher in Tensas Parish. Nobody in Tensas sees as many people as I do in a month's time, so nobody has as many opportunities to work for God as I do. I realized at that moment that I didn't have to go anywhere else to do God's will in my life."

Miss Arkansas prays to keep the fizz

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--The Christian life should be better than a soft drink, says Shannon Boy, Miss Arkansas for 1992-93 and a Baptist church member. She explains: "We go to church on Sundays and we get all fired up about God in our lives but as the days go by the fizz dies down. If we are constantly clinging to the Word of God, we can constantly keep that spiritual fervor The fizz will always remain constant. Every morning as I wake up and every night as I go to bed, I ask the Lord to give me the strength to keep my spiritual fervor alive so I can lead people to him ... and make a difference."

Quilts are her ministry to troubled girls

BURRVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When a troubled, abused or neglected girl enters the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home unit in Morgan County, Tenn., she receives a handcrafted quilt as a housewarming gift, the work of Nella Kring, 73. "The Lord inspired me to do this," Kring says. "All I can do is quilt. I can't even drive a car. I'm just working for the Lord and I don't want any praise. Those children are precious. They're down on their luck and I want them to know someone cares." For the girls, houseparent Abbie Rogers says, the quilts "are sometimes the only thing that is uniquely theirs. They keep these quilts forever."

Boomers, busters can believe, Lewis says

ATLANTA (BP)--Despite what is often said about how resistant to the gospel "baby boomers" and "baby busters" are today, Larry Lewis says he believes the time has never been better for spiritual awakening.

"I hear it all the time: You can't reach people like you see today," says Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "Well, just mark it down, it's a lie from the devil! People are the same the world around, and they are longing for something more than the broken cisterns of this world can ever offer."

He advises the dying to plan their funeral

DALLAS (BP)--People facing terminal illness should make their own funeral plans, advises Joe Gross, director of pastoral care and counseling at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. "Let your loved ones and friends know who and what you want included in your memorial service," Gross says. "Recently a Christian woman who was known for her great sense of humor died following a long illness. Her instructions to her pastor were: 'If you don't make them laugh at least seven times during the service, you have not done your job!'" Her memorial service, Gross recounts, became "an authentic testimony to her joy in life and to her belief that heaven was now her home."

CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Volunteers en route home killed in van accident," dated 7/23/93, please change the date in the third paragraph to July 17-23, not April as written.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

HOUSE MAIL



BAPTIST PRESS

901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

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

HOUSE MAIL