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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
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September 24, 1993

- ATLANTA -- Lost population estimates not new, HMB researcher says.
- ALABAMA -- WMU to distribute prayer guide for CBF.
- NASHVILLE -- Moderates issue 'call' to state conventions.
- KENTUCKY -- Billy Graham to address Mohler inaugural worship.
- GERMANY -- German youth symbol changed because of right-wing misuses.
- NEW MEXICO -- New Mexico's J.B. Fowler to retire from state paper.
- MISSOURI -- Prof believes peace agreement won't last in the Middle East.
- MISSOURI -- National strategies planned for bivocational ministers.
- NASHVILLE -- Addition; photos.
- NASHVILLE -- Correction.

EDITORS' NOTE: The following story can be used in tandem with (BP) story titled "Newspaper's spin kindles discussion of 'Who's saved?'" dated 9/21/93.

Lost population estimates not new, HMB researcher says **Baptist Press**
9/24/93
By David Winfrey

ATLANTA (BP)--If 82 percent of Americans are Christians, how can more than half the country be lost?

An Alabama newspaper story on Southern Baptist estimates of America's lost population has generated negative reactions across the country. But such estimates have existed for years, says Phillip Jones, director of the Home Mission Board's research department.

"Gallup's been asking some sort of religious questions back into the '30s," says Jones, whose department produced the evangelism index used to help HMB staff decide where best to allocate resources.

Jones notes the index was never meant to be taken literally.

"We never were arrogant enough to think these were accurate figures," he says. "This is not a survey; all we did was re-crunch some numbers."

Nationwide, studies and polls on religious preference have produced a variety of results, but "it's just a difference in the way the question's asked," Jones says.

Gallup's Princeton Religious Research Center released figures earlier this year stating 82 percent of Americans responding claimed to have a Christian religious preference.

Some differences may result from respondents' definition of Christian, says Alison Gallup, managing director of the Princeton center.

Gallup found 76 percent agreed with the statement, "The only assurance of eternal life is personal faith in Jesus Christ." But 38 percent of the adults asked identified themselves as "born-again Christians."

"Seventy-four percent say they made a commitment to Jesus Christ, which we don't understand either," Gallup says. "Commitment can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people."

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Such terms as "evangelicals" and "born again" may not be appealing to all Christians, she adds. "I think that turns people off who don't want to identify themselves as such."

The Barna Research Group's annual survey of religious views states 40 percent of adults are "born-again" Christians. They identified that group as having made a commitment to Jesus Christ that was still important in their lives and believed they would go to heaven because they confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as Savior.

The Princeton center went a step further by identifying 10 percent of Americans as "highly spiritually committed," Gallup says. To qualify, respondents had to agree with 13 statements ranging from "I believe that Jesus Christ was fully human and fully divine" to "I do things I don't want to do because I believe it is the will of God."

Such people were among the happiest, most charitable and most likely to live according to their faith, Gallup says.

Aside from personal decisions, some polls attempt to gauge the overall impression of religion in America.

"Fifty-nine percent say religion can still answer all or most of today's problems," Gallup says. Meanwhile, an increasing number, currently 55 percent, feel it's losing its influence on American life, she says.

Jones says his studies of religious preference convinced him that people who aren't active in church still had a respect and openness for the church. "It just may be, though, that they don't see enough value, for whatever reason, to participate."

Other responses to religious surveys, with their source, follow. -- Agreed at least somewhat with the statement "the whole idea of sin is outdated": 20 percent (Barna).

-- Said they think there is a hell: 60 percent (Gallup).

-- Of those who said hell exists, those who said their prospects for going to hell are excellent to fair: 19 percent (Gallup).

-- Agreed with the statement "there are few moral absolutes": 69 percent (Gallup).

-- Said they have a favorable opinion of the "Baptist Church": 65 percent. Unfavorable: 15 percent. Didn't know: 20 percent (Barna).

-- Said they completely follow all Ten Commandments: 6 percent. Said they completely keep the commandment against lying: 48 percent. Said they completely keep the commandment against murder: 93 percent (Barna).

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WMU to distribute
prayer book for CBF

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
9/24/93

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union has announced details of an agreement made with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to distribute a customized edition of the book "Operation World."

"Operation World," written by Patrick Johnstone and published by Zondervan Publishing House, is being revised and reprinted. The CBF has arranged with Zondervan to print a customized version of the book. "Operation World" is a day-by-day prayer guide focusing on the entire world.

WMU has agreed to take orders for and distribute the customized copies of the book for CBF. WMU will keep the revenue generated from the sales of the book to cover the costs of order processing and distribution.

Promotion of the book will be handled by CBF. WMU will not promote the book through any WMU materials.

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The agreement with CBF falls within guidelines established by the WMU executive board last January, WMU officials said, when the board voted to allow WMU to consider requests to produce and handle missions materials for other evangelical groups. Those materials would be tailored for use by such groups and sold separately to them. The WMU, in explanatory materials accompanying the executive board action, noted WMU would not provide any financial support for the CBF or promote its offerings.

The book is scheduled to be released before the end of September.

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Moderates issue 'call'
to state conventions

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
9/24/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The battle now, they say, is in the state Baptist conventions.

A "Call to State Conventions for the Preservation of Historic Southern Baptist Work and Witness" was adopted by some 85 Baptist moderate leaders from 13 states during a Sept. 23-24 meeting in Nashville organized by Houston layman John Baugh.

State conventions "are absolutely crucial to the future of a united Baptist witness," Daniel Vestal said in presenting the proposed "call" to the group.

Baugh said the meeting was not tied to a particular moderate group such as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or Texas Baptists Committed he helped launch.

A united Baptist witness, said Vestal, pastor of Houston's Tallwood Baptist Church, would be rooted in state conventions as well as local churches -- "the real headquarters" of Baptist life -- Baptist associations, Baptist colleges and universities, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Baptist moderates, the SBC Woman's Missionary Union and "a number of heroic individuals" who continue to work through the SBC.

The "call," which underwent revision by an ad hoc committee and then the overall group, contains a preamble and five points.

The preamble states: "It is time for healing in the Southern Baptist Family. Now is the time for renewal and revival. The world desperately needs our witness. The problems of our day are too dangerous for anything less than a unified witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How can such a renewal occur?"

The five points:

1) "Let each state convention renew its commitment to historic Baptist principles, the authority of Scripture, and the priesthood of all believers, resulting in the autonomy of all Baptist bodies and the voluntary character of cooperation in missions and evangelism.

2) "Let each state convention renew its commitment to the love of Christ as the method and means of cooperative ministry."

3) "Let each state convention renew its commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom as the basis for our mission."

4) "Let each state convention renew its commitment to religious liberty, and its corollary, the separation of church and state, and avoid being used as an instrument of or promoting any secular political agenda."

5) "Let each state convention confess that there have been far too many unethical actions in Southern Baptist political movements, resolve that such actions will not be tolerated in its life and work, and renew its commitment to truth and integrity which ultimately will result in a renewal of love and trust among all Southern Baptists."

One participating pastor, Phillip E. Reynolds of Kathwood Baptist Church in Columbia, S.C., said he hopes the call will be considered on the floor of the South Carolina Baptist Convention's annual meeting Nov. 16-17 in Columbia.

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While not advocating centralized political organizations for the state conventions, Vestal said, "I do want the state conventions to be free -- free of Southern Baptist control, free of secular political control and free to pursue whatever it is that state convention wants to pursue. That's the Baptist way."

At present, Vestal said, "Frankly, the Southern Baptist Convention has become -- is -- the most significant institutional platform in this country for the religious right. And the effort will be to turn the state conventions into the same thing.

"This is not a call for a disassociation with the SBC," he said, then reminding of the autonomy of Baptist churches, associations and state conventions. But, he said, "We have fallen into a trap of making the state convention synonymous with the Southern Baptist Convention."

The church of the future, Vestal said, will not be the "Sunday School Board-Foreign Mission Board" church of the Southern Baptist Convention of the past.

"I believe that day is over," said Vestal, "Baptist churches are going to be far more diverse ... far more different."

Baugh, retired founder of Sysco Foods, in his comments said SBC conservatives have targeted state conventions, seeking "assurance of a continuance of a major flow of money to Nashville," control of speakers selected for evangelism conferences, Baptist newspapers and colleges and "arbitrary control of pension monies," which, under a "radical"-right U.S. government, someday could be opened to political manipulation.

Calling for a restoration of "Christian integrity in the leadership of our denomination," Baugh said, "If Baptists spoke only truth to and about one another, there would be no controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention."

Defining his continual use of the word "fundamentalist," Baugh said, "The spirit of fundamentalism -- wherever it's found throughout the world -- is, you will submit to my control or I will harm you."

The "first great ungodly lie," Baugh said, was told during the 1970s, that "there's not one seminary professor who believes the Bible is true."

"But we sat there and said nothing," Baugh said. "Our fellow lay people heard that and said, 'They are going to ruin the faith of my children.'" Now, Baugh said, those same children attend SBC seminaries that are increasingly hiring professors "who will corrupt their faith."

Arthur L. Walker Jr., recently retired executive-director of the SBC Education Commission, told the group Baptist colleges and universities will be "a focal point" of takeover efforts -- "every one of them" because of their role in providing educated Baptist pastors and lay leaders of the future.

Among other topics during the two-day meeting, the group discussed the struggle with conservatives in filling vacant pastorates in state conventions and various ways of learning which churches are vacant, helping ministers prepare effective resumes and prepare to handle inerrancy-related questions that may be posed by some pulpit committee members.

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Billy Graham to address
Mohler inaugural worship

Baptist Press
9/24/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The inauguration of R. Albert Mohler Jr. as president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will feature messages by evangelist Billy Graham and Southern Baptist Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

Graham will speak at a community worship service Oct. 14 hosted by the Louisville, Ky., seminary in celebration of Mohler's inauguration. Due to the anticipated large crowd, the event has been moved off campus to Freedom Hall, Louisville's largest auditorium. The service also will include comments by Kentucky Gov. Brereton Jones and Tim McCoy, pastor of Ingleside Baptist Church in Macon, Ga.

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Graham is no stranger to Southern Seminary. The school's center for world evangelism and an endowed professorship are named in his honor. The seminary's Billy Graham Room houses documents and photographs from his early evangelistic crusades.

In addition to the community worship service, a service of inauguration will be held in the seminary's Alumni Chapel the following day which will include a charge by Chapman. Others delivering charges will be Larry Adams of Oklahoma City, a member of the seminary's board of trustees; J. Howard Cobble of Elizabethtown, Ky., president of the seminary's national Alumni Association; Timothy George, dean of the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.; and James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church in Snellville, Ga.

A resolution from the faculty will be read by Diana Garland, dean of the seminary's Carver School of Church Social Work, and a resolution from the student body will be read by Tommy Fitzgerald, president of the Student Government Association.

Since seating is limited, attendance at the service on campus is by invitation only. However, the event is being cablecast live in the Louisville area and will be shown via closed-circuit TV in several areas of the campus.

Mohler began duties as president of Southern Seminary Aug. 1. Previously, he was editor of The Christian Index, newsjournal for the Georgia Baptist Convention.

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German youth symbol changed
because of right-wing misuse

By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
9/24/93

HAMBURG, Germany (BP)--After using its logo for 38 years, the German Baptist youth department of the Evangelical Free Churches in Germany changed the logo of its junior youth group, because of its misuse by right-wing neo-Nazi groups.

The old symbol had a circle and a Celtic cross meant to illustrate the power of Jesus Christ over the world.

"It was purely by chance that our symbol, independently created in 1955, resembled the old Germanic and Celtic crosses which were used by the Nazis in the Third Reich," said Kay Moritz, director of the "Jungschararbeit," the section of the German Baptist youth department which serves more than 5,000 young people, ages 8-14. It is estimated 70 percent of more than 6,500 skinheads, the most extreme of the neo-Nazi youth, are under 20.

"Now these neo-Nazi, right-wing groups that have sprung up again are using this cross as their symbol," said Moritz, "and we changed our logo to avoid any mistake or confusion and to disassociate ourselves from these groups."

Moritz said Baptist young people and workers are often mistaken for these right-wing Neo-Nazis while they are hiking or are on excursions.

"We strictly reject slogans or actions that are hostile to foreigners," Moritz said. "Members of our groups are foreigners as well as Germans; therefore we wanted to more clearly define our logo."

The new logo shows the cross on a globe inside a circle.

According to Moritz: The circle represents the earth and humankind. The cross represents the death of Jesus Christ to save humankind. Without Jesus Christ, people are lost and remain full of conflict and sin. With Jesus Christ, man is saved, thus the cross is placed on the globe. The symbol of the cross also signifies Jesus Christ as Lord of heaven and earth.

Last September, the youth department spoke out against the firebombing of houses of foreigners in the Baltic seaport of Rostock by neo-Nazi youths and the anti-foreigner sentiment that seemed to sweep over Germany.

The German Baptist Union also condemned the attacks against foreigners and the rise of neo-Nazis and urged their churches to speak out on the issue in their worship services.

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The German Baptists also called on their government to continue to take in foreigners in need and to work to find a socially acceptable solution to their refugee problems.

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New Mexico's J.B. Fowler
to retire from state paper

Baptist Press
9/24/93

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--J.B. Fowler Jr., editor of the Baptist New Mexican for 13 years, will retire effective Jan. 31, 1994.

Fowler, 63, said he will take early retirement with plans to move to San Antonio, Texas. With accrued vacation time, Fowler actually will leave the editorship in mid-December.

The announcement came in the Sept. 25 issue of the New Mexican although Fowler said he had been thinking about it for some time.

"Everything here is fine," Fowler told Baptist Press, "and it's the right time. I feel this is what the Lord wants me to do.

"I have enjoyed working with New Mexico Baptists and have appreciated their support as state editor. I have also enjoyed my relationship with Baptist Press and fellow state editors," Fowler said.

Fowler is a native of Pawhuska, Okla., and has called Odessa, Texas, his home. Prior to assuming his current post in January 1981, Fowler was pastor of churches in McComb, Miss.; and Lubbock, Ballinger, Van and Moran, all in Texas.

He has had extensive denominational service, including as president of the Southern Baptist Press Association (state editors); a trustee of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss., and Hendrick Memorial Hospital in Abilene, Texas; and member of the Baptist General Convention of Texas executive board. He was honored by the 1979 SBC for an "Award Winning Sermon" which was also published in a book of award-winning sermons.

Fowler holds bachelor of arts and doctor of divinity degrees from Howard Payne and a master of divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He is married to the former Wanda Orrick from San Antonio. The couple has two sons: Bruce of San Antonio and David of Dallas.

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Prof believes peace agreement
won't last in the Middle East By Tamara Heitz-Peek

Baptist Press
9/24/93

BOLIVAR, Mo. (BP)--"World enthusiasm for the recently signed peace treaty between Israel and Yassir Arafat is understandable but ill-founded," says Jacquelin Matejka, assistant professor of political science at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

Jerusalem is the most intractable issues, noted Matejka, longtime Middle East observer who wrote on the subject for her doctoral dissertation in 1983.

"Neither Israel nor Muslim nations are willing to accept anything less than control of this most important religious city in the world," she said. "Where religion is involved, accommodation is impossible. One does not compromise one's faith."

Many Palestinians who support the treaty, Matejka said, believe it is merely the first step to political control of all Palestine: If Israel cannot be defeated on the battlefield, it can be nibbled to death. First Jericho and Gaza, then Golan Heights, then the remainder of the West Bank. Finally, Jerusalem.

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"There are many fine Palestinians and many fine Israelis who want peace in the Middle East," she said. "History warns us, however, that when two factions war over the same land, and outside nations partition the territory between them, the fighting does not end. The strategy did not work in Korea, nor in Vietnam. Indeed, it did not work when Palestine was first partitioned between Israel and the Arabs in 1948."

Another reason Matejka said peace will not ensue is that Yassir Arafat does not speak for the entire Palestinian Liberation Organization. He heads one of several factions. "George Habash, leader of another faction, has stated he will kill Arafat if the latter accepts the treaty. Clearly, other factions within the PLO will continue the struggle."

Matejka said a corollary fact is that leadership in the Arab world is based on the leader's charisma and the benefits he can obtain for his followers. If he loses their confidence, they will simply desert him for another leader. Much of Arafat's following will likely drift to more militant factions, she predicted.

"Arafat agreed to the treaty because the PLO was discredited in the wake of the Gulf War. By supporting Iraq against other Arab nations in the Gulf region, Arafat lost their long-standing financial contributions," Matejka explained.

"Arafat had little choice. He could not provide for his followers. With his influence on the wane, he needed to take some action which would restore his prestige and, not incidentally, reactivate financial support."

Matejka further explained Israel is banking on the fact that long ago the Arab League recognized the PLO as official spokesman for Palestinians. By signing the treaty, Israel pressures the nations of the Arab League to reign in other factions within the PLO, she said.

"Whether one thinks of the PLO as terrorists or freedom fighters, the fact remains that the men in these groups have grown up knowing nothing else to do with their lives except fight," Matejka said. "They have had little access to education or development of specialized work skills. What can they do if peace comes? How many will be able to adjust to peace, or will even want to do so?"

Another reason not to celebrate too soon, according to Matejka, is the reality that even if all the PLO felt bound by the treaty, this agreement in no way curbs the other militant organizations in the area, such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood. It is these groups rather than the PLO which have been most active in Israel over the past few years, she said. Supported largely by Iran, except for Brotherhood, there is no reason to believe they will cease their activities, she said.

"Governments make treaties, but unless the affected people within the borders accept the compromises, and that seldom happens, then the only people who believe they have accomplished anything are the diplomats."

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National strategies planned
for bivocational ministers

By Brenda J. Sanders

Baptist Press
9/24/93

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Many residents of Kansas City, Mo., recognize the resonant voice of broadcaster Dan Hurst. As many commuters drive to work each day, they listen to his morning show for radio station KMXV 93-FM.

But the congregation of Oakwood Baptist Church in Kansas City knows his voice for a very different reason -- Hurst is their associate pastor and music minister.

Strongly committed to bivocational ministry as a viable calling for God's people, Hurst was in attendance at a recent meeting of the National Task Force on Training Intentional Bivocational Ministers.

"It's inspirational to know that there are forces in the Southern Baptist Convention who recognize the value of bivocational ministry," Hurst said. "I'm encouraged that there's a sense that bivocational ministers are legitimately called to their ministries and are not second-rate ministers."

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Nineteen people attended the task force meeting on the campus of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to hammer out strategies for encouraging the development of resources and continuous training opportunities for bivocational ministers. Participants included staff members from national SBC offices; state convention representatives from Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, Texas and North Carolina; Missouri associational directors of missions; and representatives from institutions of higher education in Missouri and Texas.

Heading the task force was Dale Holloway, national program consultant on bivocational ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He said the meeting accomplished several goals, including:

- identifying schools that have a strong interest in properly preparing bivocational ministry students. In Missouri, such interest already has been expressed by Midwestern Seminary; Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal; Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis; Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar; and William Jewell College in Liberty. Task force members also said they hope to tap into support from Baptist Student Unions at the various college and university campuses across the state.

- exploring means of providing college and seminary students with individual career guidance that will focus on past experience, aptitude and interest in marketable skills that will serve as an enabler for ministry.

- discussing college and seminary courses that could be provided specifically for bivocational pastors and church planters.

- identifying ways to inform, involve and inspire students who are considering dual-career ministries.

Primarily a brainstorming session, the meeting pointed out the need to "get students' attention early to prepare them and show them how exciting and fulfilling bivocational ministry can be," Holloway said. "Right now, we don't have an institution that has a bivocational curriculum. If we don't prepare 'bivos' early, they won't think about it until they graduate and leave seminary and are under pressure to find a church."

Holloway noted that annually, about 1,000 seminary graduates do not connect with a ministry position, yet there are 37,000 ministry needs that go unmet each year.

"It's obviously not a matter of too many ministers and too few churches," Holloway said. "The problem is that much of our ministry training is for positions that are not out there. Not everyone is going to become pastor of the First Baptist Church in a county seat town. More than half of our (seminary) students find their first ministry in churches with less than 63 in Sunday school attendance. It's time we got real about our ministry training and matched needs with training."

Task force member Mike Dennis, Missouri Baptist Convention missions department associate for small church and bivocational ministries, said, "Today, we heard some tremendous ideas, as far as emphasizing bivocational ministries in Missouri and throughout the convention. In addition to helping students understand what bivocational ministry is and that it's a viable call, we need to develop materials for pulpit committees to explain how they can seek and call an intentional bivocational minister.

"Our churches need to see the advantages of this ministry," Dennis continued. "A bivocational pastor is in the field contacting lost colleagues every day."

The task force also laid the foundation for a council on bivocational ministry at Midwestern Seminary. The council will explore ways the institution can better prepare intentional bivocational ministers. A special on-campus emphasis on bivocational ministry is planned for February 1994.

Further consideration will be given to the training of bivocational ministers at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers' Association, Dec. 9-11 at Boyce Bible School in Louisville, Ky.

EDITORS' NOTE: The Richmond bureau of Baptist Press will mail two photos (one vertical, one horizontal) to accompany (BP) story titled "Religious liberty limits die with Russian Parliament," dated 9/23/93.

CORRECTION: In the (BP) story "Oklahoma Baptist staffer resigns after funds audit," dated 9/23/93," in the second paragraph, add these words to the first sentence: ... who resigned May 26.

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