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**Southern Baptist couple  
murdered in Russia**

**Baptist Press  
4/29/95**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A Southern Baptist physician and his wife have been murdered in Khabarovsk, Russia, where they have worked on medical projects since 1993.

Local police found the bodies of Chu Hon Yi and his wife, Kei Wol, March 28 after entering the couples' apartment at the request of a concerned friend who hadn't seen them for several days.

Yi had sustained several blows to his head. Mrs. Yi had been strangled. There were no signs of forced entry, and the apartment's front door was locked when police arrived. Police estimate the deaths occurred March 23.

Police have launched a murder investigation but so far have released few details. They have not speculated on a motive.

Yi, a retired cardiologist from Virginia Beach, Va., had worked with his wife, a registered nurse, at Khabarovsk Medical Institute. He practiced medicine and taught medical personnel there, working through Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization. Khabarovsk is located in the Pacific coast region of eastern Russia on the Amur River.

Yi, 60, and Mrs. Yi, 59, were longtime members of the Tidewater Korean Baptist Church in Virginia Beach. They helped start the church; he was a deacon and led the building program for its current sanctuary.

"He was the model of what a person should be as a Christian leader. Both he and his wife expressed that same spirit," said Johnny Farmer, English minister at the church. "They were so conscientious about how they conducted their business affairs. Their integrity was impeccable.

"It's rattled the congregation," he added. "We're in shock, to say the least. It's a tragedy, but out of tragedy comes hope."

The Yis were planning to return for the church's 10th anniversary celebration in September. "We had a very close relationship with them," said Ji Duk Dho, the church's pastor.

Family members of the Yis, who live in South Korea and the United States, are arranging for the bodies to be returned to Virginia. A memorial service will be held at the church. Details of the service are incomplete.

**Begaye begins leadership  
in ethnic church starting**

By David Winfrey

ATLANTA (BP)--While a student at the University of California at Los Angeles, the Home Mission Board's new director of language church extension helped take over more buildings than a mortgage banker at month's end.

From courthouses to city halls, Russell Begaye led students to stage sit-ins and demonstrations protesting the treatment of Native Americans and violations of Indian treaties.

Begaye, a full-blooded Navajo, says God took away the bitterness from those days, but the experiences prepared him for another grass-roots movement -- this time to impact the kingdom of God.

In January, Begaye assumed responsibility for the Home Mission Board's language church starting division -- the agency's largest department in terms of both budget and number of missionaries.

Begaye, 42, says such groups as the American Indian Movement taught him funding or titles of authority were not necessary to motivate people to action.

"It was based on your ability to prove to people that what they were about to do was right," he says. Such knowledge can motivate people to do things despite the cost, he adds. "People knew when we took over a building they were going to be put in jail."

Now he says he can use the power of the gospel to inspire laity to share their faith, organize missions activities and start churches.

Begaye promotes giving every Southern Baptist ethnic an opportunity to minister. "I believe every person who is saved can lead another person to the Lord."

Greater laity involvement was one of four priorities Begaye told state church starting leaders in February he plans to emphasize. The three other priorities are:

-- developing a new generation of leadership. Southern Baptists reach many first-generation ethnics who move to America but are less successful reaching their American-born children, he says.

"If you were to look at our pastors and ethnic church personnel, the majority of them are born outside the country," he says.

Among American Indians, "we have a lot of older pastors across the nation," he says. "A lot of our Indian pastors are in their 60s."

He credits summer missions and other youth-oriented programs for developing potential leaders and giving them a vision for a lifetime of Christian service.

-- empowering local congregations to develop missions strategies.

Begaye says too much planning is being done on the national level and handed down to the churches. "We should turn that around and let the local people dictate the strategy."

He describes using association meetings for planning and brainstorming. "The system's already in place. It's just that we've not used the system to develop strategy," he says. "We've used the system to tell the people what to do and how to do things."

-- helping ethnics reach their families back home.

"Southern Baptist ethnics in this country are doing what any of us would do," Begaye says. "They're going back to their country of origin to share the gospel."

Begaye says he hopes to work with the Foreign Mission Board to coordinate mission work for ethnics returning to their home countries. Often they can witness and start churches in countries Southern Baptist missionaries cannot enter, he says.

"If we do not work with them, they will do the ministry on their own," through para-church groups or other denominations, he warns.

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Begaye readily acknowledges the thing he craves most is something he can't completely control. "The greatest challenge is to see spiritual awakening occur among all ethnics in this nation," he says. "It's going to affect our whole denomination when spiritual awakening occurs."

Like his predecessor, Oscar Romo, Begaye stresses the importance of breaking down as many cultural barriers to the gospel as possible.

"The gospel has successfully been put in the language of the people, but I don't think it's been successfully placed in the culture of the people," he says. "You can tell the difference."

Such things as worship structure, discipleship and literature presentation also must be adjusted to the perspective of the culture trying to be reached, he says.

"I remember when we used to get tracts in the Navajo language," he adds. "As I read the tract, I could still hear the voice of the Anglo that wrote that tract in his culture. I did not hear the Navajo."

As only the second head of the board's language church extension division, Begaye credits his predecessor with helping pave the road for ethnic work in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"When I go to the people within the denomination and talk about ethnics, they know it's there," he says. "That will make my work easier."

Southern Baptists now worship in 107 ethnic languages and in 97 Native American nations. Nearly 500 new language congregations are started each year, and Southern Baptists have become the largest ethnic denomination in the world.

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(BP) photos (horizontal) of Begaye mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press. Cutlines are in SBCNet News Room.

#### FIRST-PERSON

Medicine man's son finds  
God's love, forgiveness

By Russell Begaye

Baptist Press  
3/29/95

ATLANTA (BP)--I was born and raised on the Navajo reservation located in the southwestern United States. My father was a medicine man and my mother a medicine woman.

In my early years I attended the ceremonies and participated in the rituals, including the "Fire Dance" -- an elaborate ceremony that qualified me to perform rituals and is a prerequisite to becoming a medicine man.

Being raised in the home of a medicine man, Christianity was a foreign religion. Participating in the "white man's religion" was a taboo, and my father punished any family member who violated the taboo.

When I was 11, my father suffered total paralysis. His body was carried from ceremonies to ceremonies. Many prayers and sacrifices were offered to the multitude of gods to no avail. In desperation our family turned to the "God of the white man."

My mother remembered this missionary who used to come and talk about his God. She said, "Let's go see this white man's God." We attended First Baptist Church of Shiprock, N.M., which the Home Mission Board helped build and support.

In that church, the gospel was presented in the Navajo language. Mom converted there and prayed to the God of the white man to heal my father.

God did heal my father so he was able to walk and talk again. A month later we were sitting in church. I was sitting behind my father when he received the Lord as Savior. At the invitation song, he walked to the front and knelt to receive the Lord. Here was a man who persecuted his children and ran off missionaries. Now, he was receiving this same Jesus.

A month later I received the Lord. At age 15 I responded to God's call to be a missionary, and I ministered alongside my family and missionaries.

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In 1970, however, I left the sprawling reservation and enrolled at UCLA in a pre-law program. I quickly discovered I was an Indian. I also learned about past and continuing injustices toward the Native Americans.

I began organizing Indian groups throughout California to fight on behalf of my people. I led demonstrations, took over public buildings, and conducted sit-ins. With each event I became more bitter. It came to the point where I began hating Anglos for just being white.

It was after we had taken over a courthouse in northern California that the Lord began to deal with me.

During our victory celebration I saw the person I had become. I was leading young people into a life of bitterness and hatred. Within the next two hours the Lord spoke to me about his love and forgiveness. At four o'clock in the morning I determined to give my life back to Jesus. That evening I knelt alongside my bed and cried to the Lord for forgiveness and cleansing. The next morning the love of God had so filled my life that I began to love people from every walk of life.

Now I have the opportunity to express that love to the hundreds of ethnics that now call America their home.

Our department's goal is to tell every ethnic that God gave them their language, custom and culture so people from every tongue and nation would bow at the name of Jesus.

My goal is to help share Jesus with every ethnic in this nation and provide an opportunity for every ethnic Christian to express Jesus.

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**Annuity Board issues statement  
on 'allegations of impropriety' By Toby Druin**

**Baptist Press  
4/29/95**

DALLAS (BP)--A Southern Baptist Annuity Board official has confirmed the agency has investigated "allegations of impropriety" in the purchase of new computers for the board but found it had "suffered no loss."

The statement by Thomas E. Miller, senior vice president for public relations, was made to the Baptist Standard, Texas Baptists' newsjournal, after an article appeared in a Dallas weekly newspaper

quoting a former Annuity Board employee, Tony Mlakar, that he had been terminated "for poor job performance" by the board after reporting what he considered to be "self-dealing" by a board employee in the purchase of new computers for the board.

Miller said the matter had been investigated and corrective action taken, but he said the board does not reveal corrective actions. He said no employee had been terminated for reporting any perceived impropriety, but added the board also does not discuss the nature of any separation from employment at the board.

Mlakar, who installed and maintained the board's computers, told the newspaper many of the new machines purchased in early 1993 did not work properly. He said he discovered they were not federally licensed, had no serial numbers, many components were assembled incorrectly and others lacked parts.

He told the Dallas weekly that when he began to look into the matter, he found a board employee who had recommended the purchase of the computers from a Forney, Texas, firm had business connections with the firm and was in fact purchasing computer components, assembling them and providing them for eventual delivery to the Annuity Board at a considerable profit.

Mlakar said when he blew the whistle on the employee, an internal audit supported his claims and recommended the employee be reprimanded. Instead, Mlakar said, he was terminated in July 1994 and the employee whose actions he had questioned was never reprimanded.

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The Business and Financial Plan of the Southern Baptist Convention, Article XVI, section 16, on Business Procedure states "that as a normal procedure each agency of the SBC shall refrain from entering any business transaction with a trustee or employee, or a business enterprise in which a trustee or employee has an interest . . . ."

Contacted by the Baptist Standard about the story, Miller said at first the board would have no comment on it. Later, after being told the Baptist newsjournal had received several calls about the board's handling of retirement funds in light of the newspaper story, Miller responded with the statement the board had suffered no loss because of the alleged impropriety and no employee had been terminated for reporting it.

A decision to turn over internal auditing functions to a separate firm was "not related to the incident in question," he said.

The matter was reported to the Annuity Board trustees at their fall 1994 meeting and they were given a review of the actions taken, Miller said.

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HMB's Chaney: Prayer  
vital to reaching cities

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
3/29/95

SAN JUAN, P.R. (BP)--The primarily rural Southern Baptist Convention must focus on reaching the cities during the 21st century -- an emphasis that will require much prayer, the Home Mission Board's vice president for church starting said.

Speaking recently to church starting leaders, Charles Chaney noted that in 1993, 80 percent of Americans lived in urban counties. "That's 205.7 million people in only 27 percent of the counties."

Meanwhile the location of Southern Baptist churches is reversed, he said. "Only 18,120 Southern Baptist churches (or 47 percent) were located in metropolitan counties in 1992."

Chaney recently completed a report stating Southern Baptists are not keeping up with the population growth of the metropolitan South and must work harder at penetrating new work areas.

Although the SBC constituted more than 1,800 churches between 1980 and 1993 in metropolitan counties, "Southern Baptists lost ground (in the cities) in the ratio of churches to population," he said.

The cosmopolitan makeup of the cities will require new levels of African American and ethnic leadership, Chaney said.

"We can see the day when we will have 10,000 black and ethnic congregations," he said. "If we are to reclaim our cities, ethnic and black SBC churches must become like the sand of the seas and the stars in the sky."

The cities should also be a focus for Southern Baptists because Satan's stronghold there is evident, Chaney said.

"Through worldly systems of power and authority and the perverted lusts of carnal men and women, Satan has gained a power base," he said. "Christ Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and we must continue his mission."

Prayer plays an "indispensable role" in this strategy, Chaney said. "I have never seriously involved myself in strategic spiritual warfare. Yet I am convinced that the cities of today demand just this kind of praying."

Chaney encouraged state church starting leaders to join him in five steps for using prayer more effectively in their lives and for reaching the cities:

-- Increase quality and quantity of prayer time.

-- Enlist a team of prayer warriors. Chaney said he is enlisting 100 people to pray for him. "I'm going to attempt to keep them informed, about once every two months, concerning my personal ministry, the needs of my work and my personal needs.

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-- Leaders and staff pray strategically. Chaney said he has restructured his staff meetings to allow more time for prayer.

-- Encourage strategic prayer in their churches.

-- Enlist churches with intentional prayer ministries to link up with large cities for prayer. "Let's find someone in each city to provide ongoing prayer information," he said. "Let's begin to pray for a breakthrough in our cities like we have never had before."

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EDITORS' NOTE: This story can be used as a sidebar to (BP) story titled "HMB Study: Baptists losing ground in South," dated 3/28/95.

Duke grad appointed  
to Southeastern faculty

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press  
3/29/95

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Calling David Beck a "scholar's scholar," Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson announced Beck's appointment as assistant professor of New Testament March 29.

Beck, who currently serves on Southeastern's faculty as an adjunct professor, holds a Ph.D. from Duke University, Durham, N.C., with work in the Gospel of John, and also has been in the pastorate 14 years.

Beck received high recommendations from Duke faculty even though they knew he was conservative, said Russ Bush, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty of the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary.

"His professors all knew where he stood," Bush said. "Despite the fact he was known as a conservative theologian, he nevertheless received high marks for his academic ability."

Saying Beck has a strong commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention and its theological persuasions, Bush said the professor is committed to the authority of Scripture and a very careful exegesis of the biblical text. "He really desires to lead students in learning how to interpret God's Word so they get the real meaning of the text."

Patterson said Beck's intellectual strength is complemented by the fact that he is "an accomplished pastor with a servant's heart." Beck has been pastor of Tally Ho Baptist Church, Stem, N.C., since 1994 and previously led churches in Durham, N.C.; Salamanca, N.Y.; and Linesville, Pa.

Bush noted Beck has "a good grasp of the situations students will soon be facing themselves."

Beck said his years in church work are an asset in the classroom: "I teach the New Testament with a pastor's experience, trying my best to show students how scholarly study of the New Testament has a relevance for their work in the local church."

Beck, who calls Bethel, Ohio, home, is concerned students may set aside their pursuit of God in the face of seminary demands: "As a professor, I have a responsibility to help students understand that studying the Bible for an academic class or in preparation for preaching or teaching is not a substitute for personal Bible study.

"As good and necessary as those activities are, neither replaces studying the Bible devotionally to allow God to speak to you through his Word," Beck said.

Beck, who also holds a master of divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, cited his teaching experience at Southeastern as a confirmation of his call to theological education.

"I have appreciated the fact that spiritual matters are given a high interest on this campus -- among students, faculty and the administration," Beck said. "This atmosphere at Southeastern makes it a very positive place for training people for ministry."

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Workshop can change writers  
from 'aspiring' to 'published'      By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When Carolyn Tomlin attended her first Writers Workshop at the Baptist Sunday School Board seven years ago, she was an inexperienced, unpublished, aspiring writer.

Today, she's the author of more than 1,200 articles in 115 publications, including 35 Southern Baptist products.

"Attending the Writers Workshop changed my life," said Tomlin, a kindergarten teacher and Baptist pastor's wife from Jackson, Tenn. "It gave me the background to put ideas to work. I am so excited about writing now."

Meeting editors like Charlie Warren from Home Life magazine at the workshop inspired Tomlin to develop her skills and pursue a part-time writing career. She now churns out close to 200 articles a year, often getting story ideas on long walks or while driving to work.

"I'm always looking for new markets because I love to write," she said. "I get to talk with such interesting people and travel to interesting places."

The annual workshop, scheduled July 17-20 at the Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Program Training Center in Nashville, is designed for anyone interested in sharpening basic writing skills or learning more about writing opportunities with the BSSB.

Tomlin's story is not unusual. Her praise for the Writers Workshop was recently echoed by John Bayer, a Southern Baptist missionary serving in Panama City, Panama.

"I attended the workshop while on furlough in 1993," Bayer wrote in a letter to a Baptist Sunday School Board official. "I had no concept of exactly what I was getting into, I just knew I liked to write."

At the workshop, Bayer met several BSSB editors who later gave him writing assignments and helped him on his journey as a writer. Earlier this year, he signed a three-book contract with a major Christian publishing company for a series of Christian fiction books.

"The guidelines and tips I received from the BSSB editors are invaluable," Bayer said. "The workshop has more than paid for itself many times."

Registration information can be obtained by calling the Church Program Training Center at (615) 251-2294.

Faculty members for the July workshop will include Tomlin; Bob Hastings, former editor of the Illinois Baptist, author of more than a dozen Christian books and author/narrator of "Tinyburg Tales," a weekly radio show aired on more than 60 stations in 14 states; Charles Deweese, director of Baptist Publishing, Providence House Publishers, Franklin, Tenn.; BSSB legal consultant Larry Cannon, addressing legal issues commonly faced by writers; Betty Hassler, discipleship and family development consultant for the Union Baptist Association, Houston, who will join the BSSB staff June 1 as a design editor in the adult discipleship and family development department; and other BSSB curriculum and magazine editors.

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