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VIRGINIA--Funeral set for missionary killed in South Africa.

**Foreign board provides \$254,500
for relief in former Yugoslavia By Mike Creswell**

**Baptist Press
9/29/95**

BELGIUM (BP)--Southern Baptists continue to help victims of fighting between ethnic groups that once formed Yugoslavia, most recently through \$254,500 in relief.

Through the Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptists are helping to feed more than 75,000 people within the Yugoslavia war zone during September and October.

Also, missionaries will use \$100,000 to provide emergency food for homeless refugees in Serbian Yugoslavia. About 250,000 refugees fled from the Krajina region of Croatia into Yugoslavia during August. Krajina had been held by Serbians since 1991 but was retaken by Croatian forces in a four-day offensive.

"Most, if not all, of these people have absolutely nothing except the clothes on their backs," said Foreign Mission Board missionary Randy Bell. Funds are being directed to the most pressing needs identified: food, housing, bedding and hygiene. Bell and his wife, Joan, are based in Belgrade, capital of Yugoslavia.

In Sremska Mitrovica and Sabac -- cities near Belgrade -- reception centers have been established for homeless refugees. Relief money will buy 126 tons of food to feed 40,000 people there for two months, said Larry Cox, whose assignment as associate to area director for Europe includes the former Yugoslavia. He is based in Wiesbaden, Germany, but recently visited the area to assess needs.

In Belgrade, \$60,000 will provide 75 tons of food to feed 24,000 people for two months; in Novi Sad, nearer to the border with Croatia, \$30,000 will provide 32 tons of food to feed 12,000 people for two months, Cox said.

Bell is overseeing the use of funds in cooperation with Bread of Life, a relief agency operated by evangelical Christians in Belgrade, and Tabita, a Baptist relief organization in Novi Sad. A \$64,500 grant, the rest of the \$254,500 appropriation, will be used to help Baptists affected by the war, Cox said. This amount will provide blankets, mattresses and hygienic items such as soap and diapers and will pay for transporting the other supplies into the stricken region.

"Gasoline now costs \$8 per gallon because of the United Nations-imposed embargo intended to slow the war, Cox said. Some funds will repay Baptists using their own cars to transport material.

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Ten Baptist churches will house 30 families of refugees, he said. Southern Baptists have provided assistance repeatedly during the war, usually cooperating with local Baptists or other evangelical Christians to assure funds are spent appropriately and distributed fairly.

They also have been supporting a cattle project in Croatia, helping at a basic level to maintain food supplies. In 1994 Foreign Mission Board missionary Bill Steele accompanied a truckload of food sent by Southern Baptists into Mostar, Bosnia, to help feed the hungry there. Steele and his wife, Debbie, live in Slovenia, a small country once part of the former Yugoslavia. Now they are on furlough in the United States.

Cox said he hopes there will be new projects for the Croatian side soon. But his hopes were tempered by the fact that Southern Baptists this year have given much less than they have in years for world hunger and relief.

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Croat offensive in August
births new group of refugees

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
9/29/95

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (BP)--Refugee status for the Yugoslavian war's newest homeless began between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. one night in August as they heard bombs exploding outside their homes in the Krajina area of Croatia.

Croats consider the region part of Croatia and in August their army took it back from Serbian forces. Some 250,000 civilians -- instant refugees -- fled.

It was the greatest displacement of Serbian people since the war began, said Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary Randy Bell, who lives in Belgrade.

"Most, if not all, of these people have absolutely nothing except the clothes on their backs. Many of them expected to return within a few days," he said.

Many refugees from Krajina joined 200,000 other refugees already in Belgrade. Most wound up in camps where the government offers scant assistance. Apartments and houses in Belgrade are bursting with up to 20 people living in them.

"Right now it is hard, if not impossible, to find the basics like bread, cooking oil and sugar," said Bell. "The prices of all food products are going up and up, and inflation is a problem. Belgrade and the rest of Yugoslavia are in bad economic condition because of the United Nations sanctions."

In Belgrade, Bell works with a Christian relief agency called Bread of Life, and in Novi Sad, he works with a Baptist relief agency called Tabita. "These two relief organizations have supported over 2,000 families for the past three years with a monthly supply of food that contains a can of meat, flour, sugar, noodles, cooking oil, soap, detergent, cans of vegetables, vitamins, powdered milk, etc.," he said.

Now, around 1,500 more families have been added to the list. "The number of refugees increases each day," Bell said. Refugees stand in line at churches for up to 12 hours a day to sign up for an interview that will lead to assistance.

Added to such physical stress is anger that the Croatian army bombed both military sites and civilian areas, and anger that the Serbian army did not protect them, Bell said. Many refugees feel the whole world is against them. Many families have gotten separated and many do not know if those missing are dead or alive. "The UN acknowledges there are 10,000 who are unaccounted for," Bell added.

Still, Bell sees some good coming from the war. "This tragedy has opened up so many doors for evangelism. The churches are full of people, and many have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. We pray that we can continue to show God's love in the midst of this evil," he said.

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**Workers among Serbs, Croats
shun good guy/bad guy view**

By Mike Creswell

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (BP)--Confused about whose side you're on in the war between Bosnians, Serbs and Croats?

Southern Baptist missionaries serve both in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, and in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, working with Baptists on both sides of the border. These missionaries say Southern Baptists cannot afford to take sides -- because they are helping both Serbians and Croats.

"Our perspective is that there are no good guys or bad guys in this war," said Southern Baptist foreign missionary Randy Bell, who lives with his wife, Joan, in Belgrade. "All sides are guilty and all sides have suffered tremendously. Many innocent people have suffered and died and we pray for an end to this war.

"Christ offers hope and we feel that he has called us here to share that hope."

In earlier times, Baptists from all of Yugoslavia worked together under the banner of a single union. But they were forced to divide as the country did, because not even telephone service was possible across the new borders political leaders drew. Now Baptist Croat and Serb leaders see each other only when they attend outside meetings, such as those of the European Baptist Federation or Baptist World Alliance.

Southern Baptist foreign missionary Larry Cox said he saw and heard much evidence of atrocities when he visited the Krajina area of Croatia recently. That region had been occupied by Serbs since 1991 until the Croatian army overtook it in a major offensive in August. Cox saw people scarred by stabbings and torture and heard from women who said they had been raped.

But he backed away from blaming one side or another. "Atrocities have been committed by all sides, and they're all guilty in a sense," he said. "This is basically a religious war. Croats are Roman Catholic, Serbians are Orthodox and then you have the Bosnians who are Muslims, added in 1,300 years or so ago.

"There is religious hatred under the political talk."

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**War victim weak, suffering,
yet patient because of Christ**

By Mike Creswell

**Baptist Press
9/29/95**

ZAGREB, Croatia (BP)--Wars make multitudes of victims, and it's usually the multitudes that are shown on the 6 o'clock news. But Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries usually meet them one at a time.

Nela Williams, missionary in Zagreb, Croatia, tells of meeting one.

Her name is Olga. She was a nurse riding in an ambulance to pick up the wounded. A grenade hit her ambulance and killed the driver. Olga managed to pull herself out of the wreckage and a passing driver rescued her.

When Williams heard of Olga from members of the Baptist church in Sisak, she was staying on the fourth floor of the New Hospital in Zagreb. Shrapnel struck Olga's back, narrowly missing her spine. A small piece still remains lodged within her. She lies motionless on her hospital bed; if she moves the jagged metal could trigger internal bleeding.

Williams was surprised to find Olga pale and weak from suffering, yet patient and grateful instead of complaining. After talking to Olga briefly, she found out why: Olga has been a follower of Christ for two years.

"Now I have many brothers and sisters. My husband is on the way, too, to becoming a Christian," she told Williams. A day before the attack, she wrote Scripture verses on a small slip of paper and posted it on the bulletin board of the clinic where she worked. Her boss wanted to put a lighted candle beside it. "But the Scripture words are already the light in themselves," she answered him.

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Despite her situation, she told Williams, "Having the Lord makes all the difference!"

"She needs our prayers as she waits for another surgery," Williams noted.

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NEA stance on homosexuality
protested by Christian groups

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press
9/29/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--A recent National Education Association resolution advocating the teaching of acceptance for homosexuality and lesbianism -- and "the celebration of a Lesbian and Gay History Month" -- is drawing fire from Christian groups across the country.

A Southern Baptist association in eastern Tennessee recently passed a resolution promising to pray for teachers who oppose the NEA's action, while Concerned Women for America reports a groundswell of outrage from its members. Richard Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, said the resolution on "Sexual Orientation Education" is a graphic demonstration of NEA's left-wing social agenda.

"The NEA represents radical special interests who want to hijack American public education and use it to brainwash the nation's children with their own outlandish, anti-biblical values," he said.

"Thankfully, the NEA does not represent the values of the vast majority of our nation's public school teachers. In fact, they exploit teachers by taking their dues and good names and using them to finance their own gay-rights, radical social agenda."

The NEA, at its annual convention in July attended by 8,700 delegates in Minneapolis, adopted by standing vote the resolution aimed at "raising the awareness and increasing the sensitivity of staff, students, parents and the community to sexual orientation in our society." The resolution calls for "eliminating sexual orientation stereotyping in the educational setting," including:

-- "Accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people throughout history, with acknowledgement of their sexual orientation."

-- "The acceptance of diverse sexual orientation and the awareness of sexual stereotyping whenever sexuality and/or tolerance of diversity is taught."

-- "Elimination of sexual orientation name-calling and jokes in the classroom."

-- "Support for the celebration of a Lesbian and Gay History Month as a means of acknowledging the contributions of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals throughout history."

In mid-September, the executive committee of the Sullivan Baptist Association in Kingsport, Tenn., adopted a resolution denouncing the NEA measure. It cited biblical opposition to homosexuality, noting Sodom and Gomorrah's homosexual activity brought about the destruction of those cities.

"The acceptance of and practice of homosexual behavior has preceded the destruction of major civilizations throughout history," the resolution said. "We believe the (NEA resolution) to be harmful to the youth of America and our society in general."

Immediately after the Sullivan association took its stand, it received support from the Kingsport Times-News in an editorial titled, "NEA putting politics ahead of education." The newspaper said it has observed while most teachers put the education of their students first, that is not necessarily true with the NEA.

"(Teachers) support the right to join any political party and vote one's conscience," the Times-News wrote, "and do not support the 'celebration' of homosexuality, much less in the classroom. But the NEA is a powerful force in influencing state and federal policy, and its positions are not to be ignored ...

."

Beverly LaHaye, president of Concerned Women for America (CWA) and a Southern Baptist, said the NEA has a long track record of trying to take over every aspect of education in the country. She charged the group with trying to force values and morals of the home out of the public schools.

"Concerned Women for America is not going to retreat one iota from its position that the nationwide surge for gay rights is destructive to our country, society and families," she said. "What the NEA is calling for now is a direct frontal attack on the beliefs and values of the overwhelming majority of women and men in our country."

Christine O'Donnell, CWA press secretary, said the group has been mobilizing its network of supporters for local action via mailings and radio broadcasts. She said CWA headquarters has been flooded with calls from the news media and members who "are outraged."

"They're upset and want to know what they can do to get this pulled and make sure that it's not implemented in the schools," O'Donnell said. "They're very upset and offended by this."

In a statement of response, the NEA said its resolution is simply a show of respect, tolerance and understanding for gays and lesbians.

"The resolution reflects the concern of (our) 2.2 million members about the violence and disrespect aimed at gay and lesbian students," the statement said. "Their concern is well-founded; suicide among gay students is two to three times higher than for all other students."

The association claimed certain groups which regularly attack public education are spreading fear and anxiety. The NEA added such critics misunderstand that resolutions are statements of belief and do not call for further action.

"The resolution does not direct schools -- or even our own members -- to observe October as Gay and Lesbian History Month," the NEA said. "Nor will NEA be distributing materials for school use during this or any other month on this issue."

Some useful guidelines for Southern Baptists who oppose the NEA resolution appeared in a recent editorial by William Fletcher Allen, editor of Tennessee's Baptist newsjournal, Baptist and Reflector. He suggested four points of action:

- 1) School administrators, teachers and school boards should let the NEA know their feelings about the issue. The telephone number of the NEA in Washington is (202) 833-4000.
- 2) People who support public schools should "lend a hand by affirming teachers who are opposing the NEA resolution."
- 3) Parents and friends can insist that programs and textbooks "do not suggest special treatment for any group."
- 4) Support local schools, keeping in touch with administrators and teachers, which "means more than only showing up to complain."

"We must remember how the system affects the future through children," Allen said. "On a biblical basis, most (Baptists) oppose these ideas espoused by NEA. Our beliefs, though strong, should be shared in a Christlike manner. We can and should speak up."

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Baptist mom, teacher initiate
opposition to NEA resolution

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press
9/29/95

KINGSPORT, Tenn. (BP)--Two Southern Baptists played a key role in organizing a move to counter the National Education Association's resolution on homosexuality and its call for a "Lesbian and Gay History Month" in local schools. The grassroots opposition could spread statewide and beyond.

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Ann Bennett, the Christian Life department director for the Sullivan Baptist Association, Kingsport, Tenn., said she drafted that group's resolution after an impromptu request at her child's elementary school. Fourth-grade teacher Ken Fletcher wanted the local Parent Teacher Association to pass a measure opposing the NEA.

However, as PTA parliamentarian, Bennett said she had to enforce rules that dictate only items placed on the agenda can be considered during meetings. Afterwards, she told Fletcher and other teachers that she supported their feelings.

Two days later, she took the matter to Sullivan's executive committee.

"The teachers at my children's school were torn up about this," she said. "I drew up the resolution to encourage our churches to pray for teachers and encourage other teachers to take a stand. The church needs to recognize the fight is in the teachers' hands, but let them know we support them."

A member of Kingsport's First Baptist Church, Bennett said she reviewed a recent copy of the NEA Journal which carried the various resolutions passed at the group's convention. She said it surprised her to see so many letters complaining about the NEA's "left-wing" agenda.

Teachers she has talked to are "not walking lockstep with this resolution," she said, adding it has been exciting to see how many instructors share Christian views and aren't afraid to stand up for traditional values.

"When the resolution came out, it was the first time I could see who the Christians are in my child's school," said Bennett. "I learned how frustrated they are because they can't share their faith, yet they're expected to have a 'Gay and Lesbian History Month,'" according to one of the NEA resolution's clauses.

"This is an outrageous resolution, especially when they called for Asian/Pacific Heritage Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month and others. And they're treating this as if it were the same thing."

A member of Kingsport's Sunnyside Baptist Church, Fletcher has joined forces with Karen Carr -- a past president of the local NEA affiliate -- to contact other teachers around the state. He said he is willing for his telephone number to be published, 1-423-323-0714.

He said he believes the overwhelming majority of his fellow teachers only belong to NEA because of its medical insurance coverage and legal aid. But, he said, they don't have a choice because of rules adopted in the mid-1970s requiring members of a local teachers association to join the state and national groups.

"A lot of teachers are upset about the resolution (and its call for a) Gay and Lesbian Month," he said. "A lot of them feel that they have put up with a lot of things to belong to NEA, but when they did this, it was like the straw that broke the camel's back."

Although the Tennessee Education Association took a neutral position on the resolution, Fletcher said TEA recently promised to work with other states to overturn it. Still, the state association recently sent letters to all its members, he said, claiming the controversy has been fanned by the media and people who hate public education.

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WMU introduces new
children's magazines

By Teresa Dickens

Baptist Press
9/29/95

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Responding to requests from Girls in Action leaders, Woman's Missionary Union has created two new age-appropriate magazines for girls. Beginning with the October releases, WMU now offers Discovery for girls in the first through fourth grades and GA World for girls in the fifth and sixth grades. Previously, Discovery was the only magazine for girls in first through sixth grades. Although the new magazine for younger girls carries the name of the previous magazine, the format and treatment of the magazine have been redesigned.

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The decision to produce two magazines for girls was developmentally driven, explained Barbara Massey, design editor for both magazines.

"As an educator, I've known that a magazine that services first through sixth grade is far too wide an age span," she said. "But because first graders are children and sixth graders are children, we tend to clump them together and not acknowledge their individual developmental stages.

"There is as much difference in a first grader and sixth grader as there is in a 12-year-old and 18-year-old," Massey noted. "If you look at a first grader who is just beginning to read and a sixth grader who is more like a seventh or eighth grader in her development and abilities to read and reason, their differences become very graphic."

Recognizing these developmental differences, she continued, Discovery was redesigned to be age-appropriate for younger girls and GA World was created to fit the learning needs for older girls.

While the magazines' content will focus on the same missions field and personalities each month, the treatment of the material will be different, Massey noted.

Discovery, for example, will have fewer words, as well as easier games and puzzles. GA World, on the other hand, will include more challenging activities and detailed articles. Both magazines will be four color and use a more open format, Massey said.

The feature of GA World that is drawing the greatest response is an advice column titled, "GA Girl Talk." The column answers questions sent in by readers with no breach of confidentiality.

"This is proving to be a very popular, yet challenging feature," Massey commented. "The letters we have received so far have shown that fifth and sixth graders are dealing with some really tough issues. They are concerned about significant moral and social problems and how their response to those issues impacts their relationship with God."

Massey said she hopes GA leaders will use the new magazines, and if possible, organize their GAs into the two age groups.

Noting Aware, the magazine for GA leaders, also has been redesigned to complement children's developmental stages, Massey said, "It would be holding children back to place them all in one room and try to use just Discovery with them. Leaders now have the option of letting children learn much like they do in public school."

One of the features of the redesigned Aware is the inclusion of three teaching plans: one for younger girls, one for older girls and a blended plan, including elements for both age groups.

Although WMU's magazines for girls are recommended as a teaching resource for GA leaders, they also can be used as a leisure piece, Massey pointed out. "A girl does not have to be a GA to enjoy and have fun with these magazines."

To order Discovery, GA World or other WMU products, write WMU Customer Service, P.O. Box 830711, Birmingham, AL 35283-7301, or call 1-800-968-7301.

(BP) Brites

Compiled by Art Toalston

How do you say 'homerun' in Russian?

TAMBOV, Russia (BP)--America's favorite pastime may have a bright future in Russia.

International Service Corps missionary Clay Cartwright explains: "My son, Adam, wanted to play catch. I took him to the dilapidated-looking playground outside our Russian apartment with a glove, a bat and a softball. By the time we came inside an hour later, we had left 20 boys wanting to play some more." With the help of an interpreter, Cartwright soon had organized the neighborhood children into two teams, with a brief devotional punctuating each game. In one of the first games, when each boy had to be taught how to bat, the score after five innings was 40-38. Lack of equipment posed a problem until Kentucky Baptists, in the second year of a partnership with Russian Baptists, sent -- via a team of medical and evangelism volunteers -- three suitcases filled with 20 baseball gloves, 40 softballs, over 20 bats, 50 baseball caps and even face masks and catcher's padding.

All he's paid is satisfaction

CLOVIS, N.M. (BP)--Dick Ross, pastor of Highland Baptist Church, Clovis, N.M., enjoys his added role as volunteer chaplain for the local police and fire departments. "I get to work with nearly every pastor in the area at some point, and I get to know them real well -- especially when I call them at 2 o'clock in the morning about a crisis situation," Ross says. In nominating him for the 1994 New Mexico Fraternal Order of Police "Friend of Law Enforcement" Award, Mike Reeves, supervisor of the Region V Narcotics Task Force, wrote: "The following incident is an example of how valuable Mr. Ross is to law enforcement. On July 13, 1992, the New Mexico State Police were involved in a high-speed pursuit which came into Clovis. Shortly after the pursuit was terminated, the suspect's vehicle collided with another vehicle, killing three small children. Chaplain Ross gave countless hours of counseling to the officers involved and was there to listen when the officers needed to talk about it. The only compensation Mr. Ross receives is the satisfaction of helping someone."

Church swings into action to reach families

ROANOKE, Va. (BP)--Although Rosalind Hills Baptist Church is investing \$75,000 in a playground for 1- to 4-year-olds and another for 5- to 12-year-olds, complete with picnic tables and park benches, the Roanoke, Va., congregation isn't playing around with outreach to families. "God ordained only two institutions, the family and the church," says pastor Tom Stocks. "Anything we can do to bring the two together is part of our mission." Stocks says the playgrounds will show families in the community, "We care about you and we want a safe place for you to play."

Satanists fail to derail his witness

BURLINGTON, Vt. (BP)--David Russell says he couldn't give away 100 Bibles total in his first five years of street witnessing in Burlington, Vt. This July, even a crowd of Satanists tried to derail Russell's witness when he was setting up a literature table across from a Woolworth store. Some 35 black-clothed, tattooed Satanists -- from the Knights of Lucifer -- circled around and chanted "Satan rules," while playing hard rock at full volume on boom boxes. No matter, Russell and 20 volunteers have distributed 1,200 Bibles, at least 224 New Testaments and 20,000 witnessing tracts since April. "I can hardly believe what God has done," says Russell, pastor of Restoration Baptist Church. "This is the first year we've seen results and openness out there. We have seen a total of nine decisions for Christ and many visitors coming to our church."

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'Grandma, Grandpa' now have tough jobs

ROACH, Mo. (BP)--Irene Endicott believes grandparents are off their rockers these days -- "standing in th gap for their adult children like n ver before." Endicott, of Seattle, a grandparenting consultant for the Baptist Sunday School Board, said 3.2 million children are being raised by their grandparents, according to census figures. Officials say the numbers are actually doubled, Endicott said, addressing a senior adult retreat at Missouri's Windermere Baptist Assembly. "The reason I'm in this ministry is that Bill and I have seven children. Four of them are divorced. Those divorces affect over half of our grandchildren. For far too long in the church we have not wanted to talk about these things." Endicott is the author of a book and 13-week study, both titled, "Grandparenting By Grace," published by Broadman & Holman.

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Melanie Childers, Julie A. Nall, Dan Nicholas and Michael Clingenpeel contributed to this column.

Funeral set for missionary
killed in South Africa wreck

Baptist Press
9/29/95

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Funeral services for Southern Baptist missionary Glenda Middleton, who died Sept. 22 in a car accident in South Africa, are scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 6, at First Baptist Church, Bienville, La.

The family requests memorial gifts be sent to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767.

Middleton, 56, was a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary in Lesotho, a tiny country surrounded by South Africa.

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