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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Porn Bill Proposed

Arkansas Baptist

December 3, 1987

'Sound Barrier' Falls



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(BP) photo / Michael Largent

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Risking All For Relief

MAPUTO, Mozambique (BP)—Baptists in Mozambique are risking death to deliver farm seed in war zones where people seek safety by hiding at night in the tops of trees.

Members of the small Mozambique Baptist Convention are dodging ambushes to monitor seed and hoe distribution funded by Southern Baptists. They hope villagers will be able to plant and harvest crops before raiders destroy the land.

"There's a war on, and there aren't any rules," said Jim Brock, a first-term missionary from Warrior, Ala., coordinating a relief effort to which Southern Baptists already have released \$585,000. Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials say

the total could go much higher.

Brock knows only a portion of the 26-pound seed ration that families receive will see harvest. In many places people who stays behind to nurture crops will die with them. Several villages Baptists marked to receive seed don't even exist anymore.

"The tactic at the moment is to move in and scorch earth—and that means people, houses, trees, crops and everything," said Brock. "Some areas are being hit as we distribute to them. Some people live in trees at night—and never the same tree twice. They come down in the daytime and try to live."

Statistics from Mozambique show more than 2 million people have been uprooted from their homes.

GOOD NEWS!

Waiting in the Victor's Circle

Rv. 2:8-11

Of all generations since Christianity began, we should understand the plight of the Smyrneans. Smyrna was a place where suffering and poverty were worn with honor in the midst of ease and plenty.

No city in the east had the impressiveness, the glory, the magnificence of Smyrna. It claimed to be the greatest and most beautiful city in the world. A proud city and one looked on with favor by Rome, Smyrna was also religiously pagan. As early as 916 B.C., Smyrna was the first city in the empire to erect a temple to the goddess of Rome.

In A.D. 26, six great cities in Asia Minor were striving for the honor of building a temple to the reigning emperor Tiberius. Smyrna won the privilege. The people of Smyrna were proud of their Caesar-worship.

A second fact of Smyrna must be noted to understand the Lord's concern for his church there. The economic and mercantile life of the city was organized around the cults of paganism. Every man seemed to have a patron god or goddess. Life was organized around gods and goddesses. Festival days, sacred to the deities, left the Christian standing apart if he refused to share in such things. His faith cut him off from the job he could hold and the work he could do.

The poverty of the church came as a result of the faithfulness of being different in a society demanding conformity.

A third thing contributed to the terrible

persecution (v. 10) of the church at Smyrna. The city was the center of Caesar-worship. In the light of Revelation's teaching against the cult of emperor-worship, the suffering and poverty of the Christians at Smyrna can be better understood.

The Christians at Smyrna had been so faithful in standing for their faith amidst persecution that they were singled out by our Lord as the only one of the seven churches of which only good is spoken.

One of the most beautiful passages in the book of Revelation is spoken to this church when the Lord, having recognized their plight, says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (v. 10).

For a Christian to stand in Smyrna, he had to face pagan cults on one hand and a group of Jews who had sided with pagans on the other (3:9). They are assigned to the "synagogue of Satan."

The outstanding fact of the church at Smyrna was its richness in spiritual things though poor in material wealth. Indications are that the hapless Christians had a sense of inferiority; they needed to be reminded that true wealth is not of worldly goods.

The crown spoken of is an eternal possession. "It is the diadem of royalty rather than the garland of victory," Vincent says.

Smyrna is promised imprisonment and persecution. Their situation may well get worse before it gets better, but the crown is to be worn by those who persevere.

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A 'Sucker Bet'

J. EVERETT SNEED

This guest editorial, by John Finn, executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas, Inc., contains important information for Arkansas Baptists. Currently there is an effort underway to obtain the needed 68,000 signatures to get the lottery on the ballot. If those supporting the lottery are successful, it is likely that we will be confronted with it at the general election on Nov. 8, 1988.

There is cause for concern among the citizens of Arkansas. Recent news reports, along with increased media attention regarding a possible state lottery, would lead one to believe that such a proposal should be taken with a measure of seriousness. State-sponsored gambling, in any guise, offers a policy for seeking new state revenues which is both inept and unjust. A state lottery would be objectionable morally, economically, socially, and scripturally.

The proposal is unsound morally, because it places government in the position of working to victimize its people, rather than to protect them. Lotteries perennially prey upon the poor and the unemployed. This fact is borne out by phenomenal "successes" of lotteries in areas of poverty and high unemployment. State government, under a lottery system, does not merely "allow" gambling. It urges its citizens to do so. It becomes a "huckster," attempting to entice its people to participate in an enterprise where better than 99 percent of the people must come out losers. This turns the entire concept of consumer protection on its head! A lottery system would make citizens into "means" to achieve the government's "ends" rather than government being a "means" to serve the people. This makes a mockery of government's objective, "the welfare of the people should be the supreme law."

The proposal is unsound economically, because lotteries are notoriously inefficient, difficult to administer, and generate offsetting social costs. In comparison to the costs of administering a tax, the lottery is a bureaucratic boondoggle. It costs from 25 to 30 times more government money to raise revenue through a lottery than it does to collect a tax. Furthermore, a lottery is difficult to administer and police. In addition, the revenues generated do not represent bottom line figures. Offsetting social



costs, such as the generating of increasing numbers of compulsive gamblers (a growing problem in states with long-running lotteries), make a lottery's economic value even more dubious. States with lotteries must spend more money per person to control crime, to support welfare programs, and to pay government debt than do states without legalized gambling.

A state lottery is unsound socially. It would make for counter-productive social policy. A lottery would amount to a severely regressive form of taxation. In other words, the lottery would take proportionately more from those least able to pay. It would invite further intrusions by organized crime in Arkansas. (The Commission on the Review of National Policy Toward Gambling concluded that state-sponsored gambling contributes to the

development of illegal gambling, not the other way around. Such illegal gambling benefits organized crime.) Furthermore, the addition of legislatures to lotteries and "gaming commissions" (state agencies set up to operate the lottery) equals an invitation to political patronage, corruption of government officials, and cheating the public through fraud. These things have occurred in other lottery states. We do not need a fraudulent governmental bureaucracy running over with political patronage in Arkansas.

A state lottery is unsound from a scriptural standpoint. Although the Scripture does not contain any direct command not to gamble, the principles set forth indicate that gambling is wrong. First, the Word of God teaches that we are to love God and our neighbor as ourselves (Mt. 22:37-40). The gambler covets his neighbor's property, which is a direct violation of the tenth commandment.

Second, the Bible teaches that we are to give an honest day's work for the wages we receive (Ex. 20:9; 2 Th. 3:10-12). The major premise underlying gambling is the desire to have something for nothing.

Finally, the Scripture teaches that the ungodly love of money produces every kind of evil (2 Ti. 6:6-11). The gambler's dominant desire for material gain is accompanied, all too often, by a variety of sinful activities.

In the final analysis, a lottery could be a "boon" to the lottery promoters, to politicians desiring political patronage and to organized crime. For the rest of us as Arkansans, the lottery would be a "sucker bet." Therefore, a state lottery is objectionable morally, economically, socially, and scripturally.

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Mark Kelly Managing Editor

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

Convention reflections bring a real sense of joy and direction to my heart. Registration was good for a convention held outside of central Arkansas. There were 1,076 messengers registered. The average is no more than an additional 100.

Attendance within the services was good. Of course, the normal, good fellowship took place in the halls and exhibit area, but every part of the convention had a respectful number present to receive the reports. In the past when the schedule took us through Thursday morning, this session was very poorly attended. When we started closing on Wednesday night, the final session was poorly attended. Now, one session has been dropped and the others moved forward so that the convention adjourns at noon on Wednesday. This means that almost everyone can stay for the entire convention and still return to the church field in time for Wednesday night services. This proved to be the best schedule we could have followed. Thank you, friends, for being good stewards of your opportunity. With the convention being so short, it really isn't good stewardship of your church's funds to use them to run in for a few hours and then leave early. I hope this trend will continue.

The schedule has squeezed the Pastors' Conference forward. We expected the Monday morning attendance to be affected by this, and it was. However, the other sessions were not really well attended. I am sorry. Dr. Tom Harris, Greg Stanley, and Randy Maxwell had an excellent program. It was one of the most practical, positive and helpful programs we have had. With all of the needs of our pastors, I hope we can see better participation.

The spirit of cooperation and fellowship was great! The emphasis on "Strengthening Missions" must have pleased the Lord. Every speaker had felt led to speak on subjects that undergirded the theme.

I've never felt more confident that we are in step with the purposes of God than now. May every pastor and church catch the spirit of those who came to the convention and move in unison to reach the nations of the world.

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Letters to the Editor

Asked to Sacrifice

It makes me sad to read the Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, and I suppose home mission people also, are told they will have to sacrifice more, when they have already left homes and families, all this we still enjoy. I'm referring to the "World" section on the back of the *Arkansas Baptist*, Nov. 5, 1987. Southern Baptists as a whole are asked to give sacrificially, which many do, then I remember reading about the Golden Parachutes. I don't recall having read anything in the *Arkansas Baptist* about this, another benefit for a few. Seems the higher echelon of SBC, like our U.S. Congress, just keeps taking a bigger piece of the pie and asking for more. All the rest are to sacrifice and pay more. When will the ones living on high salaries and retirement ever wake up? That money was given to spread God's Word, not set a few men up to easy living. I do not begrudge a reasonable retirement, seems it has gone far beyond that in some positions.—**Sue Roberts, Pottsville**

Created in His Image

The scientific fact is apparent—and scientific experiments have confirmed that the weight, shape, and size of the bumblebee's body in proportion to its wingspread, prevent it flying.

The bumblebee, who knows nothing of

aerodynamics, just flies anyway!

We who have normal abilities seem to forget that God created every man in his own image. And if we are created in his image, and we are, then all persons have the right to the name of Jesus and the "wool" of the Holy Spirit.

"... To love God with all one's heart and all one's mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

Let us Christians flow in the fruits of the Spirit and show the mentally handicapped that we do love God and our neighbors—that we truly care.

Are we going to say to the mentally handicapped, "No, Jesus doesn't love you"? Are we going to teach love, respect, trust, compassion, and salvation through Jesus Christ to all men?

"... Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel."

God forgive us for our lack of responsibility to the mentally handicapped!

Is the fear of failure preventing us from reaching out to our fellow man?

I have seen endless miracles brought about by personal courage, faith, and determination.

Like that illustration of the bumblebee—the mentally handicapped can achieve—because they do not know they can't.

Through God's grace and ordination we reach out—**El Shaddi—Jehovah Jireh—sanctifies—Helen Vanlandingham, Little Rock**

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Woman's Viewpoint

Can I Quote You?

NORMA KIRKPATRICK

I would be amused, if I were not so perturbed at the practice of some of those television commentators who follow a political address. They tell us what the poor fellow "said," and then explain what he "meant."

It's true that we seek a meaning within the words, but I wonder if we as Christians are not guilty of serving as self-appointed commentators upon the spoken words of others. It may be a sermon from the pulpit, the comment at the convention, or the conversation at coffee break. "That isn't what he said, but it's what he meant."

There is a fine line between interpretation and judgment as we rehearse



the words of others. As followers of Christ, we are called to a high plateau of honesty. It is well to quote the speaker if the words are supposed to be shared, but let us be cautious when we begin to discuss what he "meant."

Have you ever been misinterpreted? Have you ever said, "Oh, I didn't mean that! How could you have gotten such an idea? You know me better than that." We feel that if someone knows us, then they

know what we mean. Any husband and wife can tell you otherwise.

How much harder then to know what someone means when we've never even been introduced to them. It is never good to assume and then analyze.

This is especially true when we're not even acquainted with the source.

Quotes are fine. Motive and meaning seeking are another matter. Without self discipline, we may find ourselves digressing thoughtlessly from listener, to commentator, and finally to judge.

Norma Kirkpatrick is the wife of Jerry Kirkpatrick, pastor of First Church, Heber Springs. She is the mother of three grown children.

DANIEL R. GRANT

One Layman's Opinion



Crisis Needed?

The word "crisis" is written in Chinese with two characters meaning "danger"

and "opportunity." I have always liked the idea of converting liabilities into assets and of turning tragedy into triumph. Few miracles are greater than those of transforming defeat into victory and sorrow into joy.

Consider the crisis that Chinese Christians faced in 1949, after the communist takeover of China and the expulsion of Christian missionaries. With an overpowering new governmental system committed to atheism and teaching that Christianity is the opiate of the people, who would have the nerve to say this danger was also an opportunity? The communist officials considered Christian missionaries to be the equivalent of treasonable foreign spies, and all who had been involved with them were dangerously suspect, churches were closed down and church buildings were converted into factories, schools, or other structures and uses acceptable to the communists.

But what happened to the Chinese Christians? We feared the worst, but now we know that they went underground and into "house churches," much as the early Christians did under Roman persecution. How could they possibly survive the "Cultural Revolution" from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies—when the Red Guard terrorized all but the most militant communists, burned all religious books that could be found, and sent religious and intellectual leaders into manual labor in factories or farm communes?

Chinese Christians not only survived but grew spiritually and numerically in the hot crucible of government restrictions and persecution. The dangerous crisis was turned into an opportunity to show that the Christian faith is not just a "foreign religion," and that it changes lives in ways that are not tossed about lightly in the political winds.

I pray daily that it will not require the same kind of persecution to teach us American Christians to be more dedicated followers of Christ.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

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'Sound Barrier' Falls

Hearing Loss Opens Doors to New Ministry

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

PONCE, Puerto Rico (BP)—David Mitchell broke the "sound barrier" on a trip to Puerto Rico.

Mitchell didn't make aviation history. But the Southern Baptist pastor did soar beyond a debilitating handicap, leaving disappointment for victory.

Mitchell now is pastor of Mission Bautista Para Sordos—Baptist Mission for the Deaf—in Ponce, Puerto Rico. He and his wife, Marsha, are volunteer missionaries who have been serving deaf people on the island since 1985.

He was pastor of a hearing church in Ridgely, Tenn., before his deafness became so severe he had to quit. He started going deaf about 20 years ago, when he was a young man. Doctors never were sure exactly what caused his deafness, but they think it was an allergic reaction to food and chemicals.

Although Mitchell had been losing his hearing for several years, his eventual deafness came as quite a jolt. It especially hurt because he no longer could be pastor of his church.

"When I first realized I had to stop being pastor, there was shock, non-acceptance, grief—all the feelings one experiences with any loss of that nature," he remembers. "The greatest thing was a loss of purpose. I had to fight against that."

"The one thing that helped was that I knew God had called me to preach and to pastor. We had to find the people I was fast becoming a part of—deaf people. I had never met a deaf person until this happened to me."

The Mitchells set out to meet deaf people and to find out how a deaf person gets along in a hearing world. They also held on tight to a promise from the Bible: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

Mitchell resigned the church in Ridgely in 1981, and the family moved to Seymour, Tenn. "We went to Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy and took some sign language classes," Mrs. Mitchell says. "However, our biggest training was at First Baptist Church of Knoxville, where we immersed ourselves in the deaf ministry. We



David and Marsha Mitchell discuss their ministry with HMB staffers.

taught in Sunday school, mostly working with children who were attending Tennessee School for the Deaf."

After four years of preparation in eastern Tennessee, the Mitchells discovered their opportunity for ministry. They joined Mission Service Corps, a Southern Baptist program designed to supplement the ministry of full-time missionaries with the work of volunteers who raise their own support.

They went to work in a deaf camp in Puerto Rico and served with missionary Bob Bell. The Puerto Rico Baptist Association asked them to stay on, and they sensed God's leadership to remain.

"There are 97,000-plus hearing-impaired people in Puerto Rico. That was overwhelming to us, because Puerto Rico is only 100 miles long by 35 miles wide," Mrs. Mitchell says. "God led us to a town called Ponce and a church, our mother church, Glenview Baptist. Those people had been praying that we would be led to help minister to the deaf people there."

Ponce—with 250,000 residents—is Puerto Rico's second-largest city. And until the Mitchells arrived, the city's deaf people had no ministry. Mrs. Mitchell estimates the area of Ponce in which they live is home to as many as 2,000 deaf people.

Their ministry in Puerto Rico "started from nothing in a carpent," she recalls: "We found a little group of people who became Christians in Bob Bell's camp. We visited them in their homes and started Sunday morning Bible study and worship."

Now, at the end of two years in Puerto Rico, 46 deaf people have accepted Christ as Savior through their ministry. Attendance on Sundays averages 50. At least 110

deaf people have visited the mission.

And on a personal basis, the Mitchells know they have found a place to serve God. They sense the reassurance that they can do what God wants them to do, despite—or maybe even because of—Mitchell's deafness.

"There are two things about finding God's will I knew for sure when I lost my hearing," he says. "I knew God called me to preach, and he called me to pastor. I have a heart for people."

"When we made the visit to the deaf camp, both of us were so touched by these 'sheep without a shepherd'—people who trusted Christ but went back home with no discipleship, Bible training or contact with other Christians."

The mission in Ponce serves those needs every week. The congregation

meets on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. The Sunday meetings last for three hours, and the mission does not hold services on Sunday nights. The mission provides activities that are common at most hearing churches—Bible study, worship, opportunities to become a better Christian. But members also emphasize building friendships.

"We allow time for fellowship," Mrs. Mitchell says. "Many of our people don't get much fellowship and communication at home. They're lonely."

The Mitchells also try to help with other needs of their parishioners. "We help in home situations and help adults find jobs," she says. "We're also starting to help in school situations, which is a big need. The schools are oral (with no sign language provided for deaf students), so many intelligent children are not receiving the education they need."

In addition to the work with the mission, Mitchell also occasionally preaches in hearing churches. Because he was able to hear for so many years, he still speaks as hearing people do. He reads lips, but his wife often interprets to him, using sign language to tell him what people are saying.

The ministry in Puerto Rico has assured Mitchell of the one truth that has battered him over his personal sound barrier.

"God has given us a purpose," he explains. "I now can thank God for this affliction. It has opened up a whole new world to minister to people who never would have had the opportunity to hear about Jesus."

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People



Kreis



Young



Crabb

Bill Kreis has announced his retirement as director of missions for Faulkner Association, effective Feb. 29, 1988. Kreis, who plans to do volunteer mission work and work with small churches, has spent 37 years in the pastoral ministry, serving churches at Joiner, Gosnell, Blytheville, North Little Rock, and Paris. He and his wife, Doris, have four married daughters and eight grandchildren.

David E. Young will begin serving as pastor of Morattico Church in Kilmarnock, Va., in Dec. A former member of Little Rock Tyler Street Church, he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Young of Little Rock.

Bobby W. Crabb has been called to serve as pastor of Hopewell Church in Corning. He is a junior at Southern Baptist College

and was licensed to preach by Martindale Church in Little Rock.

Jody Gannaway has resigned as pastor of Magnolia Church at Crossett to serve as pastor of Glenwood Church.

Bobby Adams began serving Nov. 1 as pastor of Calvary Church at Dardanelle.

Don Hankins has announced his retirement as pastor of Dover Church, effective Dec. 31. He has served there for 20 years.

Leonard Price recently was honored by London Church in recognition of his years of service. Guests included Erwin L. McDonald, editor emeritus of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

Tom Deere is serving as pastor of Plainview Church.

Tim Akins has resigned as minister to children and youth at Trinity Church in Fort Smith, effective Nov. 15.

Curtis Elm Pennington died Nov. 9 at age 75. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister and a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He had pastored churches in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. His funeral services were held Nov. 12 at Highland Heights Church in Benton, where he was a member. Survivors include his wife, Myrtice Pennington of Benton; a daughter, Peggy McElveen of Little Rock; a brother; four sisters; a grandchild; and a great-grandchild.

John Basinger has resigned as assistant pastor in charge of visitation at First Church, Jonesboro.

John D. Noland of Memphis is serving as pastor of Friendship Church at Marianna. He has been in full-time evangelism for the past five years, preaching revivals in some 20 states. He has pastored churches in Mississippi, Tennessee, Ohio, and Arkansas. He and his wife, Phyllis, have three married daughters.

A. R. Stewart has resigned as part-time minister of visitation at Bella Vista Church.

Sandy Hinkson is serving Gravel Ridge First Church as interim minister of education.

Kime Eubanks has joined the staff of Gravel Ridge First Church as minister of youth, coming there from Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock where he had served as a youth intern.

Clinton Smith is serving New Antioch Church at Brookland as minister to youth.

Terry Parks has resigned as pastor of Uniontown Church.

Mike George has resigned as pastor of Shibley Church, Van Buren.

Callie May Adams of Waldron died Nov. 15 at age 85. She was a member of First Church, Waldron, and was recognized throughout northcentral Arkansas as a promoter of music education. Her funeral ser-

Photo / Jack Ramsay



North Park Baptist Chapel, Van Buren, dedicated a new 6,000 square foot brick building Sunday Nov. 1. There were 84 present for Sunday School, 106 present for morning worship, and 196 present for the dedication services. North Park, a mission of First Baptist, Van Buren, has been meeting since Nov. 15, 1986. The mission presently has 92 enrolled in Sunday School. Murl Walker is mission pastor.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



East Side Church, Paragould, dedicated a \$2 million building program Nov. 22. The plant replaced facilities destroyed by a fire in 1985. Dedication speakers included Carroll Gibson, director of missions for Greene County Association, Jimmie Lou Fisher of Little Rock, state treasurer, and Clarence Shell, director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Jim Fowler is pastor.

VICES were conducted Nov. 17 by her brother-in-law, Elva Adams.

Myra McClanahan will begin serving in January of director of children and preschool ministries at Immanuel Church in Little Rock. She has been serving as director of preschool ministries.

W.R. Terry of Tyronza died Nov. 1 in Crittenden Memorial Hospital in West Memphis. His funeral services were held Nov. 3 at First Church, Tyronza, where he has served for 51 years as a deacon and had taught for many years in the intermediate Sunday School department. He was a 32nd degree Mason and had served as mayor of Tyronza. His survivors include a son, Dudley Terry; and a daughter, Mildred Carter, both of Tyronza; four grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Greg Murphy is serving Broadmoor Church at Brinkley as minister of music and youth. He is a student at Mid-America Seminary.

Mike Sheets has been elected as the 1987 Teacher of the Year by Arkansas Power and Light Company. He was chosen, along with nine others, for outstanding classroom achievement. He serves as music director at Immanuel Church in Texarkana.

Charles O'Neal began serving Nov. 15 as pastor of Lancaster Road in Little Rock. He and his wife, Patricia, moved there from Temple Church in Searcy.

Mike Downing is serving as pastor of Dolph Church at Calico Rock.

Jack Richardson has resigned as pastor of Union Hill Church at Hardy.

Bernard Beasley retired as pastor of First Church, Hardy, Dec. 1.

The Harold Russell Family was recently selected by the Osceola Lions Club as Osceola's Great American Family for their service to the community. Family members include Harold and Sharon and their daughters, Leah, Sarah, and Anna. She serves as a substitute teacher. Family members are actively involved in Osceola First Church, where he serves as a deacon.

Marian Teaford was recently recognized by Osceola First Church for her 40 years of service as church pianist when the morning worship was dedicated in her honor. She was presented with a gift from the sanctuary choir and with a monetary gift from the church. An evening reception concluded recognition activities.

Briefly

Prescott First Church ordained James W. Duke to the deacon ministry Nov. 8.

Eudora Church celebrated homecoming Nov. 29, using the theme "Turn Your Heart Toward Home." Bill Pittard, a former pastor, brought the morning message. A potluck meal was served at noon, followed by an afternoon program of music, fellowship, and reflections on the church's heritage, according to Pastor Jimmy Wallace.

Pine Bluff Immanuel Church 12-member mission team to Manaus, Brazil, the first church-sponsored foreign mission team, gave testimonies in the evening worship service Nov. 8, sharing how the church's finances had help to make possible not only the team trip, but to purchase property and to assist a pastor in Recife.

Little Rock Calvary Church ordained Bill Allen, Jan Barker, Dan Berry, Jim Byrum, John Cloud, and Craig Westbrock to the deacon ministry Nov. 15.

South Side Church in Fort Smith ordained Benny Higgs, Alan Hill, and Don McMinimy to the deacon ministry Nov. 15.

Forest Highlands Church in Little Rock youth have been assigned by the Home Mission Board to work at the Carver Baptist Center in New Orleans June 27-July 3.

Friendship Church at Springdale celebrated payment of a \$150,000 indebtedness on its worship center with a noteburning service Nov. 1. The note was paid in 18 months, according to Pastor Jack Anglin. Harold Gateley, director of missions for Washington-Madison Association, was speaker.

Barton Church will observe Church Appreciation Day Dec. 6. Doyle Neal will be speaker, and Truman Owens will direct music.

Wilson First Church observed Curtis and Clara Miller Day Nov. 15, recognizing their 47 years of service to the church. He has served as a deacon and church treasurer for 46 years. Willie Gleen Brown represented her mother, who is a patient in a nursing home. Harold Ray, director of missions for Mount Zion Association, was speaker.

Huttig First Church recognized three of its deacons Nov. 8 for their years of service. Those receiving plaques from interim pastor Lawrence Harrison were Fred M. Johnson for 59 years service, Rodney Johnson, 55 years, and N.W. Lee, 51 years.

Victory Church in Conway held its fall revival Nov. 1-4. Bill Kreis, director of mis-

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Golden Anniversary—Trinity Church, Texarkana, celebrated its 50th anniversary Nov. 22. The theme was "Fifty Years of 'Belonging.'" The congregation was number two in baptisms in 1986-87 and led the state in baptisms during the previous year. Speakers for the occasion were (left to right) Leo Hughes, Carroll Caldwell, D.C. McAtee, John Warren Nutt, Wallace Edgar, and Ed Brennan. Not pictured were Charles A. Baskin and J. Everett Sneed.

sions for Faulkner Association, was evangelist. Pastor Paul Parker directed music.

Wynne Church youth choir members have announced plans for a summer mission trip to San Francisco, Calif., Aug. 1-8. There they will work in cooperation with the Southern Baptist General Convention of California in the reconstruction and reclamation of properties for use as worship and Bible study facilities. In addition, the choir will lead in a four night youth rally.

Post Oak Church at Heber Springs has started a nursery program as a result of increased Sunday School attendance.

Beck Spur Church at Forrest City broke ground for a 11,000 square foot family life center Oct. 18 that will house classrooms, a fellowship area, kitchen, parlor, and small meeting rooms. Participating in the service were Winston Rice, a trustee; Mollie Cisco, a charter member; Johnny Watkins, chairman of ushers; Pastor Joe Craft; Nettie Lou Kimble, a charter member; and Steve

Abbott, chairman of the building and grounds committee.

Union Avenue Church at Wynne has completed payment of a \$16,000 indebtedness on its parking lot, according to Pastor Shelby Bittle.

Mount Pleasant Church at Montrose recently ordained Robert Barnes to the deacon ministry.

Central Church in Magnolia held a DiscipleLife Conference Nov. 20-22. Leaders were Mike Curry, Earnest Alexander, Mark McMasters and Sherrill McMasters.

DeValls Bluff First Church choir presented "Song of Thanksgiving" Nov. 22. Zelmadene Parker was director and Sharon Arnold served as pianist. Program personalities included Pastor Hubert Elliott, Lee Admire, Joe Harrison, Linda Smith, Diane Cook, Kay Holloway, Delbert Minton, Sherry West, Linda Price, Steve Crutchfield, and Curtis Arnold.

Correction

In the coverage of the 1987 Arkansas Baptist State Convention, published in the Nov. 26 ABN, Wilbur Herring should have been identified as pastor emeritus of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro. Rex Holt Jr. should have been identified as pastor of that same congregation. The ABN regrets the error.

ACTS To Air ABSC Special

A one-hour special featuring highlights of the recent Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting in Fort Smith will be aired on Arkansas ACTS affiliates Friday, Dec. 4, at 8:00 p.m. and again Sunday, Dec. 6, at 8 p.m., according to Mike Huckabee, president of ACTS of Arkansas.

The special, entitled "Strengthening Missions," will feature the message brought by Keith Parks, president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, as

well as highlights and other footage of the convention.

The airings are timed to coincide with the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and the ingathering of the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

Copies of the program will be available on one-half inch tape for interested churches, associations, and WMU groups. For more information, contact ACTS of Fort Smith, P.O. Box 609, Fort Smith, AR 72902.

Milking Equipment

Southern Baptist missionaries in Kenya have expressed a need for usable milking equipment to be donated to the Brackenhurst International Baptist Conference Center near Nairobi.

Needed are a vacuum pump, motor, tank regulator, gauge control, two milker units, strainer, two pulsators complete, one receiver and milk pump,

and one washing system.

Persons interested in helping meet this need may contact H.E. Williams, Southern Baptist College, Box 452, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

Bivocational Conference

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary will host a conference on bivocational ministry March 11-12, 1988.

Topics to be discussed include "Basics in Biblical Preaching," "Building and Strengthening A Leadership Team," "Ministering to Persons in Crisis," "Improving the Work of the Bivocational Minister of Music," and "The Bivocational Minister's Mate."

Registration will be limited to 50 couples. Cost is \$5 per person, including a Friday night banquet. Contact the Office of Continuing Education, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126; telephone 504-282-4455.

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Porn Bill Proposed

by Tim Fields

SBC Christian Life Commission

WASHINGTON (BP)—President Ronald Reagan has announced he is sending to Congress a legislative proposal to combat child pornography and obscenity in the United States.

Reagan made the announcement Nov. 10 at the close of a White House briefing with anti-pornography activists including N. Larry Baker, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Baker, a member of the executive committee of the Religious Alliance Against Pornography, attended the briefing along with other RAAP representatives. RAAP is a coalition of religious leaders representing a broad spectrum of denominations that focus their attention on fighting hardcore and child pornography.

Reagan said the bill, known as the Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1987, has a two-fold purpose: "The first is to update the law to take into account technologies newly utilized by the pornography industry; and second to remove loopholes and weaknesses in existing

federal law, which have given criminals in this area the upper hand for too long. This bill represents one point of a seven-point plan created by Attorney General Edwin Meese to crack down heavily on producers, distributors and retailers of obscenity.

"In the last several years distributors of obscenity and child pornography have expanded into new areas. They are employing new technologies and reaching new audiences. This is how any business grows and develops, except that this business is illegal.

"Neither our Constitution, our courts, our people, nor our respect for common decency and human suffering should allow the trafficking in obscene materials—which exploits women, children and men alike—to continue. This administration is putting the purveyors of

illegal obscenity and child pornography on notice: Your industry's days are numbered."

Reagan said one of the most serious obscenity problems is dial-a-porn: "This bill will provide prosecutors with a powerful weapon to attack the so-called dial-a-porn business that profits from obscenity."

Baker said, "The bill strikes at a cancer

(CLC) photo / Tim Fields



Reagan addresses anti-porn activists.

in our national life and gives tools to law enforcement personnel to excise the evil. It can help protect our children who are being savaged by child-porn merchants.

"This bill offers Southern Baptists a door of opportunity. Our action in support of it will encourage its passage. Letters, calls and telegrams to United States senators and representatives from hosts of our people will encourage our elected leaders to move swiftly and forcefully to deal with hardcore and child pornography.



Here am I,
send me.

Express your commitment
to the Great Commission.
Get involved in soul-winning.
Suggested date: January 10, 1988



WITNESS COMMITMENT DAY

Atlanta 'Fellowship'

ATLANTA (BP)—Key national leaders of the "conservative" movement in the Southern Baptist Convention—including the current SBC president and three past presidents, two past chairmen of the Committee on Boards and two men called the architects of the "conservative resurgence"—met at an Atlanta airport hotel for an all-day "private fellowship meeting" Nov. 16.

According to a statement released following the closed meeting, "a group of Southern Baptist laypeople and pastors concerned about peace in the convention met together. . . . The purpose of the meeting was to discuss appropriate responses to the widespread political activity of the 'moderates' throughout the Southern Baptist Convention."

About 40 people attended, said Homer Lindsay Jr., co-pastor of First Church of Jacksonville, Fla., and one of the participants.

Current SBC President Adrian Rogers and all three former SBC presidents since 1979—Bailey Smith, Jimmy Draper, and Charles Stanley—attended. Others included Lee Roberts, chairman of the 1986 Committee on Boards, and Brig. Gen. T.C. Pinckney, chairman of the 1987 Committee on Boards. Also present were Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, and Paul Pressler, a Texas appellate judge from Houston. Patterson and Pressler are believed to be the architects of the effort to turn the denomination to a more conservative direction.

Most of those present declined to discuss the purpose of the meeting, what was discussed or who invited them. Reporters were told by Patterson, "This is a closed meeting of Baptists who are here for fellowship."

Texas Meeting

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—A group of about 400 Texas Baptist laymen met prior to the first session of the 102nd annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Fort Worth to mark what they termed "the beginning of the end of an era of 'Pressler-Patterson' rule over our denomination."

The Nov. 10 breakfast meeting was organized by John Baugh, president of Houston's Sysco Food Systems, Inc., and a founder of "Laity for ... the Baptist Faith and Message," an organization of self-described "mainstream conservative Southern Baptists," formed about a year ago.

The group's stated objective is to end the string of officers elections won by conservatives in the Southern Baptist Convention since 1979. "We will win," said Baugh, "with truth, prayer and balance. We are here to discuss openly how to remove the spirit of 'Pressler-Patterson-ism' from Southern Baptist life."

This spirit, Baugh said, is marked primarily by "secrecy," "unethical" political practices and "wrong-doing."

The "Pressler-Patterson coalition" refers to Paul Pressler, a state appeals court judge from Houston and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies of Dallas.

Though Baugh's group was founded in Texas and primarily by Texans, he said that lay groups are being formed in other states and that editions of the group's publication, "Baptist Laity Journal," will be published for those states.

"We are dedicated to your right, your need to know the truth," Baugh said. "It's not terribly important which side you're on. The question is 'Will we remain on God's side?'"

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Brad Pollett	Batesville	Independence
Shawn Blase	Nashville	Little River *
Tony Hinch	Ashdown	Little River *
Margaret Cox	North Little Rock	North Pulaski
Kirsty McIntosh	Mena	Ouachita
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Five Resignations

by R.G. Puckett

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—W. Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for nearly 14 years, resigned during a special called meeting of trustees Nov. 17.

Morris Ashcraft, who has been academic dean for seven years, also resigned from the deanship, but will remain on the faculty.

Both resignations are effective July 31, 1988, or when successors are named.

The resignations of the two top officials at the Southern Baptist Convention-affiliated seminary had been expected since the trustees' fall meeting Oct. 12-13. Somewhat unexpected were the resignation of three top administrators: Jerry Niswonger, assistant to the president for student development; W. Robert Spinks, assistant to the president for financial development; and Rodney V. Byard, assistant to the president for communications.

The called meeting of trustees was scheduled to begin at 8 a.m. in the conference room of Plantation Inn, a motel near the campus, a departure from normal practice under which trustees meet on

campus. The session, however, was delayed until 8:31 a.m. because of a caucus by some of the trustees who wanted to remove Lolley by Jan. 1, 1988.

James T. DeLoach of Houston, vice chairman of the board, told Todd Ackerman of the Raleigh *News and Observer* some of the "more extreme" members wanted an interim president to take over in January.

"A lot of things were talked about and that was one, but I think something of a

consensus really came about here," DeLoach said of the decision to have Lolley stay until July 31, 1988.

DeLoach supported the recommendations of an ad hoc committee that met Nov. 3 and agreed to the date and terms of Lolley's termination. In addition to DeLoach, others who participated in the ad hoc committee were Chairman Robert D. Crowley of Rockville, Md.; and past chairmen Jesse Chapman of Asheville, N.C., and W. Lee Beaver Jr. of Chesterfield, Mo.

G. Paul Fletcher, director of business affairs, will assist Lolley during the transition, and, if a new president is not found by Aug. 1, 1988, Fletcher will become acting

Search Group Slates Meeting

ROCKVILLE, Md. (BP)—The search committee seeking a new president for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary has scheduled two meetings on the school's Wake Forest, N.C., campus and is seeking nominations.

Chairman Robert D. Crowley said the 12-member search committee or subcommittees of the group will meet with the seminary's Advisory Task Force Dec. 8, and with other groups including ad-

ministration, faculty, students and alumnae in meetings scheduled Jan. 21.

Members of the search committee include trustee officers: Crowley, chairman; James DeLoach of Houston, vice chairman; Ralph Holt of Wilmington, N.C., secretary; and Arlie McDaniel of Moscow, Idaho, treasurer.

Among other members is James Bryant of Fort Smith, Ark., chairman of the instruction committee.

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president.

In the event the new president prefers another financial officer, Fletcher will be given at least one year's notice of termination.

Under terms agreed to by trustees, Lolley will be permitted to live in the president's home until July 31. Since he is eligible for a sabbatical, which he has not taken, an amount equal to one year's base salary (\$72,000) will be deposited in his annuity funds with the SBC Annuity Board. He also will receive the traditional 10 percent of salary severance plus four weeks of pay for vacation earned but not taken. Lolley also will be allowed to take an item from the office he has occupied for 14 years as a memento of the position.

DeLoach and Beaver defended as fair but not excessive the recommendation of the trustees who worked out the severance.

Aschraft will take a sabbatical to which he is entitled and return to the faculty to teach theology. As dean, he will be given 10 percent of his salary (\$4,810.50) as severance pay.

In a news conference following the trustee meeting, Lolley said, "The vision I see for Southeastern Seminary is not seen by many of the men (trustees) with me," Lolley said. "They do not see my vision. Perhaps I do not see theirs. Our differences,

as I have told them, range from matters of governance, through theology and ecclesiology, to management and leadership styles.

"We really cannot stand ambiguity and hostility any longer. We must have clarification and healing. To that end I have moved to terminate my presidency."

Lolley said he has "four lingering questions" which he wants to ask Southern Baptists:

— "Do you recognize the differences between free-conscience, conservative trustees, and trustees with pre-packaged agendas who must report out the results of their agendas?"

— "Do you recognize the differences between 'biblical inerrancy' as a legitimate personal conviction or a theological construction and this concept as a code word for power politics?"

— "Do you recognize the differences between our 1963 confessional statement and our 1987 functional creed?"

— "How long will you go on calling young girls and women to faith in Jesus Christ; telling them to dedicate all their gifts to his Lordship; recommending them from your churches to your seminaries; and then upon their graduation refusing to consider them as pastors and teachers?"

Aschraft cited the election of three

trustees—Crowley, James DeLoach of Houston, and James Bryant of Fort Smith, Ark.—to positions of leadership as actions which "made it impossible for me to remain as the chief academic officer of the school."

Jobs Exchange

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Notices of employment sought or available will be posted for three consecutive weeks without charge for members of Arkansas Baptist churches. Church staff positions will not be included. Send name, address, telephone number, and statement of qualifications, experience, and type of employment sought or available to "Jobs Exchange," Arkansas Baptist News Magazine, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. Placement of a notice in the Jobs Exchange does not constitute an endorsement by the ABN.

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The Coming King

by Bill Bowen, First Church, Mena

Basic passage: Matthew 3:1-12

Focal passage: Matthew 3:1-6

Central truth: Repentance prepares us to receive Jesus as King.

Matthew wrote his gospel to demonstrate to the Jews that Jesus is the King as prophecy predicted. Throughout the gospel, Matthew will refer to Jesus as the "Son of David" so readers will understand the kingly lineage of Jesus. Matthew wanted his readers to have a clear understanding that Jesus was the kingly Messiah, just as the prophets foretold.

In unfolding the gospel story, Matthew told of John the Baptist's preparing the way for the coming king. John's preparation could be summarized by two words found in this passage: "repent" and "baptize."

Baptism in John's day was an act reserved for proselytes—Gentiles who wished to convert to Judaism. It symbolized a turning from the Gentile way of life to a belief in the God of Abraham and an acceptance of Jewish law.

John emphasized baptism to the Jews because they were outsiders looking in on God's plan. Because they had fallen into sin, they had missed God's plan for their nation. Thus, their baptism symbolized their turning to God's plan of grace brought by Jesus.

Before the Jews could be baptized, John emphasized that they needed to repent. This was a repentance entirely different than that practiced by the Pharisees which emphasized outward show and neglected inner belief. In the Bible there are several illustrations of false repentance: Pharaoh (Ex. 9:27), Balaam (Nu. 22:34), Achan (Jt. 7:20), Saul (1 S. 15:24), and Judas (Mt. 27:3-4). Each of these kinds of repentance point to a sorrow for being caught.

John was calling for true repentance. True repentance means a change in one's mind, will, and allegiance. It is turning to the plan God shows in Jesus. An example of this repentance is the thief on the cross (Lu. 23:41-42). He recognized that Jesus had no sin. However, he recognized that there was, indeed, sin in his life. When he asked Jesus for help, he realized Jesus was the only hope for eternal life.

Today we see Jesus as the King who has come. A turning from sin and a turning to Jesus are still the prerequisites for receiving Jesus as King.

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Life and Work

Fellowship That Conforms

by Curtis L. Mathis, First Church, Harrison

Basic passage: Philippians 3:7-16

Focal passage: Philippians 3:7,10,12-14

Central truth: The Christian has wealth of eternal value to know and experience the power of the living Christ that this world does not comprehend.

One could take all the wealth of the world, put it in a gigantic pile, until it outshines the noon-day sun; then place beside it one drop of the precious blood (1 P. 1:19) of Christ and it would all cheapen into fool's gold. Paul shares this view in plain language in that all he had before his conversion, he counted as "loss" (and even "dung") in comparison to what every believer has in Christ.

What does man give up when he believes in Christ as personal Savior? His fears, frustrations, sin's bondage, death, and eternal separation from God. Whatever the world offers weighs nothing on God's scales of eternal values. One can gain the whole world, yet in losing his own soul, he makes eternity's worst bargain (Mk. 8:36-37).

Paul's desire was to know Christ (Ph. 3:10). This was more than an intellectual knowledge or even a personal conversion experience. Paul had already known him in this way for many years. Paul's desire was to experience Christ's continuing resurrection power experientially for fellowship and living.

The Christian at conversion has an eternal perfect standing before God (Ro. 5:1) but there should be a continual striving toward maturity in his personal experience (Ph. 3:12-14). The Christian race is not for salvation but a result of our new position in Christ.

Single-mindedness is a basic characteristic for success in any area of life. For the Christian who wishes to conform to God's purpose for his life it is an essential. The past is full of memories, both precious and regretful, but to live in the past has no rewards. Past sins have been forgiven and forgotten (Jr. 31:34). Neither must spiritual blessings of yesterday be food for today's responsibilities. We must daily experience fellowship with him if we are to be conformed to his image. The prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus is the Lord's "well done." This should be every believer's heartbeat.

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Bible Book

Growing In His Faith

by Don Miller, First Church, Trumans

Basic passage: Genesis 20-21

Focal passage: Genesis 20:2-3, 7-9; 21:1-3, 9-13

Central truth: Spiritual growth is a continual process rather than a condition which one finally achieves.

The Bible is always honest as it portrays it heroes. Both strengths and weaknesses are revealed. In these chapters we find in Abraham that curious mixture which is in us all.

As Abraham settles in the area of Gerar he is 99 years old. Sarah, the bride of his youth, is 90. Looking at Sarah he still beholds a woman of beauty whom others might desire for their own. Yet his actions come out in contradiction of his vision toward Sarah. Instead of seeking to protect her, he seeks his own safety. He again has Sarah present herself as his sister rather than as his wife. While this is half true, she was his half-sister, it was told with the intent to deceive. This same deception had caused both him and others problems before and would do so again (see Ge. 12).

Did Abimelech see Sarah as a 90-year-old beauty as Abraham did, or simply seek to align his forces with Abraham's by marriage? Remember, Abraham's personal servants were a powerful military force. They had defeated a mighty army earlier (Ge. 14). The Scripture does not tell us his motive. But this event threatened to compromise God's promise of Isaac. God delivers, prospers, and protects Abraham in spite of his weaknesses.

Chapter 21 briefly records what must have been a very painful experience for Abraham. A rivalry had developed between Ishmael and Isaac (or between Hagar and Sarah). Ishmael was Abraham's legal heir, howbeit he was not the heir of promise. When Sarah demanded an ousting of Hagar and her son, Abraham was very grieved and distressed. He had a father's love toward Ishmael. Only after God had promised to bless and prosper Ishmael did Abraham heed Sarah's desire. Could it be that this experience of committing and entrusting Ishmael to God helped prepare him for the time of testing that would later come with the call to offer Isaac as a sacrifice?

God is faithful even when we are not. We can trust God and should seek him in all of life's decisions from the simplest to the most complex.

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(BP) photo / Mickey Grant



Stan Cottrell (left) and Paek Shin Gi (center) run through Korea.

'Staying The Course'

By **Erich Bridges**
SBC Foreign Mission Board

SEOUL, South Korea (BP)—Long-distance runner Stan Cottrell ran more than 250 miles in 10 days to salute the people of South Korea and Baptists there.

That's about "a marathon a day," said Southern Baptist missionary David Bishop, who organized the late October-early November run from the southern city of Mokpo to Seoul.

Korean Baptist pastor Paek Shin Gi ran the entire distance with Cottrell. Bishop,

a competitive marathon runner, joined the two for long portions of the run.

The distance was no big deal for Cottrell, a Southern Baptist who attends First Baptist Church of Atlanta. He has amazed the sports world for years with his record-setting runs across the United States, Europe and China. But Cottrell was almost ecstatic about Korean response to his latest feat.

"This is the best of the best," he said after finishing the run in Seoul where he was welcomed at the city's Olympic committee headquarters by Baptists, mis-

sionaries, Korean and International Olympic Committee officials and American Ambassador James Lilley. Seoul will host the Summer Olympics next year, and Baptists and missionaries plan a variety of ministries.

"I'm here to say how much we cherish the friendship between the United States and the people of Korea," he told the group. "Now the eyes of the world are upon you as you prepare for the 1988 Olympics, and I just salute you for your commitment and your effort."

"It's well known what Baptists are doing in Korea, and as one Christian to another I just want to encourage you. People back home are talking about what is going on in Korea. Your faithfulness and your love for the Lord are inspiring untold millions of people."

Escorted from start to finish by Korean police, the Baptist trio ran through dozens of towns and villages along the route, meeting with mayors and other officials and speaking in churches. On one Sunday morning Cottrell spoke in three different churches within 90 minutes, running from one to the next. But he said spontaneous encounters meant the most to him.

"The farmers would come up out of the rice fields and stand on the side of the road. People would blow their horns and wave — the shop owners, the people in cars and buses," he related. At one city hall welcoming ceremony, two little girls emerged from the spectators and presented him with bouquets of flowers. "They did it on their own. They bowed very politely, and I guess they were maybe 10 years old. Just the look on their faces — the joy and the smiles and half-embarrassed at the same time — that kind of captures it."

People seemed to appreciate that someone would "care enough about their country and about them to come and meet them on this kind of one-on-one and person-to-person basis," Bishop said.

Both national television networks broadcast numerous reports on the run, providing wide public exposure for Baptists. The attention proved especially valuable in the southwest region where the run began. Baptist work there is weaker than in other areas, and many churches are struggling.

Missionary Notes

Jerry and Margot Fray, missionaries to Mali, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 962 N. Eighth, Arkadelphia, AR 71923). Son of Southern Baptist missionaries, he was born in Texas and grew up in Zimbabwe. She is the former Margot Pitt of Texas. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1984.

Robert and Janice Mooney, missionaries to Zambia, have arrived on the field to begin language study (address: P.O. Box 50599, Lusaka, Zambia). He was born in Marvell. The former Janice Anglin, she is from Louisiana. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1987.

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MISSIONARIES INSIST

'Not Subversives'

by Marty Croll

SBC Foreign Mission Board

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)—Southern Baptists in Kenya expected to publish a statement in two large English-language newspapers Nov. 22 responding to widespread panic over allegations that American missionaries could be involved in an overthrow plot in the east African nation.

Since Nov. 13 Kenya has expelled 16 missionaries from various mission groups for allegedly being linked to a plot by a white supremacy group related to the Ku Klux Klan. The Baptist statement calls published reports of the story "detrimental to missions and missionaries."

None of those expelled from Kenya have been Southern Baptists, but government officials have approached two Southern Baptist missionaries in different parts of the country to see if they had any information concerning the matter.

Seven deportations Nov. 13 were triggered by a memo the Kenyan government claims to have recovered and used to avert an overthrow, according to published news reports in the United States. A story about the memo was published in three of Kenya's main newspapers Nov. 14.

The memo was addressed to American KKK members, and printed on the stationery of Foscoe Christian Church in Boone, N.C. It appears to have been signed by the church's pastor, Kenneth A. Caswell, who denies any previous knowledge of it, according to reports published in the United States. The memo outlines a plot to topple several African presidents by using undercover operatives masked as American missionaries and financed by an \$80 million war chest.

According to published reports, the U.S. Embassy called the story of the plot "baseless" and the memo "a forgery." One State Department official in Washington called the whole affair "patently absurd."

But many politicians and newspapers in the east African nation of 22 million people apparently accepted the letter's authenticity without question. Some influential Kenyans have urged fellow countrymen to seek out missionary collaborators other than the seven named in the letter and to be wary of "evil foreigners" who pretend to do the Lord's work.

Apparently to distance its missionaries from any effort related to racism, the Southern Baptist statement speaks out against attempts to control power through racial balance. "As Scripture so clearly teaches that all men are created equal in the sight of God, we wish to register our op-

position to any system of rule which subjugates one tribe or race over another," it says. "No Bible-believing Christian can support the apartheid system, wherever it is found."

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has a policy prohibiting its missionaries from becoming involved politically in any of the countries where they work.

An estimated 7,000 American missionaries — including about 100 under Southern Baptist appointment — work in Kenya.

A Dose Of Common Sense

by Art Toalston

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Baptists in France may be few in number, but they have something to say that makes sense.

Andre Souchon, general secretary of the French Baptist Federation, says an effective starting point for introducing the gospel in France is to assert, "You are not born a Christian; you must become one."

Nominal Roman Catholics often respond, "That makes sense." Of France's 50 million people, 80 percent are officially Catholic, but only 8 percent practice their faith, Souchon says. Thus, most Catholics "use God three times in their lives — baptism, wedding and burial — which means only once consciously."

Souchon was in Richmond, Va., to visit the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He represents 4,000 Baptists in 83 French churches.

A generation ago, Souchon explains, many people stopped sending their children to Catholic catechism classes. So today, people age 18 to 30 are more receptive, he said, in the sense that their doctrinal beliefs don't have to be changed before bringing them the gospel. Their basic concepts of God are those drawn from their philosophy classes in high school and college.

A brief witness is not sufficient to prompt French people to come to church, however, Souchon notes. Much time must be invested in building relationships before they accept.

Souchon says it takes time to help people overcome errant notions such as, "I was baptized when I was 4 days old and now I've got a ticket to paradise."

But, he reiterates, "It appeals to them, this idea of coming to Jesus instead of just being born Catholic."