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Campolo sticks by Clinton amid new allegations

By Steve DeVane

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (ABP) -- One of President Clinton's closest spiritual advisers has said he will not abandon the president regardless of the outcome of new allegations against him.

Tony Campolo, a professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pa., said he hopes the allegations prove to be false. He said he will try to treat the president as Jesus would treat him in this situation.

Charges surfaced Jan. 21 that Clinton had an affair with a 21-year-old White House intern and encouraged her to lie about it under oath. Clinton denied the charges.

Answering reporters' questions about the allegations in Winston-Salem, N.C., Campolo, one of a handful of ministers who have visited the White House frequently during Clinton's presidency, defended the president.

"I know this president is somebody who is a caring father, a loving husband, and somebody who is concerned about the poor and the oppressed," Campolo said.

Campolo said he hasn't talked to the president since the accusations surfaced, but he plans to speak to Clinton within the next few days.

Campolo said he is worried that some other ministers may try to distance themselves from Clinton because they are worried about their reputations.

"I follow a man who really didn't give a hoot about his reputation," Campolo said. "As a matter of fact, I think Jesus had the worst reputation in Jerusalem."

Campolo said he cried when his wife told him about the allegations during a phone call Wednesday night.

"If the worst is true, I'll be a heartbroken person, because he's my friend," Campolo said.

Campolo said he rose early Thursday morning to pray for Clinton, the young woman and the country.

"This is a very troubling day in the history of the United States of America," he said. "These are difficult days for me."

Campolo said he worries about people who take delight in other people's adversities. "To not be hopeful for the best in all of this would be to be something less than a good American," he said.

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Southern Baptist leaders pledge support for Israel

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Southern Baptist leaders have assured Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu they will use their pulpits to encourage support for Israel.

A delegation of pastors -- including Morris Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, and independent Baptist leader Jerry Falwell -- met privately with Netanyahu Jan. 19 in Washington.

Falwell said he and Southern Baptist leaders told Netanyahu they would mobilize evangelical churches to oppose Israel's ceding of any more territory to the Palestinians.

One of the pastors, Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church in Tucker, Ga., said leaders pledged their support for Israel "not as a denomination but as individuals."

In the meeting, Lee told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "Mr. Netanyahu raised valid concerns that for peace to prevail there is a necessity for Palestinians to renounce violence and terrorism and to repudiate a section of their charter that calls for the destruction of Israel."

"Most Southern Baptists, as do most evangelicals, have a long record of appreciation for and support of Israel," Chapman told Baptist Press. Chapman said he is "quite sure that scores of thousands" of Southern Baptists pray regularly for the Middle East, its leaders and its people.

"It seems apparent to me that the strength and security of Israel is a key to the peace of the region, and perhaps that of the entire world," Chapman said.

But Chapman said he did not speak for all Southern Baptists in his meeting with Netanyahu. "While I had the opportunity to meet with the prime minister personally, it is well known that Southern Baptists individually form their own assessment of world affairs," Chapman said.

Other observers, however, say Southern Baptist support for Israel is driven by a view of the end times that places great importance on Israel.

William Stephens, who tracked Southern Baptist theology in his former position as a curriculum designer for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, said support for Israel is a central theme for "dispensationalists," who believe the Jewish temple in Jerusalem must be rebuilt before Jesus can return.

That view is held by several top leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention, Stephens said. "One driving force behind the SBC takeover was to use the convention as a power base to affect U.S. policy toward Israel," Stephens wrote in a series of articles for the moderate newspaper Baptists Today.

"Fundamentalists believe the United States is the nation assigned by God the work of aiding Israel in these end times," said Stephens, who is now retired. "Dispensationalists fervently want the U.S. to fulfill its role and intend to see that it does."

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-- By Bob Allen

Pope's visit to Cuba raises hope for Christians

HAVANA (ABP) -- Pope John Paul II's trip to Cuba brought huge crowds, media attention and hopes that the symbolic visit would have lasting effects for both Catholics and Protestants in the island nation.

Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said he hoped the pope's five-day visit, which began Jan. 21, would "open wide the doors to religious freedom for all Christians."

Thousands of journalists traveled to Cuba to cover the clash of values symbolized in the meeting between the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and the head of the Western Hemisphere's only socialist state.

Fidel Castro was raised a Catholic but "never really held a religious belief," he told Brazilian journalist Frei Betto in the book "Fidel and Religion." Castro has been impressed over the years by liberation theology and has said every educated person should read the Bible. He called Jesus "a great revolutionary" and said Karl Marx would have subscribed to the Sermon on the Mount.

The pope, meanwhile, has steadfastly argued for Christian values such as human rights and individual dignity, even in the face of communist dictators.

Castro has used the event to showcase Cuba's new openness to religion. In preparation for the pope's visit, Cuba permitted the first public celebration of Christmas in three decades.

In 1991 Castro rescinded a ban against Christians joining the Communist Party. In 1992 he declared Cuba a secular, not atheist, state.

Observers say a religious revival is taking pace in Cuba, as citizens seek to fill a void left by disenchantment with the failed policies of Castro's Communist Party. Attendance has increased in both Catholic and evangelical churches.

More than 35,000 baptized believers belong to 400 Baptist churches spread across the island, said Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance. The BWA, a fellowship of 100 million Baptists worldwide, relates to three groups in Cuba: the Eastern and Western Baptist conventions and the Freewill Baptist Convention. Membership in the Eastern and Western conventions has doubled in recent years, Lotz said.

"In the last two years, the prayers and suffering of the Baptist people have resulted in a revival," Lotz said.

Lotz said economic hardships led many Cubans to attend church. "A certain desperation had set in and the people became hopeless," Lotz said. "Searching for hope, many people began to visit Baptist churches."

One point of agreement between the pontiff and Castro is opposition to the United States' 32-year trade embargo against Cuba.

At a welcoming ceremony at the Havana airport, the pope indirectly criticized the embargo. "May Cuba, with all its magnificent potential, open itself up to the world, and may the world open itself up to Cuba," he said.

Castro, in his welcoming speech, called the embargo "genocide" and told the pope: "We feel the same way you do about many important issues of today's world. In other matters our views are different, but we are most respectful of your strong convictions about the ideas you defend."

The Clinton administration has said it has no plans to lift the embargo.

Lotz said he opposes the embargo. "It is my personal feeling that the boycott is not helpful," he said. "It hurts the people who need the most help."

National Baptists shun reporters, but support embattled president

By David Finnigan

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (ABP) -- Most people attending the Jan 19-22 mid-winter board meeting of the National Baptist Convention shunned reporters. But the few pastors talking to the press said they and many other preachers are supporting their scandal-plagued convention president, Henry Lyons.

Singer Stevie Wonder and activist Jesse Jackson came to this gathering of 4,000 board members, pastors and their wives -- virtually all of them African-American. Speaking at board meetings held at Los Angeles' Regal Biltmore, both men compared denomination to a family that must forgive and support Lyons, a St. Petersburg, Fla., pastor accused of womanizing and misusing church funds.

Regarding Lyons' ongoing legal and financial problems, Jackson told Associated Baptist Press: "That matter's being handled, the legal part is being handled in the courts. The convention is proceeding with its work, and friends of Rev. Lyons have set up a defense fund. So the matter has been put in perspective, it seems to me."

Precisely what the convention's "work" was at this meeting was hard to determine. Reporters were not allowed to attend the long, daily, closed-door board meetings. No press releases or even general media information kits were made available. Lyons did not answer reporters' questions and was unavailable for interviews. A press conference with a Lyons supporter was first slated for Wednesday night, then rescheduled for Thursday afternoon, well after the board meeting had adjourned. Convention security guards would not allow reporters to walk through the convention's tiny vendor section, and a registration desk staffer firmly intervened as a reporter interviewed a pastor nearby.

The National Baptist Convention claims 8.2 million members. One pro-Lyons pamphlet describes it in part as, "the Supreme Court of Negro Baptists" At the 1997 annual convention in Denver, Lyons survived an attempt to oust him from the denomination's presidency, a five-year post expiring in 1999.

This came after Lyons in 1996 returned \$214,500 to the Anti-Defamation League after only \$30,000 of \$244,500 in Jewish agency donations was spent helping rebuild burned black churches. In July 1997, police charged Lyons' wife, Deborah, with arson for setting fire to a house deeded to Lyons and another woman. [Pleading no contest, his wife received five years' probation.] That event led to news reports of Lyons and the other woman sharing ownership of a Mercedes-Benz valued at more than \$120,000 and at least one other home.

That's all water under the bridge to many at this board meeting. "This is the National Baptist Convention, and the office of president is much bigger than the man," said Ira Acree, a Chicago pastor. "We refuse to allow outside forces to dictate to us how to run a spiritual institution. We don't profess to be judges or lawyers, we're preachers and pastors. There's gotta be some sanctity as it relates to our [financial] records, and our privacy as a church."

Others echoed such comments. Several pastors, in separate interviews, compared Lyons' problems to those of President Clinton's personal life. When asked about the propriety of Lyons reportedly taking \$350,000 from the Nigerian government when he spoke on their behalf, Detroit pastor Gary Hunter said trips to Africa cost money and somebody has to pay. "When Jesse [Jackson] goes to Africa, he takes 10, 15, 20 people."

The Lyons issue, pastors said, reflects internal church politics and not what's happening on a local, church-by-church basis.

"We cannot allow allegations to stop God's program," said pastor Larry Watson, Jr., of Pensacola, Fla. "We are not lawyers, we are not crucifiers, we're Christians. Even if this were a legitimate indictment [Lyons problems,] it still wouldn't stop the local church. We have a mandate from God. This is something that has not affected my ministry in Pensacola."

Southern Seminary transfers Carver School to university

By Mark Wingfield

CAMPBELLSVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- After nearly three years of negotiations, Campbellsville University has obtained the remnants of the Carver School of Church Social Work from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Closure on the deal was announced Jan. 19 by a news release from Campbellsville, a liberal arts school affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"The Carver School of Social Work already has established itself nationally as a leading academic center for graduate studies in social work," noted Campbellsville President Ken Winters. "We at Campbellsville University will continue that standard of excellence."

Winters said Campbellsville could reopen the Carver School as early as next fall.

Trustees of Southern Seminary in Louisville voted in 1995 to close the school after conflict between seminary President Albert Mohler and Carver School Dean Diana Garland created a major upheaval on campus. Garland contended Mohler had implemented restrictive hiring policies that made it impossible to hire qualified social work faculty and retain accreditation. Mohler accused Garland of insubordination and fired her.

Subsequently, trustees voted to close the Carver School upon Mohler's recommendation. The seminary offered its last classes through the school in the spring of 1997.

Terms of the agreement between Southern Seminary and Campbellsville were not disclosed at the request of attorneys for both parties, according to Campbellsville spokesman Marc Whitt.

Neither Campbellsville nor Southern officials would say exactly what was transferred in the deal or whether Campbellsville paid Southern anything in return. No real estate or endowment funds appear to have been transferred.

Mohler, in a written statement, said that "no endowment goes with the transfer of the school to Campbellsville University."

"What is being transferred to Campbellsville is basically the legal entity known as the Carver School of Church Social Work established by Southern Seminary in 1983, its records and other documentation needed to be re-established in a new location," Mohler added. "Also transferred are some library materials, especially those purchased by the seminary in recent years related specifically to the discipline of social work."

Whitt said the university already has begun a search for a dean of the Carver School. The university also has begun conversations with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Council on Social Work Education about accrediting a proposed master's degree in social work, he said.

Accreditation could become a sticking point in the transfer. The Council on Social Work Education has stringent regulations for the programs it accredits. One part of the conflagration at Southern was a perceived conflict between the philosophies of the seminary administration and the requirements of the accrediting agency.

Mohler said at one point social-work education is "not congruent" with the seminary's mission.

Ironically, it was desire to gain accreditation that led to the Carver School's merger with Southern Seminary in 1963. The Carver School originally was owned by Woman's Missionary Union, an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, and managed by a separate board of trustees. To become accredited, the Carver School had to become associated with an already accredited academic institution.

An arduous accreditation process dragged on for 20 years. During that time, the social work program was housed in the seminary's school of Christian education. When the program finally was accredited in 1983, the Carver School of Church Social Work became a separate school within the seminary.

Despite that history, Whitt said Campbellsville officials are optimistic about regaining accreditation for the Carver School. Representatives of the Council on Social Work Education will visit Campbellsville's campus in early March, he said.

Campbellsville currently offers an undergraduate program in social work, which it has been seeking to have accredited as well. The university currently has two full-time faculty and five adjunct professors teaching social work students.

Whitt said Campbellsville tentatively plans to operate the Carver School in the Louisville area and is seeking a place to house the school. Final details will be worked out after determining accreditation requirements and learning about the interest of potential students, he said.

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Disagreement could loom over Carver School assets

By Mark Wingfield

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- Although all parties involved are keeping a low profile now, a fight could be brewing over what should become of the assets given by Woman's Missionary Union to benefit Southern Baptist Theological Seminary when the seminary assumed ownership of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work in 1963.

Now that the seminary has ceased to operate the Carver School and transferred its remains to Campbellsville University, WMU officials are poised to face this question directly. It has been simmering on the back burner for nearly three years, since seminary trustees voted to close the Carver School.

Although WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien and Southern Seminary President Albert Mohler reportedly met to discuss the subject two years ago and the WMU executive board was briefed on it, no action has yet resulted.

"It's not a dead issue," O'Brien said in a Jan. 20 interview. "We've just been sort of at a stalemate with Southern not quite finalized on the disposition of the Carver School."

O'Brien said WMU leaders had determined "not to take any action until it was clear the trust funds were not being used as they were given."

Now that final disposition of the Carver School has been announced, WMU may take a fresh look at the question, O'Brien acknowledged.

What's most likely at stake is several hundred thousand dollars of endowment funds, including funding for scholarships and an endowed chair that bears WMU's name. Although WMU also gave the seminary three parcels of real estate valued at \$799,500 along with the Carver School in 1963, WMU has given no indication it would seek to reclaim that property.

The assets and endowments of the Carver School were raised largely through donations from Baptist women across the South through the first half of this century.

Mohler spoke of the transfer to Campbellsville only in terms of the Carver School's recent history. "What is being transferred to Campbellsville is basically the legal entity known as the Carver School of Church Social Work established by Southern Seminary in 1983," he said in a statement.

Whether the Carver School of Church Social Work that existed as part of Southern Seminary from 1983 to 1997 can be separated from its predecessor organizations could become a key point in determining the fate of the assets.

The Carver School of Church Social Work, as it was known in its final decade at Southern Seminary, had origins in the WMU Training School founded in Louisville in 1907. At the time, Southern Seminary did not admit female students, so the Training School was one of the few opportunities available to Baptist women for ministry preparation.

From its inception, the WMU Training School emphasized hands-on missions and social ministry, long before social work had been identified in America as a profession. Students in the early days obtained field ministry experience through the Baptist Training School Settlement, the Southern Baptist Convention's first settlement house ministering to immigrants.

Historical documents show continued growth of the Training School's social-work emphasis. In 1952 it was renamed the Carver School of Missions and Social Work. The school was named for William Owen Carver, who was instrumental in forming the WMU Training School and was its first professor.

Although the Carver School already offered degrees in social work, by the late 1950s and early 1960s accrediting agencies were gaining prominence nationwide and the school's leaders determined the master's program in social work needed to be accredited.

According to historical documents and individuals familiar with the Carver School's history, that prompted WMU and the Carver School trustees to request a merger with Southern Seminary. The Carver School had been told accreditation would not be possible unless the school were a part of an already established and accredited academic institution.

The Carver School and Southern Seminary already enjoyed a close working relationship and were located on adjacent properties.

Duke McCall, who was seminary president at the time, recalls the tough negotiations that went into the deal. Gaining accreditation was not easy, even after the seminary took over the school, he said.

When the renamed Carver School of Church Social Work finally offered an accredited degree in 1984, it became the only accredited school of church social work in America.

That came to an end with the 1995 vote by seminary trustees to close the Carver School after a showdown between Mohler and Carver School Dean Diana Garland.

Soon after a decision was made to close the Carver School, the seminary negotiated with Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., about acquiring the school. Those talks broke off, however, just days before a scheduled trustee vote, reportedly because Samford and Southern could not agree on what assets should be transferred with the Carver School.

Several months later, WMU officials began investigating whether the national women's organization had claim to Carver School assets transferred to or directed to benefit the seminary in 1963.

When Southern Seminary took over the Carver School from Woman's Missionary Union in 1963, the seminary received three parcels of land, including the building which housed the Carver School. The seminary also became the provisional beneficiary of several endowment funds related to the Carver School.

The endowment funds include a Carver School general endowment, the Margaret M. Norton Fund, the William Owen Carver Fund and nine scholarship funds.

Six years prior to the formal merger of the Carver School with Southern Seminary, the WMU executive board gave all these endowment funds to the Southern Baptist Foundation to act as trustee. The total value at the time of the transaction in 1957 was \$355,547.

O'Brien said she did not know the exact value of the endowment funds today but suggested it is "several hundred thousand dollars."

According to the legal documents executed at the time, these funds were given to the Foundation with the earnings to be used to further the purpose of the Carver School. When the Carver School merged with Southern Seminary in 1963, the WMU executive board took further action to make Southern the recipient of earnings from these funds "provided that the seminary uses such income in conformity with the requirements of the trust agreement" between WMU and the Foundation.

If WMU decides to pursue a claim to redirect the Carver School endowment funds away from Southern Seminary, the argument likely will hinge on whether the seminary still is fulfilling the purpose for which the Carver School monies were given.

Part of that endowment has funded an academic chair at Southern Seminary. When the Carver School was in operation, the chair was called the WMU professor of social work. It traditionally was held by the dean of the Carver School.

Now that the Carver School no longer exists at Southern, the seminary has appointed a professor of black church studies to the chair, which it now calls WMU professor of Christian ministries.

When Mohler was questioned about this arrangement during the seminary's spring 1997 trustee meeting, he responded that the seminary would continue to offer training in social work even without the Carver School.

The seminary's current academic catalogue lists 37 courses under the heading "church social work," but none of those courses are offered in the spring 1998 semester. And the seminary's 1997-98 directory of faculty and students lists no faculty members with a specific assignment of teaching social work.

Should WMU determine that Southern Seminary no longer is fulfilling the purpose for which the Carver School funds were given, WMU officials would have to direct the Southern Baptist Foundation to change the beneficiary.

Whether the Foundation, which now is a subsidiary of the SBC Executive Committee, could or would agree to such a change has not been made known.

The trust agreement between WMU and the Foundation states that the funds given to the Foundation's care are to be used "for the use and benefit of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work ... and for the use and benefit of any institution doing like work into which the said Carver School of Missions and Social Work may hereafter be merged or with which it may hereafter be consolidated, including any institution doing the same work controlled by the Southern Baptist Convention which may hereafter become the legal successor of the said Carver School of Missions and Social Work."

Further indication of the intent of WMU and Carver School leaders at the time of the merger is seen in the recommendation presented by Carver School trustees to the SBC annual meeting in 1962. The third part of that recommendation, which was adopted by the convention, read: "That the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary be requested to accept the assets of the Carver School and to operate its program in such manner as will in good faith seek to achieve the purposes set forth in the Carver School charter."

Similar language was used in a recommendation from Carver School trustees to messengers attending the SBC's 1963 annual meeting. Recommendations regarding the Carver School transfer, and specifically the transfer of assets, stipulated that the seminary operate the Carver School's program "in such a manner as in good faith will seek to achieve the purposes as set forth in the Carver School charter."

The Carver School charter, as last amended in 1957 and filed with the Jefferson County Clerk's office, states the Carver School's purpose as this: "To provide and maintain a school under the management and control of the Southern Baptist Convention of the highest spiritual and educational standards for the training of personnel in church social work and specialized missionary service for the propagation of the Christian faith."

That purpose statement, found in Article 2 of the Carver School charter, also is cited in the trust agreement between WMU and the Southern Baptist Foundation.

After citing that statement, the trust adds: "Whenever the Southern Baptist Convention, a corporation, or its legal successor shall cease to conduct a school under the control of said Southern Baptist Convention or its legal successor for uses and purposes as set forth in said Article 2 of the Articles of Incorporation of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work as quoted above, the trust shall terminate and the corpus shall be returned to the Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, or its legal successor in interest."

Baptist speaker Tony Campolo pulls no punches in Missouri

By Rob Marus

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (ABP) -- Baptist speaker Tony Campolo -- known for his outspoken views on issues affecting church and society -- pulled no punches in two recent appearances in Jefferson City, Mo.

Campolo, an American Baptist minister and author of more than 20 books, spoke to Missouri political leaders at the annual governor's prayer breakfast Jan. 9. The night before, he spoke to about 100 college students in a statewide forum on faith and values. Both events were sponsored by the governor's office. Gov. Mel Carnahan, a Democrat, is a member of First Baptist Church in Rolla, Mo.

At the student conference, Campolo described his reluctance to join "the relentless evangelical march towards condemnation of homosexuals" because, he said, it breeds hatred rather than love.

Campolo told the story he has repeated often of a homosexual boy in his high school who committed suicide after being taunted by classmates. The incident led the young Campolo to repent. "I knew then that I wasn't a follower of Jesus," he said. "Because if I was a follower of Jesus, I would have stood up for Roger."

"You don't have to approve of what a person does to defend that person's dignity and rights," Campolo said.

The student gathering focused on Jesus as a model for leadership. Campolo said Christ's ability to serve without controlling was the true test of a great leader. "There is a big difference between power and authority," he said. "Jesus speaks as one having authority."

The use of power is the antithesis of Christ's methods, Campolo said. "Everything you understood about power is obliterated in the context of the Christian faith. If there was anything that Jesus was about as a leader, he was about rejecting status. He was about loving the lost, the last and the least."

Campolo encouraged the students to reject the desire to gain power and instead to become leaders who embrace the desire to love and to do good.

"In any relationship, whoever is exercising the most power is exercising the least love," Campolo told the students. "The more you love, the less you can exercise power."

In his speech at the governor's prayer breakfast, Campolo lamented the tendency of Americans to desire only happiness and success for their children.

"More important than happiness and more important than success is good," he said. "God save a nation that has made happiness its ultimate goal! I want America to be committed to goodness and righteousness."

Campolo said he and his wife raised their children to define success as being mission-oriented rather than consumer-oriented. "The purpose of our salvation is not to go to heaven when we die, but so that we might be better equipped to be instruments of God, to do his work here on earth."

Carol Craighead, who attended the prayer breakfast and served as a facilitator for the student leadership forum, said Campolo challenged the groups "to reach outside our circle -- our comfort zones -- and minister to the downtrodden, to the oppressed, to the unlovely."

"And that's not always what we want to do," she said.

Campolo has predicted Pentecostalism will be the next big issue facing Southern Baptists. Asked about that, Campolo said because Southern Baptists are "so big and so successful in their own realm," they have largely ignored a charismatic movement that is sweeping the world.

"My opinion as a sociologist is that, in cities across the South, Baptist churches will soon experience leakage of members into charismatic churches -- if they haven't already," Campolo said. "We have to ask ourselves, what is it about the charismatic movement that is feeding people's hunger worldwide?"

Campolo also responded to a question about the position that some of his fellow leaders in Evangelicals for Social Action recently have taken supporting the idea of federal tax vouchers for private and parochial schools. He said his Baptist heritage causes him to distance himself from a pro-voucher position because of church-state separation principles.

"I think that vouchers are an absolute disaster," he said. "And I don't think that the white, middle-class people who run ESA understand that."

"The minute you introduce the voucher system -- and we know this because they have threatened as much -- every right-wing militia group in this country will demand its own schools," Campolo predicted. "I don't think the taxpayers should have to fund schools of hate."

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William Jewell coach on roll at alma mater

By Rob Marus

LIBERTY, Mo. (ABP) -- When Larry Holley began coaching men's basketball at the college level, he wasn't sure he would succeed. In fact, it took 14 years for his career win-loss record to reach .500. With that figure long behind him, a new "500" has taken its place.

Holley posted his 500th career victory Jan. 5 when he coached the William Jewell College Cardinals to a 95-77 victory over Peru (Neb.) State. Holley was modest about the accomplishment. "It was very special," he said. "It means I've been very fortunate to have a lot of things -- the support of a great administration, good assistants and wonderful players."

It also means a high-water mark for a college basketball career that started when Holley was a student at the Baptist college in Liberty, Mo.

Holley said he chose William Jewell because it "was small and it allowed me to be involved in other things than athletics." As a student, Holley served as president of his fraternity, performed with both the concert band and chapel choir and lettered four times in three sports -- the last Jewell athlete to accomplish that feat.

Though track and cross-country were his favorite sports, Holley knew since high school that his real talent was basketball. Playing for his high school in tiny Jameson, Mo., Holley led the team to a 33-1 record and a third-place finish in the state tournament for the old Class S.

After graduating from Jewell in 1967, Holley went on to get a master's degree in physical education before easing into his first head coaching job.

"My best friend was in line for the job at Central Methodist College [in Fayette, Mo.,] but he got drafted into the Vietnam War," Holley said. "He gave them my name, and they hired me. I knew nothing about recruiting, or head coaching, but here I was at a head coaching job on the college level."

In six years at Central Methodist, Holley built a record of 61-93. While not impressive by most standards, Holley said he was "proud of all those wins," as well as "a few of the losses."

Next, in four years at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Holley helped turn a losing program around, ending with a 15-11 season. Holley thought he would be there a long time, but College Hill began calling his name.

"If you have a good experience as a college athlete, you always dream about going back and coaching at your alma mater," Holley said.

Still, the William Jewell job offer came with a price. Not only would he be going to a smaller program, but one with no full athletic scholarships.

Nineteen seasons later, Holley is happy with the choice. Since he came as head coach, Jewell frequently has been ranked in the top 25 of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Division II. Four years out of the past five, his teams have made it to the NAIA Division II Final Four.

At midseason this year, the Cardinals were 11-6 and Holley's career record stood at 501-307.

Coaching at a college like Jewell has unique challenges. "We have to know who we can recruit," Holley said. "In many cases, we're competing against full-scholarship programs. Truthfully, our talent pool may not be as large as some because of our academic requirements."

Those limitations don't seem to hinder Holley's teams. "He gets more from the talent that he has than anybody I have ever known," said Christian Sizemore, the college's president. "He develops teamwork, so, together, those guys do more than they ever could separately."

Colleagues say Holley also emphasizes academics far more than most college coaches. As evidence, they point to the team's outstanding graduation rate of nearly 94 percent.

"With the success that he's had with those who have achieved athletically and academically, it's been a good program to be proud of," said Larry Hamilton, Jewell's athletic director. "He works with them [the players,] not over them, dictating to them. He keeps a very strong touch with each individual -- knows what goes on with their families, knows what goes on with their personal life."

Bill Dillingham appreciates personal interest Holley took in him. "He's a very organized person," said Dillingham, a 1997 Jewell graduate and starting guard. "That kind of helped me prepare for my life, helped me to get my act together -- because I knew what was coming every day, and I knew I had to get in there and work my tail off."

Dillingham now works as a financial planner for Northwestern Mutual Securities in Kansas City.

Holley would rather point to his family's accomplishments than his own. His wife, Ann Pearl Holley, is also an educator. They have three daughters. One will graduate from Jewell in the spring, another will enter Jewell in the fall, and a third is a junior in high school.

Holley is reluctant to accept the praise single-handedly. "My dad used to always say that it's nice to work where you're appreciated," he said. "I have an excellent supporting cast."

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