

# Light

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN

BAPTIST CONVENTION

MARCH 1987

## RACISM REBORN

### A Baptist Prosecutor Confronts the Klan



White supremacists march in Raleigh, North Carolina.

By David Wilkinson

As a U.S. district attorney, Samuel T. Currin is seldom surprised and even more rarely shocked.

But Currin, a Southern Baptist layman who "has seen it all" in his role as a prosecutor, admits to being shocked by the extreme racism he has encountered while investigating the activities of the North Carolina Ku Klux Klan.

Last year the 38-year-old attorney successfully prosecuted the top two leaders of the White Patriot Party (WPP), the successor to the Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Leaders Glenn Miller and Stephen Miller, who are unrelated, were convicted by a federal jury of criminal contempt for operating a paramilitary organization in defiance of a 1985 court order.

Currin also convened a grand jury to investigate the men's ties to The Order, a violent underground group, and pledged an ongoing campaign against Klan-instigated violence.

In the process, he became a target.

"As a white male growing up in the South, I was never the object of racial hatred or oppression," he says. "But I've had the hatred of these white supremacists turn on me, and it has given me a whole new perspective on where the black man and the Jew are coming from."

After the Millers were sentenced, about 100 WPP members and Klan members imported from other states marched in protest through down-

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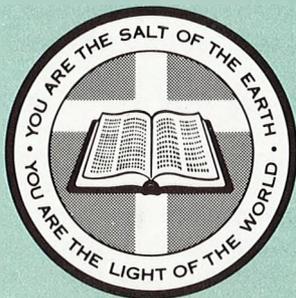
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## Doxology

There is a time for all things, a time to work and a time to slow down from working, a time to prophesy and a time to piddle, a time to go everywhere preaching the word and a time to stay somewhere taking a nap (my brother has told me that Tolstoy said a nap in the afternoon is silver but a nap in the morning is golden), a time to scatter ethics seeds and a time to contemplate the harvest, a time to come and a time to go.

For me, the time to come to the Christian Life Commission was in 1960 when the challenge was immeasurable, the task hard, the odds uneven, and the possibilities incredibly exciting. Now, the time to go as Executive Director of the Commission has come; and there is about the going a certain rightness with which I am not inclined to quarrel, a certain confidence on which I can let my whole weight down, a certain peace that passes understanding.

I'm not remotely inclined to say that if I had it all to do over I wouldn't do anything differently. On the contrary. There are multitudes of things I would like to do over, do differently, do better, do faster, do slower, or not do at all. There are mountains I still intend to climb, roads I still want to take, lots of books I still want to read, and some books I still want to write. Second takes in the drama of life, however, are not ordained. Perhaps it's better that way. The "moving finger writes and having writ moves on," as old Omar said. In spite of those angiogram-revealed deposits of plaque in the blood vessels of my heart which hastened this day a little, there's basically a good, glad, warm, right feeling about it.

Generally, I have given this work my best shot. I nearly always have done so when I felt it wasn't a throwaway. It has, for the whole journey, been for me the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There has never been a time when I wouldn't have paid the Commission for the privilege of doing it if I had been called on and financially able to do so. Through the years, I've come to work singing and gone home singing. Now, I'm even getting up singing.

While I contracted to continue to work for the Commission as Executive Officer for Development for those comparatively few remaining months until I am 65 (the scheduled official retirement time is July 31, 1988), this is to be my last Perspective column in my capacity as the Commission's Executive Director.

What more shall I say?

Thank God for friends. Without them the road would have been impassable.

Thank God for enemies. Without them I might not have been able to discern where the possibility points for growth and development were supposed to be, nor might I have had a reasonably clear perception that I was on the right road in the first place.

Thank God for trials. Without them I could have fallen into a feather bed of affirmation and positive thinking which would have denied the cross and denigrated the Christian calling.

Thank God for vision. Without an enduring vision, prospects for new heavens and a new earth "wherein dwelleth righteousness" might have grown dim or become distorted.

Thank God for grace. Without it today's counterparts for Bidad, Eliphaz, and Zophar might have laid on me enough compelling pessimism to persuade me to go another way, a different way which for me might well have been utterly wrong.

Thank God for his call. Without it the heat of the kitchen, the noise of the conflict, and the burden of the day would most certainly have enticed me to pleasanter pursuits.

Thank God for Baptists. They are God's folks and they are my kind of folks; and we can be confident that in spite of the current, still inexorably building crisis in our Convention, God will not permanently leave himself without our kind of Baptist witness in this needy world.

And thank God for the Christian Life Commission. It has been family to me: father and mother and brother and sister; and it has been home and school and, yes, church to me as well.

God bless us every one.

*Foy Valentine*  
Foy Valentine  
Executive Director

# RACISM REBORN

Continued from Page 1

town Raleigh. Dressed in crimson and white Klan regalia and paramilitary fatigues, marchers carried American and Confederate flags. Shouts of "White Power" were accompanied by Nazi salutes.

The parade ended with a rally across the street from the federal building. Speakers aimed much of their vitriolic rhetoric at Currin, who was working in his office.

As he watched the scene below, Currin's first reaction was "genuine fright."

"It's a frightening experience because some of these people are extremely dangerous," he explains. "It's not something in the abstract that you just read about; it's real."

The potential for real violence was illustrated during the Miller's trial. Witnesses described extensive weapons stockpiling, propaganda

campaigns and paramilitary training in preparation for a bloody uprising against a federal government the WPP says is controlled by Jewish communists bent on destroying the white race.

A special FBI agent who investigated right-wing extremists based in Western states testified that the WPP had striking similarities with a fictional white supremacist group in a novel called *The Turner Diaries*. In the *Diaries*, the government is toppled, Jews are slaughtered and blacks are put on boats for Africa.

The *Diaries* has also surfaced in investigations of other racist organizations as a master plan for taking power by force.

Two months after the trial, police in Fayetteville, N.C., arrested three WPP sympathizers whom they said

planned to assassinate the lawyers who prosecuted the Millers, including Currin and Morris Dees, founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala.

Currin believes the WPP and other white supremacist organizations "have the potential to cause very serious harm because their leaders are consumed with hate. When they isolate themselves in a racist group, they lose a sense of balance, they lose touch with reality."

"These groups are not just some extreme, but basically harmless, political party," he adds. "Many of their

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**Witnesses described extensive weapons stockpiling, propaganda campaigns and paramilitary training.**

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goals, and the means they would use to reach those goals, are unlawful.

"Their rhetoric is extreme, but they believe what they're saying. Some of them really believe they could lead

## LIGHT Editor Assumes Southern Seminary Post

David R. Wilkinson, editor of *LIGHT* and director of news and information services for the Christian Life Commission, has been named vice president for seminary relations at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Wilkinson, 32, who assumed the new post February 15, directs the seminary's communications program and supervises placement services, prospective student services and alumni relations.

Wilkinson has won numerous awards for *LIGHT* and other writing and twice has received the Baptist Public Relations Association's Frank Burkhalter Award for excellence in religious journalism.

Tim Fields, director of product development for the Christian Life Commission, will serve as interim managing editor of *LIGHT*.



WPP members and Klan members imported from other states march in protest through downtown Raleigh.

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***Currin believes the WPP and other white supremacist organizations "have the potential to cause very serious harm."***

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an armed revolt against the U.S. government."

As a prosecutor, Currin has concentrated on the unlawful activities of the WPP and related organizations. As a Christian, he also has been concerned about the effort to mix Christianity and racism.

"Fundamentally, these persons have a very deep spiritual problem," says Currin, a member of Raleigh's Hayes Barton Baptist Church and a member of the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. "One of the tragic things about the white supremacist groups is their attempt to use the Bible to buttress their beliefs. Many of them carry the Bible and quote from it, but they have no concept of biblical truth. Everything they stand for is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus, yet they wrap themselves in the Christian flag."

Currin believes most Americans have underestimated the white supremacy movement. "We have

viewed them more as extremist political parties rather than as terrorist organizations."

Legal action, he says, must be backed by strong opposition from churches and religious and civic groups. "There has to be righteous, public indignation by church and civic leaders," he says. "Otherwise, this will just be an ongoing skirmish between these racist groups and law enforcement."

Christians, he stresses, must "speak out on this issue just as much as we do on gambling, pornography, abortion, and all the rest. Traditionally, the Klan's strength is in the south where Southern Baptist

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***Legal action, he says, must be backed by strong opposition from churches and religious and civic groups.***

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churches are practically the state church. I hope pastors and lay people will speak out against the white supremacy movement and help to create a climate where racism cannot flourish.

"The church is supposed to be salt and light in the world. Unfortu-

nately, the persistence of racism in this country speaks to the church's inability to influence our society." ■

### **Racial Violence May Be Returning with Vengeance**

Howard Beach. The Citadel. Forsyth County. Racial violence is making headlines. But is it actually increasing?

Yes, according to one indicator.

Racial incidents reported to the Justice Department's community relations service increased from 99 in 1980 to 276 last year.

Depending on how "racist attacks" are defined, other listings go much higher.

In New York City, the police department's bias-incident investigating unit reported that such occurrences jumped from about four a week to 10 a week during the month of January alone.

—TIME

### **Poll Says 86 Percent Favor Death Penalty**

Eighty-six percent of Americans support the death penalty, many wanting it used for crimes other than murder, according to a Media General-Associated Press poll.

The percentage is about the same as findings of a similar poll conducted two years ago.

Other findings from the survey of 1,251 adults nationwide:

- 46% believe the death penalty should be used only in certain cases such as murders of children, police officers or multiple murders; only 30% think the death penalty should be used in all murder cases.

- 11% said there should be no death penalty at all; 3% were unsure.

- Support for the death penalty is overwhelming even though half the respondents thought it was wielded unfairly from case to case. Even among those who believe it is inequitable, 83% support it.

- Support crossed all religious, educational, economic and regional differences. However, blacks and whites had significantly different attitudes: 20% of blacks supported executions in all murder cases, compared with 30% for whites, and one-third of blacks said there should be no death penalty, compared with 9% of whites.

—The Tennessean (AP)

### **Southern Baptists Give \$9 Million for World Hunger Relief in 1986**

Southern Baptists in 1986 contributed more than \$9 million to their denomination's program of world hunger relief, according to figures released in February by the Home and Foreign Mission Boards.

Although total hunger receipts last year were 23 percent less than the record \$11.8 million given in 1985, hunger experts at both mission boards and the Christian Life Commission were upbeat about the ongoing responsiveness of Southern Baptists to critical hunger needs.

They noted that the 1986 total of \$9,089,279 is still the second largest amount ever given and represents nearly a \$2 million increase over the amount given two years ago in 1984.

The record total in 1985 accompanied extensive international reporting about critical hunger needs in

Africa, particularly in Ethiopia.

For 1986, the Foreign Mission Board reported receipts of \$7,790,128 for overseas hunger relief, compared with \$10,625,897 in 1985.

Receipts at the Home Mission Board for domestic hunger relief were \$1,299,151 in 1986, a slight increase over the total of \$1,204,249 in 1985.

"The overall hunger relief picture is encouraging," said Robert Parham, director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission. "Giving continues on an upward trend, a sign that Southern Baptists have a growing confidence in their mission boards' hunger programs. This broadening base of support is the key to an effective, ongoing response to the needs of starving and malnourished people at home and abroad." ■

# A CALL TO NURTURE A VISION OF PEACE

## Forging a Legitimate Place for Influence Within the Complex Task of Peacemaking

By Larry Braidfoot

The biblical message about God's desire for peace and his expectation that his people work for peace is clear. The last 12 months have brought some discouraging moments to Christians seeking to apply this biblical message.

High hopes for the peace conference in Iceland were dashed. Startling revelations, which remain unclear in detail, about arms sales to Iran and the diversion of funds to Nicaraguan *contras* have provoked a storm of controversy. Occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops continues. Storm clouds become ever darker in South Africa.

In such an era, what is the role of the Christian who is committed to the biblical message about peace? The issue is certainly not new. Christians throughout the ages have pondered this question. As we seek to apply the biblical message to our time and to our nation, some things are clear.

The dimension of peace which involves absence of military conflict and lowering of hostilities is an important part of American public policy. As such, peace and how to achieve it is an important part of public policy debate.

Much of the media focus on this debate revolves around Congressional hearings, budgets and the experts who appear before committees and seek to influence government decisions.

Perhaps as in no other field, the voices of experts have become the principal voices. Most average citizens would be intimidated at the thought of appearing before a Congressional committee and offering testimony about the many issues debated yearly regarding the level of

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***Being a peacemaker is a commitment of life, not a stance assumed during favorable circumstances.***

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military spending, the SALT II treaty, funding support for the *contras* and a host of other such considerations.

In an era when the voices of experts often conflict, when knowledge is restricted, what is the role for the Christian who is concerned about peace and who wants to be a responsible citizen?

The primary responsibility is to be faithful to the biblical message and to nurture a vision of peace. To do this, we must adopt some ways of thinking which differ from some questions we have routinely asked and some ideas we have routinely accepted.

The difference in approach can be seen by considering one of the sayings of our Lord: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (*Matthew 5:9*). One way of looking at the passage is to ask when the passage will be ful-

filled. Such an approach may lend itself to a discussion about eschatology. Or it may lead to a focus on the likelihood of attaining and sustaining peace in a sinful world. It may also provide an opportunity for comparing the relative merits of different political systems.

These kinds of probings will appeal to some persons and may be a necessary part of a particular study. But they may not provide a sense of direction that will motivate Christians to be peacemakers.

At various times in church history, leaders called for an emphasis on the "plain sense" of Scripture. What is the "plain sense" of the call to be peacemakers?

Being peacemakers means not worrying unduly about the results of working for peace. Preoccupation with results of our labors is a secular mindset.

Being peacemakers means working in an imperfect world. Jesus called the disciples to be peacemakers in a nation which was consumed with bitterness toward an external power which could be ruthless and devastating. Being a peacemaker is a commitment of life, not a stance assumed during favorable circumstances.

Being peacemakers means working with an inner sense of peace when an external plan for achieving peace is not in sight. The One who called us to work for peace is the same One who said, "Peace I leave with you . . ." (*John 14:27, RSV*).

Being peacemakers means a commitment to a particular kind of personhood. A peacemaker knows that the absence of armed conflict is not necessarily the same thing as peace. Peacemakers beget peacemakers. The transformed personhood of a peacemaker becomes the catalyst for others to become peacemakers.

What then, in a world of hostility and turmoil, is a peacemaker to do? Don't leave it solely to the experts. Nurture the Christian vision of peace. ■

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*Braidfoot, general counsel and director of Christian citizenship for the Christian Life Commission, is responsible for education and action on issues related to peace with justice.*

# READER RESPONSE

## Results from LIGHT's Readership Survey Show Diversity of Interest and Opinion

The votes are in, and the winner is each reader of *LIGHT*.

A total of 341 of you participated in a *LIGHT* readership survey conducted last fall by the Christian Life Commission. Now we would like to tell you what that representative sample told us.

Of the responses, 218 came from readers who completed the one-page questionnaire from the July/August issue and sent it to us. Another 105 surveys were completed and returned by persons who were part of a random sample of 400 names selected from the *LIGHT* mailing list of nearly 17,000. The response rate of more than 25 percent on the direct mail questionnaire was outstanding, and it helped give us a more precise picture of who our readers are and what they think about *LIGHT*.

### Who are our readers?

The survey showed a diverse readership in terms of age group, occupation and church size.

In age, 32% of readers are in the 31-40 category, followed by ages 21-30 (20%), 41-50 and 51-60 (16%), and 61 or over (15%). (*Totals throughout may not equal 100 percent due to rounding of figures.*)

Few readers—only 9%—are members of churches with less than 100 total members. Most readers—28%—belong to churches with more than 1,000 members. The rest are evenly distributed: 101-300 members—23%, 301-500 members—20%, and 501-1,000 members—20%.

The majority of readers serve as pastors (31%), paid church staff members other than pastor (15%) and denominational employees (15%). But a healthy 39% are laypersons.

More than one-fifth (22%) of the readers are women.

For the majority of readers, *LIGHT*

is the primary relationship with the Christian Life Commission. More than 74% have never attended a CLC national seminar (held annually). Also, 77% said their church does not have a Christian Life Committee. (Another 10% did not know, while 13% said their church does have a committee.)

The survey also indicated that the people who get *LIGHT* read it. A total of 40% said they read almost all of every issue; 48% scan all of every issue but don't read every article; and 11% read only what appears interesting to them. Only one person said he or she seldom reads any of *LIGHT*.

Most readers also find *LIGHT* to be a practical resource. A total of 88% said they clip and file articles from *LIGHT* (36% often, 52% occasionally), while only 12% do not.

The overwhelming majority—93%—said most articles in *LIGHT* are about right in length rather than too long or too short. (Yes, a total of 10 persons actually said they think most articles are too short!)

What do our readers read? In a list of types of articles, "On the Moral Scene" was rated as the most frequently read section of *LIGHT*; 59% said they read it on a regular basis (versus often, sometimes or almost never).

"Moral Scene" was followed by opinion articles, read on a regular basis by 47% of readers; Foy Valentine's "Perspective" column, 46%; feature or human interest articles, 44%; excerpts from sermons or speeches, 38%; and "Ethics Library," 37%.

Articles receiving the least readership were question-and-answer interviews, read on a regular basis by 29% of readers, and how-to articles, 28%.

In terms of content selection, opinions were as diverse as the

readership. In the survey, we listed 14 critical social issues and asked you to rank the effectiveness of *LIGHT*'s treatment of each issue. What we discovered is that most of you believe *LIGHT* is doing a good to excellent job of treating most issues.

Three issues receiving the highest rankings for effective treatment: world hunger (an average of 4.32 on a scale of 0 to 5), Christian citizenship (4.2) and gambling (4.14). Others with good ratings were race relations, peace with justice and alcohol and other drugs.

Issues receiving the lowest rankings for effective treatment were biomedical ethics, capital punishment, TV/media and women's concerns. Of the 14 issues, however, no single issue averaged less than 3 (average) on the scale.

We also invited you to list three moral issues you feel should receive more attention. Issues listed most often, in order, were women's concerns, abortion, pornography, TV/media and family life. A total of 24 issues were listed at least once.

So what have we learned from what you have told us? Several things. First, *LIGHT* enjoys an unusually loyal readership. Our readers really do read. They read critically. And they look for practical and relevant information. Second, *LIGHT*'s readers represent a diverse audience with diverse interests in the area of social concerns.

Third, readers appreciate a diversity in content and in style of articles. This is an affirmation of an intentional effort to move away from thematic, single-issue issues to a variety of content in each issue. Four, some issues have received inadequate treatment in recent years. According to the survey, this is particularly true for women's concerns and family issues. We would probably be more critical than our readers at this point and add a few other issues to the list.

We appreciate your input. We intend to put the information to good use as we plan future issues. And if you have other ideas for ways we can improve *LIGHT*, drop us a line. ■

Write to: *LIGHT*, Christian Life Commission, 901 Commerce, #550, Nashville, TN 37203.

# LIGHT: Some Like It, Some Don't; Opinions Are as Diverse as the Readers

One of our regrets in doing the *LIGHT* readership survey is that we did not provide space on the questionnaire for comments.

Nevertheless, a number of readers enclosed notes or made notations in the margins on the questionnaire. Here's a sample, purposely weighted toward the critical comments we received:

Several years ago when you changed the style of articles from "superficial overview" to "real content" I started clipping and filing the ones of special interest to me. I have only one complaint: The CLC is biased anti-nuclear.

—Layperson, Knoxville, TN

I am more motivated by the *National Federation for Decency Journal* and *Falwell's Liberty Report*. They not only stir me, but show me how to write, phone, picket, march, etc. However, *LIGHT* is improving. If it makes us act or react, then you've accomplished something.

—Pastor, Acala, FL

I cannot express strongly enough my deep appreciation and gratitude for the tremendous work that you are doing in so many areas. I would despair of remaining a Southern Baptist were it not for the CLC.

—Layperson, Winston-Salem, NC

I do not like the editorial policy. I feel like I am reading something from the National Council of Churches or ACLU or World Council of Churches or Jewish Defense League or Humanist Review. The editor needs to be replaced! An independent editorial advisory committee should be set up to watch over this paper.

—Layperson, Bessemer, AL

Many of your topical publications are quite persuasive in their research, logic and balanced presentation. I believe they speak to a variety of Christians of different persuasions. My only complaint about the survey is that one is forced to downgrade some aspects of the publication.

—Layperson, Shawnee, OK

Sometime I'd like to see some views that reflect a position consistent with Francis Shaeffer, greatest evangelical of our time.

—Church staff member, Denton, TX

Your survey demonstrates a lack of acknowledgement and utilization of other areas of ministry. How about using some diversity in the professionals who contribute to *LIGHT*.

—Pastor, Asheville, NC

I'm frequently pleased by the way you speak out on important but controversial issues. You've definitely been an asset to my growth as a whole Christian. I'm a poor critic. I've never thought about how you could change your publication. I've just been grateful for it.

—Layperson, Harrisburg, PA

*LIGHT* would be more effective and "enlightening" if its contents were presented more objectively, allowing the reader to form his own position on the topic, not just the narrow, liberal opinion which you present. Information from the "left" is so dominant it makes me wonder what the "Conservatives" are thinking. Please do not disregard this suggestion as being from a "right-wing fundamentalist." I am not.

—Denominational worker, Nashville, TN

More "rank and file" Southern Baptists would read *LIGHT* if it were a little less abstract and had a bit more concrete suggestions for everyday Christian living.

—Layperson, Harrison, AR

The voices of *LIGHT* offer hope for many of us surrounded by ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, selfishness, sexism in the church. We need a voice of reason. Don't make articles any longer—most people don't read.

—Layperson, Albertville, AL

Articles are too general, shallow, one-sided. You ride certain subjects to death.

—Pastor, Fair Oaks, CA

Most relevant and pertinent publication in the convention. Every issue cuts to the heart of moral/ethical dilemmas, social problems and moral crises facing

Christians. For your few pages you distill the essence of crucial thinking.

—Layperson, Premium, KY

I keep *LIGHT* in my library for reference. My only criticism is that I often receive my copy late in the month.

—Layperson, Anaheim, CA

Here's an idea for "special day" issues (Race Relations Sunday, etc.): have sermons submitted and print one the editors choose.

—Pastor, Muncie, IN

*LIGHT* follows too-liberal line on nuclear freeze, abortion, women in church leadership. Our conservative pastors are so disgusted with the liberal activity of the CLC, they won't even listen to anything from the CLC. Concerned Women for America expresses my feelings better than *LIGHT* and CLC.

—Retired pastor, Ozark, AR

I have been disappointed you use *USA TODAY* as a source so often, but only once *The Economist*. Let's do more anticipatory, future-oriented issues.

—Layperson, Lynchburg, VA

I find it appalling how little you even mention abortion in your publication. It is the hottest moral issue in America.

Could it be that you take a pro-choice stance? Also, what is it you have against conservative evangelicals involved in the political process? Is Christian involvement fine as long as it's a liberal rallying point? Finally, though you rarely speak specifically to it—the controversy between conservatives and moderates—there is a subtle stand taken. Most, if not all, of the people you utilize are well-known moderates. Come on now, if you're going to take our money at least give equal time and space to the vast majority of conservatives in the SBC. Is fairness too much to ask of the agency that is supposed to promote ethics in our convention?

—Pastor, Nashville, TN

Want to add your opinion? Write us at the Christian Life Commission, 901 Commerce, #550, Nashville, TN 37203.

# HUNGER RELIEF THE BAPTIST WAY

## Five Reasons to Give Your Hunger Gifts Through Established Convention Channels

By Robert Parham

Two years ago, members of a Baptist church in Kentucky wanted to help the starving in Ethiopia through a well-known, television-based evangelistic association which operates a relief program. These Kentucky farmers saw the need, recognized their abundance, knew what their faith required and accepted uncritically the program of this organization. Their pastor, however, was skeptical. He alerted them to what Southern Baptists were doing through the Foreign Mission Board and began investigating the group in question.

The pastor's questions to the organization's director of development were basic: How much money goes into the television ministry? How much of the money is actually spent on child care? Who are the missionaries through whom the hunger relief is channeled?

The responses were evasive. The director of development even wrote: "To go into detail on all your questions would require hours of writing and pages of typewritten materials."

This illustration should remind Southern Baptists that we need to take caution about where our hunger donations go. Many of the hunger relief organizations are aboveboard. Some are not. The ones that operate questionable fund-raising and relief programs cast shadows of suspicion on all the others.

A few years ago, *The Plain Dealer*, a major newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio, did a series of articles about hunger relief organizations. "Most relief agencies save lives and bring a measure of dignity to people thousands of miles away," the writers concluded. "But not all. Some are unethical. Some

are inefficient. Some lie to raise funds, then squander America's goodwill."

The series reported that one organization shipped food to Cambodia that was so old that zoo keepers in San Francisco had to stop feeding it to the animals. Another used film clips on national television which were two years old,

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*Organizations involved in hunger work build trust upon accountability and openness and respect for the givers and recipients of aid.*

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failing to reflect that country's current situation. One relief organization even served as a front for the Central Intelligence Agency.

According to the reporters for *The Plain Dealer*, hungry people have received all sorts of senseless, harmful items from relief organizations. Pringles potato chips were shipped to Chad. Aids diet products went to Pakistan. Tons of laxatives were distributed to the victims of natural disasters in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, where breakdowns in sanitation were causing diarrhea. Again and again, the reporters documented how American relief organizations dumped outdated drugs on Third World countries in the name of charity, but for the sake of tax write-offs.

Organizations involved in hunger work build trust upon accountability and openness and respect for the givers and recipients of aid. Donors

deserve full disclosure, not evasiveness. Recipients require relief that fits their culture, not aid that is culturally offensive or counterproductive. We must remember that good intentions fail to justify harmful actions.

One way for Christians to ensure that our hunger contributions go where they are intended and are spent wisely is to give through our own denomination's hunger program. For Southern Baptists this means the Home and Foreign Mission Boards. Both are funded by Baptists, staffed by Baptists, watched by Baptists and accountable to Baptists.

Here are five good reasons to give hunger aid through Southern Baptist channels:

**1 The Southern Baptist hunger ministry is unique.** One hundred percent of hunger gifts are spent on hunger needs. The Home Mission Board spends its hunger receipts on food assistance. The Foreign Mission Board operates in a similar fashion. It does not use hunger relief funds in the United States for administration and promotion.

The Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong special offerings support the work of missionaries, allowing hunger gifts to be used to help the hungry. Many hunger relief organizations use part of the money they raise on administrative and promotional costs.

**2 The Southern Baptist system is in place.** During the 1984-1985 African famine, the Foreign Mission Board did not have to rush to set up an infrastructure for hunger relief. A workable system already existed. The foreign missionaries had a previous relationship in the countries in need; they knew the language, history, customs and environment. They were able to respond as quickly as the hunger contributions and food aid arrived.

**3 The Southern Baptist system has dual emphasis.** Hunger relief is provided in times of emergency, such as grain distribution in famine-stricken Mali. But the key to ending hunger is to provide developmental aid or aid which contributes to self-sufficiency and long-lasting results, as does the agricultural training by Baptist missionaries in the Philippines.

Emergency relief aid attracts

dramatic attention. Pot-bellied cargo planes dropping tightly wrapped sacks of grain to the mountainous people of Ethiopia make stirring television footage. Drilling wells, on the other hand, seems mundane. Yet it is pure water that goes a long way toward improving the health care of poor people, keeping them from drinking the polluted water which is the source of guinea worm, hepatitis and other diseases. Similarly, building ponds for fishing and irrigation farming is the kind of appropriate technology which provides a "hand-up" toward self-sufficiency.

**4** **The Southern Baptist system is accountable.** The questions raised a number of years ago about the handling of hunger funds have been resolved, an indication of accountability.

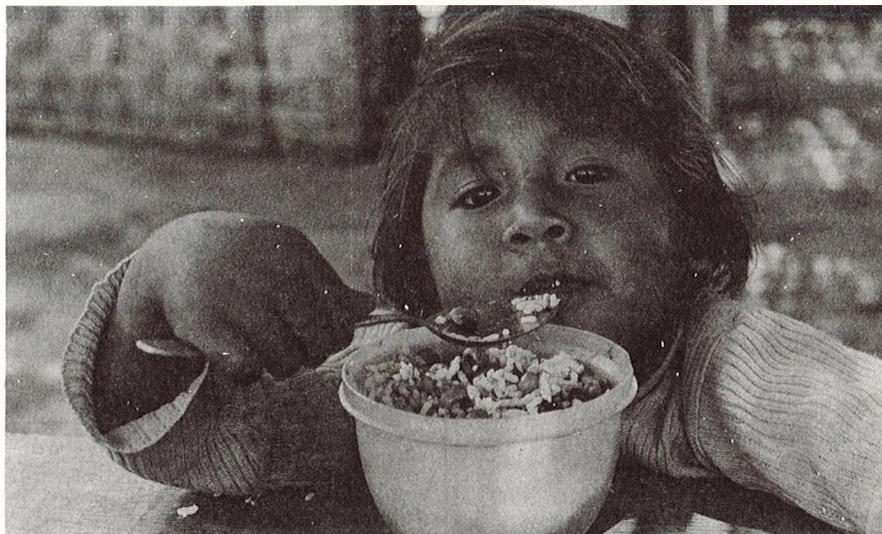
The fact that information is provided regularly to the public on how hunger contributions are allocated is further evidence of accountability. Reports are made to board members. Visits to relief and development sites by reporters, volunteer workers and denominational leaders increase the degree of oversight. Southern Baptist human needs officials recognize that lack of accountability jeopardizes hunger relief and development work.

**5** **The Southern Baptist system avoids unethical fund-raising.** Money is not spent on commercial television programs which bring forth tears in order to generate dollars. Money is not spent on mass mailings which begin with an emotional overload. And money is not raised for one project and spent on something else.

In fact, Southern Baptists have no official hunger offering. The facts about hunger are made available, examples of hunger ministries are made known and people are encouraged to give. The formula is simple: Tell the truth; trust the people.

Why give contributions through Southern Baptist channels? It is the best way. It is the Baptist way. ■

*Parham is director of hunger concerns for the Christian Life Commission. The 1986-87 World Hunger Awareness Action Guide and more than a dozen other resources on world hunger are available from the CLC. Write for a free, illustrated catalog.*



*BOWL OF PLENTY—Baptist hunger relief funds began the program that feeds this little girl and others in Comas, on the outskirts of Lima, Peru. This is the only nutritious food many of the children get.*  
(Photo by Warren Johnson)

## OFFERING LETTERS

### Extend Your Gifts through Citizen Action

Churches across the nation will be holding a different kind of offering this year for poor and hungry people in the U.S. Initiated by Bread for the World, the offering will request funds from Congress instead of from congregations. More than 1,000 congregations will be writing and "offering" letters to their senators and representatives, encouraging them to use our nation's vast resources to help feed hungry people.

In an "Offering of Letters," Christians in a worship service "unite to write" their members of Congress urging them to vote for anti-hunger legislation. Letters are collected in an offering plate and later mailed. This offering is not a call for a donation, but a call for Christian action.

During BFW's 1986 Offering of Letters campaign, more than 800 churches participated, and more than 60,000 letters were written. Each of these letters asked that Congress increase the Child Survival Fund (CSF) to immunize Third World children against six basic childhood diseases. The result: During a time of budget cuts, Congress doubled the funding for this program.

The 1987 Offering of Letters campaign will focus on the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Nearly 5

million hungry mothers, infants and children now go unassisted because the WIC program is inadequately funded to serve all who are eligible. Letters in this year's offering will encourage Congress to provide funds so that at least 500,000 more eligible people can be added to the program each year for the next five years.

According to Bread for the World, few programs are as effective in helping hungry people in the U.S. as WIC. The WIC program helps prevent malnutrition by providing a carefully designed package of nutritious foods, rich in key nutrients like iron, calcium and vitamin C to undernourished pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under five years old.

WIC encourages mothers to breast feed, weighs and measures infants to catch early warning signs of nutrition-related disease and provides health services such as child immunization and prenatal care. The program helps prevent malnutrition, infant death and mental and physical retardation in children. Moreover, WIC is extremely cost effective, saving \$3 in health costs for every \$1 spent on prenatal care. An information kit on how to conduct an Offering of Letters is available for \$2 from Bread for the World, 802 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018. ■

# CONCERNS FACING TODAY'S FAMILIES

## Biblical Ideas to Help Families Realize Some of Heaven in Their Homes on Earth

By J. Clark Hensley

The major challenge in family life today is spiritual.

In early Jewish life, religious ceremonies centered around the home. In contrast, many parents today expect the church to be solely responsible for the spiritual development of the family.

The Bible's view is that the family should be the primary agent in religious instruction. Parents are to teach spiritual truths systematically on the basis of their own experience. They are to be taught constantly, consistently and conspicuously (*Deut. 6:6-9, Eph. 6:4*).

Family members need to worship and pray together in the home as well as in the church. The spiritual temperature of our churches is controlled by thermostats in the homes of our members. Christian parents should recognize the foundational issue for families as being devoted to

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***The spiritual temperature of our churches is controlled by thermostats in the homes of our members.***

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building the family of God on earth.

Within this framework, families confront a variety of issues. Physical and economic issues, for example, are often interwoven in family life. The battle of the budget is intense because of the high cost of health care, education of children and the downward trend in the standard of living.

Christian families have the desire to find their place in the work force, either in labor or management, to

fulfill the biblical purpose "to replenish the earth and subdue it." Thus we are concerned with productivity and conservation, ecology and tech-

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***Forgiveness, acceptance and unconditional love offer the strongest bond of emotional support for family members.***

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nological advance, and we recognize our stewardship in both the earning and using of money. The believer is to care for his own, lest he be worse than an infidel, but also is to demonstrate compassionate caring for the hungry, the sick, the poor and the aged.

Both self-love and neighbor-love are commanded by Jesus. Self-love demands self-preservation, and neighbor-love demands self-giving. Families must learn how to balance material resources in this light. Jesus taught us, too, to balance the Kingdom needs with family needs such as food, clothing and shelter. (*See Matt. 6:24-33*).

Most of us are aware of the extreme disparity between the haves and have-nots. Many, however, are so accustomed to their comfortable lifestyle they are blind to what is happening around them. Often government officials and community leaders are oblivious to the suffering that goes on about them from heat, cold, hunger or illness until some tragic event reveals the awful plight of the have-nots.

Another critical family issue is emotional support. Companionship is God's primary purpose for families. Love, honor, respect and



"Discover God's Purpose For Your Family" is the theme for the Southern Baptist Convention's 1987 Christian Home Emphasis. Resources developed for use in local churches include *Building Bonds Between Aging Parents and Their Children* (an Equipping Center module) and *Building Bonds Between Aging Parents and Adult Children* (a Convention Press book).

These resources will help aging parents and their adult children better understand and accept changing roles, define and express their needs, cope with adjustments, diagnose typical problems, choose best options and use biblically based guidelines for building and maintaining healthy family relationships. ■

*For information about other resources for Christian Home Emphasis (observed by most churches from Mother's Day through Father's Day), write Family Ministry Department, 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 37234.*

trust are key attitudes. Appreciation and praise build self-esteem. Consideration, kindness, thoughtfulness and faithfulness must be expressed in action. Forgiveness, acceptance and unconditional love offer the strongest bond of emotional support for family members.

The development and practice of family traditions build good memories necessary to emotional stability. To enjoy one another, to laugh and play together, to really celebrate God's love and our love for each other leads us toward the biblical ideal that we have some of heaven in our homes on earth.

Indeed, God's purpose for the family includes "lighting a candle instead of cursing the darkness." ■

*Hensley is executive director emeritus of the Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention.*

### Drunk Driving Stats May Be Misleading

Drunk driving is a factor in more auto accidents than current national statistics indicate, says a recent study.

Crime Control Institute, a nonprofit research organization of law enforcement officials, reports that national statistics on drunk driving and fatal accidents are inaccurate because police routinely let most drivers leave the scene without a breathalyzer or blood alcohol test. As a result, says CCI, many drunk drivers in fatal accidents escape prosecution.

Of the 32,000 drivers who survived accidents involving fatalities in 1984, more than 75% left the scene without being tested for alcohol abuse, says the report. More than 25% of the 25,582 drivers killed in accidents were not tested for blood alcohol concentration.

Overall, only 45% of all drivers in fatal accidents are tested for alcohol abuse.

Meanwhile, the Department of Transportation estimates the share of traffic fatalities due to drunk driving has been declining, from 46% in 1982 to 41% in 1985.

CCI president Lawrence Sherman called such statistics "unreliable and misleading. They have lulled us into a false belief that we always detect drunk driving as a cause of fatal accidents. The truth is that we are hardly even trying."

—Monday Morning Report, Alcohol Research Information Service

### Earth's Population Put At 6.2 Billion By 2000

In the next 14 years, the earth's population will grow by more than the total number of people who inhabited the planet in 1850, according to Census Bureau projections.

By year 2000, the world's population will have grown by 1.3 billion to 6.2

billion, the bureau said. In 1850, the world held only about 1.2 billion residents.

The vast majority of growth will occur in poorer nations. Developing countries will grow at a rate "more than three times that of the developed countries at the end of the 20th century," the report said.

"About 90% of the world population growth is occurring in poor countries that can least afford to cope with rapid increases in population," said J. Joseph Speidel of the private Population Crisis Committee.

In another report, Worldwatch Institute noted that changes in world population are threatening to trap the poorer nations in a deadly cycle of rapid population growth and dwindling resources.

Sub-Saharan Africa currently has the world's highest rate of growth at 3% a year, according to the bureau's report. Second is the Near East and North Africa at 2.7%, followed by Latin America at 2.3%.

—The Tennessean (AP)

### Rape a Growing Concern On U.S. College Campuses

A study of 6,000 students at 32 U.S. campuses found 1 of 8 women was the victim of rape or attempted rape in a one-year period.

Ninety percent never reported their assaults, said Kent State University psychologist Mary Koss, who did the study.

Experts are warning students to beware of "date rape"—assault by someone the victim knows.

—USA TODAY

### Reports of Fatal Abuse Increased in 24 States

Reported deaths of abused and

neglected children jumped 29% last year in 24 states.

Anne H. Cohn of the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse said child abuse may be on the rise in part because "that pocket of population referred to as 'the underclass' has seen things deteriorate. There is joblessness, violence in neighborhoods and young people having babies."

Cohn said improved reporting of abuse-related deaths, due to greater recognition of the problem, may have contributed to the increase "but we don't believe that explains what is going on."

The group said 498 child abuse or child neglect deaths were reported last year in the 24 states that have already compiled and reported statistics, an increase of 29% over the 386 reported in the same states in 1985.

Cohn worries that case loads for state agencies "are getting too high. Some families who might have been helped by treatment didn't get it."

—Compiled from news reports

### Violent Crime Victims Often Know Assailant

In 5 of 10 violent crimes, the attacker is a relative or friend of the victim or someone the victim recognizes, according to the Justice Department.

Less than half of nearly 20 million violent crimes between 1982-84 were committed by strangers, the department said.

The report found:

- Robbery was the violent crime most likely to be committed by a stranger (75%); homicide the least likely (18%).

- In 1.5 million violent crimes committed by a relative, 77% of victims were women. In 11.5 million violent crimes by a stranger, 70% of victims were men.

The department said data may under-

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\_\_\_\_\_ The following persons would be interested in receiving LIGHT.

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City	State	Zip	City	State	Zip

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state the violent crimes committed by non-strangers because victims are often reluctant to tell researchers about domestic violence.

—Compiled from news reports

**Nearly One of Three Elderly Live Alone**

Of America's 27.6 million senior citizens, 8.3 million—30%—are living alone, a Harris poll shows.

Of those, 28% struggle below the poverty line, and four out of five of those are widowed women.

Of seniors living alone:

- 39% are women; 16% are men.
- 25% have no children and 21% have no children within an hour's drive.
- 86% prefer living alone; but 11% said they would take a boarder for rent or household help.

—USA TODAY

**AIDS Education Still Has Long Way to Go**

AIDS may be the most publicized disease in decades, but 16 of 100 people across the U.S. don't know how the virus is transmitted.

A Gallup poll for the American Hospital Association found that just 61% were sure the fatal disease is spread through sexual contact.

But educational efforts are expanding. A recent survey found that some school districts already have AIDS awareness programs in place in public schools and that a few of them are beginning the programs as early as grade school.

The study by the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that 54% of school districts surveyed last December had already begun providing some form of AIDS education in school.

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop has advocated informing children about AIDS

as early as the third grade. In most cases, he told the mayors' task force on AIDS, the minimal sex education classes offered in many junior high schools are too late.

—USA TODAY

**Soaring Costs Stir Campaign Reform Talk**

As campaign costs continue to soar, talk about reform increases. Advocates of reform cite the following statistics:

- Cost of the average Senate campaign has risen from \$609,000 in 1974 to more than \$3 million last year.
- Cost of House races has also gone up—in some districts to much more than a half million.

• Political Action Committees, authorized by Congress in post-Watergate legislation, have become financial heavyweights. PACs gave only \$12 million to congressional races in 1974. In 1984 the sum was \$104 million and in the last election cycle it had risen to \$122 million.

—The Tennessean

**How Does Class Status Affect Social Priorities?**

In white communities, lower-class, working-class and middle-class persons have different social priorities. But this is not the case in black communities.

Franklin D. Gilliam Jr., writing in *Public Opinion*, used two national surveys to test for signs of attitudinal changes as blacks moved into the ranks of the middle class. He studied three areas of public opinion: domestic spending priorities, political orientation and governmental and social issues.

On governmental spending for social programs, he concluded, "Blacks are solidly liberal. Moreover, class divisions are such that the black middle class is

more willing than either of the lower classes to increase federal outlays to solve social problems."

On political orientation, "Again, blacks are clearly in the Democratic camp regardless of class differences. Only a small number of blacks across the classes identify themselves as Republicans."

Various measures of black confidence in political institutions do reveal a class difference. But the difference is in the opposite direction of whites. Lower-class whites are cynical of political institutions, but that cynicism reduces as social status rises. In the black community, Gilliam noted, the opposite is true. For example, on the measure of police mistreatment, more than four-fifths of the middle class "perceived inequitable treatment compared to about three-quarters of the lower classes."

The government and social issues reveal no significant class difference on school busing for racial integration. On other issues, such as capital punishment, abortion and euthanasia, middle-class blacks tended to be more liberal than lower classes.

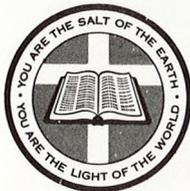
Researcher Orrin Morris of the Home Mission Board noted several implications from Gilliam's study:

- "Whites err when they assume that economic success will make blacks become like middle-class whites . . . . Some attitudinal change is evident, but the social/racial roots are more enduring than external symbols of life style.

• "Political involvement in the black community still means support for governmental intervention to ensure equality, justice and freedom. Political involvement in the white community is quite different."

—RD Digest, Home Mission Board

"On the Moral Scene" is compiled and edited by the editor.



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