

February 9, 2005

Rev. Dr. Roy Medley, Rev. Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins, Rev. Dr. Sumner Grant, Rev. Charles Jones, Ms Susan Gillies, Mrs. Peggy Johnson, Mr. David Blythe, Rev. Dr. George H. Tooze, Jr., Rev. Betty Burger

Dear Colleagues:

After more than seven months on communications, we come to the sad realization that the Board of International Ministries (BIM) will not sit a the table to account for the process used in dismissing its executive director, the Reverend Héctor Cortez. Four American Baptist regional boards have communicated with BIM to agree on meeting and explain its actions. In violation of one of the ABC covenant agreements, BIM has refused to meet, responding instead with legal pronouncements or silence. We have added our voice to the covenanting boards that have asked BIM to account for its actions.

This communication to you is to highlight the fact that the "Agreement Regarding Adjudication of Differences", page 8 on "The Covenant of Relationships", which calls participant boards to be accountable to each other, has been violated by one of the major components of ABC. Our simple question to you is this: How would you hold each other accountable in implementing other agreements of this covenant, or new ones you may establish? For a denomination that has refused throughout its history to adopt creeds, and instead established its working relationship through covenants, this is demoralizing. Your moral fortitude to honor the entire covenantal agreements has been undermined. The fabric that holds your boards together in relationships and mission has been breached.

The National Hispanic Caucus will continue to be on the sidelines watching our dear denomination face its future with such a burden--like a "house divided"--due to its failure to heal its differences.

Peace,

Orlando

José

Rev. Dr. Orlando C. Ayala

Rev. Dr. José L. Ortiz

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