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**American Boys Build
Missions In Mexico**

By Roy Jennings
Baptist Press Staff Writer

Mix a set of blueprints, concrete materials, 22 eager Royal Ambassadors from the United States and 15 Mexican lads, and what do you get?

At two Mexican villages near Torreon, the answer was foundations for two Baptist missions and 37 excited boys.

Preliminary construction of the two missions served as a special service project for the Ambassadors who participated in a two-week summer missions tour and work trip into Mexico under the sponsorship of the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission.

The boys, all Royal Ambassadors 15-17, saw missions progress in the cities of Saltillo, San Luis Potosi, Queretaro, Guadalajara, Zacatecas, Durango and Monterrey before they began the building project.

The Mexican boys shared a dormitory with the Royal Ambassadors at the Torre n Baptist seminary during the work week and took part in the project.

Each morning the boys traveled 30 miles by bus to the building sites in the villages of Zapata and Sixth of September (date of land reform) where the only other religious witness was Catholic.

The boys prepared the ground, poured the foundations, built and painted benches and partially painted a church.

Their menu consisted of tacos, tortillas, frijoles, enchiladas, eggs, sweet rolls and hot dogs.

Some of the boys slept on a tile floor with a heavy quilt for a mattress. They washed their own clothes.

Frank Black, Memphis, Brotherhood Commission officer and project director, said the main complaint of the boys was they didn't get to work enough.

The boys spent four hours daily in construction and the remainder in rest and entertainment, Black said. A fellowship and a fiesta comprised the social features.

Purpose of the tour and work trip was to give the Royal Ambassadors a new mission perspective and a greater appreciation for people of other countries. Each boy paid his own expenses.

Boys who participated included Jack Averett Jr., Columbus, Ga.; Grady Baskin Jr., Taylor, Mich.; Jay Dannelley Jr., Holt, Mich.; Fred Farris, Atlanta, Ga.; Don Gamble, Marion, Ill.; Richard Gilleland, Nashville, Tenn.

Philip Hardy, Dothan, Ala.; Richard Jones, Springfield, Tenn.; Robert King, Fayetteville, Tenn.; Phil Kirk, Ada, Okla.; Richard Leach, Alpine, Ind.; Glynn Ligon, Bellaire, Tex.; George McDow, Checotah, Okla.

Danny McGraw, Pineville, La.; Ken Neely, Spartanburg, S. C.; John Payne, Cincinnati, Ohio; Danny Spitler, Phoenix, Ariz.; Robert Springate, Raytown, Mo.

Gordon Teachey Jr., Richmond, Va.; Gary Townsend, Manchester, Md.; Robert Veazey, Houston, Tex., and Thomas Wood, Norfolk, Va. (BP)

Soloist Sings Without
Words To Unseen Audience

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--When the soloist sang she neither heard the words nor saw the audience. Neither did she open her mouth. She was both blind and deaf.

Nevertheless, she drew an audience of more than 1,500 people here into worship through her rendition of the song, "Purer in Heart."

Mrs. Elia Rose Brownell of New Orleans sang her song with graceful movements of the sign language of the deaf. An interpreter translated her signs into words and music.

The solo was a part of the worship service for the closing night of Home Mission Week at Glorieta Baptist Assembly. Mrs. Brownell was one of the 147 deaf people and deaf workers attending the annual Southern Baptist Conference for the Deaf, this year meeting in connection with the home mission conference.

The deaf conference reelected Clifford Bruffey of Jacksonville, Fla., as its president; and elected Neal Peyton of Wake Forest, N. C., as vice-president; Joe Johnson of Little Rock as secretary, and Max Floyd of Midland, Tex., as treasurer.

The conference also resolved to take an active interest in foreign mission work among the deaf, to study ways and means of extending assistance to deaf overseas, and to promote the work through the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist conventions of other nations. The deaf will meet next year during Sunday School Weeks at assemblies.

Mrs. Brownell, the blind and deaf soloist, has been a Baptist for only one year. She is a member of the First Baptist Church of New Orleans. Her pastor, J. D. Grey, calls her "our Helen Keller."

Mrs. Brownell was converted a year ago through the deaf ministry of the New Orleans church. She immediately wanted to learn to sing, a task workers first thought would be impossible. She did not even read Braille, the printed language for the blind.

However, she had learned the deaf sign language, which she understands by placing her hands over the hands of the other person, feeling the formation of the letters. Thus her sensitive hands become her only communication with the world.

She surprised everyone by quickly learning her first song, and now has memorized 19 through the teaching hands of her oldest daughter.

Mr. and Mrs. Brownell met at the School for the Deaf at Baton Rouge. He is deaf and makes a living as a carpenter, building door frames. They have two daughters, 12 and 10, and a son, 3.

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Pictures of officers available on request from Home Mission Board.

Study Group Clashed
Over School Religion

(8-8-64)

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Baptist seminar study group could not agree on the way religion is to be practiced in public schools. One of the group severely criticized Baptist leaders and conventions that supported the Supreme Court decisions barring required Bible readings and prayers in public schools.

The conflicting opinions were expressed in a study paper prepared by six Baptist ministers from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This is one of several papers being prepared by seminar groups across the country for the Religious Liberty Conference here Oct. 7-9. The conference, sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, will be on the theme, "The Meaning of the Free Exercise of Religion."

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The writers of the paper included John Nichols, pastor, Woodlyn (Pa.) Baptist Church; A. Scott Hutchison, executive secretary, Philadelphia (Pa.) Baptist Association; Herbert C. Cottrell, pastor, Oak Lane Baptist Church, Philadelphia; Bryan F. Archibald, pastor, First Baptist Church, Haddonfield, N. J.; Melvin M. Forney, pastor, Roxborough Baptist Church, Philadelphia, and O. John Eldred, pastor, Levittown (Pa.) Baptist Church.

A. Scott Hutchison said the 1963 Supreme Court decision outlawing required devotions in public schools "points up the government cannot approve nor order religious exercises, neither can it deny those performed on a voluntary basis."

Many questions remain unanswered because there has been no real case testing the "freedom clause" of the first amendment, he said.

Hitting at the court decisions against required devotions, Melvin M. Forney said such expressions of religion are needed to "remind the children that we are a God-fearing nation and that we recognize divine guidance."

The American Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist General Conference and North American Baptist General Conference in their meetings this year supported the Supreme Court decisions. The resolutions passed by these bodies reaffirmed their faith that genuine religious experiences must be "voluntary."

Forney criticized Baptist leaders for their support of the court decisions. The Baptist position of church-state separation "has not been inconsistent" with Bible reading and prayer in public schools, "even if, as in some states, it was compulsory," he said.

He charged that the Baptist leadership and Convention positions on the matter are not the same as that of church members and pastors. Possible reasons for the "difference" could be, he said:

1. Denominational leaders may say they are taking the right position and exert leadership to bring others to their point of view;
2. Denominational leaders deal with "different people, not necessarily those committed to the Christian faith and through dialogue accept a different position";
3. The "Madison Avenue" technique of getting support from the "top" before the idea is "well-aired before the public."

Expressing a different view, Bryan F. Archibald wrote: "It cannot be said too often that the task of the public schools is not to teach religion. Religious instruction belongs to the homes and to the free churches of the land."

Archibald faced the problems in teaching religion in public schools, the observance of religious holidays, objective courses in religion and in provisions for students to be excused from religious participation. "The customs, morals and ideals of American life can be taught in the public schools, but not as religion," he said.

In seeking a solution to the religion-school problem Archibald appealed for "a real neutrality of openness and respect" on the part of the schools. This, he pointed out, should allow "to those free institutions of home and church their proper functions as the molders of religious convictions in our nation."

Herbert C. Cottrell said maximum freedom for all people, in the practice of religion, is provided in the Constitution of the United States.

"It must therefore be acknowledged that any state law prescribing religious exercises for use in public schools constitutes a contradiction and a violation of the principle of maximum freedom," he stated.

He said existing constitutional amendments and resulting court decisions relative to religious exercises "do not exclude reference to or information about God" but they oppose religious ceremony prescribed by public authority. However, he said there is a danger that continued testing and interpretations may preclude all religious influence in public schools.

Cottrell questioned whether legislation would be a solution to the problem or a cause for continued controversy among varying religious groups.

"The only reasonable solution appears to be an accelerated and improved system of religious education in the home and church," he said.