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460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director**REGIONAL OFFICES**ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593  
DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996  
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226**BUREAU**BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,  
Telephone (615) 254-1631

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Detroit Baptists Escape  
Major Damage From Riots

DETROIT (BP)--Rioting and looting flared within three blocks of the offices for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan here, but the property and Baptist churches in Detroit escaped major damage during the rampage of shooting, looting, and destruction.

Four snipers, however, were captured by federal and state troops on property adjacent to the state convention building at 2619 Cass Ave., said Michigan Baptist Executive Secretary Fred D. Hubbs.

During the first three days of rioting, more than 30 persons were killed, more than 3,000 arrested, more than 1,500 businesses were looted, and more than 1,000 fires had been started, according to news reports.

Hubbs said in an interview with the Baptist Press that the extent of the damage and destruction was unbelievable.

State Baptist workers, he said, were trying to help the thousands of homeless people who are wandering around on the streets with no place to go.

"It's a pitiful situation," Hubbs, former vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention said.

"We plan to sleep some of the people who have lost their homes here (at the state convention building) tonight, and to try to feed them someday," Hubbs said.

The state Baptist leader said that the only damage to Baptist property has been vandalism at the new Baptist Center across the street from the state convention office. Copper pipes were ripped out of the center, with damage estimated at about \$5,000.

The Cass Park Baptist Church on 12th Street just South of Grand River was only slightly damaged--only a few windows and lights broken--even though it was within the area hardest hit by the riots.

"I've checked today as best I could," said Hubbs, "and the churches have seemingly escaped much property damage. The other denominations have not suffered much damage to their churches either."

The state convention offices closed down on Monday following the first Sunday night riots, but were opened to a "skeleton crew" of about six workers on Tuesday.

The building, located just north of the worst rioting section near Grand Avenue, houses the state Baptist offices on the lower floor, and provides living quarters for working women on the upper floors. Called Priscilla Hall, the building originally was built by Mrs. Henry Ford as a home for working girls.

"We have 93 women living in the building, and they've been terribly upset," Hubbs said. "Just the caretakers and the houseman and the counselors were all that were here with them during the worst of it."

He added that they were especially upset when they learned that the snipers had been captured right next to the Baptist Building.

"The troops were all around us here," Hubbs said. "They unloaded right in our parking lot and searched the area for snipers."

"No one has been shot right here," he added. "We thank the Lord for that."

State Baptist workers met with Negro ministers on the second day of the riots in an effort to set up housing, food stations, distribution of clothing, and aid to the victims of the riots.

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Hubbs said that the Negro leadership could not explain why the riots occurred. "No one has stepped forth to voice a disgruntled word saying 'this is why we have done it', so this is a mystery," Hubbs said.

It all started, he explained, when police raided a place called The Blind Pig that sells drinks after hours.

"There seems to be a pattern to it," he added. "These people seem to break in, loot the stores, haul and cart the merchandise off, and then the fires start. But the bulk of the people in the streets had nothing to do with initiating it, even though they participate in the looting after it gets started."

Hubbs speculated that there seemed to be some kind of lawless mob that has perpetuated the rioting and organized for it. "They seem to jump from one place to another," he said.

Hubbs said that fear has shaken the entire city. "The snipers are on the expressways and on the roof tops, and you never know when you are going to be shot at from any direction when you are driving down the street."

The state Baptist leader urged Baptists throughout the nation to pray for the people of Detroit and other areas where rioting has broken loose this summer. "We hope the worst of it is over now," he said.

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Hardin-Simmons Names  
Information Director

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ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--Martha Gay Ueckert, assistant public information director at Hardin-Simmons University (Baptist) here, has been named public information director for the university, effective Aug. 1.

Miss Ueckert, a 1960 Hardin-Simmons University graduate, succeeds Charles Richardson who will join the public relations staff of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Aug. 1 in Dallas.

Before joining the Hardin-Simmons University staff last summer, Miss Ueckert was assistant director of promotion for the Southern Baptist Radio-Television Commission in Fort Worth, Tex.

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