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Vietnam Chaplain Finds
Huge, Varried Congregation

By Major Charles B. Moore

SAIGON, South Vietnam (BP)--Ministering to the spiritual needs of 10,000 to 16,000 different men each month would be a formidable challenge to any pastor. This is precisely the mission facing Army Chaplain Lawrence 'Beaufort' Graham, a Southern Baptist pastor on duty in Vietnam.

Major Graham's duty station is a dusty compound called Camp LBJ (Long Bihn Junction), sandwiched between Bien Hoa Air Base and the Army's sprawling Long Bihn Post, 16 miles northeast of Saigon.

It's the home of the 90th Replacement Battalion which processes thousands of replacements into Vietnam each month and then sends thousands of war-weary soldiers home.

Camp LBJ is hot and dusty in the dry season; hot and muddy in the monsoon rains. It is the place where new men change their "greenbacks" to the Army's funny money called MPC (military payment certificates); receive an orientation on staying alive; and are assigned to their units in the field.

For Chaplain Graham, it offers a unique opportunity to live up to the Army Chaplain's motto: "Bringing God to men and men to God." The opportunity is unique because Graham is the first minister the new men see in Vietnam and the last they see before going home.

Claiming Williamston, S. C., as his home, Graham attended Furman University at Greenville, S. C., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest, N. C. Prior to entering the military, he was the pastor of the Sunset Forest Baptist Church in Gastonia, N. C.

It was nine years ago that Graham made his dual application to become an Army chaplain --one to the Department of the Army and one to the Southern Baptist director of chaplaincy in Atlanta, Ga. Asked why he wanted to be a chaplain, he replied, "I believe that God led me to the military.

"It's a satisfying job and one in which I can serve both my country and my denomination at the same time," he added. "In Protestant services, Army chaplains preach a pure scripture --the Bible. Baptists also preach the Bible, thus I feel right at home in the military."

Chaplain Graham is preaching the Bible in many ways. He counsels incoming and outgoing troops on any problem--spiritual or personal; he talks to every man going home, urging him to continue to accept responsibility and devotion to duty; he lets new men talk out their fear of combat and emphasizes to them that God's presence is everywhere, even in war.

Daily, the slightly built, black-haired pastor can be found throughout the area, talking or just listening to the men. Many a young soldier, fresh from the military discipline of basic training in the States, is startled when he is greeted by a "Good morning, brother. How are you today?"

"I guess that's a carry over from my civilian days," grinned Graham, "but to me all men are still brothers."

On Sunday, Graham goes to his chapel early to listen to the choir rehearse. The choir consists of men assigned to the 90th Replacement Battalion and, despite the lack of feminine voices, do justice to the hymns of praise.

His chapel is the upstairs portion of a two-story wooden barracks. Its accessories are sparse. But no one seems to notice. For Graham is an enthusiastic and energetic preacher who holds the attention of any congregation. Unfortunately for him, he is sometimes too enthusiastic.

Just recently, he was preaching on the "Commander of the Battle of Life." Standing behind his homemade pulpit, he was emphasizing that the individual is responsible for how he "fights" the battle of his life. Just as he said "The sword of the spirit is inscribed with THOU!", he brought his hand down vigorously on the pulpit. The knuckles in his left hand were broken, but he was so engrossed in his sermon, he didn't feel the pain until after the service.

Graham's future plans are uncertain. As he puts it, "If I remain in the military or not will depend on God's decision. He will lead me to my next assignment.

"But I do miss the civilian community," he added. "There I had established friends, a long-term, day-to-day spiritual relationship with the community."

What does he like most in the Army?

"In the Army you meet a man as a man and present to him a man's gospel," he answered. "And this philosophy is the key to the Army Chaplain's success in Vietnam.

"These boys are fighting a man's war and they expect their religion to be given the same way--on a man's level."

The men going home, back to their loved ones, friends and communities, get special recognition from Graham, he explained:

"Here is a man who, in most cases, has been separated from his family for 12 months. During this time he has been in contact with his family only by letter or tape. He realized he is not the same person who left the States 12 months before.

"This is not to say that he is a completely different person but he is changed in many ways. While here he has been constantly reminded that he is a target of the enemy, and he has lived with the actions and reactions dictated by self-preservation possibly more than ever before in his life.

"This has brought about changes, psychologically, emotionally and in many cases, spiritually. Now, all of a sudden, this tense feeling is ended."

As the men are assembled for the final processing to return home, the chaplain is given a part of the program to say a few words and lead them in prayer.

"I officially and personally thank them for the job they have done in Vietnam," said Graham. "They are told that they have contributed something, no matter what their job has been.

"Then with heads bowed, we ask God to bless them because they have come to this part of the world and given of themselves for the benefit of mankind in defense of freedom and to show the world our belief in the dignity of the individual and the right of that individual to make his choices freely. We pray God's protection on them as they leave for home so that they may be safely and happily reunited with their families, friends and loved ones.

"Lastly, we pray that whatever walk of life they enter into after leaving here, whether military or civilian, that God will surround them with His blessings, comfort, wisdom, guidance and peace."

Thus soldiers come to Vietnam in war, and leave with prayers for peace.

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March 13, 1968

**High Court Hears Debate
On First Amendment Case**

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court heard arguments on what some observers here predict could be a "landmark case" affecting future church-state relations in America.

The case known as *Flast v. Gardner* challenges the constitutionality of the way certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is administered in the state of New York.

A group of citizens in New York brought suit challenging the use of federal funds for programs and services in religiously operated schools. At issue are guidance services and instruction in reading, writing and other subjects. Included are the purchase by federal funds of textbooks and other instructional materials in such schools.

A three-judge New York district ruled (2-1) that those bringing the suit had no legal standing to bring the case. The question was appealed to the Supreme Court.

Agreement was reached on both sides of the controversy that the sole issue to be decided at this time was whether or not citizens and taxpayers have a right in federal courts to challenge laws on the ground that they violate the First Amendment.

Leo Pfeffer, noted church-state constitutional lawyer, argued that the courts should give "standing to sue" to citizens in such cases.

Erwin E. Griswold, U. S. solicitor-general and former dean of Harvard Law School, argued the government's position against the New York taxpayers.

Each side was given one hour to present arguments. Pfeffer shared 10 minutes of his time with Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr., (D., N.C.) who represented the Baptist General Association of Virginia and Americans for Public Schools.

Both Pfeffer and Griswold in their opposing arguments agreed that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was constitutional on its face. The challenge by Pfeffer was that the state of New York unconstitutionally used the federal funds for educational purposes in parochial schools.

Pfeffer and Ervin argued that if the Supreme Court did not allow standing to sue in this case there is no other remedy for testing the constitutionality of federal expenditures on First Amendment grounds.

Some Washington observers pointed out later that this was a strange argument by Ervin because he is pushing a Judicial Review Bill in Congress in an attempt to force the court to hear such cases.

Griswold on the other hand argued that the present court policy of refusing taxpayers' suits is valid and that there are other adequate ways of testing such cases through state court actions.

At the time the Supreme Court was hearing the case on standing to sue, the House Judiciary Committee was conducting hearings on Ervin's Judicial Review bill which has already passed the Senate.

Ervin, in his Amicus brief, virtually conceded that his bill has little or no chance of passage in the House. He said:

"The inability of Congress to overrule the *Frothingham* precedent means that, as a practical matter, the only foreseeable opportunity for judicial consideration of the First Amendment questions in federal aid to church-related schools lies before the court in this case."

"The legislative action," Ervin continued, "was initiated because of the previous reluctance of this court to reverse or clarify its own rule of decision. The failure to enact repealing legislation means that the obligation once again is placed solely on this court."

An announcement of its decision in the Flast case will probably be made by the Supreme Court by the time it adjourns in June.

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Two Join Staff To Meet
Church Loans Increase

3/13/68

ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's church loans division has added two new staff members to keep up with the increasing pace of demand for loans from congregations in newer areas of Baptist work.

Rex M. Phillips, assistant vice president and manager of a Spokane, Wash., bank, has been appointed as a field representative in the church loans operation, with responsibility in the Northwest section of the U.S.

He will report to the Home Mission Board in Atlanta by early summer.

Thomas F. Thrailkill, an Atlanta bank officer, will assume duties in Atlanta this spring as assistant escrow officer.

Robert H. Kilgore, director of the church loans division, said demand for church loans currently runs between 500 and 600 applications a year.

"Each field man has the capacity to process about 100-125 loans a year," he said. "By adding Phillips as the fourth field representative on the staff, we should just about be able to keep up with current demand."

Kilgore said escrow officer Tom Haynes could close only about 200 loans a year and still handle the myriad of other legal requirements.

Thrailkill will provide relief at this point so that closings can keep up with the loans, Kilgore said.

At the end of 1967, church loans reported closing loans and committing new loans to 310 churches for about \$8 million.

Phillips, a native of Cassville, Mo., currently is with the Farmers and Merchants Bank in Spokane, Wash. He has worked with the National Bank of Washington in Spokane, the first National Bank of Oregon in Klamath Falls, Ore., and the Bank of Idaho in Boise and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

He studied at the American Institute of Banking. His assigned territory covers the Washington-Oregon, Utah-Idaho, Northern Plains, Colorado and Kansas Baptist Conventions.

Thrailkill, a loan officer with Citizens and Southern National Bank in Atlanta, is a native of Hapeville, Ga.

He is a graduate of Davidson (N.C.) College.

Thrailkill, as assistant escrow officer, will supervise loan closings, insurance, tax details and technical correspondence on loan accounts.

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Atlanta Association Asked
To Reconsider Federal Aid

3/12/68

ATLANTA (BP)--The question of federal aid for Atlanta Baptist arose again here when a formal plea was presented for a called meeting of the Atlanta Baptist Association to reconsider their previous action.

In January, the Atlanta Baptist Association voted to allow the trustees of Atlanta Baptist College to decide for themselves if they wanted to accept federal aid, including grants.

In March, the pastor of Venetian Hills Baptist Church here, W. I. Warren, asked the associational executive committee to call for another associational meeting to reconsider the action.

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The request was referred to a committee to determine the constitutionality of reconsidering action taken in a called session. John J. Buell, assistant moderator acting in the absence of moderator Roy W. Hinchey, referred the resolution to the survey and communications committee.

Hinchey, the moderator, is also chairman of the survey and communications committee. Hinchey, pastor of Jefferson Avenue Baptist Church in East Point, Ga., presided over the January associational meeting when trustees were authorized "to apply for and obtain federal funds" which, in their discretion, would not "limit the freedom of the college."

Warren, who made the formal request that the action be reconsidered, said many churches, including his own, were opposed to the January 16 action. "A breach of fellowship in the association is deepening," his resolution said.

Warren's request also asked that messengers be given opportunity to vote on the release of the college from control and/or connection with the association, if another associational meeting is called.

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Arkansas Gets First State Chaplaincy Post

3/13/68

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists' chaplaincy ministries reached a new benchmark in March with the appointment of the convention's first state-level director of chaplaincy.

R. H. Dorris of Little Rock, Ark., was approved by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here for appointment as director of chaplaincy ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention--the first such cooperative position with Southern Baptists' 30 state conventions.

Dorris, a former U. S. Army Chaplain, currently is pastor of the Pike Avenue Baptist Church in North Little Rock and part-time chaplain at a Veterans Administration hospital.

He will seek to establish chaplaincy programs in hospitals and other institutions and in industry, and will encourage churches to find ways of ministering to military personnel.

Primary emphasis will be given to a relatively new area of Baptist concern--industrial chaplaincy.

Efforts at industrial chaplaincy emphasize a firm's responsibility in the matter of employee welfare, encouraging companies to hire chaplains rather than placing church-employed ministers in industry.

Dorris, for example, as does Lowell Sodeman, secretary of industrial chaplaincy at the Home Mission Board, will try to sell industry on the idea of hiring chaplains, and then hopefully will have the opportunity of placing a qualified Baptist minister in the position.

"The chaplain is a symbol of the regard management has for human and spiritual values," Sodeman said.

"Part of the philosophy of having industry hire the chaplains is that it emphasizes that industry too has a responsibility in these areas."

Sodeman said 94 Arkansas industrial and business leaders and 106 ministers met to launch this new ministry in conferences sponsored by the Home Mission Board and the Arkansas Baptist missions department.

One Baptist chaplain for a trucking company in North Carolina testified in the Arkansas meetings that he had "a congregation of 12,000."

"At first, I feared I would only draw my salary and my breath," Chaplain Homer Good said.

"But my counseling soon had to be put on an appointment basis. Often the frustrated employee simply needs someone to listen to his problem."

Sodeman emphasized that the industrial chaplain does not attempt to play the role of physician or psychiatrist, but instead makes referral a part of his ministry.

Counseling is the major part of the industrial chaplain's assignment, he said.

Dorris, who will direct these new efforts in Arkansas, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a former pastor of the First Baptist Church of Cotton Plant, Ark.

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Winners Named In Creative
Arts Competition By BSSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--Winners of the 1967 "Upward" Creative Arts Competition have been announced by the Sunday School department of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Entries in the fourth annual competition came from high school youth 13-17 over the entire Southern Baptist Convention. They were judged on suitability of subject matter for inclusion in Upward magazine, on creativity, depth of thought, style, clarity of expression and spiritual significance. Judges were chosen from Upward's board of consulting editors.

Award-winning entries will be published in the October, 1968, issue of Upward.

Rice A. Pierce, acting editor of Upward, a leisure-time magazine for youth, has announced the following winners:

Fiction: First award, Margaret A. Hughes, Big Island, Va., member of Hunting Creek Baptist Church, Big Island, \$25. Second award, Karen Knight, 16, Tyler, Tex., member of Southern Oaks Baptist Church, Tyler, \$15.

Essay: First award, James Harvey Estes III, 18, Birmingham, Ala., member of First Baptist Church, Gardendale, Ala., \$15. Second award, Ann Dee Williams, 16, Los Angeles, Calif., member of Mar Vista Southern Baptist Church, Mar Vista, Calif., \$10.

Poetry: First award, Linda M. Oursler, 16, Silver Spring, Md., member of Clifton Park Baptist Church, Silver Spring, \$7.50. Second award, Gerrie Gordon, 17, Memphis, Tenn., member of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, \$5.

Black-and-white drawing: First award, Debbie King, 13, San Antonio, Tex., member of Castle Hills Baptist Church, San Antonio, \$10. Second award, Eric Carr, 16, San Antonio, member of Castle Hills Baptist Church, San Antonio, \$5.

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Anonymous Gift For Berne
Meeting Trip Prompts Response

3/13/68

WASHINGTON (BP)--At least five young people from the Briggs Memorial Baptist Church here will attend the Baptist Youth World Conference at Berne, Switzerland, July 22-28 because somebody made an anonymous gift.

James C. Bruner, pastor, cites the incident as an illustration of the good that can come from a single motivating factor.

Someone in the church--and Bruner says only the treasurer knows who it was--gave \$1,000 to "send some young person to the conference at Berne."

A committee was appointed to select a worthy youth, and the committee decided that two youth could go on the \$1,000 if economical tours were planned.

But three weeks later the committee chairman, Erle Cocke, announced that the committee was deadlocked on three names and needed an additional \$500 in gifts to cover expenses for the third. The money was in hand the next Sunday.

In the meantime the excitement has prompted other gifts which are sending a fourth youth. One other young lady has persuaded her parents to supply funds to permit her to join the party, and still another is considering it.

"I am sure that the donor of the original gift must be pleased that the thought has prompted such a chain reaction and so multiplied its effectiveness," Bruner said. "It was a spark that has enlivened our whole youth program for years to come."

Briggs Memorial is a suburban congregation with fewer than 400 members.

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