

# (BP)---FEATURES

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

produced by Baptist Press

460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

May 12, 1970

## Chaplains Carry "Good News" to Prisoners

by Mary-Violet Burns

ARLINGTON, Va. (BP)--The imposing, white garage on South Highland Street here is the metamorphosis of a dream. The Good News Mission here, is one man's vision come alive-- a ministry to convicted law-breakers.

The mission provides chaplains for penal institutions and backs them with an organization which supplies equipment, a salary, a halfway house and training and promotional materials.

The man behind the dream is Bill Simmer, a Southern Baptist minister from Iowa, who now directs the 10-year-old effort.

Simmer started preaching every other week in the Fairfax Virginia County Jail while he was a student at Washington Bible College. Noticing the spiritual needs of the men, he would drop in occasionally to counsel them. His visits eventually grew to twice a week and finally everyday.

He expanded his ministry to include counseling, Bible classes, and films. He developed similar programs in other jails, recruiting fellow students to preach in the Alexandria and Arlington County Jails.

"By the fall of '61, I felt that this was what God wanted me to do," Simmer says. "The jail ministry was so different and I had no pattern to go by. I spent probably six months asking various Christian leaders and they'd never heard of a mission doing such a thing," Simmer explained.

From its small beginning, the mission has grown to include six chaplains ministering to 16 correctional institutions. Each chaplain is responsible for visiting two or three. They also visit in prisoners' homes while they are confined and continue after the men have been released.

The mission is run by a 15-member board of trustees who set the policy. It is a faith mission not attached to any denomination, although Simmer is a Southern Baptist.

GNEI, as it is called by some, recently completed a building program, it's fifth in 10 years. The work was done by volunteers.

The halfway house is on the second floor of the garage. Newly released prisoners needing a home during their readjustment period live here. The House was begun because the chaplains felt that the prisoner's chances for staying out of prison and crime, permanently, would increase if he didn't have to go home to four walls. "This kind of life is too lonely for them," Simmer explained.

Simmer collaborated with others to devise the Bible study course after striking out in an attempt to find a suitable denominational course. "The hangup was that most courses were too high priced, denominationally oriented, required a previous knowledge of the Bible, or the assistance of a minister."

"There is a real need to put our inexpensive materials that can be used in this type of ministry. All our work has to be more Christ-centered than denominational centered because this is a public work. The prison officials wouldn't appreciate our trying to make Baptists out of everyone in their jail," Simmer said.

Each of the chaplains has a unique method of presenting the Christian message to the men. "Our ministry is primarily befriending them," said Elmer Mehl, one of the chaplains. "It is winning their confidence, showing them that we're honest and sincere, and that when they make a decision they won't be left alone."

The men test the chaplain's patience, Mehl said. "Sometimes they flush the toilet or turn up the TV when we start to talk." Continued visits, however, wins the prisoner's confidence in the chaplains. The work is slow, Mehl says, "but the rewarding thing about this kind of work is the lives that are changed by the Gospel."

The ex-prisoners with whom the chaplains are relating can hardly communicate their appreciation. One, a convicted murderer who is now a pastor, said:

"These men are really interested in helping people. It's not a nine to five job. You'd be surprised at some of the things that these prisoners do to chaplains. A Christian in the right spot can really change a lot of lives."

The mission, however, is not without its faults, some say.

Bill Cumbie, associational missionary for the Mount Vernon Baptist Association is disturbed by the chaplains' limited training.

"Most of these chaplains lack training in the professional levels of the behavioral sciences," he said. He does not think they are qualified to counsel prisoners on personal matters.

However, Cumbie did not berate the work of the mission. "I think the reason we have laymen working in the numbers and strength that they do is because they saw no one else working toward the goals of the mission," Cumbie explained.

In an effort to correct this training void, weekly training sessions, are held for the chaplains. Last December GMI sponsored a week-long chaplaincy seminar led by Richard McKay of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Chaplains Commission.

Despite criticism, Simmer says the mission is unable to handle its many requests for chaplains. "We could employ at least 12 more chaplains right now. It used to be that the doors were slammed in our faces; now things are opened to us."

In the future, Simmer would like to see a chain of halfway houses, motel-size and equipped for handling hundreds of ex-prisoners.

One of the mission's supporters--financially and morally--decried the necessity of special training saying that training is not essential to concern. Concern is what Simmer asks of his chaplains.

"The important thing is that our chaplains be faithful to the word of God and use it, that they seek to have a godly kind of love for people," Simmer said.

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Mary-Violet Burns is an editorial assistant in the department of editorial services, SBC Home Mission Board, a bureau of Baptist Press.

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"Bwana Shamba" In Tanzania  
Teaches New Crops, New Life

By Douglas M. Knapp  
Southern Baptist Missionary to Tanzania

TUKUYU, Tanzania (BP)--Deep in the interior of Tanzania, hidden away by a circle of mountains, grow orchards and rows of cherries, nectarines, lychees, soybeans, and alfalfa.

It doesn't sound like Africa, but it is---all because of agricultural missionary efforts in this agriculturally unique corner of Tanzania.

Agricultural missions has many sides and facets, and many areas that have yet to be fully utilized. The aim of agricultural missions is evangelism, using agriculture as a door to the hearts of the people.

Just as the doctor follows in the footsteps of Christ when he heals the sick, the agriculturist feeds the hungry.

He soon finds, however that he isn't going to turn the world upside down overnight, and that there are many obstacles and frustrations in the way.

To name a few: corrupt and inadequate marketing systems; the need for large-scale improvements such as new feeder roads; processing equipment, uneconomic customs and traditions that control the distribution and use of land.

One of the more interesting aspects of agricultural missions is the introduction of new fruits, vegetables and cash crops to the area. Each church, pastor and family the missionary helps inspires him to try yet another approach or new idea.

There is no end to new projects: new crops through distribution of seeds, fruit trees and cuttings; cocks of improved breeds to upgrade poultry flocks; fertilizers and simple implements; artificial insemination; and field days and meetings.

The Rungwe District of Tanzania is an ideal location for agricultural evangelism. The people are unusually responsive to the gospel and there are over 120 churches and preaching points scattered over the small district of nearly 100 miles square. To worship in each church within a year, the missionary must visit at least two churches each Sunday.

The pastors and church members are eager for help from the "Bwana Shamba" (Mr. Farmer), as he is called in Swahili. There is no end of invitations to "come and teach us about the farming of today."

Rungwe District is unique in yet another way. There is such a variety of elevations that within the district all the temperate and tropical crops can be grown--apples and oranges, wheat and rice, peaches and bananas, English peas and coconuts.

Five years have seen many projects begun, a few completed and several still going. There are four Ayrshire cows with one more expected shortly in one project.

Four snow-white Muscovy ducks, a non-quacking breed, are the first in the district. A pound of new hybrid rice from the Philippines has been multiplied into several hundred pounds to be distributed throughout the rice growing area.

The newest project is a nine-acre crop of soybeans. This protein-rich vegetable which has been found to grow well at high and low altitudes, could greatly improve the diets of the people, and make a great difference in the appearance and well-being of the 350,000 Nyakyusa people in the Rungwe District.

Helping to improve the diets and health of the people of Tanzania has its rewards, but perhaps the greatest thrill for an agricultural missionary is to see people respond to the invitation in a church which began as a result of an agricultural meeting.

Through agricultural missions, Southern Baptists are seeking to follow the example of Jesus Christ who had compassion for people in need and fed them, and came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Douglas M. Knapp of Tampa, Fla., is an agricultural missionary to Tanzania.

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BP PHOTO mailed to Baptist state papers



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May 12, 1970

**Baptist-Catholic Dialogue Urged  
To Overcome Misunderstandings**

WACO, Tex. (BP)--Baptists and Catholics have more in common than many realize, but they need "to witness to each other to overcome a vast amount of ignorance and misunderstanding between them," a Catholic professor at the University of San Diego told a symposium at Baylor University here.

Ray Ryland, assistant professor of religious studies at the University of San Diego, called Baptists "the largest, most influential spokesman for basic convictions of the radical reformation" during his speech at a symposium on Baptist history and Christian ethics here.

"I am particularly concerned that the Baptist witness be fully shared with Roman Catholics to enrich their personal and corporate lives," Ryland said.

He cited Baptist insistence on a converted church membership, the Baptist case against sacramentalism, and the Baptist focus on the local church as three aspects of the Baptist witness Catholics "need to hear."

Ryland said Roman Catholics need to re-examine the meaning of infant baptism and that Catholic theology on infant baptism must be more clearly related to a renewed emphasis on conversion.

Active dialogue between Baptists and Catholics could strengthen this realization among Catholics, he said.

Such dialogue could also stress the Baptist view that sacraments are only symbols of living relationships that God intended should exist within the community and between the community and Jesus Christ, he said.

"If Roman Catholics can answer the charge that the theology of sacraments undercuts the doctrine of justification by faith, and I believe they can, then they must give that answer in dialogue with Baptists," he said.

Catholic theologians have re-discovered "church" as local congregation, so "one can therefore speak of a growing convergence between Baptists and Roman Catholics with regard to the centrality of the local church," Ryland said.

"The church reveals herself most clearly in the local gathering of the people of God," he said.

"Unless Baptists are thankful they are Baptists, unless they are eager to share with Catholics the riches they have found in Christ through the Baptist tradition, they have nothing to contribute dialogue with Catholics. The same applies to Catholics," he said.

Problems faced in drawing the two denominations together are humanly insoluble, he observed, the "these problems are not insoluble for the spirit of God, who is drawing us together."

Ryland said there is no contradiction or even difference between what is really of God from either religion, and "this is the truth God will preserve.

"Jesus prayed, and still prays, that all his followers will be one. When Baptists and Catholics ask 'which one?' the first answer we shall get, I believe, is 'neither one,'" he said.

We can only trust in the Holy Spirit who "will lead us into all truth," Ryland concluded.

Baylor To Sever Ties  
With Dental College

DALLAS (BP)--The board of trustees for Baylor University meeting here adopted a resolution to divest itself of the Dallas-based Baylor University School of Dentistry as soon as practical after the State of Texas has provided necessary funds.

In other action, the board named H. H. Reynolds, former vice president for administration and research, as executive vice president at Baylor, and voted to continue compulsory chapel attendance at the world's largest Baptist university located in Waco, Tex.

Boone Powell, vice president for Baylor Medical Center in Dallas, said the state is asking that the School of Dentistry increase enrollment by 50 per cent and that the only way this would be possible would be by state appropriations for dental education.

The School of Dentistry temporarily withdrew similar proceedings last year when the state failed to appropriate funds either for the Dental School or Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston, which had already been cut loose by a vote of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in November, 1968.

Baylor Medical School formed an independent board of trustees before the coordinating board for the Texas College and University System made the decision on appropriations.

Even though the state legislature had passed enabling legislation for the coordinating board to contract with Baylor Medical School and eventually Baylor Dental School, appropriations stalled. Baylor Medical School has been operating separate from Texas Baptists as well as without state funds until new deliberations are begun by appropriate state agencies.

To forestall being caught in that position, Baylor Dental School's divestiture would "become effective as soon as practical after the State of Texas shall have made provision for necessary funds," according to the trustees' resolution.

That resolution must be passed up the line through the Texas Baptist Christian Education Commission, program coordinating committee and Executive Board before being presented to the annual convention in October in Austin, Tex.

The resolution noted that expansion of facilities at the dental school is necessary to fill "an urgent need by the people of the State of Texas," and that such expansion is "more properly a responsibility of the people as a whole rather than the Baptist denomination...."

A committee appointed to study compulsory chapel attendance at Baylor reported that required attendance to chapel "has made and continues to make a substantial contribution to the total educational program of the university."

The committee made a one-year proposal that chapel programs be drawn up well in advance and that students be allowed to cut up to 25 per cent of the programs.

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Criswell Urges Baptist  
Prayer for National Crisis

5/12/70

DALLAS (BP)--Upon the request of the White House, a call for special prayer in behalf of America and its leaders was issued here by the President of the Southern Baptist Convention.

W. A. Criswell, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas and president of the 11.3 million-member SBC, appealed to Baptist pastors to lead their congregations in praying that "God will give the President wisdom and blessing in this time of deep domestic and international crisis."

Criswell issued the appeal from his home where he is recovering from a severe throat infection. He said he was among other national religious leaders who received calls from the White House asking for special prayers.

He said he would not only make the appeal but that he also supports the President in his attempt to solve national problems.

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Two Baylor Demonstrations  
Described As "Very Orderly"

WACO, Tex. (BP)--Two student demonstrations concerning the War in Indo China and the shooting of students at Kent State University were staged at Baylor University, the nation's largest Baptist school, and described by school officials as "very orderly."

About 75 to 100 students marched in behalf of peace just before and just after an annual awards ceremony by the Baylor Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), observers said. The demonstrators reportedly sat quietly through the ceremony.

A memorial service for the Kent State students killed during a protest on that Ohio campus was attended by about 200 persons, including students and faculty members and ministers there to participate in a time of prayer.

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Texas Baptist Student Leaders  
Urge Loans For Baptist Schools

5/12/70

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--The Texas Baptist Student Government Association, meeting at Hardin-Simmons University here, endorsed a recommendation that each Texas Baptist school has the right to determine for itself whether it will accept federal loans for improvement and construction of university facilities.

A measure which would have opened the way for federal loans to the schools was defeated by a wide majority last November at the Texas Baptist annual convention.

The student organization also endorsed a tuition equalization grant program proposed by the State Advisory Committee for Private Colleges and Universities which would award students up to \$1,000 each to attend either state or private schools.

In other action, the students voted to encourage an active role by Baptists students in selection and participation of messengers to the Texas convention, called for non-voting representation on boards of trustees of Texas Baptist institutions and voted to ask Editor John Hurt for more space in the Baptist Standard, state Baptist weekly newsmagazine, to tell of student activities.

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Quiche Genesis  
"Off The Press"

5/12/70

RICHMOND (BP)--Word came from Guatemala: "The Book of Genesis is off the press."

Though publication of books of the Bible may not be unusual in most situations, it was in Guatemala. The Book of Genesis was translated into the language of the Quiche Indians in an area so remote that it must be reached by canoe and by foot.

Richard R. Greenwood, Southern Baptist missionary in Guatemala, described the trip to the region this way:

"The canoe ride down the river is thrilling, but the six-mile hike into the forest is something else. Vines four and five inches in diameter adorn the towering trees. Tripping on root systems in the ankle-deep mud removes all monotony from walking."

The Greenwoods, who live in Coban, are the only Southern Baptist missionary couple working among the Quiche-speaking Indians, descendants of the ancient Mayans. With only one other evangelical couple to help, Greenwood says they "continue to dream in unmet opportunities."

Until February, the only parts of the Bible available in the language of the Quiche Indians, who number about 300,000, were the New Testament and a book of selected Old Testament stories.

The Quiche translation of Genesis was accomplished largely through the labors of Ruth Carlson and Fran Eachus, Wycliffe Bible Translators who have lived in the area for 14 years. Other religious groups including Baptists served as advisers.

On a Sunday afternoon recently the newly printed Quiche translation of Genesis was dedicated. With coffee and sweet bread to enliven the barter, Quiche Indians bought 226 copies of the 2,000 that were printed.

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Greenwood believes that one of them, Joaquin Vasquez, spoke for all when he said, "how much clearer and better is the scripture in our own language."

Exodus, the second Old Testament book is scheduled for release in Quiche shortly.

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#### Mullins Fellowship Plans No Meeting At Denver SBC

RICHMOND (BP)--The E. Y. Mullins Fellowship, organized last year during a controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention concerning literal interpretation of the Bible, and freedom and openness in the denomination, will not hold a meeting at Denver during the SBC, the organization's president has announced.

Thomas D. Austin, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Richmond, distributed a letter to members of the organization stating that results of a membership poll showed that too few members would be present at the Denver convention to justify meeting.

Last year, E. Y. Mullins Fellowship met jointly with Baptist Student Concerns, an organization of Baptist students, at a New Orleans church. The secretary of the E.Y. Mullins Fellowship, Bill Smith, was later nominated for convention president as a protest candidate against W. A. Criswell of Dallas.

Smith has since resigned from his position at the University of Richmond here, and has publicly announced he was leaving the denomination feeling there is no place in the Southern Baptist Convention for the liberal.

Austin, in the letter to Mullins Fellowship members, wrote that though the organization plans no meeting at the Denver convention, "this does not mean that the Fellowship is disbanding or 'withering on the vine.' It simply means no meeting in Denver."

Reporting on a survey of the 350 members of the organization, Austin said that 37 of the 199 who replied wanted to disband the organization, 10 were "ambiguous," and 127 said "keep it going."

Austin said only 25 of the persons who wanted to continue the fellowship indicated, however, that they would be in Denver for the Convention.

Austin, concluded with a plea for members to send in their \$2.00 dues immediately "so the fellowship can continue," to either himself or Smith. He also urged the membership to encourage others to join because "The S.B.C. needs us."

He also requested suggestions for persons to serve on the organization's "continuing committee," and suggestions "concerning the direction of the fellowship ought to take." He added some proposals and ideas for the fellowship have been proposed and would be detailed in future correspondence.

One such suggestion, coming from a group of members in the Nashville area, proposed that the fellowship seek to emphasize local chapters or organizations that would meet to share common concerns and information on issues facing the denomination.

Austin said that there is a possibility that the members of the Mullins Fellowship who do attend the Denver convention might try to get together informally, "just to talk about what happens at the convention." He added plans are indefinite, and he did not know when or where the group might meet informally.

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Field Elected President  
Of William Jewell College

LIBERTY, Mo. (BP)--Trustees of William Jewell College have elected Thomas S. Field, pastor of First Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo., as the Baptist school's president, effective Aug. 1.

Field has been pastor of the Springfield church for the past 10 years, previously holding pastorates of churches in LaGrange, Ga., Lake Charles, La., and several American Baptist churches before entering the Southern Baptist Convention in 1950.

William Jewell College is affiliated both with the American and Southern Baptist state conventions in Missouri.

A native of Illinois, Field is a graduate of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., with a bachelor of arts degree in business administration and public relations. He has done graduate work in business administration at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., and holds the bachelor of divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. Wheaton College has conferred upon him the honorary doctor of divinity degree.

The 54-year-old pastor was president of the Missouri Baptist Convention from 1967-69, and presently is a member of the state convention's Executive Board and Executive Committee. He also is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

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Oklahoma Board Approves  
Hospital Expansion Plan

5/12/70

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The Board of Directors for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma approved here major expansion plans for Baptist Memorial Hospital here and voted to recommend a \$3.8 million state convention budget for 1971.

The hospital expansion would add nearly 385 beds to an ultimate 800-bed capacity at Baptist Memorial Hospital. The construction of four additional floors at the Doctors Medical Building adjacent to the hospital for a cost of about \$1.65 million. A third proposal called for construction of additional parking facilities at the hospital, to be financed, constructed and operated by a third party.

The hospital expansion program is to be financed by the sale of tax-exempt bonds, supplemented by a fund campaign for private contributions. The total bond issue will amount to \$27.5 million, and the fund campaign would seek to raise \$1.5 million in contributions.

The Board of Directors for the convention was told this financing plan would clear the convention's Cooperative Program funds of any obligation or assessment to pay off hospital indebtedness.

Financing of the Doctor's Medical Building expansion will be handled through a loan to be repaid by the hospital during a three-year period.

The building expansion projects are expected to be completed within a 10-year period.

After lengthy discussion during the board meeting, the convention's directors decided to take no action on a constitutional amendment referred to the board by the 1969 state convention. The amendment called for messengers to the state convention to be from churches which co-operate with the convention and which are affiliated with and in good standing with co-operating association.

The \$3.8 million 1971 budget, including a basic budget of \$3.3 million, would be distributed 57 per cent within the state and 43 per cent to the Southern Baptist Convention causes. Funds over the basic budget would go 75 per cent to Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and 25 per cent to Baptist Student Union work.

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