



BAPTIST PRESS

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SBC Missionaries in
Jordan Reported Safe

RICHMOND (BP)--Southern Baptist Missionaries in Jordan, scene of fighting between Palestinian Guerillas and Jordanian forces and an attempt on the life of Jordan's King Hussein, are safe and at their jobs, according to Paul S. C. Smith, missionary in Amman.

Also, no travel restrictions have been imposed by the Jordanian government, reported J. D. Hughey, Foreign Mission Board secretary for Europe and the Middle East. This is a good sign, Hughey said.

Hughey received Smith's message Wednesday via the U. S. Embassy in Amman and the state department in Washington, D. C.

Southern Baptists entered Jordan in 1952. Work in Amman, the capital, is now being emphasized.

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Nixon Names Lodge as His
Representative to Vatican

6/11/70

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Richard Nixon has appointed Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. to represent him personally and the United States government at the Vatican, the world headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church.

According to announcement at the White House by Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, Lodge will have "no official title...and accreditation is not envisioned." Thus, confirmation by the U. S. Senate is not necessary.

Ziegler cited the informal contacts already begun by this administration with the Vatican, and said the President "feels it is important to maintain continuing contact with the Holy Father." He continued that "it is important to have the benefit of the Vatican's information and views on a continuing basis and to exchange views which are matters of mutual interest."

The President's appointment of a special envoy to the Vatican goes against pleas by Baptists and other protestant groups who believe that the government should not establish official diplomatic relations with any religious body.

The newly-elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Carl E. Bates, issued a joint statement with outgoing president W. A. Criswell of Dallas and Jimmy Allen of San Antonio, president of the Texas Baptist Convention, in which they deplored the president's move and urged him "to rescind this unwise action."

The Baptist leaders maintained that this action on the part of the President is a violation of our American heritage of separation of church and state. They said it was ironical that "a man elected on campaign promises to bring us together again should strike this serious blow to divide our American people."

Further, the three men said: "We regret that passions of religious divisiveness will be stirred by this tragically unwise step."

In 1969 when such a move was announced to be under consideration by Mr. Nixon, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in semi-annual session adopted a statement requesting the President "to avoid naming a permanent representative to the Roman Catholic Church or to any other church."

The Baptist Joint Committee noted that "the intricate relationships involved in world peace require the widest range of perception and communication." But, the statement continued, "we believe that the national interests and the cause of peace are served best by flexible and informal means of church-state consultations rather than by formal diplomatic relations."

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Plans for a more effective recruitment program among seminary students are being worked out by board staff members, Fletcher reported.

One of the new appointees, Miss Betty Lynn Cadle, is a pilot. She has logged about 55 hours in a single-engine Cessna 150, and she hopes to get her pilot's license before going to her assignment in Rhodesia. The Baptist mission there has a plane which Miss Cadle might pilot from time to time.

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Vietnam Servicemen Build Faster
Than Destroy, SBC Leader Says

7/31/70

ATLANTA (BP)--Americans in Vietnam are building faster than they tear down, the director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Chaplaincy Commission said after returning from a tour of military installations in Vietnam.

"The road our servicemen are blazing in Vietnam today is paved with new hospitals, new orphanages, new homes--all built by our American servicemen," said George W. Cummins of Atlanta.

He added that living within these homes, orphanages and hospitals are thousands of Vietnamese children, women and men who have been fed, clothed, and healed--both from sickness and the wounds of war--by these same young American servicemen.

"For any house they are accused of destroying, they have built hundreds; for any innocent they are accused of hurting, they have ministered to tenfold others; for any one life they are accused of taking, they have saved others, a thousand times over," Cummins declared.

The SBC Chaplaincy head recently completed a 105-day globe-encompassing tour that carried him to military installations in Vietnam and around the world.

Cummins quoted one chaplain as saying that "today's soldier has a greater sense of urgency," but would return to his home "wiser, more mature, perhaps even more solemn, but a man his parents and every American can be proud of."

The SBC Chaplaincy leader observed that servicemen in Vietnam "are not murderers, warmongers, nor are they immoral individuals because they are serving the military.

"They are God-fearing, loving, knowledgeable, and patriotic Americans meeting their responsibilities to God and country," Cummins declared. He further praised the "bravery, heroism and courage" of the soldiers in Vietnam.

Cummins described the American soldier in Vietnam as "a young man who hates war and fears it, but fights it because he knows that there are worse things."

Newsmen covering the war in Vietnam overlook many positive stories because they lack "sensationalism and dissent," Cummins claimed. He explained that on his visit, he encountered many positive stories about the war that have not been told.

In an interview here, Cummins did not attempt to justify the war, but seemed to accept it as a reality. He strongly defended the country's military forces, however.

"The military is the finest and most effective peace force our country has and we'd better believe it," he stated. "One would not think of eliminating the city, county, state or federal law enforcing agencies--it would be suicidal, foolish,unwise."

Then he questioned: "Why do some people continue to be unwise and seek the elimination of the military and condemn the military establishment? In attempting to do so, is this not the first step toward losing all the freedoms that we hold so dear?"

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White House Conference On Aging
Involves Baptists; Seeks New Goals

7/31/70

WASHINGTON (BP)--Representatives of three Baptist conventions are among the list of 81 persons from different religious organizations involved in preliminary planning for the White House Conference on Aging.

The Conference is scheduled for Nov. 29-Dec. 3, 1971 in the nation's capital.

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