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NOVEMBER 17, 1970

**Friday the 13th Premonition
Comes True: Fox Is Hijacked**

By J. D. Dennis

DALLAS (BP)--Baynard Fox, a vice president for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board here, had a Friday the thirteenth premonition that came true when he flew off to Cuba on a hijacked Eastern Airlines jet.

It happened when Fox boarded Eastern's Flight 257 on Friday, Nov. 13, at the Raleigh-Durham (N.C.) airport for a short flight to Atlanta to meet his wife and son, Baynard Lane Fox, minister of music at a suburban Atlanta church.

"When I got to the airport," Fox said, "I had some sort of premonition that something would go wrong. I thought of a hijacking so I walked around the terminal looking at all the passengers.

"There wasn't one I could see who looked like a hijacker, so I relaxed," he said.

Airborne out of Raleigh-Durham, Fox said everyone was getting settled when a "clean-cut" young Negro man got up and walked back to one of the stewardesses.

"I didn't see any weapon, but I felt like something was wrong when he and the stewardess came back up the aisle and went into the pilot's compartment," Fox said.

A few moments later, the captain's "South Georgia drawl" announced that the plane had been hijacked and was going to Cuba. The flight to Havana took two hours and 40 minutes, including a stop in Jacksonville, Fla., for refueling.

"Those were our only nervous moments," Fox said, "We were stranded way out on the runway rather than up at the terminal. Two men came out of the plane in a fuel truck. As one sat in the truck, the other moved very deliberately around the wing, handling the refueling."

Apparently, he said, the young hijacker was afraid of being hit by a high-powered rifle bullet.

The hijacker held an old-model cocked pistol at the head of the captain during the entire flight. He was also very insistent that a stewardess wipe his fingerprints from every surface he touched.

"After we got back in the air, people started wanting to go to the restrooms," Fox said. "That made the man with pistol nervous, I guess.

"We got word from the captain over the intercom to stay in our seats and not leave them. After that, nobody that I know of did."

After flight 257 landed in Havana, Fox said the hijacker was impatient to get the door to the DC-9 jet open and to get out. He was met by two Cuban guards on the steps of the aircraft where he handed over the pistol and walked off with them, arm in arm.

Seventy-eight passengers and four crew members remained on board the plane. They were detained in Cuba for more than five hours. During the stay Fox said all passengers were treated well by Cuban authorities.

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Several passengers, including some military personnel, were interrogated. The Cubans took pictures of each passenger, and also provided them with lunch in the terminal restaurant.

Fox said the meal consisted of "...some of the greasiest French fried potatoes, I have ever eaten, steak that definitely didn't taste like Texas prime beef, and cubed cucumbers. There was beer for those who wanted it, but I never did get my coffee or tea," he said.

Many people--mostly soldiers and police--filled the rundown Havana airport, Fox said. However, only three aircraft landed while the hijacked passengers were there.

There were no gift shops or snack bars in the terminal, Fox said. But, after the passengers and crew had been served lunch, the Cubans brought out boxes of liquor and souvenirs "for which they gladly took the Americans' money."

But the passengers were unable to keep the souvenirs once they arrived back in the United States, Fox said items purchased in Cuba were confiscated by customs officers after the flight landed in Miami.

"Two of the finest men and two of the bravest girls..." is the way Fox described the crew of the Eastern flight. He also praised Eastern management personnel for the assistance and information they provided his family in Atlanta.

Fox is vice president of the church services area of the Annuity Board's Development Division. The Kentucky native is a graduate of Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Prior to joining the Annuity Board staff in Dallas, Fox served as Kentucky's annuity secretary.

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"Freedom Swimmers"
Fleeing Red China

11/17/70

HONG KONG (BP)--Since the first of October more than 300 persons have set out to swim from the Communist Chinese mainland to Hong Kong, Southern Baptist Missionary Britt E. Towery Jr., reported here.

Not all the swimmers make it, however. Forty bodies were discovered in Hong Kong waters or washed up on beaches during the first eight days of November, according to a newspaper account. Cold water and exhaustion were too much for these "freedom swimmers," Towery observed.

Most of the escapees reportedly are students who disagree with programs of the Red Chinese regime. Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-Tung's recent effort to send college-age youths to the fields to learn from the peasants is cited as an objectionable point.

Some who have made it across Mis Bay say hundreds more are waiting for the right moment to escape, Towery said. Refugees still cross at night in small fishing boats when tides and winds are right.

Few attempt to flee on foot because the land border is guarded better than the bay, Towery added. The South China Morning Post, a leading English-language daily, recently carried the headline "Chinese Patrols Ordered to Shoot Escapes."

Towery also reported the Hong Kong Baptist Association's 34 churches and 30 chapels (total membership 20,086) baptized 759 new Christians in 1969, and will go "well beyond" that total this year.

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Baptist VIEWpoll
Martin B. Bradley, Director

Baptist Leaders in Sympathy
With Israel

by Kenneth Hayes

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Baptist VIEWpoll has learned in a survey of Southern Baptist pastors and Sunday School teachers that sympathy among Baptist leaders rests strongly with Israel in the Middle East crisis.

Panel members were asked this question in August 1970: "In the trouble between Israel and the Arab nations in the Middle East, are your sympathies more with Israel or more with the Arab states?"

"Israel" was the reply of 77 per cent of the pastors and 73 per cent of the teachers.

"Arab states" claimed the sympathy of only 2.6 per cent of the pastors and 1.1 per cent of the teachers.

"Neither" side received sympathy from 15.2 per cent of the pastors and 18.2 per cent of the teachers. Also, some of the pastors (5.2 per cent) and teachers (7.7 per cent) had "no opinion" on the crisis.

When the same question was asked of Baptist leaders in March 1969, 71.9 per cent of the pastors and 69.3 per cent of the teachers expressed sympathy for Israel.

This represents an increase in support of Israel which comes mainly from those either uncommitted or having no opinion in 1969. However, Arab states did lose some support among liberal supporters, and this could have been activated by the Arab sky-jackings which occurred during the period the poll was being taken.

In the Gallup Poll of March 1970, 44 per cent of American adults were in sympathy with Israel, 3 per cent with the Arab states, and 43 per cent were either uncommitted or had no opinion.

Baptist VIEWpoll findings are based on 92 per cent response of the panel members.

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Baptist Schoolteachers Barred
From Teaching Religion in Finland

11/17/70

JAKOBSTAD, Finland (BP)--Two Baptist schoolteachers barred from teaching religion courses in public schools at this western Finland village have prompted enough support for their cause that some observers say Finland might abolish the law which requires religious instruction in public schools taught only by Lutherans.

The teachers, Rafael Heimdahl and his wife, Stina, teach in the third and sixth grades in the public schools here, and are members of the Swedish-language Baptist church. They have taught in the schools for 17 and 14 years respectively.

Throughout their teaching careers, they have been able to teach religion courses because the district inspector of schools did not enforce the law which requires that religion courses in public schools, a required subject, must be taught by Lutherans and must emphasize the religion of the established Protestant Lutheran Church in Finland.

A new inspector of schools, however, took office this year and has enforced the law strictly. If they are barred permanently from teaching the religion course, the Heimdahls will take on other instruction and their religion courses will be shifted to Lutherans, according to a report in European Baptist Press Service.

There is some speculation, however, that publicity on the case may build up enough pressure on national educational authorities and the parliament in Helsinki, the capital to modify the law or abolish it altogether.

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The largest daily newspaper in the district recently came to the defense of the Heimdahl's position, charging that enforcement of the law "is an expression of the most severe kind of intolerance."

Lutheran priests in the districts have also discussed the issue and said they consider the Baptist couple qualified to provide religious instruction. Heimdahl earned a theology degree at the university in Turku, Finland.

The issue is an old one in Finland. In 1871, a Baptist woman who founded a school for deaf-mutes was told she could not teach a religion class in her own school. The issue has been dormant since about 1965 when a Baptist and a Pentecostal teacher were forced to quit teaching religion courses they had been offering for several years without interference, European Baptist Press Service reported.

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CORRECTION

On BP story dated 11/12/70, page 3 of mailing, reporting actions of Oklahoma state convention; please correct error in graph 9 of the story (3rd graph on page 3). Only one of the nominees from the floor was approved. Please substitute the following for graph 9 of the story:

An effort to amend the nominating committee's recommendations succeeded partially, with the convention approving one of four nominees suggested from the floor to replace four trustee and committee members, all from Oklahoma City. The convention elected the nominee from the floor for convention program committee chairman, but rejected three nominees from the floor for trusteeships at Oklahoma Baptist University.

--Baptist Press



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