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June 8, 1971

Baptist Social Ministries
Given Vietnamese Approval

SAIGON (BP)--South Vietnamese officials and Southern Baptist missionaries have signed an agreement approving the missionaries' program of social ministries in the country.

The agreement relieves the Baptists of some of the high taxes usually imposed on imported materials, offers possible assistance with transportation of materials within the country, eases financial transactions through specified Vietnamese banks and assigns official recognition to personnel designated to perform duties related to social ministries.

The missionaries agreed to supply, when possible, personnel, materials and s rvices to areas where help is needed, and they will cooperate with the government and other charitable organizations in avoiding duplication of existing programs.

The Ministers of Social Welfare and Finance signed the document for the Vietnamese government. Southern Baptist Missionary Walter A. Routh Jr., represented the Baptist Mission.

Baptists have had social welfare ministries since opening work in Vietnam in 1959. But their efforts were hampered by lack of personnel and of access to facilities for receiving supplies. They also needed official approval for such activities, according to Rondal D. Merrell, mission press representative.

Formal recognition by the government is the climax of several studies by local missionaries and stateside personnel, Merrell said. The mission has asked the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to seek a trained Christian social worker to lead the program.

Attending the formal signing ceremonies, besides Merrell and Routh, were Mrs. Routh, Herman P. Hayes, mission chairman, and Do Vinh Thanh, pastor of Faith Baptist Church, Saigon. Faith Baptist Church had received official commendation for its work with refugees here during and after the Tet offensives in 1968 and '69.

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Martine Nears End
Of Journey To Light

6/8/71

By Robert O'Brien

LAS TRUCHAS, Mexico (BP)--Six-year-old Martine Madriles, blind since birth, has nearly completed his miraculous 3,000-mile journey to light.

It began on a mule deep in the mountains of Mexico's Chihuahua state last March, and its path was paved with a love that transcended nationality and denomination.

Awed by the sounds and sensations of the computer age, which contrasted sharply with his own remote, mountainous environment near Las Truchas, Martine is back with his mother and four brothers and sisters.

And he has a new cornea, which surgeons hope will make his journey to light complete.

He still has a long way to go, even though he has a new cornea in his left eye.

But for the first time, Martine can distinguish light and large objects. And the doctors have hope that his sight will improve.

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Martine's journey took place because his misery touched the hearts of representatives of six denominations--including Texas Baptists. They carried him by mule, jeep, automobile, commercial airliner and private plane to Iowa City, Iowa, for an operation at the University of Iowa Hospital.

At birth, Martine was blinded when a midwife accidentally used iodine instead of the proper eyewash. Because Martine's father, Pedro, earned only $12 a week and had seven people to feed, medical attention seemed impossible, and none was readily available in the remote area.

Several Christian doctors, who regularly volunteer their time for medical mission projects in Mexico, found him in Las Truchas. The interdenominational team, led by Dr. R. B. Yeager, a dentist from Charles City, Iowa, is made up of four United Methodists, a Presbyterian, a Congregationalist, a member of the Church of Christ and a Mormon.

Martine had ridden 18 miles by mule that day last summer when the doctors were working in the 68-person community.

His bulging, stinging, sightless eyes stirred the doctors into action. After examination, they knew that unless something was done, the eyes might rupture and kill the little boy. They believed that surgery could restore sight.

Through contacts in Iowa, Dr. Yeager set up the surgery, which the University of Iowa Hospital promised to donate. A team of three prominent eye surgeons, including the chief of the hospital's retinal division, volunteered to perform the surgery.

Then Dr. Yeager contacted a friend, Priscilla Gohman of the El Paso Baptist Association. Martine was brought to El Paso, where he and his father stayed with Mrs. Gohman until Baptists could arrange to book him on a commercial flight to Dallas.

The remainder of the trip, to Iowa and back, was coordinated by Elmin Howell, who heads the Rio Grande River Ministry of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He called in Wings for Christ of Texas, an organization of Baptist pilots.

Knowledge that Martine's eyes could rupture at any moment heightened the urgency.

Despite high headwinds, mechanical problems and three-feet of snow which forced a mid-flight destination change in Iowa, Wings for Christ flew Martine on the life-saving mission. Pilot Harold Cain, a Fort Worth construction executive, also brought Martine back when the operation was complete two months later.

Surgeons decided against surgery on the right eye because they felt it might destroy light perception in both eyes. They hope that within a year, the left eye's sight will improve. There is no hope for the right eye.

"This proves that when Christians get together, they can accomplish something," Dr. Yeager said. "Not only that, this story has drawn response from across the country, including a letter from President Nixon."

Dr. Yeager said Martine's new cornea came from a young man who died in an automobile accident. Earlier, he had donated his corneas to the Iowa Lions eyebank for use after his death.

Martine knows little English, but the talkative, bright, child made friends everywhere.

During his return trip a reporter leaned down to talk to him. His little hands grasped her. "I love you," he said in broken English.

Another asked him if he was anxious to get his sight back, "If God wills," he replied.

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BP PHOTO TO BE MAILED TO BAPTIST STATE PAPER EDITORS

Baptist Music Directors Urged
To Reach Youth Through Music

ST. LOUIS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Church Music Conference closed its national meeting here with a warning to Baptist church ministers of music against rejecting the pop-rock music of today's youth as it spills over into religious expression.

"If you reject the pop-rock music of the youth, then you reject the youth themselves," said Sidney Fox, program specialist for the Follet Educational Corp., in Thousand Oaks, Calif., during the conference's closing address.

Fox told the ministers of music for Baptist churches across the country that a new pop-rock musical liturgy is sweeping the country as a part of the so-called Jesus Movement.

"An old-time, foot-stomping, hand-clapping religious revival is happening, led by young zealots, with the liturgy of youth music," Fox said.

"They have found a new liturgy: the music of the pop-rock world whose composers create words and music that express their thoughts and heartbeat ," he added.

"Must you wait until the youth have reached the point of no return before you try to elevate their spirits with the music that is relevant to them?" Fox asked.

He observed that the music liturgy of youth is nothing but an extension of what has been going on for centuries: "the need for man to find a new expression and communicate in new and changing times."

Throughout his presentation, Fox played recordings of pop-rock selections to illustrate his points. The selections from "Hair" and "Jesus Christ, Superstar," and other pop-rock recordings by such performers as the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Simon and Garfunkle, George Harrison, and others were in sharp contrast to the music presented earlier during the 2 1/2 day jammed-packed meeting.

During the conference, the Baptist musicians heard premier preformances of three new musical works, attended a composer's symposium and heard a half-dozen concerts by Baptist church choirs and musical groups.

The conference honored both the retiring and the new secretaries of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department.

Elected president of the organization of Baptist church ministers of music was Carl Perry, of the First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn.

Meeting at the First Baptist Church of St. Johns, a suburb of St. Louis, following the Southern Baptist Convention, the conference featured addresses by seven speakers.

Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, N.C., told the conference that music more than any other medium of communication can be used to draw a crowd at churches. "We have moved to a day when the speakers are rational, but the audiences want to feel," Sherman said. "Through music, they can feel; they are made alive."

Sarah Walton Miller, church drama worker in Houston, told the conference to tie music and drama together. "They are naturals," she said. "They belong." Seeking to prove her point, she selected persons from the audience, costumed and made them up, and used them in a simple drama.

Loren R. Williams, music sales specialist for Broadman Music, music publishing arm of the SBC Sunday School Board, told the conference that Broadman is endeavoring to maintain a sensitivity to the music needs of churches and produce as much music as possible and practical to meet their needs.

Donald Orr, a music missionary to Colombia, said that music has opened doors in South America that no other method could accomplish, and Donald Allured of Lake Charles, La., minister of music for First United Methodist Church, told of the use of bell choirs in church music ministries.

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In his president's address, Bob Burroughs, minister of music for First Baptist Church in Abilene, Tex., recalled impressions from two years as president of the conference. He discussed the lack of communication between local church staff and members of the churches, the new music revolution, and how Baptist musicians should "pull your heads out of the sand and get into the word as it marches by."

Samuel Adler, professor of composition at Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York, led a composer's symposium. A selected portion of the Oklahoma Baptist University Chorale performed seven of Adler's works during the symposium.

Three choirs performed concerts during the Conference and another three assisted with congregational worship experiences. The William Jewell College Choir, the Missouri Singing Churchmen and the Oklahoma Baptist University Bisonettes sang concerts.

Church choirs from Tulsa, Okla., and Raytown, Mo., and the chapel choir and orchestra from Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, assisted with the music worship periods.

The combined choirs of Walnut Street and Hurstbourne Baptist churches of Louisville, and the orchestra of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, premiered a new musical drama entitled, "Immanuel." It was written by Southern Seminary Professor Phillip Landgrave.

A cantata and anthem, commissioned especially for presentation at the conference, were also premiered. The cantata was written by W. L. Hooper of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. It was performed by the combined junior choirs of First Baptist Church, Ferguson, Mo., and St. Johns Baptist Church, St. Louis.

The anthem, "How Great," was written by William J. Reynolds, new secretary of the SBC Sunday School Board's church music department. It was performed by the William Jewell College Choir.

Reynolds was honored by the conference with a new award named in honor of the retiring secretary of the department. It was the first time the W. Hines Sims Award of Achievement was presented to a person cited for the most outstanding contribution to church music during the past year.

An award of merit was also presented to Mary June Tabor, worker in the Oklahoma Baptist state music department, who has been active in the conference for 20 years.

Elect d as a vice-president for the conference's local church division was Bob Woolley, minister of music for First Baptist Church, Raytown, Mo.

Two other vice-presidents for divisions of the conference were re-elected: Duane Barrett of the California Southern Baptist Convention, Fresno, in the denominational workers division; and James C. McKinney, of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, in the educational division.

Miss Tabor was again re-elected secretary-treasurer by the conference's executive council.

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