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December 13, 1971

**Missionaries Stay in Dacca;
 Not on Evacuation Plane**

RICHMOND (BP)--The evacuation of foreigners from Dacca, East Pakistan, on Dec. 12 did not include Southern Baptist missionaries, according to John D. Hughey, the SBC Foreign Mission Board secretary for Europe and the Middle East.

Hughey said that Southern Baptist missionaries, along with some Roman Catholic missionaries, evidently elected to remain in Dacca.

Other foreigners who remained there include 17 persons connected with the U. S. Consulate, 15 to 20 American journalists, and 34 U. N. personnel, most of whom are non-Americans.

Hughey said he learned that the missionaries were not on the evacuation flight from U. S. State Department spokesman Scott Butcher.

Butcher told Hughey that he does not believe there will be another evacuation attempt because it is believed that all who wished to leave the country were able to do so. He added that at the latest report all Americans in Dacca were safe and well.

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**Southern Baptists Near
 Record Year in Baptisms**

12/13/71

SAN ANTONIO (BP)--Southern Baptists in 1971 baptized the second largest number of persons in their history, the director of the Evangelism Division for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board told state Baptist evangelism leaders here.

Statistical projections based on reports from more than 26,000 of the 34,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention indicate that Southern Baptists last year baptized more than 412,600 persons.

The projected number of baptisms is 43,821 above the 1970 figure, an increase of nearly 12 per cent. In the last ten years, the highest figure reported was 381,000, and most years the total was around 370,000.

The record of 429,063 was set in 1959, and the 1971 baptisms figure is the first time the number has topped 400,000 since 1961, according to Kenneth L. Chafin of Atlanta, director of the SBC Home Mission Board Evangelism Division.

Commenting on the increase, Chafin said, "There is a moving of the spirit of God in America and a new openness to the gospel of Christ.

"Some of the alternatives to Christ that looked so good a decade ago have not worked out. Instead they have begun to crumble," he continued.

"The sheer intensity and fierceness of life has begun to plow up the souls of men," Chafin said. "There is a piling up of the reverses of life and men are turning to Christ in significant numbers as they realize a personal relationship with him."

Chafin said he felt Christians need to thank God that in a time which is most difficult, there are new signs of hope for the churches.

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Another major reason for the increased baptisms, he observed, is that Christians seem to be increasingly turning outward. As an example, he cited a series of "effective" grass roots training sessions sponsored by the denomination during the last two years in an effort to equip laymen to share their faith.

The evangelism lay training program was developed by the staff of the Home Mission Board's Evangelism Division, and the state evangelism leaders who were meeting here.

The program uses intensive schools, special materials, and on-the-spot participation in evangelism to train laymen to share their faith. Often, the schools are staffed by laymen.

"I expect within the next few years to see some of the best years we have ever had in evangelism," especially with high school and college youth, Chafin said.

"We believe that what we are seeing now are the first fruits of our training of the laity," he added.

"The genius of this lay effort is not that it is just a program in name but in every community the laity are being equipped. There is a sense of renewal as sensitive laity become articulate in expressing their faith."

In conducting the lay evangelism schools, evangelism leaders have found that the uncommitted were not enrolled in the church organizations as was true in the past. Instead, lay evangelism workers have had to go into the homes to reach the uncommitted.

"What we are seeing is a winning of these people to faith in Christ and then enrolling them in the church organizations for their nurture," he said. In past years, many Baptists felt that most conversions resulted from enrolling uncommitted persons in church organizations where they were led to Christ, but this appears to be changing, Chafin said.

The report of 412,684 baptisms for 1971 is a projected figure based on reports gathered from more than 26,000 church letters by the department of statistics of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Chafin said such projections in the past have been "fantastically accurate" for the 34,000-plus churches, and have not missed the final total by much.

Chafin said he observed a sense of excitement concerning evangelism among evangelicals throughout America.

He said 100 denominations and groups are participating in what is known as Key 73, a united effort to evangelize the North American continent by 1973.

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Keith Joins Lightfoot
Evangelistic Association

12/13/71

DALLAS (BP)--Billy Keith, director of public relations for the Baptist General Convention of Texas since 1968, has joined the A. B. Lightfoot Evangelistic Association as public relations consultant.

Keith, 37, will be headquartered in Dallas, where he will have primary responsibility for coordination of evangelistic crusade and revival meetings and preparation of evangelistic materials for use in local churches.

Previously, Keith was a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan, where he was pastor of a Japanese Baptist church, and director of radio and television programming for Baptists in Tokyo and on the Island of Hokkaido. He also edited the Japan Baptist News and was news director for the Japan Baptist New Life Movement, a nation-wide evangelistic effort co-sponsored by Texas Baptists in 1961.

The Oklahoma native is a former pastor of First Baptist Church, Canadian, Okla. He is a journalism graduate of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, where he served for several years as news director. He also was editor of Southwestern News, the seminary's alumni periodical.

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Besides directing the Texas Baptist public relations and communications program since 1968, Keith has been chief of the Dallas bureau of Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Keith is a member of several professional public relations societies and has won awards in annual competitions of the American College Public Relations Association, the Texas Baptist Public Relations Association and the Baptist Public Relations Association (BPRA). He is president-elect of the Texas BPRA.

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Sunday School Board
Gets New Zip Code

12/13/71

NASHVILLE (BP)--The United States Postal Service has issued a new, exclusive zip code to the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

It is believed to be the first time an individual zip code has been assigned to a Southern Baptist Convention agency.

The new zip code, 37234, was given to the board in order to insure quicker mail service, according to board officials.

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CORRECTION

On Baptist Press story mailed 12/9/71, headlined: "Duck Named PR Administrative Assistant for Alabama Baptists," please change graph 3, line 2 to read "1950-1963" instead of "1950-1953" as sent. Thanks.

--Baptist Press



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