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April 21, 1972

**Baptist Couple's Murder
Shakes Up Prison Ministry**

By Toby Druin

HICKORY, N.C. (BP)--The practice of ministering to prison inmates, including their attendance at worship services outside prison walls and visits in members' homes, is undergoing a painful reappraisal in many North Carolina churches following the murder of a Hickory Baptist couple.

Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Turner, members of the Penelope Baptist Church here, were slain on a Sunday afternoon at their home after taking a prison inmate to worship services, to lunch and to their home for dessert.

The 21-year-old "model" prisoner from the nearby prison camp in Newton, N.C., Michael Douglas Wiles, has been charged with their murder.

The Penelope Church pastor, James Rowles Jr., called the Turners' death "the high cost of caring." He said the prison ministry must continue "as long as one man can be rescued from hell and restored to life."

It was Rowles who encouraged Turner to become involved in the prison ministry and to sponsor young Wiles, a local youth who had grown up in and out of the Hickory church, and had been in prison since August 1970 for attempted rape of an 18-year-old girl.

During his confinement over the past two years, Wiles has been considered a model prisoner. He was transferred to Newton from Central Prison in Raleigh in February. Next February he would have been eligible for parole from his 9-15 year sentence.

Turner, one of a half dozen or so men in the Penelope Church active in the prison ministry, was encouraged by Pastor Rowles to sponsor the youth when Wiles was moved to Newton.

It seems ironic now, but Turner's oldest son had taught Wiles in Sunday School when the boy was eight years old, and Turner's daughter-in-law was superintendent of a Vacation Bible School the boy attended.

Turner, 57, a mechanic for a wholesale food distributor, and his wife Voncille, reportedly were apprehensive at first about sponsoring Wiles because of the charge that brought his imprisonment.

But the Turners' interest, according to Rowles, was in missions, and they soon accepted the challenge. Turner had refused to take a job as a regular Sunday school teacher so that he could go once a month to the prison camp to teach the inmates.

"He felt he was more needed there," Rowles said. "He was not afraid to care."

Wiles was not the first inmate Turner had checked out of the camp.

On the day of the slayings, the Turners and Wiles left the church and went to a local restaurant where they ate the noon meal. The boy's mother was called and invited to join them at the Turners' home for dessert.

According to Rowles, Turner and Wiles were seen in the Turners' yard, laughing and joking during the afternoon. Then, he said, Wiles' mother, Mrs. Madeline Mangum, asked the boy to go to her car to get her a pack of cigarettes.

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The young man reportedly returned from the car, stepped into a bathroom near the kitchen, then turned and shot Turner across the room. Turner died almost instantly. A second shot killed Mrs. Turner.

Wiles did not harm his mother, who watched the incident in horror. She told police he ran out the door, telling her not to call the authorities.

Mrs. Mangum told police the pistol was hers and was in the glove compartment of the car. She had the gun in the car because she had been fearful of prowlers around her home, she said.

Wiles reportedly took his mother's car and drove away. The shootings occurred about 3:40 p.m. Wiles was arrested in Valdese, about 15 miles away, at around 4:30 p.m.

Those who knew the prisoner took the news with disbelief. Jim Guffee, a member of Forest Hills Baptist Church in Raleigh, where Wiles had been in Central Prison before his transfer to Newton, said he was stunned by the news.

Guffee had served as Wiles' sponsor in the same manner as had Turner, bringing him to his home and office, and often taking him to North Carolina State University basketball games. He said the young man had addressed his Royal Ambassadors at the church for some 45 minutes one night, and remarked afterward that he hoped there could be "many more nights like this one."

Guffee went to see Wiles at the Newton camp the Saturday before Easter, and had talked with him on the telephone on Friday before the Turners were slain.

The young man had been very despondent on the pre-Easter visit, Guffee said, but had brightened up by the time he left him at the camp. When he talked to Wiles the Friday before the slaying, Guffee said Wiles expressed hope that he might be paroled in the Raleigh area.

Wiles was concerned about what might happen if he got back with his old crowd, Guffee said. Wiles had been assigned to a road work crew at Newton, and many of his old cronies had driven past him shouting at him. He feared the outcome of renewing old friendships and activities.

Guffee was concerned, too, by the fact that Wiles often expressed to him the belief that it was long-term prisoners--murderers, double murderers, and so forth--who "had it made" in prison. Such prisoners, he said Wiles told him more than once, always seemed to have the better jobs, were looked up to by fellow inmates, and were free of the fear of having good conduct time lost because of altercation with other prisoners.

Guffee said he is thankful for the time he spent with Wiles and added he probably would have to visit the youth to resolve the matter of the murders in his own mind. Nevertheless, the thought that Wiles, a "model" prisoner, now is charged with two murders and at one time was in his home, gives Guffee concern.

"I'm scared to death at the thought of what could have happened here," he said. "I have guns all over the house. But if he did do what they say he did, I still feel compassion for him. I know he wasn't responsible; he must have gone berserk."

Guffee said that in spite of the slayings, "prison ministries must continue. If we stop right now, the devil has accomplished what he intended," he said.

Rowles, the Penelope pastor, said it would be a matter of continuing to "care enough" to minister.

"Those who never have cared will smugly sit back and say 'I told you so,'" he said. "You won't catch them going out on a limb. They will never learn it is not how long you live but how well you live.

"Caring as Jesus did requires the full measure of life. Caring is more like Christ-- 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,'" Rowles continued.

"Some will say this is the end of such programs for prisoners. But not for Penelope Church, I hope. We will go back and back. We will take the risk. As long as one man can be rescued from hell and restored to life, men like F. L. Turner will be at work."

Bates Names SBC Committee
Chairmen, Parliamentarian

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President Carl E. Bates, in consultation with vice presidents of the 11.9 million member convention, has named four committee chairmen and a parliamentarian to serve during the denomination's convention in Philadelphia, June 6-8.

Named parliamentarian to assist Bates in presiding over business sessions was Robert Scales, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Oklahoma City.

Chairmen of four special committees were announced by Bates. They are:

Randall Lolley, chairman, resolutions committee, and pastor, First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C.;

Dotson M. Nelson, chairman, committee on committees, and pastor, Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham;

Joe Hubb Collier, chairman, credentials committee, and businessman, lay preacher and former pastor from Oklahoma City;

and George McCotter, chairman, tellers committee, and owner of the Tryon Moving and Storage Co., Lillington, N.C.

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Abandon Horse and Buggy Index
Of Papers, Historian Urges

4/21/72

NASHVILLE (BP)--Charging that Baptists are still indexing their periodicals "in a horse and buggy fashion . . . within sight of the 21st century," the president of the Southern Baptist Historical Society called for developing a computerized master model of inexpensive indexing of Baptist newspapers, periodicals, minutes and other publications.

F. Wilbur Helmbold, director of libraries at Samford University in Birmingham, made the appeal in a major address at a joint session of the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Historical Society here.

Helmbold stated that no scientist would allow his institution to be without such a master index system, yet Baptists continue using out-of-date and inadequate methods of indexing their periodicals.

"This part of our dream is a nightmare," Helmbold told a dinner meeting of the two history organizations. "Let's wake up and end it once for all with an adequate project to develop this master model for us all."

He added that the cost of developing such a system is beyond the reach of any single Baptist group, but it is well within the reach of "our combined store of knowledge and support."

Helmbold told the two organizations that from a historical perspective, he believed Southern Baptists were at a "significant turning point" in the direction that the denomination's organizations dealing with history would take in the future.

He outlined three possible future directions for the organizations: (1) a centralized, semi-official establishment with programs developed at a central base; (2) an entirely locally oriented emphasis "designed to supply grist for local churches and state conventions;" or (3) a balance between the two, "allowing full latitude for all of us."

The last alternative, he said, would involve persons of all backgrounds interested in Baptist history--the scholar, the housewife, the student, the archivist, the pastor, the denominational leader, the writer, the librarian, the statistician, as well as specialized historians interested in theology, sociology, biography, genealogy.

Often, scholars and academically-oriented historians view the local historian "as a poor grubber delving into routine records of churches, court houses, newspaper offices in dusty country towns, and even in the cemeteries," Helmbold said.

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"There are still some little old ladies in tennis shoes going around looking on tombstones for grandfathers, but there is also a whole new class of worthy genealogists arising who are specialized, skilled historians," he said.

He called for all types of persons interested in history to weld themselves together in a bond of academically and spiritually disciplined enthusiasm to raise up historians who will make "extraordinary contributions to the Kingdom of God."

Later, in business session, the Historical Society voted to create a student membership category at half the regular membership fee (\$2 for students, \$4 for regular membership).

Rollin S. Armour, professor of religion at Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., was elected new president of the SBC Historical Society. Named vice president was R. A. McLemore, retired president of Mississippi College, Clinton.

The Historical Society, an organization open to any Southern Baptists interested in history, met jointly with the denomination's Historical Commission, the agency of the SBC assigned to coordinate matters relating to history comprised of members elected by the messengers to the annual convention.

Theme for the joint meeting was, "Baptists and Social Revolution." A half-dozen scholarly papers traced the history of Baptist involvement in "social revolution" during the two-day meeting here.

The SBC Historical Commission, in a business session, elected a new chairman, Robert A. Baker, professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. Elected vice chairman was Martin B. Bradley, research section director for the SBC Sunday School Board; and named secretary was Mrs. Roy Babb, wife of a Nashville pastor.

The commission also adopted a resolution commending the work of outgoing president W. Morgan Patterson, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, who will be out of the country on sabbatic leave next year.

A special consultation was held prior to the commission meeting, seeking advise of 18 persons invited to make "a comprehensive, critical study" of the work of the commission, the history needs of the denomination, and the implementation of programs, past, present and future, of the commission.

No action was taken by the full commission, but four committees of the commission brainstormed findings from the consultation in an effort to suggest priorities to the commission's administrative committee, which will seek to implement findings of the study.

Two priorities which seemed to emerge, according to Historical Commission Executive Secretary Lynn E. May, included more promotion of the need in the denomination for work in denominational history, and the need to focus attention on current issues as history unfolds as a living, vital, interesting area of work.

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President's Panel Recommends
Relief to Nonpublic Schools

4/21/72

WASHINGTON (BP)--The President's Panel on Nonpublic Education, in its long-awaited report, has recommended federal income tax credits to parents for part of their tuition payments to private and parochial schools.

The tax credit plan, estimated to cost \$500 million a year, is the most expensive of four major recommendations.

This plan "makes the best sense from an economical, political and constitutional standpoint" of any of the current aid proposals for private schools now before Congress, according to panel chairman, Clarence Walton, president of Catholic University.

The three other major proposals call for tuition reimbursements for nonpublic school children in any future plans for federal aid to education, a construction loan program, and federal assistance to inner-city poor families through a variety of aid programs.

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Specific recommendations for the urban poor call for experiments with educational vouchers, supplemental income allowances for nonpublic school tuitions for welfare recipients and the working poor, an urban assistance program for public and nonpublic schools, and full enforcement of present laws entitling private school students with certain benefits.

The 58-page report, entitled "Nonpublic Education and the Public Good," was released at a White House press conference. Prior to the hour-long press conference, Walton and two of the four panel members presented the report to President Nixon in a 45-minute private session.

President Nixon appointed the panel April 21, 1970, as part of a larger Commission on School Finance. He instructed the panel to study and evaluate the problems concerning nonpublic schools, the nature of the crisis confronting such schools, and to make recommendations for action "which will be in the interest of our entire national educational system."

Neil H. McElroy, chairman of the 18-member Commission on School Finance, wrote a letter to President Nixon submitting the report of the Panel on Nonpublic Education. McElroy said that "it is important to recognize that it (the report) represents the views of the panel members and that it has been neither reviewed nor approved by the commission as a whole."

The earlier report from the commission, released the first of March, referred to a number of aid programs for nonpublic schools, but there was a division among the members about recommendations for assistance to private schools that would be both practical and likely to win any later judicial challenge.

Walton, who presided at the press conference, said President Nixon is concerned to have this report "widely read and discussed."

He and fellow panelist Bishop William E. McManus, director of Catholic education in Chicago, were enthusiastic about the President's response to the recommendations. The other panelist present, Ivan E. Zylstra of Grand Rapids, Mich., did not participate in the discussion.

When asked if Nixon "endorsed" the recommendation concerning tax credits, Chairman Walton reported that the idea was "perfectly acceptable" to the President.

McManus spoke up and cited recent speeches of the President where he had said "You can count on me" to find ways to aid parochial schools, and said he felt confident that the President would ask for tax credit legislation in the present Congress.

Later in the press conference, Nixon's staff would not commit the President to any position on the recommendations or to any specific timetable for legislation.

"The President is neither endorsing nor rejecting the recommendations. . . . He appreciates the report and looks favorably on the recommendations," the White House press secretary declared.

Ronald Ziegler, White House press secretary, said the President sees tax credits as "an active option" in aiding parents of parochial school children. He insisted that the staff would study the panel's recommendations in light of their constitutionality before making any proposals to Congress.

The panel's report dealt at length with the complex issues of aid to parochial schools and present constitutional law as interpreted in a number of Supreme Court decisions.

Criticism of recent high court decisions cropped up at several places in the report.

The private school panel accused the court of an "inadequate perception of realities in parochial schools" in recent decisions striking down aid programs in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania.

The court has focused on the powers of the hierarchy, the role of the pastors, the teaching commitment of religious (orders); but has virtually ignored the parents, teachers, and pupils who are cut off from certain forms of public assistance, the panel argued.

In appealing for programs to aid private and parochial schools, the panel suggested a number of constitutional guidelines. They asked that "all school pupils should be eligible beneficiaries of aid programs--preferably under a single statutory rubric."

Cash subsidies for direct aid to nonpublic schools "should be avoided," the panelists agreed. Financial assistance for the benefit of a nonpublic school pupil should be subject to review by public authority, and systems of accountability for public benefits "must be balanced in ways which permit legitimate accountability while . . . avoiding excessive government entanglement," they urged.

Another constitutional guideline said that all private schools participating in public aid programs should sign the compliance agreement in the 1964 Civil Rights Act which outlaws discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin.

Regarding the constitutionality of its recommendations under the present laws, the panel said that the federal income tax credits "have a strong probability" of meeting constitutional criteria.

The panelists noted "possible constitutional difficulties" with the tuition reimbursement process. Nevertheless, the panel said, it recommended its inclusion in future federal legislation so that eventually it can be tested in the courts.

In its aid proposals for inner-city families and parochial school, the panel noted possible "constitutional complication" in these in addition to the present prohibition against direct aid, already barred by the Supreme Court.

"But the court must now be asked to face the real-world situation where nonpublic schools provide sound education, generally across sectarian lines, in areas where public schools are often overcrowded and understaffed," the report read.

"The poverty factor could make a difference in judicial reasoning regarding aid to a church-related school," claimed the panel.

"Constitutional considerations may ultimately require inner-city church-related schools to alter their corporate structure in order to receive government funds essential to their survival," the report continued. For example, "they may have to be legally separated from the parish. . . an adjustment that is preferable to closing any inner-city church-related schools."

In other references in the report to possible changes in the judicial framework to make broad aid programs possible, the panelists noted that some critics of the court hold that "there is now a virtual disenfranchisement of religiously committed people" with respect to public policy questions about which their churches have a strong position.

These critics, the report continued, ask whether the civil rights of Lutherans or Jews or Quakers (for example) are to be suppressed under the guise of "no religious division" in the same way that the civil rights of Negroes were curtailed in a court ruling in 1896 that said "separate but equal" treatment was necessary for peace and order.

The panel explained further that some constitutional lawyers feel the time has come "to challenge the denial of benefits to nonpublic school students on grounds that educational appropriations are public welfare benefits which should not be restricted by religious conditions.

"The challenge must be mounted," the panel declared in its report released April 20, 1972.



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