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FEATURES

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Indian Forced from Uganda
Finds New Home with Baptists

By Tim Nicholas

ATLANTA (BP)--Walji Patel parked his Renault in front of his house in Mbarara, Uganda, carried the car keys to the district commissioner, packed 55 pounds of clothing for himself, his wife and five children, and then left his home in Uganda.

He and his family did not want to go. Patel was a successful beryllium miner with blasting and prospecting certificates, and he liked living in Uganda. But Patel, a native of India, just wasn't the right color.

The Patel family, now relocated in Atlanta with the help of Southern Baptists here, was among thousands of "Asian non-citizens" deported from the East-Central African country by order of Maj. Gen. Idi Amin who overthrew President Obote about one year ago.

Amin, seeking to make Uganda all black, ordered the Asian and British population of Uganda to leave, confiscating all businesses property, bank accounts, automobiles, and even new clothes. Each family was allowed to take one suitcase.

Patel's citizenship papers were torn up, and he became a stateless refugee. After 16 days (others spent months) in a relocation camp in Italy, the Patels were brought to the United States (the refugees were sent to countries that would accept them).

Patel spoke of life in Uganda and of times when he could return home from the bush country where the mines were located. "We would have friends over, maybe cook a chicken, and play cards all night," he recalled.

He worked the mines for two weeks between two day breaks at home, not because he had to, but, "we were after the money, always wanting more--and we had to leave it all. Now I work to be happy."

When he and his wife were married 11 years ago, Patel was working in the bush and had no real honeymoon. His wife Lalita laughs, "honeymoon now in America."

Called on by the U.S. government to resettle 1,000 families, Church World Services, an agency of the World Council of Churches, contacted denominational leaders. L.D. Wood of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board was notified of the need as the denomination's director of immigration and refugee services.

Wood, who had helped in the relocation of hundreds of Cuban refugees, called on pastors and superintendents of missions in Baptist associations to help. He received only two immediate responses to the emergency--one from an association in South Carolina, and one from a church in Atlanta.

J. Ray Batson, superintendent of missions for Spartanburg Baptist Association in South Carolina and Pat Clenning, minister of counseling and missions coordinator of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, each took over the watchcare of a family.

Spartanburg association took the Jamnadas Chandarana family and Second-Ponce de Leon took the Patels.

The churches agreed to find a house, furnish it, pay rent for a few months, help find a job, and meet other expenses until the family could begin to pay its own bills. Since the first agreements, Wood received several offers of help from other churches.

Since the day before Thanksgiving when the Patels arrived in Atlanta, they have lived in a two-bedroom apartment which required no immediate lease or deposit. The church's Woman's

Missionary Union stocked the refrigerator, bought tableware, kitchenware, towels, and blank ts. Two ladies on Social Security heard of the effort and donated \$5 each.

The church still pays rent, but Patel, who speaks slow and precise English (along with Hindi, Gudjarati, Swahili, and Ankole, a Ugandan dialect) insists on paying for his own groceries. Currently working as a roofer, Patel, 33, has only a fair-weather job. He has already suffered through one of Georgia's wettest winters, acclimatization through the flu, and a company strike.

"I will learn everything of America, then I will go find better work," says Patel who now has no telephone or car.

The church is providing an English teacher for Lalita Patel. She can buy croceries and can speak English fairly well, but not fluently. (She says Americans talk through their noses.)

The two oldest of the five children (four are girls) Bhavna, 9; Sanhya, 6; are in elementary school. Ranuka, 3; and Husna, 5; are in the church's nursery school. The boy, Paresh, five months old, stays with mama during the day.

Though the Patels are of the Hindu religion, last December a group of young people from the church came to give an impromptu Christmas party for them. They brought gifts, read and explained the nativity story, and sang Christmas carols. Even in March the children had not yet opened all of their gifts, saving some for later.

Mrs. Patel and the children attend Sunday School at the Baptist church. "We learn about the Christian religion," she says, pointing to the copy of Good News for Modern Man lying on the living room end table.

After the initial fear and strangeness begin to wear off, isolation and loneliness set in. The Patels have no idea where any of their old friends are.

Mrs. Patel has two sisters, three brothers and her father in London, England; two brothers in Denmark; and three more brothers in Austria. They were all refugees from Uganda like the Patels, and they don't know each other's addresses.

Reluctant pioneers, the Patels are free. It's a freedom tempered with frustration--of language and economics.

Only time, knowledge, hard work, and love can erase the boundaries of that freedom.

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Baptists May be Last
To Give Women Rights

3/23/73

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--Southern Baptists may be among the last groups to permit women full and equal status in the leadership of the church, Sarah Frances Anders, acting dean and chairman of the department of sociology at Louisiana College in Pineville, said here.

She was speaking about women's liberation to some 700 participants in a seminar on "A Future for the Family," sponsored by the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

While the apostle Paul said, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female," she said, women have been relegated a second class seat in the church.

"Until recently the church role has been little more than the children-kitchen role placed on holy ground," Miss Anders said.

"Besides teaching small children, arranging altar flowers, singing in the choir, planning temple meals, there was little else she (woman) was permitted to do," she said.

Miss Anders singled out Judeo-Christian practice as reinforcing sex distinction as if it were "God inspired and ordained."

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If order of creation is important, some advocates of women's liberation suggest that man is as inferior to animals as Eve is to him, she added.

"Thinking women in the church deny the need for a theology of women for that presupposes an innate uniqueness which is scripturally invalid. It would put sexuality above personhood, and being made in the image of God refers to person and not sex chromosomes," she said.

Wallace Denton, professor of family life and director of the marriage counseling center at Purdue University, presented the response to Miss Anders' address, praising it and urging more consideration of women in responsible positions in the churches, especially as ministers and deacons.

"The pastoral ministry is the most segregated of all the professions," the Southern Baptist layman and deacon said. "The most prestigious positions in a Baptist church--pastors and deacons--are almost universally cornered off by men."

Denton, a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, drew applause with the statement that "I believe that as significant positions open up in the ministry--pastoral music, religious education, in the deacons and committees--that women's groups will atrophy and the work they are doing--and doing well--will be taken over by the whole church, where it ought to be anyway."

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10 Largest Sunday School List Inflated, Pastor Says

3/23/73

FORT WORTH (BP)--A California Baptist pastor, whose church is on the list of the 10 largest Sunday Schools in the country, advocated abolishing the list because "it makes liars out of some pastors."

Harold Fickett Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Vay Nuys, Calif., an independent Baptist church with more than 10,000 members, spoke at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here in a conference on dynamics of reaching people.

"Six out of the 10 largest Sunday schools (on the national list) include attendance at early morning worship services as the pastor's Sunday school class," Fickett charged.

He said the 17,000-member First Baptist Church of Dallas, largest of Southern Baptist congregations, does not inflate its totals in such a manner.

The Dallas church has the largest SBC Sunday School and ranks on the national list published by Christian Life Magazine.

Another speaker at the conference was Elmer Towns, a member of Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Va., and vice president of Hynchburg College, connected with the large independent church.

Towns said, "Let's not over react and build a church on what the critics say. Let's build a church on the word of God."

Fickett and Towns both said that America's fastest growing churches are characterized by strong leadership and biblical discipline.

Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church, Houston, said many churches become bogged down because they cannot separate their theology from church strategy.

"Then it comes time to change strategy, people think that theology is also changing," he said. "Many have a religious commitment to strategy."

The conference was co-sponsored by the seminary's continuing education division and the Texas Baptist missions division. It was coordinated by Don Hammer of the Texas Baptist urban strategy council.

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Wedel Retires As Board's
First Personnel Director

NASHVILLE (BP)--Leonard E. Wedel, the first director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's office of personnel, has chosen an early retirement, effective April 1, after 29 years of service to the board.

A native of Oklahoma, Wedel earned the bachelor of arts and master of science degrees in education from the University of Oklahoma, Norman. Additionally, he attended George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville; the University of Tennessee, Nashville; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth; and the YMCA Law School, Nashville.

Prior to becoming director of associational work in the board's Training Union department in 1944, Wedel was minister of education of Trinity Baptist Church, Oklahoma City. Earlier, he served for two years as minister of education for First Baptist Church, Enid, Okla.

When Wedel became director of the newly-created personnel department in 1951, he recalled, recruiting, screening, interviewing, salary administration, and job evaluation were handled in as many ways as there were department heads at the board.

"It seems unbelievable, but occasionally an employe would be placed on the payroll and not know what his salary was until he got his first pay check," said Wedel. "There was no such thing as a formal salary program or a merit rating program based on job performance," but the employees were happy, he said.

Through years of procedure adjustment and personnel services evaluation, Wedel and his staff became responsible for developing personnel objectives, policies and procedures for attaining optimum employe relations.

The office staff counsels with organization heads in the administration of personnel functions, such as selecting and screening of qualified people for employment; maintaining approved salary structures, employe benefit programs and personnel records; and for counseling with employes and providing health service.

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Photo being mailed to state Baptist papers.

Georgia Convention Staff
Organize in Four Divisions

3/23/73

ATLANTA (BP)--Major reorganization of the Georgia Baptist Convention administrative staff creating a four division system of operation has been approved by the convention's executive committee.

The convention's executive committee function will be grouped into four divisions, effective April 1--evangelism and missions, education, church services and development and administrative promotion.

Searcy S. Garrison, executive secretary of the convention since 1965, will head the administration-promotion division.

Bernard D. King, Georgia Baptist Brotherhood secretary since 1947, will become administrative assistant to Garrison in the administrative-promotion division.

Aubrey L. Hawkins, Georgia student work secretary for 23 years, will head the new education division.

Julian T. Pipkin, Georgia Baptist Sunday School secretary since 1967, will be director of the new division of church services and development.

Ernest J. Kelley, now assistant to the executive secretary, will direct the new division of evangelism and missions.

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Four auxiliary agencies will continue to relate to the convention's executive committee under separate boards of directors. These groups are the Christian Index, Georgia Baptist Foundation, Georgia Baptist Women's Missionary Union, and Georgia Baptist Hospital.

The convention's executive committee also granted Truett McConnell Junior College at Cleveland, Ga., another year of "grace" to see if it can lift its enrollment and eliminate financial deficits. One year ago, enrollment had dropped below 200 students and had accumulated about \$250,000 in operating deficits in three years.

Enrollment has now jumped to more than 300 students, and much of the deficit has been erased, according to Truett McConnell president Ronald E. Weitman. The school was given another year of "probation" by the committee.

The executive committee honored Searcy S. Garrison and noted a citation adopted by the Georgia General Assembly (legislature) for his 18 years service as executive secretary, and paid tribute to Georgia Convention President John T. Tipett, pastor of Calvary Baptist Temple, Savannah, Ga.

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Rio Conference Draws
SBC Music Missionaries

3/23/73

RIO de JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--Music missionaries to Central and South America gathered here recently for a music conference--the first of its scope among Southern Baptists. A total of 31 delegates represented Southern Baptist missions in 14 Latin American countries.

Consultants for the conference were William J. Reynolds, secretary of the church music department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, and T.W. Hunt of the school of church music, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Hunt termed the conference a "milestone in kingdom advance" and said it was a time of professional regeneration. "Reynolds," he added, "made an especially valuable contribution in this area."

Reynolds conducted a choral reading clinic and led the conferees in a performance of "Ichthus," an original choral work he composed for the 150th anniversary of First Baptist Church, Nashville.

A highlight of the meeting, according to J. Frederick Spann, missionary to Brazil and chairman of the conference steering committee, came from an advance assignment. Each delegate was asked to bring 35 copies of a Christian composition characteristic of the country where he serves, and to lead other conferees in sight reading the selections.

"Most participants," said Spann, "had to search out and notate music which until then had never been written down. The assignment revealed to all of us," he continued, "that there are endless resources for (indigenous) sacred music which run untapped, partly because we have not taken the time nor effort to make them available and usable."

One missionary shared a piece of music indigenous to Guatemala's K'ekchi" Indians. Southern Baptists are working with some success among these people, although as yet only a small portion of scripture has been translated into their language.

Conferees also prepared in advance a study on some aspect of music missions. After the presentation of each, time was allowed for discussion.

"The steering committee," said Spann, "was pleased with the depth of preparation for these addresses. It had been our aim that advance preparation would insure just such serious thinking in each area treated."

Evenings and Sunday afternoon of the nine-day conference were given to instrumental and choral concerts performed by various groups; conferees also gave renditions in local Baptist churches.

Wyatt Parker, missionary to Brazil, summed up the spirit of the conference in his discussion of the roles the music missionary plays in the artistic community. Concluding with the role of "witness," he said, "In spite of our emphasis that the music missionary should be a musician among musicians, he is a musician with a difference: a difference in purpose, a difference in lifestyle, a difference in program."

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