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Toll-Free Number Plan Aids Motorists to Glorieta

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Motoring to Glorieta (N. M.) Baptist Conference Center this summer will be relatively trouble-free under plans made by conference center officials and the New Mexico Tourist Service.

Travelers outside New Mexico can call a toll-free number (800-545-9876) to find out the availability of gasoline along their route. During business hours, persons will be able to explain their situation to an employe of the New Mexico Tourist Service. After hours, a recording will be used.

According to Larry Haslam, Glorieta manager, the conference center will call several cities in New Mexico each week to find the availability of gas for guests leaving Glorieta. These cities will include Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Farmington, Roswell and Las Cruces. Gasoline information will be posted each week at the guest relations desk located in the lobby of New Mexico Hall.

In addition, the conference center operates a Kerr-McGee service station for the guests. Kerr-McGee, BankAmericard and Master Charge credit cards are accepted.

"Our station has not been low on gas this year," adds Haslam. "In fact, I have not seen any stations in the area that are closed due to the shortage or that close early because they have reached their daily allotment."

In light of the crisis situation, Haslam points out, "Our registration has not shown any significant lag this year compared to the same time last year. We are expecting to have normal weeks in attendance this summer and so far registration has been favorable.

Glorieta Baptist Conference Center is owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Brooks Hays Calls For General Vietnam Amnesty

5/9/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--Brooks Hays, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, called here for granting general amnesty to draft evaders and deserters from the Vietnam war.

In an address delivered at the Potter's House, a coffee house in downtown Washington sponsored by the ecumenical Church of the Saviour, the former Arkansas congressman called upon Christians to lead the drive toward amnesty.

In his proposal, Hays indicated that the only exceptions to the general amnesty should be those who fled after committing crimes of violence.

"I believe church people of this country have a great responsibility," Hays declared, in seeking amnesty for exiled young Americans.

Citing America's Judeo-Christian heritage, Hays insisted that the public should be challenged to forget, as well as forgive, those who fled to foreign countries rather than fight in Vietnam. "The word 'amnesty,'" he said, "does not mean just forgiving; it means forgetting."

Hays argued that to "pile on vengeance upon another" is not the Christian solution to the problem of amnesty. The alternative, he maintained, is the "universal force of forgiveness,"

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All along the coast are formidable limestone cliffs which were topped by German coastal guns. At Pointe du Hoc where the cliffs rise to dizzy heights stands now a granite spire honoring a group of American Rangers led by Lt. Col. James Rudder who scaled the precipices with hooks and ropes to get at the German pillboxes at the top. The scars of battle here are still quite visible throughout the area.

Farther west, the 4th American Division landed on bloody Utah Beach to link up with the 82nd and 101st Airborne troops.

Behind the first waves of troops the Allies had ready 39 divisions with nearly three million troops and 16,000 planes.

The Germans had 65 divisions including reserves extending back to Germany, also a Luftwaffe which had been virtually driven from the skies.

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the German commander of the "Atlantic Wall", had said to an aide on April 22, "The first twenty-four hours of the invasion will be decisive...it will be the longest day." He was exactly right. The battle was grim, but decisive. The days of Nazi rule were numbered. At the end of June Rommel reported that his casualties for the month were "28 generals, 354 commanders and approximately 250,000 men."

Eleven months after D-Day Hitler committed suicide in the rubble of Berlin and the vaunted "Thousand Year Reign" of Naziism was over.

But much death and destruction lay in wait along the way to Berlin.

The visitor to this beautiful western quarter of France is continually sobered by reminders that thousands of men on both sides died too young in the apple orchards and green pastures of Normandy.

Battle fields are places of tragedy. Anywhere, they speak of man's failures, not his successes. They mark in carnage and blood the breakdown of civilization itself. They testify to some monstrous deficiency in the affairs of men.

On the Normandy coast at St. Laurent there is a 150-acre site given to the USA by France. It is a cemetery where rest 9,300 Americans who died in the early days of the Allied invasion. Crosses and stars of David in Carrara marble stretch out in long, neat, symmetrical rows. The place is quiet and peaceful. Bird songs ride in on the gentle breezes. Seeing it, a nameless, visceral sadness fills the heart.

This time of year Normandy is in full blossom once again. On the Channel coast and in the hill country life goes on. Fishermen in wooden shoes clip-clop their way to the waterfront. Housewives in carpet slippers sweep the sidewalks. Old women under black shawls shuffle along. Boys with long loaves of hard bread tied to their bikes move carefree through the narrow streets and roads. Priests in long black robes hurry to their devotions. And life goes on.

But the Normandy coast of France will forever haunt the memory of man. The world should have learned a lesson there.

In war everyone loses!



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ON 30TH ANNIVERSARY:

Memories Haunt the
Beaches of Normandy

by W. C. Fields
Director, Baptist Press

On warm days children frolic on the beach at Arromanches-les-Bains on the Normandy coast of France. When the tide is out, horsedrawn carts race up and down the flats.

Nearby the hulk of a warship rusts in the sand. Offshore the tumbled remains of an artificial harbor named by Winston Churchill, "Mulberry," lies in wreckage.

This peaceful fishing village was at the center of the most massive amphibious military assault in human history.

Onshore facing the English Channel a museum commemorates the apocalyptic events of 30 years ago, D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Allied invasion of Hitler's "Fortress Europe."

The battle which began that day has taken its place beside Waterloo, Hastings, Thermopylae Pass and some others, as a major turning point in human affairs.

At precisely fifteen minutes past midnight on that fateful date Operation Overlord began. At that moment a few specially chosen pathfinders stepped out of their planes into the moonlight over Normandy.

They marked the drop zones for American and British paratroopers and infantry in over a thousand planes and gliders that quickly came behind them.

Airborne troops fought desperately in the darkness that night. St. Mere Eglise on the Contentin Peninsula became the first French town liberated by the Americans. In the battle there one paratrooper's chute caught on the church steeple and he dangled for two hours in full view of the fierce fighting going on around the town square below.

In the British sector, two paratroopers landed in error on the lawn of a German general who demanded of them, "Where have you come from?" One of the captured British replied calmly, "Awfully sorry, old man, but we simply landed here by mistake."

During the hours before dawn over 2400 U. S. and Royal Air Force bombers pounded ground installations. A naval bombardment rocked shoreline gun placements.

Simultaneously, over 5,000 ships, the greatest armada the world has ever witnessed, maneuvered offshore. They carried a quarter of a million soldiers and sailors.

East of Arromanches for twenty-five miles were the three British and Canadian zones-- Gold, Juno and Sword. Westward for thirty-five miles were the two American zones-- Omaha and Utah.

At 6:30 AM the first wave of troops waded ashore through artillery and machine-gun fire, through beach "hedge-hogs" and land mines.

The 1st and 29th American Divisions at Omaha Beach fought desperately during the day and reported that they were "hanging on by their toenails."

At St. Laurent, Vierville-sur-Mer, and Colleville the issue was often in doubt. Monuments there today memorialize the daring of the invaders. Allied casualties were more than 10,000 in the first 24 hours.

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as seen in the Prodigal Son's father. "To take the position of the elder brother," he elaborated, "is to go against the finest sentiments in human life."

While acknowledging that "men equally conscientious and equally intelligent" disagree on solutions to the question, Hays went on to give two principal legal reasons for his commitment to a general amnesty.

First, the "very nature of this war" was different, he argued. "It was a misadventure" in which "we were not fighting to preserve civilization. There is something to be said for (the) view that this war was not constitutional," he said.

A second legal argument in favor of a general amnesty involves the American tradition of civil disobedience, Hays asserted. Citing the Apostle Peter's injunction to "obey God rather than man," Hays argued that part of America's genius is its provision for civil disobedience. The "business of politics" includes both statutory law and natural, or divine, law, he said.

Hays proposed that Congress consider providing for voluntary service on the part of returning exiles. This should not be seen "as a condition for returning to their families," he said, but as a means by which young exiles might voluntarily serve their country upon returning.

Congress is currently considering several amnesty proposals, but many observers feel that outlook for passage of any such measure in this session is dim.

At the 1972 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Philadelphia, a resolution on amnesty was proposed but tabled by messengers.

The last specific stand on amnesty by Southern Baptists in their annual meeting was 1946 in Miami, Fla., when a resolution passed urging the President of the United States and military authorities to "grant amnesty at the earliest possible moment to the conscientious objectors still held in camps or prisons." Some years later, another SBC resolution called on Southern Baptists to individually study the amnesty question and make personal decisions on it.