

# (BP)

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

## ---FEATURES

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Door Ajar for Distribution  
Of Bibles in Eastern Europe

By Robert O'Brien

NEW YORK (BP)--The door has been nudged quietly ajar in recent years in the communist-controlled countries of Eastern Europe for increasing distribution of the Bible through legal channels.

But representatives of the world's Bible societies have had to tread on uneasy and difficult path between the professed atheistic standards of the eastern bloc nations and the rising demands of the citizens of those countries for the word of God.

In the past three years, the United Bible Societies (UBS) has spent almost \$800,000--about half of that from its American Bible Society (ABS) affiliate--for translation, production, importation and distribution in Eastern Europe.

The American Bible Society, which observes national ABS Sunday, Nov. 24, looks back on a year of achievement in which it has played a major role in Scripture distribution in the communist countries. During 1973, more than 690,000 copies were distributed in those nations--a 9.1 per cent increase over the previous year and five times greater than 1966 totals.

The ABS, cooperating through UBS with local Bible societies in the eastern bloc nations, approaches the task of supplying Scriptures with eagerness but also with the delicate touch of a snowflake on a window pane.

"We sometimes think we could get great short-term gains and raise a lot of much-needed money with a sensational approach," John D. Erickson, an ABS executive, said in an interview, reflecting on the touchy political overtones of Bible distribution in Eastern Europe.

"But we'd do it once, and that would be the end. The door would be closed."

Erickson hesitates to speak harshly of actions of Bible smugglers, who take the sensational approach, going to great lengths to circumvent customs laws and often producing questionable publicity about their exploits.

He's certain of one thing, though: "The ABS and UBS way is--and always will be--the legal way, working through government officials and local churches.

"Bible society workers around the world," said Erickson, who recently traveled through Eastern Europe, "inform us that smuggling and the great publicity it gets in the West causes them difficulty because they constantly have to differentiate between smugglers and what the Bible societies are doing in an open, legal manner.

"The ABS and UBS," he emphasized, "have the reputation of being what they say they are, of being open and honest. We have faith God will get done what he wants done."

The world's Bible societies do not claim that the nearly 700,000 Scriptures now finding their way into the hands of Eastern European Christians each year can satisfy the needs of the millions of people in those countries.

But, says Erickson, comparative results over the years show an encouraging trend. "At the end of World War II," he reported in the American Bible Society Record, "there were only a few Bible translation projects going on. Today, the United Bible Societies is giving assistance to 20 projects in 13 languages, representing all the nations of Eastern Europe.

"New translations of the whole Bible or of the New Testament are now either ready for production or are actually being printed in...Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatia, Hungarian, Macedonian, Polish, Serbian, Slovak and Slovenian," he said.

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Translation projects are often carried on by local scholars with no government interference in a number of the countries. Besides translation aid, UBS affiliates, mainly the ABS, assist in printing finished manuscripts.

Printing also takes place in most eastern bloc countries. Paper for 100,000 Bibles came from the Bible Societies of Czechoslovakia, and production is underway in the printing house of the Patriarchate of the Rumanian Orthodox Church, Erickson noted.

In November, 1973, UBS officials helped the Patriarchate arrange for importing new printing equipment, mainly for use in Scripture production.

Changeovers to local production have reduced imports to Poland and Yugoslavia, Erickson reports, but imports in others languages have continued.

Last year in Czechoslovakia, 2,500 family-sized Bibles were imported and almost immediately sold out. Permission was requested and obtained for the import of another 10,000 in 1974. Import of pocket-sized Bibles is planned for 1975.

"To aid (local) translators, scholarly editions of the Bible and the New Testament have been imported to all Eastern European countries (except Albania) on an increasing scale since 1967," Erickson says.

Albania, a small nation on the Adriatic Sea, is the only country in Eastern Europe where no recognized or formal effort is--or can be--made to distribute the Bible," he explains.

Albanian, however, is spoken in bordering Yugoslavia and there a translation of the gospel of Luke into Albanian has been completed and is in production."

The picture varies from country to country and so do the reasons for easing the way for distribution of Bibles in an atheistic structure.

"Quite often," Erickson told Baptist Press, "such allowances are made because the governments have to recognize that the church is a fact of life and must be dealt with, and that it is not possible to completely eradicate the culture, history and nature of a people which has taken centuries to build up.

"Production and distribution of the Scriptures in the Soviet Union has been permitted from time to time in the recent past," he continued, "although quantities are woefully insufficient to meet the increasing demands for God's word.

"Reports indicate that 140,000 Bibles and Testaments for the Orthodox and Baptist churches have been produced there since 1956."

He cited some advance in Lithuania and Estonia and then noted of Russia: "A program for a new translation of the Bible into Russian is under study. UBS translation experts and Russian theologians, working with modern literature on translation in Leningrad, have reported progress... We have received word that parts of (the gospel) of Mark have already been translated."

Commenting on Bulgaria, Erickson noted that reports indicate 50,000 copies of a new translation of the Bulgarian New Testament will be scheduled this year, reversing a situation in which no edition of the New Testament has been published there since 1945.

Varying reports of success have also come out of East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia.

But, despite hopeful signs, Christians in Eastern Europe still must struggle for privileges taken for granted in the West--unencumbered worship and access to God's word.



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**Supreme Court Refuses  
New Obscenity Cases**

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By Stan Hasteley

WASHINGTON (BP)--For the present, the U.S. Supreme Court has decided not to attempt defining precisely what constitutes obscenity in motion pictures and books.

That appears to be the clear message of nine 5-4 decisions by the court to refuse to schedule for oral arguments a new series of obscenity cases which had reached the docket of the nation's highest tribunal.

The nine cases, which came to the high court from New York, California, Florida and Virginia, all stemmed from local bans on obscenity. In its 6-3 decision last year, in Miller v. California, the court ruled that local communities may determine for themselves what constitutes obscene matter in judging films and printed materials.

Earlier this year, in Jenkins v. Georgia, a case involving the film "Carnal Knowledge," the court held unanimously that although it stood by its earlier Miller decision, "it would be a serious misreading" of that decision "to conclude that juries have unbridled discretion in determining what is 'patently offensive.'"

Following the Jenkins decision last summer, the Supreme Court subsequently refused to hear 18 other obscenity cases in an action identical to that of the nine 5-4 decisions. By disposing of such a large number of similar cases, the court seems to be signaling a willingness to rest, at least temporarily, on the Miller and Jenkins rulings.

In a related action, the high court has already heard oral arguments this fall in a case challenging the city of Chattanooga, Tenn., for refusing to allow the rock musical "Hair" to run in a municipally-owned theater.

The promoters of "Hair" contended before the court that the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech encompasses a play, including actions as well as words. "Hair" gained fame in the mid-1960s as an anti-establishment production and is still running in several U.S. cities.

Part of the controversy surrounding the musical was its liberal use of four-letter words and a nude scene.

By hearing oral arguments in the case, the court has expressed its willingness to consider for the first time an obscenity case involving the theater.

As for movies and printed matter, the court has for now decided not to decide further.

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Texas Leader Refutes Reports  
That Book is Pornography

10/23/74

DALLAS (BP)--A Texas Baptist leader says a news story "grossly misrepresents the truth" in stating that a handbook his agency circulated for pastors on opposing pornography may be banned as pornography.

James Dunn, secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, sharply refuted reports that the book did not get a good reception. He said it drew only three protests.

The story, circulated nationally by wire services, said, "Ministers began calling the office almost immediately saying they were appalled at the book's vivid description and frank language."

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The 190-page paperback, entitled "Pornography: The Sexual Mirage," was part of a packet mailed to 4,200 Texas pastors to aid them in urging their congregations to oppose pornography.

Author John W. Drakeford, a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex., said descriptions were necessary to portray the grossness of pornography.

"How can we expect the American people to effectively combat the problem of pornography if they have no factual knowledge of its devastating effects, both physical and psychological?" Drakeford said.

The book, on sale in book stores for more than a year, was published by Thomas Nelson Inc., Nashville, Tenn.

The company's senior editor, Bill Cannon, said in Nashville, "We are not in the business of pornography. No respectable publisher would be."

Cannon said the book, written by Drakeford and illustrated by Jack Hamm of Dallas, carries the theme that pornography does not bring erotic fulfillment, but brings "decadence to all concerned."

He said the book was far from a sex manual, containing no four-letter words and no illustration of sexual acts. He said it "deals in very clear language" and probably was the first contact protestors had "with how dangerous, how decadent, hardcore pornography is."

Cannon added that Baptists in a Southern state, which he declined to name, have had copies printed for distribution in the future.

"Actually there were no phone calls at all in opposition," Dunn said. On the other hand there were dozens of calls, personal comments and letters praising the book for its usefulness, he added.

"Only three of the 4,290 Texas Baptist pastors wrote letters indicating any problems with the book."

Dunn does not expect any mention of the book during the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Oct. 29-31, in Amarillo.

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Mid-America Seminary  
Will Relocate in Memphis

10/23/74

MEMPHIS (BP)--Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, based in Little Rock, Ark., since its founding in August, 1972, has announced plans to relocate here in 1975.

At a news conference at Bellevue Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation, B. Gray Allison, seminary president, said the school is purchasing the property of Temple Israel, a reform Jewish synagogue in Memphis, for \$940,000, and will take possession in June, 1977. The seminary has reportedly made a \$150,000 down payment.

In the meantime, the seminary, which has no official ties with Southern Baptists on national, state or associational levels, will begin holding classes at Bellevue Baptist Church next year.

Phillip Allison, Gray Allison's brother and seminary vice president, told Baptist Press the seminary had abandoned plans to build on donated property in the Little Rock area because of escalating costs.

He said Adrian Rogers, Bellevue Church's pastor, suggested the Temple Israel property to the seminary, after Bellevue had declined an offer to buy it. The synagogue is located a block from Bellevue Church.

Mid-America Seminary has 150 students and seven fulltime faculty members. It has held classes in Little Rock's Olivet Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation, since its founding.

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Foreign Fields Request  
1,014 New Missionaries

RICHMOND (BP)--Evangelistic response, developing opportunity and replacement needs in the 81 countries where Southern Baptists have 2,579 missionaries were major considerations as the Foreign Mission Board studied 527 requests for 1,014 new missionaries.

Secretaries for the seven overseas administrative areas briefed personnel secretaries on the current requests for new missionaries during the administrative staff's annual review of missionary personnel needs.

Many of the requests were the result of recently-opened areas and increasing evangelistic response in such countries as Korea, Malawi, Brazil and the Philippines.

James Belote, secretary for East Asia, pointed to needs for evangelistic workers for Korea, "where response to the gospel is dramatic."

But new opportunities in Laos, Brazil, Togo and Uganda also pressed the personnel secretaries, who processed 229 new missionaries last year.

"Clouds of uncertainty are on the horizon, but now we have a great opportunity," said R. Keith Parks, regarding the requests for missionary evangelists in Laos. Parks is secretary for Southeast Asia.

"Some of the most emotional discussion," said Jesse C. Fletcher, director of the mission support division, "related to calls for personnel replacements where losses due to resignation or retirement have left key stations bereft of missionary workers and the remaining missionaries with overwhelming work loads."

Frank K. Means, secretary for South America, said of one such missionary, "He has an impossible task now. We must find him help."

"Vietnam deserves Southern Baptist resources now that the war is over," Parks said. "People want to forget, but the need is greater than ever."

While calls for field evangelists dominated the list, calls also came for theological teachers, religious education specialists, musicians, women's workers, literacy workers, agriculturalists, mass media specialists, business managers and social workers.

In addition, a large number of medical needs continue to exist. Physicians were requested for 12 countries where Southern Baptists have medical work. Most of the calls represented needs growing more critical day by day and imposing health-threatening responsibilities on doctors currently serving those posts. Dentists were requested for countries and nurses for 13. Calls also came for pharmacists, x-ray technicians, hospital administrators, dietitians and public health workers.

Seven different countries called for agriculturalists, with an eighth requesting a veterinarian.

Maintenance workers, pilots, a builder, a printer and several office secretaries were included in the list.

In summary, Winston Crawley, director of the board's overseas division, pointed out that any real advance beyond the levels now occupied will call for a dramatic escalation of new missionary personnel. "We especially need young men and women who are graduates of our seminaries with some experience in pastoral work and church development," he said.

Louis R. Cobbs, secretary for missionary personnel, indicated that appointments in 1974 should exceed the 1973 level and constitute one of the largest appointment years the board, the world's largest missionary sending agency, has ever had.

"While the missions (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) overseas have requested new personnel for 49 different job categories, there has been a heightening of interest in missionary service on the part of men and women from practically every walk of life in Baptist churches throughout our convention," Cobbs said. "A most urgent appeal must

be made for young preachers who are willing to commit themselves to the challenge of world missions," he added.

In reviewing the administrative work done, the board's executive secretary, Baker J. Cauthen, pressed the home office staff to develop new ways to lay the needs before those groups of Southern Baptists best prepared to respond to them.

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Honduran Relief Continues;  
Baptist Laymen Participate

10/23/74

RICHMOND (BP)--The physical needs of victims of Hurricane Fifi in Honduras are still a priority among Southern Baptists, and lay people have pitched in to help.

Already four physicians from churches in the United States have treated patients in Honduras and a mobile disaster unit, sponsored by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has arrived, according to W. Eugene Grubbs, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's consultant on laymen overseas.

Southern Baptists in Honduras are concentrating most of their relief efforts in one small community, Las Brisas, now that most of the widespread emergency needs have subsided. Las Brisas was chosen because it had been overlooked by other groups.

Southern Baptist missionaries have set up a clinic in Las Brisas, a suburb of San Pedro Sula, with the help of Second Baptist Church, San Pedro Sula.

In addition, missionaries hope to distribute at least 100 sets of tools and kitchen utensils to help local residents get on their feet again. They also plan to rebuild an elementary school, which completely washed away, and build two churches in areas which had no building before.

Grubbs hopes to locate five people experienced in masonry to volunteer to go to Las Brisas for about two weeks, beginning Nov. 15, and begin work on the school. When they finish, he hopes to have five carpenters ready to complete work on the building.

He also said there will probably be a need for some construction workers toward the end of the year.

Besides plans to distribute tools and cooking utensils, Grubbs said Baptists will build 400 to 500 cots so children sleeping on the ground will have a bed.

He estimated that the school project will take about \$20,000 and the two church buildings about \$6,000 and \$7,000 each. Missionaries would also like to acquire a tent that would seat about 350, with a public address system so they can hold evangelistic meetings in areas hit by the hurricane.

Grubbs said Southern Baptists "can be proud of the way missionaries in Honduras responded" to the emergency situation. "The hurricane presented a tremendous opportunity and responsibility, and they responded extremely well. It has produced a unifying effect on the Honduran Baptist Convention, for Honduran church members and pastors alike have stood alongside the missionaries in their efforts to minister," he said.

Grubbs, who made "an impromptu" trip to Honduras last week to survey needs, said that the four volunteer doctors and Southern Baptist missionary, Dr. W. David Harms, treated more than 6,000 people in 17 days.

The physicians treated 6,288 people for worms, distributed a one month supply of vitamins to almost 6,000 people, gave almost 5,000 vaccinations and administered other medical treatment to 4,000 others.

Baptists have also distributed about 15 tons of food in the Las Brisas area. As of last week, more than 22,000 pounds of grain, four pickup truck loads of food, two pickup loads of corn on the cob, 1,000 pounds of sugar, 1,000 pounds of skim milk and 11 cartons of oatmeal have been distributed.

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Missionary Leslie G. Keyes has bought food still available locally and taken it to one of the churches where members package it in small units and oversee the distribution.

The need for food may be more desperate five months from now than at present, Keyes said. The grain crop in the area was completely destroyed, and it will take six months to harvest another crop.

The disaster relief unit from Texas, also being used to feed people, is currently set up in El Progreso, Honduras, under supervision of Robert E. Dixon of Texas Baptist Men. The unit, a converted 39-foot tractor trailer rig, is equipped with bunks for the eight-man crew, facilities to feed some 500 people an hour, water supply, generator, showers, emergency tools and supplies and two-way communications equipment.

"The disaster relief unit will undergird relief efforts, strengthen the witness of the church in El Progreso and will provide many excellent opportunities for witness," Grubbs said.

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Southern Baptists Named  
To Lausanne Committee

10/23/74

By James Lee Young  
For Baptist Press

Two Southern Baptists have been named in Honolulu to a "continuing committee" to determine what organizational structure or fellowship will result from the International Congress on World Evangelization, held in Lausanne, Switzerland in mid-summer.

Southern Baptists appointed to the committee were Kenneth Chafin, the pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston, Tex., and Harold Lindsell, editor of Christianity Today. Both said they will accept the appointment.

Forty-three persons were named, subject to their acceptance, by the planning committee of the Lausanne Congress in its final meeting in Honolulu. The continuation committee, selected from a long list of candidates, named by regional groups at the Lausanne Congress, will meet in Mexico City on Jan. 20-24, 1975.

Lindsell, a member of the Lausanne planning committee, said the matter of budgeting and whatever organization should come out of the congress would be determined by the continuing committee.

The final audit of the Lausanne budget isn't in yet, according to Lindsell, but "as far as we know the budget has been met. . . If there is any surplus from the budget, it will go to the new continuing committee."

Evangelist Billy Graham, a Southern Baptist, will convene the Mexico City meeting, Lindsell said.

Graham was prominent in the Lausanne Congress, but he will not be the chairman or a member of the continuing committee, Lindsell said.

Chafin, former director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said he received a telegram informing him of the appointment to the continuing committee. Well known among evangelicals and in the field of evangelism, Chafin said he anticipates the committee's role will be that of a "positive group reacting to the gospel, man's need for the gospel and to the need for sharing the gospel to the world."

The Southern Baptist pastor said he did not anticipate that the continuing committee or any resulting fellowship or organization "will in any way try to supplant the World Council of Churches. Some people selected for this committee are from churches in the WCC."

"I'm hopeful about the possibility of people with a commitment to evangelism building relationships and strengthening one another," he said.

Chafin said he would be going as an individual, in no way representing Southern Baptists as a denomination. But, he noted, he would be present in Mexico City, "particularly

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as a Baptist," adhering to "our basic style. We have no problem associating with others on evangelistic projects," he contended.

Chafin's optimism concerning the continuing committee still leaves the question, however, as to which direction the committee will actually take.

At least one person, Peter Beyerhaus of Germany, also named to the committee, subject to his acceptance, said in Lausanne that he was looking for a rival organization to the WCC to come out of Lausanne. Congress participants in Lausanne stressed the need for a "continuing fellowship" and emphasis was made again and again by Graham and others that no WCC rival was intended.

Chafin noted it was too early to say what directions the committee will take, although he expressed his own desires for such a gathering.

Lindsell noted that the Lausanne Congress planning committee is now out of business and further action will be up to the new continuing committee.

The names by country or region of continuing committee appointments are:

United States, J. Kennedy, G. Raedeke, T. Zimmerman, R. Coleman, M. Scott, Mrs. Bill Bright, P. Wagner, Chafin.

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M.

Middle East, Deeb; Oceania, A. Jack Dain; Canada, Di Gangi; East Asia, J. Cho, A. Hatori, P. Octavianus; P. Teng and Mrs. M. Mapalie; West Asia, B. Khokhar, B. Wafi; N. Samuel; S. Athyal; S. Sangma.

Latin America, Juan Isais, Samuel Libert, Nilson Fanini, P. Arana-Quiroz, and an unnamed candidate to be appointed who will be a Brazilian Pentecostal. Africa, M. Cassidy, F. Kivengere, I. Zokue, B. Kato, G. Osei-Mensa; Europe, P. Beyerhaus, A. Hoppler, J. Horak, P. Schneider, J. Stot, H. Blocher, E. Utnam, and G. Landreth.

Persons nominated at-large for the continuing committee were: Leighton Ford of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association staff, Lindsell, L. Chia, Miss F. Yeboah and R. Attalah.

Lindsell said there is still a young person to be named to the continuing committee and noted that the committee appointees come from all Christian evangelical denominations and that "Baptists are strong there."

No immediate breakdown by denomination was available. (BP)



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