



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
James Lee Young, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 254-5461
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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75-56

Statue of M.L. King Jr. Proposed Again in Congress

WASHINGTON (BP)--U.S. Senator Walter F. Mondale (D.-Minn.) has reintroduced a bill which would commission a statue of the late Martin Luther King Jr., the slain civil rights leader and Baptist pastor, to be placed in the U.S. Capitol.

Introducing the measure, Mondale noted that although the capitol "is supposed to be a building that symbolizes a government of all people, not a single black American has been honored by having a portrait or statue placed" there.

Mondale cited King as being "uncompromisingly dedicated to justice, to equality, to faith and to peace." He noted also that the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 "stand as living monuments to Dr. King."

Martin Luther King Jr. served as co-pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, a position he held at the time of his murder in April 1968. King was shot and killed by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tenn., while engaging in a series of protests on behalf of sanitation workers in that city.

Mondale's bill was introduced last year but failed to reach the senate floor for a vote. The new version of the measure is cosponsored by 26 other senators. An identical bill was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Jonathan Bingham (D.-N.Y.) with more than 160 cosponsors.

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Baptist Missionaries
Leave South Vietnam

Baptist Press
4/10/75

RICHMOND (BP)--All of the 10 Southern Baptist missionaries remaining in Saigon will evacuate South Vietnam by April 12, according to a cable sent to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board by missionaries there.

Eight of the 10 were evacuated by April 10. Two others, H. Earl Bengs Jr. and Jack Miller, were scheduled to leave April 12, according to R. Keith Parks, the board's secretary for South-east Asia.

The cable also said Vietnamese Baptists have organized a Capitol Baptist Association which will maintain refugee centers and continue to administer relief.

"All of the missionaries have their reentry permits in order which would allow them to return if it seems advisable for them to do so," Parks said. "They will wait to see if the situation will stabilize before making a decision concerning reentry."

Earlier in April, 16 Southern Baptist missionaries and their families were evacuated, leaving 10 men who remained in Saigon ministering to relief needs of refugees.

Elaborate plans made earlier by the Baptist missionaries for relief and relocation of refugees had crumbled due to the instability, uncertainty and rapid changes of the crisis situation.

The 10 who remained responded day by day to crucial relief needs as they arose, according to W. Eugene Grubbs, the Foreign Mission Board's disaster response coordinator, who recently returned from a survey trip to Vietnam, along with Bob Harper of The Commission, board publication.

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Plans to transport refugees, clear land, build houses, churches and schools, dig wells and provide tools had been made before the majority of South Vietnam's land area had fallen to Communist control.

Prior to the collapse of Danang, missionaries were able to lease a ship and intended to assist in moving refugees out of that city. Before reaching the Danang harbor, however, Communists were already in control.

The vessel sailed instead to Camrahn, picked up about 100 refugee families and moved them to more secure areas of the south.

Church buildings and other Baptist property in and around Saigon are being used as temporary refugee centers. One Baptist church serves as a reception area where refugees seeking Baptist aid are registered and directed to one of the centers.

At these centers, food is distributed and shelter, mats and cooking utensils are provided. A low grade of rice is used to feed refugee families. A family of six can be fed for two weeks for about \$22, according to Grubbs.

"The Vietnamese Baptists felt they could feed them for two week periods," Grubbs said. "Then they'd have to find a family to go to or move on out."

Grubbs commended the Vietnamese Baptists for their efforts. He said they had collected an offering from what little they had in order to assist other refugees.

The Baptist missionaries had also voted to provide funds for the evacuation of a Baptist orphanage in Camrahn. It is not known if this effort has been successful.

Frustration, disappointment and despair are the feelings of the missionaries, Grubbs said, as they face the uncertainty of their future and the future of the Vietnamese Baptists they are leaving behind.

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(BP) PHOTOS mailed to state Baptist papers.

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Baptists in Washington And
Georgia Prepare for Refugees

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4/10/75

WASHINGTON (BP)--A group of Baptist leaders announced here the formation of an organization which will seek to aid Vietnam refugees in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.

Allen Oliver, pastor of the Hillendale Baptist Church in suburban Adelphi, Md., told Baptist Press that the group has been formed because "we are convinced that in the near future our churches will need to be prepared to minister" to Vietnam refugees coming to this country.

Oliver is serving as cochairman of the new group, the Baptist Committee of Metropolitan Washington for Refugee Relief, along with Harry Hearne, director of Christian social ministries for the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

Baptist associations on both sides of the Potomac River in Maryland and Virginia as well as the D.C. Baptist Convention will participate in the program.

Meanwhile in Marieta, Ga., another Baptist group, made up of seven members of the 180-member Lakeview Baptist Church, have announced they are forming a corporation to serve as a clearing house for Vietnamese orphans.

Mitchell Burress, a layman in the church, will serve as president of Christian Missions Inc., which hopes to establish a receiving facility for orphans and perhaps even a standby airplane shuttle system to transport them from the war-torn country.

The organization, newly incorporated, has established no concrete plans for the operation yet, Burress told Baptist Press. Among officers and directors of the organization are James R. Cochran, pastor of the church, and Bobby D. Chastain, the church's music director.

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The metropolitan Washington-area group set up an executive committee made up of pastors, laymen and denominational workers. It will seek to implement a comprehensive program to aid the refugees in resettling.

Oliver said that the group's objectives include: Setting up emergency care centers for incoming refugees; securing Baptist people to care for individual refugees on both short-term and long-term bases; providing basic necessities such as food, clothing and medical care; securing jobs; and providing "cultural adjustment" forums

Each of these projects, Oliver said, is to be headed up by a member of the group's executive committee who specializes professionally in the field.

Initial response has included preliminary commitments from a number of area churches and individuals to provide food, clothing, temporary housing and medical care to incoming refugees.

"Some of us who are pastors have already secured commitments from our own congregations to participate in the program," Oliver noted.

In an effort to attract the widest possible participation, the organization is distributing a "resources inventory" in all Baptist churches belonging to area associations to determine what the churches can do to help refugees in repatriating.