



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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75-76

Foreign Board Appoints 14;
Approves \$92,770 for Relief

RICHMOND (BP)--Fourteen missionaries were appointed, \$92,770 was appropriated for world relief and current reports were heard on Vietnam missionaries and refugees at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's May meeting here.

Of the relief funds, \$30,000 was designated for refugee relief in Angola, \$28,000 for food production and distribution in Bangladesh, \$12,270 for drought relief in Ethiopia, \$7,500 for flood relief in Botswana, \$5,000 for assistance to Cambodian refugees in Thailand, and \$5,000 each for needs in Korea and Uganda.

"The long-standing internal strife in Angola has now resulted in plans for the independence of that country," said Baker J. Cauthen, executive secretary. "With a change in the country's outlook, it is possible now for many of the people to return to their homes from the areas to which they had fled during times of hostility.

"Needs are becoming increasingly great for doing whatever is possible for these people as they try to reproject their lives. Further studies will be made concerning other possible steps both in Angola and in other countries."

The board also heard reports from R. Keith Parks, secretary for Southeast Asia, and W. Eugene Grubbs, disaster response coordinator, updating the involvement of the Vietnam missionaries and the steps being taken to aid Vietnamese refugees.

Parks commended the evacuated Vietnam missionaries for their ministry to refugees and for their desire to continue as foreign missionaries in other countries.

He reported that missionaries were saddened and frustrated to learn that apparently none of some 500 Vietnamese Baptist employees and their families, which were supposed to have been evacuated, escaped before the fall of Saigon to the Viet Cong.

The U. S. Embassy had agreed to evacuate the persons on a list provided by Missionaries H. Earl Bengs Jr. and Gene Tunnell, who returned to Saigon several days before the fall to arrange the evacuation. Apparently, the situation collapsed before the embassy could fulfill its promise.

Parks did report the successful evacuation of a group of 82 children and 15 adults from the Baptist-related Camrahn City Christian Orphanage. The group was scheduled to arrive in New York on May 15 and be sent to Ft. Chaffee, Ark., for processing.

Grubbs emphasized the cooperation of many Baptist groups with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's work at refugee processing centers in the United States. He commended the assistance being given at these centers by Foreign Mission Board missionaries, who were home on furlough from Vietnam when the communist take-over occurred.

The seven missionary couples appointed by the board will serve in seven different countries.

Appointed were Mr. and Mrs. Roger M. Bostick Jr., Tennessee and Georgia, assigned to Rhodesia; Mr. and Mrs. Wayne E. Brown, Virginia, East Africa; Mr. and Mrs. Harold V. Cole, Oklahoma and Texas, Liberia; Mr. and Mrs. W. Ronnie Reynolds, West Virginia and North Carolina, Argentina; Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Y. Sarver, California, Ghana; Dr. and Mrs. Bill R. Swan, Arkansas and Oklahoma, the Philippines; and Mr. and Mrs. Tom C. Townsend, Tennessee and California, Indonesia.

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All were appointed as career missionaries, with the exception of the Bosticks and the Coles, who were employed as missionary associates.

Mr. and Mrs. Billy Bob Moore, previously missionaries to East Africa before resigning in 1971, were reappointed to Trinidad.

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FMB Sends Relief Money
For Refugees in Angola

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RICHMOND (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has appropriated \$30,000 for relief aid for refugees in the African nation of Angola in response to a request from missionaries there.

The largest group of refugees have returned home after 14 years of living in exile in the forests to the north of their villages.

They are centered in the Ambrizete-Musserra area in Northwestern Angola and around the city of Carmona. Another group, those left homeless in fighting between the nation's three political factions in the capital, Luanda, may develop later.

"The appropriation is to meet emergency needs while a complete evaluation is being made," said Davis L. Saunders, the board's secretary for eastern and southern Africa.

Southern Baptist missionaries, after visiting the refugee areas, have devised a plan for refugee aid.

"We found them hungry, nearly naked, with poor eyesight. The children showed signs of malnutrition," said Mrs. Harrison H. Pike, Southern Baptist missionary. "The women hid themselves because they did not have adequate clothing to cover themselves," Mrs. Pike said.

In 1961, the refugees took shelter in the forests during the fighting between the terrorists, now called liberation forces, and the Portuguese soldiers. Since the Portuguese military coup in April, 1974, this overseas state of Portugal has enjoyed greater freedom. Many refugees were able to return home safely.

Relief efforts began immediately, even before the completion of the missionaries' trip. Pike described the situation as "no rain, no hoes, no gardens, no food."

They purchased 300 hoes in Ambrizete for \$1 each and took 200 to Musserra. They gave the rest to refugees in the Carmona area. "The women clutched the hoes to their breasts and tears streamed down their cheeks," Mrs. Pike said.

The relief program outlined by Pike involves persons belonging to all three political parties.

Relief efforts included the purchase of 1,000 pieces of cloth to be used as wrap-around skirts for the women. The missionaries also distributed 200 kilos of powdered milk which was received through the Swiss Phil-African Mission.

Ten tons of potatoes arrived in Luanda, May 10. Thirty sacks were taken immediately to Musserra and 120 sacks were distributed the next day to the rest of the Carmona area. Ten tons of corn flour has been arranged for, and cuttings of manioc (used to make flour) will be provided by Christians in Luanda and Carmona for the refugees. Manioc will be part of the refugees' first crop.

Some of the potatoes will be planted and the rest eaten, as will pineapples soon to be received. Peanuts will also be planted and another order has been placed with a hoe factory since there were not enough hoes for each woman.

"We need thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of vitamins to give the children to supplement their daily diet," Mrs. Pike says. "Almost without exception the children are suffering from malnutrition."

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A former Angola evangelist, who is also a male nurse, will go to the areas to assist and to administer whatever medicine can be secured.

School will be set up in churches and taught by young Christians who have had some education, using the gospel of John as a reader. The refugee children must learn to speak, read and write Portuguese to communicate in Angola.

In each village, one person will make a list of refugees living there so services will not be duplicated. These persons will also aid missionary Albert C. Sutton Jr. in deciding what land to break for planting. Sutton intends to take the tractor to these northern areas from his own station and spend a month breaking large tracts of land for each community to use.

Although there has been fighting in Luanda, all the missionaries are safe and all mission property is undamaged.

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Vietnam Orphans Arrive;
Aided by Missionaries

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5/14/75

RICHMOND (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries to Vietnam, frustrated in their attempt to evacuate about 500 Baptist employees and their families, are overjoyed by the successful evacuation of 97 Vietnamese from the Baptist-related Camranh City Christian Orphanage.

The 82 children and 15 adults from the orphanage were scheduled to arrive in New York on May 15 and travel from there to Ft. Chaffee, Ark., for processing, according to R. Keith Parks, the Foreign Mission Board's secretary for Southeast Asia. Most of the orphans are between three and 11 years of age.

Apparently, the previously reported plans made by Missionaries Gene V. Tunnell and H. Earl Bengs Jr. for the evacuation of Vietnamese Baptists and their families were never implemented.

"The evacuation plan was approved by the American Embassy on Friday, April 25, but we have since learned that the whole evacuation procedure fell apart on the following Monday night," Parks said. "As far as we're able to tell, almost none, if any, of these were evacuated. Unfortunately, there was no way it could be done."

American embassy personnel had agreed to evacuate employees of volunteer agencies, their spouses, parents, brothers and sisters, sons under 18 years of age and daughters under 21.

Independent Baptist Missionary Walter Routh, after signing two affidavits with the U. S. government promising to be totally responsible for transportation and living costs, successfully evacuated 52 Vietnamese, including 35 Baptists.

The Camranh City Christian Orphanage was begun in 1967 when a group of Christian servicemen stationed in the Camranh area became concerned about the number of orphans there. After collecting money and constructing a building, they learned that foreigners were not permitted to operate an orphanage. Vietnamese Baptist representatives decided to sponsor the orphanage.

Prior to the fall of Camranh, the orphanage group fled to the southern part of the country. Aided by Southern Baptist relief money, they bought a small fishing boat and were eventually picked up by a larger ship that took them to Singapore.

They contacted Southern Baptist field representative William R. Wakefield and negotiations were made for their transportation to the United States.

While in Singapore, they were among about 7,000 refugees aboard ships in the Singapore harbor. Due to governmental restrictions, these ships were not allowed to dock.

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Wakefield and other Baptist missionaries have been using \$10,000 of Southern Baptist relief funds to feed the thousands of refugees in the harbor.

When the Baptist-related orphanage group arrives at Ft. Chaffee, Southern Baptist groups, through coordination with the Home Mission Board, will be there to greet them, including James M. Gayle, furloughing missionary to Vietnam, who was pastor to many of the Camranh group.

Local Baptists, coordinated by W. Trueman Moore, former missionary to Bangladesh and now pastor of East Side Baptist Church, Ft. Smith, Ark., are also assisting refugees in Ft. Chaffee.

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Court Action Favors
Bequests to Churches

Baptist Press
5/14/75

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court refused to hear a case from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania which declared unconstitutional that state's "Mortmain Act." A "mortmain" law is one which negates bequests in wills to religious and charitable institutions when the person making the will dies before a prescribed period of time has elapsed.

The Pennsylvania "Mortmain Act" provides that a person must live at least 30 days after he makes a will, including bequests to religious and charitable institutions, before such groups are entitled to the estate. Other states having similar laws are Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Montana, New York and Ohio.

The heirs of Gilbert F. Riley, a resident of Hollidaysburg, Pa., invoked the law upon Riley's death, Nov. 30, 1969, just 20 days after he had executed his will. The will specified that a portion of his estate go to the pastor of the St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church of Hollidaysburg to be used for the benefit of the church and its school.

More than three years after Riley's death, a local court of common pleas reopened the case in light of a decision by a federal district court in Washington, D. C., which held a similar District of Columbia law violated the free exercise of religion clause of the First Amendment.

The court of common pleas reached a similar decision in June 1973. Riley's heirs then took the case to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which ruled in December 1974, that the state's mortmain act was invalid in that it violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

In a legal brief urging the U. S. Supreme Court to hear their case, the heirs maintained that the action of Pennsylvania's high court takes away from the states their right "to determine the manner of testamentary disposition of property."

They also argued that the Supreme Court has held in the past that nothing in the constitution forbids state legislatures "to limit, condition or even abolish the power of testamentary dispositions" in their jurisdictions.

The other side argued in its brief that the Pennsylvania law has a "chilling effect" upon the testator as he seeks to dispose of his property. "The prudent testator," the argument continued, "may well be motivated to forsake the opportunity which the law permits him as to gifts to religion, precisely because that opportunity is so seriously qualified."

The brief concluded that "no compelling state interest reasonably justifies the statute's violation of religious liberty."

The Supreme Court's refusal to schedule the case for oral argument does not either endorse or reject the lower court's ruling. It has the effect, nevertheless, of leaving in force the lower decision.

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CP Birthday Celebrated
At Memphis Breakfast

MEMPHIS (BP)--A breakfast crowd of 350 Southern Baptists, heavily sprinkled with leaders of the 12.5-million-member denomination, celebrated the 50th birthday of their Cooperative Program here with accolades, prayers of thanksgiving, and the launching of a 29-day, 1,300-mile torch run.

The prayer breakfast for the denomination's unified giving plan attracted bevy of agency executives, state Baptist convention leaders and just plain people from the pews to old Ellis Auditorium, now part of Cook Convention Center, where Southern Baptists started the Cooperative Program on May 13, 1925.

Also among the guests were eight Southern Baptists who actually witnessed the event. They were Robert F. Polk of Ponca City, Okla., Mr. and Mrs. Lyn Claybrook, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Moore, and Mrs. A. C. Rodgers, all of Memphis; Mrs. R. H. Jones of Nashville; and Alvin Huffman of Blytheville, Ark.

As a climax to the breakfast, Porter Routh of Nashville, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, lit a Cooperative Program torch which 1,200 teenag Royal Ambassador boys will carry across four states to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 10-12, at Miami Beach.

In lighting the torch, held by Mark Simmons, a Royal Ambassador at Belmont Heights Baptist Church of Nashville, Routh reminded the audience that the flame was more than fire and that it represented the light of life.

Polk, pastor of First Baptist Church of Ponca City, opened the breakfast by recalling that he viewed the birth of the Cooperative Program as a five-month-old baby "in my mother's arms."

During the last 50 years, I've seen the Cooperative Program grow to become the largest and most stable system of giving in the world." (In 50 years the Cooperative Program has raised \$1.6 billion for state and national SBC needs, not including billions retained by local churches for their needs.)

"I try to lead every church I pastor to increase its gifts to the Cooperative Program," Polk disclosed. "During the last six years, my church has increased its gifts through the Cooperative Program by 88 percent and to missions as a whole by 106 percent. Maybe our Lord will lead us to a new plan, but right now the Cooperative Program is the best practical plan of sharing the gospel with people everywhere."

Robert Lee of Alexandria, La., executive secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said the denomination, during the current clamor for a name change, should probably be known as the Cooperative Program Convention.

"I believe the Lord revealed the Cooperative Program to us in this city as a way in which every church can share in the worldwide service of our Lord, beginning at home," he said.

Miss Alma Hunt, retired executive secretary of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), lauded framers of the Cooperative Program for "making Southern Baptists a family."

Paul Stevens of Fort Worth, president of the SBC Radio and Television Commission, recalled the Cooperative Program caused him, as a pastor at Ada, Okla., to lead his church to give 50 percent of its gifts to missions.

The SBC Stewardship Commission, which sponsored the breakfast, gave each person a coffee mug inscribed in gold with the Cooperative Program emblem as a memento of the birthday celebration.

Old Timers Recall Birth
Of Cooperative Program

By Jim Newton

MEMPHIS (BP)--Six "old timers" and two "youngsters" by comparison returned to the old Ellis Auditorium in downtown Memphis to recall what really happened there 50 years ago when the Southern Baptist Convention gave birth to its Cooperative Program unified budget.

Ranging in age from 50 to 86, the group included two retired pastors and their wives, a widow, a retired Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) worker, and the two "youngsters"--an Oklahoma pastor and an executive from the SBC Radio and Television Commission.

All eight attended both the 1925 Southern Baptist Convention meeting and the 1975 Cooperative Program 50th Anniversary Prayer Breakfast, both on May 13 in their respective years in Memphis.

Robert F. Polk, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ponca City, Okla., a "youngster" in the group, told the 350 breakfast participants about his own involvement in the birth of the Cooperative Program.

Polk, who was born in Memphis, was five months old at the time. In his mother's arms, young Polk participated in a pageant presented during the WMU convention the night before the Cooperative Program was created in 1925.

During the pageant, entitled "An Open Window to the World," individuals representing the millions of persons around the world in need of Christ walked past an "open window" reminding the church of its responsibility to people. Polk's mother carried him in the pageant.

Polk's mother, he recalls later in an interview, apparently did not realize the significance of what took place that night and the next day. It was not until 40 years later when Polk mentioned his participation in the pageant to Cecil Ray of Dallas, state Stewardship director for Texas Baptists, that Polk began to realize the significance of that event.

The old timers, as well as the youngsters, admitted that they really did not realize in 1925 what the Cooperative Program would accomplish in the next 50 years.

Most of the old timers could not remember too many details of the 1925 convention.

Lyn Claybrook, spry and energetic after 60 years in the ministry, including 48 years as a pastor, recalled one "great quote" from T. V. Herndon of Louisiana during the discussion of the adoption of the Cooperative Program.

"The old way of raising money was too spasmodic, and we just couldn't have enough spasms to meet the needs," Claybrook recalls Herndon telling the 1925 convention.

Ralph Moore, who then was pastor of three churches near Atlanta while studying for the ministry at Mercer University, said he doubted that any of the messengers present in 1925 fully realized the significance of the birth of the Cooperative Program at the time.

Moore and his wife, who both attended the convention, are retired. They live in Memphis where he served for almost 19 years as superintendent of missions for the Shelby Baptist Association.

Polk said the 1925 event was almost like the birth of a baby, adding that he doubted the parents of Abraham Lincoln could have imagined at the time of his birth the great things he would accomplish.

Mrs. A. C. Rodgers, 86, also of Memphis, recalls bringing a group of WMU ladies from West Helena, Ark., to Memphis for the convention.

She carried in her hand a small, pocket size book of devotions she had bought in Memphis during the 1925 convention for her daughter. She wore on her lap 1 both an orchid corsage and a messenger pin from the 1928 convention.

"I looked for it, but I couldn't find my 1925 convention messenger pin," she said.

Another "old timer" from Arkansas, Mrs. R. H. Jones, 82, now of Nashville, recalls an emphasis at the SBC in 1925 of Baptist work in Europe through the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

Mrs. Jones, associational superintendent of WMU work and active in her home church in Osceola, Ark., for 60 years before moving to Nashville, wore a BWA lapel pin, explaining that she had also attended the Alliance's 50th anniversary in London in 1955.

A third native of Arkansas in the group, Alvin (Bo) Huffman of Blytheville, now executive vice president of the Radio and Television Commission, Fort Worth, was the second "youngster" who attended the 1925 convention.

Huffman, who was 10 at the time, quipped that the only thing he could remember about the convention was that he got a three-day excused absence from school to attend.

In retrospect, the group was unanimous in their praise of what the Cooperative Program has accomplished during the last 50 years in raising \$1.6 billion for state and national SBC needs, not including billions more retained by local churches.

Polk, in his remarks at the breakfast, called the Cooperative Program the largest and most stable system of missions support known among Christian bodies.

Mrs. Jones agreed, pointing out that she had read recent reports that every major Protestant denomination, except Southern Baptists, had seen a decline in mission giving during the last few years.

Polk said that he has seen the convention during the Cooperative Program's lifetime, rise from 8,285 churches giving to missions through the Cooperative Program during that first year, to 29,848 churches supporting Cooperative Program causes during 1974.

Claybrook and his wife, retired and living in Memphis, re-emphasized Polk's point: "The Cooperative Program makes it possible for all of us to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ."

Claybrook, who hands out calling cards saying he is still young at heart and available for supply preaching and revivals, explained that no man or woman in his or her lifetime can literally "go into all the world and preach the gospel." But it's possible, he added, to carry out that commission through others, supported through the Cooperative Program.

The eight agreed that it was wonderful to be present, both in 1925 and 1975, to see with their own eyes what great things Southern Baptists have accomplished through the Cooperative Program, the main method of financing SBC work in all 50 states and 83 foreign countries.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist papers.

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RA Opens 1,300-mile Run
In Memphis Ceremony

By Lee Hollaway

MEMPHIS (BP)--As a duet sang "Pass It On," Mark Simmons of Nashville ran from Cook Convention Center here carrying a lighted torch on the first leg of a 1,300 mile journey.

A crowd of 350 Southern Baptist Convention leaders applauded and a group of Royal Ambassador (RA) boys cheered as young Simmons inaugurated the torch run to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the SBC's Cooperative Program unified budget.

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After winding through Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and Florida, the torch is scheduled to reach Miami Beach the night of Jun 10, during the SBC Stewardship Commission's report to the denomination's annual meeting.

About a half-mile from the Cook Convention Center, Simmons passed the torch to Ricky Franz, also of Nashville. Both boys are active in the Royal Ambassador boys program at th Belmont Heights Baptist Church.

A 67 degree temperature, under clear skies, provided a perfect climate for the run to begin.

With a police motorcycle escort and safety vehicles in front and behind, the runners moved along at a brisk pace. Within an hour they had covered the 15 miles to the Memphis city limits and were well on their way toward Nashville.

Buses dropped the runners off at half-mile intervals and then picked them up after they had finished their stint.

"We had never really thought very much about the Cooperative Program and how it works until we got started on this project," said Simmons.

"Then our RA leader started telling us things, and we found out more on our own."

Simmons and Franz are part of the cast for a skit at a rally marking the torch's arrival in Nashville. "The skit is about how the Cooperative Program began" in 1925, said Franz. "We have learned a lot just from working on it."

Prompting people to ask questions and get information about the Cooperative Program is a major purpose of the torch run.

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the SBC Brotherhood Commission, which sponsors the RA program, explained the project to the convention leaders gathered at a breakfast sponsored by the SBC Stewardship Commission.

"During the next 29 days, we will have many deputy sheriffs--and maybe quite a few Baptists--who will be asking what this torch means. And, by June 10, we will have 1,200 boys with sore feet who know what the Cooperative Program is all about."

Porter Routh of Nashville, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, lit the torch and gave a challenge to the runners.

"As you start with the light, keep in mind that you are not just carrying the light of this torch. Remember the words of John 8:12, in which Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world: He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"

Then, as he struck a match to the torch, he added: "Let the Light Shine!"