



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Southern Baptists Challenged To Provide Refugee Sponsors

ATLANTA, Ga. (BP)--Southern Baptists were challenged here to provide sponsors for the more than 30,000 Vietnamese refugees who remain in resettlement camps in the United States and on Guam.

"There is a great need," said Irvin Dawson, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's (HMB) immigration and refugee service here, "and Southern Baptists could help meet it by responding to the call for sponsors."

Dawson said there are many single men, large families and families with persons with various physical and emotional handicaps who have been passed over in the resettlement effort to date.

"It would be a real measure of our commitment to minister to human need to sponsor these people," said Dawson.

Through September 26, Southern Baptists working through the HMB office here and through Church World Service (CWS) had resettled 1,896 refugees.

Texas led other states in resettlement efforts with more than 400 refugees finding new homes in the Lone Star State. California has resettled more than 225; Florida 164; Alabama 163; and Arkansas 150. The figures do not include those resettled through agencies other than the HMB and CWA.

Dawson said that as of September 13, the last date figures were available, CWS had resettled 10,952 refugees and had accepted a goal of resettling 5,000 more. CWS originally agreed to attempt to settle at least 10,250 refugees.

A bulletin from the Inter-Agency Task Force which is directing the federal government's resettlement effort, showed that as of September 24, some 128,000 refugees had entered the United States. Almost 92,000 have been resettled in the U. S., another 3,700 sent to other countries and 28,900 remain in camps at Fort Chaffee, Ark.; Indiantown Gap, Pa., and Camp Pendleton, Calif. The fourth camp at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., has been closed. Almost 2,000 still are on Guam.

Dawson said that churches wishing to sponsor a refugee or refugee family can either contact his office in Atlanta or the local coordinators at the three remaining U. S. bases.

The local Southern Baptist coordinators are Jerry Edwards, Fort Chaffee, Ark. toll free, 1-800-643-9750), and Wayne Eurich, San Diego Baptist Association for Camp Pendleton (area code 714-583-9183).

No Southern Baptist coordinator is stationed at Indiantown Gap, but the CWS phone number there is 717-872-4946.

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Unrest in Portugal
Doesn't Stop Crusade

Baptist Press
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LISBON, Portugal (BP)--Baptists in Portugal, determined to have an evangelistic campaign, decided not to let riots, demonstrations, changes in government and a general tense atmosphere deter them.

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The crusade, October 12-19, will include guest speakers and revival services in the 45 churches of the Portuguese Baptist Convention. The decision to go ahead with plans was based on the great need for an evangelistic effort at this time and the uncertainty surrounding future possibilities to have such campaigns, according to Norma (Mrs. John M.) Herndon, Southern Baptist missionary.

Due to the unrest a large number of the guest preachers canceled, Mrs. Herndon reported. She said the convention leaders reasoned that revival doesn't depend on the preacher.

"They (convention leaders) ask prayers from their fellow Christians that God will bring tranquility to Portugal and that they will be able to see the miracle of mighty spiritual victories in spite of present upheavals," said Joseph B. Underwood, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's consultant on evangelism and church development.

Underwood has been responsible for initial planning of the Baptist World Alliance-sponsored "World Mission of Reconciliation through Jesus Christ" campaigns during the past few years.

Another part of Baptist work continuing in spite of turmoil is a summer camping program completed in September.

The camping program at Aua de Madeiros began with two weeks for girls. It continued with two weeks for boys, two weeks for young people, one week for the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and a family week sponsored by the Baptist Brotherhood (men's missionary organization).

"The first week began during a time of much unrest," said Mrs. Herndon. "We had anticipated few in attendance but to our surprise, 75 youngsters showed up. We found out later that many parents wanted the children out of the cities in a safer place.

"God is still working in these difficult times," she concluded, "and his work continues."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers.

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Accountability, Pioneering
Urged for Social Workers

Baptist Press
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By Floyd A. Craig

Nashville, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist social workers were told here they must be more accountable for their work and seek to focus upon prevention of problems.

The social workers were also urged to pioneer in new services, to use research in determining priorities and to be forthright in dealing with current and prospective employers.

Lillian C. Milanof, associate professor at Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville, Ky., keynote speaker and lecturer during the annual meeting of the 159-member Southern Baptist Social Service Association (SBSSA), explained, "Private agencies--such as are sponsored by church groups--have budgeted for planning and administration but little if any for any research and service accounting.

"In this age when there is a push for accountability it behooves sectarian agencies, as all others, to reorder priorities in the use of funds that are available. If more money were allotted to research it would document and provide persuasion needed with the powers that be to obtain more funds.

"All who pay for social services, whether through churches or through taxes, have a right to know why, where, and how funds are spent."

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"We must," warned Ms. Milanof, "not only report how many people we have helped, but we must be willing to see if our work has any impact on the incidence of such problems delinquency, poverty and family breakdown."

The professor reminded the 108 participants--from 18 states--that sectarian private agencies and churches have a responsibility to interpret to all that less time should be spent on worrying whether or not they are duplicating services as with actually providing services. "Our primary concern should be that there is a shortage of resources rather than a gross misuse of those we have," she said.

"It is necessary for sectarian agencies to be committed to work for prevention," stressed Ms. Milanof, "The continuation of crisis intervention as a priority and adding band-aids constantly must be evaluated. There must be a breaking of these cycles of hurt," she noted.

"The task of social work is so large, I believe," said Ms. Milanof, "public and private agencies must work more closely. We have come to realize that there is a limit to our resources. Therefore, sectarian agencies must work on providing input for more social legislation at all levels of government."

Ms. Milanof encouraged the Southern Baptist social workers to concentrate on assessing community and individual needs and move to meet those needs, "You must continue to be explorers and forerunners of new services as public agencies increasingly take over the mass programs."

She admonished the Association members and Southern Baptist ministers and administrators to understand they need each other in the task of ministering to people. "Far too often," she said, "rather than each supplementing his/her own efforts with the contribution of the other--the relationship becomes a stand-off. Traditionally, clergy have performed most of the helping roles now assumed by social workers," reported the Kentucky educator, "As the clergy develop more interest in pastoral counseling and as there is the development of programs to train pastoral counselors the clergy may become more involved in roles parallel to those of social workers."

"The fact is both are needed--social ministry is the responsibility of all--the volunteer, the clergy and the social worker," urged Ms. Milanof. "The important factor is for each to know who is in need of service, what it is each is trying to achieve, the skills and knowledge each can contribute and how they can complement one another to provide a total service."

Ms. Milanof stressed the importance of having clear understandings when being employed by any organization--even the church, "Social workers are always out working for the rights of others, but who works for the rights of social workers?"

"When you are considering a job--don't be naive. Ask for--in writing--what position you would be hired for, its description and expectations, your starting salary and means for increases," she advised. "This is just good business, and, more importantly, it helps to get on with providing service to people."

The association elected Derrel Watkins, professor of social work, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, president; reelected both Sandra Hill, director of social work at Harvard Street Center, Alexandria, Va., as vice president and Beverly Hammack, assistant director, department of Christian social ministries, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, as secretary-treasurer.

SBSSA is a fellowship organization of those who are involved and/or interested in social ministry and related education in Southern Baptist life. The organization's 1976 meeting will be September 26-28 in Charleston, S. C.