



March 1, 1977

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N. H. Missions -- Maybe Luck
Had Nothing to Do With It

By Everett Hullum

MANCHESTER, N. H. (BP)--Sometimes, in church extension, it's hard to know where luck ends and the work of the Holy Spirit begins. Or vice versa.

In late 1973, Paul Glenn came to Manchester as a church extension home missionary of Southern Baptists.

A camping caravan of Mississippi Baptists had worked in the area the previous summer; a team of US-2 missionaries had made surveys. Glenn began with those groups' lists--and got nowhere.

Finally, discovering that parents would "relinquish their children to us for spiritual matters," he began a series of Bible clubs, hoping to contact parents through reaching the children.

For almost a year and a half, Glenn conducted the clubs, averaging as many as 55 children in his small house. Again, he got nowhere, or at least not where he wanted to go.

"We had seen the children as a door to reaching the parents. We didn't see the problems we could cause for a family by reaching the children and alienating the parents," he said.

Most of the children came from Catholic backgrounds, he explained. Their offsprings' new interest in the Baptist church created tension Glenn believed unhealthy.

"The family was the first institution God created," concluded Glenn, "not the church." Discouraged, Glenn backed away.

Then luck--or the Holy Spirit--intervened. In a Bible study in Massachusetts, Edith Lawrence, director of church extension for New England Baptists, met a woman who had a sister in Manchester.

The sister, when contacted by Glenn, made a profession of faith in Christ. "It was a transformation, just like that," recalled Glenn, snapping his fingers.

That opened the door to a Bible study in the woman's home. Other members of the family became Christians and were baptized in the swimming pool of a nearby motel.

Nine people, counting Glenn and his wife, began making the 100-mile round trip to Portsmouth, N. H., to attend Screven Memorial Baptist Church, which sponsors the Manchester work. After three months, the group asked Glenn if they could begin Sunday services in Manchester.

"I'll never do that again," declared Glenn smiling. "Trying to start a church with nine members is ridiculous. But I had never done it before and neither had they. All I can say is God has blessed our ignorance."

The little group began meeting in a YMCA. The budget of \$20 a week was a "real test of faith," Glenn said, "because our group was just above welfare level in income. But we never lacked, we always got more than we expected."

Yet problems developed. Glenn tried to develop lay leadership among the mission's members, but most, coming out of Catholic tradition, expected him--as the "priest"--to direct the church.

The church's key family joined a group of charismatic Catholics, parting amiably with Glenn.

"The church had grown to 12 members," Glenn remembered, "and these were the most faithful. We had grounded what we were doing on them. These are times when you learn the power of prayer."

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Luck--or the Holy Spirit--again intervened. A couple from Denver, Stu and Elaine Greer, called. The Greers, conservative Baptists who had moved into the Manchester area to do "missions work," had learned of Glenn's name from a friend.

"It was the work of God," Glenn said later, "because these people were just like clock-work. The church was down and they moved in and the work never missed a lick."

A couple of others joined and the church had regained in a week the nucleus it had lost. Since that time about a year ago, the church has added 20, including those by baptism, for a membership of 32 and is entirely indigenous, Glenn says.

At first, he tried to find Southern Baptists. But he never located any "who were not involved in other churches in the area. And we make no attempts to proselytize. There are too many others who have no affiliation."

That didn't make those lonely Sunday mornings, when Glenn was preaching only to his wife, any more satisfying. But looking back, he believes he's taken the right course, even if it seemed fruitless at times.

"Sometimes, you do everything you've been taught and nothing works," he said.

The pace is snail-like...If we had been impatient, if we'd not been willing to stay with it, we would have been out of here a long time ago.

"Now we have 40-45 attending on Sundays; we're trying to begin new work in other areas. Our emphasis for the year is building a strong foundation and strengthening our base,

"All that's possible because we've had the freedom to work as the Holy Spirit directs."

Maybe luck had nothing to do with it, after all.

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Adapted from the April 1977 issue of World Mission Journal

(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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Cooperative Program Shows
No Gain in February

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NASHVILLE (BP)--February receipts of the national Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program registered virtually no increase over February of 1976, but the receipts are running over nine percent ahead of last year after the first five months of the 1976-77 fiscal year.

State Baptist conventions, which receive state Cooperative Program receipts from SBC churches, forwarded \$4,484,795 for worldwide SBC mission causes in February--only a little over one half of a percent more than February, 1976.

The national Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified budget, has collected \$21,741,253 during the first five months, 9.06 percent ahead of \$19,935,028 at the same point last year. Receipts were running 11.51 percent ahead after four months but dipped 2.45 percentage points after the virtual standstill in February, according to the financial planning office of the SBC Executive Committee.

Total SBC receipts, including the \$21,741,253 Cooperative Program figure and another \$21,903,227 in designated contributions, amount to \$43,644,480--a 7.26 percent increase over the \$40,691,654 given last year.

The designated receipts alone show a 5.52 percent increase over \$20,756,626 given in the first five months of the 1975-76 year.



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Anita Bryant's Anti-Gay Stance Causes Cancellation

By Adon Taft

MIAMI BEACH (BP)--Singer Anita Bryant's vehement anti-gay rights activities have cost her a potentially lucrative job hosting a daytime television sewing show, but she's been offered a consolation prize.

The show's chief sponsor--the Singer Company--gave her a top-of-the-line, electronic "Athena" sewing machine, valued at \$1,300, and Singer vice president Edward Trevorrow said his firm won't ask for the machine's return, even though Miss Bryant's television contract has been cancelled.

She said she will return the machine anyway. "It would be the only honest thing to do," she added.

At a press conference in her spacious Miami Beach home, she charged that the cancellation was "blacklisting.... I have been blacklisted for exercising the right of a mother to defend her children, and all children, against their being recruited by homosexuals," she said.

Miss Bryant has been spearheading a petition drive exhorting the Metro Commission to revoke a month-old ordinance prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals.

Singer and the film company making the series pilot decided they would prefer a hostess whose activities were less controversial. The telegram cancelling the contract cited the "extensive national publicity arriving from the controversial political activities" Miss Bryant has engaged in.

The show is planned to be a talk show with an emphasis on sewing, fashion and arts and crafts. "We want this to be a pleasant show," said Trevorrow. "We'd like to have as little difficulty as possible in any direction."

Miss Bryant said the move had dashed a lifelong dream "to have a television series of my own to entertain and present wholesome subjects to my fellow Americans." She said the cancellation was a complete surprise. She had been rehearsing songs for the pilot and practicing sewing on the new machine, which has 24 automatic stitches and a buttonhole maker.

Miss Bryant's husband and business manager, Bob Green, said she had been offered "thousands of dollars" to make the pilot film and "hundreds of thousands of dollars" for the television series, which was expected to run three-to-five years. He said he is discussing a possible breach-of-contract suit with his lawyer.

Despite this setback, she said she is undaunted in her fight to have homosexuals "keep their perversions in the privacy of their home." She said she will continue her fight in Dade County and expects to launch a national campaign to stop a similar bill introduced this month in the U. S. Congress.

"I am accountable to God first," said Miss Bryant, a Southern Baptist. "Those who do not share in my conviction may continue to blacklist my talent, but with God's help, they can never blacken my name."

Miss Bryant also does commercials for the Florida Citrus Commission and First Federal Savings and Loan. Both organizations have said they have no plans to cancel her contracts, although they have been besieged by letters from homosexuals and their sympathizers urging the cancellation of the contracts. Similar letters have gone to the Orange Bowl Committee because she has done the television commentary on the Orange Bowl Parade.

Author of 'Roots' Expounds
Basic Biblical Concepts

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--Black people in the United States are among the last ethnic groups to be assimilated into American culture, but this process is now rapidly becoming a reality, according to Alex Haley, author of the book "Roots."

In spite of the progress of blacks in recent years, Haley charged that racial problems in many segments of American society are worse than before the Civil Rights Movement. Especially is this true in prison and jail populations and in employment opportunities, he said.

The Civil Rights Movement in America is entering a new phase for black people, he said. This is a period of pride in their African heritage, similar to the pride of other ethnics in their European roots, he indicated.

At a sell-out luncheon in the ballroom of the prestigious National Press Club in the nation's capital, Haley entranced his audience by an account of his father, who rose from a Tennessee sharecropper to become a college professor. In telling the story, he illustrated basic biblical concepts of providence, responsibility and the value of human life.

Haley, whose book and record-smashing 12-hour television series based on it are having a dramatic impact on America, is rapidly becoming a living symbol of the hopes, ambitions and potentials of black people.

The television show, "Roots", based on Haley's book which traced his mother's family back to pre-slavery days in Africa, topped all previous television records including "Gone With the Wind." The show captured over 130 million viewers.

The author was asked how much control or direction he provided for such an achievement. He replied that such an effect of a book or of a television program could not be planned.

"I feel that it was meant to be," he said.

"No individual nor any collection of people could sit down with whatever expertise and predictably create something that would cause that galvanic a response of a whole nation in the space of eight nights," he speculated.

He then explained that his belief was based on what he had heard his grandmother say in earlier years--"The Lord may not come when you expect him, but he will always be on time."

Haley's father grew up on a Tennessee sharecropper farm in the first decade of the Twentieth Century, when the value of a black child was based on field work rather than on education. Nevertheless, he was the only one of a family of eight children who was encouraged to finish the eighth grade, go away from home and get his high school and college education.

Enduring almost impossible hardships, but with the help of a scholarship provided by a wealthy person, the poor sharecropper achieved the impossible for a black man in his day. From the help that was provided to his father and from his dogged determination, Haley drew two morals:

1. "Those of us who have need of help, if we get the help, have a mandate to do the very utmost that we can do to achieve the very fullest potential of which we are capable," and

2. "Those of us who have been blessed with the position to give help have a mandate to give it to other people, knowing that we are investing in the most powerful source there is for reaping benefit and that is in another human being."

Haley illustrated the value of every person regardless of status or ethnic background by recounting the baby-naming ceremony in the African tribe from which he was descended. The naming of a child was an eight-day ritual at the end of which the father, in the presence of the villagers, lifted up the infant and whispered in his ear his new name before announcing it to the people.

"Thus it was the first time the name had ever been spoken as the child's name, for the people felt that each human being should be the first to know who he was," he said.

Then that night the father would take the baby out under the moon and stars and hold him up to face the heavens. He said softly to the newborn infant, "Behold the only thing greater than yourself."

"This," Haley said, "is a symbol of the potential of all of us in this country."

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Missionary to Malaysia
Dies of Heart Attack

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3/1/77

KUCHING, SARAWAK, Malaysia--Southern Baptist Missionary G. Harold Clark, 58, died at his home here Feb. 28 after suffering a heart attack.

Mr. and Mrs. Clark were appointed as missionaries in 1954 and have served since 1956 in Malaysia, where he has been a general evangelist. In addition to pastoral duties he had preached in revival meetings, spoken in youth camps and served on the executive committee of the Baptist association which he helped form. He also had served on a number of committees of Malaysia Mission (Organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Malaysia).

Before going to Malaysia, he served as pastor of the Richland Baptist Church, near Cynthiana, Ky.; Demossville (Ky.) Baptist Church; Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Demossville; Fairview Baptist Church, Ooltewah, Tenn.; and Krum (Tex.) Baptist Church.

A native of Christopher, Ill., Clark graduated from high school in nearby Benton, worked for firms there for seven years, and then joined the U. S. Army. While serving in the Army during World War II, he helped organize a Baptist church in the Philippines.

Clark is survived by his wife, the former Anna Evanos, and one daughter, Rebecca Ann, both of Kuching; one brother, Virgil Clark of Terre Haute, Ind.; and one sister, Agnes (Mrs. Fred) Bundy of Benton, Ill.

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Baptist Computer
Uses 'Bad' Language

Baptist Press
3/1/77

ATLANTA (BP)--The computer didn't cuss, but it used bad language nevertheless.

In a mailing to the chairmen of deacons in more than 30,000 Southern Baptist churches from the denomination's Home Mission Board in Atlanta, the computer addressed all the letters: "Chairman, Board of Deacons."

A flurry of calls and letters from upset persons let the agency know deacons were not members of a "board." They did not have ultimate responsibility for the church. They did not direct. They did see their role as servants of the church.

It was then that the Home Mission Board staff realized the computer had not been taught theologically correct language. The staff does agree, deacons are a ministering body serving Christ in the church--not directors.

Because of the blooper, Bob Bingham, director of the board's services section, hasn't decided if the computer's mouth will be washed out or not, but at least it will be taught a few less words when addressing deacons.

With recent trends, will the next assignment be to teach the computer non-sexist language? You know, like "chairperson."

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Valentine Honored, Ugandan
'Terrorist' Acts Protested

FORT WORTH (BP)--The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, in its annual workshop here, heard protests over "terror in Uganda," explored the relationship between evangelism and social action, discussed diverse social issues, and presented its 1977 Distinguished Service Award.

Foy D. Valentine of Nashville, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission, received the award for "consistently and courageously . . . advocat(ing) the cause of applied Christianity."

Valentine, former director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, was described by Texas Baptist President James Harris of Fort Worth as a man "who's paid the price" as a pioneer in race relations and other areas of Christian action.

"Terrorist actions" by President Idi Amin of Uganda came under fire from two workshop speakers, U. S. Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R.-Ore.) and Stanley Mooneyham, president of World Vision International.

Hatfield said he is working with the U. S. State Department to bring the weight of world opinion to bear on Amin as he did when dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn was being detained by Russian Communists. He described Amin as "a madman" with "psychotic tendencies."

Mooneyham, who had met with the late Anglican Archbishop Janani Luwum, whom news reports have said Amin murdered, said he believes Amin did kill Luwum. He said a letter Luwum and 18 bishops were planning to present to Amin protesting his abuse of human rights "led to his (Luwum's) death."

He urged Christians to send "letters of loving, prayerful support" to the Church of Uganda, Box 14123, Kampala, Uganda.

In confronting the relationship between evangelism and social action, L. L. Morriss, evangelism director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said, "We have one Savior and one purpose but different gifts to carry out a common commission. Your intense interest in ethics is because you first of all were evangelized."

James Dunn, director of the Texas Christian Life Commission, said the conference helped to bridge an unfortunate gap that has developed in the minds of some Christians concerning evangelism and social action.

"It can have far-reaching impact on one of the most significant issues in Christian ministry," he said.

Southwestern Baptist Seminary Professor William Estep of Fort Worth blamed the false division partly on "the liberal theological foundations of the social gospel which was substituted for the evangelism of the New Testament."

Another speaker, Culbert Rutenber, professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, said, "Jesus identified with the poor and the lame. Evangelism and social action go hand in hand."

Author Elton Trueblood, stressing the need for churches to express vital concern for both human need and Biblical evangelism, said "You cannot be a Christian alone. The phrase 'one another' is like a thread that binds together the New Testament."

Sen. Hatfield told how, in the tumultuous world of politics, he applies Christian ethics to such problems as world hunger and oppression of the poor. His overall solution: "Alleviate the sin problem."

"The world produces enough food. It's not a problem of underproduction but of distribution, not a question of need as much as a question of greed," he said.

Civil rights has undergone drastic changes since the days of angry people wanting to burn cities a decade ago, said another speaker, Bill Lawson, pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, Houston.

"Minority groups are saying, 'What I want is not to sit at someone's lunch counter, but to belong,'" said Lawson.

He urged churches to befriend "the little people," or there will always be overlords abusing underdogs while church members sit singing hymns.

Lawson said the United States once set standards and forced them on people, but "now we recognize that we're a nation made up of the sons and daughters of Africans, the sons and daughters of Aztecs and the females of our society."

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Child Care Executives
Elect George Norton

Baptist Press
3/1/77

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C. (BP)--George Norton, superintendent of the Baptist Home For Children, Jacksonville, Fla., was elected president of the Southern Baptist child care executives organization here.

The election came at the annual meeting of the organization at which child care executives from around the nation heard a series of speakers deal with child care concerns.

Other officers are first vice president, Bill Amos, executive director, Kentucky Baptist Board of Child Care, Middletown, Ky.; second vice president, Howard Meyer, superintendent of the Missouri Baptist Children's Home, Bridgeton, Mo.; secretary-treasurer, Tom Collier, superintendent of the Alabama Baptist Children's Home, Troy, Ala.; and historian, Roger Williams, director of the eastern area for the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc., Thomasville.

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