



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 9, 1977

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Some Missionaries to Leave Ethiopia, Others to Stay

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)--Two Southern Baptist missionary couples, two missionary journeymen and one volunteer couple will be leaving Ethiopia in the near future because of unsettled conditions.

Five other missionary families will remain in Ethiopia until a July 11 meeting with Davis L. Saunders, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for eastern and southern Africa. Three missionary families on furlough will delay returning to Ethiopia until after the July meeting, and another missionary couple who, not yet arrived for work, will be reassigned.

Saunders said the evacuation was because of inconvenience and the inability to work effectively. "The families do not express any sense of danger," he added.

The decisions were made individually at a May 3-5 meeting of all Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

"Evacuation of those planning to leave will be orderly," Saunders said. "They are planning to leave by commercial airline and will not attempt to move any household goods out of the country with them."

Missionary couples leaving include Mr. and Mrs. Ron D. Bodenhamer of Missouri. They will go to Nairobi, Kenya, after June 2 when school will be out. The Bodenhamers expect to be reassigned to another country. They are both from Missouri.

The Donald Kirklands will also leave Ethiopia. Kirkland, pilot for the Cessna 185 airplane which belongs to the organization of missionaries there, hopes to fly the plane to Nairobi. His family will follow by commercial airline.

Permission to take the plane from the country has been obtained, but the plane must still be documented, Saunders said. The United States State Department is helping obtain documentation. The date for the Kirklands' exit has not been set. He is from Florida. She is from Georgia.

Both missionary journeymen in the country will leave about May 20. Larry E. Witten of Kentucky has been recommended for reassignment in Malawi, pending that government's approval. Cynthia Jane Lumpkin of Tennessee will return to the United States, having completed her two-year assignment. A journeyman candidate, Ricky Owens of Texas, was scheduled to arrive in Ethiopia this summer but is expected to be reassigned to Tanzania upon successful completion of the training period.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Mason of Florida, who are serving as volunteers with the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries, expect to leave Ethiopia about May 20 and arrive in the U. S. around June 1. Mason has been business manager for the Baptist mission in Ethiopia.

The five families not leaving immediately will come to Nairobi July 11 for an agricultural missions conference. They will meet with Saunders at that time for further plans, he said.

Those staying include Mr. and Mrs. V. Lynn Groce of Missouri and Florida; Dr. and Mrs. Samuel R. J. Cannata Jr. of Texas and Mississippi; Dr. and Mrs. Dale E. Beighle, both of Kentucky; Dr. and Mrs. Jerry P. Bedsoie of Alabama and Missouri; and Mr. and Mrs. R. Clifford Staton Jr., both of North Carolina.

The Charles A. Hamptons of Arkansas, who had been scheduled for English-language work in Ethiopia, will be reassigned to another country. They have not yet left the U. S.

Three missionary families are currently on furlough and will remain in the U. S. at least until August. They are Mr. and Mrs. Raymond V. Lindholm, both of California; Mr. and Mrs. William D. Curp, both of Missouri; and Mr. and Mrs. Jim K. Maroney, both of Texas.

During recent weeks Southern Baptist missionaries, some on the advice of the Ethiopian government, moved their families from rural areas where they were doing missions work to the capital city of Addis Ababa.

Four missionaries have been arrested and detained during the past month. Cannata was detained 16 days on a firearms technicality, and released. Groce, Beighle and Bedsole were detained for 48 hours in late April without charges.

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Baptist Work Reported
Progressing in Cuba

Baptist Press
5/9/77

RICHMOND (BP)--Baptist work is progressing in Cuba in spite of limited religious freedom, according to Baptist World Alliance (BWA) President David Y. K. Wong, who recently spent six days visiting Baptists in that country.

The Baptist layman from Hong Kong commented on conditions in Cuba during a visit to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board here.

Wong said that he and his wife were welcomed at the Havana airport by 50 to 60 Baptists who sang the hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers."

"They are not permitted to preach outside of church, so the churches are full," Wong said. "With these limitations they must use the church for three meetings on Sunday, morning prayer meetings during the week, Bible studies and prayer meetings in the evenings.

"Churches are not allowed to buy property on which to build nor to convert existing buildings into a church," he continued.

Three to four evangelistic meetings are held in each church every year, according to Wong, and last year 438 baptisms were reported in the country. There are now 227 Baptist churches with about 15,000 members, he said. Baptists in Cuba have two seminaries where, Wong said, enrollment figures were encouraging, plus two Baptist-supported camps and two homes for the aged.

Eighty percent of the Baptist churches have their own pastors, according to Wong. He said one church with 57 members has 55 who tithe (give a tenth of their earnings).

"They need material things like printing machines," including mimeograph machines, and printed materials, Wong said.

Even with the shortage of equipment and a shortage of ink, Cuban Baptists continue to mimeograph material for use in Bible study and leadership training, he said.

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Holiday Inn Cancels Rooms
For Baptist Educators

Baptist Press
5/9/77

NASHVILLE (BP)--The annual national meetings of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools (ASBCS) and the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention have been shifted from New Orleans to Mobile because the Holiday Inn-East Highrise in New Orleans cancelled previously confirmed rooms.

The ASBCS, made up of 71 Southern Baptist educational institutions from California to Virginia, will now meet in Mobile (Ala.) College, June 27-29, and the commission will meet there, June 29-30. The original dates were not changed.

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"I'm surprised at the Holiday Inn's action," declared Ben C. Fisher, executive director-treasurer of the Education Commission. "They cost us a great deal of time and money and broke a commitment with us. We had been working on this with them for a long time and had written confirmation for 100 rooms.

"In view of our past good experiences with the Holiday Inn, we were greatly disappointed at their foul-up," Fisher said. He expressed appreciation for the assistance of William K. Weaver, president of the Baptist college in Mobile, "for helping us work out arrangements on short notice" and said he was looking forward to the meeting in Mobile.

Fisher and George Capps, the commission's associate executive director, said the Holiday Inn got a new manager during the negotiations who claimed the hotel was overbooked.

"He cancelled our rooms in order to confirm rooms for the Lions International," Capps said.