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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**3 Nicaraguan Baptists Killed;
Conditions Begin to Stabilize**

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (BP)--Three Nicaraguan Baptists were listed among the dead in fighting in Masaya as conditions in this middle American country began to stabilize.

Southern Baptist Missionary Stanley D. Stamps reported by phone from Managua, Sept. 20, that the big problems now facing the country are economic ones caused by unemployment due to the shutdown of businesses and industries.

The two Southern Baptist missionary couples remaining in the country are working with Nicaraguan Baptists and other evangelicals in getting food and other needed supplies to the areas hardest hit in the fighting between rebels and government troops.

More than 4,000 families have received food and other aid from the interdenominational program through which Nicaraguan Baptists cooperate, Stamps said. Stamps, who indicated he may ask for additional Southern Baptist relief money soon, said good use has been made of a \$2,000 Foreign Mission Board relief appropriation.

Stamps said the Baptist churches in Managua have been taking up special relief offerings for the last two or three Sundays and have raised about \$500. "Please communicate to Southern Baptists that we are well and are trying to function as much as we can," he added. "We appreciate the prayer support we know we're getting."

The three Baptists killed in Masaya, one a deacon, were caught in crossfire and were not active participants in the fighting, he said.

Stamps said that Nicaraguan Baptists have churches in most of the cities where heavy fighting has occurred, but that no further word has been received of deaths of Baptists or damage to churches. "Perhaps a few other Baptists may have been wounded," he added.

One missionary couple, N. Hoyt and Marie Eudaly, left for El Salvador, Sept. 19. Their transfer to the nearby country had been planned even before fighting began in Nicaragua.

Stamps said that his family and a missionary journeyman couple, Stephens L. and Paula Baumgardner, "plan to stay on for the time being unless food supplies run out" or some other conditions make it advisable for them to leave.

Fighting between guerrillas of the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the national guardsmen of President Anastasio Somoza Jr. has been under way since Sept. 9. The president claimed Sept. 20 that the rebel offensive had been crushed.

Despite martial law and an 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew, people are visiting the Baptist Culture Center (bookstore) looking for Bibles and Bible study materials, Stamps said. Church services are continuing, with some evening activities scheduled earlier because of the curfew.

Stamps planned to cable a list of "desperately needed" medical equipment and supplies for the Baptist Hospital in Managua. Supply houses that normally provide such items have been closed because of the general strike, which still continued Sept. 20.

He said Managuans have relatively normal movement but that long-range effects of the fighting lie in the unemployment. The price of rice rose 100 percent in one week, he said. The prices of other items also are up. "It's going to be a long haul out," he said.

Wood Asks Carter Not
To Name Vatican Envoy

WASHINGTON (BP)--James E. Wood Jr. of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has called on President Jimmy Carter "to terminate the very recent practice of sending a presidential envoy to the Vatican."

Wood, the agency's executive director, specifically asked Carter not to name a successor to David M. Walters, the president's personal envoy to the Vatican.

Appointed by Carter in July, 1977, Walters resigned in August, 1978, after the death of Pope Paul and before the election of Pope John Paul I. He explained that he did so to clear the way for the appointment of a new presidential representative to the new pope.

Wood reminded Carter that at the time of Walters' appointment he had "expressed to you on behalf of eight national Baptist bodies our profound disappointment in your appointment of an envoy to the Vatican." He charged the president with raising serious constitutional questions by the appointment and that the president was showing preferential treatment to the Roman Catholic Church.

He maintained in his letter to Carter "that the Vatican can and should communicate with the U. S. government in the way any religious group communicates with it."

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Some Missionaries Leave,
Others Stay in Rhodesia

By Ruth Fowler

Baptist Press
9/21/78

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary personnel are deciding individually whether to remain in Rhodesia or leave the politically troubled area.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board supports all decisions of missionaries to leave or stay and gives the missionaries both collectively and individually the privilege of choice in dangerous situations, said Davis L. Saunders, the board's secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa.

As of Sept. 19, eight missionaries and one two-year missionary journeyman assigned to Rhodesia had decided to transfer to other countries or return home. Ten new personnel, including eight journeymen, were reassigned before ever reaching Rhodesia.

A total of 32 missionaries remained in the country at mid-September and 30 more are in the United States on furlough or leave of absence. Some of those on furlough plan to return as scheduled and others are waiting to see how the situation develops before making decisions.

Among those currently in Rhodesia are missionary physician Maurice L. Randall and dentist John W. Monroe, who continue to visit Sanyati Hospital two or three times a week. Southern Baptist missionary personnel evacuated the Sanyati compound in June following the stabbing death of missionary Archie G. Dunaway Jr. by guerrillas.

A letter from Rhodesia told Saunders that the only persons being admitted to the hospital were obstetric patients and the clinic load has declined. Attempts are made to provide alternative care for the persons from the Sanyati and Gokwe areas needing surgery.

Guerrilla activities have become more open in the townships of Rhodesia and missionaries are taking appropriate precautions, the letter added. The attitude is that missionaries will carry on their work as long as possible, Saunders said.

Classes are still being taught at the seminary near Gwelo, but missionaries travel 14 miles into town to spend the night. Also continuing are the Baptist Bible Way Correspondence School in Bulawayo and the Theological Education by Extension courses based in Gwelo.

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Baptist publications work is continuing in Bulawayo, and the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries is maintaining offices plus a mass media ministry in Salisbury.

Throughout Bulawayo, Gwelo, Gatooma and Salisbury, evangelism efforts continue. Evangelists are also stationed in Triangle, Fort Victoria and Hartley, and evangelist missionaries on furlough are planning to return to Plumtree. Pastors and other African leaders are continuing services in most churches in the other areas.

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Lebanese Baptists Express
Pessimism About Camp David

By Frances Fuller

Baptist Press
9/21/78

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Pessimism and protest characterized the response in Lebanon to the agreements signed at Camp David, Md.

(The Lebanese Baptist response contrasted with an earlier report of generally favorable reaction from Baptists in Israel.)

Several Baptist leaders expressed the opinion both before and after the conference that Camp David meant nothing to Lebanon. "Our war will go on," they said.

A pastor and denominational leader said, "Israel has not given up the West Bank and never will, and therefore, there will not be peace. Without the West Bank, where can the Palestinians go?"

A Baptist woman said, "It's great for Egypt, but it doesn't help us."

A missionary observed: "It's good but incomplete. Some of the biggest questions are still unsolved."

"Ike," Lebanon's only English-language paper, noted during the conference that success at Camp David would make Sadat a great hero among the Arabs and usher in a period of unprecedented American influence in the Middle East. After the meeting "Ike" declared that the accord had split the Arab world and thereby split Lebanon more severely.

Newspapers published by right-wing Christian groups tended to report the details of the agreements and speeches without comment.

On the west side of Beirut, a Muslim and leftist oriented area, there was a one-day strike of protest and demonstrators burned piles of automobile tires in the streets.

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Frances Fuller is the Southern Baptist missionary press representative for Lebanon.

NOTE: Baptist Press mailed an Israeli Baptist reaction story Sept. 20, 1978.

Cleanup Begins After
Hurricane Hits Belize

Baptist Press
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BELIZE (BP)--Three feet of water remained standing on the first floor of the Baptist church in Belize as cleanup operations began in this small British colony hit by Hurricane Greta.

One church member's house was destroyed by the Sept. 18 storm, Otis W. Brady, Southern Baptist missionary in Belize City, said in a Sept. 19 conversation with a ham radio operator.

Brady purchased food for distribution to the hurricane victims, but is not requesting relief funds until he and others assess the damages.

No deaths were reported, but extensive mud and water damage resulted. Cars were swamped with mud, and trees were downed by the winds, he said. Before the hurricane struck about 6:30 p.m., Brady and his family left their home and sought more substantial shelter on higher ground.

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Africa's 'Bad Press' Not Valid
Say Mission Board Secretaries

By Ruth Fowler

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Press coverage of the political turmoil in some African nations has caused many to forget that a large number of African countries are stable and responsive to the gospel, two officials of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board have declared.

John E. Mills, secretary for West Africa, and Davis L. Saunders, secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa, especially want to get this point across to those now committing their lives to mission service.

West Africa, Mills said, is experiencing a period of great receptiveness to the gospel. But mission volunteers for that area have declined. He attributes this, at least in part, to the "bad press" Africa is receiving.

"All of Africa is not in political turmoil," said Mills. "The last politically connected fighting in West Africa was a civil war in Nigeria in 1970. Even the military control of Ghana recently changed hands without bloodshed."

Two of the nations of West Africa, Liberia and Nigeria, have Baptist heads of state and missionaries are welcomed in many nations.

"When changes of government have occurred in recent times, they have been peaceful," Mills continued. "And many nations have had very stable leadership, the same leadership, for more than 15 years. West Africa is working through the problems of new independence."

And the stability of some nations in Eastern and Southern Africa equals that of West Africa, according to Saunders. He pointed to the peaceful political situation in Kenya following the death of President Jomo Kenyatta. Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi also have stable governments and thriving mission work.

"There has been a dramatic drop in the number of missionaries willing to go at a time when West Africa is the most responsive," Mills said. "If we had the missionaries, we could make a real impact."

There are only 134 missionaries assigned to Nigeria, the oldest active SBC mission field, where once there were 254. Mills said there are more baptisms and church members in Nigeria than ever before and the sacrifice of more than 130 years is finally coming to fruition.

"However," Mills said, "the harvest is great and we do not have the missionaries to reap what is ready--a crop that was planted at great price."

In the five French-speaking countries of West Africa a few couples have been studying the people, establishing work, finding out what evangelism methods are successful. "Now if we had about 50 people to go into each of these countries we could really make an impact," Mills said.

"The people of Africa are wanting a change," Mills explained. "Even though it is politically peaceful there is economic turmoil that makes the people dissatisfied with the old way."

Doors are also open to mission work in new parts of Eastern and Southern Africa. Southern Baptist missionaries have just entered Rwanda and Bophuthatswana and the board has approved beginning work in Mauritius and Burundi.

Both areas of Africa still list preacher-evangelists as their primary personnel need.



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