

(BP)**-- BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 3, 1978

78-161

McDonald's, Kroc Deny
Gifts to Satanic Church

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Unfounded rumors that McDonald's Corporation founder and chief executive officer Ray Kroc contributes 20 percent of his income to the Church of Satan continue to plague the international hamburger franchise and frustrate Southern Baptist newspaper editors who are trying to avoid another Madalyn Murray O'Hair fiasco.

In that one, church members flooded the Federal Communications Commission in protest of Miss O'Hair's attempt to remove religious broadcasting from the airwaves. In truth, she never attempted it, but denominational newspapers could not squelch the rumor.

It appears the rumor machine is again geared for a high speed chase, and concerned, but unsuspecting, church members are going for the ride.

According to several variations of the rumor, Kroc made the contributions public on either the Merv Griffin or Phil Donahue shows, CBS' 60 Minutes, the Today Show, or in the National Enquirer.

Complete transcripts from the Today Show and Phil Donahue reveal no such statement. A letter from Don Hewitt, executive producer of 60 Minutes, says no connection between Kroc and the Church of Satan has ever been mentioned on 60 Minutes. "In fact..." the letter said, "Mr. Kroc's name has never been mentioned on 60 Minutes nor has the Church of Satan ever been mentioned (if there is, indeed, such a church)."

Local managers, owners and advertisers also denied Kroc had made the statement on the Merv Griffin Show. Copies of the National Enquirer showed no mention of the rumor.

Kroc himself, worth about \$350 million, depending on the stock market on a given day, said in a letter to the Texas Baptist Standard, "I was absolutely appalled to learn of the false allegation that my personal funds, and those of McDonald's Corporation, had been donated to the Church of Satan. Such a donation would be contrary to the corporate contributions policy of McDonald's and to my personal beliefs."

A complete listing of McDonald's corporate contributions for 1977 shows \$884,672 dispersed to civic, cultural, health, social welfare, economic development, environmental and educational organizations. It shows nothing to any Church of Satan.

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Baptist Leaders See Upward
Swing For British Churches

Baptist Press
10/3/78

LONDON (BP)--The past two years may have seen the start of dramatic change in the lives of the churches in England.

It looks as if the churches may at last be emerging from the end of the long dark tunnel that stretches back to before World War I.

That's the view of two men close to the church scene in all denominations, Baptist Union Secretary David Russell and evangelism specialist Lewis Misselbrook, as quoted by the "Baptist Times," London Baptist newspaper.

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S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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"It is my judgment that the state of the churches in the United Kingdom now is much better, much more optimistic than it has been for some long time," Russell told 375 Southern Baptists from the United States, in England for a World Evangelism Foundation-sponsored Partnership Mission with 53 British Baptist churches.

"I have detected, even during the past year, unmistakable signs of a new optimism, hope, faith and expectation."

Misselbrook declared that "during the past two or three years, it seems as if God is giving a new spirit to His people.

"Five years ago, if you had looked at our churches you would not have been able to find more than half a dozen which were growing and where the people were willing to talk about Christ and about their faith.

"Now many more of our people are becoming eager to talk about him--and well over 150 of our churches are actually growing. There is a groundswell of Christian faith and Christian optimism."

British and American coordinators of the Partnership Mission--which included about 350 American lay persons--reported about 500 professions of faith in Jesus Christ, over 500 rededications of lives to Christ, and about 10 decisions for special Christian service in the eight-day effort.

World Evangelism Foundation, although not a part of the Southern Baptist Convention structure, is made up totally of Southern Baptists in staff and participants. The latter are largely lay persons who give their vacation time and pay their own way to participate in the Partnership Missions.

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Commission Stretches Funds
Six Times in Free Programs

Baptist Press
10/3/78

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission has turned \$3 million into nearly \$18.5 million by providing "no-cost" programming to 2,736 radio and television stations throughout the United States and other countries.

For the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, the commission--operating on a \$3 million budget from the denomination's Cooperative Program--received \$18,480,454 in free air time for its eight regular radio programs.

Paul M. Stevens, commission president, said "In 1941, when the Radio Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention began its ministry with 'The Baptist Hour,' they broadcast on 17 radio stations and were given approximately \$10,000 worth of free air time."

Stevens, who has been pushing for substantial increases in denominational funding so the commission can purchase air time, said a religious broadcaster who measures himself by the free time he secures is "clearly missing the mark."

"We don't evaluate our results in the form of cash flow, but in the lives of people who have been touched by our programs," he said. "We are a mission agency, an arm of the church, reaching into areas where churches would be locked out."

Stevens said using free time limits the degree of evangelism that can be presented. "Wouldn't it be great if the commission could present its same quality programming--more evangelical than ever before--in paid programming time?" he said. "America would be greatly blessed."

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Missionary Secures
Refugee Federal Aid

DENVER (BP)--A Southern Baptist missionary who helped ensure continued Social Service payment for some 680 Indochinese refugees in Colorado, says his work has just begun.

David Miller, Christian social ministries missionary and director of the Brentwood Baptist Center, Denver, was among citizens outraged when a Social Service announcement stated that federal funds to aid the refugees were to be cut off.

Miller and Bill Cartee, Mission Service Corps worker at Brentwood Center, began an immediate campaign through the state's news media to restore the money.

The critical status of the refugees was publicized over television stations and in newspapers across the state. Gov. Richard Lamm called a weekend conference to resolve the situation and announced that federal funds totaling over \$700,000 would be available for direct aid for refugee families.

Miller said that among refugees affected were members of the Lao Evangelical Baptist congregation which meets at Brentwood Center.

Brentwood Center has become the primary distribution point for clothing, food and other contributions in metro Denver, including 150 bags of groceries from the Denver Post newspaper. English and reading classes are planned to help refugees make quicker adjustment to the American culture.

"These people are talented and skilled," Miller said. "But it's tough to make it in a culture without knowing the language or being able to read it. They need time. They aren't lazy! They want to work. We want to give them the time they need."

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Leeper Expelled From Turkey;
Appeal Made to Envoy in U. S.

Baptist Press
10/3/78

ANKARA, Turkey (BP)--James F. Leeper, an English-language pastor in Ankara for more than 12 years, has been forced to leave Turkey after being arrested following revocation of his residence permit.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, under whose auspices Leeper has worked in Turkey since 1966, has appealed the action to the Turkish ambassador to the United States, Melih Esenbel.

Leeper has gone to Germany pending outcome of the case, but his wife Jean and their four children, who have separate passports and residence permits, remain in Ankara. The expulsion order apparently does not apply to them, said J. D. Hughey, the Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. The Leepers are the only Southern Baptist representatives in the country.

Hughey explained that Leeper has been on tourist status much of the time he's been in Turkey and has had to leave the country periodically to retain his tourist classification. His last residence permit was granted in October 1977, retroactive to Aug. 2 of that year, but this permit was revoked in May 1978.

Leeper was asked to leave the country May 30, with no explanation of the action, Hughey said. The pastor returned as a tourist June 2 and again requested a residence permit, believing that lower officials were responsible for his expulsion and that it would not be upheld by the Turkish government.

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He was arrested Sept. 22 and imprisoned for a brief time before being released and allowed to remain in Turkey until Sept. 29. His unspecified time in jail "was like sleeping on a park bench," Leeper said.

"We do not believe the expulsion of Mr. Leeper has the approval of the highest officials of your government," Hughey wrote Ambassador Esenbel. The letter asked the ambassador to "bring this matter to the attention of the prime minister, who has revealed his commitment to freedom."

Hughey said that while in Germany, Leeper plans to apply for a Turkish visa and also make decisions about where he would work in case he is not allowed to re-enter Turkey. In Ankara, Leeper has served as pastor of Galatian Baptist Church, a congregation composed primarily of U. S. military personnel.

The Leepers were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1965 as the first representatives of the board to Turkey. He was born in Houston, Texas, but grew up in Dayton, Ky. Mrs. Leeper is the former Jean Davis of Battle Creek, Mich. Leeper was pastor of an English-language church in Bamberg, Germany, for three years before appointment by the board.

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Equip Laity for Growth
Conference Leaders Say

Baptist Press
10/3/78

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Equipping the laity is essential to church growth, according to more than 20 Southern Baptist leaders who led the second annual Church Growth Dynamics Institute at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Paul Benjamin, director of the National Church Growth Research Center in Washington, D. C., told the more than 400 participants that people are tired of letting the pastor make all the church decisions. "I believe they want a real ministry," he said, "one that they can be included in and have some control over. I believe the people want to be equipped to teach others about Christ.

"We tell people they must minister if the world is going to be won to Christ. But, we don't tell them how. We ought to be teaching them more of the Bible, and we ought to be teaching them to teach.

"I am convinced that people are more winnable today than at any other time in history and if we can get back to these biblical principles, then we will see great church growth."

E. Dale Brister, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Atwater, Calif., said growth in his church can be attributed to five things: strong emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit; strong preaching and teaching on the reliability of the scriptures; a discipleship program for the men and women of the church; a pastor's doctrine class for new members, and a strong evangelistic outreach program.

Pastors of other growing churches cited reasons for their growth. Among them were an emphasis on building up young people "but not at the expense of the older Christians," and an emphasis on summer programs. "Summer should not be a time of sluggishness, but our time of greatest activity," said Wilfred Chung, pastor of the First Chinese Baptist Church in Sacramento, Calif.

Willie Gaines, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, San Jose, Calif., told the gathering: "There is no magic to church growth. It is primarily due to a matter of attitude, both on the pastor's part and on the part of the congregation. If the pastor takes the initiative in attitude, then his people will soon reflect it."

John Hatch, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lakewood, Tacoma, Wash., said his church is committed to "growth by conversion." "This kind of growth is the most highly prized," he explained, "because it pushes forward the kingdom of God and adds new members to His family."

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