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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Peter Vins, Other Baptists  
 Face New Soviet Pressure

WASHINGTON (BP)--Peter Vins, 22, currently serving a one-year term in a Soviet labor camp, may face seven years imprisonment and five years of internal exile, according to a report from the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism at Keston, England.

Vins, a dissident Baptist, is in a labor camp in Western Ukraine serving a sentence for "parasitism." The reason for the threatened additional punishment is that he allegedly distributed anti-Soviet propaganda in the camp.

Keston received the report from Igor Pomerantsev, a close friend of Vins, who has recently emigrated from the USSR. He also said that Vins has declared a hunger strike, which would place his life in danger, since he suffers from a stomach disorder and has had a part of his intestines removed.

He is the son of Georgi Vins, another imprisoned dissident Baptist leader.

The Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism has also reported several other recent cases of official discrimination against Soviet Baptists.

Lyubov Sergeeva joined an unregistered Baptist church after her marriage. Her husband sued for divorce on grounds that her religious views were incompatible with his non-religious stance. He then gained custody of their children. She now claims that he is not caring properly for the children but has been unable to get a reversal of the court decision.

In another case, the centre reported that a former Communist Party secretary, Vladimir Denkovich, who was converted and became a Baptist, was sent to a psychiatric hospital for observation because he was "dissatisfied with Soviet power."

The son of a Baptist prisoner, Viktor Dubovik, was beaten up at school by an older pupil and spent over two weeks in the hospital as a result. Prior to this incident, two anti-religious lectures had been given at the school in which Dubovik was specifically attacked. Dubovik was later removed from his labor camp and sent to an unknown destination for internal exile.

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Washburn To Head Golden  
 Gate Music Program

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MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--S. Alfred Washburn, associate professor of church music and organ at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will join the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Jan. 1.

Washburn will serve as associate professor of church music and coordinate the total church music program at the Mill Valley, Calif., campus, according to W. Morgan Patterson, dean of academic affairs.

Before joining New Orleans Seminary, Washburn served as instructor of piano, organ and church music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; adjunct professor of church music at Southern Seminary; editor of beginner and primary music materials at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; and organist, choir director and minister

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of music for churches in Florida, Kentucky and Louisiana.

A native of Shelby, N.C., Washburn attended Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., where he earned the bachelor of music degree. He later earned bachelor of church music, master of church music and doctor of musical arts degrees from Southern Seminary.

He has had extensive experience as a writer and conductor and leader of music workshops.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Pope John Paul II, formerly Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Cracow, Poland, was elected by the Roman Catholic College of Cardinals, Oct. 16, to succeed John Paul I, who died after 34 days as spiritual leader of more than 600-million Catholics. C. Brownlow Hastings, assistant director of the department of interfaith witness at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, reflects on what the election of the Polish cardinal may mean to Catholics and Baptists. Dr. Hastings has covered Baptist-Catholic relations on special assignment for Baptist Press.

Polish Pope Supported  
Evangelical Efforts

By C. Brownlow Hastings

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Roman Catholic College of Cardinals has surprised the world again.

Much speculation at the conclave in Vatican City centered around the possibility of the election of a non-Italian to succeed Pope John Paul I. No one had any cardinal from the Iron Curtain countries on their lists of favorite candidates, but the cardinals elected Karol Wojtyla of Poland.

Suddenly, there's a whole new religious ballgame in Italy, Poland, other communist-controlled countries, even the world. One Italian communist leader said, "The umbilical cord of Italy to the Vatican has now been cut."

Maybe. But at least the Vatican will now have to adjust to its first non-Italian pope in over 450 years. Pope John Paul II brings something old and something new to the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church. Something old: a very conservative stance in his personal theology and his desire for discipline and loyalty to the church. Something new: lifelong experience of helping the church survive in a land grievously wrecked by war and dominated by an anti-religious regime.

Fresh from the close of a highly successful 10-day, history-making preaching tour of six cities in Poland, Evangelist Billy Graham issued a statement through his Minneapolis headquarters.

"Pope John Paul II has the greatest opportunity to make a contribution to the spiritual development within the Roman Catholic Church and to the evangelical resurgence throughout the world. He also has a tremendous opportunity to make a contribution to world peace.

"The third evangelistic sermon I ever preached in a Roman Catholic Church was in his church in Cracow," Graham said. "I gave a public invitation to receive Christ and hundreds did. His election could be the dawning of a new era."

John Wilkes, director of European Baptist Press Service, who covered the Graham mission to Poland, said, "It was the first time in his 30 years of world-circling evangelism that the Baptist preacher from North Carolina had such a broad base of support from Roman Catholic leadership."

Graham was offered "total cooperation by both Polish cardinals"--Stefan Wyszyński, archbishop of Warsaw and primate of Poland, and former archbishop of Cracow, Karol Wojtyla, the new Pope John Paul II. However, because of the death of Pope John Paul I, neither of the cardinals was present during Graham's mission.

Elias Golonka, Southern Baptist home missionary to United Nations personnel in New York City, gives another perspective. Born in Poland of a Russian Orthodox father and a

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Roman Catholic mother, Golonka was converted in a small Baptist chapel in Poland and has maintained good communication with the Baptists there.

"Cardinal Wotjyla has been very friendly to our people in Cracow," Golonka said. "Our people talk about him as a progressive, and he is ecumenical in attitude."

Baptists in Poland number only about 2,500 baptized members in 45 churches, plus some preaching stations, Golonka said, with perhaps 6,000 adherents (family members and friends of baptized members).

Baptists before World War II numbered as many as 70,000 but they lost heavily when much of eastern Poland was partitioned into Russia.

Golonka believes the election of the Polish cardinal as pope will have a tremendous impact upon the religious situation in Poland. "But it could make it more difficult for our Baptist people because it will increase the sense of national unity centered around the Roman Catholic Church," he said.

"The church was the backbone of resistance to both the Nazis during the terrible days of occupation and the present communist regime," he said. To convert away from the Catholic Church is seen by the man in the street as a betrayal of national solidarity.

The United Evangelical Churches in Poland include Pentecostals, Evangelical Christians, Polish Free Brethren and Churches of Christ.

The new pope brings a high degree of theological scholarship to his new role. He has taught philosophy and ethics in the University of Cracow. In his travels, he has gained a speaking ability in six languages, including English. Two years ago he addressed the Eucharistic Congress of the Catholic Church in Philadelphia. He also delivered a theological lecture at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

As cardinal in Poland, he has stood firmly against communism and the state's oppressive measures. But he was more conciliatory than the primate Cardinal Wyszynski, who was exiled for three years by the government in the 1950's. One observer noted that Polish Catholic leadership has skillfully struck a delicate balance between capitulation and confrontation in co-existing with the communist regime.

As a pastor, Wotjyla easily identified with the workers and peasants in his charge, so his record must have appealed to the cardinals from Third World countries.

Baptists can take heart from his strong stand during the Second Vatican Council for the Decree on Religious Liberty. In his first sermons as pope, he has pledged to defend those liberties worldwide and in general to continue the renewal and reforms launched by Vatican II.

It remains to be seen how sharp is the knife he may use to cut political ties in many countries, both Catholic and communist.

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Baptist Missionary  
To Return To Uganda

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NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--Mr. and Mrs. G. Webster Carroll, Southern Baptist missionaries to Uganda, are now in Nairobi but he plans to return to Uganda at the conclusion of a two-week leadership conference.

James E. Hampton, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's field representative for Eastern Africa, said he knows of no anti-American actions in Uganda in the past week (Oct. 9-16).

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(Ugandan President Idi Amin had been quoted in wire service reports as saying that he would retaliate against Americans living in Uganda because of President Carter's action signing a bill to prohibit U. S. trade with Uganda. The new law affects the sale of Ugandan coffee to the United States and the sale of American technological goods to Uganda.)

Hampton said the Carrolls have been in Nairobi for several days preparing for Mrs. Carroll to return to Florida for family medical reasons.

Carroll will remain in Kenya through Nov. 3 for the leadership conference for missionaries and national Baptist leaders in 10 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa.

The other missionary couple assigned to Uganda, Mr. and Mrs. James L. Rice, are on furlough in Virginia.

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Five Missionaries Return  
To Beirut; Fighting Subsides

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BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Five Southern Baptist missionary personnel who evacuated to Jordan during the recent intense fighting in Beirut have returned, as the battle-worn city once again has become relatively quiet.

Back in Beirut are the Mack L. Sacco family, the James P. Craigmyles, and Russell Wayne Futrell, a missionary journeyman. The Tome R. Hayes family and the J. Wayne Fullers, who left Oct. 15, remain outside the country. Another missionary family may decide to leave if the American school which their children attend does not reopen.

In a telephone conversation with J. D. Hughey, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia, Fuller said the 11 missionaries who remained in the country were unharmed but had been confined to their homes several times.

In a letter to her daughter in the United States, Anne Hutchison McConnell, a volunteer teacher who was among those who remained in Beirut, reported periodic loss of electricity and water service. Mrs. McConnell said she slept several nights in the interior hall away from the possible path of stray bullets and broken glass.

No property damage was reported to Baptist churches but the home of one Baptist family, Dr. and Mrs. Peter J. Manoogian, was hit. Thousands are homeless from the fighting. Baptist relief efforts include distribution of food and other necessities along with rebuilding homes.

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