



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 28, 1978

78-193

**Baptists Among White House
Thanksgiving Eve Guests**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Nearly 300 religious leaders joined President and Mrs. Carter at the White House on Thanksgiving eve to hear British actor Alec McCowen recite the Gospel of Mark.

The guest list for the buffet dinner and one-man performance by McCowen included numerous Southern Baptists sprinkled in a crowd of representatives from many faiths.

The recitation of "St. Mark's Gospel," done in the King James Version on a bare stage, ranks as "an absolutely electrifying performance," said Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "The Gospel of Mark came gloriously to life. You wouldn't believe how fascinating it was. It was a prodigious feat of memory but, more important than that, it was a glorious communication of the Good News of Christ."

McCowen told the White House audience, "I feel safe. I have a president for my prompter--indeed, I believe I have nearly 300 prompters here."

President Carter told the group he had read through the Gospel of Mark the night before in anticipation of McCowen's performance, held as part of the 38th annual National Bible Week. After the party, the president left for Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, where 33 members of the Carter family celebrated Thanksgiving Day.

Among Southern Baptist Convention leaders invited were Porter W. Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee and Mrs. Routh; Jimmy R. Allen, president of the SBC and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lydia Williams Allen; Baker James Cauthen, executive director of the Foreign Mission Board and Mrs. Cauthen; Grady Cothen, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board and Mrs. Cothen; Russell H. Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Mrs. Dilday; Darold H. Morgan, president of the Annuity Board and Mrs. Morgan; Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission and Mrs. Valentine; and Emmanuel L. McCall, staff executive of the Home Mission Board and Mrs. McCall.

Two state Baptist convention executive directors, James Landes of Texas and Searcy S. Garrison of Georgia, and their wives, were in attendance, along with Abner V. McCall, president of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and W. Forrest Lanier, assistant to the president of Shorter College, Rome, Ga., along with their wives.

Several Southern Baptist pastors, including the president's pastor, Charles A. Trentham, and Robert Maddox, pastor of First Baptist Church, Calhoun, Ga., were also invited.

Baptist public officials on the guest list, reportedly drawn up largely by Mrs. Carter, included U. S. Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., a Conservative Baptist, and U.S. Sen. Jennings Randolph, D-W.Va., a Seventh Day Baptist.

World Opens To Evangelism

Denny Tells BWA Group

KANSAS CITY, Kans. (BP)--The world is opening up to the proclamation of the gospel Baptist World Alliance general secretary Robert S. Denny declared in his report to the annual meeting of BWA's executive committee.

Denny said he returned from an October trip to East Germany, Poland and the USSR, where he was allowed to speak clearly on evangelistic themes and even to invite converts to make professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

"Forget what you read about the necessity for underground evangelism," Denny said. "We now have the opportunity for above ground evangelism in Eastern Europe," he asserted. He also said the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the USSR has government permission to import 25,000 Bibles and 5,000 concordances. The BWA, in cooperation with the United Bible Society in Brussels, is seeking contributions of \$150,000 to buy these Scriptures. "There's no need to smuggle Bibles into Eastern Europe," he said. "Our problem is to find money to pay for those that we have permission to import."

Denny spoke also of the possibility of opening doors for the Gospel in mainland China, citing the ability of President William R. Tolbert of Liberia, a former president of BWA, to meet with a congregation of Chinese Christians in Nanking in July. He noted that Baptists in Burma, a socialist state, had baptized 6,215 converts in a single day in December, 1977, and cited a letter from Arthur Kinyanjui of Kenya, a BWA vice president, reporting 1,275 conversions in a two-week revival at Kigali, Rwanda, in June, 1978.

BWA associate secretary, C. Ronald Goulding, director of the Alliance's division of evangelism and education, said that evangelism conferences, training both ministers and laymen in evangelism, have been held in the past year in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Evangelistic services were conducted every evening during a November conference in Warsaw, Poland, and "decisions were recorded at every meeting," he said.

Charles Roselle of Nashville, Tenn., reported on a Baptist youth world conference with 1,500 young people from 36 nations, at Manila, Philippines, in July, 1978. "Never have I found youth as much interested in religion as now," said Roselle, who heads National Student Ministries, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The three-day meeting of the executive committee also heard reports from committees planning the 14th Baptist World Congress at Toronto, Canada, July 8-13, 1980, and from a long-range planning committee anticipating advances in BWA's outreach through the organization's centennial celebration in 2005.

Fred B. Rhodes, treasurer, said that income for 1978 has been below expectations but that the staff has curtailed spending so that the budget will be balanced at year's end. He said the contributions from churches and individuals usually accelerate during December. The BWA executive committee approved a 1979 operating budget of \$579,640 during its meetings last July in Manila and a relief "asking budget" of \$1,193,700.

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James Leeper Denied
Residence in Turkey

Baptist Press
11/28/78

ANKARA, Turkey (BP)--The Turkish government has announced that James F. Leeper, Southern Baptist missionary expelled from Turkey in September, will not be allowed to return to the country to live.

J. D. Hughey, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia, has made another appeal on Leeper's behalf to the Turkish ambassador to the United States. Hughey also asked that Turkey grant permission for a replacement to serve as pastor of Galatian Baptist Church, an English-language church in Ankara, if Leeper may not return.

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Leeper was given 20 days to return to Turkey and get his affairs in order. His wife and children had remained in Turkey throughout his exile from the country. He went to Germany but soon after his arrival got word of his mother's death and came to the United States. He has returned to Europe and will live there if he cannot return to Turkey.

Following a brief imprisonment, Leeper was asked to leave the country in late September. The only hint of charges made against him came in October during a meeting of Leeper and U. S. Baptist leadership with the Turkish ambassador in Washington. At that time general charges relating to witnessing practices were disclosed, but specifics have not yet been announced.

The Turkish ambassador said in the October meeting that he didn't know details of the case but understood Leeper had been charged with disseminating "religious propaganda," which, he said, violates Turkish law. He said any effort to influence people to change their religion falls under the umbrella of "religious propaganda." Leeper said it was the first time he had been informed of the charges.

In his appeal to the ambassador, Hughey pointed out that the congregation in Ankara is 12 years old and it would be a serious affront to religious liberty for the Turkish government to forbid the congregation's right to exist and to have the leadership of a pastor.

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Respond To World's Cries
Black Leader Tells Students

Baptist Press
11/28/78

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--"If the church is not concerned with the social implications of the Gospel, then it is not truly the church of God," Fred Shuttlesworth, a black leader during the 1960's civil rights movement, told students at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Preaching in chapel, the pastor of New Light Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, explained, "You must put yourselves in the shoes of those in need. Like Ezekiel, you must sit where they sit."

Calling on Christians to respond to "the world crying out," Shuttlesworth said, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ not only brings comfort to the afflicted--the Gospel must also afflict the comfortable."

Shuttlesworth, whose home was bombed and wife stabbed while he was a Birmingham, Ala. pastor during the early 1960's, told students, "God can do anything if He can find a man or woman willing to stand up for Him. Just when you think you have done all that you can, God breaks through."

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Charlie Shedd Withdraws
From Family Conference

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press
11/28/78

DALLAS (BP)--Author Charlie Shedd, who drew the fire of a Houston Baptist pastor over his statements on sexual behavior, has withdrawn as keynote speaker for the Texas Baptist Family Life Conference in March.

Shedd wrote to the Family Task Force which planned the conference: "I trust you will have a fine meeting and wish you and your fellow Baptists the best for every success now and down the road ahead.

"In South Georgia we have a benediction which I pass along to you with special good wishes from Martha and me: "May you and the Lord be getting on uncommonly good."

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James Basden, chairman of the Family Life Task Force, said Shedd had been invited to be keynote speaker for the conference because of the positive impact he has had on the lives of individuals and families through the years.

"His (Shedd's) many books have been a source of help to parents and young people. He has blessed families with his Christian approach to family crises."

Basden, director of the Texas Baptist Human Welfare Coordinating Board, added, "It is unfortunate that the present controversy may have cast a shadow over the many positive contributions he has made in the past."

In late October, the Union Baptist Association (greater Houston) adopted a resolution asking that Shedd be withdrawn as speaker because he has said there is nothing wrong with oral-genital sex in marriage.

Glynn Little, pastor of Houston's Langwood Baptist Church, who brought the resolution, contended that oral-genital sex in marriage is a perversion.

Little brought a similar resolution to the Texas Baptist state convention in Austin. Although the controversy drew widespread media coverage, the convention spent little time with it.

In lieu of Little's resolution, the messengers adopted without debate a resolution from its committee on resolutions which requested convention agencies "in all of their programming to exercise caution to assure that the emphasis of speakers who address the issue of human sexuality is positive and biblically sound."

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Blind Baby on Doorstep
Leads to Eye Ministry

Baptist Press
11/28/78

BLUE MOUNTAIN, Miss. (BP)--A blind baby girl left on the doorstep of a Southern Baptist missionary in Canton, China, began a ministry that continues today, linking Blue Mountain College to a medical missions program in Hong Kong.

The American Mo Quong Board, operated at the Baptist school in Blue Mountain, Miss., administers funds which equip and staff a mobile eye clinic in Hong Kong, finance eye operations, help a sighted Chinese girl to attend Blue Mountain College and aid in translating religious tracts and portions of the Bible into braille.

Missionary Lula Whilden found the blind baby on her doorstep in 1892, when most Chinese parents placed little value on daughters, less on those born blind.

Miss Whilden established a permanent home for blind girls in Canton, utilizing to a great extent funds raised by students and faculty at Blue Mountain College. The home, named Mo Quong (meaning Light Within) was opened in 1909.

It suffered through invasion by the Japanese army in 1937 and was confiscated when communists overran China in 1951. The girls were transferred to a Presbyterian home in another part of Canton.

Now, interest from an endowment fund goes from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to Hong Kong Hospital, part of which is used for the ophthalmic treatment of women and girls. Dr. John Chang, hospital ophthalmologist and a Baptist layman, influenced the Hong Kong Rotary to purchase a van for a mobile eye clinic which the American Mo Quong Board has furnished and staffed.

The van goes to schools in winter to check for eye problems. In the summer, it goes to factories to test for glaucoma and eye disease. In 1977, nearly 15,000 children were given eye tests through the van.

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CORRECTION: In line 2 of graph 12 of Baptist Press story mailed 11-22-78, entitled "Baptist Conventions Mix Harmony and Debate," change the word require to request, making that read: effort to request colleges to publish a list of the affiliations of non-Baptist faculty.

Thanks, Baptist Press

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