



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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79-39

Border Fighting Increases; Missionaries Stay in Yemen

SANAA, Yemen (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries plan to remain at the Baptist Hospital in Jibla even though the U. S. government has suggested they consider moving north to the capital city of Sanaa, farther from fighting in the south.

Dr. Jon D. Tillinghast, Southern Baptist missionary physician stationed in Sanaa, relayed the missionaries' decision to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board by telephone March 6.

Nine Southern Baptist missionaries and four missionary journeymen are now in Yemen. All but the Tillinghasts are stationed in Jibla.

The U. S. State Department in Washington, D. C., confirmed that it had suggested all unofficial Americans (Americans not directly related to government programs or employment) consider moving from Southern Yemen to the northern region. This would be a move away from the recent border fighting between Yemen and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, a separate nation on Yemen's southern border.

Tillinghast told J. D. Hughey, the board's secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia, that the missionaries in Jibla reported fighting "not so far away" but emphasized it had not reached Jibla.

"No Americans have been involved in the fighting or have been injured," Hughey said. He said the ambassador had asked Americans on government assignments, including Peace Corps and Agency for International Development workers, to move from the southern area to Sanaa.

None of the other Americans in the Jibla area made the move.

Yemen (sometimes called North Yemen) is closely related to Saudi Arabia, where many Yemeni men work. The only real "export" of Yemen is labor. Approximately \$3 million a day is sent into Yemen from Yemenis working elsewhere.

Yemen stretches along the side of the Arabian peninsula facing the Gulf of Suez. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, a Communist country backed in this battle by Russia, stretches along the southern end of the peninsula. The two nations are traditionally enemies and this is the second border fight in the last five years.

Neither nation has the rich oil reserves of its neighbors and in the past the Arab League of Nations has refused to convene to hear appeals for help from either nation. Egypt helped Yemen Republic forces break from the monarchy in 1962 when the northern nation was established.

Yemen is a Muslim country, where Southern Baptists have a hospital and a public health ministry. The 70 -bed hospital in Jibla is the only medical care in the area of this village and also provides outpatient clinics. Southern Baptists have been working in Yemen since 1964.

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A map and list of missionaries to Yemen by state will be mailed to Baptist state papers.

Robert Lindsey
To Preach To President

JERUSALEM, Israel (BP)--Robert L. Lindsey, Southern Baptist representative to Israel for more than 30 years, was scheduled to preach March 11 for a special Sunday worship service to be attended by President Jimmy Carter.

Carter, an active Southern Baptist layman, was to be in Israel as a part of his attempt to negotiate a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. Israeli government officials planning Carter's stay announced Lindsey's invitation to preach but said no decision had been made on the service's location.

"It's particularly appropriate for a veteran Southern Baptist representative to Israel to be chosen to preach," said J. D. Hughey, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia.

Lindsey has been a Southern Baptist representative in Israel since before the State of Israel officially existed. He and his wife, Margaret, from Norman, Okla., and Columbus, Ohio, respectively, were appointed in 1944. They left Israel for several months during the 1948 war and returned in March 1949. He is acting pastor of the Jerusalem Baptist congregation in West Jerusalem and has been translating the New Testament into modern Hebrew since 1959.

Newsmen from all over the world have flocked to Israel in hope of a peace announcement, but Israelis are being cautioned not to be prematurely elated.

Elizabeth (Mrs. Charles W.) Smith, Southern Baptist press representative in Israel, said the news media reports were split. Some were hailing the trip to Israel by Carter as a sign of coming peace, and others were expressing notes of doubt.

"Everyone is bewildered and surprised," said Mrs. Smith. "Every pastor and every lay leader will be setting aside a time for prayer for peace during their regular Saturday services."

Baptist worship services are held on Saturday in Israel to coincide with the Jewish Sabbath so that the congregation will be off from work. Because President Carter was to worship on Sunday, a special service was to be arranged, but Mrs. Lindsey told news media that the Sunday service would be in format and content like any other worship service.

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Mideast Missionaries Take
New Posts; 2 Going to Norway

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3/8/79

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries who had been serving in Iran have accepted other assignments, one of which will take a missionary couple to Stavanga, Norway.

The C. Kenneth Glenns, Southern Baptist missionaries from Georgia and South Carolina, will work with an English-language Baptist church in Norway in which members mainly consist of employees of American oil companies and their families.

J. D. Hughey, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia, said the Glenns would live in Norway for at least six months with the possibility of extending their assignment if they and the church feel it is wise.

The James F. Kirkendall family was also stationed in Iran. Kirkendall will continue his work as field representative for South Asia from Bangalore, India, and will devote more of his time to evangelism and church development in India. Mrs. Kirkendall will remain in Liberty, Mo., where their son has enrolled in William Jewell College. The Kirkendalls are from Missouri and Oklahoma.

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The Henry E. Turlingtons, Southern Baptist missionaries from Florida and Virginia, will be active in evangelism and church development efforts in Bangalore, India.

Both the Turlingtons and Kirkendalls hope to return to their work in Tehran, Iran, when other Americans return to that country.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, the possibilities of English-language work continuing in Turkey are brighter.

James F. Leeper was not allowed to remain in the country, but John Allen Moore, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Europe, is applying for a visa "to help a group of American Christians in Ankara organize a church within the framework of Turkish law and to serve as pastor of the church," Hughey said.

Leeper was denied a residence permit last fall on the grounds that the congregation which he had served as pastor for 12 years was not officially recognized by the Turkish government. After several appeals failed, Leeper left the country permanently early in 1979.

The Leepers, missionaries from Texas and Michigan, are now in Augsburg, Germany, where they are active in another English-language church. Leeper is working with the large population of Turks living in Germany in addition to his work as pastor of the church.

The Moores, still in the United States while awaiting official approval to work in Turkey, plan to stay for several months in this special assignment. They are from Mississippi and Georgia.

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High Court Will Not Review Mandatory Retirement Laws

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a series of actions, the U. S. Supreme Court declined to become involved in the legal dispute over compulsory retirement laws.

Acting in four separate cases, the justices unanimously decided not to settle a growing dispute in lower courts over the constitutionality of state laws requiring public employees to retire at a given age.

Last year Congress passed legislation extending mandatory retirement from age 65 to 70 for most American workers. No exceptions were made for churches. The law applies only, however, to employers with 20 or more employees.

By declining to review the four cases, the high court seems to be signaling that it is unprepared for now to get into the thorny area. As is customary, the justices offered no reasons for their denial.

Two of the cases came from New York, where state laws requiring the retirement of public school teachers and tenured civil service employees at age 70 were under challenge. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals had ruled earlier that the laws do not violate either the equal protection or due process rights of those affected.

Another circuit court, however, has held that an Illinois school teacher who was retired at age 65 under a mandatory retirement policy had an "actionable claim" which required that the school board demonstrate that the policy served a purpose which furthered the "state interest."

The fourth case turned down by the high court involved a challenge by a college professor in California that a recent state law doing away with compulsory retirement on the basis of age necessarily invalidated an earlier law requiring college teachers to retire at age 67. A California state court disagreed, ruling that the earlier law could remain in effect.

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It Was a Good Year
For Home Missions

BIRMINGHAM (BP)--Though some Southern Baptist Convention statistics dipped during 1978 according to recent reports, it was a banner year in home missions.

M. Wendell Belew, director of the Home Mission Board's division of missions ministries, told SBC leadership in a personal mailout that more than two new church-type missions a day were started in the U. S. during 1978 for a total of 756.

These were added to more than 1,800 church-type missions organized the previous year. "When these organize into churches we will have fantastic numbers," Belew said.

Additionally, Belew said, Southern Baptists have averaged baptizing 1,000 people a day for approximately 25 years.

They have averaged establishing one new church a day since organizing as a convention in 1845.

More than 500 predominantly black churches have affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and more are affiliating at a rapid rate, he said.

The Home Mission Board department of special mission ministries assisted 21,671 lay persons in doing volunteer short term missions.

Student summer missionaries numbered 1,446--the largest group ever.

In church extension, 140 seminary students in summer intern programs established 40 new missions.

A Southern Baptist ministry of some form was begun in nearly 100 counties that have no Southern Baptist church.

In other developments, 516 mission pastors and their churches yielded 9,480 professions of faith, 198 new churches were constituted by mission pastors, and 897 new Bible fellowships were established by mission pastors.

Language missionaries began work with five additional ethnic groups--Pakistani, Persian, Afghan, French-Canadian, and Dutch--bringing the total number of Southern Baptist ethnic groups to more than 35.

More Baptist Vietnamese congregations now exist in the U. S. than there were in Vietnam before missionaries were forced to withdraw. It is estimated that there are more Spanish speaking Baptist congregations in the U. S. than in all the rest of the world.

Chris Elkins, a Home Mission Board staffer who was formerly associated with the Unification Church, informed 53,440 persons about the "Moonies" through 237 conferences.

Christian social ministries missionaries conducted 37 Vacation Bible Schools in the Watts area of Los Angeles, resulting in 750 professions of faith.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U. S. Department of State has asked the Home Mission Board for help in ministering to illegal aliens.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions in 1978 grew 14.5 percent over 1977 to a total of \$12,282,228--still short of that \$13 million goal--but an increase over the previous year's 11.3 percent.

During March the Southern Baptist Convention will attempt to top that record. The Easter offering for home missions goal is \$15 million, which would require more than a 22 percent increase over last year's receipts.



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