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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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April 2, 1979

79-54

Cooperative Program  
 11.39 % Ahead of Last Year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Six months into the 1978-79 fiscal year, contributions to the national Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program have reached the \$31.5 million mark, 11.39 percent ahead of receipts at the same point last year.

The 1978-79 budget calls for \$64 million in basic operating and capital needs for the SBC's worldwide missions effort and another \$11 million in challenge funds to finance the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust plan to reach the world for Christ in this century.

The \$31.5 million figure represents undesignated funds. In addition to that, Southern Baptists have contributed another \$35.3 million in designated funds, for a total of \$66.8 million during the first six months. That ranks 12.36 percent ahead of last year.

During the month of March alone, undesignated Cooperative Program contributions totaled more than \$5.3 million, a 13.01 percent increase over the same month last year.

"The 13.01 percent increase demonstrates a continued concern for Bold Mission Thrust," declared Porter W. Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee which receives and disburses national Cooperative Program funds to SBC agencies.

Routh also expressed approval of Southern Baptist response to the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, which thus far has collected more than \$32 million in designated contributions, a 12 percent increase over the same period last year.

Total contributions for March, including the Cooperative Program amount, totaled more than \$14.6 million, a 24.9 percent increase over last March.

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Clovis Brantley, Pioneer  
 Home Missionary, Dies at 66

Baptist Press  
 4/2/79

ATLANTA (BP)--Clovis A. Brantley, 66, retired Southern Baptist home missionary and pioneer in Christian social ministries throughout the United States, died at his home March 31, from congestive heart failure.

Brantley, who retired Dec. 31, 1977, after 40 years in home missions, continued to serve until his death as a specialist for the Christian social ministries department staff at the Home Mission Board. In fact, his calendar was full for the next few months.

Recent illnesses, stemming in part from his age and a diabetic condition, caused cancellation of a revival scheduled to begin April 2.

For 20 years, Brantley served in the board's Christian social ministries department, six years as associate director.

He left the grocery business to become a pastor in the 1930s. To pay his way through New Orleans Baptist Seminary after graduation from Stetson University in 1937, Brantley worked at the Baptist Rescue Mission in New Orleans.

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This work began a long career in Christian social ministries, ending with a remarkable record of beginning 118 ministries across the United States, with 108 still in operation.

A few include Baptist Friendship house in New Orleans, Priscilla Hall in Detroit, and La Frak City in New York.

While serving as superintendent of the rescue mission, Brantley developed, by 1941, a program for unmarried expectant mothers: Sellers Home and Adoption Center.

Sellers was--and is--the first and only home of its type sponsored by the Home Mission Board. And it is the work Brantley recalled with greatest satisfaction.

Since he founded the adoption part of Sellers' ministry in 1948, more than 2,000 babies have been placed in adoptive homes.

A memorial service, following cremation, was held at Columbia Drive Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., on April 2.

The Brantley family, including his wife, Gladys Beall Brantley, three daughters, two sisters, a brother and three grandchildren, requested no flowers, but memorial donations to the Home Mission Board or Columbia Drive Baptist Church, where Brantley was a member.

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Evangelists Emphasize  
Preaching and Singing

Baptist Press  
4/2/79

HOUSTON, Texas (BP)--Four hours of evangelistic preaching and singing are scheduled for the annual meeting of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, Wednesday, June 13, at Houston's First Baptist Church.

The meeting, one of several related to the annual Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14, in the Summit in Houston, is scheduled during the Wednesday afternoon period when no SBC session will be held.

A breakfast and business session at 8:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Downtown will precede the meeting, which gets underway at 12:30 p.m. at the church with a gospel concert, followed at 1:50 p.m. by the main program.

Speakers are Eddie Martin, evangelist from Lancaster, Pa.; Anis Shorrosh, Arab Christian evangelist from Mobile, Ala.; Ronald Dunn, evangelist from Fort Worth, Texas; and Larry Walker, evangelist from Dallas, Texas.

Music will be provided by Lonnie Parsons, San Antonio, Texas; Bette Stalnecker, Memphis, Tenn.; the Cruse Family, Jacksonville, Texas; and the Bernard Singers, Houston, Texas.

Other conference participants include John Bisagno, host pastor; James Draper, the conference's pastor-advisor, pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas; L. L. Morris, evangelism director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas; and Hyman Appelman, evangelist from Kansas City, Mo.

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Brazil's Flooding:  
Worst of Nightmares

By John J. Hurt

Baptist Press  
4/2/79

BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil (BP)--Neither the wildest imagination nor the worst of nightmares can adequately picture the suffering and flood damage to a big part of Brazil.

Run a line north from Rio de Janeiro, drift it slightly to the west, and most of the area east of that line endured major damage.

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Some say more than 500 lives have been lost. No one will ever know an exact total. Refugee camps dot the hillsides above Belo Horizonte, third largest city in Brazil. Move out into other areas of the state of Minas Gerais and you decide government reports of 178,651 homeless persons are too conservative.

Minas Gerais is bigger in land area and population than Texas. Brazil is a little larger than the continental United States. That helps to focus on the size of the task. Telephone and telegraph communication is adequate in normal times but non-existent in disasters, such as recent floods.

Rains of monsoon intensity hit in the lowlands which also were catching water gushing down mountains and hillsides. Flash floods developed and in some cities, such as Manhuacu with a population of 40,000, a major part of the business district and nearby homes were under water for eight days.

It wasn't much better in Belo Horizonte, state capital, where automobiles caught downtown were inundated. Water went up to eight feet in buildings. Travel in the city of 2 million became dangerous for some automobiles were covered by landslides.

Take a 185-mile trip from Belo Horizonte to Manhuacu, including 14 detours plus numerous one-lane stretches where mudslides have erased other lanes, and you are in a city months away from normalcy.

Baptist pastor, Oliveira de Araujo, would have told you at year's end of a thriving church with seven mission points and three preaching stations, one 170 miles away. Membership has almost doubled, now 204, in his four years. The state convention provided 80 percent of his salary when he came. Now, the church pays 80 percent and provides a pastorium.

But the flood wrecked the city's economy and the church budget. The pastor and his wife are caring for two teen-age girls, cousins whose parents are staying with relatives. And, the pastor has received no salary since January.

In Belo Horizonte, Jose Bittencourt, executive secretary of the state convention, says other churches have similar experiences. Most are straining to provide money for members who lost everything, or almost everything. Obviously, mission gifts from churches to the state conventions will drop.

Bittencourt says that will mean slashing salaries and trimming aid to mission pastors. But, instead of dwelling on the disheartening, he says some pastors are saying "it is much easier to witness" in disaster areas because people have been attracted by Baptist concern for other Baptists--a limited circle for relief because of very limited funds.

Directly north, in Montes Claros, a city of 200,000, Southern Baptist missionary Jesse L. Kidd, said relief funds have "had a lot of influence on families and friends" of those helped.

Pastor Levy Jose Penido of First Baptist Church, used \$400 from Southern Baptist relief funds for materials to rebuild a home for an elderly widow who is the acknowledged leader in a suburban settlement. He enlisted church members for the construction.

Now, because of appreciation for that effort, he is able to plan a mission which will meet in the woman's concrete-block house--directly behind a two-story building used by a spirit worshipping group.

Pastor Levy and church members did not wait on Southern Baptist relief funds, which totaled \$285,000. His church and two others in the city swung into action, collecting clothing and food for flood victims. They also sent the church van, loaded with relief supplies, twice to Januaria, hard hit by the flooding San Francisco River, second in size only to the Amazon.

In Januaria, pastor Jose Raimundo, his wife and two-year-old son, have returned to their home once flooded by five feet of water. They lost their clothing and most personal possessions but saved their furniture which was moved to a two-story building.

Raimundo's home, still damp, lost two interior walls. Much of the construction in this area is of adobe, packed around intricate weaving between poles. Continuing rains collapsed the walls since normal conditions permit days of drying between rains.

Januaria is one of those cities which bring back memories of refugees in World War II. Just like those refugees, people here fled from flagstone streets to higher ground where families have existed for weeks in army tents and under plastic sheets spread over a frame.

In this city of 37,000, best estimates say 17,500 persons were displaced. Many were farmers now anxious about money for seeds to plant new crops. Others who worked for industry wonder when they can go back to their jobs.

But don't get the idea Brazilian Baptists are sitting idle while awaiting Southern Baptist relief funds. Churches and missionaries are using what is available and refugees are making the best of unfavorable conditions.

The government has helped. Medical teams have gone into the worst hit areas for preventive medicine. So have Brazilian Baptist doctors.

But this state of Minas Gerais, which has 25,000 Baptists, will be a long time recovering. Highway damage is estimated at \$70 million. There were 715 bridges which collapsed and another 554 damaged. One estimate has 200,000 homeless at one time, and 300 drowned or killed by mudslides which covered automobiles and destroyed homes.

Other statistics, which would jam a computer, tell more of the story but always there is a reminder this is but one state--three others less in land area and population have their own reports of tragedy.

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(BP) Photos mailed to Baptist state papers by the Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

Reaction to Verse on Peace  
'Overwhelms' Walker Knight

Baptist Press  
4/2/79

ATLANTA (BP)--Walker L. Knight still can't believe the feedback he has been getting from around the country in reaction to some free verse on peace he wrote which President Jimmy Carter quoted in a speech delivered on the day of the signing of the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.

"I'm overwhelmed, said Knight, editor of "Home Missions" magazine at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and chief of the Atlanta Bureau of Baptist Press. He said attention has ranged from national news media to the paper in his hometown of Hendersonville, Ky., where he formerly worked and where his father was managing editor.

Carter quoted an excerpt from "The Peacemaker," which news media have called "the most memorable" part of the president's speech. The full poem first appeared in the December, 1972, issue of "Home Missions." It was passed to the White House by Bob Maddox, pastor of First Baptist Church, Calhoun, Ga., after he heard it quoted in a sermon by Knight's pastor, John Nichol of Oakhurst Baptist Church, Atlanta.

The free verse, comparing war and peace, said:  
 "Peace has one thing in common with its enemy,  
 with the fiend it battles, war.  
 Peace is active, not passive.  
 Peace is doing, not waiting.  
 Peace is aggressive--attacking.  
 Peace plans its strategy and encircles the enemy.  
 Peace marshals its forces and storms the gates.  
 Peace gathers its weapons and pierces the defense.  
 Peace, like war, is waged.