



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

## BUREAUS

**ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
**DALLAS** Richard T. McCartney, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996  
**MEMPHIS** Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461  
**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) L. Bracey Campbell III, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

May 22, 1979

79-82

## 500 Profess Faith in Christ Amid Terrorist Tensions in Nicaragua

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (BP)--Approximately 500 professions of faith were reported in a two-week bold mission evangelistic crusade held in the midst of uncertain conditions caused by stepped up terrorist activity in Nicaragua.

Services were cancelled in three places because of sporadic armed conflicts in the vicinity. Despite the tensions, attendance of 500 or more was reported at services in some cities and rural areas, according to Southern Baptist missionary Stanley D. Stamps. In other areas, attendance was fair and in a few cases, poor.

Eighteen evangelists and one musician from the United States participated in the May 6-19 effort.

In some areas, armed conflict was taking place but services were held early and visitation was limited. The services themselves were normal except for cancellations for one night at two locations, according to Stamps. Leaders had debated whether to hold the crusade.

"The increased tension brought on by the uncertain political situation and growing economic problems definitely limited the efforts of the crusade," Stamps said. "But we are quite happy with the results and encouraged by some of the developments we have witnessed."

It was definitely a bold missions undertaking in the light of calculated risks," Stamps said. But because of the unrest in the country, people were more open and the crusade will have far-reaching effects, according to Stamps.

Stamps, missionary press representative for Nicaragua, said all the visiting evang lists commented about the "obvious hunger for God's word" and were impressed by the warmth and responsiveness of the people.

Two new mission points were initiated during the first week, one at Camoapa, where Archie V. Jones, missionary on leave of absence from Ecuador, preached; and San Rafael del Sur, where a tent revival attracted more than 500 nightly and resulted in 85 professions of faith. Rudy Hernandez of Grand Prairie, Texas, was evangelist there.

The crusade was a cooperative effort of churches of the Baptist Convention of Nicaragua with participation of the Southern Baptist evangelists enlisted through the office of vangalism and church development of the SBC Foreign Mission Board. It was the follow-up phase of a two-phase evangelistic thrust begun earlier this year in which nearly 60 laymen and pastors from the States participated.

The evangelists were advised of the tensions in Nicaragua before they arrived. For more than a year, missionary and volunteer work in Nicaragua has been under tension. As early as Jun 1978 a 90-voice church choir from Fort Worth, Texas, encountered anti-government and pro-Communist disturbances during its visit. In September, three Nicaraguan Baptists were caught in crossfire and killed. In November, a revival campaign was cancelled due to the unrest.

Court to Rule on Minority  
Public Works Set-Asides

WASHINGTON (BP)--For the third time in its last three terms, the U. S. Supreme Court has decided to hear charges by whites that affirmative action programs designed to help minorities make up ground in education and employment violate both the Constitution and the Civil Rights Act.

The high court announced May 21 that it will decide if Congress can require that 10 percent of all federal funds appropriated for certain public works projects go to businesses that are at least 50 percent owned by certain minority groups.

At issue is the Public Works Employment Act of 1977 requiring that the 10 percent set-aside be made to companies at least half-owned by "Negroes, Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts."

That portion of the law was introduced on the floor of the House of Representatives during debate on the measure by U. S. Rep. Parren J. Mitchell, D.-Md. No action on the provision was taken during committee hearings on the bill.

Although the challenged section has been upheld by several federal courts at the district and circuit levels, a U. S. district court judge in Los Angeles struck it down on grounds that it violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Last year the Supreme Court held in one of its most publicized decisions ever that Allan Bakke, a white applicant to the University of California-Davis Medical School twice denied admission because of an affirmative action policy, had to be admitted.

The court held that while race may legitimately be considered as one of several criteria for admission to universities, it may not be singled out exclusively. The justices also ruled that the university's system, requiring that 16 percent of new medical school students be from minority groups, violated white applicants' constitutional rights of due process and equal protection of law.

Earlier this term the justices heard arguments in the case of Brian Weber, a white worker at the Kaiser Aluminum Co., plant in Gramercy, La. He claimed that a promotion plan, voluntarily implemented by the company and designed to advance members of minority groups to better jobs over equally or more qualified whites, violated his constitutional rights.

The high court has yet to rule in the Weber case but is expected to do so by the end of the current term.

The new challenge to the public works law will not be heard before next fall and may not be decided by the justices until as late as next spring.

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Flooding Strikes Paraguay;  
Board Sends \$6,000 in Aid

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ASUNCION, Paraguay (BP)--Weekly rains have crept up on Paraguay, causing flooding and threatening to strike the South American country with a "slow disaster."

Already some 16,000 people in this city of 500,000 have been affected by the flooding. Countless others throughout the country are also in need as the rain continues. It is believed to be the worst flood in Paraguay since 1905, and follows on the heels of weeks of flooding in nearby Brazil, where hundreds were left dead and thousands homeless.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board immediately made available \$6,000 for purchase and distribution of food and food-related items to flood victims.

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"This is just a gradual thing," said William A. Hickman Jr., Southern Baptist missionary to Paraguay. "The water is going up by several inches every day. This is the major problem. This is a slow disaster."

In Asuncion, water has covered the docks in the port area. Water also has risen in Encarnacion, a major city southeast of Asuncion, but flooding is not as serious there. Other cities, however, have been completely flooded and people evacuated.

Baptist pastors already have set a date for gathering and distributing foodstuffs to needy people, said Alex F. Garner, another Southern Baptist missionary in Asuncion. In addition, Paraguayan Baptists, churches, organizations, charities and schools are participating in the disaster relief efforts.

No lives have been lost but Hickman said the flooding "causes lots of illness and the people quit work to try to take care of what little they have. So then they don't have food and then they become ill. It's kind of a vicious cycle."

The Baptist mobile clinic, however, was at one flood-stricken site soon after the flooding took its course and attended 300 people in one day.

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Houston School Plans SBC  
Transportation Aid

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HOUSTON, Texas (BP)--Houston Baptist University will furnish transportation from Houston Intercontinental Airport to downtown hotels for messengers arriving for the Southern Baptist Convention and related meetings.

The service will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 9, and end at noon Tuesday, June 12.

By June 1, messengers to the SBC should send their name, address, date and time of arrival, airline and flight number and hotel name to Barney Walker Jr., development office, Houston Baptist University, 7502 Fondren Road, Houston, TX 77074, or call 713-777-0171.

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Oregon Association  
Disfellowships Church

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EASTSIDE, Ore. (BP)--Myrtlewood Association in Eastside, Ore., removed Calvary Baptist Church from its fellowship following a dispute over the use and definition of the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The action followed months of negotiation between the association's credentials committee and Eastside church.

In January, the committee charged Calvary with holding beliefs that negated God's will to serve man's faith. It said Calvary believed the baptism of the spirit was a separate experience from salvation and that it believes in faith healing in that a person must only have enough faith and they can be healed of anything.

Roy Worthley, pastor of First Baptist Church, North Bend, Ore., asked at the semi-annual association meeting that Calvary be removed from the association for breaking fellowship. Worthley said the church's support and participation in Women's Aglow, a charismatic fellowship, created dissention among Baptist churches.

Calvary's pastor, C. J. Shreckengost, said his church never had tongues speaking in its services.

The 124-member church has had previous disagreements with the association. Several years ago, according to the Northwest Baptist Witness, its pastor Frank Potsmesil openly advocated tongues-speaking and was asked to resign. He took about half the membership with him and formed a non-denominational fellowship.

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14,500 West Germans  
Enroll In Bible Schools

By Jerilynn Wood

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Gunter Wieske's dream of providing Christian education to European countries began during his seminary days at the International Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

"I had never even heard of Sunday School work when I started seminary in 1949, but during my first year I read about it and became very interested," said Wieske, Home Missions secretary for the Baptist Convention of West Germany.

"During that year at seminary the seed was planted which would continue to grow as I read and studied and later became involved with the Baptist World Alliance. Through the Alliance I met key men from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board such as A. V. Washburn, James L. Sullivan and Charles Roselle. They helped me to see that a Sunday School program could be an instrument in accomplishing evangelism and Christian education, both to which I was committed," Wieske said.

Wieske went to West Germany five years ago from his post as evangelism secretary in Norway. He works with the 380 churches and 67,000 Baptists in West Germany.

"Four years ago I felt God directing me to put action to my dreams and begin a regular form of Bible study for adults in West Germany," he said. "We had no program for church members after they reached 14 or 15 and were discovering that Bible study was decreasing along with the layman's knowledge of the Bible, ethics and doctrine."

In 1975, Wieske first came to the Sunday School Board to study its programs, then returned in 1976 with 26 other Europeans for additional training. He returned again this year with 14 others for an update and to further learn how to utilize Church Bible Schools in evangelism.

"We introduced Church Bible Schools in West Germany in April of 1977 after I made a prayer goal in 1976 that 3,000 people would be involved in the program by the end of 1977," he said.

By December of 1977 11,200 members had enrolled in Church Bible Schools and by April of this year, 14,500.

Wieske said Bible schools have been instrumental in stopping a 10-year decline in Baptist work. "We are now growing and last year baptized more than 2,000 individuals," he said.

"I believe that we are really just getting started as the horizons for Church Bible School are broadening," he continued. "Work has been started in Austria and East Germany and a radio station now broadcasts one lesson a month to many European countries, including countries behind the Iron Curtain.

"I am excited and thankful that I have had a part in providing Christian education and reaching more people for the Lord."