



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. Hasteley, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

August 13, 1979

79-137

'Skyboxes' Eliminated, Four Cities Suggested for SBC

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Provisions will be made at future meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention to avoid the hassle which erupted following the use of the controversial "skyboxes" at the 1979 SBC in the Summit in Houston, Texas.

Charges were made at the Houston SBC that the privately owned or leased suites at the top of the Summit were used in violation of convention bylaws for political causes in the campaign to elect a president committed to biblical inerrancy as an issue.

"Whether those charges were correct or not, we want to take steps to prevent a similar disagreement in the future," said Tim Hedquist of Nashville, Tenn., convention manager. "The use of such skyboxes or similar facilities will be specifically excluded in future contracts for convention sites."

Hedquist, director of financial planning and assistant to the treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, also said he will recommend that the SBC begin alternating its annual meeting mainly among four cities--Dallas, Atlanta, New Orleans and Kansas City.

"I don't mean to suggest that we never meet in another city," said Hedquist. "Six other locations meet our specifications, and we may want to hold the SBC occasionally in one of them." The six places are St. Louis (site of the 1980 SBC), Los Angeles (site of the 1981 SBC), Pittsburg (site of the 1983 SBC), New York, Detroit, and a new facility under construction at Rosemont, Ill. (O'Hare Airport).

Citing the growing size and expense of SBC meetings, Hedquist said the four cities are best suited to handle the SBC. "They have strong Baptist work to assist in local arrangements," he said. "They also are centrally located--a factor which will save the financial resources of messengers, SBC agencies and the convention operating budget and will also conserve gasoline for people traveling to the convention city."

-30-

Ugandan Baptist Churches
Survive Amin's Reprassion

Baptist Press
8/13/79

DALLAS, Texas (BP)--About 100 to 125 of the more than 300 Baptist congregations active before former President Idi Amin's rule are still alive in Uganda, says a Southern Baptist foreign mission volunteer recently returned from there.

-more-

Although church buildings badly need repair, the churches are quickly reviving spiritually, said Jimmie D. Hooten, former Southern Baptist missionary to Kenya and Uganda and now minister of outreach at First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

He spent more than a month in Uganda supervising a team of six college-age, Swahili-speaking MKs (missionary kids), including his own son. They distributed aid throughout the country where Ugandan exiles and the Tanzanian army restored religious freedom when they deposed Amin this spring.

Hooten helped distribute 80 to 100 tons of supplies and tools. He also assisted Uganda missionaries reestablish contact with Baptist congregations in the country and met with government ministers to maintain recently established rapport between the new government and Baptists in the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries and in the churches.

Of the approximately 300 Baptist leaders and pastors once in Uganda. "Many more have stood strong than we have realized," Hooten said. "Over 200 still feel called and are ready to build."

Although that means a surplus of church leaders, Hooten says all will probably be preaching again within a year's time. The mission is reviving its five Bible schools to train them for returning to the ministry.

Hooten says a small proportion of the missing churches were simply destroyed by Amin's men--their buildings demolished and leaders killed. But most of the missing churches either disbanded because of fear or joined the Anglican congregations allowed to continue meeting when Amin banned Baptists and 26 other religious groups.

Buildings of the active congregations need extensive repairs since cement and tin for roofs have been unavailable for eight years, said Hooten. Also, Amin's men often stripped church roofs of tin to sell.

In spite of the physical disrepair, churches hold regular Sunday services. On other days, he said, "They just quit what they're doing and are ready to have a service whenever you arrive. The people are grateful to God."

Ugandan Baptist leaders have already met and begun a series of revivals led by local leadership. They also plan to hold a simultaneous revival, Hooten said, probably next year.

"At this point, things are down so far spiritually, politically, economically and emotionally that the best thing that can happen is a moral, spiritual and emotional uplift for the people," he said.

To deal with the economic low in what was once one of Africa's most prosperous black nations, Hooten and the MKs helped the mission distribute medicines and vitamin and food supplements donated by Medical Assistance Program of Carol Stream, Ill., and simple agricultural tools purchased with Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board relief ministries funds.

Using three vans and a five-ton truck provided by Foreign Mission Board relief ministries funds, the volunteers delivered the supplies to mission hospitals in areas where Baptists have churches. Pastors worked with the volunteers in signing supplies over to the doctor in charge and helped him put them into storage for distribution through the hospital.

When they unloaded two tons of medical supplies at one hospital, Hooten says, a doctor there said over and over, "Oh my goodness, I was down to my last vial of that," or "I haven't had any of that in two years."

Agricultural tools were distributed through Baptist churches. At meetings bringing together several churches, pastors helped hand out tools, such as hoes or slashers for cutting grass, to each household head in the church, distributing extras to other families in the community.

Tools will help people raise more through subsistence farming, which enabled them to survive on corn, millet or matoke (a cooking banana) while other food was unavailable.

Hooten said no basic commodities, such as flour, salt and sugar, are available in Uganda. A box of 50 matches, he said, may cost about 80 cents; gasoline, when available, is more than \$3 a gallon; meat is usually \$10 a pound; and Coca Colas cost \$3 each. Protein supplements are necessary, he said, because most Africans don't eat meat.

Supplies distributed by Hooten and the MKs were cleared through Nairobi, duty-free, by Southern Baptist missionary to Uganda James L. Rice of Virginia. Rice coordinated the overall distribution program, while his wife, Linda, also a Virginian, cooked for the volunteers and helped in distribution.

The six MKs, Hooten said, "Really committed themselves and worked hours and hours and days and days delivering these supplies and giving their testimonies where they went." People here will never know what their prayers meant, he said. "They went through roadblocks with no problems at all."

MKs on the team were scheduled to return to the United States in late August, Hooten said. Charles A. Tope, pastor of Northwest Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., arrived shortly before Hooten's departure to work with the team. Tope is a Foreign Mission Board member and former missionary to Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya.

MKs on the team are Jim and Tim Tidenberg, both of Clovis, N.M.; Will Partain of Fort Worth, Texas; James Boone of Friendswood, Texas; David Hooten of Dallas; and Randy Senter of North Zulch, Texas.

-30-

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press

Churches in Eastern Europe
Are Alive and Doing Well

By Irma Duke

Baptist Press
8/13/79

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--"God is alive and doing well in Eastern Europe," according to John David Hopper, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board fraternal representative to that area of the world.

He brought news of 1,000 baptisms in one local church association and average attendance of 100 percent of membership in his report during Foreign Missions Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. He said in some countries worshippers fill the seats and aisles and stand outside looking through the windows for three-hour services.

-more-

Some of the services use brass bands and stringed instruments and most of them have a high amount of congregational participation. In some services, 50 to 60 percent of the congregation participates in the service through special music, recitations and speeches.

Hopper said he went into one home and found some Christians and their neighbors learning the Lord's Prayer and a hymn. He left that home and went to another one nearby and found the same thing. In the third home which he visited, he found a woman "on fire for God" whose husband was not a believer. He said this woman ran after him when he left and asked that he pray for her husband.

"God's spirit is moving. Churches are growing," Hopper said.

Christians in these countries have freedom within limits. Bibles are available in some countries but sell so fast they are sometimes hard to obtain. Churches sometimes wait for building permits for years and in other areas, churches are torn down for urban renewal, according to Hopper. In some countries, educational opportunities for Christians are limited, and some Christians have been jailed for their beliefs. But these limitations vary from country to country.

Southern Baptists have been involved in work in Eastern Europe since 1920 and have been well received by believers. Assistance from the Foreign Mission Board has been available for construction of church buildings and for church development projects.

Currently two Baptist programs are broadcast weekly from Monte Carlo in cooperation with Polish Baptists. Radio programs are broadcast in Yugoslavia and Romania eight times weekly. Listeners to these broadcasts write in regularly for more information.

Seminaries in Eastern Europe offer theological education, which is available by extension in Yugoslavia. Some theological students from these countries study at the Baptist Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

-30-

WMU Conference Seeks
'Life Changing Commitments'

Baptist Press
8/13/79

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--More than 2,300 women were summoned to "life changing commitments" to missions during the Woman's Missionary Union conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

Christine Gregory, president of the 1.1 million-member auxiliary which promotes and helps support Southern Baptist home and foreign missionaries, challenged participants to a simple lifestyle so that resources could be redirected to missions.

She also challenged them to missionary service, as a career, short-term or at home; to reallocate priorities to gain time for prayer and missions education; and to inspire churches to reduce local expenses so more may be given to missions.

Lifestyle workshops launched the week-long "Life Changing Commitments" conference that offered training in household budgeting, cheap nutrition, money management, economical shopping, conservation of resources, will-making, prayer, missions volunteerism, lifestyle

-more-

witnessing, and similar topics.

L. D. Johnson, chaplain of Furman University who led daily Bible studies, asked, "Are we willing to adopt a lower standard of living so that others can have a higher one? Are we willing to spend less on consumer goods and more on missions?"

Johnson preached on identifying and using spiritual gifts as well as material gifts. "God is not a squanderer," he said. "God gives you a mission, then gives you what you need to match it." He said Southern Baptists are misdirecting God's gifts away from missions into selfishness.

Conferees held a dedication service for seven persons about to begin mission service. They included Cynthia Weaver, Corinth, Miss., who will go to Taiwan as a career missionary to teach children of other missionaries; Mrs. Celia Phillips, Tucker, Ga., a Christian Service Corps volunteer who will help plant a new church in Pennsylvania; Will and Caroline Fields, Mission Service Corps workers moving from Tennessee to Pennsylvania with their five children where Fields will help build and renovate buildings for new churches; Debbie Belew, Aiken, S.C., a two-year SBC Home Mission Board Appointee as a US-2 missionary; Peggy and Wayne Dunn, foreign missionary associates in the Windward Islands.

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of WMU, commissioned the new recruits to carry out their assignments boldly. At the same time, she charged the audience to consider service in one of the avenues described by the new missionaries. She also urged women to make life changing commitments to guarantee support for these and for 5,700 other career missionaries and thousands of voluntary workers.

Twenty-two missionaries addressed the commitment theme which threaded through 50 courses offered for WMU leaders and officers. Participants were admonished to go back to their churches and present "95 shocking facts," a list WMU workers compiled naming unmet missions needs, fashioned after Martin Luther's "95 theses."

Specialty conferences were offered for approximately 60 men who registered, for single women, for Spanish-speaking women, and for ministers' wives.

The faculty included 99 conference leaders and speakers from 16 states.