

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICESBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355W. 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

September 4, 1979

79-148

Basement, Closet, Mattresses
Protect Missionaries in Storm

By Ruth Fowler

DOMINICA (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary personnel huddled in a basement, in a closet and under mattresses as Hurricane David swept the island of Dominica and destroyed their homes.

Foreign Mission Board officials pieced together information about what happened during a telephone conversation with missionaries who later evacuated to Barbados and parents of missionaries who had received information from Barbados. Four mission personnel and one child remain on Dominica, while five mission personnel and three children have evacuated.

As the storm approached, some missionaries gathered in the basement apartment of missionary journeyman Colleen Thompson, who lived underneath the home of missionary Fred Walker. The apartment was the only missionary residence to escape damage. The home above lost part of its roof.

Walker left his home to take the car to the garage at the Donald B. Snell home. Walker and the Snells were trapped in the Snell home when the storm hit. First they hid under the bed in the upstairs apartment. When the roof blew off the rain poured in at such a rate they feared they would drown under the bed.

Then they went to a closet, which also gave way under the force of the wind. At last they found shelter in the apartment below.

Mark Allen took his pregnant wife Jan to their car, the only safe place he could think of. They were joined by an elderly couple also seeking shelter. The car and its occupants escaped without a scratch but their home was destroyed.

No missionaries and none of the other 300 Americans living on the island were injured, according to reports.

After the storm, the basement apartment was the only dry, livable home left. The river used for drinking water was contaminated. Food was in short supply. No immediate communications could leave the island.

While families in the United States waited anxiously for word, missionaries began to ration food and water. A fresh water spring was found just before some of the missionaries were evacuated to Barbados.

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"They were beginning to get a little dehydrated but were rationing the water and drinking coconut water when it was available," said Miss Thompson. Discovery of the spring solved the drinking water situation, but missionaries are boiling it to make sure it is safe to drink.

Walker got a brief message through to Barbados via ham radio to tell them an evacuation was possible and that food was becoming a problem. The message also said the missionaries were safe and the first word of their survival got back to the United States.

A British barge took several of the mission's personnel, including Mrs. Snell and the Snell children, Mrs. John Ross, Miss Thompson, and Mark and Jan Allen, to catch a German freighter to Barbados.

The Allens, Mission Service Corps volunteers, went immediately to the United States from Barbados. When they arrived in Atlanta on Sept. 3, they were wearing the same clothing they had on when the storm struck.

The Walker family, Don Snell and Dr. John Ross, a special project dentist, remain on the battered island of Dominica to begin relief and rebuilding efforts in the wake of what has been called one of the most destructive hurricanes of this century. They are all living in the one undamaged apartment.

Official death tolls report that at least 37 persons lost their lives on Dominica, but most people agree some deaths will never be confirmed.

Immediate needs include food, water, shelter and medical care. Some medical supplies are beginning to arrive.

Dr. Ross has been enlisted to help in first-aid. Ross is traveling by British helicopter from village to village providing whatever help he can, including sewing up wounds. Infections are now a problem. Because of the contaminated water supply, cholera and typhoid are also real dangers.

Missionaries staying on Dominica sent a list of building supplies to Barbados missionary Philip R. Overton. He and fellow missionary Jerry L. Harris are buying sheet iron, nails, lumber and food to ship to Dominica. They will first seek to repair damaged roofs on missionary homes to provide adequate shelter.

John R. Cheyne, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's associate consultant for relief ministries, went to Dominica with \$15,000 to begin immediate purchase of supplies.

On his way back to the United States, Cheyne also was expected to visit the Dominican Republic, where missionaries were reported to be safe but where extensive relief efforts may be needed. A majority of the estimated 800 Caribbean deaths caused by the hurricane occurred in that country.

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Skyrocketing Crime Rate
Unites Clergy, Politicians

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
9/4/79

ATLANTA (BP)--Outrage against a wave of violent crime has united politicians and clergymen in several cities across the United States.

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Mayors in Detroit, New York and Chicago have given attention to churchmen who offered assistance to deal with the problem. Cleveland Mayor Dennis Ducinich even told a national television audience that it's time to pray about crime.

Most recently, Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson called on local ministers to "attack crime at its individual and spiritual source," and urged them to help form ARMAC--Atlanta Religious Mobilization Against Crime.

In Atlanta, which already has had more citizens murdered this year than in all of 1978, rape has increased more than 30 percent and robbery by more than 50 percent.

Jackson said a "spiritual breakdown" and the burden of economic stress have combined to increase the incidence of violent crime.

"As economic instability infuses the lives of people...frustrations can become a weight too heavy for some individuals to bear," he explained, adding that such tension often relieves itself in sudden bursts of rage.

To curb the city's growing crime rate, Jackson advocated more constructive use of religious resources, both physical and human, and asked pastors to monitor state laws in an effort to most effectively deter crime and punish criminals.

Searcy S. Garrison, executive secretary-treasurer of the Georgia Baptist Convention and member of the ARMAC executive committee, said ARMAC's task is to "do anything we can to reinforce support for fighting crime."

Most importantly, the organization must foster a "recommitment to moral, spiritual and ethical ideals--the bulwark of our strength for years," Garrison emphasized.

But just how religious leaders go about kindling recommitment could spell success or failure, according to Dale Cross, director of metropolitan missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"Politicians are asking churches, 'What is the nature of man, and how can we affirm it?'" Cross said. "Churches cannot afford to answer these questions in simplistic slogans, for this will lead to cynicism (among politicians) and a lack of credibility (on the part of churches)."

Churches and religious leaders also must move beyond verbal interactions with politicians and deal with problems at their grass-roots level--among people, said John Havlik of the Home Mission Board department of evangelism.

Havlik said churches must deal with the crime problem at the "congregational level," noting that economic stress and racism are major causes of violent crime that need immediate attention.

Churches can heal families besieged by economic stress at the "point of most concern--evangelism," he said. And churches also can begin to destroy the "specter of racism" that haunts cities.

He also supported "grass-roots neighborhood organizations" at all economic levels. Such groups could foster a community spirit among neighbors and present a platform from which the church could speak to vital issues such as crime.

"But the real key is involvement"...Havlik said. "Jesus wept over the city, so our first step must be to take time to care."

Such care and involvement should take the gospel wherever "crime forces gather crowds," said Martin Luther King Sr., dean of Atlanta pastors and father of the late civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr.

"We need ministers to go to dance halls and parks and get a hearing," King explained. "We need men and women, people that folks have respect for, to take the message to the people."

"They need to go and keep going, not just one, two or three times," he said. "I believe we'll get a hearing."

Politicians and religious leaders from coast to coast will be listening to hear the response of that "hearing," for Atlanta's problem is a "parallel phenomenon" across the country, Cross said.

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Virginia, California
Churches Given Honor

Baptist Press
9/4/79

ATLANTA (BP)--Jefferson Street Baptist Church of Roanoke, Va., and First Baptist Church of Bell Gardens, Calif., have been recognized as outstanding churches in transition by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The churches were honored as Outstanding PACT Congregations by the department of metropolitan missions. PACT is Project Assistance to Churches in Transition and is designed to help churches minister to and cope with significant changes in their communities.

The Jefferson Street and Bell Gardens congregations both have experienced transition in their communities and underwent the PACT program, which includes an intensive study both of the church and its community.

Also recognized were the consultants who worked with the churches. John Dowdy, director of Christian social ministries and special missions ministries for the Missouri Baptist Convention, worked with the California church. George Bullard, missions-ministry director for the Mecklenburg Baptist Association in Charlotte, N.C., worked with the Virginia congregation.

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Cooperative Program Needs
Strong Sept. To Reach Budget

Baptist Press
9/4/79

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--In September, Southern Baptists will need to record the third highest month in the history of the national Cooperative Program unified budget to achieve the denomination's 1978-79 national operating and capital needs budgets.

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September must yield \$5,679,595 to reach the \$64 million operating and capital needs budgets of the world mission program of Southern Baptist Convention agencies.

Through August 1979, the next-to-last month in the fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30, receipts totaled \$58,320,405. That represents an 11.29 percent increase over the same point last year but lacks \$5,679,595 of reaching the 1978-79 budget.

The Cooperative Program operating budget of SBC agencies is \$62 million for 1978-79, with another \$2 million ticketed for capital needs.

Already during the fiscal year, the SBC Executive Committee has reported two months which rank at the top of the list in Cooperative Program history. In January 1979, national receipts totaled \$6,002,367, the highest month ever. In February, the third highest month, receipts totaled \$5,592,262. The second highest month of \$5,784,485 came in January 1978.

Total receipts for the first 11 months include the \$58,320,405 Cooperative Program figure and another \$53,909,515 in designated contributions for a total of \$112,229,919. The designated contributions are 14.37 percent ahead of the same point last year, while total contributions are 12.75 percent ahead.

For the month of August alone, Southern Baptists gave \$5,296,767 through the national Cooperative Program (a 12.96 percent increase over last August) and \$804,191 in designated gifts (a 23.94 percent increase). Total contributions for the month of \$6,100,958 represented a 14.29 percent increase.