

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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December 4, 1979

79-203

Cooper Renews Brazil Ties,
Warns President On Smoking

By Robert Stanley

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--A crowd of newsmen gathered around Southern Baptist layman Kenneth Cooper as he emerged from almost an hour's interview with the president of Brazil. Most of the newsmen were smoking.

"I just finished telling your president that he shouldn't smoke," said Cooper, whose name is synonymous with physical fitness in this South American country.

Few Americans could have given that advice without causing resentment. But Dr. Kenneth Cooper, because of the training program that he instituted which helped Brazil's soccer team win its third World Cup in 1970; is a special person to the millions of soccer fans here.

His name has become almost a legend. Edgar F. Hallock Jr., Southern Baptist missionary who interprets for Cooper on his visits to Rio, said when you ask a person if he jogs, you ask, "Have you done your Cooper today?"

In Brasilia, the federal capital, a jogging course has been marked off along the main avenue through the city. Signs at 400-meter intervals tell joggers how far they've run.

"They have difficulty translating the word 'aerobics' into their language," Cooper says modestly. "So they've just used 'Cooper' instead on their markers."

Cooper, a doctor who became interested in developing a physical fitness program while in the U.S. Air Force, now has a large aerobics center in Dallas, Texas. He also has written four books on aerobics, the conditioning system that emphasizes fitness of the heart, lungs and circulatory system.

A native of Oklahoma, Cooper first became acquainted with Hallock through the missionary's father, the late Edgar F. Hallock Sr., pastor of First Baptist Church, Norman, Okla. Cooper was a member of Hallock's church and at one point felt the Lord was calling him to be a medical missionary.

The invitation to meet with Brazil President Joao (John) Figueiredo came during a recent 15-day visit to three South American countries. With missionary Hallock translating, Cooper gave the president a number of tips on personal physical fitness.

The next morning, Cooper and Hallock got up early to join the governor of the federal district in dedicating the new aerobics course and an official government program of preventive health medicine.

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The main purpose of Cooper's recent 15-day trip to South America was to participate in a physical fitness program in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where about 5,000 participants turned out for a run sponsored by city officials and two other groups.

Afterwards, thousands crowded around a three-tiered platform in Palermo Park, one of Buenos Aires' major parks, to hear Cooper speak. So many people mobbed the platform after the ceremony that it collapsed, and security guards had to pull Cooper away to safety.

Cooper said he enjoys working with Southern Baptist missionaries wherever he visits. "I try to introduce them to people in high government positions or others that I have contact with because of my physical fitness programs," Cooper explained.

And wherever he goes Cooper tries to say a word not only about physical fitness, but spiritual fitness as well. One woman was converted after she heard his testimony on television during the 1974 Billy Graham crusade in Rio.

Hallock, a former president of the "Cooper Maniacs," joggers in Rio, is enthusiastic about the witnessing contacts which have opened up through Cooper and the exercise group.

How else, he asks, could you expect to meet people like Coach Coutinho and his wife? Coutinho, who coaches the Flamingo soccer team in addition to the international team, gets as much attention the year around as a Super Bowl coach gets in the United States when the National Football League championship is played each January.

"We're just like old friends now," Hallock says. "And that's a tremendous opportunity."

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Robert Stanley, director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's office of news and information services and chief of the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press, just returned from a news-gathering trip to South America.

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

Baptist Service Held
In Royal Palace in Morocco

Baptist Press
12/4/79

RABAT, Morocco (BP)--William R. Tolbert, president of Liberia, requested and was granted the right to attend a private worship service at the royal palace in the Muslim state of Morocco during a recent visit.

H. Val Frailey, pastor of Rabat Protestant Fellowship and a Southern Baptist representative in Morocco, conducted the service in the guest quarters of the palace for Tolbert and his entourage.

Tolbert, who also serves as pastor of a Baptist church in Liberia, had been unable to attend regular local Protestant services because of a schedule conflict.

Christian worship and witness are restricted in the Muslim state.

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Memphis 'Church' Featuring
Slot Machines Loses Appeal

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southgate Chapel and Recreation Center in downtown Memphis, Tenn. is out of business.

The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand a lower court ruling affirming the conviction of Paul E. Vance, who described himself as the minister of what turned out to be a gambling establishment.

Vance was convicted three years ago, sentenced to two-to-three-years in the state penitentiary and fined \$1,000.

Vance argued throughout his lengthy appeal that the chapel and recreation center, sponsored by the so-called Christian Church of Faith, was discriminated against by Memphis police. He said that if the vice squad looked into his operation, it ought also to check out local Catholic church and Jewish synagogue bingo games.

He also said that his church was legitimate because it held services every Sunday, had a minister, held group sessions, helped drug addicts and the homeless, and gave away money to children for bus fares.

Tennessee's assistant attorney general, on the other side, argued that although the state could not subject Vance and his "church" to "a test of orthodoxy or good faith," it nevertheless "can and frequently must determine what groups and activities are religious" in the context of the First Amendment.

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Missionary Brings Laughter
To Cambodian Food Lines

Baptist Press
12/4/79

BANGKOK, Thailand (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Daniel R. Hill has seen the first sign of joy among the Cambodian refugees and says "it's worth crawling through mud for."

Hill, who was in charge of setting up the food distribution system at Sa Kaew Camp, found that playful sternness helped keep order in the food lines and brought some laughter, too.

In fact, his system worked so well that Mark Brown, a representative of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in charge of refugee holding camps in Thailand, asked him to become the food distributor of his holding centers team.

Hill, a native of Atlanta, Ga., will be in charge of buying and distributing the food.

"I have never seen anyone more effective in organizing and distributing food than Danny Hill," Brown said.

The people at Sa Kaew were not familiar with life in a holding camp. Desperate to get all the food they could when it was available, they tried to return again and again to the food line, breaking in front of those less able to object. Hill became known as the "mad Baptist" as he attempted to restore order.

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"We had to be rather stern with them," he said. "It was a constant pressure of having to discipline some by making them go to the end of the line, telling some to get out of line as they had been served already, or making the line straighten up. When I talk about a line, I am talking about one line with about 40 people across and as far back as you can see."

When Hill saw people breaking in line, he would go back to them, holding a stick, and tell them to get out of line or to go to the end. "I couldn't allow any compassion to come in," he says, "but they saw through that. I remember the first time I did that I turned around and started walking back, and they suddenly broke out laughing.

"When I heard the laughter, I thought, 'This is good; they're laughing.' Since then I have played on it. Now, so often when I go after somebody, I'll go after them in a way like going toward a kid you're wanting to tease or scare. They still sit there, then just burst out laughing. That's worth standing on your head for or crawling through mud for, to see a little bit of joy and a little bit of laughter."

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Agriculture Has Ethical
Implications, Currie Says

Baptist Press
12/4/79

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (BP)--The structure of American agriculture should be viewed as a moral issue with far-reaching implications, David R. Currie testified at a hearing conducted here by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The hearing is one of a series of 10 across the nation during November and December led by Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland to gather information on the economic and social issues affecting the structure of American agriculture and rural life.

"Agricultural structure affects the stewardship of land, food prices, energy use, rural communities, and ultimately food security," said Currie, special projects coordinator for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville.

Currie, who has researched the ethical implications of agriculture, called on the Department of Agriculture to take steps to preserve the family-owned and operated farm.

"Studies have shown that communities surrounded by small, family-operated farms are more stable economically, socially, politically and spiritually than communities surrounded by large farms often with absentee landlords," said Currie, who grew up on a family-operated ranch in Paint Rock, Texas.

"As family farms go bankrupt, society as a whole suffers due to the fact that rural communities and their traditional values of family life, honesty and hard work tend to disappear," he said.

Currie told the hearing that the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Houston in June 1979, supported protection of family farms with the following resolution:

"Whereas, the continued loss of family farms is a threat to rural communities, traditional values, a family-based food production system, and ultimately the food security in this nation and around the world, be it resolved that we urge individual Southern Baptists to communicate with their elected congressional representatives in support of political policies which will preserve the family farm and thereby help preserve the life and well-being of thousands of churches."

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Currie explained that even though 13.2 million Southern Baptists are in all 50 states and in large cities, that the denomination is still in many ways rural, with "63 percent of all Southern Baptist churches (22,000) . . . in communities of under 2,500 population.

"Out of these predominantly rural churches have come many of today's leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention," he said, "including many of its pastors, . . . denominational workers, . . . seminary and university professors, . . . and home and foreign missionaries.

"I might add that out of one of these churches has also come the current president of the United States," he said, in reference to the Plains (Ga.) Baptist Church, where Jimmy Carter grew up.

Currie urged the Department of Agriculture "to look carefully at the ethical implications of U.S. agricultural policy." He suggested that the department "structure policies to preserve the family farms as the primary source of American food production; examine tax policies, commodity programs, export-import restrictions; and research programs to see if they help or harm family farmers."

He also expressed hope "that Congress will ask broad social and economic questions and deal with agricultural policy with a holistic approach rather than a piecemeal one."

"Every aspect of farm policy, whether it be development, compensation, environment or trade, is tied to everything else, and directly or indirectly impacts the structure of agriculture and thus rural development. I hope Congress will ask of every agricultural policy: 'How does this affect the whole? Is this for the good of the public? What are the ethical implications of such policies?'"

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Baptists Plan Broadcasts
On Nation's First Station

Baptist Press
12/4/79

MAFEKING, Bophuthatswana (BP)--Baptists are planning to air 15-minute broadcasts on Radio Bophuthatswana, the independent homeland's first station.

Less than a year old, the station broadcasts to the Tswana people around Moshale and Mmabatho, capital of the independent homeland within South Africa's borders. Although few homes have electricity, most have battery-operated radios on which they listen to South African stations as well as their own, according to Southern Baptist Missionary Gary R. Tallman.

Frank J. Baker, Southern Baptist missionary in Zambia, will develop and produce the programs in English. Later the mission plans to have a national pastor broadcast in Tswana, the national language.

"The possible impact is tremendous and only time will tell what the Lord has in store for this ministry," said Tallman. Each program will end by giving an address for people to write with questions and comments.

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Bob Banks Elected
To Conference Office

Baptist Press
12/4/79

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Bob Banks, program section director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, has been named president-elect of the North American Conference of Mens' Work Secretaries for a two-year term.

Banks is scheduled to become president of the fellowship of 20 denominational executives concerned about laymen of the churches in North America in December 1981.

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