



-- BAPTIST PRESS

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Michigan Twister Destroys Baptist Church Building

By Marv Knox

GLENDALE, Mich. (BP)—Michigan's fiercest onslaught of tornadoes in 15 years destroyed a Southern Baptist church building, but it may have revitalized the congregation which meets inside.

"People who hadn't been with us in a long time worshipped with us today," said pastor Joe Jones of Glendale Baptist Church, after members met in a home and voted to rebuild the structure.

The twister that felled the building in mid-May was among several tornadoes which ripped through western sections of Michigan, killing five people, injuring at least 82 others and causing more than \$50 million in damage to property in Bangor, to the west, Glendale and Kalamazoo, to the east.

"It took off like a galloping horse and really did the havoc," Jones said of the tornado which hit Glendale.

"But we're really lucky—none of our members were injured," he said. "In fact, I think it served to wake them up to the value of the church—in their lives and in the community."

The church, which has about 40 members, is "the stable element, about the only thing left" in the rural farming community, said Jones, a bivocational pastor and resident of Kalamazoo.

"The spirit is good, and the members came up with the idea of rebuilding themselves," he reported. "They selected a building committee, which is responsible for pursuing a course of action during the coming months."

"The building was a total loss, and we hope to collect all of the \$20,000 for which it was insured. I would guess that it will cost twice that amount to rebuild if we hire all the labor."

"However, we're hoping to find some other Baptists who can come in and help us with the labor. If we can get that, then the \$20,000 probably will cover the cost of supplies."

Members are meeting in homes while cleanup efforts continue and while the building committee looks for a suitable location to serve as interim church building.

"It's going to take a long time to get back to normal," Jones assessed. "Yet I feel there is a future for Glendale Baptist Church. Maybe this will stir up the people who have not been involved for awhile."

Southern Baptist Aid
Asked for Refugees

ATLANTA (BP)—As Cuban refugees continue to pour into the United States, Southern Baptist refugee resettlement coordinator Gene Tunnell has asked for church sponsors for several hundred.

More than 8,000 persons currently are awaiting resettlement through Church World Service, a volunteer resettlement organization the Baptist Home Mission Board cooperates with. Southern Baptists should be prepared to handle a significant number of those, Tunnell said.

Early press reports have tended to exaggerate the number of "single men" and "criminals" coming in, Tunnell said, explaining that such reports may have dampened sponsorship hopes. He said those arriving include many families and children.

Castro is using the word "criminal" indiscriminately, applying it to persons as "the kid who steals chickens because he's hungry or the young man who refused military service because he didn't want to fight a pointless war in Angola," Tunnell said. "Among the refugees are some criminals. But government agencies are doing everything they can to weed out these persons. I can't guarantee a church won't get a criminal, but it is very, very unlikely."

Tunnell has just returned from a fact-finding trip to Eglin and Chaffee military bases, where the refugees are being sent for processing and where Southern Baptists have workers helping them.

These ministries make contact with people "who might never again hear of Christ if our churches don't follow up," Tunnell noted.

David Lema, himself a Cuban, is working at Eglin. He is pastor of a Spanish-speaking Baptist church in New Orleans.

Donoso Escobar, a Spanish pastor in Little Rock, Ark., has moved to Chaffee, near Fort Smith, Ark., to handle the Baptist caseload there.

Tunnell stressed the urgent need for sponsors because the federal government was not helping financially in Cuban resettlement.

"Whereas in other resettlement efforts, the government has made available substantial funds, these are not available for the Cubans," Tunnell said. "So an even heavier responsibility is placed on the churches to act in this crisis."

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Carter's Religious Beliefs
Shape Policy, Pippert Says

By Bob Stanley

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5/19/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—President Jimmy Carter's concept of his role as "first servant" instead of "first boss" may have been instrumental in the restraint he has exercised in the Iranian and Afghanistan crises, a White House correspondent said.

Wesley Pippert, who covers the White House for United Press International, told the Religious Communications Congress/1980 that the influence of Carter's religious beliefs may also have taught the American people that there is a "wise and pragmatic alternative" to the "cops and robbers" response of force.

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Pippert said he felt that he and other Washington newsmen have failed to probe the implications of Carter's beliefs in terms of what they mean in his actions in the Oval Office.

One of a three-person panel exploring ethical questions in news coverage, Pippert admitted that most newsmen have a "language problem" when it comes to writing about morality "without seeming to be moralizing."

He recalled that in a speech before a group of Washington's power elite, Carter had noted that they often described themselves as "public servants" without true understanding of what is meant by the servant's role. He told of hearing Carter quote Jesus' teaching that the person who would be "first" should learn to be "servant of all."

The 20-year veteran UPI reporter said that late in the 1976 campaign for the presidency, he asked news director Jody Powell how he felt the press had treated Carter's religious background and beliefs, particularly his statement of being a "born again" Christian.

Powell's response was that he felt the American people were better prepared to understand Carter's religion than were the correspondents who were being called upon to report it.

Marjorie Hyer, religion editor of The Washington Post, advised the communications audience from 43 states and 18 countries attending the congress with a "commandment:"

"Thou shalt be eternally mindful of the power of the media and exercise it with the greatest of responsibility."

Such exercise of responsibility, she said, means more than just giving equal time and equal space to contrasting views. In a recent story quoting W. A. Criswell, pastor of Dallas' First Baptist Church, on a Baptist doctrinal issue, she said she noted that Criswell had been a "supporter of President Nixon."

"I'm not sure that that was fair," she added. "I put it in because the story had political overtones. Maybe I was being unfair to him (Criswell). It has troubled me since."

Hyer advised the religious journalists to be sure that they do not ignore the stories concerning persons in their denominations that are covered in the secular press. As an example, she cited the recent forced withdrawal from Congress of Robert Drinan, a Catholic priest, on orders from the Vatican.

"What happens to your credibility if your members read about this in the secular press but don't see it in their church paper?" she asked.

The third panelist, Chris Clark, vice president for news of WTVF, the CBS station in Nashville, said at church he is often cornered with a question: "Why do you people in the news media handle the news the way you do?"

He confessed that "we are human instruments subject to human error."

The panel was questioned about use of visuals that might be offensive, such as the recent Iranian display of bodies of the eight Americans killed in the rescue attempt in Iran. Clark said he agreed with CBS' policy in this instance of describing the scene but not using the most disturbing of the pictures.

Wrapup

Media Ethics Concerns
Religious Communicators

By Lillian Moir

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Religious communicators from around the world concluded a once-a-decade gathering with a challenge to use the media in "the service of humanity."

Some 1,295 Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Jewish communicators from 18 countries attended the Religious Communications Congress/1980 at Nashville's Opryland Hotel.

A recurring thread throughout the meeting was ethics in religious communication. This thread wove its way through speeches, seminars, worship and meetings of participating religious bodies at the May 14-16 event.

The highlight for the event came the concluding day with a special videotaped message from Pope John Paul II in Rome, who urged that the power of the media be used to "expand the horizons of individuals and peoples who are seeking to fulfill their human destinies."

The God-likeness of humanity, said the Roman Catholic leader, must be proclaimed if believers are to "defend human dignity against the forces that would reduce human beings to mere consumers of material goods or to pawns of national interests or of divisive ideologies."

Another special message came from U.S. President Jimmy Carter, an active Southern Baptist layman, who supported the religious communicators in "addressing the myriad moral and ethical issues arising from the use of mass media techniques for matters of the spirit."

"I salute your earnest desire to further understanding between peoples in a manner consistent with God's grace and compassion," he said in a message read by Curtis Chambers, Dayton, Ohio, general chairperson for the congress.

A panel of television, newspaper and wire service journalists admitted they face a dilemma on stories with ethical implications. The dilemma for Marjorie Hyer, Washington (D.C.) Post, was whether to print accusations of indiscretion leveled at a Roman Catholic priest—a story which could destroy him, the woman making the accusations and her family. Hyer chose not to print it.

Wesley Pippert, United Press International, Washington, D. C., said the news media appear to be unwilling to write stories about moral or ethical issues. Frequently such stories are "covered with a mass of detail" which does not get at the truth, he said.

The communicators from a variety of professional disciplines as well as religious backgrounds were challenged by Martin Marty, University of Chicago Divinity School professor. He told the congress participants that they are not "mass communicators" but communicators to small groups of people.

"We need to remind ourselves that the general population has more to do than just read, see or hear us," Marty said. "We are less than truly mass communicators," but that is "not to say our ministry to sub-communities is unimportant."

Participants in the event sponsored by 49 organizations of religious communicators heard a call to counter the current "sweep of conservatism" in the U.S. by returning to its "historic vision of greatness."

Benjamin L. Hooks, a Baptist minister and executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said in his keynote address that the conservative movement "has threatened to roll back" civil rights advances made in recent years.

Hooks, former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, urged congress participants to "join hands and lock hearts" in the struggle for justice, particularly in the job market.

Another speaker who sounded the cry for justice for the poor and powerless was Harvey Cox, Harvard University Divinity School professor. He urged the communicators to become "the voice of the voiceless," to recognize that the cry of the poor is "the very voice of God—on of the ways God speaks to us in real human history."

Hispanic-American journalists in the Catholic Press Association, meeting during the congress, formed a caucus to press for equal rights and affirmative action for them and for blacks. They were joined by a group of black communicators who urged the participants to actively recruit, hire, train and promote blacks and other minority persons in the field.

Communicators also need to "accept responsibility for confronting racism within their spheres of influence at all levels by challenging and eliminating exclusivist practices and policies," said the newly-formed Society of Blacks in Religious Communications.

The society drafted a statement to present to planners of the Religious Communications Congress/1980 expressing sadness and alarm "over a sea of white faces" at the congress.

Congress Coordinator Wilmer C. Fields of Nashville said, "The concerns of the Society of Blacks in Religious Communications are true to the extent that representation of minorities was light."

"We are disappointed to have so few Blacks, Hispanics and other minorities in attendance," said Fields, director of public relations for the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. "We planned originally and worked to try to get broad representation, and we support the efforts of this organization to call attention to this disparity in American religious life," Fields said.

Human rights issues the church must face surfaced in some of the 16 seminars held simultaneously during the congress.

Racism and sexism in the church and in the communications fields were attacked by Mary Lou Redding, editor of The Upper Room, Nashville, and by Lionel C. Barrow Jr., dean of the school of communications, Howard University, Washington, D. C., who called for changes in language and hiring practices.

War and peace is the most serious issue facing the church, said Ethel Gintoft, Milwaukee, Wis., editor of the Catholic Herald Citizen, and Spurgeon Dunnam, Dallas, editor of The United Methodist Reporter, who urged speaking to the church with more knowledge on the complex issue.

Widespread use of computers by the First World could mean a widening gap in power between it and the Third and Fourth Worlds, said James Finn, New York City, director of publications for the Council on Religion and International Affairs, who feared the record-keeping possibilities of computers as a means of "control over others."

Congress chairperson Chambers said he was "highly gratified for the response of communicators representing the religious communities in the U.S., Canada and in many parts of the world."

"I've been convinced all along that one of the most significant parts of such a congress would be the interchange and sharing between the many different groups from diverse religious traditions representing the whole spectrum of communications media," he said.

Chambers, head of United Methodist Communications, said it will be some weeks before the final reckoning, but that the event will not show a financial deficit. The budget for the congress was roughly \$100,000.

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Congress Approves Funds
For Food Stamp Program

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WASHINGTON (BP)—Congress swiftly concluded action on supplemental appropriations for the Food Stamp Program, just meeting the May 15 deadline announced by the Department of Agriculture for ordering states to suspend benefits June 1.

The Senate voted, 57 to 17, and the House, 316 to 36, to approve a conference report appropriating \$2.56 billion to fund the program through Sept. 30, the end of the current fiscal year.

The action, urged by numerous religious leaders, allows approximately 21 million Americans assisted by the program to avoid what one senator called a "foodless June."

The conference report sets a new ceiling of \$9.2 billion on the program for fiscal year 1980, allowing room for Congress to appropriate an additional \$446 million which the Senate had considered necessary to fund the program for the next four months. House rules prevented it from approving a higher figure until the overall budget ceiling is raised.

Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton, D-Mo., who managed the emergency resolution in the Senate, told his colleagues that passage of the measure would avert a "disaster" and that he anticipated the additional \$446 million will be appropriated later.

To complete action by the target date, the House and Senate had to vote to authorize the additional funding and also approve a waiver from the ceiling imposed by this year's budget resolution.

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Korean Crusades
Start on Schedule

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PUSAN, Korea (BP)—Despite student riots throughout the country, the Korean evangelistic crusades started on schedule May 18 with a near-capacity crowd of more than 5,000 in Pusan.

Because of student demonstrations in Kwangju and a resulting 9 p.m. curfew, the first night of the crusade in that city was changed to a prayer meeting. The remaining sessions were rescheduled for 2 p.m.

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The Pusan meeting began at 7 p.m. but as much as an hour later people were still pouring through the doors to the city auditorium. More than 400 people sat on the floor as Florida Baptist team members preached, sang and gave their testimonies. Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, was the main speaker.

Pastor Choi Pyung San, who is in charge of counseling, said he expected the number of decisions for the first meeting to be more than 100.

One Korean student who accepted Christ during the invitation said, "I didn't plan to come here tonight. I was on my way home when I passed the auditorium and a woman gave me a program and asked me to come in and hear the American evangelists. I said I didn't have time, that I was too busy, but she persisted. I sat in the back, planning to leave, but when the American speaker started to talk about death and what it would be worth to gain your life, I couldn't leave."

The crusade, a result of three years of planning and preparation, is being sponsored by the Korea Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board with assistance from the Florida Baptist Convention.

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Wrapup

Huge Women's Conference
Preaches Order, Building

By Roy Jennings

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MEMPHIS (BP)—More than 4,000 women from 18 states and Canada received detailed instructions at the three-day Mid-Continent Christian Women's Concerns Conference in Memphis on how to build their lives, homes, and bridges to others in their communities, nation and world.

A battery of nationally-known "religious architects" provided the instructions in general sessions, supplemented by 35 workshops on subjects ranging from biblical submission to staying slim.

The interdenominational conference, a project of Mrs. Adrian Rogers, wife of the pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, attracted women from Alaska to Florida, mostly young and Southern Baptist.

Originally limited to about 3,000, sponsors opened both auditoriums at Bellevue church and repeated all general sessions twice when demand for admittance became so great.

Mrs. Roland Maddox of Memphis, a co-director of the conference, said the cost of the event would run almost \$100,000 but a registration fee of \$20 per person should cover it.

Two Southern Baptists, Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, opened and closed the conference.

Rogers kicked off the conference by challenging the women to build their homes and lives on the Word of God and to reject the humanistic approach of trying to solve mankind's problems apart from God.

Touching on women's liberation, Rogers said he believed in the equality of the sexes, but added: "I'm of the opinion that a woman is infinitely superior to a man—at being a woman, and a man is infinitely superior to a woman—at being a man. We are equal, but thank God, we're not the same."

At the closing session, Miss Weatherford advised the women that the real test of their experience was what they did in service to others with what they had.

Southern Baptists have an unusual challenge in building bridges to the rest of the world through Bold Mission Thrust, a project to share the gospel with all mankind by the year 2000, Miss Weatherford said.

The feminist movement took its lumps in general sessions and workshops.

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Beverly LaHaye, wife of Tim LaHaye, founder of Family Life Seminars and pastor of Scott Memorial Baptist Church, San Diego, called on the women to praise the Lord that the Equal Rights Amendment hasn't passed.

"I want you to be encouraged," she said. "We're told to resist. We're told to put on the armor of God and resist the enemy."

In a workshop on biblical submission, Mrs. Jack Taylor of Fort Worth, Texas, characterized the feminist movement as a demonic attempt to make men and women alike.

"As I listen to feminist leaders speak, I wonder which man in their life they are angry with and why they are taking the anger out on God."

"It (biblical submission) is not being a doormat or admitting inferiority and it is not being in slavery. Nor is it getting your husband to do what you want him to do by manipulation," Miss Taylor said. "For a woman, biblical submission is to discover and yield to her position in God's divine order." She referred women to 1 Corinthians 11:3 for the proper order.

Television was accused of eroding the American family.

Mrs. Billie Barrows, wife of Cliff Barrows, member of the Billy Graham evangelism team, called television a wonderful invention, "but it's just about to damn the American family."

"Those soap operas that are making women discontented in their roles, they're immoral. Women, I pray God will convict you if you cannot put the test of Philippians 4:8 on that TV, 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure... think on these things.'"

Mrs. Norma Gabler of Longview, Tex., called the material in children's textbooks one of the most dangerous encroachments on the family.

A nationally known proponent of parental textbook screening, Mrs. Gabler cited examples of school curriculum which she feels are immoral and contradictory to religious convictions, including sex education courses which she feels are being taught in schools without a proper moral context.

Other speakers struck notes for prayer and personal witnessing.

Mrs. Vonette Bright of San Bernardino, Calif., wife of Bill Bright, president of Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc., said prayer represents one of the greatest ways women can use their influence today.

Mrs. Millie Dienert of Washington, D.C., an international consultant to Christian Women's Clubs, reminded the women that God wants them to spend their time witnessing (furnishing proof and evidence of Jesus) not erecting bigger buildings.

Many of the women wept openly as several speakers shared how their faith helped during personal tragedies.

Mrs. Elisabeth Elliot, author and evangelical spokeswoman for the role of women, told of the death of two husbands, one a missionary to Ecuador, then outlined how the women could discover discipleship.

"Trust God for who he is, not what he does. Give up your right to yourself," she said.

After explanation by Mrs. Rogers, the conference co-director, the women used applause to signal their agreement to send a telegram to the New York state legislature supporting a bill limiting deceptive solicitation, particularly the practices of some "religious" groups using deception to get members.

Cothen Says Quotes
Misrepresent Facts

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist Sunday School Board President Grady Cothen said quotations included in charges leveled against three writers of board publications by Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, were taken out of context and, therefore, misrepresent the facts.

Cothen reiterated the board's policy of seriously considering all questions raised by Baptists concerning the doctrinal soundness of its materials and admitting and seeking to correct any mistakes.

The three writers of Sunday School publications were among a list of seven cited by Patterson.

The three are Temp Sparkman, author of Being a Disciple, published by Broadman Press in 1972; Fisher Humphreys, author of The Death of Christ, published by Broadman in 1978; and George L. Balentine, pastor of First Baptist Church, Augusta, Ga., and author of Bible background material in the July, August, September 1979 issue of Sunday School Young Adults in the Convention Uniform Series.

Concerning the Sparkman book, Cothen said the issue was dealt with in 1977 when the book went out of print "because after five years, sales had largely ceased, it was dated, and because there had been some misunderstanding and misinterpretation."

Further, Cothen said, "Dr. Patterson and his associates were aware of this action about the time it was taken or shortly thereafter. This is a rehash of a three-year-old controversy."

Regarding The Death of Christ by Humphreys, Cothen said, "Dr. Humphreys' argument throughout the volume does not deny any of the basic truths of the New Testament."

"His (Humphreys) attempt is to explain the cross in terms that are more easily understood by those whose cultural background does not give them an understanding of the Old Testament pattern of sacrifice and religious ritual," Cothen said.

He added: "It is possible to take passages out of context and totally distort the meaning of the volume."

Cothen noted that in the chapter which Patterson questions, Humphreys discusses the views of eight theologians and their attempts to describe the meaning of the cross.

"While Patterson's attacks call Humphreys' book an attack on atonement, Humphreys' statement is accurate when he describes his own book as 'a defense and an exposition of Christ's atoning work,'" said Cothen.

In the commentary in Sunday School Young Adults, Cothen said Balentine's writing is consistent with characteristics for the Convention Uniform Series of which Sunday School Young Adults is a part. The Convention Uniform Series is one of three lines of Sunday School materials produced by the board.

Series guidelines specify: "Interpretations are consistent with and not contrary to the Southern Baptist Convention's 'The Baptist Faith and Message.' Biblical evidence supporting views generally held by Southern Baptists is given. Only rarely are other interpretations included, and then only to help learners know that such views exist. In dealing with passages on which there is no general agreement among Southern Baptists more than one possible interpretation is given."

"Every effort is made by every editor and writer to follow the curriculum base design," Cothen said.

He added: "Some seem to wish that curriculum materials never deal with any problems known to serious students of the Bible. For the Sunday School Board to ignore these questions is to be guilty of negligence in our theological duty."

"In publishing literally scores of millions of words annually and to have such a minute quantity of the material even questioned is an achievement of considerable magnitude," he said.

Cothen said his personal view of the total reliability of the Scriptures "is well known to Southern Baptists and is evidenced in all of my speaking and writing across 35 years."

"The official policy of the Baptist Sunday School Board is to follow exactly Th Baptist Faith and Message statement on Scripture. We sometimes fail and when we do we will apologize and try again," he said.