



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

## NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
Wilmer C. Fields, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Craig Bird, Feature Editor

### BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996  
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

January 9, 1984

84-4

Fuel Crisis Could Alter  
Tanzanian Missions Concept

By Robert O'Brien

DAR-ES-SALAAM, Tanzania (BP)--The fuel crisis in Tanzania has left Southern Baptist missionaries wondering from week to week whether they can get enough gasoline and diesel fuel for a wide range of ministries.

Some missionaries have had to curtail their work or watch it nearly grind to a halt, at least temporarily, while others manage to get enough fuel to maintain some semblance of normalcy.

Janet McDowell and Martha McAllister, missionary nurses working out of Mbeya, don't know from one week to the next whether fuel will be available for them to continue life-saving rural mobile clinics for mothers and babies.

Jim Houser, church developer and mission chairman, said the fuel shortage has greatly curtailed his work in Musoma. But Charles Orange, church developer in Mwanza, said he manages to get enough while others around him wait two days in lines at gas stations.

In Kyela, missionary Doug Knapp personally baptized more than 4,000 of the 5,000 baptized there last year and started a number of new churches. If mobility decreases, Knapp and African evangelists who work with him may not continue to get that kind of results.

Already, 1983 statistics show baptisms and new churches in 13 of the 22 associations decreased or recorded no gain because of lessened missionary mobility. But increases in the other nine associations caused a 1.8 percent overall gain in churches and an 8.2 percent rise in baptisms, the lowest totals in a number of years. Overall, spirit in the churches remains good despite shortages and inconveniences of many kinds.

The problem, created mainly by a shortage of foreign exchange currency in the East African nation, could cause the Baptist Mission of Tanzania to rethink a missions philosophy built on the concept of wide mobility. A number of missionaries have already begun to analyze what the future holds if the problem doesn't abate.

"Even before this we spent more than 50 percent of our time just taking care of the logistics of living," said one missionary. "If it gets so that most or all of our time is consumed by things other than missions we may have to decide whether we can work here."

But others have begun concluding that less mobility may result in more depth. Instead of far-flung ministries, they may have to stay around home and invest themselves more intensively with fewer people. Thousands of people live within bicycle and walking distance in crowded Africa.

The more intense personal approach may be a wave of the future in missions around the world as resources dwindle and the Southern Baptist mission dollar has to stretch further and further. But meanwhile missionaries are adapting as best they can.

In Iringa, the Baptist Conference Center has cut off its refrigerator because it can't get enough consistent electricity from the local power lines or enough diesel fuel for the generator.

--more--

DARGAN-CARVER LIBRARY  
S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Missionaries Keith and Betty Oliphint, who manage the center, have taken it in their stride. They plan to can more food from the center's garden and prepare fresh food daily for conference participants who can get to Iringa.

Because almost everything is scarce or unavailable in the country, the Oliphints and the Baptist Mission of Tanzania already had a long-range plan to make the center almost entirely self-sufficient.

The story varies from mission station to mission station as 75 missionaries try to get their work done and share what fuel they can get with each other. But even that's difficult because of great distances, uncertain transportation, storage problems and bad roads.

Decreased mobility has increased isolation of remote, single-family mission stations, especially since Baptist Air, the mission's plane service, and Missionary Aviation Fellowship have had to sharply curtail flights because of severe rationing of aviation fuel.

Houser said the mission will consider asking the Tanzania government, which is trying its best to solve the problem, to allow the mission to import fuel. Some groups have done this but face difficult logistics problems.

The recent re-opening of the Tanzania-Kenya border, severely restricted for the past six years, will probably ease procurement of fuel from outside Tanzania. But residents don't expect a quick, easy solution to the problem.

--30--

Draper, Former SBC Presidents  
Say No To Vatican Ambassador

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press  
1/9/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr. and his three immediate predecessors have asked President Reagan not to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican.

In a brief letter dated Jan. 6, Draper and former SBC presidents Bailey E. Smith, Adrian Rogers and Jimmy R. Allen told Reagan such action "would be a clear violation of the principle of church-state separation, a dangerous precedent in church-state relations and an occasion for practical problems in the missionary work of all denominations."

The letter is the latest indication of a rising chorus of opposition by a wide range of religious groups and figures to congressional approval of the move. Before adjourning its first session in November, Congress repealed a 116-year ban on formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican as part of an authorization measure for the Department of State.

Since then the State Department has asked for approval from congressional committees to adjust its fiscal year 1984 budget to allow for setting up an embassy in Vatican City, the 108-acre enclave that seats the Roman Catholic Church.

Along with other Baptist groups, the Southern Baptist Convention has objected to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican for nearly 50 years, opposing in 1939 a move by Franklin D. Roosevelt to appoint Myron C. Taylor as personal representative with the rank of ambassador. Roosevelt subsequently downgraded the Taylor appointment to that of personal envoy with no diplomatic rank.

Baptist leaders' opposition ran strongest when Harry S Truman, a fellow Baptist, announced in 1951 his appointment of Mark W. Clark as ambassador. After fierce public reaction, Truman dropped Clark's nomination.

Despite congressional repeal of the ban on formal relations, President Reagan has given no public indication personally he intends to follow up by exchanging ambassadors with the Vatican. Like several other recent presidents, he maintains a personal envoy, California rancher and land developer William A. Wilson, to the pope.

--30--

Rogers Appointed Dean  
Of Southern's RE School

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--William B. Rogers Jr. has been named dean-elect of the School of Religious Education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Rogers was appointed by Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt effective Jan. 1, 1984. Seminary trustees will vote on the appointment at their regular meeting March 12-14.

The new dean was elected to the Southern Seminary faculty as professor of history and philosophy of education last spring. He has been on sabbatical since Aug. 1.

Rogers was on the faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary from 1974 to 1983. Previously he was associate minister and youth minister for churches in Texas and Virginia.

The Birmingham, Ala., native is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

His wife is the former Luwilda McKaig. They have two children, Jason Benjamin and Melissa Alexandra.

Rogers succeeds Jack H. McEwen, religious education dean from 1980 to 1983, who now is professor of psychology and director of community development at Chattanooga (Tenn.) State Community College.

--30--

Denomination Leader Requests  
Presidential Action On Ruling

By Ray Furr

Baptist Press  
1/9/84

DALLAS (BP)--President Reagan may soon find his desk stacked with letters urging him to overturn a 1983 revenue ruling which prohibits ministers and military personnel with tax free housing allowances from deducting interest and real estate taxes for personal residences.

Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan is encouraging Southern Baptists to join him in writing a letter to the president and Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan requesting they revoke Revenue Ruling 83-3.

In his letter to the president, Morgan questioned the authority of the Internal Revenue Service to revoke a previous interpretation which had been in effect for more than 20 years. Morgan said he thought the "proper forum for a decision of such monumental economic impact is Congress, not the IRS."

Although the 1983 ruling has not been applied to military personnel with housing allowances, the Treasury Department is reviewing a proposal which could eliminate the mortgage interest deduction for these members of the armed forces. Defense officials argued this step would amount to a pay out of four to six percent for half a million people in the armed services. They contend approximately 600,000 military personnel will see tax increases of \$800-\$3,000 per year.

Morgan said while the impact on military personnel is severe, ministers will suffer more because the clergy are among the lowest paid workers in the country. He noted the financial impact of Revenue Ruling 83-3 in addition to the higher Social Security taxes that went into effect Jan. 1 will devastate many ministers. He said the IRS admits the additional revenue generated from ministers by the ruling will be miniscule.

The new ruling became effective for ministers on July 1. However, the IRS extended the effective date for clergy already owning their own homes until Jan. 1, 1985.

Morgan also noted should Treasury Secretary Regan conclude military personnel are exempt from the ruling, such action would be unfair to the minister.

--more--

"Such a discriminatory application of revenue 83-3 would contradict advice given by IRS attorneys to the effect that no distinction should be made between ministers and members of the armed forces with respect to deductibility of real estate taxes and interest," Morgan said.

Noting Treasury Secretary Regan's decision is expected to be eminent, Morgan is encouraging interested Southern Baptists to write their letters as soon as possible.

The addresses are: President Reagan, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; and Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan, Herbert Hoover Building, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

--30--

The Harpers Of Africa:  
The Story Lives On

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press  
1/9/84

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (BP)--Bill Harper had a lump in his throat and his mother, Juanita, was flooded with bittersweet memories that hot day last November as they stood by Wimpy Harper's grave.

"It was kind of sad," said Bill, who last stood there as a 15-year-old after his father drowned off the East Africa coast in late 1958. "You get a lump in your throat, but a grave is just a monument and a memorial. The person and the memory aren't there."

The person and memory of Winfred O. "Wimpy" Harper indeed have escaped the grav . They aren't interred with his bones in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where he, Juanita and their three children pioneered Southern Baptist missions in East Africa.

In fact, his memory has become a universal symbol of the spirit of missions which underlies Southern Baptists' efforts to place 5,000 missionaries in 125 countries by the close of the century.

Part of an era ended when Juanita left Kenya before Christmas 1983. She began a furlough and terminal leave before she retired after over 30 years in home and foreign missions. But what she and her husband launched has not ended.

"Most of our effort was just to begin the work in East Africa, and I guess that's all God wanted us to do--just begin the work," she reminisced after what may have been her final visit to her husband's grave.

The Harpers, Davis and Mary Saunders and Jack and Sally Walker transferred from Nigeria to East Africa in 1956 to begin the work, just two years before Harper died. Those dramatic and poignant years gave birth to a lot.

Harper and the other pioneer missionaries laid the groundwork for growth in the form r Baptist Mission of East Africa. It grew from less than two dozen missionaries, one organized church and two partially completed institutions at Harper's death to 104 missionaries, over 200 churches and eight institutions by 1965.

Since then the East Africa Mission has divided into three separate missions--Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The work now reaches into 18 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa, with 500 missionaries, more than 2,300 churches and many institutions.

That's the scene Juanita, who resigned overseas service in 1960, found when she returned to East Africa in 1981 at age 61. The Foreign Mission Board had reappointed her to work in Nairobi, Kenya, for James Hampton, associate to the director for East Africa, who supervises missions in nine countries.

She found a different, more complex scene with Africa's burgeoning social problems and rising nationalism. But many familiar faces remained.

--more--

They included remnants of the pioneers, such as James and Gena Hampton, who followed close after the three original couples, and others who answered God's call to missions because of Harper's magnetic influence. Wherever he spoke, many responded to the challenge.

"I was frightened about coming back," Juanita admitted. "The idea of going so far away alone did scare me. Yet I was excited over the thought, and I felt sure the Lord was in it because the call came just one month before my boss in Texas retired."

Her boss was W. H. "Bill" Colson, then director of the Corpus Christi (Texas) Baptist Association. She worked there in home missions more than 20 years after resigning foreign missions to rear her children--Bill, now of Sugarland, Texas; Beth, now Mrs. Terry Sanders of Abilene, Texas; and Richard, now a Southern Baptist missionary in Brazil.

The last 13 years in Corpus Christi, she was Christian Social ministries director as a missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. But she never forgot foreign missions.

Her testimony, whenever she spoke, always began with foreign missions, and then went into home missions--"the story of my life."

The story of the Harpers' lives, first immortalized in Jesse Fletcher's book "Wimpy Harper of Africa" in 1967, won't end when Juanita becomes an emeritus foreign missionary more than a year after her return from Kenya.

The story will continue to live among the missionaries and Africans they touched, and it will continue to live in the hearts of the Harper children, each of whom has made trips to revisit Africa and his father's grave.

But, like their brother, Bill, who stood by the grave with his wife and 9-year-old son, the others won't look back dejectedly on the past.

"The future is where you want to look--not to the past, not to a grave," Bill said.

More significantly, the story will continue to live in the collective memory of 14 million Southern Baptists as they reach toward the future. Juanita's contagious smile, loving spirit and real-life story of missions past and missions present will inspire them even more toward missions future and their Bold Mission goal to reach the entire world for Christ.

CD  
AR  
Jm



**BAPTIST PRESS**

**460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219**

**LYNN MAY HO  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
127 9TH AVE NO  
NASHVILLE TN 37234**