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February 7, 1984

84-20

Strife, Curfew Separate
MKs, Parents in Beirut

By Bill Webb

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Intensifying civil strife and a government-imposed curfew trapped three Southern Baptist MKs (missionary kids) at the American Community School compound in west Beirut Feb. 6 and prevented a missionary caught at a fellow missionary's apartment from returning home.

The three MKs, Ashleigh Dunn, 13, and Paul and Julie Sacco, both 15, were taken in by a teacher whose family lives on the compound, according to Finlay Graham, Foreign Mission Board associate for the Middle East, who lives in Nicosia, Cyprus.

Ashleigh is the daughter of Pete and Pat Dunn, from Mobile, Ala. Paul and Julie are the children of Mack and Linda Sacco, from Gilroy, Calif., and McAlester, Okla.

Veteran missionary Nancie Wingo, from Santa Anna, Texas, was caught at the west Beirut apartment of new missionary Russell Futrell, from Pineville, La., while she was helping him move Feb. 6. They were able to join Southern Baptist volunteers Steve and Meriam Fox, from Centerville, Ohio, the next day.

Despite the separations, all Southern Baptist mission personnel and their families are safe, Graham reported to the board's offices in Richmond, Va.

Graham said missionaries told him the situation in Lebanon was deteriorating rapidly. His wife, Julia, said the dependents of United States Embassy personnel in Beirut had been evacuated by helicopter to American ships offshore during a lull in fighting Feb. 7.

Beirut Baptist School took in about 100 refugees Feb. 6 as they fled heavy fighting in the southern part of the city, Graham said. But by the end of the day, some of the worst fighting had come within a block of the school, according to missionary principal Jim Ragland, from Wetumka, Okla.

Ragland urged Southern Baptists to "pray for Lebanon, that this country will know peace and that the gospel will continue to be proclaimed in Lebanon."

Missionaries on the east side, in the hillside suburb of Monsouriyeh, also reported heavy fighting and shelling, and were staying in their basements.

Moslem militiamen seized control of most of west Beirut Feb. 6 and Moslem Shiite leaders were calling for the resignation of President Amin Gemayel, a Maronite Christian. Prime Minister Shafik Wazzan, who is a Sunni Moslem, and his Cabinet resigned Feb. 5 to clear the way for a national coalition to try to end the conflict.

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Senate Panel To Reconsider
Vatican Funding Approval

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press
2/7/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Senate appropriations panel will take a second look at its earlier informal approval of a State Department request to reprogram funds for establishment of full diplomatic ties with the Vatican.

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According to spokesmen for the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary, the panel's chairman, Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., has asked the State Department to hold off reassignment of fiscal 1984 funds it requested for the Vatican mission. Laxalt earlier had given his go-ahead on the \$351,000 reprogramming request, but withdrew it after fellow Republican panel members Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon and Lowell P. Weicker of Connecticut requested the chairman to reconsider the action.

Reconsideration of the Vatican funding question is expected to occur at a March 28 hearing of the subcommittee, according to a panel spokesman. On that date, Secretary of State George P. Shultz is scheduled to testify on the State Department's fiscal 1985 budget. In addition, a spokesman said the panel will look at the reprogramming request and also is expected to hear from groups opposed to establishment of diplomatic ties to the Holy See.

The Senate appropriations committee's House counterpart was scheduled to take up the reprogramming request at a Feb. 9 hearing.

Opponents of sending an ambassador to the Vatican viewed the decision by Laxalt's subcommittee to reconsider the reprogramming request as further evidence the issue is more controversial than indicated by Congress' almost unnoticed passage last year of a measure repealing the 116-year-old ban on diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

In addition to the debate now occurring on funding for a full Vatican mission the confirmation of President Reagan's nominee as ambassador, William A. Wilson, has been temporarily delayed in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C. Helms announced his intention to delay the process at a recent hearing on Wilson's confirmation in order to give opponents of the issue a chance to have their view aired.

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Home Mission Vision Transmitted
Across Country Via Satellite

By Carol Sisson

Baptist Press
2/7/84

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--More than 2,130 mission-minded men and women across the United States were linked together via satellite Feb. 4, for the Southern Baptist Convention's first home mission teleconference.

A joint effort of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, the live teleconference originated in Birmingham, Ala., and was broadcast to 10 sites across the nation.

"This teleconference affords the opportunity to have both inspiration and information immediately at our fingertips," said William G. Tanner, HMB president.

The teleconference format included live interviews with Tanner and WMU Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford. Jay Durham, director of the media department at the HMB was moderator.

Discussion between Tanner and Weatherford focused on home mission efforts, both past and present, with major emphasis on the 1984 Week of Prayer for Home Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Audiences at the 10 sites became part of the discussion with questions phoned in to the Birmingham studio.

Responding to a question from Greensboro, N.C., Tanner identified the most critical need in home missions as prayer and funding.

"We are very concerned about the hundred or so new missionary positions that we would like to create every year, and simply cannot because we do not have the funds to do it," he said.

Hearing these facts brings the March 4-11 Week of Prayer and the \$29 million Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal into sharper focus, Weatherford said.

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"When you hear Bill Tanner say there are more volunteers than we can fund positions, that becomes a personal challenge," she said.

The audiences were made up mostly of state convention leaders, associational leaders, pastors and WMU leaders.

Home missionaries Gwen Williams of New Orleans, and C.W. Brown of Delta, Utah, were in the Birmingham studio to share prayer requests and personal experiences.

"Many of our churches send checks to missions, but we need more than a check. We need you to come and minister to our kids, to see what's going on in the community," Williams said.

Other home missionaries from as far away as Cold Bay, Alaska, joined the teleconference with live phoned-in prayer requests.

Bobbie Sorrill, author of the new biography, "Annie Armstrong: Dreamer in Action," shared personal experiences and insights received during the two years she spent writing the book.

"Annie Armstrong was so concerned about the needs in her homeland, and did so much to dream up new things that the Home Mission Board could do, and then to mobilize the churches to get behind those concerns with prayer and money, that it was just logical to name the offering after her," Sorrill said.

Associational directors of missions and state WMU executive directors worked to facilitate interaction between audiences and the WMU studio.

"It's good for us to talk about things of the Lord in this new way, utilizing the most vital media in the country," Tanner said.

The teleconference closed with state convention executive directors leading audiences in prayer.

"I think it's exciting that we've had this experience today. We've had 10 cities linked together by satellite, now let's link them together by prayer," Durham said.

The 10 teleconference sites were: Birmingham, Ala.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Atlanta; Lexington, Ky.; Detroit; Kansas City, Mo.; Greensboro, N.C.; Memphis, Tenn.; Dallas-Fort Worth and Richmond, Va.

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

Texas Pastor Compelled To Serve
Despite Crippling Arthritis

By Nancy Barcus

Baptist Press
2/7/84

WACO, Texas (BP)--If there's anyone who might be tempted to give up the call of God, it's Robert Gilbert, pastor of Carver Park Baptist Church in Waco.

Since graduation from Baylor University in 1967, he's been hospitalized at least 40 times for complications from the severest form of crippling arthritis. Both his wrists and elbows are completely fused and his spine is so stiff he cannot turn his head.

He's survived major abdominal surgeries, two hip replacements, a broken hip from falling out of his car, numerous other medical problems, and a heart valve replacement to avoid the danger of stroke and total disability.

But none of that has interfered with his commitment to minister to the people of Carver Park church, a black congregation affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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Though Gilbert, the first black graduate from Baylor, moves about only in a wheelchair or on crutches, he often drives through town to visit the sick, the bereaved, and anyone in pain or need. He preaches every Sunday morning he is not hospitalized, determined to give out the gospel to the faithful congregation whom he says has "given so much to me."

The secret of his relationship with his church, he says, is the members' ability to take increasing responsibility for vital ministries. Five licensed persons in his church carry out specific duties--visiting those in hospitals, nursing homes and private homes; performing marriage ceremonies; arranging senior adult and youth activities and many other tasks.

Gilbert's contribution, he feels, is to preach, advise on church activities and business and counsel church members with serious personal and family problems.

The former history teacher in Waco's public schools also carries a keen interest in education into his church ministry. Gilbert recently planned an educational enrichment program for children in his church who need extra help with schoolwork.

Tireless in his search for still more innovative ways to bring the people of his church into caring and responsible relationships, Gilbert says the role of the church is "bringing people to Christ and then teaching them how to serve their community by meeting the needs of others."

"Salvation and education for service go hand in hand," he says. "We'll only have true leadership as we develop our people into community leaders."

While he wishes he had more energy to put his ideas into practice, those who know him marvel at the way he just keeps on going.

"I've taken as my motto, 'My grace is sufficient for thee,'" he says. "In all critical moments, God has kept me and saved me. I need to testify how good he's been to me through every obstacle and handicap."

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(Photo available on request from Baylor University, Waco, Texas).

Opdyke Scholarships Aid
Mountain Students

Baptist Press
2/7/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--In the 1920's Ida Opdyke of Jamestown, N.Y., was impressed with Southern Baptists' work among people living in mountainous regions.

So impressed that when she died, she left, as a memorial to her daughter, Dorothea Van Deusen Opdyke, a scholarship fund designated to assist students from mountainous areas in obtaining their education.

As a result, over \$700,000 has been awarded to nearly 6,150 students since 1969 when the SBC Executive Committee asked the Southern Baptist Education Commission to administer the funds.

Awards are made to Southern Baptist institutions for selected students who are qualified to receive the scholarships. The scholarships awarded for 1983-84 amounted to \$350 per year for senior college students; \$300 per year for junior college students and \$150 per year for students in Bible schools and academies.

For the 1983 fall semester, 119 scholarships totaling \$16,350 were awarded to students at 28 institutions in 14 states.

The number of scholarships awarded to each institution is determined by the scholarship committee of the Education Commission based upon the use of the available scholarships and the number of needy students from mountain areas enrolled at the schools.

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Baylor Receives
\$12 Million In 1983

WACO, Texas (BP)--Donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and estates to Baylor University totaled more than \$12 million during 1983, according to John Scales, associate vice president and director of development.

The final total of \$12,238,604 was one of the largest yearly amounts in the university's history. Corporations and businesses donated \$1,246,642; \$4,950,050 came from alumni; \$2,284,755 came from non-alumni; foundations contributed \$2,324,628 and bequests totaled \$2,748,647.

There were several additional gifts of real estate given to Baylor during 1983, but these will be included in 1984 totals after the property has been sold.

Scales said the \$12,238,604 is part of the "Profile '85" campaign, an effort to increase University net assets by \$100 million by 1985. So far, about \$82 million has been added to net assets, and the campaign is two months ahead of schedule, he said.

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Carter, Newman
Join WMU Staff

Baptist Press
2/7/84

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Frances Carter and Deena Newman have joined the staff of Woman's Missionary Union--SBC as editor and publications coordination specialist, respectively.

Carter became editor of Acteens/Girls In Action products fulltime last month. She had held the same position on a part-time basis since last October.

Newman was named to the new position of publications coordination specialist to assist the publications section director.

Carter came to WMU from Samford University in Birmingham where she had taught early childhood/elementary education and home economics since 1956. The Mississippi native earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi, her master's from the University of Tennessee and her doctorate from the University of Illinois.

She has written three books and written curriculum units for several WMU publications. Her husband is dean of the school of education at Samford.

Newman graduated from Florida State University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and did doctoral work at Southern. The Florida native worked as an editorial intern for WMU during the summer of 1980. Her husband is a pastor.

She has written numerous articles for WMU and Baptist Sunday School Board publications.

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