



# 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. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

May 17, 1984

84-74

## ACTS Network Sends First Signal Skyward

RTUC  
(C)-N

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The American Christian Television System (ACTS) became a reality at 4:00 p.m., May 15, launching the first TV network by a Christian denomination.

The first broadcast signal from the newest television network was sent from a 38-foot satellite transmitting dish in Fort Worth, Texas, to the Weststar V satellite. When ACTS' blue and gold logo flashed on the eight-foot TV screen at the Radio and Television Commission headquarters, employees who had gathered to watch the sign-on broke into applause.

"ACTS is a reality," Jimmy R. Allen, president of the commission, told employees and reporters before the 4:00 p.m. broadcast. The Radio and Television Commission is assembling the network, which will deliver family and Christian entertainment programs daily to cable TV systems and television stations nationwide.

Allen led the group in prayer just before the satellite sign-on. Quoting Psalms 119, Allen said, "'The heavens declare the glory of God,' and they (the heavens) will become the means for sharing the message of God all over this country."

ACTS will broadcast six hours a day until June 12. On that day Southern Baptists will officially dedicate their video venture in ceremonies at the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, Mo., and expand to 18-hour-per-day broadcasts.

The first program on the network, which was delivered to almost 70 cable TV systems, was a 30-minute preview of ACTS and its shows. It was followed by the first episode of "Sunshine Factory," a half-hour children's program.

ACTS will use its first months of transmission to fine-tune the operation and bring more TV systems on line. Organizers estimate the network will have access to three-to-four million homes when it reaches full speed June 12.

—30—

Ed. Comm.  
(C)-N

Hunter New President  
At Baptist College

Baptist Press  
5/17/84

CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP)—A North Carolina educator and active Baptist layman has been named president of Baptist College at Charleston, an institution of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Jairy C. Hunter Jr., vice-chancellor for development and business and a member of the faculty at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, N.C., since 1978, was elected at a meeting of the college's board of trustees May 14.

Hunter, 42, earned his Ph.D. in educational administration and management from Duk University, Durham, N.C., and holds degrees from Wingate College, Wingate, N.C., and Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C. He will assume the president's office Aug. 1.

—more—

Hunter, a native of Lancaster, S.C., is confident about returning to his home state to lead the financially troubled Baptist institution. Baptist College faces severe financial problems and has undergone several administrative changes since November 1983, when the college's trustees asked for the retirement of John A. Hamrick, the school's first president.

The South Carolina Baptist Convention recently announced it would negotiate a \$1 million loan for the school to help pay outstanding debts.

Hunter told Baptist Press he is pleased with the direction the college has been going under the leadership of interim president John A. Fincher.

"I have thoroughly reviewed the college's financial records and have found sound fiscal policies are in practice." He noted the college also is taking positive steps toward collecting outstanding loans from students which amount to some \$1.2 million.

"I feel Baptist College is close to turning the corner and within the next 12 months or so will be on a sound financial basis," he said.

Hunter, a Sunday school teacher and deacon at Pine Valley Baptist Church in Wilmington, said he came to Baptist College because he wanted to be "involved with the development of students in a Christian environment."

Hunter and his wife, Carolyn, have two children, Jairy III, 17, and Jill, 12.

--30--

C-N

Registered Soviet Baptists  
Visit Southern Baptists

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
5/17/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Four leaders of the 500,000 Baptists in the Soviet Union stopped in Nashville, Tenn., May 15-16 on a two-week "bridge-building" visit to Southern Baptists.

In a news conference the Soviet churchmen insisted religious freedom exists in the Soviet Union, that stories of religious persecution are "one sided," and, as a whole, Soviet citizens are more knowledgeable about the true character of Americans than Americans are of the true nature of Russians, because, "we listen to our own press as well as broadcasts from Europe and the United States."

Questions and answers had to be translated since only two of the four spoke English. Direct comparisons of religious freedom in the United States and the USSR were avoided by noting the cultural and historical differences between the countries assuring the systems would develop differently.

Jakav Dukhontchenko, pastor of a 1,400 member Baptist church in Kiev and superintendent of the Baptist Church in the Ukrainian Republic, stressed the freedom he and his church enjoy.

Such freedom is not extended to unregistered religions, he explained. He estimated there are 10,000 "unregistered" Baptists in the Soviet Union, who "have a theological problem with registration...they feel they would not be a 'true church' if they registered."

"There are only about 200 people in prison for religious reasons," he said.

Dukhontchenko insisted, however, "We preach the full gospel in our churches, we preach that salvation is only through Jesus Christ—and we encourage our people to practice personal evangelism and reach others with the message of Christ."

"We have as many as four or five services a week, where three or four one-hour sermons are preached," he said. "No one tells us when or where or how often to hold our meetings and no one tells us what we can preach."

"Parents are guaranteed the right to instruct their children in religion and bring them to church—and in some of our churches 50 percent of the congregation are young people."

--more--

Other questions concerned the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the summer Olympics and the relationships between Baptists and Jews in Russia.

"The Olympic boycott by the Soviet Union was announced after we left so we cannot speak for others but just for the four of us," Nikilai Zverev, vice-chairman of the International Department of Baptists in the Soviet Union and one of the translators said. "We feel the decision would not have been made without good reason."

Zverev expressed regret the move was necessary, but noted he had seen television talk shows since being in the U.S. where men talked of their plans to demonstrate against the USSR during the Olympics.

"There is no doubt such actions are planned," he continued. "It would be like me inviting you to my house for dinner where my children were bigger and stronger than you are and wanted to hit you while you were my guest—but I would say 'there is enough liberty at my house for all to enjoy' so I won't let them hit you."

Michael Zhidkov, a pastor of Moscow Baptist Church and director of the correspondence school of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, said he was sorry to lose the opportunity to spread understanding among countries of the world through the Olympics.

Zhidkov, a chaplain in the Olympic village during the 1980 summer games, said he and members of his church found it was a wonderful opportunity to share Christ, "not only with athletes from other countries but also with our fellow Russians."

Dukhontchenko said fellowship between Baptists and Jews in the Soviet Union was very good, including the exchange of literature and even speaking at special synagogue events.

This is the first "official" visit by Soviet Christians to the SBC, though they have had contact with the 14-million member denomination through trips sponsored by other groups such as the Baptist World Alliance.

Dukhontchenko said the four (the other was Gregory Kommandant, assistant superintendent of the Baptist Church in the Ukrainian Republic) would return to the Soviet Union, "spiritually energized by the enthusiasm, the boldness and the thrust for missions we have encountered among Southern Baptists."

The men visited the Southern Baptist Convention Radio and Television Commission and SBC Annuity Board in Dallas, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

In Nashville they visited the Executive Committee, the Christian Life Commission, the Baptist Sunday School Board and First Baptist Church. From Nashville they will fly to Washington where the Baptist World Alliance is headquartered.

In October, the "bridge-building" will continue when Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee; Roy L. Honeycutt Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; Foy Valentine, executive director-treasurer of the Christian Life Commission, and Darold Morgan, president of the SBC Annuity Board, and their wives, will visit Russia for a first-hand look at Baptist work there.

—30—

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

Resort Missions Vital To  
Bold Mission Thrust Goals

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press  
5/17/84

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (BP)—Southern Baptists cannot afford to ignore resort settings if they expect to accomplish Bold Mission Thrust goals, asserted Chuck Clayton, national resort ministries consultant for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

—more—

Clayton, addressing Southern Baptist pastors, lay leaders and denominational workers attending a national resort ministries conference, said until a few years ago, "never before in the history of mankind has leisure time been available to the masses." But because of the sheer volume of people engrossed in leisure activities, resort areas offer Southern Baptists a way to reach people "whom we won't be able to reach in traditional ways."

"If we're going to accomplish Bold Mission Thrust and share the good news of Jesus Christ with every person in the world by the year 2000, we cannot neglect the leisure settings of our country," he stated.

Clayton said many Southern Baptists perceive resort ministries as playing games, but he charged games, clowning, puppetry, drama and music are merely "tools for ministry."

He said biblical models of missions contain three components—evangelism, congregationalizing and ministry—and charged resort ministry "is biblical missions carried out in distinct resort and leisure settings."

He stated resort missions is founded on "boldly but sensitively" sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and added, "If we're not going (into resort areas) with the intention of introducing people to Jesus Christ, I don't know why we're going."

"Evangelism is not manipulating people into making professions of faith," Clayton explained. "Evangelism is introducing people to the risen Lord. When we minister, we do so to glorify our Lord and create an atmosphere where evangelism can take place."

He urged any resort missions effort be tied to an existing church or aimed at beginning an indigenous congregation. If the gospel is to communicate in a resort setting, "it must be faithful to biblical truths, but will have to wear the dress of its indigenous setting in matters that reflect culture and not theological principles," said Clayton.

Resort settings attract people with needs who seek to get away from the pressures of their lives. Clayton said it is a Christian responsibility to meet those needs in any setting.

"There's no doubt Jesus came to minister," he asserted. "Jesus intends for us to minister to people who are hurting and in resort settings there are a lot of people who are hurting."

Clayton urged Baptists to use a balanced approach to resort ministry, noting any time evangelism, congregationalizing or ministry is done to the exclusion of the others, Christians fail to do all the gospel requires. He encouraged resort workers to balance their staffs with people who use a variety of approaches in order to reach the maximum number of people.

Clayton said anyone wishing to begin a resort outreach should first get to know their resort community. He noted three groups of people frequent resort areas: year-round residents, seasonal workers or residents, and transients. Clayton suggested Baptists focus on seasonal workers or residents first since they're seen as "outsiders" in the community, have more needs "and would be most receptive to the gospel."

Though reaching year-round residents is important, said Clayton, they are the hardest people to reach. By caring for some of the short-term residents Baptists can gain credibility and identity, two keys to making in-roads into the established community.

He noted about three-quarters of Baptists' energy in resort missions is geared toward reaching transients, short-term guests who, "will probably be the group we'll be able to do the least with in terms of making a long-term impact," and those who are already Christians. He suggested Baptists re-think their approach to resort missions and move away from primarily providing worship services tailored more toward reaching Christians than those who are lost.

Clayton said although worship services are a useful tool to help Christians see their leisure time as a ministry opportunity, "most people visiting a resort don't come seeking God."

To reach the majority of people in resort areas, he added, Southern Baptists "are going to have to find a new approach," using such means as clowning, puppetry, drama and other non-traditional tools of ministry to "identify with people where they are."

Baylor Gets Land Gift  
Worth \$13 Million

WACO, Texas (BP)—A Dallas woman has left Baylor University in Waco, Texas, more than \$13 million, even though no one in her immediate family ever attended the Southwest Conference school which is affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Baylor officials said the gift from the estate of Mattie Allen is the largest in Baylor's 139-year history and one of the largest given any college or university in Texas.

After the announcement May 17 the money immediately was invested through the Baptist Foundation of Texas to start earning approximately \$4,000 per day in interest.

Income will be used to strengthen Baylor faculty and instructional efforts in certain schools and to provide extensive tuition scholarships for "students who both need and merit such assistance," said Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds.

Mrs. Allen died Aug. 30, 1983, at age 96, leaving Baylor approximately 147 acres of prime real estate between Grapevine and Fort Worth, located near the Las Colinas development area. The land was sold for more than \$13 million.

Her esteem for Baylor apparently was greatly influenced by George W. Truitt, long time pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, which she joined in the 1930s, and by her attorneys.

J.C. Allen, her husband, drowned accidentally in 1937. The couple had no children.

Following her husband's death, Mrs. Allen continued to cultivate the land through a tenant farming agreement. When DFW Airport was constructed in the early 1970s and nearby land was rezoned, she was offered a large profit if she would sell the land. She refused.

Her property taxes rose enormously and at times the payment of these taxes was a very serious hardship, Frank Ryman Jr., one of her attorneys explained. Through the years, she refused numerous opportunities to sell the land even though it would have eliminated her tax problem and enabled her to enjoy a much more affluent lifestyle.

"Her answer to all of these offers was, 'I do not want to sell my farm as long as I live, because when I die I want the property sold and the proceeds given to Baylor University to help educate boys and girls,'" he explained.

Ryburn said Mrs. Allen maintained a very simple lifestyle until her death, keeping with her "the memories of her deceased husband, the comfort of her church and her Bible until the end." She was a member of First Baptist Church of Dallas for some 50 years and was an active participant in its Sodalitan Bible Class.