



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

July 20, 1984

FMB-N

84-102

Robbers Kill Jamaican Guard,
Seize Volunteers' Goods, Car

By Mary Jane Welch

BROWNSTOWN, Jamaica (BP)—Armed robbers beat and shot a guard and broke down the door of a Jamaican villa July 18 to rob a group of Georgia Baptist volunteers who were in Jamaica to help with Vacation Bible Schools.

The Jamaican guard, Austin Robinson, 48, died later at a hospital, leaving a wife of three months and children from a previous marriage. He recently had become a Christian and had been baptized the week before, said Frank Sledge, the only volunteer injured in the robbery.

Sledge, pastor of Franklin Road Baptist Church, LaGrange, Ga., was bruised by the robbers, who held a gun to his head during the robbery and threatened to cut his fingers off when he had trouble removing his class ring.

Sledge's wife, Nancy, and two other women were threatened but uninjured by the robbers.

The Franklin Road group was among 448 Southern Baptist volunteers from 15 states in Jamaica for a week of Vacation Bible Schools and evangelistic services sponsored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The robbers entered the Castle Peak Villa on the northern side of the island about 2:30 a.m. and went first to the Sledges' bedroom, ransacking the room and taking their valuables, including Sledge's attache case containing the group's passports and other papers.

Forcing Sledge to go with them, they searched for others in the house, although Sledge told them they were alone. They broke down the door of the bedroom where Cathy Brown and Lucrette Wood had locked themselves into a bathroom. They broke down that door, threatened the women and took their valuables.

Before they reached the room of Lucille Buttram and Ruby Satterfield, a fourth man outside called them and they fled. Sledge said he believes the man had discovered that the guard, whom they had left for dead, was gone and feared he had called the police.

Robinson, although beaten and shot, managed to get to a nearby golf course where two policemen were patrolling. They took him to the hospital and called more police to the villa. "He just literally gave his life for us because he fought them off as much as he could," said Sledge of Robinson.

The gardener next door reported seeing the men leave in two vehicles. One was a Toyota automobile rented by the Foreign Mission Board for the volunteers' use, and the other is believed to be the vehicle the robbers arrived in.

The Jamaican police have inspectors all over the island working on the case, said John Baxley, a volunteer from St. Augustine, Fla., who was in charge of housing for the volunteers. But as of early July 20, none of the robbers had been apprehended.

The six volunteers and another team of six from LaGrange returned home July 18 as soon as police completed questioning them. Air Jamaica was on strike, but Swinton Futch of Palatka, Fla., travel coordinator for the group, was able to get them on an Eastern Airlines flight, the only flight leaving the island that day.

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ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
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Four other groups also working on the Brownstown preaching circuit and the rest of the volunteers stayed until July 23 to complete the Bible schools and evangelistic services.

Sledge said he hoped the incident would not hamper the Bible School project, but that he did hope future volunteers would be aware of dangers they might face in traveling overseas.

Southern Baptist volunteers have helped with Bible Schools in Jamaica for the past six years, enrolling more than 40,000 children in Bible School during that time, said Baxley. This year, with the largest group of Southern Baptist volunteers ever to work on a single project at one time, he expects Vacation Bible School enrollment to total about 20,000.

Baxley noted during the past six years with more than 6,000 volunteers going to Jamaica, only one other incident has occurred. On an earlier trip, a burglar entered the villa where he and others were sleeping, but fled when he was discovered.

Southern Baptists from the following states participated in the Vacation Bible School project: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

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Christian Unity Prevails
At World Youth Meeting

By Jim Lowry

Baptist Press
7/20/84

BUENOS AIRES (BP)—Warm hearts and expressions of friendship easily overcame the cold of Argentina's winter for more than 4,000 youth from 68 countries attending the Tenth Baptist World Youth Conference.

The conference, the first worldwide Baptist youth meeting held in Latin America, was sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance.

From the opening session on July 11, delegates were eager to adopt the Latin American customs of a hug-and-kiss greeting between friends. Dramatically different lifestyles and customs never hindered the sincerity of delegates to show the world that Baptists can be unified in Jesus Christ.

On the opening night, delegates were part of an historic moment for Argentine Baptists when Raul Alfonsin, president of Argentina and a Catholic, addressed the group about religious liberty, world peace and reconciliation. He is the first elected head of state ever to appear before Baptists or any other evangelical group in Argentina.

The Latin American hosts made every effort to make the delegates feel at home, even though many were thousands of miles from family and familiar surroundings in the largest city in southern hemisphere. Approximately 11 million persons live in Buenos Aires.

The international flavor was most evident during the music presentations when music from every continent was sung in native languages.

The Christ Preachers, a choir of 19 men and women from Lagos, Nigeria, sang for two of the sessions, dressed in native costumes and using several instruments. Before the group was finished, youth were standing holding hands and swaying back and forth to the music.

Attendance by the youth delegates never lagged during the five-day conference. The Obras Sanitarias Stadium was filled to standing room only for each of the five plenary sessions. At the close of the final session, the traditional exchange of tokens from home countries lasted several minutes as delegates were determined to see new friends one more time.

Each of the plenary sessions featured a presentation of Baptist work on one of the five continents.

The desire for unity, peace and understanding was repeatedly evident throughout the five-day conference.

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Included in the conference were 39 delegates from Great Britain, who stayed in the homes of Argentine Baptists. These delegates and those from Argentina expressed in several sessions their unity in Christ in spite of recent governmental differences and a 1982 war over the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands.

The delegates from Great Britain issued a statement on the third day of the conference "expressing gratitude for the overwhelming reception given to us by the Argentine people."

The statement, signed by 35 British Baptists, said they appreciated President Alfonsin's appearance and welcomed his call for peace and reconciliation. It also praised Alfonsin's call for a reduction of spending on the military and pledge to use greater resources for the alleviation of world hunger.

In conclusion, the statement called for the British and Argentine governments to normalize relations between the two countries.

The British delegates then pledged to work for peace and reconciliation between the people of the two countries by the building up of Christian and cultural understanding.

Raul Scialabba, chairman of the local arrangements committee and interim chairman of the BWA youth committee, said the Tenth Baptist Youth World Conference means the "beginning of a new era of challenge and responsibility."

"Many people in Argentina didn't know who Baptists were or whether they were Christians before President Alfonsin's address," Scialabba said. "Now others have seen that we have the same goals for reconciliation between nations and people as other Christian groups. And now they know the only way is through Jesus Christ."

"We have worked long and hard and prayed to God for seven years wishing for this moment," he said. "In that time we had a change of government, a very difficult economic situation and a war. But God gave us all this, with the youth conference. It has been an extraordinary, enriching experience to see proof that prayers have been answered."

All sessions of the Tenth Baptist World Conference were presented in Spanish and English, making it the first bilingual BWA youth meeting. Announcements, Bible study sessions and the daily newspaper were presented in both languages.

Representation for youth around the world was expensive. From Africa there were 70 delegates. North America had approximately 300 representatives. Argentina and Brazil each had several hundred persons in attendance. Delegates also attended from Czechoslovakia, Cuba, Finland, Portugal, the Philippines and India, with a total of 68 nations represented.

Some of the delegates came alone to the conference while others traveled in larger groups. Some of the young persons brought no money because their governments do not allow currency to be taken from the country. Special arrangements had to be made for housing and meals.

Even though problems were encountered, when the conference concluded on Sunday morning, a feeling of unity prevailed in the lives of youth brought together to share their faith.

"We shall overcome because Jesus has come," Douglas Waruta of Tanzania told the youth. "Jesus Christ is the one we need and the one to whom we must dedicate our lives and we shall never fail."

The next world youth conference will be held in 1988 in Europe, according to Denton Lotz, director of the BWA youth department.

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Valentine Praises
Drinking Age Law

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Uniform Minimum Drinking Age Act, signed July 17 by President Ronald Reagan, has been welcomed as "an encouraging sign that public concern can affect public policy."

Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, said the new law, which establishes a national minimum drinking age of 21, represents "one responsible, intelligent step toward saving both lives and dollars. It is the direct result of public pressure brought by hundreds of thousands of persons who have been morally outraged by the tragic and disgraceful violence of drunken driving."

Valentine also expressed the hope that Reagan's final signing of the bill, which the President earlier opposed, "indicates some recognition that the issue of alcohol and drug abuse is a national evil that must be confronted on a national scale."

The law, approved overwhelmingly by both houses of Congress, establishes a set of rewards and penalties for states by tying compliance with the new federal statute to eligibility for certain federal highway funds.

In addition to the minimum drinking age, it sets forth uniform, nationwide criminal penalties for all persons convicted of drunken driving:

--For first time offenders, a minimum 90-day drivers' license suspension and a sentence of either 48 hours in jail or 100 hours of community service.

--For second offenders, a mandatory 10-day jail sentence, accompanied by revocation of the driver's license for at least one year.

--For persons convicted of drunken driving three times or more, a minimum jail term of 120 days and a minimum license revocation of three years.

The new law also calls for rehabilitation and treatment programs for those arrested and convicted of drunken driving and establishment of research programs for detecting the use of any controlled substance by drivers.

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SBBOC Founder
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Baptist Press
7/20/84

DALLAS (BP)—L. Taylor Daniel, who pioneered the development of retirement plans for Southern Baptist agencies, died July 15, following a long illness.

Daniel, 75, was employed by the Annuity Board 20 years when he retired in 1975 as senior vice-president and director of development. Prior to his service with the board, Daniel was the endowment secretary for the Texas Baptist convention. He also spent 15 years in the pastorate of churches in Arkansas, Kentucky and Texas.

He was a native of Hampton, Ark., and a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He was awarded an honorary doctoral degree from East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, in 1953.

As director of development in 1960, Daniel designed a retirement plan, now the convention Annuity Plan, for Southern Baptist agencies. In 1961 he founded the Southern Baptist Business Officers Conference to provide seminars on current financial trends affecting denominational agencies and churches.

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Daniel is survived by his wife, Emma Jean Hargrove Daniel, Dallas; a daughter, Mrs. Frank (Joan Marie) Pennington, Houston; a son, Gene P. Daniel, the senior vice-president of the Annuity Board's marketing division, Richardson, Texas; six grandchildren, and a sister, Mrs. J.I. (Ethel) Allison, Woodville, Texas.

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CLC Staff Member
Accepts Pastorate

Baptist Pr ss
7/20/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Ronald D. Sisk, director of program development for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, has accepted the pastorate of Tiburon Baptist Church in San Francisco.

Sisk, who will begin his new responsibilities Aug. 1, has coordinated the social agency's work in the areas of peace with justice, women's rights, and education and action on alcohol and other drugs.

Before coming to the CLC in 1982, he was pastor of Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church, Midway, Ky. From 1973-75 he was instructor of history and political science at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

A Texas native raised in Arkansas, Sisk is a graduate of the University of Arkansas. He holds an M.A. from New York University and M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is married to the former Sheryl Sims. She is a native of Tulsa, Okla., and a graduate of Colorado State University.

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