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December 4, 1984

84-174

Evangelism Leaders Express
Concern Over Baptism Decline

By Jim Newton

VANCOUVER, B.C. (BP)--Southern Baptist evangelism leaders meeting in Canada expressed "grave concern" after being told baptism of new converts declined during 1983-84.

"We are not winning America to Christ, we are losing," the state directors of evangelism said in a consensus statement. They pledged to pray daily for revival and called on all Southern Baptists to make evangelism their top priority.

During the conference, SBC Home Mission Board researcher Jack Washington presented a statistical report indicating SBC churches baptized about 375,000 new believers during 1983-84, the third consecutive year decline.

Washington pointed out it is the second time in the 1980s the number of baptisms has been below the 400,000 mark.

Washington said his report was based on a telephone survey of the state convention offices, which receive copies of the "Uniform Church Letter" statistical report provided by the 35,000-plus churches affiliated with the 14.1 million member SBC.

Just a few days after the meeting, the SBC Sunday School Board research and statistics office released projections based on analysis of the Uniform Church Letter reports, indicating the projected number of baptisms for 1983-84 would be about 368,957, a decrease of 25,649 or 6.5 percent.

Washington acknowledged his figures were slightly higher, based on statistics from the state conventions rather than projections based on the UCLs.

Washington said the reports indicate the number of baptisms increased in eight state conventions (plus Puerto Rico).

State conventions reporting increases were Hawaii (up 33 percent), Kansas-Nebraska, Missouri, Nevada, Virginia, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, South Carolina and Wyoming.

Decreases in baptisms were reported by 23 state conventions. Three were the same, and four had no data available, said Washington, associate in the HMB research division.

Washington said the data does not indicate "why" the decline in baptisms occurred during a time when Southern Baptists are placing heavy emphasis on Bold Mission Thrust and evangelism. He observed, however, that during 1983, there were 6,002 SBC churches, almost one-sixth of the total, which did not report any baptisms during the entire year.

A study of statistics since 1980 revealed the number of adults baptized has remained fairly constant, Washington added. The decreases during the past three years have been primarily among children and youth, Washington said.

As "baby boom" youth grow older, there will be almost five million fewer youth during the later part of the 1980s, according to census reports. Washington predicted the decrease in baptisms is likely to continue unless there is a major change in the trends.

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Several speakers during the three-day national conference referred to the statistical decline, suggesting other possible reasons.

Bob Hamblin, SBC Home Mission Board vice-president for evangelism, said the decrease is an indication Southern Baptists are not really concerned about evangelism.

In another speech, C.B. Hogue of Tulsa, Okla., executive director-elect of the California Southern Baptist General Convention, blamed the decline in baptisms and lack of concern about evangelism on the members of SBC churches.

"Do you know why we are down in baptisms?" Hogue asked rhetorically. "It's because we have too many unregenerate members in our churches."

Joe Ford, associate vice-president in the Home Mission Board evangelism section, blamed the decline in baptisms on current controversies in the SBC and Baptist press coverage of controversy.

"Baptisms are down, and I'm not surprised," Ford said. "Even the Baptist press has 'bought into' the value system of the secular press. Rather than seeking to diffuse much of the controversy, they (Baptist editors) have flamed the fires of it in our convention.

"I believe that is a direct cause for the decline in baptisms in our convention," Ford said.

"I'm not laying all the blame at their feet," he added. "I'm simply saying it is time for those who are leaders who do not believe in that to call Baptist press to an accounting and say it is time that we do not feed our people that which they do not need to be dwelling on all the time.

"That's going to be unpopular," Ford acknowledged. "The truth usually is."

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SBC Leaders Experience
Russian Baptist Life

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
12/4/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A shared heritage of Biblical Christianity provided ample common ground for eight Southern Baptists from the United States and their Russian Baptist hosts to overcome cultural, geographical and political barriers earlier last month.

The governing board of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists invited Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, to select three other SBC agency heads to experience Baptist life in the Soviet Union first-hand and help observe the 100th anniversary of Baptist work in the country.

In the process, Russian Baptists hoped to learn from the structure and function of the Southern Baptist Convention agencies and institutions. "We are a theological and organizational model for them and they are a model for us on unity," Bennett said.

Roy L. Honeycutt, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; Darold H. Morgan, president of the SBC Annuity Board in Dallas, and Foy Valentine, executive director-treasurer of the SBC Christian Life Commission in Nashville, Tenn., were selected to provide expertise in specific areas of Russian Baptist interest--theological education, support of retired ministers, and the role of Christians in working for world peace. Bennett provided an overview of the entire convention as well as the role of the Executive Committee.

All four men were accompanied by their wives.

The group visited churches in Moscow, Lennigrad, Novgorod, Kiev (two congregations) and Rostov-on-Don, speaking more than 30 times. They also met with pastors in each of the cities except Novgorod. At each worship service two of the men would preach and two others from the group, often one of the wives, would bring greetings.

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After the services the visitors were bombarded with questions such as how Southern Baptists felt about the charismatic movement, birth control and abortion, the Moral Majority, blacks and black churches in the SBC, the typical size of a pastor's family, the role of the deacon in the local church and even: "Who were the 'sons of God' mentioned in Genesis 6:2 who 'saw the daughters of men that they were fair' and whose marriages produced giants?"

Additionally the Americans maintained a steady pace of sightseeing at museums, monuments, cultural events and historical sights. A special moment was a visit to the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism. There "Baptists have a little corner," including a picture of man breaking bread during an observance of the Lord's Supper. The son of the man pictured, Sergei Nikolaev, accompanied the Southern Baptists the entire trip.

Nikolaev, 36, is northwest superintendent for the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. He was trained in theology at Spurgeon's College in England. "His favorite words are 'absolutely fantastic' and that sums up my feelings about the trip," Bennett said. "His energy and dedication to God's work were reflected in the churches we visited.

Morgan agreed. "You can't mask the power of the Holy Spirit," he said. "Churches in the Soviet Union are growing and many new churches are being established. Visiting the Baptist churches is like seeing the second century church come alive in the book of Acts. Even in the midst of oppression, the Holy Spirit is at work among his people.

Honeycutt's primary impression was contrasted with the preconceptions he took with him. "My overriding impressions focused on the openness and freedom in worship and the public opportunity to make a commitment to Christ at the close of each church service," he said. "You could feel the sincerity of the people at worship and prayer despite the language barriers.

The freedom to worship--though certainly not nearly as open as in the United States--is greater than most Americans realize, Valentine explained. "The freedom to worship is limited to the 'religious area' of life--which is why they rejoice when a Billy Graham is able to come to Russia and go public with the Christian witness."

Christians in Russia gained what they feel was a significant victory in 1977 when a new constitution for the USSR was adopted. In Article 52 of the new document, the guarantee of the right "to conduct religious worship or anti-religious propaganda" was changed to read "to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda."

When a communist party official stopped a youth Bible study group from meeting, a Union official filed a complaint with the government for interfering with the right to conduct religious worship. The official was removed and the group resumed.

Of course, the constitution still reserves all education for the state and makes personal, public, Christian witness difficult.

Bennett explained if you witness to a Russian after he has told you he is not interested he can file a complaint and have you arrested. But if he asks questions and allows the conversation to continue it is legal.

The legal separation of church and education means there can be no Sunday school, church training or mission awareness programs. Instead Christian education is conducted at home by parents, in home Bible study groups, and built into the public music and preaching services.

The typical Baptist church in the country has three services on Sunday and services on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday nights. Many churches also have services on Friday night.

Services last a minimum of two hours and three hours is average. Multiple sermons and as many as six choir specials are included in each service. Because of a shortage of hymnals, great care is taken to explain the words of hymns as they are memorized.

In five of the six churches the Southern Baptists visited, hundreds of people had to stand, filling the aisles all the way to the front of the church and crowding the stairways to the balconies. At the sixth church, in Moscow, all 1,500 seats were filled for each service.

The image of the Christian church in Russia being populated by aging congregations also was shattered. Young people were worshipping in large numbers, especially in the Sunday afternoon services.

The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists was formed in 1944 by 6,000 Baptist, Pentecostal and Brethern/Mennonite churches in the face of government insistence that religious activities be circumscribed by an organization.

At that time the Union reported a combined membership of 560,000-1,000,000, figures still in use today.

Later some churches decided they could not submit to what they viewed as governmental control and withdrew from the Union. They make up the "unregistered" churches. Georgi Vins, who now lives in the United States, is the most prominent leader of that movement.

The Southern Baptists saw Vins' former church. The unregistered churches are not "underground," Bennett explained. They meet openly but are subject to governmental interference for failure to follow the regulations governing church activity.

Yet despite the problems--which include the lack of a Christian printing house and the difficulty of providing theological training since there is no seminary--the Southern Baptist leaders came back hopeful and excited about what they saw.

Baptist work in Russia developed in relative isolation, both under the Czar and since the October 1917 revolution brought the communists to power. Yet, "their similarity to us (Baptists in the U.S.) in structure and organization is remarkable," Valentine said. "That's because we both pulled our identities from the Bible, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit."

Pastors are selected from the church membership (each church has at least four or five) and every deacon also preaches. Theological training is provided through a correspondence course, coordinated by the Union.

Four Union leaders visited the United States and various Southern Baptist institutions and agencies last May.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Press

Wamble Wins Parochial
Aid Suit In Missouri

Baptist Press
12/4/84

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Allowing federally-funded teachers to conduct classes in Missouri's parochial schools is a violation of the separation of church and state, according to a ruling by U.S. District Judge Joseph E. Stevens Jr. of Kansas City Nov. 28 in the case of *Wamble v. Bell*.

The suit, filed in 1977 by Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor G. Hugh Wamble, focused on the constitutionality of "Title I of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended."

A "bypass" provision applicable to Title I was adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1974. It allowed the federal government to bypass state departments of education in order to provide specific services to parochial school children. The particular program in question involves remedial classes in reading, language arts and mathematics to low-income students who receive below-average scores on standardized tests.

The bypass provision specifically allows the federal government to pay a third party which, in turn, hires teachers to conduct classes at parochial schools during regular school hours.

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The Missouri program, funded by the federal government at an annual budget of \$2.2 million, serves some 3,700 elementary school students at 157 religiously-affiliated schools, primarily Catholic and Lutheran.

Judge Stevens ruled providing the instruction at parochial schools offers a risk of excessive entanglement of church and state. He stayed the injunction, however, until the U.S. Supreme Court rules on a similar New York case on which it is scheduled to hear oral arguments Dec. 5.

Stevens noted his ruling was prompted "by the necessity of preserving one of the most cherished freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution."

He went on to explain the program creates dangers that teachers will be influenced by a religious school environment and might present ideological views to students.

The federal judge said providing necessary supervision of the program to insure there was no excessive entanglement of church and state would itself create excessive entanglement.

Wamble, who personally argued the case before Stevens, described the ruling as "basically a strong decision."

However, the seminary professor questioned both the excessive length of time before the ruling was made and the decision to stay the injunction pending the outcome of another case.

"The time factor is certainly a problem," Wamble told Word and Way, newsjournal of the Missouri Baptist Convention. "The effect of the delay was to let the New York case start from scratch and eventually go to the Supreme Court. I've never seen anything remotely like that."

The history of the case dates to April 4, 1977, when the Blue Hills Homes Corp., as a third party contractor, began placing federally-funded teachers in five Missouri school districts. Wamble filed suit that day against the U.S. Commissioner of Education, who approved the Missouri bypass, and against the Blue Hills Home Corp., and members of the commissioner of education's staff.

As pre-trial activities heightened, 13 parents of parochial school children signed on as intervening defendants. Wamble was later joined by 39 taxpayers and parents of public school children who became intervening plaintiffs.

Before going to trial, the case faced an 18-month stay imposed by the U.S. district judge in March 1979 pending the outcome of an earlier related case.

The Missouri case finally came to trial in August 1982, more than five years after being filed by Wamble. The trial concluded five months later, meaning last week's ruling came more than 22 months after the trial ended.

Wamble said Judge Stevens originally indicated a ruling would come by May 1983. Noting he was "anxious" about the repeated delays, Wamble remarked, "This case can stand on its own merits even if the New York case goes down."

He said a primary concern over the delays and current stay is that "the program continues without any controls on it. No one has been looking over the shoulders of the Blue Hills Homes Corp. since the trial was over."

Pointing to the non-establishment of religion clause in the First Amendment, Wamble added, "The resolution of the constitutional question has been unresolved by the delay. The delay has abused the rights of every citizen."

Ingram Rescinds
Oklahoma Retirement

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Joe L. Ingram, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma since 1971, has rescinded his retirement announcement of November.

When Ingram announced he wanted the apparatus put into motion to find his successor, messengers to the annual convention voted overwhelmingly to ask him to reconsider and bring his decision to the executive board meeting Dec. 4.

In his regularly scheduled address Dec. 4, Ingram said: "I have carefully assessed my physical strength and honestly sought God's will in this matter of continuing to serve in my present capacity. In feeling the assurance of his wisdom, his strength, I announce to you today that I will continue to serve as executive director-treasurer of this convention. I walk in the light of a limitless horizon leaning on his everlasting arms, confident of the leadership of his spirit and depending on the continuing cooperative support of the Baptist people of this state."

He then brought a message on love and said only love can overcome the factions in the SBC. He is not concerned about division in his state, he said, because Oklahoma Baptists know how to get along with each other. But he has great concern about the SBC, he said.

Ingram will be 65 in January. A motion at the state convention in November rescinded normal retirement age of 65 for Ingram alone. The state convention has a mandatory retirement age of 70. Ingram did not indicate how long he intended to continue to serve.

A heart problem experienced in August is under control by medication.

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Elder, Anderson Address
State Family Directors

By Gail Rothwell

Baptist Press
12/4/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--State family ministry leaders attending annual planning meetings were told by Southern Baptist Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder the BSSB is committed to the program of family ministry because the needs of families must continue to be a concern of Southern Baptists.

"This is your platform year in the Southern Baptist Convention," Elder said, noting the 1984-85 SBC Bold Mission Thrust emphasis is Strengthen Families. Elder assured family leaders family ministry will continue to be a priority program because "there are families out there like yours and mine who are hurting and need your help."

Douglas Anderson, secretary of the family ministry department, told leaders their task of helping to establish family ministry programs in churches and associations is not an easy one. "Family ministry is not one of the established Southern Baptist programs such as Sunday school or church training," said Anderson. "Churches are not comfortable with the program because it deals with change and conflict."

Explaining family ministry does not differ in theology, but application, Anderson said, "We are different because we are asking leaders who may be experiencing some of the same problems to be models for their congregations."

One of the goals of the family ministry department is to help leaders see themselves as "wounded healers," said Anderson. "We want people to be able to accept the grace of God in their own lives, realizing they are not perfect, but they are called of God."

During the meeting, leaders discussed plans for a 1985-86 emphasis on "Discipleship in the Home." The theme will be used to plan programs and resources for families, couples, single and senior adults.

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Anderson believes the home is the place people learn about faith. "The home is strategic in developing believers because people live out their Christianity in the home," he said.

Anderson challenged leaders to "strive to have an associational family ministry director in every association by the year 1990." Leaders agreed associational family ministry support would help to strengthen family ministry programs in local churches.

The family ministry department has developed a family life committee resource to aid churches and associations in developing an organizational structure to plan, promote and conduct family ministry events.

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'Feminization Of Poverty'
Confronts Church: Valentine

By David Wilkinson

Baptist Press
12/4/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—The face of poverty in America increasingly is assuming the appearance of a single female who often has the sole responsibility of caring for her children.

"Despite all the jawboning and rhetoric about an economic recovery, the tragic trend toward the 'feminization of poverty' is getting worse rather than better," according to Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Valentine cited a recent study by the Congressional Budget Office which reported women now make up 42 percent of the labor force, yet comprise over 66 percent of the people living in poverty.

Additional data from the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor and Statistics indicate last year 16.5 million persons in families headed by a single female were living in poverty. That figure represents almost one-half the number of Americans—about 35 million—who were classified as poor.

During 1983 the government defined the poverty line at \$10,178 annual income for a family of four.

The poverty level for the nation as a whole in 1983 was slightly more than 15 percent. But among the 12 million households headed by females—many of whom are senior citizens—40 percent lived below the official poverty line, surpassing the poverty rate among blacks (35.7 percent) and Hispanics (28.4 percent).

Among racial minorities, more than half of the female-headed households lived below the federal poverty line.

Statistics indicate "not only are the numbers of female-headed households growing, but the economic conditions in those homes are worsening," said Valentine. "According to a study by the Urban Institute, disposable income of these families shrank by an average of \$400 per family from 1980 through 1984."

The intertwined problems of poverty, hunger and disease, he added, "clearly affect most those who have the least visibility and political power."

In 1983, Valentine pointed out, another 900,000 persons slipped below the poverty line, and "almost two of every five of these so-called 'new poor' were children under the age of six."

Recent studies indicate 22 percent of America's children now live in poverty.

"Southern Baptists, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ who stood compassionately with the poor, the weak, the hungry and the powerless, must renew our commitment to social action that leads to genuine economic justice," he said.

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**RTVC's Eldon K. Sparrow
Joins Fund-Raising Firm**

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Eldon K. Sparrow, former director of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission's broadcast engineering department, has joined Cargill Associates as a consultant.

In his new position Sparrow will direct capital campaigns for Christian-oriented institutions. Cargill Associates, a Fort Worth-based consulting firm which has worked in 43 states and two foreign countries, specializes in fund raising for Christian institutions and churches.

As director of broadcast engineering for the RTVC, Sparrow traveled to churches across the Southern Baptist Convention consulting with them in acoustics, house and broadcast sound, lighting and video. He had been with the RTVC nearly 14 years.

Each week more than 126,000 people hear the gospel preached live on church sound systems he designed. These churches also preach to more than 350,000 radio listeners and telecast to nearly 500,000 regular viewers weekly for a combined total of 850,000 people who benefit spiritually from that ministry.

Before becoming director of the broadcast engineering department, Sparrow was involved with the RTVC's Second Step Campaign which raised more than \$3 million in the 1970's.

When he joined the RTVC staff, Sparrow left a secular career as president of AVS of America, a Memphis, Tenn.-based motion picture theater equipment supply company. Previously he was director of group communications for Holiday Inns.

Sparrow, a native of California, was graduated from the University of Mississippi and attended graduate school there. He also has attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. He is married to Bonita Sparrow, director of promotion for the RTVC.

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**Mission Will Bulldoze Road
To Starving Ethiopians**

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
12/4/84

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)—Southern Baptists gained permission in a pivotal meeting to bulldoze a 40-mile road through 10,000-foot mountains to salvage thousands of starving people in Ethiopia's Menz-Gishe area.

Officials of the Marxist nation also approved an offer from Southern Baptist missionaries in Ethiopia to survey the area where they once worked and design programs of short-range relief and long-range development.

The opportunity to return to rural Menz-Gishe represented an emotional moment for the missionaries, who lived and worked there for 10 years before the government moved them out of the troubled area and into the capital city of Addis Ababa in 1977.

It also provides a chance to preserve countless lives before Menz-Gishe gets as bad as the highly publicized situation to the north.

Already, reports out of Menz-Gishe, located on the southern perimeter of famine-stricken north Ethiopia, indicate at least 500 people and 159,000 animals have died in the area, populated by an estimated 250,000 persons.

The government's decision to allow the mission to re-enter Menz-Gishe came with stunning speed after a delegation from the Baptist Mission of Ethiopia and the Foreign Mission Board met with Debele Densa, first secretary of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia for the Shoa region.

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Approval came within 24 hours after Densa took the request to higher authorities on Nov. 29. By that time, the missionaries and Foreign Mission Board human needs consultant John Cheyne had already begun planning the difficult return to Menz-Gishe. Cheyne, a former missionary to Ethiopia, planned the original development program which made it possible for Southern Baptists to first enter the country in 1967.

Within two weeks of the decision, a mission-financed bulldozer will join 12,000 Ethiopians trying vainly to re-open the road to Menz-Gishe with crude hand tools. The journey into Menz-Gishe takes nearly seven hours in a four-wheel drive vehicle, even when the road is open.

The Foreign Mission Board approved a mission request for \$150,000 in hunger funds to rent a bulldozer and purchase the relief vehicles and supplies necessary for immediate hunger relief. It will only be enough to get the relief operation underway.

Earlier the mission received another \$50,000 from the FMB to help the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) finance a feeding and health care program in Woleta in the south.

Cheyne and the missionaries expressed amazement at events which seemed to miraculously link to propel Southern Baptists out of Addis Ababa and into the thick of famine relief. Each piece fell into place as they moved among government offices, relief agencies and equipment suppliers to gain crucial information, promises of cooperation and equipment.

Three career couples and two single personnel, already deeply involved in spiritual and physical ministries in Addis Ababa, faced their opportunity enthusiastically but realistically.

"We've taken on a long-term need," missionary agriculturist Lynn Groce told Cheyne during a special called meeting of the mission. "Can we count on Southern Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board for backing?"

"If this country misses another rainy season, you 'ain't seen nuthin' yet'," missionary veterinarian Jerry Bedsole added with emphasis.

Cheyne responded \$5.6 million in unfunded hunger and relief requests from around the world waited on his desk at the Foreign Mission Board but he expected Southern Baptists to respond to the crisis.

With that assurance and an acute sense of urgency for the desperate situation, the small mission voted to stretch itself thin and go full speed ahead in isolated Menz-Gishe, while numerous other relief agencies handle the problems further north.

The mission believes many marginal areas throughout the country must receive help before they too turn into famine dustbowls where people die by the thousands as they have in the north. Even though famine and drought have hit hard, Ethiopia is a patchwork of pockets of drought and fertility because of inconsistent rainfall. Some areas starve while others, such as Addis Ababa and vicinity, have experienced good crops and rainfall.

The SIM feeding and health care project already has impacted Woleta, a marginal area in the south. SIM relief workers and nurses, including Southern Baptist nurse practitioner Sharon Smith of South Carolina, report the food has raised nutritional levels dramatically and brought numerous children back from the brink of starvation in just five months.

The Baptist Mission of Ethiopia's initial request for Menz-Gishe includes a call for two volunteers to help handle logistics.

Cheyne and the mission believe a feeding and grain distribution program they hope to launch in January may need to involve primary health care to deal with medical needs which affect the critically malnourished.

The long-range development will likely include agriculture, animal health, irrigation, community health and sheep breeding.

The mission provided most of those services in the Menz-Gishe area before the government advised them to move to Addis Ababa in 1977 because of guerrilla activity in the area.

All the missionaries left Ethiopia in mid-1977 because of unsettled political conditions , but work re-opened in Addis Ababa in March 1978 and has continued to operate with a small staff since then. Besides veterans Jerry and Rosie Bedsole and Lynn and Suzanne Groce, the mission is staffed by four newcomers, career missionaries Troy and Jewell Waldron, journeyman teacher Mary Lou Jackson and volunteer veterinarian John Lawrence.

Their work in agriculture, animal health, relief, education and discipleship training ministries has had a growing impact.

Menz residents, where the missionaries made a deep impression on the Ethiopian Orthodox community, have urged the missionaries be allowed to return. But that seemed impossible until the present crisis.

At the meeting to decide the fate of isolated Menz-Gishe, Debele Densa and th missionaries alluded indirectly to past difficulties but decided to forget the past.

The missionaries, who lost some property and faced other problems in the area, told Densa they had no desire to recall the past or worry about losses but to move ahead to help the people in Menz-Gishe.

"Let us forget the past and let bygones be bygones," Densa said. "We are starting again from scratch. We are sorry such things happened.

"We need to save the lives of our people," Densa said. "Your coming to the region is of great importance. We are at your disposal."

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