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All Races In South Africa
Cooperate In Relief Effort

By Marty Croll

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (BP)—South African Baptists of all colors are working together to provide shelter and relief for blacks who fled their burning homes in the sprawling shanty settlement of Crossroads.

Whites, Asian Indians and "coloreds" (the South African race of mixed ancestry), are taking supplies to the offices of the Western Province Baptist Association in Pinelands, a suburb of Cape Town. From there Southern Baptist missionary Charles Hampton and a black pastor distribute them to Crossroads refugees.

Hampton, a church starter from Monticello, Ark., has been working with the pastor, Michael Dwaba, to start churches in and around Crossroads. In the relief program, Hampton picks up food, clothes and blankets left at association offices and transports them into the black community of Langa, where Dwaba helps him with distribution among the Crossroads refugees.

Shielded inside his pickup truck behind stainless-steel mesh, Hampton also drives supplies about once a week to an army tent outside Crossroads that shelters about 5,000 refugees. To distribute the supplies there he works with Baptists living in the camp. He estimates South African Baptists have cared for up to 1,000 people through this program.

The 65-year-old missionary outfitted his truck with wire mesh in June after youths in Langa tossed cement chunks through his windshield. Rival groups of blacks started fighting each other in the region in May. In June the South African government declared a state of emergency.

During the violence in Crossroads, about half of the city was burned. At one point up to 70,000 blacks were wandering around looking for shelter from the cape's winter rain or bundled up, shivering in wet blankets. Strong winds have hampered relief efforts, at least once blowing down a tent with several thousand people under it.

Hampton and missionary Mark Morris, a church starter from Memphis, Tenn., are exploring the possibility of securing land from the government to build homes using Southern Baptist relief funds. Under the proposal, black pastors would help the missionaries identify families to live in the homes. The organization of Southern Baptist missionaries, however, has not yet requested the funds from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Since his arrival in the Cape Town area eight years ago, Hampton has helped bridge the gap between the four races in South Africa whose lives normally run on different tracks. Now Baptist churches in Western Province Association are multiplying despite racial conflict surrounding them.

"We can't seat the people," said Hampton. "Every time I go somewhere they say, 'We've got 30 people awaiting baptism,' 'I've got 16 people awaiting baptism' or 'I'm counting 50 that are going to be baptized.' The coloreds, the blacks and a number of the European (white) churches just can't take care of the people with their buildings. We can't keep up with building buildings big enough."

Western Province Association is an integrated group of about 100 churches, missions and preaching stations. Its representatives meet every two months, and its officers are picked freely from each of the racial groups, Hampton said.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

Missionaries and South African Baptists on the Cape of Good Hope have found ways to spread the gospel in the midst of this most recent crisis. For one, they stuff Bibles and tracts donated by the South African Bible Society into bundles of relief items they give to people Dwaba identifies.

Dwaba preaches nightly under a tent where about 200 refugees sleep. The tent stands on a church lot awarded Baptists in Khayelitsha, about three miles from Crossroads, where the government built housing for 100,000 blacks. The word, "Khayelitsha," means "my new home" in the Xhosa tongue. The residents pay minimal fees, mainly for water and sewerage.

Hampton has received the best treatment he could want from government officials, as he and others have worked to provide relief behind checkpoints in trouble spots, he said. "The police everywhere I've been have been cooperative. I had occasion yesterday to take a step way up the line to a major's office for something I needed to know and work out. Every one of them was just as cooperative as he could be, right up the ladder."

God is blessing the work of Baptists in South Africa, Hampton said: "What people are seeing on the news media is certainly only a small part of the story. The Lord has blessed us far beyond any dream we could have ever had, in the midst of all of this."

One night Hampton arrived at a youth meeting after dodging fires on the roadway to Strandfontein Baptist Church in Mitchell's Plain, the largest colored community in the region. Upon his arrival, 40 to 50 youth there rose up, applauded and prayed, praising God. Then they broke out in a chorus, singing, "At times like these we sing out a song, we sing out a love song to Jesus."

"I know this is a terrible time for anybody, but God's children have rallied together for each other and have loved each other through this thing," Hampton said. "There's a lot of sunshine that's shining through the clouds."

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160 Million Americans
Need To Hear Gospel

By Sherry A. Brown

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RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—On the heels of the nation's Liberty Weekend celebration, Southern Baptists concentrated on methods to spiritually free 160 million non-Christians in America.

With the theme "Good News Lost America," home missionaries and guest speakers spoke to the problem of reaching America with the gospel during Home Missions Week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

"We have the manpower in this room tonight to reach these 160 million," declared William Hinson, guest preacher for the evening worship services.

Hinson, special assistant to the president at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, spoke to the nightly crowd of 1,500 people. "We celebrate Liberty Weekend by singing 'God Bless America,' but we forget that two-thirds of America is lost," he said, noting the problem is one of spiritual attitudes—fear, arrogance, selfishness, apathy.

"We're not seeking to save the lost because we're arrogant. We label people a liberal, a fundamentalist, a homosexual, a drunkard. By attaching a label in the house of God or in the marketplace, we displace them," Hinson warned.

In another session, C.W. Brister, professor of pastoral ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, addressed the issue of care for the caregivers.

Listing common illusions about religious professionals, Brister claimed even religious professionals often are unrealistic in self-expectations. People think "ministers must be strong at all costs; ministers are above mistakes; ministers lead 'charmed' lives," he said.

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"Preachers preach and don't do anything else, is also a common misbelief." But one of the most dangerous illusions of ministers is that "self-care is selfish. Ministers often are not concerned with health, exercise, a beautiful home, stylish dress because it is a selfish act," Brister told a group of directors of missions.

Brister, author of "Caring for the Caregivers," warned against this misbelief, pointing out "ministers should love because they are loved. And they should love themselves, as well."

In another session, Brister warned against the caregiver caring too much: "Theologians can ponder the mystery of God, but pastors must do the work of God. However, care must be part of the energy that keeps things going. Inordinate and inappropriate investments of time, energy and money in the objects of one's care may become idolatry."

Brister suggested ministers and other caregivers set priorities and limits in respect to life's time-frame. He also told the audience to get a "clear theological focus, asking, 'Does God expect what society wants?'"

More than 2,000 people attended the week-long eastern conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

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Bonita Sparrow
Leaves RTVC Job

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Bonita (Bonnie) Sparrow, a 14-year veteran staffer at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, has been named director of communications for the Fort Worth (Texas) Independent School District.

Sparrow, according to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, was chosen for the school district post over 471 other applicants. She will assume her new duties Aug. 11, and will be responsible for distributing news about the school system to the media and providing information for parents and other interested persons.

She joined the RTVC in 1972 as news coordinator, a post she held until 1978, when she became vice president, then director, of the RTVC's promotion department. When the promotion department was abolished in a reorganization in December of 1985, Sparrow became a regional sales manager for timeRite, inc., syndication, which is a division of the RTVC charged with selling four of the ACTS television programs to secular television stations.

In addition to her promotion duties, Sparrow coordinated the RTVC's annual national Abe Lincoln Awards program for broadcasters and promoted, coordinated and handled logistics for the annual National Conference on Broadcast Ministries.

She has won several first and second place awards from the Baptist Public Relations Association for excellence in newsletters, news and feature stories and for booth design at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. She was BPRA program vice president in 1983, and planned that year's meeting in New Orleans.

Sparrow earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and English from the University of Mississippi. Prior to joining the RTVC, she worked for two newspapers, the Memphis, Tenn., Commercial Appeal and the Jackson, Miss., Daily News. She also spent a year in Korea working with the American Red Cross.

She is married to Eldon K. Sparrow, who was director of the RTVC's broadcast engineering department until he left the commission in 1986 after 14 years of service. Currently, he is president of Communications Ministries, a Fort Worth-based firm which specializes in acoustics, sound reinforcement and television production lighting for churches.

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Southwestern Professor
Retires To New Tune

By Scott Collins

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Retirement won't change Robert Douglass' tune—it will only change the language. Douglass, distinguished professor of musicology, is retiring this summer after 32 years at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

In retirement, he and his wife, Elaine, want to take their music skills around the world. She is retiring as a public school music teacher. He is an authority on music history. They intend to combine their talents to strengthen Southern Baptist music missions in Spanish-speaking countries. Their interest in music missions came from two sources.

The first came last year when Douglass taught in the Baptist seminary in Peru for eight weeks. In preparation for that trip he spent hours studying Spanish. A second influence was his years in Southwestern's music school where there is "an emphasis on music missions," he said. That emphasis "really came home to me in the '60s," he says.

At that time the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission asked him to write a program on great oratorios. The program was translated into Spanish for use by 100 radio stations in Spanish-speaking countries. Requests came in from more than 425 stations.

Through both projects, Douglass saw the potential for music in missions. In fact, it was just such a practical application of theory that attracted Douglass to Southwestern in 1954. "I felt I was not just teaching in an ivory palace," he says. "I was teaching people who were going to go out and use what they learned.

"Any theory that doesn't have a practical application isn't a theory, and any practice without a theory isn't a very good practice," he says. Douglass took that vision and helped build Southwestern's music school.

In addition to teaching, he was associate dean for doctor of musical arts. He also led the committee which developed the seminary's long range plan for 1975-2000.

Among his contributions to the local community is a 20-year sideline as music critic for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Before coming to Southwestern, Douglass studied at North Texas State University where he earned a doctorate in music. He has also taught high school band in Texas. Douglass also applied his musical talents as a bugler in the U.S. Army's 5th Cavalry and in the Army band.

But in retirement Douglass doesn't want to dwell on these "good old days." He believes, "The good old days are now. Enjoy them because these are the best we've had."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Christine Bess Handled Money,
But People Made Her 'Rich'

By Marv Knox

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Christine Bess handled money during her 35-year career with the Southern Baptist Foundation, but people enriched her life.

Bess began in January of 1951 as the first full-time employee to work with C.H. Bolton, first chief executive of the foundation. She started as a secretary and kept books and later was accountant and administrative assistant. She was executive secretary-treasurer at the time of her retirement this summer.

Along the way, she worked with all five of the foundation's chief executives and worked with hundreds of Southern Baptists who asked the foundation to invest their funds for the perpetual benefit of Southern Baptist causes.

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"Christine Bess has helped a lot of Baptist people give what they want to Baptist causes-- which will help the denominational enterprise until Christ returns," says Hollis Johnson, president of the foundation for the past 10 years.

"She also has been the link, the tie from administration to administration," Johnson adds. "For all these years, she has provided continuity to the foundation."

And continuity is a stock in which Bess has invested deeply. She still keeps in contact with the families of former foundation executives. Even in retirement, she maintains frequent correspondence with many Southern Baptist investors who entrusted their funds to the foundation, as well as foundation trustees with whom she has served.

"If anything enriches your life, it's not just diversification of people, but continual contact with them," she insists. "My greatest impression of my years here is of people--people--people contact."

She reminisces about "unselfish, capable businessmen who came regularly, gave hours of their time" and worked to carry out the intent and purpose of the foundation as its trustees.

She also is fond of her association with the organization's five leaders, who always insisted on a "working with" relationship. "Their openness of mind and receptiveness was most rewarding," she says. "These dedicated Christians--who were in depth in Scripture, devoted to Southern Baptist life and committed to the foundation--not only profoundly affected me, but my family."

That family also is bound up in another relationship--membership in Crieewood Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn. They share a long family-church history. She was chairperson of the first neighborhood census which was used to help the church get started. Today her grandchildren share a pew with her during worship services.

From that pew, and from her Nashville home, Bess continues to cultivate relationships which have so enriched her life.

"Life still holds for me the greatest challenges," she says, noting she still is involved in some phases of foundation work, especially estates in which she still has power of attorney and relationships she has developed over the years with Southern Baptist donors.

So, while she still keeps up with Dow Jones averages, she also keeps up with friends she has made during the past 35 years.

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Emeritus Professor
R.B. Jones Dies

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SPARTANBURG, S.C. (BP)--Russell Bradley Jones, emeritus professor of Bible at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., former foreign missionary to the Philippines and president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, died July 17, in Spartanburg, S.C.

Jones, a native of Kentucky, was a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. In addition to teaching at the Tennessee Baptist school and serving as a missionary pastor in Manila, Jones was pastor of churches in Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland and Georgia.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Georgia Baptist Foundation for the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary in Baguio.

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