



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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July 7, 1987

87-101

Volunteers In Haiti  
Return Home Safely

By Eric Miller

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP)--Despite rioting and roadblocks in Haiti, a group of North Carolina volunteers "felt calm" because they knew churches back home were praying for them.

Soldiers killed 24 people and wounded 90 others last week in Haiti during violence related to strikes against the government. Organizers of the strikes, which started in late June after the Southern Baptist volunteers had been there a week, say the strikes will continue until a three-man governing council steps down from office.

But that didn't keep the 10-man construction team from North Carolina from finishing their work in the interior of the country and returning home July 5. Using \$15,000 raised by 29 churches in North Carolina, the volunteers built a house for a national pastor and part of a school, said Paul Gordon of Troy, N.C., the group leader.

The group, working in cooperation with the Foreign Mission Board's volunteer program and North Carolina Baptist Men, labored in a remote area eight hours away from any major towns. Gordon, who has built churches in Haiti for five years, said that amid all the striking and violence in populated areas, the team "stayed put" and remained in the remote area an extra day until a weekend truce between strikers and the government took effect.

If violence had reached their remote area, they would have crossed a nearby border into the Dominican Republic, he said.

Two additional volunteer teams scheduled to arrive later in July and in August have been advised by missionaries in Haiti not to come.

With Haitians mixing mortar and carrying blocks, the volunteers finished the construction they had set out to do. Two volunteers preached in two crowded worship services. Others donated shoes, shirts and tools to the Haitians. One Haitian accepted the gifts with tears.

As their departure time approached, they rode in Jeeps and a truck toward Port-au-Prince, not knowing whether an airplane would be at the airport to return them to the United States. They drove on bad roads at 10 to 15 mph for 14 hours, occasionally stopping to fill ditches dug across roads and remove log barricades placed by strikers.

They drove past cars that had been smashed and burned by strikers because occupants had tried to remove barricades. As they crossed a river, water rose to the headlights and "we started to feel the Jeep float," Gordon said.

Finally they reached the airport and found that a plane was there to take them home. Throughout the trip, "we felt calm," Gordon said. "We knew we had churches praying for us back home."

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Mexican Baptists Table  
Name Change, Re-elect President

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
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HOUSTON (BP)--Messengers to the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas tabled a controversial name change, re-elected a president and underscored their commitment to missions during their annual meeting, June 29-July 1 at First Baptist Church in Houston.

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Dedicated to the theme, "My Mission ... Texas," more than 2,000 persons -- including about 900 messengers -- met for the yearly gathering of Hispanic Southern Baptists in Texas.

David Dixon, pastor of Central Hispanic Baptist Church in Fort Worth, introduced a motion to change the convention's name to the "Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas," which he said he considered more inclusive. At the recommendation of the committee on constitutional revisions, the convention voted to table the issue for one year, allowing time for the matter to be discussed and prayerfully considered by all cooperating churches.

The convention also re-elected Manuel Rodriguez, pastor of the Hispanic congregation of Harlandale Baptist Church of San Antonio, for a traditional second one-year term as president.

Rodriguez received 349 votes, compared to his closest challenger, incumbent first vice president Roberto Cuellar of Calvario Baptist Church in Dallas, who received 131 votes. Other presidential nominees were Willie Garza of Calvario Baptist Church in San Antonio, and James Benson of Broadway Baptist Church in Houston.

Other officers elected were: first vice president, Lorenzo Pena of El Paso; second vice president, Daniel Banda of Dallas; third vice president, Rugiero Izaguirre of McAllen; honorary president, Manuel Davila of Houston; and secretary, Mateo Rendon Jr. of Odessa.

Also elected were: ministers' conference president, Leobardo Garcia of Corpus Christi; ministers' wives conference president, Noemi Pena of Temple; youth conference president, Rhoda Sanchez of Fort Worth; Woman's Missionary Union president, Mary Valerio of Houston; and Texas Baptist Men president, Ben Silva of Dallas.

In his presidential address, Rodriguez challenged the Mexican Baptists to be united in their efforts to meet the spiritual needs of Hispanics in Texas. He cited three great needs among Hispanic Baptists in Texas: the need for love among brethren; the need for accurate information and increased communication; and the need for laymen to give their lives to the ministry.

Noting that 300 Texas Baptist Hispanic churches and missions are without pastors and reminding convention-goers of the Mission Texas goal of starting 2,000 new congregations by 1990, Rodriguez offered an invitation to become Mission Texas workers. At least 26 pastors agreed to lead their churches to begin new work, and 36 laymen surrendered to full-time vocational Christian service.

In the annual convention sermon, Daniel Banda of Bethel Baptist Church in Dallas, encouraged Hispanic Texas Baptists to share the "living water" of the gospel with the lost and to gain strength from it themselves, particularly in times of despair and disappointment.

John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston, preached at the final session of the convention on the need for commitment to unity, evangelism, prayer, holiness and the lordship of Jesus Christ. He especially encouraged the convention not to allow differences of opinion to distract from their unified purpose.

"The name of your convention is important, but the unity of the convention is far more important," he said. "Settle your problems quietly and in love, out of the public eye.

"There is enough controversy at the national level. If the Southern Baptist Convention had spent as much energy in evangelism in recent years as it has in fighting over the Bible, we would have won the world by now," he said. "Evangelism must take precedence over all else."

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Texas Baptist Named  
Disaster Site Liaison

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
7/7/87

SARAGOSA, Texas (BP)--Manuel Galindo, vice president of student life at Valley Baptist Academy in Harlingen, Texas, has been appointed liaison between government agencies, volunteers and the local building committee in Saragosa, the West Texas town virtually leveled by a tornado May 22.

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Galindo, who is on a sabbatical from Valley Baptist Academy, had been on-site disaster relief volunteer coordinator in Saragosa for Texas Baptist Men.

In his new role, he will relate to federal entities such the Federal Emergency Management Agency, state authorities, the Saragosa Building Committee and volunteers. The job is expected to last at least six months, and Galindo's salary will be paid through a government grant.

Galindo has taught at Valley Baptist Academy for 17 years, and also has been coach, athletic director and executive assistant to the president. During his sabbatical for the 1987-88 school year, Galindo plans to complete work on master's degree in athletic administration at Texas A & I University in Kingsville.

Galindo was elected Varones Bautistas (Baptist Men) vice president for disaster relief operations during the June 30 meeting of Hispanic Texas Baptist Men in Houston.

Texas Baptist Men will coordinate volunteers and materials to rebuild Saragosa, according to Bob Dixon, director of the emergency task force for Texas Baptist Disaster Relief.

Of the 107 homes in the community, 60 were destroyed by the tornado, and 47 sustained damage but were considered habitable. Temporary housing for the homeless is being provided in mobile homes set up on donated land.

Tentative plans call for a week-long Texas Baptist Men volunteer construction project this fall to rebuild the remaining houses, but no firm date has been set, said Dixon.

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Baptist Educators Face  
Legal/Political Issues

By Pam Parry

Baptist Press  
7/7/87

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Southern Baptist educators are going to be confronted with the problem of AIDS, James P. Guenther told participants at a public policy/legal affairs workshop held prior to the meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools in Kansas City.

Guenther, a Nashville attorney, told educators: "It is clear AIDS is coming to your campus. College lawyers are busy trying to figure out how to advise their institutions about AIDS."

He noted old statutes are being studied for their application to what he described as the "newest morass" for higher education and told educators they must support any action taken with AIDS victims on their campuses with hard medical evidence.

"Simply an ignorant -- as the medical community might call it -- fear of contagion will not get you past an AIDS discrimination case. The next few years is going to see this topic on the agenda of preventive legal planning by every college," he said.

Southern Baptist educators also heard from Richard F. Rosser, president and chief executive officer of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the only major organization which represents all independent higher education.

Rosser told educators independent educational institutions have a public relations problem for two reasons.

First, Rosser said, all privately-supported schools are perceived as having the same kind of tuitions as Harvard or Yale. Second, some politicians believe all independent institutions are heavily endowed, while, in fact, only 20 percent of private schools have endowments of \$10 million or more, he said.

"We have to have political action, and you, individually and collectively, are the key," Rosser said. He urged the educators to call their senators and representatives to tell them the realities of their situations.

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In regards to financial aid, Rosser noted monetary support from private institutions has grown from \$900 million to \$3 billion in the last four years.

The problem, Rosser warned, is that federal funding is dwindling at private colleges and universities. He said the main reason involves the influence of proprietary schools, for-profit institutions which are designed to teach a trade. These schools are influential because they have a political action committee in Washington which contributes directly to senators and congressmen, Rosser said.

"We have to fight for our share of student aid because it's the critical thing in the budget of practically every school," he said.

During the public policy/legal affairs workshop educators also heard a presentation on the costs and liability of asbestos removal from James D. Jordan, a Nashville attorney.

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Music Professor Sets  
Scripture To Music

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press  
7/7/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The best text for a hymn or Christian anthem is Scripture, according to Claude L. Bass, widely known Southern Baptist teacher, composer and text writer.

"Scripture is beautiful to me. Maybe as I read Scripture, I hear music more than from any other texts," said Bass, professor of music theory and composition at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He considers himself a teacher first and a composer/text writer second.

As the music composer and text writer for numerous works, many of them commissioned for special occasions, Bass seems to turn more often to Scripture than to life experiences for words.

"Our society is so I-centered," he observed. "God should be at the center of it, not what we have experienced or how we feel about something. That can be done in personal devotions.

"I like to shed as much light on the Scripture as I can. I try to find the best way to wed it to music so the music does not detract from it. I'm trying to paint in music what the text is saying."

His settings of Scripture cover a wide range of texts. "Psalm Twenty-three," published more than 25 years ago by Broadman Press, is representative of his earlier settings of Scripture to music. Later works published by Broadman include "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:31-33), "Christ, My Strength" (Philippians 4:13, Psalm 28:7), "Wait on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:30-31), "Ye Are the Light of the World" (Matthew 5:14-16) and a work from "Contemporary Canticles," Matthew 6:19-21 from an original translation by W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Bass said he always begins with the text, preferring that the music come from the text rather than forcing the text to fit the music.

"I do background work with commentaries and read a lot of different translations of the Bible," he said. "I look for the specific character of the text and then I try to match it in music. Intuition is a part of it, but it's also a matter of applying craftsmanship. I have to put myself in that framework to match the mood of the text to the mood of the music.

"I do ask the Lord to help me a lot when I am setting his word to music," said Bass. He lamented that "God's word is trivialized by a lot of music.

"I generally go for more formal language, and the King James Version has that," he added.

Paraphrasing Scripture, he said, is more difficult than using the exact words from Scripture, "because paraphrasing has to be stylistically consistent. That's what I want -- something that fits together. The Scripture itself is already stylistically consistent."

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Bass said he feels not enough time is spent on praise, adoration and worship: "I like to concentrate on texts that praise God rather than on one that tells how I feel or how I'm doing in a certain point in my day. I would rather my music point toward God."

Mark Blankenship, who has been Bass' editor in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department for a dozen years, said some Bible passages are more easily set to music than others because of their metrical flow.

However, Bass "has the ability to take most any Scripture and give it a poetic flow with his music, even if there is not a natural metrical pattern to the syllables," Blankenship observed. "His unique gift of melody seems to pull the most important meaning and emotion from every word of the text."

Bass recalled one of his teachers telling him that "'the sacred music we write presents to the world our view of God.' This really stayed with me.

"Music can give expression to things that words cannot express."

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

Baptists Begin Project  
To Feed Mozambicans

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
7/7/87

MAPUTO, Mozambique (BP)--Southern Baptists have begun a project to feed starving street children in Mozambique, where famine and war have produced a food shortage predicted to take as many lives as the recent Ethiopian crisis.

The denomination plans also to distribute seed and farm implements throughout six areas of the country.

Southern Baptists decided to release \$30,000 immediately to begin the feeding program after John Cheyne, relief planner for the denomination's Foreign Mission Board and Southern Baptist missionary Jim Brock talked with Mozambican officials in early July. Cheyne visited Maputo, capital of the southeastern African nation and then flew over stricken rural areas.

Before the trip, Cheyne said he expected the board eventually will spend up to \$1 million for relief in Mozambique and just outside its borders, where thousands of refugees have fled. The refugees have streamed into neighboring Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa and Swaziland.

Published reports from inside Mozambique say up to 2 million people could die even if relief equal to that provided in Ethiopia were begun immediately. At least 1 million people are estimated to be inaccessible, surrounded by fighting. The United Nations has estimated up to 4.5 million Mozambicans face starvation.

In the Southern Baptist feeding program, national Baptist workers will serve malnourished children in five areas a dish of rice topped with vegetables and soup. Many children in Mozambique have lost their families during upheaval caused by fighting between rebels and government troops. The food will be supplied through Foreign Mission Board hunger funds.

Initially \$12,500 will buy a truck, and other money will buy utensils for eating and cooking in seven feeding stations in Maputo, where 20,000 children are estimated to live on the street. Maputo is a seaport located in the southern tip of the long, slender country. Cheyne hopes Baptists can provide 2,000 or more malnourished children with at least a daily minimum requirement for calories. The feeding stations will be open five to six days each week.

Eventually Baptists expect to open about a dozen other feeding stations throughout the country, in the seacoast cities of Quelimane and Beira, and farther to the north in Nampula. Another feeding station is proposed closer to Maputo in an area considered dangerous because of rebel activity.

The seed and farm implement program is planned in six major areas, but Cheyne still is working out details with government agriculture officials. Distribution would be handled through local agencies, but Baptists would be free to monitor it in each area.

Seminary Students  
Witness In Army

By Breena Kent Paine

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Witnessing in the military is not easy, according to two seminary students who have experience in the field.

David Coram, who is a helicopter pilot in the Army National Guard, said the military is "one of the most unreached units. ... It's more difficult to be a Christian in the military and to make that known. ... You can be isolated soon" because of the constant pressure to participate in "secular-oriented" entertainment. "Lifestyle witnessing is the most effective by far."

Coram, from Tampa, Fla., may be a chaplain one day, but right now he feels he can best minister in the military as a helicopter pilot. A student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he said: "I considered going into the chaplaincy program when I came here, and I'm still thinking about it when I graduate, but I felt that I could better witness as a pilot." I felt I would have better rapport being one of them."

Recently, Coram swore a fellow seminary student, Jerald McGowin, into the chaplain's candidacy program. Although McGowin will not actually be a chaplain until he graduates from seminary, he has been a chaplain's assistant in the U.S. Coast Guard and knows the special needs of military personnel.

"It's difficult to witness to someone in a lower grade," said the Brookwood, Ala., native, because it would seem like pressure. "And it's difficult to witness to someone higher, because you're telling him he's a sinner and going to die."

McGowin observed, "Witnessing is such a long haul" in the military. "One fellow I led to the Lord had already been witnessed to over a period of three years at different bases, and I just happened to be there at the time to lead him to the Lord. ... Very rarely do you see the results of your own witnessing. It's the idea of planting a seed" -- some plant, some water, some reap, "but most of it is watering," he said.

Coram and McGowin also have discovered effective witnessing through their wives. As their wives witness to the spouses of military men, bridges are built for Coram and McGowin to witness. McGowin said his wife "helps my ministry to be more effective."

Coram and his wife, Caron Renee, have three children -- David Jr., 10; Rachael, 7; and Nicole, 3. Coram served 12 years in active duty in the Army -- the first eight in personnel administration, the last four as an aviator. "I served in local churches wherever I was assigned overseas and in the United States," he said.

Coram obtained a bachelor's degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Licensed and ordained by Benning Park Baptist Church in Columbus, Ga., he came to New Orleans in the fall of 1985, answering a call to the ministry he received while on active duty.

McGowin and his wife, Marjorie, have two children -- Joel, 4; and James, 8. McGowin served in the U.S. Coast Guard for seven years. Three of those years he was a chaplain's assistant, where he received his call to ministry.

McGowin obtained a bachelor's degree from Samford University in 1986. He was licensed at Orchard Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., and ordained at Fourth Avenue North Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. He was pastor of a church in Centreville, Ala., before he came to New Orleans in 1986.

Both Coram and McGowin received their calls to the ministry while on active duty, both are students at New Orleans Seminary, both teach at Cameron Community College, and their wives are both students at the seminary.

But most important, both have dedicated their lives to sharing the gospel with men in the military.

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(BP) photo available upon request from New Orleans Seminary.