

The COMMISSION

FOREIGN MISSIONS JOURNAL, SBC/APRIL '74







Bound by the Barrio

*Photos by
Bob Harper*

Facing page: A little girl of the barrio offers a smile in Caracas, Venezuela.
Above: Mountains form backdrop for Caracas skyline viewed from barrio hill.

By Veda Rae Lozuk

CARACAS, shaped like a long, narrow, banana-split dish, contains all the delights that the mind of modern man has invented. Mountains wall in the beauties of the Venezuelan capital.

But between the riches of the city and the mountain heights live the barrio people. They make up between 40 and 50 percent of the city's two million residents. They are the poor who have come to the metropolis to seek a more comfortable way of life. They can see, spread out below them, evidences of that life with all its conveniences. Yet how can they ever become a part of it?

Maritza lives in one of the barrios (poverty areas). She grew up in a poor family

in a city of the northern Andes Mountains. Because her mother worked as cook at an evangelical institute, as a girl Maritza heard about the Christian life.

She was more interested, however, in the fact that she was pretty and that boys liked her. At 15 she married a youth from a poor family like her own. He soon took her to Caracas, where he hoped to find some kind of a job. The couple moved into a *ranchito* (barrio shack) with his sister and her large family.

The teenage bride was miserable, as she tried to fit in with so many people in such a small space. When her husband at last found work as a day laborer, they rented their own *ranchito*. Immediately an uncle and a cousin of her husband moved in with them.

By this time Maritza was expecting her first child, and she was sick constantly. Still, she had to carry water from the community faucet and wash, iron, and cook for the three men.

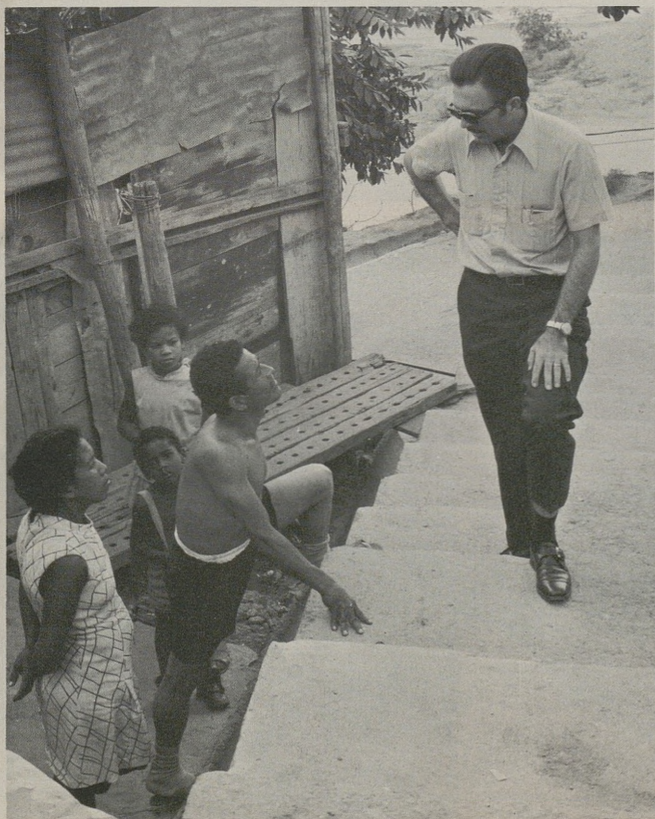
A son was born, and in a short time a second child was on the way. Again Maritza felt ill, but she kept on working. She and her husband quarreled frequently about the relatives in the home. Becoming enraged, her husband ordered her to leave and accused her of seeing other men.

Maritza denied any wrong doing and declared she would not leave her home. But when her husband threatened her with a machete, she fled with her baby.

With no place to go, she accepted the invitation of a man who said she could live with him. Her second son arrived. Then she bore a third son by the man she was living with. Since the man did not treat Maritza or the little boys well, in desperation she wrote to tell her mother about the situation. In response, her mother moved to



Above: A barrio boy enjoys a snack. Facing page, top: Venezuelan flowers provide a splash of color. Right: Beginning climb to top of hill in the barrio, Missionary James R. West pauses for a chat with a family.



Veda Rae Lozuk, the author of a half dozen articles in this issue, is stationed in Caracas. She and her husband, George, were appointed missionaries in 1956.

Caracas, found a job, rented a house, and took Maritza and her children to live with her.

Now Maritza feels fortunate—she has met another man, one who is good to her and the children. She has borne him a son, and he pays for the food, clothing, and education of the three older boys, as well as for his own son. While the couple has been building their own *ranchito*, he has lived with his mother and Maritza with her mother. She has worked alongside her man in laying bricks for the house.

Maritza is only 28, but she appears older, and her once-attractive figure is fading. She has died her long hair blonde. She would like a job, any job, she says, to help in buying materials to finish the home. But one overriding worry has barred her from seeking work—her 13-year-old son and the *barrio*. Until recently she has been able to keep her children in the house with her and away from the neighborhood. Now, however, she is beginning to lose control of her oldest son, who is making friends of other *barrio* boys and going out with them.

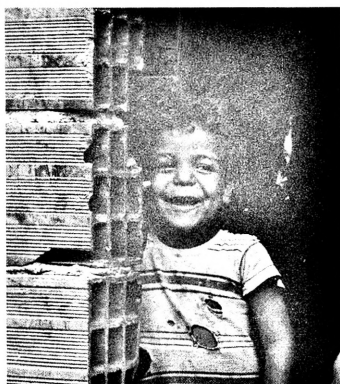
Maritza sends the children to an evangelical church in the *barrio* with her mother each Sunday and has even begun attending herself from time to time. She still recalls the “new life” she heard about as a child.

“All about us,” she laments, “there is all the immorality known to man—drugs of all types, liquor for anyone who can pay for it, crime, filth.”

She has begged Christian friends to help her enroll her teenage son in an evangelical boarding school. “The one thing I can’t stand,” she explains, “is to lose my son to the life of the *barrio*.”

At least Maritza has knowledge of a better life. So many of those in the *barrio* do not even know there is another way to live. **TC**





Residents
of the
barrio.

On the subject, "The Holy Spirit in Action," the "television announcer" fired news flashes. He cited changes in the lives of Saul of Tarsus, Phillip, Peter, and others after they had been touched by a force called the Holy Spirit of God. Interviews with "eyewitnesses" upheld the reports.

Then the two dozen young people watching the Training Union program at Immanuel Baptist Church, Caracas, were transported in time by the announcer. Now it was 1974, but the news was still "the work of the Holy Spirit." People were saying, continued the young announcer, that Venezuelan Baptist churches had been touched and changed by the Holy Spirit.

To those of us who have served as missionaries in Venezuela for a number of years, the Young People's Union of Immanuel Church had gone right to the heart of the matter. With the changes taking place in Baptist work in this land, the Spirit of God seems to have left his mark on many congregations, blowing a new wind of attitude through the churches.

Congregations that not so long ago were asking, "Who is going to help us keep going?" are declaring, "Look how the Lord is using us to help others!"

The steps are simple to trace. Baptist work had its beginning in Venezuela some 30 years ago. Small groups of Venezuelans who had come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior began using Baptist literature from the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Tex. In 1949 the Baptist Mission in Colombia was invited to send someone to look into several small churches in Venezuela that felt their beliefs had come to coincide with Baptist doctrine. Some of these congregations did become the first Baptist churches in the country. Two missionary couples moved from Colombia to work with them. Six churches formed the Venezuelan Baptist Convention in 1951.

Two more couples were assigned to Venezuela before a faith-healing movement swept through the evangelical churches and divided the new Baptist work. Those who remained in Baptist ranks kept on preaching and evangelizing. During



This map was used by the missions committee of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention to promote the 1974 missions offering. It carries the declaration that Baptists will be working in all the states of Venezuela by 1980.

THE SPIRIT LEAVES HIS MARK

VENEZUELAN AWAKENING

By Veda Rae Lozuk

the 1950s a well-loved missionary died of cancer, and several new couples were appointed.

Then a serious misunderstanding between missionaries and convention leaders brought about a complete division in Baptist work. Most of the churches followed convention leaders; a few sided with the missionaries. After a six-year separation the groups reunited. They came together with a fervent wish for full understanding and

unity. This led to the "one work" plan, under which Baptists in Venezuela cooperate today.

Yet there persisted among Baptists a feeling of being "a minority group" without much potential. During the months when a beloved pastor's wife and Baptist pioneer lay dying of cancer, Baptists from all over Venezuela made their way to visit this one who had led many of them to know Jesus. Her life and example led the convention to



Children in Venezuela.

name the Venezuelan mission offering for her before she died. (See p. 9.)

At the same convention session a guest challenged Baptists to take the gospel to the state of Cojedes. The idea caught fire, and a young couple about to graduate from the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, Colombia, sent word, "If you will send us, we'll go to Cojedes to start Baptist work."

A mission vision had been born. The convention's missions committee set a goal of \$4,200 as the minimum amount needed to launch an effort in Cojedes and support it for a year. In 1970 the first Christmas missions offering designated for opening a home missions program reached \$7,000.

Among the churches a new attitude emerged: "With the Lord's help we can do important things." The next year's offering totaled \$8,000.

Enrique (Henry) and Pilar Damaso and their two children moved to San Carlos in Cojedes state in August 1971. They found no church,

no mission, no known prospect. But a year later there were 24 baptized believers, a number of other converts, and still others interested in the gospel. In less than two years from the missionaries' entrance into Cojedes, First Baptist Church of San Carlos was formed with 35 members. (See p. 8.)

Next, Baptists who had visited the beautiful fishing island of Margarita began to point out, "Spiritually it is dead. There's not one evangelical pastor on the entire island." The cry became, "Let's support the work in Cojedes and begin a witness in Margarita."

The convention's missions committee suggested a goal of \$11,700 for the 1972 offering. Gifts amounted to \$13,000, enough to maintain the work in Cojedes and also to send Tito and Josefa Campos as missionaries to Margarita; they moved to the field last July. Six months later, missions and preaching points were flourishing all over the island.

For the 1973 Christmas offering, the goal moved up to \$16,500 to

support home mission work already under way and to send a third couple to the populous, oil-refinery state of Falcon. Early reports have indicated the goal is in sight. And a potential missionary couple has been located.

During the same years that Venezuelan Baptists have responded to the home missions program, God has also been blessing in several other areas:

(1) Growing out of small beginnings, the convention's Radio and TV Commission now is producing on a weekly basis four local programs and five that are broadcast over Trans World Radio. (See p. 18.)

(2) In 1970 a long-held convention dream became reality with the opening of the Venezuelan Baptist Theological Seminary. Enrollment is now 26, and extension courses are conducted in various sections of the country. (See p. 12.)

(3) At its 1972 session, the Venezuelan convention, then with 35 churches, adopted a goal of 100 Baptist churches by 1980.

(4) Baptists have opened two children's homes. One is a student home in Guanare to allow children from rural areas to live in Christian surroundings while attending the city's high school. A young pastor and wife started the other home, where unwanted or needy children are cared for, enrolled in public school, and trained in Christian living.

(5) Fabulous eastern Venezuela, known for its iron ore and other natural resources that may hold the key to the country's future, is opening to Baptists for the first time.

(6) An agricultural ministry has been opened in the central plains with a dual purpose: to help farmers use scientific methods in cultivation and as a point of contact for the gospel.

(7) Combined talents of a Venezuelan Baptist musician and a music missionary are enlarging the music program among the churches and making contacts in places and with people where Baptists have never before been known. (See p. 28.)

A feeling persists that many Venezuelan Baptist churches have been awakened by the Spirit of God. It's a good time to be a part of the Lord's work in Venezuela. **TC**



IT IS hot tonight. Even the people who live here in San Carlos are suffering from the heat. Yet they don't seem to mind—in fact, they seem happy.

There's Lygia. They tell me she was baptized this afternoon. What a change her face reflects from that embittered, Communist-oriented young woman I knew before! There is no question: the gospel of Jesus Christ does make a difference.

The Castro family with their 12 children just arrived. Before this mission was begun, they were like so many Venezuelan couples—not married and with many tensions in the home. The first thing they did after accepting Christ was to get married—with all 12 children present. Now they are all active members of the congregation.

Only a year before tonight the first service was held in this house with two young persons present. During that first week three individuals made professions of faith in Christ.

The author was appointed a missionary to Venezuela in 1963.

Tonight there must be 150 people gathered on this porch. Some of us, of course, have come from other places, but the great majority are local people. That is not too surprising, since several services lately have had more than 100 in attendance, and 24 persons were baptized during the year. There are also two missions in active operation. That's pretty good for a one-year-old mission in a brand-new area.

It's even hard to breathe in this heat. I'm glad we're outside. It appears we will use the *la hora llanera* (starting time on the plain—always one or two hours late). It will be late when we get home, but it is great to witness what God can do. Think of it—just two years before tonight this mission was only an idea of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention's Mission Board!

All of us in the Mission Board meeting that night felt that God had spoken. The question was raised: Why not send out national home missionaries to the many areas of Venezuela in such need of the gospel and with so little con-

THEIR OWN THING

BY H. ROBERT TUCKER, JR.

tact with any evangelical church?

We could never expect to secure enough missionaries from the U.S. to meet the needs; even so, that would not be the best long-range solution. Venezuelans should assume leadership in winning Venezuela for Christ.

Many questions remained to be answered: Where? Who? How? The "where" was soon determined.

(Continued on page 10.)



The Baptist church at San Carlos now sponsors three missions. This is the congregation at one of them, Valley Hondo.

SIOMARA de Nuñez, whose life inspired Venezuelan Baptists to begin thinking seriously about the missionary challenge in their country, was born Siomara Guerrero on March 16, 1901, in the plains village of Guasdualito.

Born into a wealthy family, she was educated by tutors and spent her free time thinking of clothes, entertainment, and friends. In the marketplaces she pulled her skirts close to her, so as not to touch those people of the lower class who passed nearby; they belonged to a world she chose not to acknowledge.

Her life changed radically when she was 19. Angel Archilla Cabrera came from Puerto Rico to preach for an evangelistic campaign in her village, and she surrendered her life to Christ. She studied nursing in order to help the sick and underprivileged, pulled teeth, and walked as far as 40 miles, crossing rivers and wading mud up to her knees, to preach Jesus in Venezuela's vast central plains.

When two churches in Guasdualito were pastorless, she took charge of them. Pastors came to serve, and she took upon herself the task of seeing that they were adequately supported. When a young pastor named Germán

Nuñez was called to her church, Siomara and the pastor fell in love and were married.

Now she deliberately took a back seat in church activities and helped her husband as he led the church. For the rest of her life she was to play a quiet, supporting role, though her spiritual strength was felt in all areas of their ministry.

She firmly believed in tithing. Even when she earned only 40 cents a day by sewing, she faithfully set aside 6 cents for the Lord.

She believed in prayer. Once when her husband's only suit disappeared from the clothesline, he resigned himself to preaching in shirt-sleeves. But Siomara felt her husband really needed the suit, and she asked the Lord to have the thief replace the clothing. Germán recalls that he did not have that much faith, but his wife kept praying. Three days later the suit reappeared on the line.

Siomara was happy when she and her husband decided to go the state of Cojedes to begin a Baptist work. Still, when the illness of a fellow pastor caused them to change their plans and move to take his place, she went along

and quickly fitted into the new situation. Even after her husband became pastor of Venezuela's largest Baptist church, she was always ready to travel with him to the small churches of the hot plains region.

Having no children of her own, she helped to bring up several nephews and pointed them to the Lord's way. She represented Venezuela in trips to Colombia, Mexico, Spain, and the U.S.

When it was discovered that Siomara had cancer, people great and small came to Caracas from all parts of Venezuela to visit this woman who had given so much of herself for others. During the long months of suffering, those who went to cheer her up remarked time and again that they came away fortified because of her faith.

Siomara de Nuñez went to be with the Lord September 8, 1969. To conclude the burial service at the cemetery Germán Nuñez led the large group gathered there in singing a hymn that, translated, is titled, "Glory to You, Divine Savior." The predominant feeling was not sorrow, but praise and triumph because of her life. It seemed an appropriate farewell.

—VEDA RAE LOZUK

Germán Nuñez, Mission Board president and pastor of Central Baptist Church of Caracas, the convention's leading church, shared his testimony. Twenty years earlier he and his late wife, Siomara, had felt led to open work in the state of Cojedes. Because of the critical need of a pastorless church, they were never able to go, but the great spiritual needs of this state with 95,000 inhabitants had continued to call.

Nuñez asked the group to consider prayerfully the possibility of naming Cojedes, with its capital of San Carlos, the first home mission field. Following several fact-finding surveys and interviews with numerous citizens in the area, Mission Board members agreed that the spiritual, moral, and material needs justified Nuñez' concern.

Where? The state of Cojedes.

CONCERNING "who," the first missionary would need to be God's man for the task. He would require sound theological preparation, the ability to start a mission work from nothing, and the talent to deal at all social levels.

After much prayer over several months, the Mission Board felt led to Enrique Damaso. A dedicated young man of Spanish background and now a naturalized Venezuelan citizen, he would soon be graduating from International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, Colombia. He and his wife, Pilar, after seeking God's leadership, informed the Board that they with their two children were willing to go.

Who? Enrique and Pilar Damaso.

Perhaps most formidable was the "how." All the Mission Board members felt strongly that the mission outreach should be completely Venezuelan. The likely answer appeared to be holding a

special missionary offering at Christmas, patterned after the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, but distinctly Venezuelan. A few attempts had been made in this direction earlier, but with meager response.

According to calculation, approximately 15,000 bolívares (about \$3,500 U.S.) would be required for the first six months of the program. Another 30,000 bolívares would be needed for the next year, in order to continue what had been started. Could we dare hope that the churches would double the best they had ever done in the past—8,000 bolívares?

The challenge must be accepted. Too much was at stake. We agreed to recommend to the convention a goal of 18,000 bolívares.

The "how" was decided.

I STILL recall the night the proposal went before the Venezuelan Convention during its 20th anniversary meeting. Members of the Mission Board had spent hours in prayer that afternoon. The Holy Spirit moved, and the messengers eagerly accepted the goal.

The next months were filled with prayer, promotion, and preaching. Throughout the convention was felt a sense of anticipation while results were awaited from the first "Siomara de Nuñez Christmas Mission Offering," named for the deceased wife of German Nuñez (see box). At last the final report was in—30,000 bolívares! This was four times greater than any previous offering and almost double the goal.

Now tonight in the heat Pastor Enrique is beginning the service, expressing gratitude to God and to Venezuelan Baptists for what has been accomplished, for the many lives and homes changed during the year.

Señor Sexto nods in agreement. A labor leader who lost an arm, he had become bitter toward the world, but now he is using his influence for Christ.

Ana, whose father might become governor, shows through her smile that Jesus has made a difference.

Thank you, God, that we Venezuelan Baptists could all have a part in these and other victories.

NOW the pastor is announcing that he wants this mission to be the first to contribute to the Christmas Mission Offering (1972 goal, 50,000 bolívares) to enable Venezuelan Baptists to send a second couple to the island state of Margarita (the Pearl), as well as to continue support for work in Cojedes state. When chosen as the next mission field, Margarita (population 120,000) had only two small evangelical congregations and not even one evangelical pastor or missionary amid vast material resources the Venezuelan government has poured into the island to make it one of the Caribbean's leading tourist centers.

O God, may I be in another service like this, heat and all if necessary, in Margarita to rejoice in the victories you have given. May the convention missionary force grow to have five couples by 1980, fully supported by Venezuelan Baptists. May the convention reach the goal of 100 organized, self-supporting churches by 1980. (As of late 1973 there were 38 churches and 50 missions.)

So many in this country would respond as did the souvenir seller on Margarita when told that Venezuelan Baptists were planning to send a missionary couple to his island: "Oh, please come! We have such a spiritual thirst." **TC**

PASTOR ON WHEELS

BY DALE C. LINDSTROM



Pastor Roque León rides his Suzuki along a Venezuelan road.

IN THE HEAT of the tropical, noonday sun a Latin pastor laboriously pedals his bicycle. As he travels home, trees at each side of the dusty road form leafy walls that block any refreshing breeze. He has just made a pastoral visit near one of the three rural churches he assists in addition to the church where he is pastor.

The cyclist: Roque (Rocky) León, pastor of Emanuel Baptist Church in the village of San Nicolas, in central Venezuela's Portuguesa state. Often I have been in his home to find him exhausted after a trip of as long as four hours by bicycle to visit two or three families. After such an outing rest is imperative, so more visits the same day become impossible.

Recalling another pastor who

travels on a small motorcycle, I asked León about buying such transportation. In reply he pointed out his low salary (\$220 a month) and the size of his family—seven, with the oldest daughter preparing to enter university. Besides, the cost of living is high in Venezuela.

I began praying for a solution to León's problem. About that same time the men's group of a church in Colorado decided to assist with whatever might be the greatest need in Portuguesa. In my work assignment, agricultural missions, there is always need for machinery and equipment. But I felt transportation assistance for León and his teaching-preaching ministry took priority. In addition, if he were able to visit in his areas of responsibility more regularly, I would be released for other work. (I had been looking after six churches, seven mission, and several

preaching points with periodic visits on weekends.)

Then the Venezuela Baptist Convention's Mission Board asked León to dedicate more time to the churches and declared they were in favor of buying a small motorcycle for him, along with a small increase in salary. Although the Venezuelan board had no money for the motorcycle, I offered it the designated funds from the men's group. This, plus a gift from a family in the English Bible study group in Barinas, almost covered the cost of the cycle.

Soon León was learning to ride a Suzuki 90. Within several months the odometer registered more than 2,000 kilometers (about 1,200 miles). In Portuguesa state a cloud of dust and a muffled roar along one of the rural roads may simply mean that a Baptist pastor is going visiting. **TC**

The author, appointed a missionary in 1969, is stationed at Guanare, Venezuela.



Ludwing Villamizar, Venezuelan seminary student, chooses outdoor setting to study.

SHAPING A SEMINARY

By Larry E. Rice

its many months of planning the committee developed a program that incorporated the best of other institutions with the requirements of the Ministry of Education in Venezuela. As each obstacle arose, the committee discovered means to overcome it.

One tough decision was including secular studies in the curriculum. Several young persons suggested that a pastor should be able to communicate outside the four walls of his church to modern, university-trained Venezuelans. They pointed out that the lack of a completed high school education on the part of some pastors helped create this communication barrier. They wanted the institute, in addition to offering theological education, also to help overcome this educational deficiency.

Not only did individuals offer the suggestion, but those who were qualified also offered their services

as volunteer faculty members. As a result, the institute developed as what is believed to be the only institution in Latin America to offer both secular and theological education. And the Ministry of Education recognized the degrees offered as the equivalent of a university degree.

Out of this decision another problem arose. How can a double program be supported on a budget insufficient to support a single one? As the committee prayed, money became available. With a \$76,000 appropriation from the Foreign Mission Board, property was purchased. Located in the beautiful mountains of Los Teques at an altitude above 3,000 feet, the campus is ideally situated to provide both the seclusion and accessibility desirable for such an institution.

An hour's ride from Caracas, Los Teques is a city of more than

HOW do you start a seminary? How do you organize it? Assemble a faculty? Locate buildings?

And, perhaps hardest of all, find funds to operate it? These and many other questions flooded the mind of Missionary Roy L. Lyon when, at the 1967 session of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention, he was chosen chairman of a committee to start a theological institute.

After more than two years of preliminary work the doors of the Baptist Theological Institute of Venezuela opened September 17, 1970, with 17 students. In August 1973 the first graduation exercises were held for a class of ten. What a joyous day for Venezuelan Baptists!

The convention formed the committee for the institute in recognition of the pressing need for qualified, well-trained pastors. In

In a classroom students get ready to take notes.



Appointed a missionary to Venezuela in 1969, the author is stationed in Caracas.

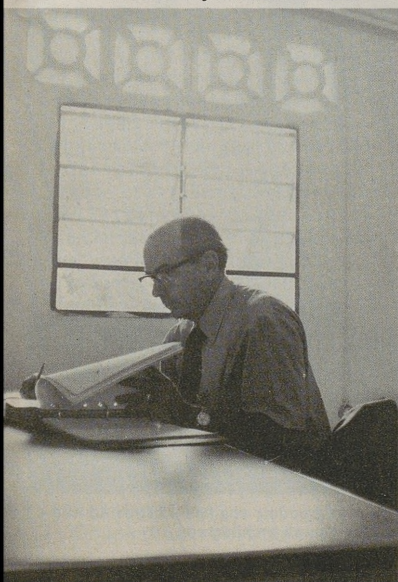
100,000 residents, most of whom do not know Jesus as personal Savior. From its inception the institute has provided a local witness.

There followed a time of waiting and more prayer. Through the designated gifts of Mrs. Mildred R. Cross, of Colquitt, Ga., funds became available to renovate the houses which were to serve as dormitories and classrooms and to provide furniture for the institute. The driveway was paved, a court for physical education classes was finished, a small organ and two pianos were bought for music classes, and the biology lab was completed. Gifts also came from the WMU of Venezuela and from other individuals.

With an additional appropriation from the Foreign Mission Board apartments for four student families were constructed.

The institute began operation with one paid professor, the vice-rector. The rest of the more than 20 faculty members are missionaries and volunteers. After two years of operation the institute's faculty was equally divided between missionary personnel and Venezuelans. Most of the faculty of the secular subjects are Baptist laymen who, without remuneration, drive from Caracas several times a week to teach.

Preparing to teach New Testament class is Missionary Charles B. Clark.



Missionary Roy L. Lyon (left), seminary president, talks with H. Robert Tucker, Jr., missionary who has headed the seminary's religious education department.

One of the Venezuelan teachers is Samuel Prato, a civil engineer and architect. "Aside from considerations of our Baptist work nationwide and the impact in the spreading of the gospel throughout Venezuela, teaching at the seminary is a great spiritual experience for me," declares Prato, a member of the committee that began the seminary.

"I teach church architecture and art appreciation," he continues. "These two classes form a personal experience that helps to raise my thinking to another plane and to direct my mind in avenues of thought foreign to the daily toils of my profession. It gives me the opportunity to share with young people and adults, both professors and students, which in turn stimulates my own spiritual life and helps me to experience the great joy of companionship and fellowship that we all share in Christ."

Adds Prato: "With such a group of Christians, with whom we have a common faith and life, we don't have any inhibitions that would prevent us from sharing our own personal experiences and talking frankly about the uncommon things of life.

"It is a great experience to be working in an institution where all of the people involved share a common love and affection for their school. All the professors—missionaries, pastors, and laymen—have a common interest in serv-

ing the students in whatever manner possible, so that they can develop their minds and broaden their intellectual horizons."

By the time the school began its third year, its name had been changed to Venezuelan Baptist

WHEN Francisco asked Mary if she wanted to be the wife of a pastor, she recalls, "I felt that my prayers had been answered. I had been praying that God would lead us both into full-time Christian service."

That was several years before Francisco and Mary Aular entered theological school. First Francisco finished his high school work, and the couple was married. They began planning to attend International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, Colombia, but when they heard of the projected seminary in Venezuela they changed their direction.

At the seminary in Los Teques while Francisco studies toward the *licenciatura* in theology, Mary, with two small children, works toward the bachelor of Christian education degree and her high school diploma. While a student, Francisco has served as pastor of a church about an hour and a half by bus from the campus. And his fellow students elected him student body president.

For the Aulars, their time in seminary has been one of intellectual stimulation and spiritual enrichment. Comments Francisco: "The seminary, nestled in these mountains, means to me what Moses' experience on Mt. Sinai must have meant to him."

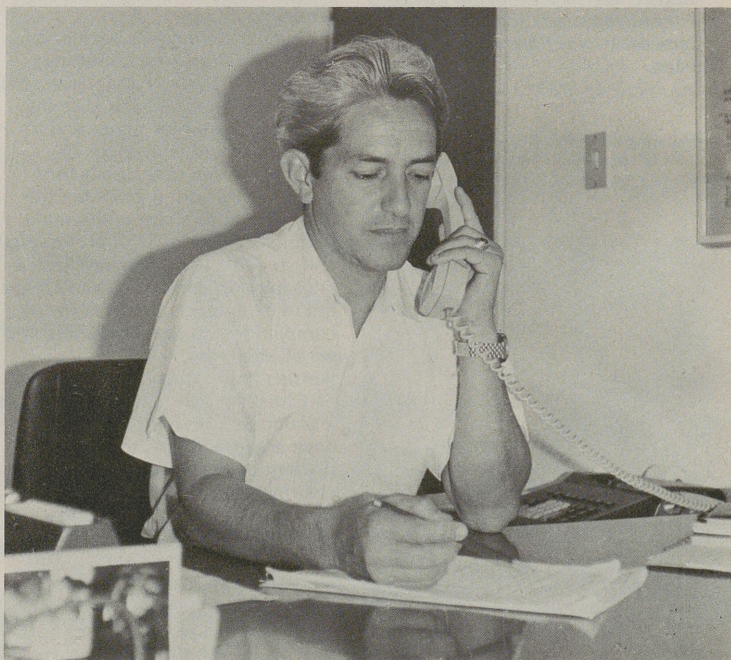


Francisco and Mary Aular (see box, p. 13) and one of their sons make the climb from their apartment to the seminary.

Theological Seminary. The seminary offers several degrees, all accredited by the Ministry of Education: bachelor of humanities (high school diploma); bachelor of Christian education or theology (associate of arts degree); *licenciatura* in Christian education or theology (bachelor of arts degree with thesis).

Students carry a heavy load. Those working toward the bachelor of theology degree also are doing high school work—a double class load; they are in classes 37 hours a week. *Licenciatura* students, free of secular studies, follow a schedule that calls for completion of four years' work in three years; they attend 21 hours of classes a week.

A distinct missionary spirit prevails among the students. Several have made public decisions to open new mission work instead of serving existing congregations. They want to be home missionaries and may well get their wish. The Vene-



A volunteer faculty member, Samuel Prato, a construction engineer, drives to the seminary weekly to teach a class in church architecture.



A graduate of the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Cali, Colombia, Margarita Flores teaches in the religious education department and works in the library at the Venezuelan Baptist seminary.



zuelan Convention has set a goal calling for 100 affiliated churches—almost triple their number—by 1980.

But the seminary does more than train future pastors and missionaries. In 1971 it began a program of lay training through extension courses. Directed by Missionary H. Robert Tucker, Jr., the seminary's director of theological studies, the extension program is a three-year course of certificate level. Included are 19 courses; as well as two special periods of "intensive studies" taught by full-time faculty members, who once each year travel to one of the seven extension centers.

Extension students also take part in two weeks of study on the seminary campus, and their graduation is a part of regular commencement exercises. Since the professors at each of the extension centers are seminary trained, the quality of instruction is high.

Coupled with classroom studies

is a program of practical work. By the second week of the course each student is expected to be working in some mission project of his church. If a student does not complete this requirement, he cannot enroll for second semester.

"We feel the student will learn more by the practical work than by classroom studies alone," says Lyon, seminary rector. "We're not interested in hanging diplomas on anybody's wall. We're interested in putting people to work in missions, and this is the heart and soul of the extension program."

Within the first year of the extension effort 114 Baptist laymen throughout Venezuela had enrolled.

In talking of goals, Lyon first maintains that the seminary should become more indigenous. The majority of the faculty, he feels, should be Venezuelan. "Even in the U.S. this is a long, drawn-out process," he acknowledges.

Now that International Baptist Seminary in Cali, Colombia, offers

a *magister* in theology (master of theology) degree, it is hoped that some of the top students from Venezuela will go there to work not only for a master's degree but eventually for the doctor of theology degree. "It will be a great day when we can see our own people getting their doctor's degrees here in Latin America," says Lyon.

More space—"because we could have a lot more students than we have"—and development of an adequate library are among the needs given priority.

High among Lyon's hopes is the goal that the seminary be a place of spiritual enrichment. He wants, "more than anything else, that this institution might be a place where there will be opportunities to deepen the spiritual lives of students."

The seminary is still young, but as it grows into maturity it will also help the maturing and expansion of Venezuelan Baptists. **TC**

S AID Jesus in explaining a parable, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Truly the presentation of God's Word and its true exposition constitute divine seed. One grain alone has so much potential life that it can nourish all of humanity. If the seed is planted time and time again, the harvest will be fabulous.

The Word of God as presented and displayed by the Baptist Spanish Publishing House (El Paso, Tex.) has been like true grains of the gospel planted in the soil of my Venezuelan homeland. This granary, founded by Missionary J. Edgar Davis, has grown through the years and has produced

of the Word caused the seed to fall in many furrows and to be reproduced in many persons who today form a part of the Baptist ministry in Venezuela, among them this writer.

I first met Ruperto Prato in 1932. In 1939, while I was pastor of of the evangelical church of Guasdualito, he sold me Baptist books that gave me an orientation about the New Testament position I adopted a few years later.

For several decades the Sunday Schools of many of the evangelical churches in Venezuela were served by the Baptist Spanish Publishing House. The books, written in simple, attractive style,

several students—José Juan Corti, Ramón Mejías, Antonio Escalona, Efraín Silva, and this writer—firmly took a position similar to that of Southern Baptists in the U.S.

Due to the influence of Baptist literature, three families in the Venezuelan Andes Mountains—Julio Moros, Rafael Urdaneta Mejías, and Eusebio Perez Domínguez—took the step of biblical baptism many years after having been sprinkled. All these men later served as Baptist ministers. Behold the powerful influence of literature!

The literary seed of the Scriptures, faithfully explained, was to turn into garden beds for the Lord—into Baptist churches.

The Planters

By Germán Nuñez

rich harvests of new believers, educated children, prepared young people, and workers sent to the harvest.

In the village of Guasdualito, situated on the bank of the Garare River in Venezuela's southern plains, in the early 1900s a dentist named Ruperto Prato came to know the gospel by means of the printed Word. Converted in this manner, he understandably developed a love for Christian literature. He maintained in his home a veritable book store, not only for continuing the cultivation of his own spiritual life, but also for scattering the divine seed as far as he could. The literature he promoted came mainly from the Baptist Spanish Publishing House.

Even after he moved to Caracas, he maintained a modest book store for many years, administering it himself until he died in 1966 at the age of 90. Then his widow kept the store going.

The perseverance of this sower

were available in libraries and book stores. Consequently there appeared in all parts of the country Christians eager to follow the pure gospel of the New Testament: salvation of pure grace by means of faith in Jesus Christ; the baptism only of consenting Christians; the church made up of reborn persons; the eternal security of salvation; the true baptism that symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the democratic governing of the churches under the authority of Jesus Christ and guided by the Scriptures.

In this manner a new generation was raised up. It broke the traditional molds of Protestantism that held on to old teachings of Romanism. As the doctrines germinated in the minds of those of the new generation, in time they brought forth leaves, flowers, and fruit of the purer gospel.

As a result, in one of the older Bible institutes in Maracaibo

Domingo Bracho, the father of several children who are now outstanding leaders in national Baptist work, by correspondence entered into a long relationship with Davis, founder of the publishing house.

Consequently, Davis visited Venezuela with thoughts of establishing a Baptist work. Although this idea did not become reality at that time, Pastor Corti did found the first Baptist church in the nation, at Acarigua. Returning from Barranquilla, Colombia, Julio Moros, having been ordained for the ministry, established Central Baptist Church of Caracas.

It was my privilege to scatter the divine seed, deposited in the printed page, by means of a small newspaper, *Luminar* ("Light") that was later converted into *Luminar Bautista* ("Baptist Light"). Wisely directed for years by Efraín Silva, the paper has been a true light to illumine the way for Venezuelans. The paper has been



The author, Germán Nuñez, pastor, Central Baptist Church, Caracas, Venezuela, is president of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention's Mission Board and speaker for programs prepared by Venezuelan Baptists for broadcast over Trans World Radio.

an important factor in teaching, inspiring, and solidifying the Baptists of Venezuela.

At the same time, the Baptist book store in Valencia has been the outstanding one in this country in the scattering of the truths of Jesus throughout the nation.

God has poured rains over the seed planted in the hearts of children. Besides the regular planting in Sunday School, the extraordinary influence of the literature used in Vacation Bible Schools should be noted. How comforting it has been to see hundreds of children enjoying the teachings of this interesting literature, the best of its type on the continent.

There have been cases in

which a young teenager has accepted Christ as Savior in a Vacation Bible School and a year or two later become director of one of the best such schools. Many Baptist young people have surrendered their lives to Christ under the influence of the literature used during vacation time in August.

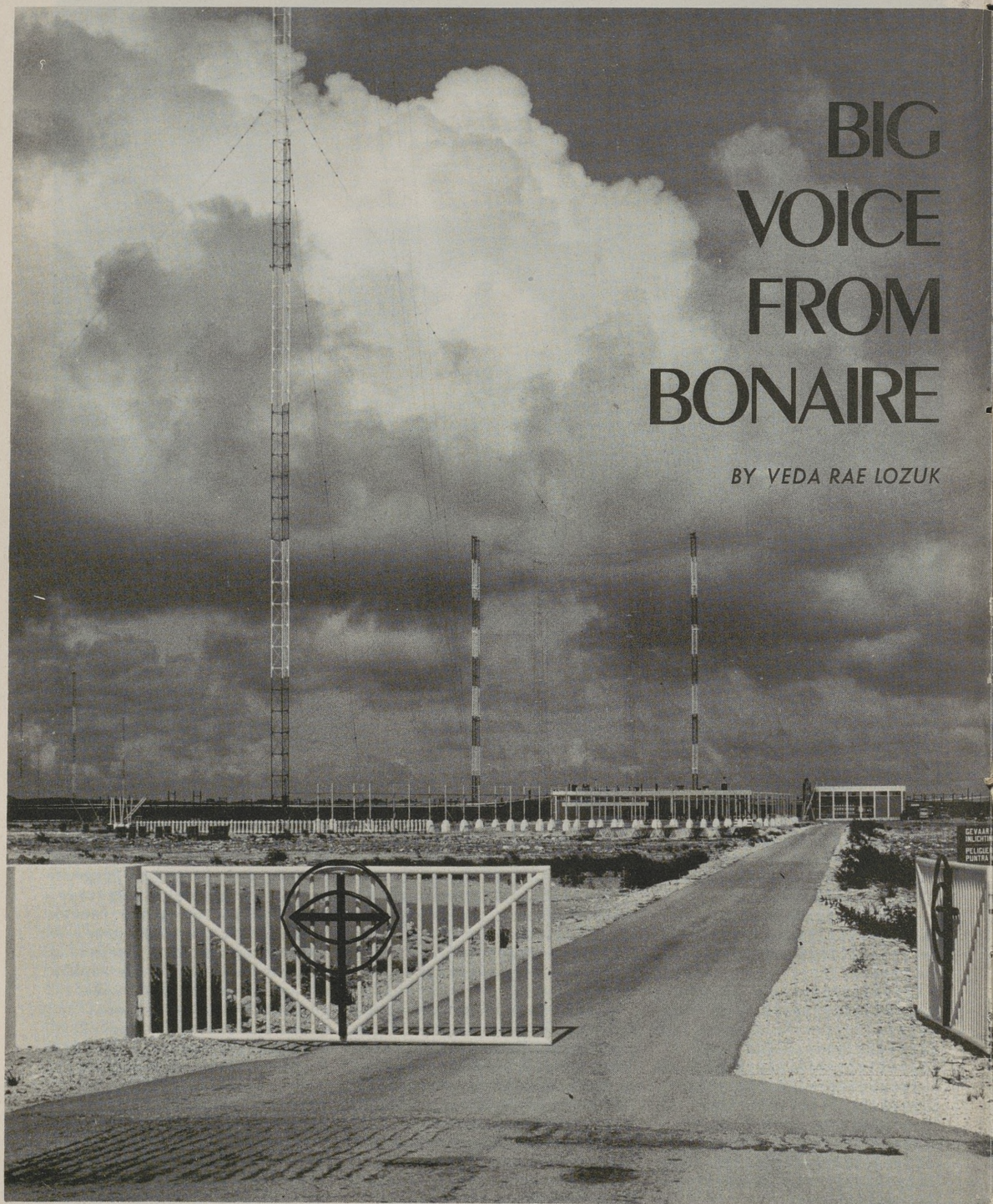
Baptist literature has transformed churches. For example, the printed seed reached a small, rural church in the western part of the country. All the members had been sprinkled, not immersed, but by way of the Baptist magazines and books they came to know the meaning of New Testament baptism. Thus, when a Baptist pastor was called to a church in a nearby town, upon

request he baptized all the members, including the pastor, in a stream near the church building. Out of this experience was born Emmanuel Baptist Church of San Nicolas.

The Lord has used Christian literature to produce a Baptist conglomerate strong in the Word of God, rooted in the authentic gospel of Christ, and prepared to continue sowing the seed throughout Venezuela. Since the founding of the Baptist seminary (which, by the way, means "seed bed") there will be even better-prepared spiritual "farmers," real "agricultural engineers" in the spiritual field. The seed, spoken and written, will be scattered even more widely in the furrows of the nation. **TC**

BIG VOICE FROM BONAIRE

BY VEDA RAE LOZUK





TWENTY-two-year-old Esteban Rodriguez pondered an

important decision. Leaving his home village to locate work, he had found himself attending an evangelical church and had come to the point of accepting Jesus as Savior. The experience had been new and good, and he had enjoyed the fellowship with his fellow Christians.

The job ended, and Esteban (Steven) returned to his home deep in the sparsely populated southeastern section of Venezuela. A look at the behavior of his family and friends completely

Transmitting towers of Trans World Radio break up the horizon on island of Bonaire.

discouraged him. A drunken, immoral life was the norm.

Esteban considered moving his mother and younger brothers and sisters to another village for a better environment. Another thought kept creeping into his mind—no one at home knew he was a Christian; he could return to the village's life-style, and no one would ever know the difference.

But the Lord's direction came by the way of broadcasts carried over Trans World Radio. As this new Christian listened to God's Word on the air, he came to understand that he was not to yield to temptation, nor was he to move away. Instead, he was to begin to proclaim to those around him that he had found a new and marvelous way of life.

His mother and several other persons responded to his testimony and accepted Christ. Esteban wrote to the Baptist radio program, "Christ, the Only Hope," to ask the producers to help him and his converts start a church.

The letter's urgency impressed Missionary George S. Lozuk (my husband), who directs radio and television work for Venezuelan Baptists. Along with fellow missionaries—H. Robert Tucker, Jr., of the convention's missions committee; James R. (Jim) West, field missionary in southeastern Venezuela; J. Bryan Brasington, Foreign Mission Board field representative for the region—George traveled to Esteban's village, San Francisco de la Paragua.

After "almost running off the map," as one missionary described it, the group arrived in the village only to find that Esteban was on a three-day trip into the jungle where he worked cutting wood with a machete. Esteban's mother and family warmly received the missionaries, who read the Bible and talked with the family. One by one, others from the village appeared at the home and were presented as people who had recently trusted in Christ. The missionaries left in the village a supply of Bibles, Gospels of John, and other literature.

West returned to San Francisco about a month later, this time

with a carload of members from the Baptist church in Ciudad Bolivar. The visitors were thrilled with Esteban's testimony of what the Lord had done in his life and with the opportunity to meet ten other converts. The new believers had obtained use of an abandoned Catholic church building and were busy repairing it.

In another month Tucker and his family drove to the village. Expecting to find the same little group that had gathered in Esteban's house on the first trip, Tucker was surprised to count 75 persons worshipping in the old Catholic chapel. Of the group, about 30 had made professions of faith in Christ during the past four months. Children and adults were called on to repeat newly memorized Bible verses. Persons who accepted Christ that Sunday were taken aside immediately to begin their doctrinal training.

Leaving the village, the Tuckers thanked the Lord for evidences of the working of his Spirit and for the voice of Trans World Radio that broadcast the Word of God just when Esteban needed it.

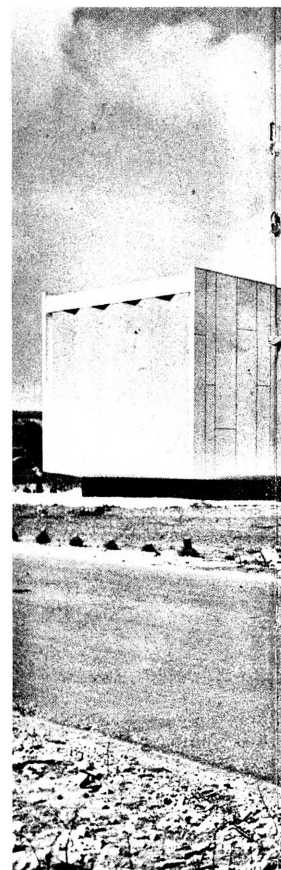
THE meeting with Esteban was but one of many new contacts by Venezuelan

Baptists during 1973 growing out of the broadcast ministry.

Last July Venezuelan Baptists appointed their second home missionary couple, Tito Campos and his wife, to work on the country's fishing island, Margarita. A group of students from the Venezuelan Baptist Theological Seminary went to Margarita to help the couple begin the witness. The students scattered over the island to hold street-corner services, give their Christian testimony, and become acquainted with the people.

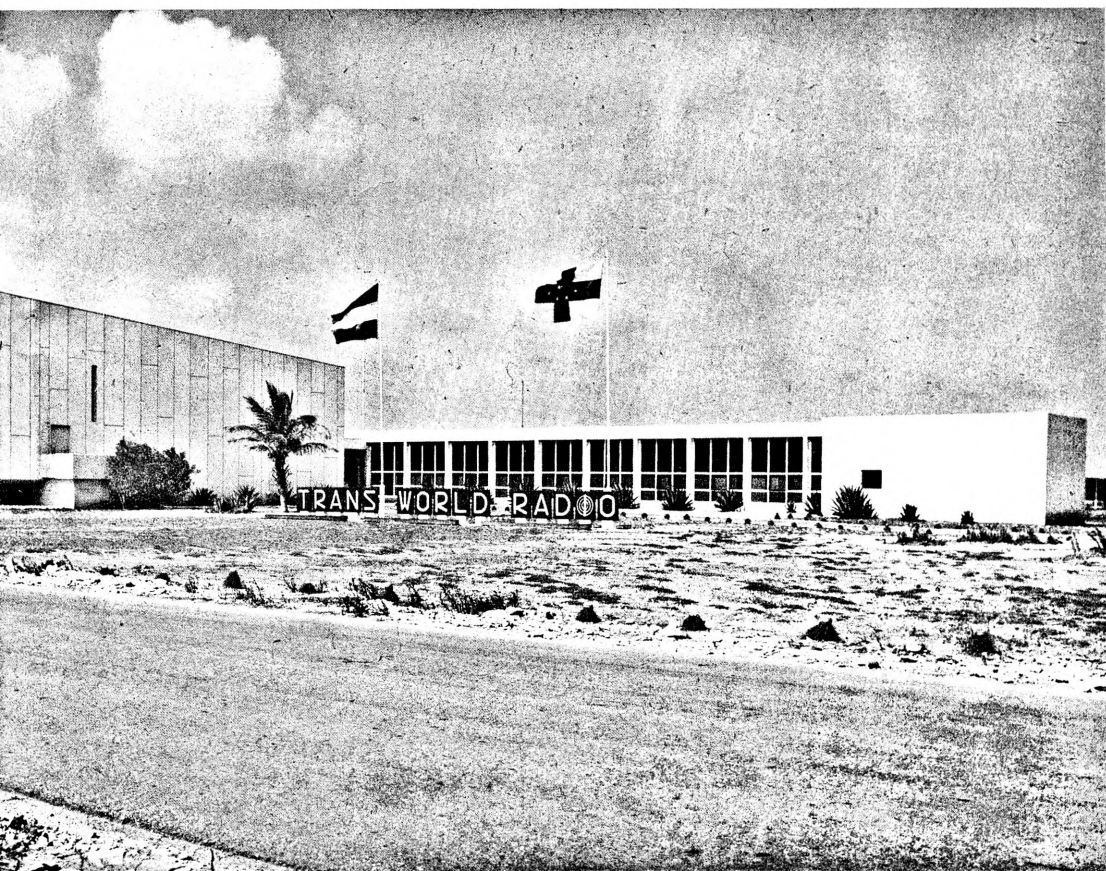
Reporting back to Campos, the students told how, as they began to proclaim the gospel, people would interrupt to say, "Oh yes, you believe like those who talk on Trans World Radio every night." Several persons were located who are new Christians as a result of the radio preaching. One such new believer, a nurse,

Missionary George S. Lozuk directs radio and TV work for Venezuelan Baptists.





Left: One of the modern control rooms for TWR.
Below: Building houses offices and studios.



now gathers neighborhood children into her home for Bible stories. The few small evangelical groups now on the island have no pastors, but they have told of spiritual help received through the voice of Bonaire.

The coral reef that forms the Dutch Antilles island of Bonaire in the Caribbean Sea is being touted in the world of tourism as a tropical paradise, where skin-diving enthusiasts can find perfect waters and an unbelievable variety of fish. All this is true. But Bonaire carries another connotation for millions of radio listeners around the world. They have come to recognize Bonaire as the big voice that faithfully broadcasts the gospel.

A visit to Trans World Radio installations on the "Isle of Flamingos" (another name for Bonaire) challenges the imagination concerning the vast potential audience within reach by changing the patterns of the evangelical radio station's towering antennae. A circle pattern sends broadcasts through Caribbean countries. A large figure-eight covers parts of North and South America simultaneously. A full beam north or south directs English or Spanish broadcasts in the appropriate direction at 500,000 watts. Also to be pondered is the possible outreach from the antenna that can push the gospel to countries behind the Iron Curtain.

THE TWR complex grew out of the unexpected direction of one man, Paul E.

Freed. As a worker with the Youth for Christ movement in the U.S., Freed attended a meeting of that organization in Switzerland in 1949. There he reluctantly allowed two delegates from Spain to persuade him to accompany them home to help evangelize the Spanish people. Having grown up as the child of missionaries to the Arab world, Freed felt his mission interest lay in that direction.

But the visit sparked a firm desire in the young man to reach the people of Spain with the gospel. In his book, *Towers to Eternity*, Freed tells how he, who

had no interest in radio, became convinced that radio was the only means to reach the people of Spain, to whom the preaching of the gospel was prohibited. The result was a radio station begun in Tangier in 1954. With the cooperation of European Christians this station was soon carrying gospel messages in Spanish and in many other languages.

When all radio stations in Tangier were nationalized five years later, the gospel station moved to Monaco. The TWR staff began operating the installation Adolph Hitler had set up to spread Nazi propaganda.

In a search for more effective coverage, TWR built its super-powered installations on Bonaire and began broadcasting that reached from Canada to the tip of Argentina in 1964. The more than 90 TWR missionaries on Bonaire include experts on all phases of radio technology and broadcasting.

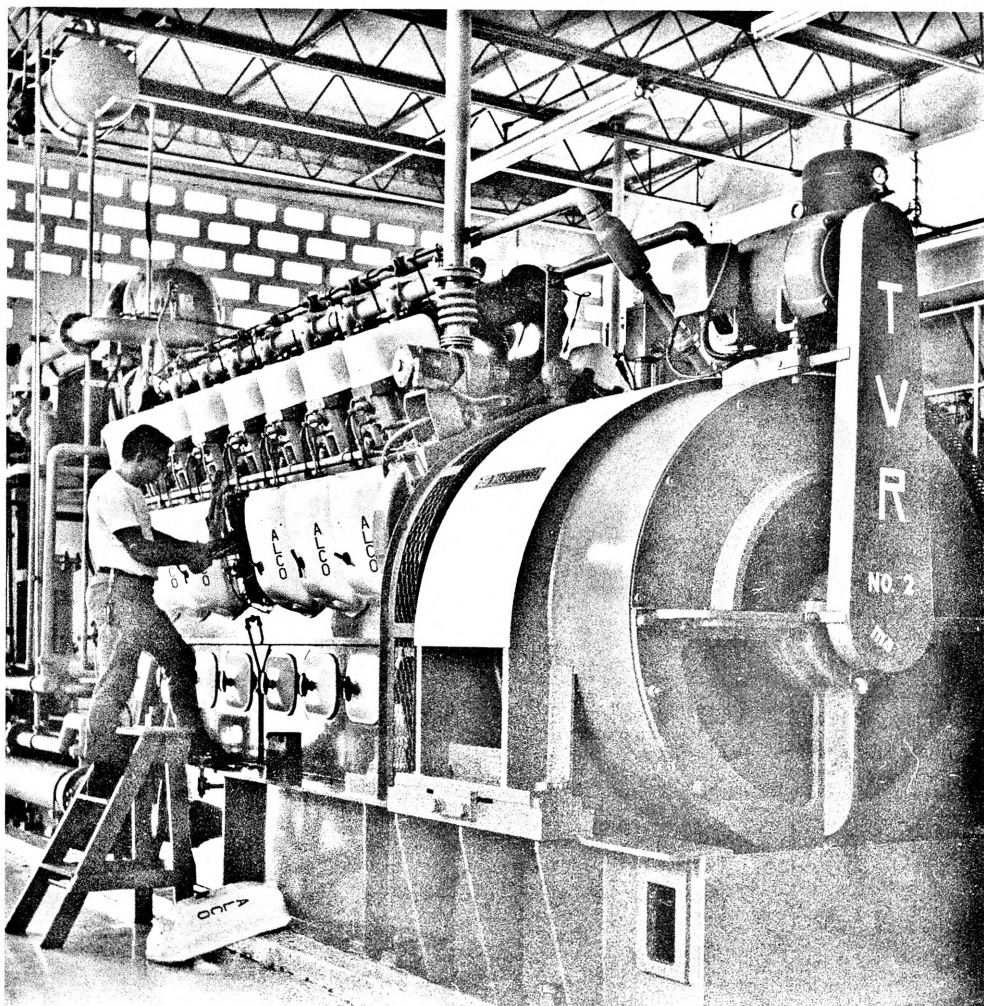
THREE years later, during the Campaign of the Americas, Venezuelan Baptists sought a way to reach all of Venezuela with one voice. Someone had heard of a powerful station only 30 minutes by air from Caracas. When the Baptists made contact, TWR, careful to sell time only to those who present the gospel message faithfully, welcomed the Baptist program. At first the broadcasts were carried during early-morning hours. Later the Venezuelans moved to prime time and unexpectedly became involved in an international ministry, since their broadcast in Spanish reached many other countries besides Venezuela.

After three years of broadcasts twice weekly in prime time, the Venezuelan Baptist Radio and TV office changed its follow-up approach in response to a suggestion by Alan W. Compton, Foreign Mission Board radio and TV coordinator for Latin America. Now the Venezuelan office dispatches an initial reply to letters received from other countries and sends whatever has been offered on the broadcasts. Then the





Far left: Wind-sculptured tree on Bonaire beach.
Left: Members of Esteban Rodriguez's family meets Field Representative J. Bryan Brasington at San Francisco de la Paragua.
Below, left: Lozuk (left) with staff members at TWR, including Tom Lowell (seated), field director.
Below: One of the generators providing power to transmitters.



letters are channeled to Baptists in the country of origin. In that way a more personal and more continuous follow-up can be made, and some listeners will likely become a part of Baptist work in their own countries.

The change in follow-up procedure has allowed the Venezuelan Radio and TV office to concentrate on Venezuelan contacts. A compilation by states of Venezuelans who have written in response to the radio programs shows a list of contacts in each of the country's 20 states, in the two government-owned territories, and in the Federal District, around the capital. The letters reveal listeners in both urban and rural areas.

Baptists in Venezuela sponsor several local broadcasts, and the enthusiastic radio and TV staff eagerly is planning new ones in specific places aimed at particular audiences. The use of Venezuelan music and other material with local flavor is called for.

Still, even if everything now in planning stages had already been on the air for years, Venezuelan Baptists would not have come even close to reaching the people who have responded to the Trans World Radio broadcasts. In a way, the Bonaire voice is like a shotgun, for it covers the continent instead of being aimed at a particular audience in one locality. It took the universal appeal of the gospel, as presented by a gifted radio pastor, such as Venezuela's Germán Nuñez, and beamed to a diversified target group to reach the numbers who have written to the program.

THE group is made up of individuals, such as the 87-year-old woman who appeared at the Baptist church in Maracay. She announced that she had accepted Christ while listening to Nuñez preach on "Christ, the Only Hope." Although her family had been known for the number of priests and nuns it produced, she had never been happy as a Catholic. Once, as a girl, she had acquired a New Testament to read for herself,

but a priest took it from her and burned it. Today she has a Bible and has read through it three times. She can quote a number of passages.

She wrote to several evangelical programs carried by TWR in Spanish and asked for literature they offered. When representatives of some of the groups visited her, however, she affirmed: "You might as well leave me alone. I started listening to Don Germán Nuñez, and I'm a Baptist and always will be." She has been baptized in the Maracay church.

In Cojedes state, Enrique Damaso, the first home missionary sent out by Venezuelan Baptists, went looking for individuals who had written in response to "Christ, the Only Hope." Once before, he had sought out letter writers but had found no prospects for the mission where he was pastor. It began to appear that again he might have no results, but one letter had especially attracted him, so he kept driving and searching for the difficult address.

Finally he stopped and showed the name and address to an old man who said he knew the family and would lead Enrique to the house, "a long way from town, out by itself." The house indeed was in a jungle clearing. As the missionary got out of the vehicle he recalled the line in the letter that made him determined to find the writer: "My whole family is looking for a new way of life." Enrique loves to explain the "way."

Identifying himself as a representative of those who sponsored "Christ, the Only Hope," Enrique was warmly received into the home. As he turned the conversation to spiritual matters, the missionary soon realized that the man had been practicing spiritism. The householder told how, in his search for God, he had seen a magazine article that offered spiritual help and had written to the U.S. address given.

Soon he was receiving books and articles to be used in spiritism. Following the instructions, he acquired a houseful of snakes and toads and involved his family in the ceremonies of spiritism. His 17-year-old son had become so

Below: Boy in Bonaire. Right: This entire family stopped practicing spiritism and accepted the gospel after a missionary visited them because of a letter written in response to Baptist radio program. Bottom: Control panels are monitored at TWR installation.





depressed that three times he had tried to take his own life.

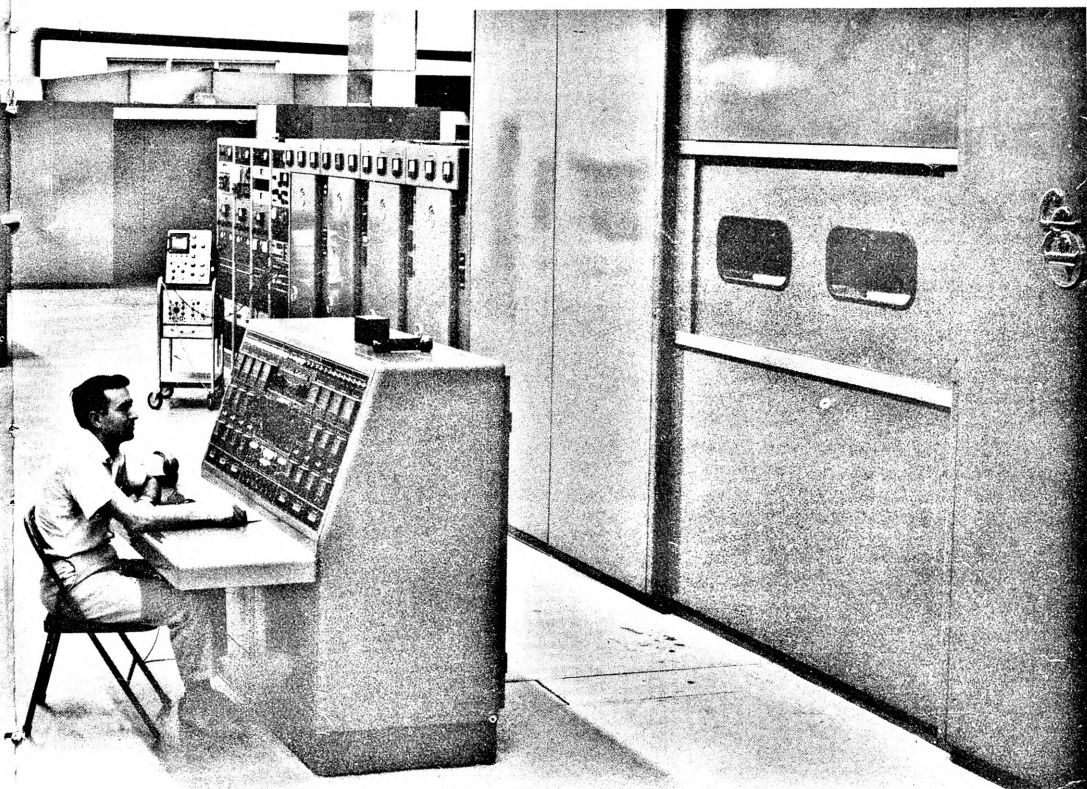
Enrique talked about the real "way" and about the God of love who provided it. After listening, the man exclaimed, "This is what I've been looking for for a long time!" Then and there he accepted Christ as Savior. During a later visit by the missionary, the rest of the family members also trusted in Christ.

"Now what do I do with my books?" the new convert asked.

"I'm not going to tell you what to do with them," Enrique answered. "But I think the Lord will let you know."

A few minutes later the man called his family into the front yard. There he piled the books on spiritism and set them on fire. As he did so, he announced to his relatives that he had no need of such trash, for now he had Jesus as his Savior.

As Baptists learn more of the results of their broadcasts over Trans World Radio, they cannot help but thank God for the "big voice" on Bonaire. TC





AFTER THEY HEAR

BY VEDA RAE LOZUK



AS MY husband, George, packed his suitcase for a trip to Trans World Radio on the Dutch island of Bonaire, our four-year-old Lauralyn explained to a visitor, "My daddy is going to 'Bow and Arrow.'"

Mulling that over, George decided, "That isn't a bad explanation, except that Trans World Radio is the bow, and those who send them the programs with the gospel message furnish the arrows that they let fly to all parts of the Americas."

Although our original purpose in broadcasting over the Bonaire station was to saturate Venezuela with the gospel, the letters from listeners that continuously pile up in our post office box in Caracas, Venezuela, come from all parts of Spanish-speaking America. And they come for a variety of purposes.

Some writers merely want a copy of the current radio offer. Others want to discuss doctrine. A number have serious personal problems and ask for counseling.

And, through the radio preaching, some have come to respond to God's love for them. They write to inform us that they have accepted Jesus as personal Savior.

The following letter thrills our staff everytime it is read.

Santa Marta, Magdalena, Colombia
August 14, 1973

Program, "Christ, the Only Hope"
Apartado 61152
Caracas, Venezuela

Greatly Esteemed Brethren:

To me it is a pleasure to be able to write to you and greet you in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and I wish for you the "peace that passes understanding" and that your hearts and thoughts might be kept safe in Jesus Christ.

I am from the state of Antioquia; for economic reasons I left, crossing six states to get to the state of Guajira, where I heard for the first time the gospel, but I didn't allow them to keep talking to me about it, because my parents and others had influenced me against it. Without understanding anything else about the gospel, I left that place and went eight hours into the mountains to a village called Corralejo. I had a radio and accidentally heard your program, and it impressed me so much that I wanted to keep listening.

Before, if I had tuned in that station, I would not have listened even for a second, because I knew that those who were talking didn't believe in God or the virgin; nevertheless, that day I did listen and heard that they did talk about God, and I heard all of the program and kept listening to it for three months against the wishes of my wife. Then I accepted Christ as my Savior.

Praise the Lord! He has taken away all of my bad habits, such as cigarettes, tobacco, liquor, and others. I had a New Testament that someone had given me, and I looked up all of the Bible verses that were cited in the program to see if it were true; in this way, I was convinced that I was an idolator, a pagan! I accepted Christ

July 15, 1972, in the evening, and the next morning I went to visit my neighbor who was "my best friend" and told him about the Christ of the gospel, and he treated me like dirt.

Very sadly I went home and started to read the New Testament and found help to "fight the good fight," and I kept on teaching about it until I lost my friends, and my wife was looking for a suitcase to pack her clothes and leave me. In spite of all this, God gave me the strength to go on teaching about Christ's love, and in December of that year my wife accepted him, along with four of my friends. Then in July of 1973 four more of my friends accepted Christ. These people have only the help of this radio station, because I moved to the state of Magdalena—some of them don't even know how to read, and I hope you will pray for them.

But this didn't solve all of my problems, because in my hometown, they don't know the gospel, and they are very fanatic and jealous of their religion, and I feel responsible for them. Three months ago I learned to tithe, but since I am affiliated with no congregation, I'm setting aside this money to buy New Testaments and some other books that will serve for teaching in each one of the homes that I hope to reach.

I have started a program like this: I made a copy for a folder with the title, "A Message from God for You," and a figure with the same type of clothes that are worn in my hometown and with a Bible in his hand and standing in the midst of a group of country people. And, since they are so fanatic about their religion, the beginning has simple words like these: "Don't think that this folder talks of a new religion; it will only tell you what is said in the sacred Word of God, the Holy Bible." I am doing this because, otherwise, they

would think that it was a bad thing that I was teaching. This folder announces Bible teachings for three days, and the person who attends all of the classes will receive a New Testament and another book that will help in the Christian life.

I have planned this program to begin after September 12. I am poor, I have no home anywhere, and I have four children. For these reasons, I ask your help in prayer. I have in hand my money for the trip, which is 600 pesos (Colombian), and 300 pesos besides to buy the literature that I need. I am thinking that 100 New Testaments plus 100 other books are necessary, because I am planning to do this program in two regions where there are plenty of inhabitants without a town nearby, and in this way I'll avoid the problems of the priests. I also ask your advice if I can do this, about where I can get this literature and more-or-less what it will cost me. The books that I want to use are Bible lessons of great importance about the Christian life, called "Elemental Studies."

I am asking for the book you offered, called "The Lighthouse," but as much as I would like to have this book or magazine, I wish you would change it for me for a New Testament that will surely serve to reach one more soul for the honor and glory of God. Again I ask your prayers that God will help me to get my hands on this material, since I don't have a way to get it. I know that I am not capable of this task, but I know that God told me to do it. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14: 13-14).

Please pardon all that is
bad in this letter,
Gustavo A. Torres

WHAT DO WE do with such a letter when it arrives in our radio and TV office in Caracas? The temptation is to catch the fastest possible transportation to the listener's address to meet him and hear firsthand what the Lord has done in his life. It's probably best that time and finances make this impossible. A sudden invasion by a group of strangers from another country might do more harm than good in this place where God has begun a work in his own way. There might even be a temptation to offer too much

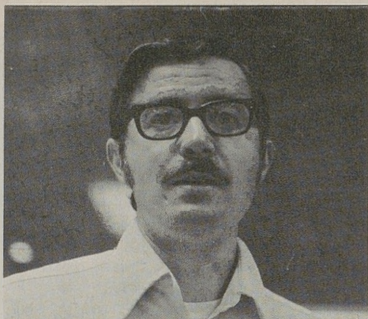
material help and take away from the lesson in tithing this man has learned.

For this particular listener, we answered by return mail. We praised the Lord along with him for what has been done in his life. We assured the believer of our prayers and told him that a pack of literature is on its way to him.

The return address on the package and the first lesson of the Bible study course included is that of our Baptist colleagues in Colombia. A copy also went to Colombian Baptists so that they

can make additional contacts with the listener.

While we might hope someday to know the rest of Gustavo Torres' story, we have reached the conviction, after three years' experience in follow-up of international programming, that our task is to put these listeners in other countries in touch with Baptists where they live. We do so in the hope that the Lord, who has thus far dealt with these correspondents, might help them become a part of Baptist work and witness in their homeland. TC



Above: Author Larry Rice. Right: Impromptu concerts became customary as the Venezuelan choir awaited transportation. Here they make music at the airport in Santiago, Chile, pending bus ride to conference.



VENEZUELAN ON TOUR

PIERCING my sleep-clogged brain, the alarm clock's shrill clanging reminded me that it was 4:00 A.M., time to begin the trip for which we had worked and prayed for more than ten months.

Planning had begun when Paúl Eustache, president of *Grupo Vocal Bautista*, a 23-voice Baptist young people's choir of Caracas, Venezuela, read the invitation to take part in the Second Congress of Latin American Baptist Young People in Santiago, Chile (in Feb. 1973).

Receiving the invitation was exciting, but when we began to examine the cost of such a project and the obstacles to be overcome, our enthusiasm cooled a bit. We prayed that God would lead us. Soon we began to see a plan forming.

Shortly afterward, I was named by the Venezuelan Baptist Mission as representative to the Conference on Music for South America, sponsored by the Foreign Mission Board; it was to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the same month as the meeting in Chile. At first, this seemed a conflict, but later it proved to be an opportunity to extend the choir's trip to other lands.

As our vision expanded, we saw the chance to visit not only Santiago and Rio, but also to stop in Lima, Peru, and Buenos Aires, Ar-

gentina. Taking a giant step of faith, we made plans accordingly.

A choir savings account was established. Each choir member began making monthly deposits toward a goal of 1,000 bolivares (\$233 apiece), about half the cost of tickets. The remaining funds were sought by means of paid concerts and two 45 rpm records to be produced.

Leadership responsibilities were divided. Michel Eustache, founder of the choir, divided directing chores with me. He planned and directed Venezuelan and Latin American folk music, while I did the same for sacred music. When he played the flute, I would direct. His brother, Paúl, the group's president, was also chosen business manager.

Fall came, and the paid concerts became free ones with the opportunity to sell choir recordings. However, it took all the proceeds from the first record to pay for the second, and income from the second proved less than expected. Still, as a result of the long rehearsals in producing the discs, the choir's singing ability was improved.

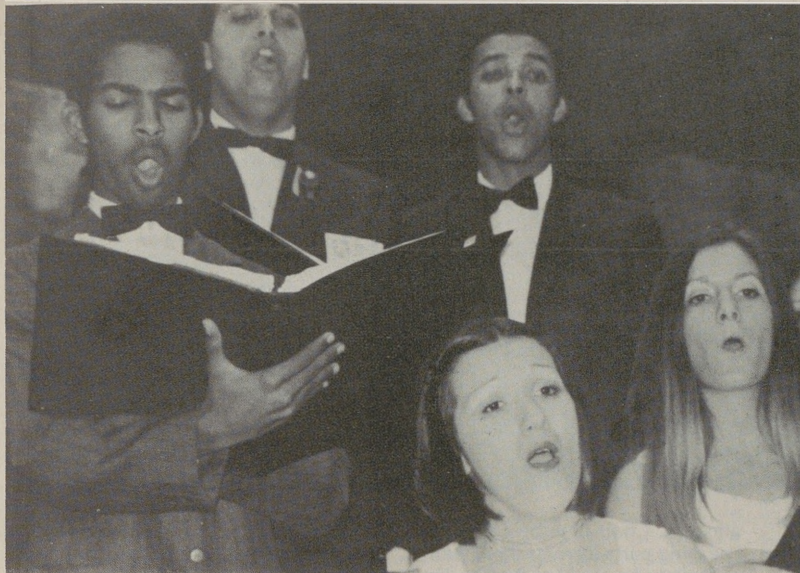
As departure time approached, monthly installments slowed down. Some members were unable to

reach the goal. After considerable prayer and discussion it was decided to take only part of the group—perhaps a balanced 12 to 16 voices. As definite commitments were made, a perfectly balanced group of 14 members emerged who could and would go.

At Christmas the choir gave a concert at one of the youth centers in Caracas, and as a direct result the choir obtained an official Venezuelan passport. This collective passport gave the choir national recognition.

Passport in hand, Paúl went to the tax office to request an exoneration from the exit taxes required when the choir left. The Lord was at work, for the choir was granted one of the few exonérations ever given. It meant a saving of more than \$300.

THE WEEK of departure arrived, but money for all the tickets was not yet in hand. A farewell concert did not bring in the funds hoped for, but the following Sunday several members of Central Baptist Church donated enough money to bring the total on hand to just short of three passages. At Monday evening rehearsal we prayed that God would continue to work through us.



Above: Manuel Morandy and Felipe Rojas teach a chorus to youth conference participants. Left: Choir members in a performance on tour.

By
Larry
E.
Rice

The next morning I took a cassette recording of the choir to a meeting of the Friendship Committee of the North American Association of Caracas. As the music was played, I saw committee members soften. By the end of the fourth song they had promised the amount we needed.

Thus, when the alarm clock rang on Friday, I awoke to the day that would see us begin our spiritual and musical adventure. On the first leg of the journey the young people practiced continually, treating other passengers to an impromptu concert, warmly received.

Missionaries met the group in Lima. After a quick lunch came rehearsal for an evening television appearance, arranged by Missionary Thomas L. Watson. On the program the group sang several numbers and, during interviews with members, there was opportunity to announce the concert for the following night.

Saturday morning was filled with sightseeing and shopping, the afternoon with rehearsals, and the evening with a two-hour concert. The program included folk and sacred music, pieces by the recorder ensemble and folk-instrument group, and selections by our soloist, Rebeca Morandy.

Early morning brought time for departure. While waiting for the plane, the choir offered another spontaneous concert. On board the aircraft bound for Santiago, one of the passengers with whom I had spoken earlier made us a present of \$50 for the trip. We felt as though the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 was being reenacted. We left Caracas with the bare minimum of funds, but the Lord kept providing every need.

ARRIVING in Chile, the group again had opportunity to sing while waiting for transportation into the city—a chance to advertise the youth congress and the choir's purpose in coming. At the congress we met young people from throughout Latin America. The choir sang for the congress repeatedly, performed at a meeting of the Bolivar Society of Chile, and prepared a videotaped program for use throughout Chile at a later date. The cultural officer of the Venezuelan Embassy, in whose home we had sung earlier, helped to expedite the choir's exit through customs.

Because of a commitment at the music conference in Brazil, I left the group in Chile, Michel taking charge. During the appearance in

Buenos Aires the choir presented four concerts in a day and a half. On hand to welcome the choir to Rio, I discovered how much the members had come to mean to me in a year and a half. Meeting them at the airport was like welcoming my family.

Members of *Grupo Vocal Bautista* show striking dedication. Formed to participate in the Crusade of the Americas several years ago, they meet every Friday and Saturday night for rehearsal. They provide Venezuelan Baptists an artistic voice to share the gospel. As the choir sang at the music conference that evening, I noted anew the rich blend of their voices and the glow on their faces as they sang of the Lord and his goodness.

The next day we sang at the American school in Rio and that evening at Memorial Baptist Church. Then we packed instruments and clothes for the flight home—again an early morning departure.

Reflecting on the tour, I am reminded anew that God is at work in the world. We began a project frankly beyond our means, artistically and financially. By trusting in the Lord for guidance, we were able to develop into effective instruments to help spread the gospel message. **TC**

WITH BELLS AND VOICES

By Veda Rae Lozuk

FOR the stage crew of the Renny Ortolina show in Caracas, Venezuela, accustomed to filming unusual acts for the variety program, the afternoon's group was different. The cameras were focused on a choir of young persons from First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., in filming for the nationally viewed "Show de Renny."

The choir, directed by Clifton Baker, included 33 young persons, ages 16 to 18. Eight adult sponsors, qualified to handle all the backstage facets of the trip, accompanied the troupe on its (1972) itinerary that included the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad, as well as Venezuela.

Larry E. Rice, music missionary in Venezuela, in charge of arranging the choir's appearances there, told how the TV opportunity came about. A Venezuelan pastor took news and photos of the choir to the offices of channel eight. An interested producer agreed to talk to Rice and George S. Lozuk, missionary director of Venezuela Baptists' radio and TV commission. Result: a five-hour filming session for the Oklahoma group, including handbell numbers, contemporary songs, and the complete version of *Good News*.

How did the Oklahomans sing in Spanish? They don't really speak much Spanish, but they began learning to pronounce and sing the words to the Spanish version of the musical months earlier, coached by a church member of Spanish

ancestry. Choir members with speaking parts learned them well enough to be easily understood by a Spanish audience.

The choir also performed in two Baptist churches and in two neighborhood cultural centers in towns near Caracas. The young people met an enthusiastic reception even in sections known to be strongly Catholic.

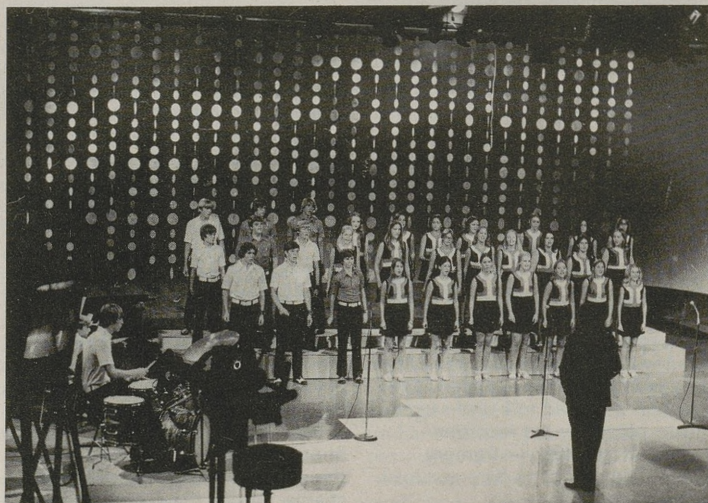
To make the trip, each choir member had contributed \$400; girls had sought babysitting jobs; a number of boys worked as janitors in large buildings for months to earn funds.

The time in Venezuela was short for the choir, but Director Baker

affirmed, "These young people now have an interest in missions that will never leave them." Missionaries report that the choir left in its wake much good will among Venezuelan Baptists and among people who never before knew that Baptists existed.

Concluded Lozuk: "In our work here, Baptists have had very few occasions of national coverage on television. We had only glimpsed the inside of the beautiful studio with its modern equipment—and we dreamed. Perhaps the enthusiastic acceptance by Venezuelans of this choir of Baptist young people will open doors for us in the months ahead." **TC**

Oklahoma City choir performs for Venezuelan television audience.



THEY PUT STUDY INTO PRACTICE

Students enrolled at the *Seminari Theologia Baptist Indonesia* center in Purwokerto, Indonesia, brought their first quarter of study to a close with written personal commitments to witness faithfully for Jesus Christ. The programmed text used in the course featured the methods and principles of witnessing as demonstrated in the life, teachings, and example of Christ.

The week following the commitment service, students met again for final examinations. As I greeted the eight adult students in Nusawungu, one of eight seminary teaching posts, this one located on the south-central coast of Java, I became aware that they had other things on their minds besides final exams. For an hour and a half they told of the wonderful works of God in answer to their commitments. All but one had witnessed to someone with favorable results.



Pak Sumarno, the village clerk, told the most beautiful story. The previous day five men from an adjoining *desa* (country community) had come to his home while he was working in the rice fields. They sent a messenger to summon him. Arriving home, he could hardly believe his ears when the visitors pleaded, "Would you come to our village? We want to become Christians, but we need someone to lead us."

One week later, with another seminary student (Pak Sumarno was sick and could not go) I rode a bicycle for an hour's trip south from Nusawungu. Then I sat for two hours listening in quiet amazement as Pak Sukirman, a recently converted teacher in a junior high school, talked with nine men who had never been in a church and had never opened a Bible. The topics of conversation ranged from the meaning and purpose of the *Panca Sila* (the five foundation stones of Indonesian government and social philosophy) to the differences between Christianity and *kebatinan* ("mysticism"), Islam, and animism, to the difference Christ makes in daily life, work, family relations, and worship. As night closed in, the men asked that we teach them to pray to *Gusti Yesus* ("Lord Jesus").

As we made our way home that night, I was overwhelmed by the reality of what I had experienced. As an evangelist, my heart thrilled to see heaven in the eyes of new babes in Christ. As an educator, I marveled at the mature grasp and application of gospel truths by one so new in the faith. I thanked God for providing leadership-training opportunities for mature local leaders who otherwise would never have been able to benefit from seminary education.

Pak Sukirman and Pak Sumarno are students in the Candidate Division of Leadership Training of the Baptist Theological Seminary of Indonesia. Completion of two years of responsible leadership in their local congregations and surrounding areas will eventually qualify them for enrollment in the Leadership Division of the program. With candidates like these, what will God bring about through qualified Baptist leaders?

☞76

J. Marvin Leech, Purwokerto, Indonesia

FIRST MAN AT LOZANI

Baba Muyemik entered the hospital at about 4:00 A.M. (It was the fourth time that night for Maurice [my husband] to get up to admit a patient.) He was critically ill—severe meningitis and no blood pressure.

Later we learned that Baba Muyemik is the husband of the WMU president at Lozani, the preaching point where Maurice attends on Sunday afternoons and where I attend WMU meeting on Thursday afternoons. This preaching point has been like many in Rhodesia—strong in women's work and in the presence of women and children, but with no men attending. We earnestly prayed for the saving of this man's life, physically and spiritually. The Lord granted the request and healed Baba Muyemik in body and soul. What a joy it has been to see this man come with his family on Sunday afternoons! He has publicly come forward before this group to share the decision to accept Christ he made at the Baptist hospital. On that same Sunday afternoon three others from his village made professions of faith.

Baba Muyemik was one of 35 baptized recently at the sponsoring church. He told the pastor, "I am only drinking tea these days." Beer is used in most of the local celebrations and feasts, and it is one of the women's main responsibilities to cook it. Another man has joined the group at Lozani, and recently there have been from five to eight men attending. We praise the Lord for answered prayer.

☞75

Shirley (Mrs. Maurice L.) Randall, Gatooma, Rhodesia

EPISTLES

AT THE ROAD'S END

The dust swirled behind us on the bumpy ride along the road toward what we had been told was the jumping-off place of the world. Now and then we could see a few grass huts with the ever-present banana trees around them or alongside. We were on our way to Las Animas (meaning "souls"), a village situated virtually at the end of the road leading from Guanare.

The group included Francisco Aular, a dynamic young national pastor, and several young people from his church. They were to conduct weekend revival services in the church building



picturesquely located in front of the Guanare River in Las Animas. The visitors envisioned meeting in a lean-to, a grass hut, or perhaps even under the trees, but to everyone's surprise, members of the Las Animas congregation had constructed a neat, block building, complete with metal roof.

The members also surprised us with how quickly they spread the news that services were to be held. In less than half an hour the church building was filled. The people sang heartily and eagerly learned new choruses. The fervency on the part of the congregation was rewarded by a growing attendance and by several conversions.

The four worship services and periods of witnessing in the community allowed us time to hear of the work of this small church, pastorless for three years. Laymen have carried on the church's mission enterprise: continued support of one mission and organization of another, located further down the "road," which turns into little more than a trail beside the river.

Several church members in Las Animas have written in response to one of the Baptist radio broadcasts to ask for a Bible correspondence course in order to better prepare themselves as lay workers. The rustic faith and stalwart effort of these farming people accounts for the fact that in the state of Portuguesa is to be found one of the strongest Baptist works in Venezuela.

William E. Goff

Maracay, Aragua, Venezuela

using missions mediapak

THE MISSIONARY OVERSEAS

Storyboard? What's a storyboard? First look at one. Extract the green-bordered picture set from the Stimulog package in **Missions MediaPak: THE MISSIONARY OVERSEAS**. Look at the pictures. Everyday items: mixing bowl, salt shaker, tire, ruler, Bible, tape recorder. Everyday activities: baking, washing hands, changing a tire, kindling a fire.

In your mind's eye put a missionary in each of the situations the pictures suggest. Then ask one question: What is the missionary doing? Younger children will love giving you answers. Older children will probably add more detail. Young people invariably will want to add ideas about the why and how of missionary activities.

Use a storyboard picture set with adults? Sure! And use the occasion to work through successive levels of the question: What is the missionary doing? It's simple to say he is measuring a board or holding a child's hand. But where? Why? Under what circumstances?

A simple, little picture may evoke serious conversation about the missionary, his calling, and its fulfillment today. One photo may be enough to "bring alive" a missionary experience you know about. Or to put a Scripture text in perspective for a whole group of people.



You will find the storyboard in the Stimulog package of **Missions MediaPak: THE MISSIONARY OVERSEAS**.

Available now at your Baptist Book Store. And through Broadman Films' CAVE PLAN. Sale price: \$14.95.

BEYOND SIGHT

By Antonina Canzoneri

Missionary to the Bahamas

People who die
are so terribly
gone,
except to those
who see beyond sight
and hear beyond hearing.



MISSIONARY FAMILY ALBUM

Current addresses of Foreign Mission Board missionary personnel, including emeritus missionaries, are available at the Missionary Directory, published every four months by the Board's Department of Missionary Education. The Directory is available free on request from the department, Box 6597, Richmond, Va. 23230.

Arrivals from the Field

CHESER, Wayne (Journ., *Togo*, terminated Feb. 28), Rt. 1, Box 100, Bardstown, Ky. 40004.
JONES, J. Randall/Lawanna (*Paraguay*), 407 Gay St., Brandenburg, Ky. 40108.
MOON, Hazel F. (*Nigeria*), Appomattox, Va. 24522.
NOLAN, Paul W./Beth (*S. Brazil*), Rt. 4, Box 219, Rayville, La. 71269.
WILLIS, Miriam (*Yemen*), 3450 Roxboro Rd., NE., Atlanta, Ga. 30326.

Departures to the Field

BURKS, Edgar H./Linnie Jane, *Nigeria*.
ELLIOTT, Darline, *Colombia*.
GILES, James E./Mary Nell, *Colombia*.
HALLOCK, Edgar F., Jr./Zelma, *S. Brazil*.
HANCOCK, Elaine, *Hong Kong*.
HOLLINGSWORTH, Tom C./Marcelle, *Argentina*.
HOWARD, Stanley P., Jr./Patsy Ruth, *Japan*.
JENNINGS, Lois (Mrs. Willard J.), *N. Brazil*.
JOHNSON, Margaret A., *S. Brazil*.
JOLLEY, Earl E./Veta, *Argentina*.
KING, Julian F./Janice, *S. Brazil*.
LARAMORE, John E./Nancy, *Guatemala*.
PARK, J. Kenneth/Divina, *Chile*.
RICHARDSON, William L. C./Kathryn, *S. Brazil*.
ROHM, Alma, *Nigeria*.
SCAGGS, Billie V., *Liberia*.
SMITH, Betty Ann, *S. Brazil*.
SMITH, Betty M., *Eq. Brazil*.
SNOW, Laura E., *Chile*.
STEPHENS, C. Thomas, Jr./Vivonne, *Indonesia*.
YARNELL, Carl F., Jr., *Malaysia*.

Transfers

BILBARY, C. Don/Carolyn, *Guyana to Leeward Islands*, Feb. 12.
HURST, Harold E./Alice, *Honduras to Panama*, Mar. 15.
MAGER, Bob G., *Chile to Colombia*, Feb. 28.

Resignations

HENSON, L. Gene/Exie (*S. Brazil*), Feb. 15.
MOORE, Vernon L. (assoc., *Malaysia*), Jan. 31.

Staff Member's Father Dies

E. W. Smith, 81, father of a member of the Foreign Mission Board's administrative staff, died February 16 at his home in Fuquay-Varina, N.C., following an extended illness. He was the father of Truman S. Smith, of Richmond, Va., FMB missionary family consultant. He was also the father-in-law of Eunice (Mrs. L. C.) Smith, also of Richmond, a staff assistant in the Board's Department of Promotion and Furlough Ministries. The elder Smith is also survived by his wife, Adna Byrd Smith; another son, Tillman, of Raleigh, N.C.; a daughter, Mrs. Warren Coble, of Albemarle, N.C.; a brother; a sister; and seven grandchildren.

Morris Wins Lowndes Award

J. Glenn Morris, Jr., son of Glenn and Polly Morris, missionaries to Thailand, has been named Foreign Mission Board recipient of the Elizabeth Lowndes Award for 1973. The award is made annually by the Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, to an MK ("missionary kid") from a Home Mission Board family and one from a Foreign Mission Board family on the basis of having the highest overall scholastic record during four years of college work. The younger Morris was graduated from Rice University, Houston, Tex., last May. He is a first-year student at Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, La.

SAVAGE, Roy E., Jr./Kay (*Ivory Coast*), Jan. 1.
SCHWEER, G. William/Wanda (*Indonesia*), Feb. 28.
WOOD, Darrell W./Priscilla (*Hong Kong*), Jan. 31.

Births and Adoptions

BRUBECK, Clinton Ray, son of Roger W./Carol Brubeck (*Kenya*), Jan. 23.
EVERHART, Kurt Alan, son of Jack D./Sharon Everhart (*Korea*), Jan. 30.
GARY, Timothy Alan, son of Alvin L./Judy Gary (*Leeward Islands*), Jan. 22.
HARDWICK, Marion Melitta, daughter of Ellis B./Marilee Hardwick (*Nigeria*), Feb. 9.
LONG, Thomas Patrick, son of J. Shannon/Loraine Long (*Chile*), Jan. 21.
SCALES, Jeremy Tarlton, son of Louie T./Jo Scales (*Kenya*), Jan. 16.
SIMON, Kimberly Kay, daughter of Jerry G./Carol Simon (*Uganda*), Jan. 27.
WADDILL, Angela Tania, daughter of Thomas A./Lucille Waddill (*Zambia*), Feb. 2.

Deaths

BENNETT, Mrs. R. O., mother of Troy C. Bennett (*Bangladesh*), Nov. 8, Winston-Salem, N.C.
FOLSON, Homer L., father of Carolyn (Mrs. Bradley D.) Brown (*Liberia*), Jan. 31, East Point, Ga.
HUNKER, Mrs. Louise Bosworth, mother of W. Carl Hunker (*Taiwan*), Jan. 23, Canon City, Col.
JOHNSON, W. Buren (emer., *Indonesia*), Feb. 3, Winston-Salem, N.C.
MAY, Mrs. Ernest V., Sr., mother of Ernest V. May, Jr. (*Dominican Rep.*), Jan. 26, Lockhart, Tex.
NEWTON, Walter E., father of Anna (Mrs. Marvin R.) Ford (*Ecuador*), Feb. 11, Towanda, Pa.
WILLIAMS, Mrs. Dale, mother of Paul B. Johnson (*Philippines*), Jan. 30.

Marriages

CHAMBLESS, Rebecca Ann, daughter of V. Walton, Jr./Lorena Chambliss (*Bap. Spanish Pub. House*), to Brian McCafferty, Jan. 26.

In Memoriam

WILLIAM BUREN JOHNSON

Born Harnett Co., N.C., Oct. 24, 1895
Died Winston-Salem, N.C., Feb. 3, 1974

An emeritus missionary to China and Indonesia, W. Buren Johnson, 78, died Feb. 3 in a nursing home at Winston-Salem, N.C.

Johnson and his wife sailed for China in 1921 under a three-year contract with the Foreign Mission Board to teach in mission schools in Soochow.

They were appointed career missionaries in 1925 and served in China until 1950. While in China, he spent more than six months in internment by the Japanese during World War II and lived more than a year under Communist rule. The couple lived in Soochow and later in Kunshan and Shanghai.

In 1953 the Johnsons were instrumental in setting up mission headquarters in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. While there, he was treasurer and business manager for the Baptist Mission. Retirement came in 1961.

Johnson served during World War I in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was a graduate of the University of Richmond (Va.) (B.A.) and of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. (Th.B.).

Survivors include his wife, the former Kate Carper, and two daughters, Mary Frances Johnson, of Humoz, Switzerland, and Eugenia (Mrs. W. R.) Dambacher, of Chinle, Ariz.



Needed Now

Requests for missionary personnel come to the Foreign Mission Board from Baptist Missions on the fields. Shared here are but a few among top-priority requests.

DAHOMY: *Field evangelist* to engage in a pioneer program of preaching ministry, student ministry, and associational missions; basic theological degree required; pastoral experience and some musical ability helpful. Wife would be involved in Bible teaching, work with women, and social ministry. Would work in urban area of Cotonou and Abomey-Calavi, section with the country's largest population concentration. Opportunity for ministry to students and also in pioneer setting. Language: French.

LEBANON: *Teacher* of English and physical education for girls. Should have at least a B.A. in English and secondary education and experience as teacher in city school system. Would share in development of young lives with a view to leading them to Christ. Basic work in English but knowledge of Arabic helpful.

COSTA RICA: *Religious education worker* to fill need in Christian education program in local churches. Graduate degree in religious education required. Desirable for couple to have had experience and interest in youth work, recreation, audio-visuals, mass-media work. Couple would work directly with local churches as requested, and, in effect, "could serve as 'educational director' for some 25 churches." High proficiency in Spanish necessary.

JAPAN: *Field evangelist*, with seminary training and experience in a church-related vocation (pastorate, music, education). Would work in a supportive role to four churches in Kumamoto, in southwestern Japan. Language: Japanese; assignment could be accepted after completion of two years of basic language study. Possibilities for Bible classes in English and Japanese and for developing skills in preaching in Japanese. "Active Baptist Association offers opportunities of learning from and sharing with Japanese Christians."

LEBANON: *Student worker* with theological training and emphasis on student work, preferably with experience in ministering to international students. Would devote time to dealing with thousands of students at Arab University, which attracts students from many Arab nations, and at Lebanese University. Language: Arabic (English is only secondary at these universities).

For additional information concerning these and numerous other opportunities for career missionary service abroad, contact: Department of Missionary Personnel, Foreign Mission Board, SBC, Box 6597, Richmond, Va. 23230.

Missions Update . . .

"Southern Baptist foreign mission work stands at an all-time high," according to the annual report for 1973, Executive Secretary BAKER J. CAUTHEN told the Foreign Mission Board in February. He reported there are now 6,907 organized churches (5,207 of them self-supporting) on the Board's mission fields, 8,034 mission points, and 5,884 national pastors. Baptisms reached a record high of 62,151. Cauthen also reported more than 500 schools with combined enrollment exceeding 85,000. During 1973 medical work extended care to 63,207 inpatients and 1,260,877 outpatients. Thirty publication centers printed in excess of 23,000,000 pieces of literature.

The Foreign Mission Board's spring meeting, April 8-10, will be held in LITTLE ROCK, ARK. It will include an appointment service for some 20 overseas missionary candidates at Robinson Auditorium, April 9 at 7:00 P.M. The Board usually meets in RICHMOND, VA., but for the past five years has met in another city at least once a year. This is "to allow Baptist people to participate more directly in the appointment of the missionaries" they support, said JESSE C. FLETCHER, Mission Support Division director.

Among the 229 persons added to the Southern Baptist overseas mission force in 1973, 81 were graduates of Baptist institutions; 33 of the 43 four-year Southern Baptist colleges and universities were represented. "Baptist colleges and universities continue to have a vital role in training missionary candidates," declared LOUIS R. COBBS, secretary of the Foreign Mission Board's missionary personnel department.

Bible Way Correspondence Course in ZAMBIA reached 9,925 new students last year, with 61 percent of them completing the course, reports Missionary Associate MELVIN A. WELLS, Bible Way director. Currently about 39,000 Zambians are studying the course; to get a diploma, a student must complete five courses. One problem of such rapid growth, said Wells, is the many requests from groups who have had Bible Way courses and are left stranded without churches. "We need missionaries to follow up and baptize students who have read the books and have the desire to live for Christ," he added.

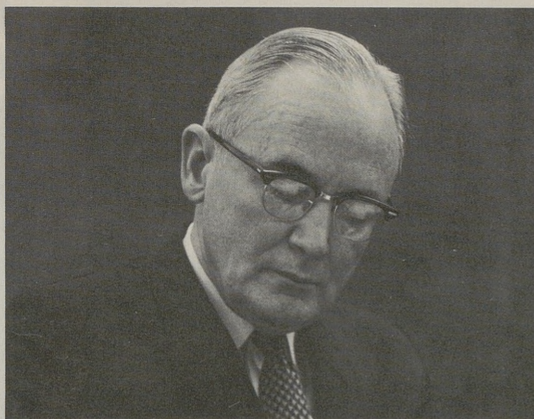
In response to urgent requests from missionaries the Foreign Mission Board in February appropriated \$5,000 for emergency relief operations among victims of a severe drought in the REPUBLIC OF NIGER. In recent months the FMB and the Baptist World Alliance each have contributed several thousand dollars to aid relief efforts there.

The total of Protestant missionary workers worldwide now stands between 50,000 and 55,000, according to Mission Handbook: North American Protestant Ministries Overseas, just released by Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center (MARC). Of the total, 35,070 (65 to 70 percent) originate from NORTH AMERICA. Of non-North American missionaries, some 3,000 originate from "Third World" countries (in AFRICA, ASIA, and LATIN AMERICA). Fields receiving the largest numbers of North American missionaries are BRAZIL, JAPAN, MEXICO, INDIA, and the PHILIPPINES.

An atmosphere of anti-Yankeeism overshadows Southern Baptist missionaries in ARGENTINA, but it would be a mistake to say the missionary's day there is over, summarizes Missionary JAMES O. TEEL, JR. JUAN DOMINGO PERON, back in power after 17 years of exile, faces the problem of controlling terrorism. Some people fear the repression an empowered state might bring in a law-and-order drive, Teel indicates.

At HONG KONG Baptist College communications students are using a \$150,000 closed-circuit radio-TV station to broadcast 15 minutes of television programming and 45 minutes of radio daily over the school's receivers. With an offset printing press journalism students now can produce their own newspaper. The communications department is said to be one of the most up-to-date in Asia in providing practical experience.

The JAMAICA Baptist Union at its recent annual meeting marked its 125th anniversary, adopted a Christian education manual, and launched a national crusade effort, a student ministry at a KINGSTON college, and an endowment fund for future expansion.



FAMINE IN AFRICA

By Baker J. Cauthen

COUNTRIES on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert are suffering from famine growing out of a five-year drought. The desert is encroaching upon land where people formerly raised their cattle.

Already thousands of cattle have died, and hundreds of people have perished. The sight of herdsmen driving their cattle southward is on every hand.

Emergency relief measures are being put in motion by governmental and relief organizations. Southern Baptists have missionaries located in the countries where famine is being felt. Two couples are in the Niger Republic, in the town of Maradi. Word from them in January stated, "Our town is surrounded by 15,000 displaced persons from many of the villages north of here. Many of these are women whose husbands are dead or have deserted them to look for work and food. The number is still growing."

The communication states that babies are dying by the score. Many of them have measles, which in their condition of malnutrition is often fatal.

Missionary H. Jerold Palmer, Jr., wrote a little poem expressing some of the tragedy:

Have you ever seen a first-class famine,
Where people are dying by the score?
No cattle, no flock, eyes glazed and in shock,
The world seems rotten to the core!
Have you ever seen a cornstalk house,
Little shelter from the cold, sandy wind?
A hole for a door, dirt for a floor,
Not as clean as a farmer's hogpen!

Have you ever seen a measled kid,
Naked and cold on the sand?
Wanting to die, and even defying
The touch of a helping hand!
Have you ever seen a baby die
Who had not asked to be born?
Heard his mother's cry, 'cause her milk goes dry,
Too weak to pound any corn?

The missionaries are working hard to arrange for a massive feeding program and are doing what they can to get medical attention to the people. Every time they go out to the refugee camp, their hearts are broken by the sight of dying children and bodies being carried away.

The Foreign Mission Board is grateful for relief funds sent by people who want to help. These funds, supplemented by appropriations from regular mission funds, strengthen the hands of the missionaries as they deal with this tragic situation.

Human misery is an old story in many parts of the world. Sometimes it takes on tragic proportions when famine and epidemics stalk the land. Missionaries amid the suffering are grateful for the prayers and gifts of Baptists who undergird them. They rejoice to be messengers of the Lord Jesus Christ, both in word and deed.

All of this demonstrates the increasing cry of humanity as we move into the final quarter of the twentieth century. If ever the gospel of Jesus is needed throughout the world, it is now. Deeds of love and mercy await workers and resources.

What would the Lord have you to do?

FROM THE EDITOR

Summer Prayer Objective

A PRAYER target date has been set for Baptist churches all over Latin America, supporting one of the most strategic Baptist events for that part of the world in this decade. It is the Conference on Urban Evangelism, scheduled for August 13-20 at Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The Sunday special day of prayer opens the week in which the conference begins.

As is true all over the world, South Americans are in ever larger numbers swarming into their already burgeoning cities. The task of reaching them with the message and ministry by which they can come to know Jesus Christ becomes more complicated as each urban center grows larger and more congested. The conference has been set and the program planned out of a sense of great urgency on the part of Baptist leaders in South America, both nationals and missionaries. They are looking for maximum spiritual support from fellow Baptists in North America.

Many Southern Baptists will not want to wait until August 11 to start praying on behalf of the conference. It is even possible that some churches will want to single out this particular prayer objective, applying themselves to it from now until the conference has completed its sessions. Perhaps they will choose to continue praying for the conference follow-up. Through prayer you and I can share in a great outpouring of God's Spirit and wisdom on every participant at the conference.

A Welcome Reprint

CONSIDERABLE interest has been shown across the Southern Baptist Convention in the article, "A Layman Looks at the Cooperative Program," by Hal Wingo. It appeared simultaneously in last year's September issues of *THE COMMISSION* and *Home Missions*. The item has been reprinted in pamphlet form and made available through the stewardship offices of the various Baptist state conventions.

The editors of both magazines are indeed pleased that the Wingo article can be given such wide distribution. We hope it reaches into every church, for it will help generate a new appreciation for and commitment to the consistent basic kind of support the Cooperative Program gives to the world outreach and ministry of every Southern Baptist through his church.

Prayer Is Getting Started

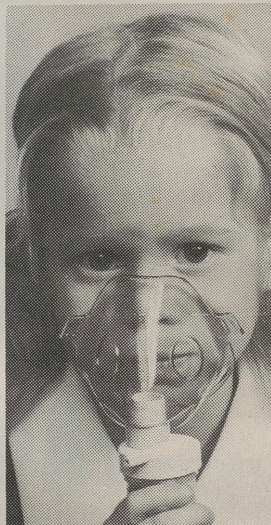
IN OUR TWO previous issues this page was given largely to the subject of prayer as the basic spiritual support of foreign missions. Some of the statements and questions were quite elementary, almost to the point of oversimplification. This is exactly what was intended, for among us there may be some who yet have not made a good start along the path of spiritual growth that our Lord makes possible. Some of us may have been professing Christians for a large number of years without having grown much toward a mature prayer life. Prayerlessness can blight our best opportunities to be led and empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

Thousands of Southern Baptists, irrespective of chronological age, need to be encouraged toward discovery, or rediscovery, of the deep fulfillment that comes from a deliberate effort to share specific kingdom interests with our Lord through prayer. There seems to be no way by which we can reliably estimate the impact given to our worldwide witness by those whose praying God is able to use as channels of great power. We shudder at what it might be like if suddenly such praying were to cease.

Our current effort to issue a call to prayer is aimed at the person for whom prayer is just a routine exercise, with little more than a wholesome effect upon one's self and on the immediate environment. They who dare to move beyond that limited application are sure to make the exciting discovery of new joy and involvement with God's worldwide purpose. The impact of the gospel all over the world is enhanced as individuals, churches, and missionaries advance beyond minimal prayer life, discovering the rich awakening that awaits all of us.

We are praying for a "prayer awakening" among Southern Baptists. The objective is to enlist many in this deeper adventure for the very first time. Out of it will come the fruits of God's calling. He will lead some to mission fields, others into avenues of usefulness as agents of his power, supporting the ones who go. The call to prayer, therefore, is aimed at building a prayer force within and among our churches that will implement the greatest wave of worldwide witness ever generated by a free body of believers.

Never take breathing for granted



Six million children can't. They have lung-damaging diseases. Many of them struggle to breathe, because of chronic bronchitis, severe asthma, bronchiectasis and the most serious one of all—the inherited disease, cystic fibrosis.

They can be helped. The National Cystic Fibrosis Research Foundation is helping through a nationwide network of C/F Centers for diagnosis and treatment. It is helping through research to improve the treatment for all lung diseases and specifically to find a cure for cystic fibrosis. Now that you know—won't you help, too?

Join your local C/F Chapter's Breath of Life Campaign.



The COMMISSION

LETTERS

The Commission, Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Journal, published 1849-51, 1856-61, and since 1938 by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, U.S.A.

Published monthly by the Department of Missionary Education, Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Commission is published at 3806 Monument Avenue, Richmond, Va. 23230. Second-class postage paid at Richmond, Va.

SUBSCRIPTIONS—Single subscriptions: \$1.50 a year; \$2.75 for two years; \$3.50 for three years. Addresses in foreign countries \$2.10 a year. **All-Families Church Budget Plan:** Eight cents a copy, applicable only when church includes in its roster a complete list of families in active membership. **Club Plan:** Write for information. Student rate: \$1.00 a year; \$2.00 for three years. **Single copies:** 15 cents, prepaid. Make checks and money orders payable to The Commission. Address all correspondence: The Commission, Box 6597, Richmond, Va. 23230.

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EMPHASIS: Venezuela

Bound by the Barrio
Veda Rae Lozuk Cover II

The Spirit Leaves His Mark—Venezuelan Awakening
Veda Rae Lozuk 6

Their Own Thing
H. Robert Tucker, Jr. 8

Pastor on Wheels
Dale C. Lindstrom 11

Shaping a Seminary
Larry E. Rice 12

The Planters Germán Nuñez 16

Big Voice from Boaire
Veda Rae Lozuk 18

After They Hear Veda Rae Lozuk 26

Venezuelans on Tour
Larry E. Rice 28

With Bells and Voices
Veda Rae Lozuk 30

PERSPECTIVE

Famine in Africa
Baker J. Cauthen 35

From the Editor 36

EVENTS

Missions Update 34

VERSE

Beyond Sight Antonina Canzoneri 32

MISSIONARY PERSONNEL

Needed Now 32

DEPARTMENTS

Epistles 31

Missionary Family Album 33

In Memoriam 33

Letters Cover III

COVER: A Venezuelan flower introduces this month's emphasis on Baptist work in Venezuela. Photo by Bob Harper.

CREDITS: Photos—Bob Harper, Cover II-5, 17, 20, 22-23 (2), 24 (top), 28 (left), 32, George S. Lozuk, 6, 12-15, 23 (top), Veda Rae Lozuk (and son, Mark) 7, 29, Enrique Damaso, Sr., 8-9, 25 (top), Dale C. Lindstrom, 11, Trans World Radio, 18-19, 21, 23 (bottom), 24-25 (bottom), W. Robert Hart, 35.



Each article to which this symbol is attached is recommended for use in the Foreign Mission Graded Series study of the year indicated. Scheduled topics: 1974—Strategy in Foreign Missions, 1975—Directions in Healing and Helping (Southern Baptists' Medical and Benevolent Ministries), 1976—Schools and Student Work, 1977—Publications: Tool for Church Development and Evangelism.

Magazine a 'Must'

Please send me an extra copy of THE COMMISSION for December. I am a subscriber and want to have an extra copy of your wonderful magazine. Your material is really a must for me.

Don Sawtelle
New York, New York

May I add a word of praise for a wonderful and informative magazine, which we enjoy and appreciate? Please keep up the good work.

[Missionary] William E. Goff
Maracay, Aragua, Venezuela

Please renew my subscription of THE COMMISSION for three years. As WMU director of my church, I cannot be without THE COMMISSION.

Ozella Tarver
El Reno, Oklahoma

I have subscribed to THE COMMISSION for years and do not wish to miss a single issue. After I read my copy each month from cover to cover, I pass it on to a member of my missionary circle who does not subscribe to it.

Margaret Bruce Brown
Culpeper, Virginia

A Wise Move

Subscribing to THE COMMISSION was one of the wisest things I've ever done. I look forward to its arrival every month and read it immediately. I love to read of our Lord's work overseas.

Cindy Bryant
Lubbock, Texas

I enjoy your magazine, since it talks about people and what people are doing and can do for missions. You aren't just showing social-action Christianity but soul-deep involvement of people with people.

Rolla L. Utley, Jr. [pastor]
Olive Branch, Mississippi

I just received the February issue of your fine foreign mission magazine, and I especially enjoyed the letters from the missionaries and the departure listings. I found the names of several of the missionaries I had met, and that's always interesting. . . . Thank you so much for the good material found in your magazine.

Mrs. Loman Jones
Opelika, Alabama

I want to take this opportunity to say that recently I read the October issue of THE COMMISSION. It was without a doubt one of the best editions I have ever seen.

William D. (Bill) Moseley [missionary]
Alegrete, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Thousands More

Since I was so dissatisfied with TC, I am writing to express gratitude for the change to THE COMMISSION. How I wish thousands more copies could go into the homes of Southern Baptists!

Mrs. J. L. Gillespie
Brevard, North Carolina

Thank you for good material and good coverage.

Linda Warren
Charlotte, North Carolina

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