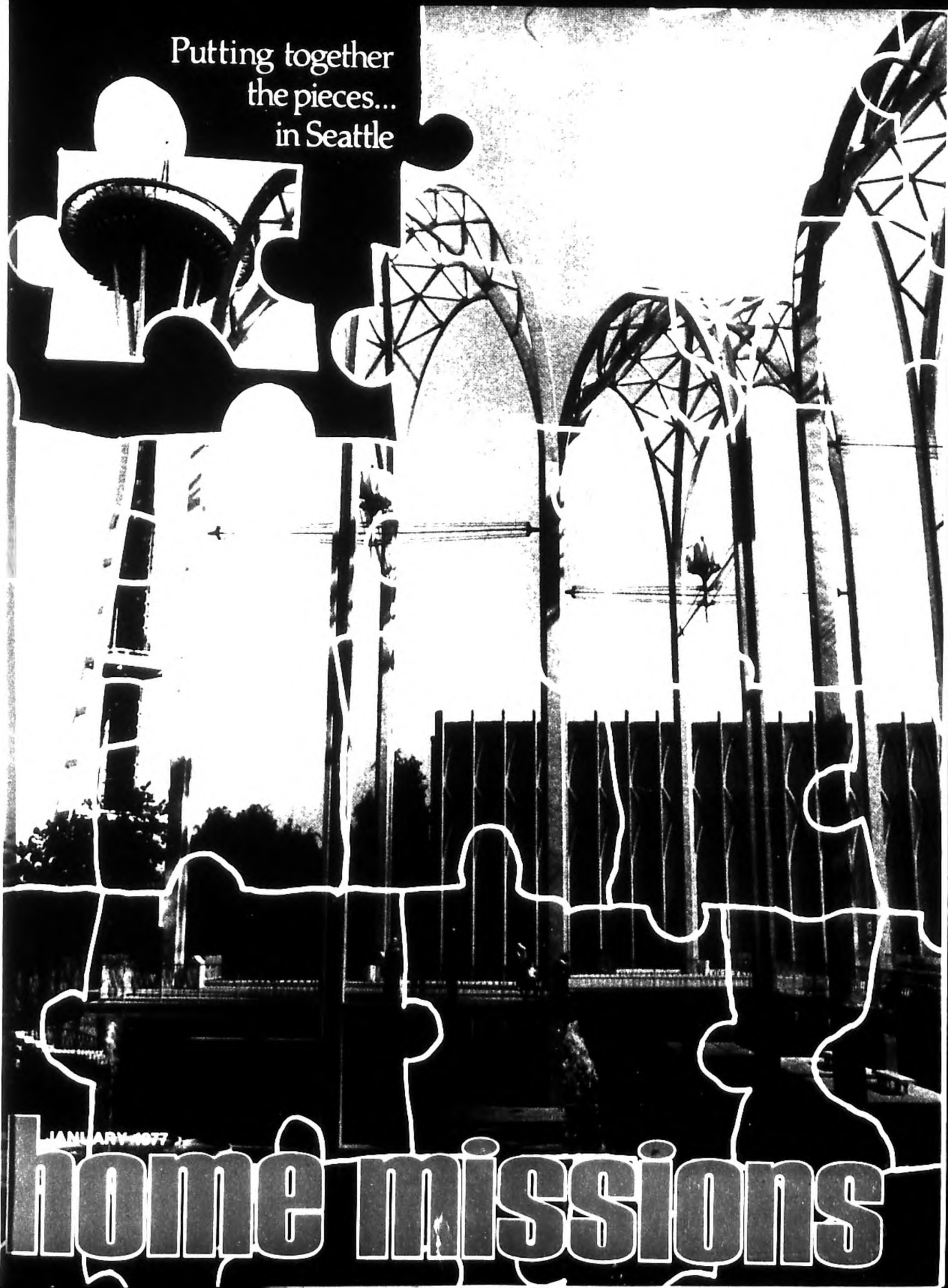


Putting together
the pieces...
in Seattle



JANUARY 1987

home missions

home missions

Volume 48 January 1977 No. 1

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Cover: In Seattle, all the traditional "pieces" of community morality and church membership don't quite fit. PHOTO BY HULLUM

Opposite: Joe Rhodes, a US-2er working in Alaska, comforts a young Eskimo. Rhodes' two-year term in the "northern boondocks" is just one of numerous difficult and unusual assignments the HMB has given youth. PHOTO BY DON RUTLEDGE

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2 JANUARY



JANUARY PREVIEW

Churched, unchurched US-too.

The US-2 story has been in the mill for more than a year. HMB photographers covering other assignments in nearby locations, shot pictures of outstanding US-2 workers, from Ekwok, Alaska to Oklahoma City to Harlem. Writer Patti Benton organized material compiled from various sources and pored over a detailed survey of the program. Benton reports she was impressed by contrasts in the US-2er's experiences. Joe and Tricia Rhodes celebrated their first Christmas together in Ekwok—with gifts bought through a Sears "wish book." And although they attempted to acclimate themselves to the culture, the Rhodes balked at least once—when offered a gourmet food, Alaska-style: moldy fish heads. On the other side of the country, Mary Lewis ministered in a world of subways and skyscrapers and poverty in Harlem. "Despite the differences," says Ben-

ton, "I saw a common thread of enthusiasm." After more than 11 years the US-2 program, she believes, is "alive and well." • Discovering Seattle, Wash., was in one of the least-churched areas in the United States, writer Everett Hullum traveled to the west coast city to discover what effects that had on city life. He came back with copious notes and few conclusions. So, he decided to present the facts—and let the readers make up their own minds—with a do-it-yourself, fill-in-the-blanks article. • Not all Christian social ministries stories have happy endings. But Terry Moncrief, CSM missionary interviewed by Elaine Furlow, recently received a letter from an alcoholic he had helped at the Baptist center in Atlanta. Cliff Nations wrote he is employed by the Salvation Army in Tennessee—and his wife recently became a Christian.

4 US-2: An evaluation by Patti Benton

Reviewing and previewing the HMB's Peace Corps-type program for college graduates. US-2ing: In Ekwok, Alaska (p. 8); In Harlem, New York City (p. 10); In Oklahoma City (p. 12); In Baltimore, Md. (p. 14).

19 WHOLE 'NOTHER WORLDS by Elaine Furlow

photography by Don Rutledge

Techwood Baptist Center may be in the shadows of downtown Atlanta, but it is a far distance from the posh offices and swank restaurants.

24 SEATTLE: Do Community Morality and Church Membership Mix?

by Everett Hullum

The answer is a definite, unequivocal maybe; unless we've asked the wrong question to begin with.

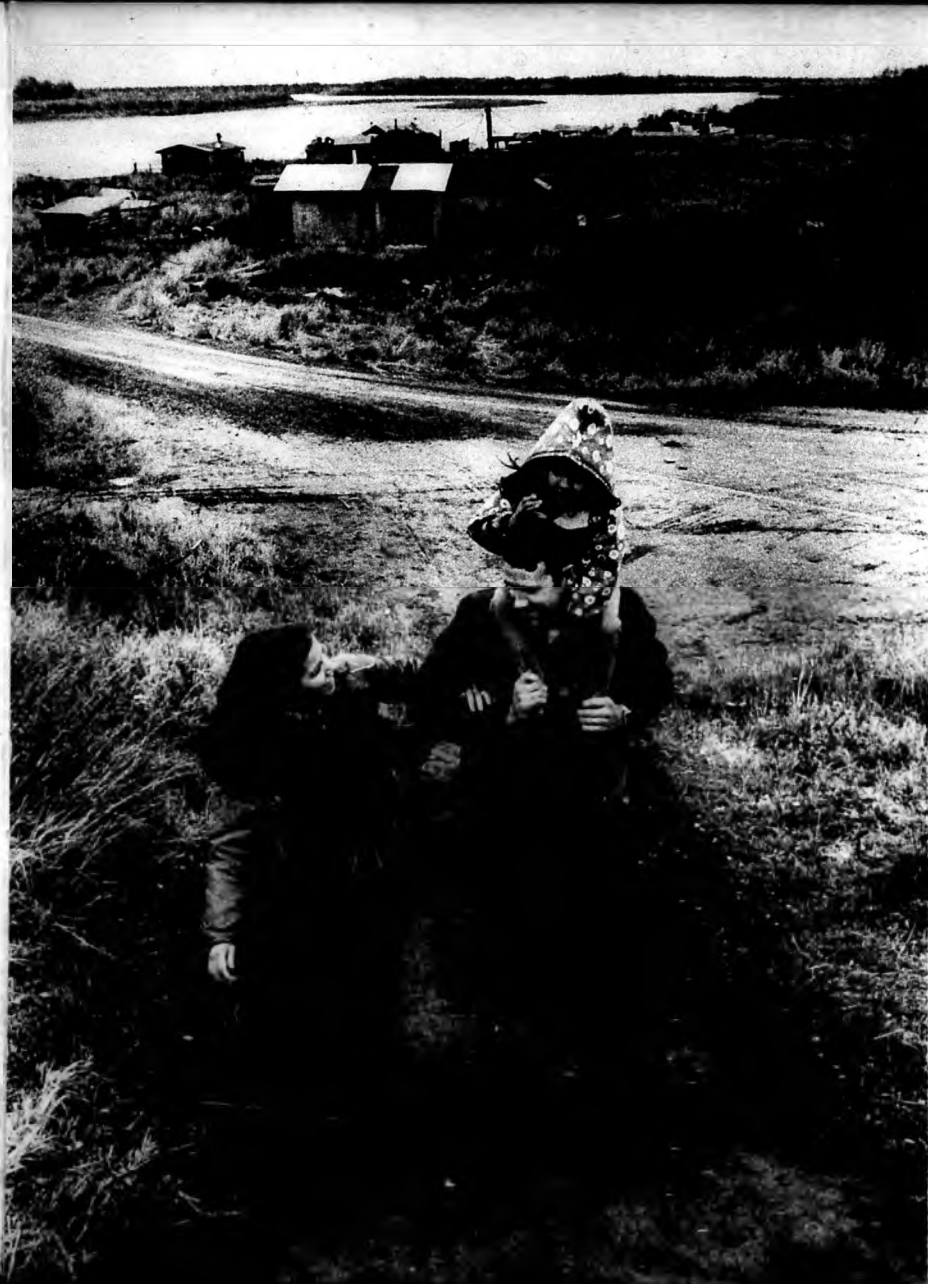
43 COMMENT by Walker Knight

46 READERS' REACTIONS

47 AND IN PASSING... by William G. Tanner

The first column by the new executive director pays homage to the HMB's retiring executive director.

JANUARY 3



When the small plane carrying new US-2ers Joe and Tricia Rhodes and their supervisor, missionary Don Rollins, touched down in Ekwok, Alaska, a curious crowd of native villagers gathered on the gravel airstrip.

After a winding odyssey from the sunny California Baptist College campus to orientation and on to more training in Anchorage and King Salmon, Alaska, the Rhodes were eager for their two-year Home Mission Board assignment to begin. "When we finally got here," Tricia recalls of their first day in the tiny, remote village along the Nushagak River, "we were so excited."

Rollins led the way to their newly-rented, 16'x 20' house, complete with a red-handled water pump in one corner, and a two-seater outhouse in the back. Then Rollins said good-bye, and took off again in his plane. Except for occasional visits from Rollins, the Rhodes were on their own.

That was over a year ago. Now the two-room house contains a couch, bed and chairs flown in from King Salmon. A red-checked cloth drapes the kitchen table and red-and-white checked curtains hang at the window.

The Rhodes' trek to Ekwok began in early '75, when the two students stopped by the California Baptist College Baptist Student Union to read a list of positions available in the Home Mission

Board's US-2 program. Interested, they decided to apply. Some time later, the HMB asked them to come for an interview.

A description of the Ekwok assignment caught their eyes. "It was the only place where there was no ministry," says Tricia. "That is what really appealed to us."

This sort of challenge—and a sense of adventure—has caused hundreds of others like Joe and Tricia Rhodes to apply for US-2, the HMB's two-year mission assignment for post-college adults, since the program began 11 years ago. "In 1965, we hoped to give our Baptist youth an opportunity for a Peace Corps-type experience, including an expression of Christian faith, which the Peace Corps didn't always allow," says Don Hammonds, director of the HMB's Special Mission Ministries Department and chairman of the US-2 committee which coordinates the program.

In 1965, 20 fledgling US-2ers were commissioned. "The US-2 program," adds Charles McCullin, assistant director of the HMB's Christian Social Ministries Department and US-2 committee member, "is specifically for those people who, at that point in their lives, aren't sure what they want to

Continued

US-2

The HMB's missions program for college graduates has come a long way in its 11-year history. But it's still far from running its course • by Patti Benton

do and would like to try out a thing or two."
 "When we applied for US-2, we felt we weren't ready for seminary, or didn't know whether we wanted to go," says Joe Rhodes.
 "I probably will always feel like there are things I really need to know, but now I am ready to go to seminary."

The purpose of US-2, as Hammonds sees it, has not varied greatly in the past decade: to offer mission experience to young adults and to meet home missions needs at the same time.

Mildred Streeter, director of Carver Baptist Center in New Orleans and a US-2 supervisor, points out that "US-2 provides a testing period for youth, recruits new missionary blood, gives much needed assistance to established work, and



Deaf ministry US-2er Lynn Stepleton leads deaf children in camping.

gives vision to older missionaries."

From a 1975 survey of former US-2ers conducted by Clay Price, research assistant at the Home Mission Board, two-thirds of the 179 who responded indicated they had entered church- or mission-related work after their US-2 stint.

But not all do. "There are some who discover after they're in the program, 'Hey, this is not what I thought it would be,' and get out," observes CSM's McCullin. "Which is a good thing, too, and one of the objectives of the program."

US-2 is open to persons with a college degree and leadership experience up to 27 years old, although age is flexible. Seventy-six percent of those polled had been 22 or younger when appointed.

Requirements past age and education are harder to measure. One quality Ed Seabough, director of the HMB's Personnel Recruitment Services, looks for is "aggressiveness."

"Desire and commitment are great," says Seabough. "But if a person is not a self-starter, he probably won't make it in US-2."

US-2 is open to single or married persons. Since 1965, single appointments (including incidents where only one marriage partner was assigned) have numbered 195; 75 couples have been appointed.

For most of these persons, Baptist Student Unions have been the first source of information about US-2. Some 64 percent of the US-2ers surveyed had learned through BSUs, followed by summer missions, RA and CA participation and mission youth group experiences.

Language Missions Department director Oscar Romo feels there's room for reaching "the good, potential US-2ers who work and don't have time for BSU. We need to broaden our recruitment—and look for quality in places we haven't gone before."

Ed Seabough emphasizes that recruitment circles have broadened to include student-related conferences and local churches.

"The big difference in recruiting now is that we're aiming more toward student commuters who live at home, remain active in their local church, and also may work. We're reaching some fine Christian people through these avenues."

When the applications come in, they are processed by Cecil Etheredge, director of Missionary Personnel Department and US-2 committee member. If approved, the names pass to the US-2 committee of Hammonds, McCullin, Etheredge, Irvin Dawson of language missions, Quentin Lockwood of church extension and Emery Smith of special mission ministries.

Also on file are requests for US-2ers from state mission directors and executive secretaries. Matching the applicants to the needs is not easy. Each year more than 100 young adults apply for US-2.

Usually, only around 25 are accepted.

"Funds are the main reason we cannot appoint more US-2ers," explains Hammonds. The US-2 committee, he points out, tries to steer those not appointed into other areas, such as Christian Service Corps, or on to seminary. "We feel some obligation to those who come to us, then are turned down."

For the ones who make the team, "As much as possible, we try to offer each one his first choice of a place of service," Hammonds emphasizes.

But the US-2 committee also must consider what the local field requests, such as whether they prefer a single appointee (male or female), or a couple. If the state lists "Single—Male Preferred," the HMB tries to honor the request, although the US-2 committee "has worked hard to provide openings for single women—or at least to help states reach the point of being willing to accept a single female US-2er," says chairman Hammonds.

"Our preference would be to assign a strong female rather than a weak male in most positions," he continues, "but in the past, some states would rather have had a weak male."

In one situation, a woman was qualified for a position, but the state leaders wanted a man. "We told them if they wouldn't take her, they would have to wait another year for someone else," Hammonds recalls. They reconsidered.

"It's a slow process," he admits. "But as women have opportunity to demonstrate their expertise, we can share their success with the state people and open the doors wider for single women."



Virgie and Mike Brown, missionaries in Milwaukee, Wis., Baptist Center are former US-2ers to Alaska.

One thorn in the side of the US-2 program during its 11 years has been the US-2er's relationship to local supervisors. Supervisors are hand-picked by departments assigning the US-2er. Many are HMB missionaries, state mission directors, pastors or associational personnel. Oscar Romo of language missions feels supervision is crucial.

"We've had some young people with good minds, who are capable," he says, "but who needed training and experience."

"The key to the success of the US-2er is the quality of local supervision. A 'supervisor' is over you. The US-2er needs a 'guider,' instead, who suggests without cramping what God is directing in the US-2er's life."

CSM's Charles McCullin agrees. "The US-2er has to learn how to handle limits with freedom. All of us have to live in boxes, but the box gets larger as the US-2er gains experience."

Most at the HMB believe supervisors over the years have done adequate or superior jobs. Many supervisors such as Yvonne Keefer feel, "My ability to offer healthy supervision and guidance is as great a factor as the US-2er's willingness to do the job. I should be accountable for that."

Those supervisors who haven't been as successful have exhibited a gamut of attitudes, from harboring too high expectations of the US-2er, to patronizing the new worker without allowing responsibility, to parenting the "kid" stranded in an adult's shoes.

"Some supervisors have expected too much of inexperienced, just-out-of-college US-2ers," Hammonds observes. "We have put a few students with people they should not have been assigned to."

One US-2er assigned in 1973 through the spe-

cial Mission Ministries Department recalls, "Our supervisory relationship was something that no US-2er should have had. We were experienced, competent people being treated as though we knew less than nothing."

Richard and Debbie Humble, assigned to Indian and deaf work in Santa Fe in 1973, arrived to find no direct local supervisor. On their own, they struggled to open doors in deaf work and relate to students at an Indian high school, while keeping tabs on student boarders and a transient ministry based in the Baptist center/mission where they lived.

"We were so naive, and a lot of people who stayed in the center took advantage of us," Debbie remembers. "We needed supervision."

After nine months, a missionary couple was assigned to head the center ministry and supervise the Humbles, who continued in deaf and Indian work.

"It turned out to be a good experience," the Humbles conclude. "We were willing to stick it out."

Stan and Lynn Stepleton, US-2ers who strengthened deaf work in the Northwest Baptist Convention, rate as "top-notch" their supervisor, Harold Hitt, general language missionary for the convention.

"Harold was our best friend," says Lynn. "He had really prepared for our coming—on our first day he took us over to talk to the people at Oregon State School for the Deaf."

"After we got started," she adds, "he left us alone unless we needed help."

Hitt believes the Stepletons' work matched the caliber of the best full-time missionaries. "They were not prepared for the contrast between the Northwest and Alabama. But the challenge inspired them. They didn't let things discourage them. Problems became opportunities."

At the Board level, supervision varies from one department to another. Text continues on page 16.

"The US-2er has to learn to handle limits with freedom," says a CSM worker. "We all live in boxes, but the box gets larger with experience."



US-2ing in Ekwok, Alaska

Life is reduced to basics for Joe (above) and Tricia Rhodes, from hunting for meat for fish, hanging out clothes, hoping a cold snap will turn them into seals. "This is a man's country," believes Joe. Confesses Tricia: "He couldn't live here, but I don't mind. I love the place, but it's too different a way of life up here."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DON RUTLEDGE

As they interpret the goal of their two-year hitch, Joe and Tricia Rhodes are in Ekwok, Alaska, "to lay the groundwork for a ministry. The idea in language mission work is to develop native leadership."

On Sundays, Joe walks through the village of 100 persons with a bullhorn inviting attendance at an evening worship service at the Alcoholics Anonymous building.

"To the natives, Sunday is the same as any other day. Most are fishermen, at least during part of the year, so they have to keep fishing to make a living," says Joe. "It makes formal Sunday services hard."

For the village children, there are Joe's puppet shows at the Rhodes' house, and wife Tricia's autoharp accompaniment to loud choruses of "Climb, climb up Sunshine Mountain."

"When we first came," says Tricia, "the kids said, 'Did you come to baptize us?'" The natives are acquainted with Christianity: a Disciples of Christ missionary began work there 20 years ago. Many are Russian Orthodox.

"The older ones are staunch," Joe observes, "but the younger ones don't know what they believe, or don't believe anything."

Conflict with an independent Baptist missionary—he claimed the Rhodes were "taking my converts"—caused some problems. Joe and Tricia tried to cooperate, but "it just didn't work out."

Their supervisor, Don Rollins, "had watched this missionary for a long time," says Joe, "so he knew the man didn't minister to the natives."

"Most of our time is spent showing the people the good parts of Christianity," Tricia asserts, "because they have seen the bad parts."

Acceptance comes through the Rhodes' participation in community life: "Everybody helps everybody with everything," says Tricia.

Adapting to local customs has been hard, especially for Tricia. "Men here don't like women who try to carry on conversations with them. The men are gone a lot, doing things together, and the women are here," she explains. "And, well, it's hard because there are not many people here like me. It's a different culture, so we are not interested in the same things."

Loneliness seeped in at the Rhodes' first Christmas in Ekwok. They shopped for gifts through the Sears "wish book," trimmed a small tree, and cooked a special Christmas dinner of Cornish hens. Still, the day was tinged with sadness because they were so far from family and friends.

"I love these people," says Tricia, wistfully, "but I don't think I could live here."



US-2ing in Baltimore

"Rock" Milton—as he's nicknamed by friends—has become a familiar sight on the Alcorn University campus.



10 JANUARY

Even though one campus associate never learned the name of the program—he called Milton "U-2" for two years—Milton feels satisfied his contribution to Maryland student work was worthwhile. So did local Baptists, who hired him for a third year of campus ministries.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEN TOUCHTON



When Nathaniel Milton interviewed for a US-2 position, his mind was set on Christian social ministries. But a student work job in Baltimore needed a black person. "We feel you can do it—what do you think?" Milton was asked. He thought for a minute, then answered, "Yeah, I can."

After college, says Milton, "I had seminary in mind, but I really wasn't ready for it. I wanted more in-depth experience in missions. US-2 sounded like something that would fit."

With his new wife Phyllis (who was not appointed), Milton arrived at Morgan State University eager to bolster a sagging Baptist Club. He found no Baptist Club. The once active group had dwindled away.

"I had to do a lot of groundwork," Milton remembers. "All my reports said, 'I'm building foundations, building foundations.'"

At first stalled by inadequate advance planning, Milton gradually gained the trust of the campus ecumenical director and carved a foothold on campus among students and staff alike.

From a core of four students, Milton led the Baptist Club in a comeback that climaxed when two students became summer missionaries.

When his two-year stint ended this past fall, Milton signed on for a third year with the Maryland convention.

"I felt the ministry was at the stage where I was needed another year to help it move a little farther, get a firmer footing. At that time, there wasn't anybody to replace me. I didn't want to see it lapse."

Milton feels more confident now that the club is self-sufficient—student leadership has jelled and a new freshman crop is becoming involved.

"US-2 gives you an opportunity to minister and helps you grow," explains Milton. "It's a time to find out who you are. If missions is for you, two years ought to let you know whether you can cut it or not."

"I thought I could before—but now I know I can."

JANUARY 11

US-2ing in Harlem, NYC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL OBREGON



After church, kids gather around Mary Lewis (right photo, center).

12 JANUARY



To prepare for tutoring at Mt. Zion, Lewis took an HMB-taught literacy course (right). In it, as in other things, she displayed a confidence her supervisor Ray Gilliland describes as "a big ego. But it takes it to make it in the setting Mary comes from."

In the gray light of Sunday morning, Harlem looks tired. Litter blows like tumbleweed down streets lined with liquor stores and storefront churches; a few young black men cluster on a corner.

"She's quiet now. But she gets loud," says Mary Lewis, a US-2er who calls Harlem home.

A '76 CSM appointee, Lewis came from South Carolina to Harlem as a youngster with her family. After finishing college in New York, she toyed with leaving. Instead, she signed on as a US-2er in her own community.

"People here ask me, 'What's the city got to offer you?'" says Lewis. "I answer, 'The city can't do anything for me—it's the people I'm staying for.'"

Lewis serves Metropolitan New York Baptist Association as a liaison with CHANCE (Cooperative Harlem Association of Neighborhood Churches Endeavors). She worked as a summer missionary with CHANCE day camps for three years; now she's recruiting kids from the camps for an after-school tutorial program at Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Her supervisor, Ray Gilliland, CSM director for the association, says, "some pastors have resisted women in a leadership role, but Mary is having a softening effect."

Mary explains, "Naturally, I have a tendency to feel I'm the US-2er—here I am, ready or not. But I have to simmer down and remember they've been here longer than I have."

Gilliland admits, "Mary believes in herself."

The new US-2er plans to relate to young people through the New York City BSU and HMB-owned Baptist center in Harlem.

"I hate to see my younger black brothers and sisters hooked on dope, hanging out on the street as pimps and prostitutes, playing hooky, running into trouble. They're not stupid—it's just that somewhere along the way, they tried to take the easy way out."

"Only it wasn't."

Encompassing her hometown with a sweep of the hand, Lewis confides, "Somebody's always losing his or her life in the city—I love it and hate it all at the same time."

"There's so much to do here."

JANUARY 13

US-2ing in Oklahoma City

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KNOLAN BENFIELD



US-2er Bev Gray organizes basketball teams and referees games. She also talks, mingles, listens—her wide, green eyes creating a sense of confidentiality for the teenager seeking advice on his love life, or the child caught in the throes of family problems.



14 JANUARY



Gray helps women look over clothes in the center's closet. In every activity, says supervisor Martha Sterling, "Bev has a unique outlook on life. Giving is a joy."

When Arthur, a boy playing at the Baptist Mission Center, slapped US-2er, Beverly Gray, she just stood there.

"She told us the Bible said it was best to turn the other cheek—so that's what she did," reports Reggie Iernigan, 14, who saw the encounter.

Shrugging, he admits, "That's what I don't understand about her."

In a rough neighborhood in Oklahoma City, which functions more on the principle of an "eye for an eye" than brotherly love, Beverly Gray's lifestyle is probably puzzling. She may joke a teenager out of hostility or wordlessly face verbal abuse. Physical threats, the under 5-foot-tall Gray meets with a quick, "There's no glory in beating up a sissy."

Sometimes the kids lash out in confusion, but slowly, some are putting the pieces together. And there is some evidence her Christianity is rubbing off.

Observes acting director of the center, Martha Sterling, "One of the things that has impressed me most, is Beverly's not afraid of getting involved in people's lives."

The kids at the center have Gray's home phone for help after hours. She tries to make herself available to the young people and their families.

Despite her willingness to give and help, Gray has been hit with some disappointments. She returned from a US-2 meeting to find some of the kids had broken into her apartment and stolen jewelry and a clock radio. "It hurt me," she admits. "They had taken my things. I felt like they were attacking me." But her reaction made a lasting impression on at least one of the girls. "Beverly always forgives."

Gray intends to pursue a career of Christian social ministries. "God has used this (US-2 stint) to turn out better than I thought," she says. "This has helped me become more confident in myself. It's helped me understand my limitations."

"I feel I have found what I want to do forever and ever and ever."

The impact Gray already has had on the lives of kids at the center is evidenced in their non-verbal responses toward her. The children and teenagers seem comfortable around her. They compete to sit beside her in the front seat of the van.

And there are indications Gray's Christian message has filtered past the center and into the neighborhood. "My little brother, who is 4, was going here," says a teenager at the center.

"One day, at home, I heard him singing. 'Yes, Jesus loves me.' I asked him, 'Who teach you that?'"

"He said, 'Bev.'"

JANUARY 15

"Desire and commitment are great," says an HMB staffer. "But if a person is not a self-starter, he won't make it in US-2."

Oscar Romo stays in touch with language missions US-2ers, and doesn't hesitate to offer advice when he senses a problem—professional or personal.

He has talked sternly to the wife in a US-2 partnership—"You're too dominating," suggested Romo. "Give your husband room to see his mistakes and correct them on his own."

CSM's Charles McCullin sees the HMB as a "liaison when communication breaks down."

"We hope the problem can be resolved between the supervisor and the US-2ers; if it can't, we're there."

Cecil Etheredge, who coordinates US-2 orientation, sees the need for more supervisor training, but concedes, "When you're talking about training all the supervisors in the country, you're talking about a lot of time and money."

"You're also working with free-thinking, independent local leaders who may or may not realize the need for training."

Etheredge continues, "Actually, the responsibility for supervisor orientation lies at the state level." Some state missions directors have asked the HMB for help in the how-to's of training, which Etheredge has provided.

Plans for next year's US-2 orientation will include a session for supervisors, says US-2 committee chairman Hammonds. "We'll offer help on inter-personal relationships, how much direction to give the US-2er, and the mood of today's youth."

"Some of these supervisors have been out of touch with the college campus for a while," he explains, "and don't always know where the US-2ers are coming from."

"Basically," he concludes, "I feel good about what supervisors are doing for the US-2ers. If a few of them haven't done a good job, it's not all their fault."

"Some of it is ours, for not helping them understand what the job involved."

After the excitement of the commissioning service fades, most US-2ers experience a collage of frustration and fulfillment. For nearly all, the first few months are jolting. "I didn't know where to begin or how to do the job I was asked to do," says a church extension worker assigned in 1972. "And I missed having fellowship with other Christian young adults."

Another US-2er assigned by rural-urban missions in 1970, recalls, "I was stuck in a fellowship vacuum. Being 30 miles away from my direct supervisor, I traveled a lot. Not having a gas allowance, I was poor as a pauper most of the time and felt like a lone sheep in the middle of a wolf pack."

Joe and Tricia Rhodes have felt handicapped in Alaska by their ignorance of alcoholism and Russian Orthodoxy.

"At US-2 orientation, they kept talking about 'how to work with youth' and 'how to do survey,'" remembers Tricia. "They kept saying, 'We're sorry, we know that doesn't apply to you....'"

"I wish we'd had better information about Ekwoik, the natives and the customs. It would have helped."

Etheredge of the personnel department points out two goals of orientation—"To familiarize the

new appointee with the programs of the Home Mission Board, and to introduce them to HMB staff."

"Staff are resources for the US-2er," Etheredge continues. "Specific orientation to local customs and needs should come from state supervisors."

A complaint shared by some supervisors and US-2ers alike has been that two years is too short—and in some cases, too long—for meaningful ministry. "By the time I felt I was beginning to have a good grasp of the situation, the two years were up," says a '71 appointee.

Lynn Stepleton, US-2er in the Northwest, recalls, "Our first two months were spent just building trust in the deaf circles."

Her supervisor, Harold Hitt, thinks "two years is about right. But I do wish, in some cases, we had the option to end or renew a US-2er's term at the end of the first year, or to extend it past the two-year marker."

Some have questioned whether US-2ers do more harm than good in establishing work with ethnics, only to pull up roots and move on two years later.

Language Missions Department's Romo acknowledges that danger, but also contends, "The time you work does not matter as much as what you contribute while you work."

For some, the US-2 journey brings personal limitations into uncomfortably bright light. Says one US-2er, "I found I didn't love everybody. Frankly, some people bored or disgusted me. And you know the missionary image—I love everybody."

"Well, I didn't."

And sometimes, the question "Am I right for this?" dogs every step.

Diane MacKenzie graduated in the spring of '76 with degrees in biology and environmental science from Kentucky's Georgetown University.

"I first heard of US-2 from a Southern Baptist recruiter who spoke on campus one night," MacKenzie says. She had grown up in a North America Baptist conference church in Delaware and knew little about Southern Baptists until college. "At that time," she continues, "I was feeling a strong call into full-time Christian work, and thought US-2 might be the answer."

Despite an inner conflict between her call and a natural inclination toward botany, she applied and was approved, but not appointed, because not enough positions were available.

So when the HMB called unexpectedly with an opening in language missions, she took little time to consider. With mixed emotions, she accepted the job and moved to Atlanta.

"I wish now I'd thought about it longer," MacKenzie admits. "Not knowing about the US-2 program or Southern Baptists, I didn't know what to expect."

Because she would mainly work with bi-lingual youth at the Spanish First Baptist Church of Atlanta, MacKenzie was told she would not need Spanish. However, without the language, she remains an outsider.

"The kids are bi-lingual, that's true. But they communicate easier in Spanish, and all the church functions are in Spanish," MacKenzie explains. "It would help a lot to speak Spanish."

In addition, the pastor has resigned, leaving MacKenzie without supervision or direction. Consequently, she spends much of her week filing and researching for the Language Missions Department at the HMB. "I knew the job would involve some office work," says MacKenzie, who had applied for a rural position, "but not this much. I'm not sure I can stay."

MacKenzie is quick to point out, however, that HMB staffers have been sympathetic and helpful. She does not feel bitter, but thinks, "The Board needs to match persons to positions a little better."

The US-2 committee, says Hammonds, is aware of MacKenzie's problem. "The department may have made a mistake in her placement," Hammonds acknowledges, "but that's no slap at language missions. We've all done that. You'll find the same problem in placing career missionaries. Sometimes we miss."

If MacKenzie's experience has been disappointing, it also has been didactic. "I have realized from this that a 'full-time Christian worker' is what we're all supposed to be in whatever we do," she observes.

"I think I misread my call. It's a true call, but I understand it better now."

At this stage, MacKenzie wants to enter a field that will allow her "to help people understand how important the earth is."

As for her US-2 experience, it's "been frustrating, and I've hated it at times," MacKenzie admits candidly. "But it's been a good experience, too. I've met some really nice people, learned to adapt to a difficult situation, and I've certainly learned a lot about trusting the Lord."

Another rough spot for some US-2ers (and their supervisors) has been relationships with local forces on the field. "In dealing with state and association officials," states one US-2er from 1971, "I sensed that they viewed me as young and idealistic—one of the 'long-haired youth.'"

For Natty Garza, a Mexican-American from Mercedes, Texas, US-2 seemed the natural epilogue to two summers as an HMB summer missionary in the Northwest. But when Garza returned to develop a Spanish ministry with an Oregon church, problems plagued her.

"The church was going through a bad time," Garza explains. "There was conflict over the tongues issue and the church was divided."

Supervisor Harold Hitt feels, "A long-term relationship with a church is different from being with them several months in a summer. Natty was torn between loyalty to friends who left the church, and the rest of the congregation."

In addition, communication between the church's pastor and Garza gradually deteriorated. "The Mexican culture has not yet accepted women's lib, and Natty fought that all along," Hitt observes.

"I never really handled the problem," Garza recalls, "because it built up until it finally exploded."

Hitt met with both the pastor and Garza—the end result was a transfer to another part of the convention. (HMB figures show 30 percent of the US-2ers transfer from their first assignments.)

"There were misunderstandings on both sides," says Hitt. "She related better at the second church and finished the term."

Part of Garza's difficulty, Hitt believes, may have been "a rosy, romantic picture of US-2 that finally crashed in on her."

Others also have reeled from that blow. "In the past, I believe we did paint too rosy a picture of US-2," says Don Hammonds, "but in orientation now, we try to let them know it won't be a bed of roses. It's unfair to the US-2er to build



US-2ers find a moment's relaxation in a camp-fire service.

it up as though it were.

"Yet," he continues, "it is an exciting adventure. So we need to promote a balanced picture of the program."

Romo points out, "We have tended to oversell US-2, offering it as a chance to 'do your own thing.' Some of them strip away the glamour and make it; others don't."

Seabough, director of personnel recruitment services, believes "over-romanticizing is inevitable, because people hear what they want to hear."

"One US-2 couple serving in California admitted to me, 'You couldn't tell us anything at orientation—we were know-it-alls and didn't hear what you were telling us about the realities on the field. 'Now we know.'"

Athough immaturity has hampered some US-2ers' effectiveness, many supervisors surveyed by the HMB's Price feel "the US-2 program is strong or weak according to the maturity and dedication of the individual US-2er."

In retrospect, a US-2er who served in the '65 pilot program reflects, "After 10 years, I still have negative feelings about many things that happened in US-2. But the feeling of failure con-

Continued

More than 100 students apply for US-2 each year. But only about 25 are accepted. The rest, however, are offered other opportunities of service.

tinues to diminish as I look back and see how immature I was, and how unrealistic my expectations were."

"Immaturity has been an issue," Hammonds explains, "but that's part of the growing process of US-2. If we help supervisors understand the US-2er—where he's coming from—they can help the US-2er through it."

A challenge every US-2er faces is how to stretch his salary to cover the bills.

A single appointee receives \$60 per month for miscellaneous expenses; a couple receives \$95. Rent and utilities, board and travel expenses vary with the field location and are figured separately for each US-2er. How much of that the Home Mission Board carries depends on the amount of support the states supply.

"Over the past several years, we've pretty much required the local areas to supply housing for the US-2ers," says Hammonds. "That way they share some of the responsibility and are more concerned that the US-2er makes it."

Fringe benefits offered by the Board are sizable: life and health insurance, severance pay of \$1,200 per person at the end of the term and a one-year \$300 scholarship for each US-2er who goes on to seminary or graduate work.

"We felt well taken care of," say Stan and Lynn Stepleton. "We had tried to prepare for not having money for extras—our car was paid for."

For another US-2er, the strain was more severe. "I feel the HMB should reevaluate the method of determining how much US-2ers are paid," says a CSM '74 appointee. "Clothing, car, medical and dental expenses are overlooked."

When the columns are added, the US-2 program hits a six-digit figure.

In 1974, the cost of supporting 52 singles and 18 couples reached \$279,103. It cost the HMB 6.1 percent less to support a US-2er in '74 than in '71; a couple cost 9.3 percent more. Housing and travel costs have decreased as local support has shouldered more financial responsibility.

Based on the 1975 study, the total HMB monthly cost of the US-2 program has not risen significantly.

But there are those who feel the money should be put to better use.

"In our area, for the same amount of money, a good pastor could be supported and could be much more effective in growing churches and reaching people," asserts one US-2 supervisor.

"The program is costly," agrees the HMB's Charles McCullin. "And it is true that you can hire a career missionary for what it costs to get a US-2er on the field for two years. We would be better off hiring career persons, if cost were the only criterion."

"But I don't think it is," McCullin continues. "I think the US-2 program says to the denomination and its young people, 'We're interested in your pilgrimage, and what you're doing with your life.'"

"In that sense, I think the price is right."

Although buffeted by strong gusts of controversy in its 11-year lifespan, the US-2 program seems today on even keel.

In Price's study, 51 percent reported that US-2 had been "a life-changing experience." Relates Lynn Stepleton, "God would not have taken us to the Northwest, and allowed us to accomplish so

much, without having a purpose for our future."

Stan Stepleton is now working toward an M.R.E. degree at Southwestern Seminary; Lynn teaches deaf school children. They plan to return to the Northwest to continue their work after seminary.

Unlike the Stepletons, not all US-2ers make it to the finish line. Of 179 US-2ers contacted, 9.2 percent had quit before their terms ended—for reasons ranging from marriage to illness to unresolvable conflicts within themselves or with their supervisors or their work.

When a US-2er resigns, "I don't try to talk them into staying," says Don Hammonds. "Generally, their minds are made up and you're better off letting them go."

Some regret their decisions. A '71 special mission ministries appointee who left the program has reconsidered: "My greatest regret is that I didn't stick it out and see it to the end... I gave up too soon."

For those who remained, a solid 92 percent felt they had been effective in their work—and 83 percent of the supervisors agreed.

Martha Sterling, acting director of the Baptist mission center in Oklahoma City, supervised Beverly Gray as a US-2er. "She desires you laugh with life, yet she sheds tears. The tears are caused by hurt... the frustration that we couldn't do more."

Gray believes US-2 "helped me understand my limitations. I am poor in office work, but the things I can do I am more confident in."

With that confidence comes clarity in what lies ahead. "I'm well aware now that I need some training," says Gray. "I've used all the tricks I know."

Like Gray, 76 percent of the US-2ers studied felt a need for more education and returned to school after their US-2 terms.

A resounding 99 percent believe their US-2 work was meaningful; 96 percent would recommend US-2 to other young adults.

A '72 church extension appointee described "seeing the group of new Christians at the Baptist chapel develop from seekers and takers to givers and helpers" as a tangible result of his term.

Such expressions indicate US-2's basic value—but feelings for the program at the Home Mission Board, according to Don Hammonds, range from "very enthusiastic to apathetic."

"Yet, it doesn't disturb me that some don't feel US-2 is worth what we put into it," says Hammonds. "They're entitled to that opinion. I think it is."

"We're improving the program," states McCullin. "Orientation, screening, expectations, job descriptions—all are better than they were."

"We're listening to the US-2ers. We've learned from their hurts, their frustrations, their needs. Out of that, changes have come."

In 11 years, the US-2ers themselves have metamorphosed through subtle stages.

"They come with different attitudes now," observes Don Hammonds. "Five years ago, they were going to change everything, whether it needed changing or not."

"Now, they ask how they can help."

Whole 'Nother Worlds

Techwood Center ministers to people whose lives are far removed from their well-to-do downtown Atlanta neighbors. • by Elaine Furlow/photography by Don Rutledge



Glass-paneled skyscrapers in downtown Atlanta fail to reflect Techwood's world of food stamps, broken homes, violence and alcoholism.

In the tall hotel's revolving restaurant, two businessmen tucked their leather briefcases under the table and made idle conversation while awaiting their meal.

"There's I-75," one man pointed out, showing his visitor a clogged freeway; "there's the Capitol and the Omni, where our hockey and basketball teams play." Then, as the restaurant turned slowly to face north, he spotted Georgia Tech.

"There's where I went to school," he told his friend. "See the stadium?"

Between that glittering downtown building and the campus lies a barely visible collection of low, brick buildings: The Techwood housing project. The two businessmen overlooked it completely. But there, only a dozen blocks from the city center, live thousands of people, mostly poor.

The two old women stood, shoulders stooped, worn-out shopping bags crooked in their arms, waiting for the number 37 Luckie St. bus.

Downtown, a mile or so from the bus stop, the sun glinted on Atlanta's Peachtree Plaza, a 72-story glass and steel cylinder stretching toward the sky.

"I saw that on TV," one woman told her companion, motioning toward the impressive building. "They said you could eat up there on its top, and it goes round so you can sit right there and see the whole town."

Her companion nodded, seemingly unimpressed.

"Wouldn't that be fine?" her friend asked. Impatient for a reaction, she nudged her with an elbow.

"Aw, Etta," the friend answered, a note of weariness in her voice. "You know we ain't got no call for things like that."

From the Clark-Howell Techwood Baptist Center, Terry Moncrief can see Atlanta's growing, glittering skyline. But his world is much more attuned to the bus stop conversation, the everyday cares of the people who live in Techwood, a decaying, 1950s housing project built in an inner-city section of Atlanta.

Each day, people from the Techwood neighborhood walk to the center, which is sponsored by the Atlanta Baptist Association. There Terry and Rebecca Moncrief, appointed by the Home Mission

Board's Christian Social Ministries Department, do everything from helping them find jobs to filling out food stamp applications, making peace with a quarreling spouse, or coming to accept Jesus Christ.

Though the motive stays the same—to express Christ's love—the methods may vary: Bible study, child care, ceramics, Ping-pong, a fierce game of basketball, a trip to the circus.

During college, Moncrief, who was an engineering major, attended Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly. During the week, he felt the need to make a stronger commitment to Christ, as well as a commitment to home missions.

His counselor that night was David Beal, then director of Techwood center.

When Beal heard Moncrief say he was a student at Georgia Tech, Beal asked: "If you want to get into home missions, why don't you walk down the street six blocks?"

"What's there?" asked Moncrief. "Techwood Baptist Center."

The Moncriefs came in July, 1972, after attending Southern Baptist seminary, and Terry admits the first year was discouraging.

In his first three weeks, 12 break-ins occurred at the center.

Bars went up on the windows; a door buzzer system was installed.

During the first year, only three persons made professions of faith.

"If it had all been like the first year, I don't know if I would still be hanging on." The roar of a garbage truck on the street drowned out his words, and Moncrief motions to come inside.

"I came to a point that year," he explains, "where the Lord said to me, 'You've been trying to do a good job, but on your strength and power. They've run out. How about spending more time with me?'"

From then on, Moncrief says, things began to turn around—"but not overnight, and not just through me."

A revival in the second year saw 45 people make professions of faith; services now are held each Sunday night in the center.

Volunteers like Jean Hopkins, who drives the center's van to the park, the circus, baseball games and concerts,

help the Moncriefs' work. Four student interns from nearby universities work part-time. Baptist churches such as Tabernacle, Briarlake, Buckhead, Wieuca Road and Locust Grove, to name a few, send aid through money or manpower.

But the bulk of day-to-day work falls on director Moncrief, a Georgia native.

As Moncrief gets ready for his weekly women's Bible study, he greets the neighborhood mothers. The women straggle in in twos and threes. As the group gets seated in a semi-circle, Moncrief begins—today's lesson is on what the Bible says about money.

"Now, some people say money is the root of all evil. But they leave off two words from that quotation," Moncrief says.

"Love of," answers Karen.

"That's right. And Jesus tells us that the lack of money or the excess of money is not directly related to our happiness."

One woman looks a bit doubtful.

Many of them are on welfare, and lack of money is a daily worry.

"Wouldn't you rather have life than a bunch of money?" Moncrief asks. "Fill in this blank. 'Life is better than _____'"

After a pause, one woman answers, "Life is better than food stamps."

She chuckles and the group laughs with her.

"That's what he's saying in this verse."

The discussion gets sidetracked as a newcomer enters.

"You working?" one woman asks her.

"Yeah, at the restaurant."

"They need any more help?" asks the woman hopefully.

"Maybe night shifts. Call 'em."

Skillfully, Moncrief weaves the interruption back into the Bible study.

"A lot of times, though," he admits, "it seems like there's no hope, if we don't have the skills to get a job so we can provide."

"I see this as one way a church, our center, can help. If you feel God talking to you in this, come see me, we'll go on it. It may take some looking, but we're doing ourselves a disservice if we assume there aren't any jobs out there."

The concrete block room is painted a cheery yellow; on the wall by the blackboard hangs a wooden cross, hand made by Clint and Joyce, and donated to the center.

Continued



Sharing a joke (left), or taking his ministry outside the Techwood Center doors (below), Terry Moncrief is busy expressing love.





"It looks rotten but it isn't," explains Clint, a crewcut, muscular man of 50. "I just made it look that way—like the old rugged cross, you see? My wife painted the crucifix."

An ex-kitchen manager for a drive-in, and a former alcoholic, Clint has more experience on the streets than Terry Moncrief could ever want to hear about. But Clint and Moncrief are friends.

Last winter, Clint's wife was working at the center as a volunteer in the preschool program.

Clint, who'd been drinking heavily, occasionally came by the center to help out. When Clint and his wife separated, both asked Terry for help. Moncrief helped them patch up their lives again. Last February, after discussion with Terry in the center's kitchen, Clint accepted Christ.

After that, Clint tried to sober up. He got a job—as a dishwasher—and began part-time janitorial service at the center.

"I kept asking him, 'Clint are you on your power now, or God's?'" Terry recalls.

"Mine," Clint answered at first. "It won't be a bed of roses, but God can help you," Moncrief encouraged him.

Clint started living with his wife again. Because of that, it was no longer fair for her to get the monthly welfare check she had been receiving.

Moncrief asked the couple to "get honest with welfare," and agreed to accompany them to the welfare office to make the explanations.

But before they could make the trip, welfare notified Joyce that she had been reported.

"I'm going to have to terminate your check," the worker told her.

Moncrief intervened, telling the official how the couple was trying to make things work again.

"If you're willing to go to 'detox' (detoxification) at the hospital," the man told Clint, "I'll continue the check another month." Clint did, and says he no longer has a problem with alcohol.

His old street friends give him a hard time, he admits, but the talkative man, tattooed arms bulging from his t-shirt, seems to laugh them off with a story or a joke. "I can give as good as I get. They would give anything to be off it. I know."

Clint now helps the Moncriefs with a weekly ceramics class, bringing out the

From ceramics to painting to in-depth Bible studies, the people gathered at Techwood Center explore other worlds and discover new horizons.

molds for poodles, shields, masks and butterflies.

He distributes the pots of paint to each newspaper-covered table and jokes with the group as they paint.

The sounds from the ceramics room, which doubles as a library, are muted compared to the gym next door—where two teenagers furiously dribble basketballs full court. A large, hand-drawn sign behind them proclaims: "Jesus loves the little children of the world."

Down the hall, in the preschool day care, four-year-old Tommy attacks the teacher's feet with a green and yellow plastic caterpillar while she tries valiantly to play an alphabet game.

And later on, in the next room, Frank, a slim BSU worker in a green t-shirt, teaches an after-school class of young black junior high boys.

After the reading in *Good News for Modern Man*, Frank tries to delve further into the passage.

"Now it's talking about yokes here, Jesus made a yoke, he was a carpenter. Does anybody know what a yoke is?"

"Inside an egg?" ventures Rick. Frank corrects him and plows ahead to talk about John the Baptist.

"Who knows who John the Baptist is?" he asks.

"He baptized Jesus," answers one student.

"That's right," says Frank, a grin breaking over his face.

"Do you know what finally happened to John the Baptist?"

Puzzled looks and averted eyes. "He got beheaded. They took his head in on a silver platter."

The boys look puzzled. "You mean they cut his head off?" asks one, incredulous.

"That's right."

"Man, that's someth'n."

As the class continues, Moncrief looks in the glass window to check on their progress. By the end of the day, he likely will be dirty—from playing with youngsters on the swings outside or changing a neighborhood woman's flat tire—and tired.

"It's not glamorous stuff," says a friend in the HMB's Christian Social Ministries Department. "But it's the kind of day-to-day ministry we like to see in a Baptist center." ■



Techwood provides a haven for the destitute, a center of activity for the young and old who populate Atlanta's decaying inner-city. Among its offerings are handicrafts, Bible studies and counseling.





At dusk, the Space Needle puts above the Seattle skyline.

January 1977

EVANGELISM NEWS

Retreat Renews, Motivates

By Reid Hardin

Sessions of the Silver Trumpets Renewal Evangelism Retreat in Toccoa, Ga., pushed toward the midnight hour. The emphasis was on persons and relationships. The program was loosely structured and experience-oriented.

"With expectancy," observed Walker Knight, "those attending the renewal weekend stayed until near-midnight."

"I was impressed," continued Knight, editor of *Home Missions* magazine, "by the witness of persons over and over that they had gained new insights into their lives and ministry. I was touched by the freedom and warmth with which persons related to each other."

During the conference, more than 50 persons volunteered to travel at their own expense to renewal weekends in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana and Hawaii, to serve as renewal team members. One couple volunteered to go anywhere in the world to do renewal ministries.

Reports were received of the renewal movement resulting in the calling out and equipping of lay pastors who regularly witness and minister to prisoners at the federal penitentiary.

The entire mood of the conference seemed to be on the maturing development of the church as a caring community authentically ministering to a broken world.

During morning Bible studies, Laddie Adams, director of the Oklahoma Brotherhood department, invited his listeners to "come and see the Christ"—then go a step further — to share their Christian experience.

Calvin Cantrell, associate director of evangelism for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, warned Christians against standing too long before the mirror in

preparation to meet the world. He encouraged his listeners to accept themselves, then move out toward others.

Emphasizing Christians should accept other people "the way they are", Emory Wallace, pastor from DeRidder, La., reminded Christ evoked the response, "I never believed anyone like you would eat with somebody like me." Wallace told his audience nickels and noses and associational minutes are secondary to relating the love of Jesus.

Lewis Abbott, a pastor from Irving, Tex., talked about the Christian response to Christ's will, and the need for consistency in relationships: with God, the family, and the church. Christian response, Abbott said, should be revealed in the quality of life that gives itself for others without counting the cost.

The renewal retreat, held in late October, included dramas and the presentation of a new songbook, "Scripture and Praise," compiled by Jesse McElreath.

An innovative multi-media presentation was produced by Master Media, Inc., and directed by David Causey, minister of music at the First Baptist Church of Tucker, Ga.

The presentation combined photography, music, and sound to present the needs of persons in the world and the unique gifts of Christians to meet those needs.

Those in attendance called the weekend retreat freeing, meaningful and refreshing.

"It was a watershed for us," reported Jim and Mary Tillman, social engineers from Atlanta, Ga. "Our personal lives and professional careers will be divided into two periods: *before* and *after* Toccoa."

The Tillmans, who are social engineers specializing in urban affairs with a focus on white racism, said during the weekend they learned their work can be "immeasurably deepened by manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which we experienced at Toccoa."

The experience, they said, reaffirmed their professional direction because "now we know that the human potential for goodness and truth makes the elimination of facism possible."

"We believe," they continued, "that our professional activities in the past—based on rational beliefs—have been right on target. We now know that they can be enhanced, deepened and reinforced when set in the larger, more fundamental religious perspective, derived from the teachings of Jesus."

The renewal weekend seemed to generate warmth and individual fulfillment. Although, Walker Knight said, "Christianity's most subtle perversion is the temptation to stop with one's personal experience with Christ and not allow his love to work itself out through our love for others—Toccoa went the second mile."

"Participants," he said, "shared the struggles of their ministry with alcoholics, with the mentally ill and with prisoners."

"A businessman told of his decided change in lifestyle," continued Knight, "including giving up golf to care for the hurting and the invalid."

Knight sees the frontier of renewal evangelism in the emphasis on the contemplative life. "The inward journey of meditation, Bible study and prayer, will make the continued outward journey possible."

Related photo on page 24 h

SHAHBAZ: Assyrian



Waving his arms and preaching with emotion, George Shahbaz conducts morning worship service at Lake Shore Baptist.

George Shahbaz is an evangelist—but he wears a language missionary label.

The Chicago-based missionary is sometimes called an "Assyrian Billy Graham" by his people. And Shahbaz admits his dream is to evangelize—on a large scale—if it is God's will.

Shahbaz is an animated man who grabs an opportunity to witness: on the street corner, in the park, via radio waves or in homes of newly arrived Assyrian refugees.

Running from one place to the next, he is always on the lookout for fellow Assyrians. He waves at them from his van as he weaves in and out of Chicago traffic.

At a suburban restaurant, a smile breaks out on his face. "One of my people," he nods, as a dark-haired woman sits down across the room.

Fellow pastors say Shahbaz also relates well, cross-culturally. His Jewish physician calls him "cousin," and George says, "I have asked him, 'Why don't you believe in Christ?'" The owner of a Greek produce market greets George as "father"

with deference to his religious work.

And says James Godsoe, head of language missions for Illinois, "George is probably invited more than anyone else to talk in suburban churches."

He speaks several languages, and frequently Shahbaz is confused with other nationalities, Greek, Spanish and Arab.

"My style is international. I can work with any nation," admits Shahbaz. Yet, he wants his work to be distinguished as Assyrian.

Says Shahbaz, frowning, "I don't know why people call us Arabs. They must think anybody from the Middle East is an Arab. But there are many others: Armenian, Turkish, Jewish, Assyrian."

"When I am introduced, people ask, 'Are you Arab?'"

"No," I say, "Assyrian."

"Syrian?"

"No. Assyrian."

The Assyrian civilization was established even before the Greeks, on the plain of Eden, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It was an Assyrian—

Abraham—who established the Hebrew nation. However, since 606 B.C., Assyrians have been without a home territory.

Shahbaz says, "We have been a nation of refugees since 600 years before Christ." An estimated 100,000 Assyrians populate Iraq; 75,000 Iran. An estimated 60,000, like Shahbaz, have made their homes in the United States.

Shahbaz, a native of Baghdad, moved from Iraq to Turkey to Lebanon. He became a Christian while translating for a Lebanese pastor who visited Iraq.

While in Turkey, Shahbaz became friends with Southern Baptists missionary, James Leeper. Leeper encouraged Shahbaz to study at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut.

After graduation, Shahbaz and his wife, Amal, moved to the United States.

Shahbaz's initial avenue into the Assyrian community of Chicago was through a 15-minute spot on the "Voice of Assyrians" broadcast on Evanston station WEAU. Shahbaz paid the \$25 for broadcast time out of his own pocket.

Evangelist

His sermons were hard-hitting — and brief.

On the air, he denounces "worldly" activities: drinking, dancing, listening to popular music and gambling. He offers Christ as the answer for a changed life.

"I attack my people so harshly," he remarks, "and take them back with such love. If they don't change, they are going to hell."

"I can't cheat them by telling them are good."

Assyrians—sometimes 3,000 at a time—gather for Sunday picnics in the summer. Sometimes after church, Shahbaz and his wife join in. They eat shish kebabs and sweet desserts and Shahbaz passes out religious tracts and sometimes preaches

extemporaneously.

He also holds weekly Bible studies in Morton Grove, a Chicago suburb. His lessons are punctuated with an enthusiastic call for commitment. "Can a Christian say, 'I'm a believer' and sit down and have a nap?" he asks. "A believer moves."

Anglanteen Warda, who comes to the Bible studies, comments, "George makes you jump—that's how he preaches great—he's next to Billy Graham."

"That's what we think of him — an Assyrian Billy Graham."

Shahbaz helps supply food and clothing for Assyrian refugees. And he buses Assyrians to language classes for several weeks.



Whether he's in an Assyrian restaurant, below, or on the steps of an apartment in an Assyrian neighborhood, Shahbaz, shares the gospel with Assyrian people.



Shahbaz

He also has a strong ministry among youth. Friday night fellowships may find Shahbaz seated on the floor, pounding out the rhythm of a native or American religious chorus on an Assyrian drum—or preaching a short sermon in the basement of Lake Shore Baptist Church where his congregation meets for worship.

Several youth converts he tutors in special Bible study. Old Testament events come alive with his explanation of warring nations and ancient rulers. He can read all three languages from which the Bible was translated: Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek.

Among those he has been training is

Johnson Benjamin from Baghdad. He hopes one day Benjamin will become a pastor. Says Benjamin, in halting English, "I thank God for Brother George."

For two years, George struggled on his own in Chicago. Then the Home Mission Board took an interest in his work, through James Godsoe. "George has stability," comments Godsoe. "He doesn't drop one thing to start something else."

Initially, Godsoe was impressed by Shahbaz' sense of independence and dedication. A few pastors from the Mideast had expressed reluctance to support their own churches. "It is like going to market and buying a pair of

shoes for the best price they could get," explains Godsoe.

"The pastors didn't want to ask their people to give anything as long as they could get it from the Home Mission Board.

"This is not true with George," Godsoe observes. "He is not haggling for a financial advantage. His only concern is to somehow get Christ's message across."

Photos and text adapted and reprinted with permission from American Montage, The Human Touch in Language Missions. Photos by Everett Hullum, text by Celeste Loucks. Copyright © 1976 by the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention.

Shahbaz is surrounded by students in Senn High School, below, and hugs Assyrian youngsters, right, after a Bible study.



24d



24e

Meeting Sparks Joy

By Celeste Loucks

"It was like a ton of bricks up the side of the head. 'It hurt,' commented Tom Stricklin. 'But it was a good hurt.'"

Stricklin, minister of youth at the First Baptist Church of Los Angeles, Calif., was among almost 300 persons attending the youth evangelism conference at Ridgecrest in October. He was commenting about the impact of talks by keynote speaker, Peter Lord.

Lord, pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church in Titusville, Fla., confronted conferees with the need to actually seek God—"not his power, not his service, not his blessings - but HIM."

Passing out a chart, Lord had the audience note the number of hours per week spent on routine activities, then make a comparison: time spent watching television to time spent talking with God; time spent reading the newspaper, to Bible study. "You," he told the conferees, "are leading men to God—and you don't know him, yourself."

"We must interact with God, to know him," Lord insisted.

To examine priorities further, Lord questioned, "What do you think about when all the lights are out... when you are all alone and no one sees? This," he said, "is what your heart is full of."

He also asked the audience to write down their greatest fears in life. He maintained the things people fear losing "are the things we love the most."

"We want God," he said, "but not with our whole heart."

He urged those in attendance to seek God's face, not his hands. Too often, he said, Christians approach God as "if he were some high-classed servant, to be summoned."

"He never says we'll behold his hands—he says we'll behold his face..."



Florida pastor, Peter Lord, speaks at the youth evangelism conference held at Ridgecrest in October.

Lord suggested Christians look at their problems as opportunities to "discover what God wants you to learn."

"We gaze at our mess and tell God what to do. What we should do," he said, "is gaze at God and glance at our mess and ask God... what are you trying to say to me?" After the lesson is learned, "God will clean up your mess," Lord said.

He emphasized that troubled times are part of a continuing "resurrection" process. "Christian life," Lord said, "is dying and rising, dying and rising, dying and rising."

When the Christian is faced with the problems, often his reaction is, "Oh God, oh, God, don't make me go through this." But Lord contends the resulting blessings cause the Christian to wonder, "Why did I ever balk?"

Max Barnett, director of the Baptist Student Union at the University of Oklahoma, combined dry humor and personal experiences in his discussion of discipling. "Don't look for a bag of tricks," he told the audience. Despite emphasis on programs and strategies, he said, "Do you know what people really need? They need your life!"

Barnett, who brings disciples into his home where they may both observe and participate in a Christian home life, suggested, "Let your whole family be a part of it (discipling)."

He also talked about the importance of Bible study in the discipling process. "If you want to produce strong young people," Barnett said, "get them into the word of God."

Quiet-spoken E. W. Price, pastor of Green Street Baptist Church in High Point, N.C., shared the aspects of his personal devotional life. He explored prayer for personal needs, and intercessory prayer for fellow Christians, non-Christians and national leaders. Price said he had gone all the way to the White House "in my prayers."

Reach out, a high school evangelism strategy, was presented during small group sessions each day of the conference. The strategy includes discipleship ministry, touch ministry (adult leaders contacting students in the high school environment), and joy explosion (a group sharing time designed to "reap the results" of the other ministries).

Reach out trainer, Lamar Slay, minister

Explosion

of youth at First Baptist Church in Pasadena, Tex., said his touch ministry began one weekday when he realized he wasn't touching teenagers by sitting in his church office.

Obtaining permission from school authorities, Slay began visiting a high school during the lunch hour. At first, he visited his church members in the school cafeteria. Slowly, he made acquaintances outside the FBC circle.

"It's a lonely feeling to go through the cafeteria line and see none of your kids to eat with," he admitted. "A lonely feeling." However, he now takes advantage of the situation, sometimes finding a lone student to eat with. "The lunch line," he said, "is the best place to meet new kids."

His visits expanded, to basketball practices and pep rallies. Slay occasionally helps the cheerleaders make posters before sports events.

To illustrate the impact of the touch ministry, Slay said the principal called him into his office one day. To Slay's surprise, the principal told him, "I really appreciate your coming to our school."

Continued Slay, "He reached into his desk and pulled out a sheet of paper—a list of kids. 'These kids are in trouble,' he told me. 'They need something we can't give them.'"

Sue McAllister, a 25-year-old coordinator of youth ministries for Harrisburg Baptists Church in Tupelo, Miss., said the touch ministry has forced her out of the church office and into the environment of the students. And, she seems glad: "I think it is time these kids see some active concern."

Students are welcomed into her home for counseling, and she receives phone calls from parents who need advice on how to deal with their teenagers' problems.

The program also has resulted in ongoing training of youth workers and teachers in the church. She believes the reach-out strategy will have long-range value, an "everlasting effect that is not going to stop."

Comments Jack Buckner of Westlake, Fla., about the prospects of implementing the ministry at his church: "I've done the cookies and punch—and

that doesn't go. Through joy explosion, this sort of thing, we can change their lives."

Several conferees believed the change would have to begin in their own lives. One man said he had called long-distance to share with his wife the things he had learned. "This may not be the turning point," he said, "but there will be a definite change in my ministry."

Remarked Tom Stricklin, "Peter Lord said any religious experience that doesn't change your time schedule is fraudulent. This has had an impact. I am working on my schedule while I am here."

Barry St. Clair, director of youth evangelism for the Home Mission Board, felt positively about the impact of the conference. "To see these people come alive is really exciting to me," he said.

The next youth evangelism conference is scheduled for April 18-22, 1977, in Glen Airy, Colorado.

The conference included small group sessions, Bible study, prayer time, and a "joy explosion" of preaching and singing.





Walker Knight, left, editor of Home Missions magazine, Jim Newton, editor of World Missions Journal, and Norman Godfrey, standing, director of the ministries division of the Brotherhood Commission, were among the more than 20 persons leading discussions and programs at the national renewal evangelism conference. Held at the Georgia Baptist Assembly in Toccoa, Ga., the conference explored small group dynamics and renewal programs for pastoral leadership, laypersons and youth. The conference theme, "The Silver Trumpets," was a call to God's people to develop and share their spiritual gifts. Renewal evangelism retreats in 1977 are scheduled for Oct. 17-21, and Oct. 21-23.

HMB Hotline

Home Missions Hotline begins its fifth year January 1st.

During past years thousands of Baptist churches have called the Hotline and recorded its message for replay during church services and at meetings of church mission groups.

The three-minute program of home missions information, news and prayer requests is changed every Friday morning. Phoning the Hotline costs only the price of a regular three-minute station-to-station telephone call. The service will operate 24 hours a day through April 1st.

The number is 404-875-7701.

TELEVISION SPOTS AVAILABLE FOR EVANGELISM

Colorful, animated, high quality television spots are now available. Designed so the pastor may insert a personal message, they may be used to promote a local church revival, area crusade or regular worship service.

The video cassette spots may be previewed at no cost, and will be mailed upon request. Included are two 60-second spots and two 30-second spots. The package of four sells for \$25, and they are available from the Department of Mass Evangelism, Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring Street, N. W., Atlanta, Georgia, 30309.

WORKSHOP FOR VOCATIONAL EVANGELISTS JUNE 10 & 11 1977 KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

EVANGELISM NEWS

John Havlik, Editor

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Q DO COMMUNITY MORALITY & CHURCH MEMBERSHIP MIX?

A In Seattle: Maybe... Sometimes... Are you kidding?... Not likely... Who cares? Or is it: None of the above? By Everett Hullum

Prologue (for readers with short attention spans):

Mama! Mama!
I went to town
Inside
Outside
Upside down

THE BEGINNINGS. Point... Shuffling papers and inner-office memos. One stands out.

"Hey, what's this Evangelism Index?"

"It's part of Bold Mission Thrust... it helps designate places of greatest need... it's a scale worked out to show areas of the country that are under-evangelized."

"How's that?"

"Board statisticians rated each county in the nation according to church affiliation reports."

"Santa Clara... that tops the list. That's in California?"

"Right. It's most needy..."

"Where's this second one... King County?"

"That's Seattle."

COUNTERPOINT. In a study of "quality of life," Seattle ranked as the third best city in which to live, Time magazine reports. The study, funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and done by a Kansas City research institute, measured 123

"quantifiable variables in five broad areas: (1) environment ... (2) politics ... (3) economics ... (4) health and education ... (5) 'social conditions'" which included housing, racial conditions and cultural opportunities. No Southern city rated in the top 30 cities.

Seattle was the largest metropolitan area ranked in the top five.

Saturday Review, in "America's Most Livable Cities" (August '76), listed Seattle among its top choices. Said author Patrick Douglas:

"If any American cities have a chance of withstanding the centrifugal forces that have been weakening this country's urban communities for the past 30 years, Seattle would have to rank high on the list. From the verdancy of its parks to the intimacy between its buildings, slopes, and waterways, here is a habitat in harmony with nature. And above it all Mt. Rainier rises like an affable but exacting conscience, a reminder that this harmony is fragile, this cohesiveness possibly fleeting."

In a 1975 article in *Harper's*, Arthur M. Louis used 24 categories to rank top 50 American cities. Basing his judgment on criteria as diverse as number of hospital beds, park and recreational space, educational levels and percentages of single family-owned dwellings, Louis concluded Seattle was the best American city.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN... Is Caesar's image? None of the ratings seems to have considered "church affiliation" or "church availability" a consequential element in making judgment.

MEANWHILE, IN BRAVE NEW WORLD... A Billy Graham crusade opened Seattle's new domed stadium last year. So successful was the crusade that the stadium filled every night; hundreds were turned away. Numerous decisions were made.

"It's hard to understand," says a Baptist leader. "Graham had overflow crowds. Yet we live in the most secular society in the U.S."

He pauses...

"Those who came weren't just Christians...they were seekers..."

POP QUIZ. QUESTION #1. Multiple Choice: One contribution of the church (that is, Christianity) to society has been to serve as

- ☐ A. the moral leaven of the community.
- ☐ B. the conscience to control and guide group actions.
- ☐ C. the institution that answers man's ultimate questions, provides meaning to life.
- ☐ D. an architectural accent in a city skyline.
- ☐ E. the voice of the poor, the weak, the dispossessed.
- ☐ F. the refuge of the advantaged amid a world of disadvantaged.
- ☐ G. all of the above.
- ☐ H. none of the above.

QUESTION #2. True or false.

- (1) Seattle is among the most livable U.S. urban areas.
- (2) Based on comparable statistics, Seattle has the second lowest church affiliation of any U.S. metropolitan area.

QUESTION #3. Open-book essay. Using information provided below, discuss pros and cons of the following statement: Seattle is a great place to live, but I wouldn't want to visit there on a Sunday.

Or,

Despite weak church attendance and minimal religious overt influence on the community, Seattle seems as clean, safe, moral as most U.S. cities, if not more so. Why?

CONVERSATION WITH DAN STRINGER. (Excerpts.) At 49, Stringer has been executive secretary of the Northwest Convention for 19 years. A man of savvy and horse sense, Stringer's background of "pioneer missions" dates to teen years in New Mexico, early pastorates in Arizona and Nevada. One of his problems, Stringer stresses, is "getting people to understand this is an unchurched area; it's hard to realize how many are lost here."

HM: The figures for low church attendance do not surprise you?

STRINGER: No. But people in the Northwest get uptight about them; they don't agree. You know, people here have something of a frontier concept—they're forthright and honest in their dealings with one another; many of them, too, a large percentage, have church affiliations in other places. They

come to the Northwest and don't identify with church groups here...

If they were being judged on morality or ethical standards... We live in a moral climate, but one in which thousands have no relationship with Christ."

TWO QUESTIONS...too many answers? Are the people of Seattle underchurched?

- Sam Harvey, pastor, Calvary Baptist Church: "No question about it...even many funerals are conducted without any religious services. Weddings are different. I do twice as many Christian weddings as funerals. The young people are more responsive."
- Andrew Viera, HMB missionary: "The number of unchurched is astronomical. They're everywhere. There's always the temptation to worship the god of the weekend instead of the true and living God."
- W.D. Malone, pastor, South Hill: "Yes. One reason is people of the Northwest are young. The population grows and the number, percentage-wise, grows with it. Another thing is the leisure time..."

Why is Seattle underchurched?

- Roy Belcher, pastor Mercer Island: "We're a mobile population. Many know they won't be here a long time; they want to go to the mountains, to the water. They get into other things besides church..."
- Noel Brandon, pastor, Trinity: "A lack of an evangelical approach. The liberal denominations were and are the power here..."
- Viera: "For ethnics, it's pretty much the same as for others. A lot of church dropouts. It must be the climate, there's so much drizzle, cold and cloudy out. There's no community pressure to attend..."
- Norman Ford, pastor, Lakewood-Tacoma: "...the reshuffling of pastors without new blood to bring in life, challenge, from the outside. The churches have grown stale. We've infected one another with a lack of enthusiasm. Pastors have been told so long it can't be done they've become convinced of it. That includes Southern Baptists—they're good men, but they have defeatist attitudes..."
- Robert Sapp, pastor, Brookhaven: "(From the beginning) people came out here looking for everything, but God. And they found it all and, unfortunately, did it without God. So they are not bad people; they're just not religiously oriented. Not being Christians and being isolated, they became very independent—self-reliant you might say. Being independent didn't make them immoral, just the opposite: they're very moral."

BACKGROUND (for history buffs): Seattle, among the newer U.S. cities, was founded in 1851. Its remoteness and

rugged basic industry, lumbering, resulted in 30 years' slow growth.

In the 1880s, gold discoveries to the north turned Seattle into the "gateway to the Yukon and Alaska." Population soared: from 3,553 in 1880 to 80,671 in 1900. So did Seattle's reputation for openness, "deplored from Sunday pulpits but profitable to some of those in the front pews."

In this century's first decade, population tripled: "stable people, not frontier drifters..." Growth continued until 1960, spurred by war-related shipping and manufacturing in the 1940s, and boom of aerospace industries—principally Boeing Aircraft—in the late '50s and early '60s.

But an economic crunch in the late 1960s hurt Seattle. Boeing, with more than 100,000 employees, was the financial barometer of the area. The sprawling giant wrist-slashed its work force to 37,500 in two years. Citywide unemployment hit 15 percent as "every Boeing layoff caused the firing of two workers in industries related to aerospace," an observer reported.

Two disgruntled ex-Boeing workers, among thousands who left seeking jobs elsewhere, were credited with the billboard on Seattle's outskirts:

"Will the last one out of the city turn out the lights?"

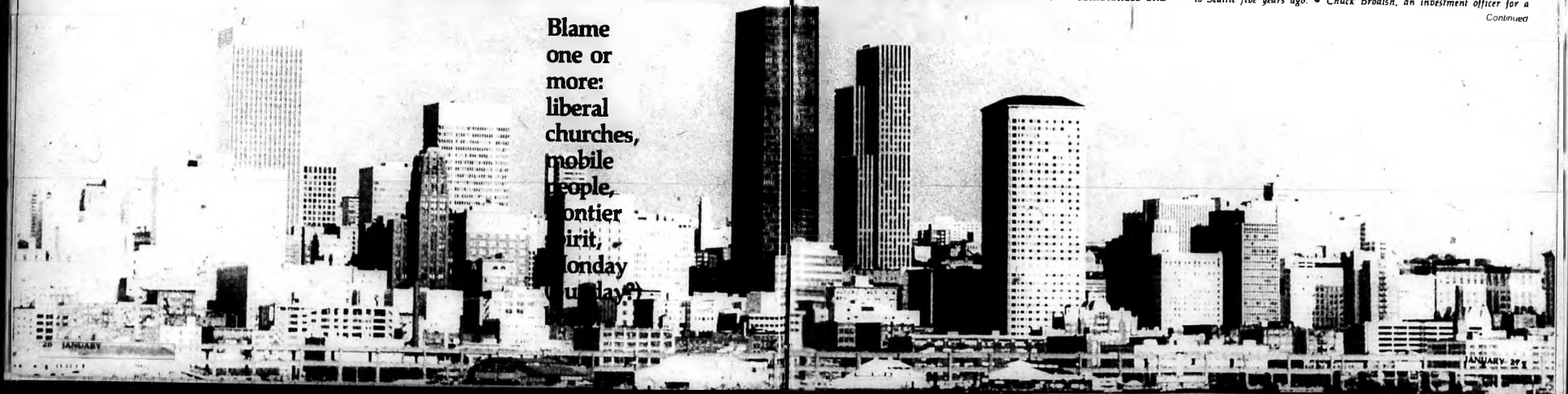
UPDATE (for those wondering if, indeed, the lights were turned off): Diversification of industry, expanded shipping and a Boeing upturn to 45,000 employees have eased unemployment to 8.7 percent; not good, but enough to steady the economy.

"Seattle's dominant tone is one of vigorous hard work," says West Coast writer Neil Morgan.

And despite perpetual city problems, the people of Seattle exhibit optimism: "It is not difficult to imagine why Eastern-based people," writes a newspaper reporter, "would look upon Seattle as a gleaming signal of hope at the far end of the land."

VIEW AND OTHER POINTS. A discussion with four Baptist laypersons. The group meets in the empty auditorium of Mercer Island Baptist Church, which all attend. They are: • Jim Crouch, district sales manager for a pharmaceutical company. A Virginian, he's been in the Northwest two and a half years. • Hugh Boring, an engineer for Boeing; he came to Seattle 20 years ago from Texas. • Bill King, public health service anesthesiologist from Oklahoma; he transferred to Seattle five years ago. • Chuck Bradish, an investment officer for a

Continued





Seattle bank; he moved to the city nine years ago from Illinois via Texas. Brodish also is a national associate in lay renewal for the HMB.

CROUCH: In Richmond, where I'm from, you see a tremendous amount of problems not prominent here... the inner-city is just decayed. The church there is active, trying to bring about love between the two societies that exist... I haven't seen this as a priority of the church in the Northwest. There, overwhelming needs moved the churches to put Christianity into action. I feel a lack of that here... maybe problems aren't so apparent.

KING: You can't clearly circumscribe a little area and say, "This is the ghetto." There are no clear separations between rich and poor.

BORING: Our children were brought here while quite young. Consequently, they've never been exposed to race problems; they've always had black, Chinese, Korean friends.

CROUCH: My children go to school with blacks, Japanese, Koreans. They learn from them. The best of these cultures is giving; that's what makes this area so good; everyone giving and no one taking.

KING: There's not the element of fear as on the East Coast. There are few places you'd be afraid to go at night.

CROUCH: That affects church life. In Richmond, church people did things together; it was a closer knit fellowship because that was required. Here you're freer to go on your own—you don't need companionship.

BRODISH: People here are basically honest. I deal in millions of dollars every day. I've never had anyone lie to me or back down on a deal—and many are made on the phone.

BORING: Economic conditions are different; we have welfare, but it's not a welfare society.

BRODISH: One reason we don't see a lot of violent crime, we have so many avenues of release—there's so much to do outside...

We don't feel people on top of us. In 45 minutes, I can be in a natural setting so free from people and pollution, I can drink from a mountain stream. It's so soothing...
A lot of times, when I want to get away from the pressures

of the job, I take the monorail to Seattle Center, buy a snack at the Food Center and listen to music out under the trees.

But this setting may be a real detriment to church attendance. People find outlets in nature.

KING: The environment, which attracts people to the area, also turns them from God.

CROUCH: But churches miss the boat in that leaders don't define areas of outside need. Going out looking for unsaved souls is a fine thing, but many times people here seem so self-sufficient, they don't seem to need Christ.

We've got to become goal-oriented on problems in the Northwest. We've got to get involved. This is where Christianity can work at its finest.

BRODISH: We don't deal with the basic question, "Why am I here?" Until that can be answered through the Christian experience, it'll be rough attracting people to the churches.

Being a Christian isn't a badge of acceptance here. Yet we do have a higher percentage of Christians who are committed than any place I've been. In Dallas, I couldn't find a Christian Bible study downtown during the week. In Seattle, there are five or six I can attend any day.

KING: Until churches establish a relevance for people, they'll not bring people in. But a warm, friendly church will attract people. It's what brought us here (to Mercer Island).

BORING: We found many churches have a satisfied feeling; they aren't concerned about reaching out. They're conservative, but they seem cold. They'll take you on their terms. But you don't feel welcome.

CROUCH: Some Baptists are guilty of this, too.

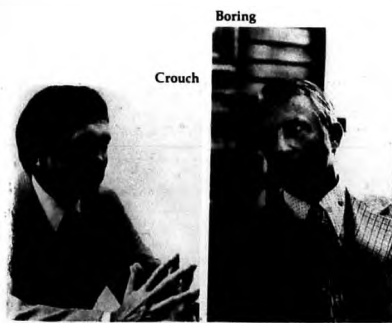
BORING: A deacon complained to me, "I don't want our church to be bigger; I like the closeness we have. If we got bigger, we wouldn't have this." Many feel that way. People are disillusioned with bigness.

At one time, I thought we needed some huge Southern Baptist churches like we have down South. Now, I feel maybe we need 1,000 100-member churches....

BRODISH: There isn't a resistance to discuss Christ. There are a lot of timid Christians—"undercover" Christians. Growth will come, but it will be on God's time-table.

Continued

"We've got to be goal oriented." Or...? "...answer the basic question, 'Why am I here?'" Or both...?



A NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT. *Pluses...* "Since 1958, Seattle has built a new sewer system to purge its waters of pollution, almost doubled its park lands, held a successful World's Fair and cast up a domed sports stadium.

"Since 1970, more than \$450 million of new public and private structures have been built in downtown Seattle, changing the appearance and personality of the business district. The busy Port of Seattle has expanded its facilities....

"But now the mood is different. There is more concern for conservation and preservation, less enthusiasm for dynamic new enterprises."

The result has been preservation of such sections as Pioneer Square, an old section of downtown slowly being restored to its turn-of-the-century grandeur; and saving the Pike Street Market, an eclectic collage of vegetables, fish, crafts and arts that was destined to become a parking lot.

"It seems people are more involved in political and community life here than any place we've ever been," says Baptist pastor Norman Ford. "A lot of people attend community meetings; they're socially, politically conscious. They really seem to care what happens; they know their participation can have effect."

AND NATURALLY. *Minuses...* "I wouldn't build another building in Seattle ever, ever again... There are easier ways to make money."—C. Bagley Wright, Pentagram Corp., builder of the Space Needle and 40-story California Bank Center.

"What the young reactionaries (environmentalists and their allies) are trying to do is not only keep the status quo but turn back the clock. The odds are high that any major project in this town will be contested."—Richard Ford, deputy general manager, Port of Seattle.

IMPRESSIONS, PART 1: *Early morning fog ink slicks asphalt pavement. Yellow street lights burn bravely, their glow weak in thick-soup air.*

A mist glaze covers the awakening city. "It rains a lot here," says a Seattleite. He laughs. "But we don't get much rain."

About 30 inches a year, says the almanac; less than many U.S. cities. Most comes between October and March.

They call it "dry rain."

"I lived here three years before I ever bought an umbrella or raincoat," says a Baptist leader.



30 JANUARY

Which
does not
belong:
suicide,
rain,
divorce,
isolation,
high
church
attendance.



Because it falls so slowly, so quietly, so imperceptibly. The rain is not in the air; it is the air. Plants breath moisture and give lushness; people accept it and treasure the sunshine.

"Last year I think it was 29 days straight we had without seeing the sun," recalls a government official. "One afternoon late the sun came out..."

He nods toward a glass-and-steel skyscraper opposite his office window. "It was an incredible sight. Beautiful. It turned that building purple and gold. I was so impressed I took three Polaroid shots of it."

They are taped on a wall, one above the other.

A woman office worker recalls the same—or a similar?—occasion: "Last winter we had a string of rainy days. I thought it'd never quit. One afternoon it stormed, afterward, the sun came out. It was so great. I put on my coat and went outside for a minute.

"I just wanted to feel the sunshine on my face."

ALMANAC FACT. Seattle climate: rainfall—170-190 days a year; average snowfall—8.6 inches; temperature range—July normal maximum: 75°; January normal minimum: 36°. Only twice has temperature reached 100°. Record low: 11°

BABY THE RAIN MUST FALL... with depressing results.

In *The Pacific States*, Neil Morgan discusses, in the same section, the high incidence of suicide and divorce and low incidence of church affiliation. Cause and effect he implies. Seattle, he points out, in suicide rates consistently ranks among the highest for cities of its size. Divorce, too, is common. But Morgan believes divorce, "like the high suicide rate, has an out-of-state genesis." The region, he speculates, "inherits more than a normal share of couples who have decided to make one last fresh start in the West. But a bad marriage is seldom saved by a change of scene."

In his *Atlantic* article, "A Tale of Three Cities," Thomas Griffith quotes author Neal R. Pierce: "This placid city of trim homes also has the second highest alcoholism and suicide rates in the U.S. and the highest divorce rate of any urban county."

Then Griffith asks, "Are the alcoholism and high suicide rates part of the Scandinavian heritage? Or the result of nature's gray palette?... Or could it be that attractive and freewheeling cities like Seattle... are on the natural trade routes of discontented people looking for something they cannot find?"

Continued



JANUARY 31

OPINIONS AND POTSHOTS, Part 1. Excerpts from interviews with Tim Burgess, press secretary, Seattle chief of police. Tall, thin, brown hair combed neatly, Burgess looks like a pre-Serpico TV cop. A reporter before joining the force, he is friendly, open, articulate. A native Seattleite, he admits prejudice in his feeling the city "is clean and beautiful, its people friendly," adding, "we have good schools, vigorous recreation programs for the inner-city, no organized crime." Seattle's citizenry is as protected from crime as any other people, he says. Statistics reveal Seattle 12th among cities of its size in rates of offenses for seven major crime areas. "Trends," Burgess continues, "are downward."

HM: Does the average person feel safe on Seattle's streets?

BURGESS: In most areas. Street crimes are not common; stranger-to-stranger murders are very rare. We've redirected our efforts away from vice to concentrate on person-to-person crime.

We're probably no more or less decadent than any other city... we may have vices to a lesser degree... If our current 15 percent reduction in crime holds good through 1976—statistics aren't in yet—Seattle would be 20th among cities its size in crimes per 1,000 people. And its rate of 77.92 crimes per 1,000 would be well below the 87.59 national average.

Our massive citizen participation program, "block watch," has helped. In it, neighborhoods are trained in crime prevention methods. People have responded because they want to be safe, not just in their minds but in actuality.

HM: Can the church play a role in creating this safe atmosphere?

BURGESS: I happen to believe man is basically evil. No matter how much money you spend on anti-crime measures, you'll always have people preying on one another. Churches can provide an alternative: the answer is Christ. There is hope.

... a lot more Christians (are in Seattle) than show up in the statistics. People are just turned off by organized churches. They're forming into Bible studies and prayer groups.

I'm a Christian. Many in my circle of friends are. I can see reason for real encouragement....

OPINIONS AND POTSHOTS, Part 2. Excerpts from interviews with Paul Meyer, ombudsman for Seattle/King County. The bespectacled Meyer, solemn and softspoken, views his job as "not just unraveling red tape, but expressing a concern for a person's wholeness. We act as a sounding board for the public. We try to offer a sense of caring for weak, easily preyed upon people who somehow find their way to our door."

The ombudsman's office handled 2,000 cases in 1975; many of them involve "spiritual problems." Meyer cites one example: An old man, resident of a "finger bowl" (rich) neighborhood, came griping about neighbors and police who were "persecuting" him. On several occasions neighbors had complained to police about his conduct. Meyer investigated, found the old man a wheeler-dealer who left junk scattered around his yard, did other offensive things. "His problem was himself," Meyer concluded, "he was spiritually dead." Meyer counseled him to "practice his religion and ask for atonement." The old man watched Meyer. Meyer thought he'd made a convert, until, as the old man was leaving, he turned and asked: "Do you know what I'm going to do?" "No," Meyer said, expecting "a great revelation." "I'm going to sell my house to the biggest, blackest nigger I can find."

HM: Are you able—or willing—to channel such people to spiritual counseling?

MEYER: We're going to tap into that resource on a select basis. I've talked to a minister friend about it....

HM: Are the people here as negative toward religion as statistics seem to indicate?

MEYER: I don't think statistics indicate religious climate. People are reading (religious books) more, talking more about God, about their faith. They are more open about it.

... There has always been a strong nucleus of religious people... many in positions of leadership. This atmosphere, you don't see it, but it's there, in Bible studies, prayer break-fasts. They're afraid people will misunderstand, so they don't publicize this. They don't noise it about...

A lot of people have an unwritten rule not to talk about their faith; they believe if you talk about it, you won't do it...

HM: How, then, can churches grow?

MEYER: If they started to hustle people, they'd probably fall flat on their faces. Churches have to be willing to accept people, not be afraid of the secular world. They have to reach out to people, not see persons as prospective church members, but as human beings in need...

After a bad morning recently, at lunch I walked up to a church nearby (to meditate and pray). It was locked up. I asked the janitor if I could go in. He looked aghast and said I'd have to come back when a service was going on. I said I won't break up anything. Finally he let me in. Maybe it's necessary to lock up the churches—I know people steal—but I had the feeling the church was more protective of its physical plant than a person's relation with God.

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING (A report on religious activity or lack of same). Immigration during the '40s and '50s brought the first significant numbers of Southern Baptists; their presence resulted in an SBC church being formed in the late 1940s and several others beginning before 1955.

Most newcomers, however, were from the northern tier—Montana, South and North Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota—people of German and Scandinavian ancestry and Lutheran upbringing.

Their churches mixed with other mainline Protestant denominations to form the traditional ecclesiastical establishment. These churches reached their peak growth in the 1960s and have declined statistically since. The most dramatic drop has been in church Sunday School attendance, which practically halved since 1960.

Jay Lintner, a United Church of Christ minister who assembled the statistics on the seven major Protestant denominations and Roman Catholics, admits he was prepared for decreases, but "when compared with the population growth of the state during this period, the figures are even more stark."

Nevertheless, Seattle today is an exceedingly pluralistic religious community. Among its more than 660 churches (770-plus in all King County) are Buddhists, Bahai, Free Evangelical, United Pentecostal, Reorganized Saints, Gospel Church of Holiness in Christ Jesus, Deliverance Chapel and a half-dozen shades of Baptist, House of Prayer Church of God in Christ and several other flavors of belief. Glossolalia and other sorts of charismatics are quite active; the quasi-denomination, Children of God, was strong in Seattle for several years.

Twenty-eight of the Seattle churches are Southern Baptist. They are part of Puget Sound Baptist Association, which runs the eastern shoreline from above Seattle to below Tacoma.

Puget Sound association was formed in 1976, after Northwest Baptist Convention officials and HMB strategists, working together, concluded the Sea-Tac megalopolis was too unified to be split into separate Baptist associations. Explains NW Convention executive Dan Stringer: "The whole Puget Sound relates as a unit, economically, politically, socially. Most concerns are Puget Sound concerns. We believed in this area one strong association could work more effectively than two—which we had."

Guiding the new Puget Sound association is Ray Harris, a long-time Baptist worker and 19-year resident of Seattle.

COMMENTS BY RAY HARRIS (Slightly condensed). Harris,

a gentle, unassuming man whom friends describe as "deeply concerned about starting new churches," has been a Seattle director of missions almost as long as there has been a Northwest Convention. Coming in 1958 when Seattle had only 15 churches, 2,300 members, Harris has seen the association grow to more than 8,000 members, shifting from largely Southern transplants to more than 50 percent local people. Continually plagued by low finances and small numbers, however, Harris has fought for years to overcome "thinking small." On one occasion, after listening to a local pastor explain why his church was too weak to start a mission, Harris turned away. "That attitude keeps him weak," he muttered quietly. "When I came I was really confused. Church attendance was low; there were no large churches. Still moral standards were higher than any place I'd been in the South. It bothered me... later I came to feel the people had delegated their moral standards to a series of Christian government leaders... Now things are not the same, but the churches still aren't able to take the load..."

Harris remembers failures of American Baptists, hampered by comity agreements, and the decline of other denominations: "They wouldn't admit fear of meeting the unknown. It wasn't that they didn't want people to come in, they just didn't know how to go out and meet them. The church members weren't cold, they just were threatened that they couldn't live up to imparting the knowledge (about Christ) they know they should be able to give..."

And SBC church extension struggles: "We've found people resent outsiders... local people do a better job than newcomers. We've had other problems too."

"Our preachers can't work with 'worshippers.' They demand visitors become Sunday school members, even before they're ready to get active... Another thing: we get preachers who've built churches quickly where Baptists number about one of four people. Up here the ratio is one to 100 at best. These pastors can't cope. They become bitter and go home in defeat. Every time that happens, the church loses; discontent grows... Bothering us is our addiction to methods and procedures. We got so involved in organizations we forgot Baptist distinctives. Our preaching and teaching offered little difference from other denominations. People asked, 'Why labor here? Let's join that group already with buildings, workers, etc.'"

But Harris feels the downward mental spiral has stopped. "There's a new surge of people feeling the call to pioneer work; they're coming without salary, without expenses. They're not idealists, they're realists."

Continued

To grow,
churches
must
seek out
converts.
But if
they
hustle,
people

"We're not gaining the transplants. That means more opportunity for local people to take leadership roles. We're at a place where our people are willing to work, and whenever people work, something happens.

IMPRESSIONS, Part 2: Mercer Island bridge traffic, into Seattle, begins to back up as commuters funnel to work. At Evergreen Point bridge, the only other inbound route for those living east of Lake Washington, toll gates slow the car flow.

Seattle nestles on seven hills on an hour-glass-shaped isthmus between fresh-water Lake Washington and giant Puget Sound. The city has more than 200 miles of shoreline; it has more boats per capita than any other U.S. city.

Even in the gray morning light, a few sailors guide their craft over the lake's dark waters.

Probably few cities have a more beautiful natural setting.

The leaden skies and wet-black streets deepen the greenness of the grass, giving it an almost radiant shine; the trees, their leaves first tinged with golds and reds and browns, line the quiet avenues. Homes are old, but neat. Brick occasionally, but most two-story frames with intricate gingerbread trim that speaks of stabler, more patient times when houses were built with style and flair. In several places, restoration work is in progress.

At the University of Washington, students hurry to classes. Autumn's first chill has not hurt late blooming flowers surrounding the fountains and rimming the mall.

In Volunteer Park, grade school kids take advantage of "free admission day" at the Art Museum to see an exhibit of early American paintings on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

In neighborhoods like Queen Anne, Sunset Hill, Crown Hill, Capital Hill, Broadmoor residents wait for buses or take cars to work. Because they live "in town," their days begin later than the suburbanites who come in from Bellevue, Mercer Island, Renton, Kirkland.

In Seattle, some neighborhoods are given their portion of the city budget to decide their own spending priorities.

Such residents represent the new breed of urbanite. Collectivized in neighborhood associations, they lobby city hall, fighting to preserve their homes and communities from the spreading disease called urban blight.

More than that, they fight to save Seattle.

Or the vision they have of it.

Says a former Texan, transplanted to Seattle by job relocation: "I never lived in a nicer place."

OPINIONS AND POTSHOTS, Part 3. Excerpts from interview with David Marriott, special assistant to Seattle mayor Wes Uhlman

A new surge of people—realists, not idealists—are coming to work in Seattle.



(whose term ended in January '77). With thick glasses and bushy red hair, Marriott looks little like a press secretary, which he is. Cobby-holed in an office practically filled with a giant, oak roll-top desk, Marriott talks—his manner easy-going, his attitude intense—with pride of the progress Seattle has made in becoming "a people's place." Some recent accomplishments, according to Marriott, include new programs for the elderly, such as "SPICE," which offers senior adults hot lunches in neighborhood schools and makes possible their participation in school activities as "foster grandparents" or teachers' aides; and "little things like curb cuts for wheelchairs of the handicapped."

HM: What makes Seattle a better place to live?

MARRIOTT: Others have written off their cities, but we feel Seattle has a chance as an urban area. And we're trying to preserve our heritage...it's important, because it helps us form part of our identity. Practically, too, restoration of such areas as Pioneer Square means better economics—increased tax revenues.

Seattle's tax base is declining...but many city services benefit everybody, from cultural events to mobile coronary care units. Did you know Seattle is rated the best place in the U.S. to have a heart attack?

...It's hard to get people to realize what they've got...

HM: Can churches, with their low attendance, contribute to the city's revitalization?

MARRIOTT: Only if churches do their homework and find out what's on people's minds and begin to address that. Religious messages have to be reiterated but related more to family needs, to people needs.

I'd really like to see churches more involved in community based issues. The church can't be relevant (and attract more people) if it keeps its head in the sand on everything but religion...religion covers more than Sunday worship.

The church can't continue old rote answers to today's questions. It needs to get in tune, be in touch...One thing super about our priest—I'm Catholic—He talks about things that are on people's minds. That's good.

And what Bill Cate at the Church Council is doing about "red-lining"—that's what the church has to do to restore confidence in its role in the community...

COMMENTS BY WILLIAM CATE. (Considerably abbreviated) When Methodist minister William Cate came seven years ago to direct the Church Council of Greater Seattle, he faced a

Continued



city deeply depressed by the Boeing layoffs. He led the churches to respond with a "neighbors in need" program that became a "sort of national example" of churches organizing a community to help the unfortunate. Today he's leading the churches in another venture, a fight against a banking practice called "red-lining." This is a loan policy that gives preference to suburban building, and does not loan money to residents of racially-mixed or inner-city neighborhoods. The practice accelerates inner-city decay and is, Cate believes, "discriminatory; it has destroyed cities." But he has found "it like pulling eye teeth to get the city's largely conservative churches—Seattle has few "liberal" churches, even among "liberal" denominations—to address the issue. "There has been almost a non-expectant expectation that the church won't be an active force in the life of the community," he says. "I believe very strongly you have to tie personal commitment to the work of God's kingdom. Where we fall down is not in doing that and therefore, our witness becomes mediocre." A personable, gently humorous man, Cate speaks intelligently and coherently about church conditions in Seattle.

"The church has not dominated the society, but it has, because of its identity, had a fairly significant impact on the life of the community. Church members carry their commitment... they act like and respond like Christians in their involvement in society. The only trouble is, there aren't many of them, you see."

"The churches still have an image of being frontierish and sectarian. That can be healthy in many respects. It is unhealthy in terms of being parochial. By that I mean the leadership doesn't often understand or promote the relationship of the church to the community at large."

"I've had great difficulty in trying to persuade people to let the church as an institution work for social justice."

"Records show the church is weak in numbers of members, but it's strong because it's got itself together. It's like Gideon and the 300—give me 300 who are committed and you can have your 10,000... The church has contributed a lot of the staunch, law-abiding people and that has made for a good, solid community... But there has not always been as much compassion as there should have been for the plight of the have-nots..."

Cate admits that the churches, even if they've stabilized membership, face serious trouble; he points to "a sense of defeat in the church" caused in part by an abundant, but insecure clergy.

He also blames the churches for their "coldness" and their failure "to embrace the newcomers." Mormons (among other

groups) are growing, he says, because they are a "warm, caring fellowship of churches."

Cate's greatest concern, he says, "is the quality of life of the people in the churches we now have. Because unless the quality of life is more dynamic in Christian terms, it will never attract anybody."

Cate wants more evangelistic churches.

"You've got to deal with the totality of the gospel... we have an extremely large number of alienated people whom I think the church could reach. Not by one way, but by a variety of ways. But it has to be a dynamic church, which goes to the total needs of a person, human needs plus gospel needs, you know?"

BACK TO THE ALMANAC. Seattle population: 1970-census—530,831. Rank among U.S. cities—19th. Living costs—for middle-class family, 16th among U.S. cities. Ethnic percentages: black—12-13; Asian—5-6 percent.

But... Between 1960-70, population declined 26,000; between 1970-75, another 27,000 drop. Number families with children under 18, down from 32.5 percent of city's households in 1960 to 26.9 percent in 1975. Number of children in 5-19 age bracket, down 29 percent.

During same years, King County grew 266,500. "Many families with young children are leaving the city for the suburbs because they hold doubts about the future of their neighborhoods and are concerned about the quality of Seattle's schools," reports a newspaper article.

"We've experienced an out-migration for a long time," says city official Dave Marriott, who recently moved back into the city into a home built in 1906. He is restoring it. "But I think the population is starting to come back up. Housing is a premium. It's a seller's market in the city."

OPINIONS AND POTSHOTS, Part 4. Excerpts from interview with Curtis Green, director of Seattle Department of Human Resources. Tall and rangy, Green sits in a glass-enclosed office on the fourth floor of a renovated building off Pioneer Square. Outside, young workers in casual dress reflect the relaxed atmosphere. An adopted Northerner from New York, Green has headed the department since the early '70s, when it was created "to meet significant but unmet needs of groups in the general population"—the elderly, the handicapped, the young. Its programs range from efforts to give utility-bill discounts to elderly homeowners, to provide day care for single mothers, to help Vietnam veterans re-enter society, to deal with juvenile crime and high school drop-

outs. All cases represent, says Green, "the city reacting out of awareness of a problem before pressure by voting blocs" forced it to take hasty—and sometimes unwise—actions. But, he adds, Seattle—like most cities—was not very involved in social services until the crises of the mid-1960s.

HM: What is the outlook for the city today?

GREEN: If you asked someone how he felt about Seattle's future, he would be "cautiously" optimistic. In the East, they think many of the problems were unsolvable.

HM: Is this optimism part of the Northwesterners' nature?

GREEN: Well, the people are very independent, politically, socially... Especially in respect to their attitudes toward traditional institutions, whether political parties or churches. They operate more on personal biases and concerns than on institutional ones. They're not joiners. I think this carries over to church attendance...

IMPRESSIONS, Part 3. The Bremerton ferry slides away from the Elliott Bay docks every hour, on a sunlit autumn afternoon, the 50-minute ride offers a graceful, groaning sort of good-bye to Seattle.

Behind the ferry's churning whitewater, the city shimmers, a ragged profile like a stock-market chart, aglow in the warm yellow light. To the left, the 60-story Space Needle interrupts a horizon line of gentle hills whose evergreen backdrop is spotted with house roofs.

They've christened the Space Needle the symbol of Seattle. Built during the 1962 World's Fair, it stands as a sign of the progress and promise as well in the city. But perhaps a better indication of Seattle's current outlook, it seems, can be found around the World's Fair fountain. There, on the grass, under the trees, on benches, Seattleites eat their lunches... or doze... or engage in quiet conversation. And watch the fountain's dancing waters, sparkling in the sunshine, casting rippling rainbows in the spray.

The fountain, a brass half-world sludded with hose-nozzle water outlets, spews dozens of streams of water high into the sky. And the whole performance is done to the music of Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Bach.

To the right of the Space Needle, Seattle's downtown breaks the skyline: tall skyscrapers, shorter office buildings, occasionally the steeples of a church.

Just above the docks, in restored Pioneer Square, business types and chic young couples enjoy the warming sun in sidewalk cafes, while winos snore on benches nearby. Tourists stroll, sometimes uneasily, past a staggering drunk. But Seattleites seem to accept the winos and tourists about equally. After all, this section once was at the foot of Skid Road,

where giant logs cascaded down the muddy hill street to the wharfs. Later the section became the bawdy sailor district; winos became as permanent fixtures as the gas lamps and cobble streets.

And Skid Road became "skid rows" for thousands of other cities—a corruption of names Seattleites still aren't happy about.

To the right of downtown, far, far in the hazy distance, the white cone of Mt. Rainier looms above all—the patriarch of two ranges of mountains that bracket the city. At 14,410 feet, the nation's second highest mountain—80 miles away—is a wonderland of snow and flowered fields, of tall trees and gurgling brooks, of peaceful coves and strenuous trails.

Writer Patrick Douglas recalls his first view of Rainier: "... I rang the doorbell, then idly turned around—and froze. For there, staring me in the face, was the most enormous mountain I had ever seen... The mountain was so big it seemed to fill the sky. Its base was obscured by a thin white haze, so that the entire mass appeared to hover above the horizon like an alabaster apparition—immense, awesome, serene."

Off the back of the ferry, screeching gulls dive into schools of fishes swimming below the Sound's blue-black surface. A young couple, watching the city shrink behind them, stand wind-blown on the ship's stern.

Finally the ferry turns, its course easing up Rich's Passage between Bean Point and Orchard Point. Along Bean Point, old homes, weathered by wind and sand and saltwater, stand on a narrow beach. Behind them, the firs cover the hill, their dark greens punctuated by maples, birches, oaks in first autumn dress.

Slowly, slowly, Bean Point's tip slides across the horizon. And Seattle disappears from view.

UNWRAPPING THE WRAPUP. Non-conclusions for a do-it-yourself article. We have presented, more or less, a summary of information gathered from personal interviews, research and observation. While by no means definitive, it is representative. And it probably explores, about as thoroughly as possible without excessive repetition, the question of the church's role/influence in a secular society such as Seattle.

If it fails to reach conclusions, perhaps it is because conclusions seem paradoxical:

Seattle—and we include the metro area—seems to be, for example, a pleasant, strikingly beautiful, cultured and progressive city in which to live and raise a family. Yet it records an unusually high number of suicides, divorces, alcoholics.

Seattle seems to be an urban community full of hope and faith in the future. Yet population figures indicate flight to the suburbs is growing at an alarming rate.

Seattle seems to be a moral, clean city whose people are concerned about, and acting to alleviate the problems of,

Continued

Pioneer Square restoration



Seattle features dancing fountains, classical music, plus the original "Skid Road."



The question is not, "Can God...?" But rather, it is, Will Southern Baptists...?



the community and all its residents. Yet church affiliation statistics reveal it to be one of the lowest membership areas of the nation, well below national averages. There are other surface contradictions. Which, of course, may not be contradictions at all. And a thousand other opinions which all lead, in different directions, to the same point. It's Dan Stringer's point and he expresses it best: "We're a test-tube society for Southern Baptists," the Northwest Convention's executive director says thoughtfully. "We're here with a mission. But in a sense we feel it's a mission all Southern Baptists have a stake in. We've always wondered if the Southern Baptist approach would work in a society like this..."

AMONG THE AMBIGUITIES, A POSITIVE "IF." "There's up" time. Do church affiliation statistics reveal depth of Christian belief? If the answer is yes, the Northwest—Seattle in particular—is in desperate need of a strong, unified effort by Christian churches to "evangelize and congregationalize" the region's people.

And the time may be now. Norman Ford, pastor of the Sound's fastest growing SBC church, 600-member Lakewood-Tacoma First, senses "a searching, an openness in the Northwest. They don't turn you off, religion's not old hat. They're interested, they want to know more about religion."

W.D. Malone, himself pastor of a "Project 500" church that has grown steadily, believes only efforts similar to "Project 500" have much chance of success. "Project 500" pinpointed priority areas, then provided whatever necessary in funds to establish a church. Of the five Northwest churches begun this way, four have flourished, he points out. It's a performance he thinks can be duplicated.

But even those successful "Project 500" churches were primarily suburban. Dan Stringer laments the absence of SBC churches in Seattle itself. The few SBC churches, he says, are concentrated in the bedroom communities that ring the city: "More than 100,000 people in the inner-city have no witness."

Reaching those people cannot be done by Seattle Southern Baptists alone. And if the SBC is even to play a significant role in "spiritual reclamation" of the area, the effort will require a massive infusion of time, money, energy, personnel—all things not present in Seattle SB churches.

It will require, in fact, a massive commitment on the part of Southern Baptist churches across the nation.

Back to Stringer: "I don't know if Southern Baptists can penetrate the Northwest," he says. "But I think God can. And I think God can and will use Southern Baptists to break through this secular society, the moral society, this clean society—this society where people are without Christ."

Is the final question, then, "Are Southern Baptists willing to be so used by God?" And is the answer still, "none of the above?" ●

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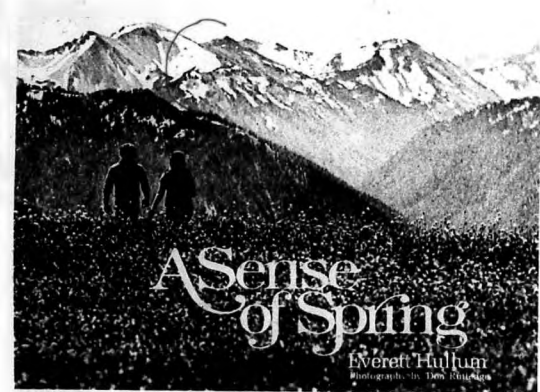
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COMMENT by Walker L. Knight

Toward a national strategy

Bold Mission Thrust holds the promise of being the focal point for an emerging national mission strategy.

This is not to imply that no national strategy has existed. It is to say that the strategy has not focused sharply at the point of establishing ultimate priorities and marshalling resources to accomplish them.

A national strategy must have a grand design, and Bold Mission Thrust views the nation with a concern for every person and for every community.

It is not difficult to understand why the Home Mission Board has not developed earlier a comprehensive national mission strategy. The Southern Baptist Convention's charge in 1958 to the agency to develop a uniform mission program may have envisioned a national mission strategy, but there is a difference between unifying a program and coming up with a strategy.

The agency once operated from a small base scattered among Dallas (where evangelism leaders were), Oklahoma (where a National Baptist leader lived) and Atlanta (where everyone else was). Then the agency was repaying a heavy debt, while doing mission work with high visibility and appeal.

Following that time, we were caught up in a period of putting out fires. The fires came under the headings of a national crisis in the 1960s, the Cuban crisis, and earlier the response to a call to national expansion. These became our programs, our strategy.

Strategy often was as simple as "putting most resources into the pioneer states," holding back on work in the more established areas.

Many times we were following, not leading, and we simply went to where we were hurting—to the sorest toe—or to where someone yelled louder than someone else; or we followed that person who made the most dramatic speech and got the most attention.

Previous to 1959 a national strategy, even a uniform mission program, was blocked by the fact that each state was going one way and the HMB quite often another. Even if they were working at the same problem, little communication occurred.

That confusion was compounded by the fact that at the agency each "program area" might often be going its separate way. That was not all bad—it provided diversity and often eliminated vacuum

areas—but it did not contribute much to a national strategy. Everyone simply grabbed his part of the common task and worked at it as hard as possible, hoping the Holy Spirit would provide the grand design. Without such divine guidance, the complications and problems would have overwhelmed us.

Within it all and through it all, a national strategy was painfully emerging, sometimes in big steps and at other times almost crawling.

One of the major building blocks, prompted by the Southern Baptist Convention nudge for a uniform mission program, was creation and implementation of state cooperative agreements whereby most missionary personnel became joint employees of the states and the Home Mission Board. As these agreements have been refined and strengthened, they have moved toward planning and strategy. The agreements have their pluses and their minuses, but the pluses at this point appear to outweigh the minuses. These provided an organizational base for a national mission strategy and a new sense of teamwork and cooperation emerged.

Meanwhile, a growing economy and growing stewardship by Southern Baptists, along with an improved awareness of the role of national missions and the needs within the nation, brought increased financial support. The Home Board budget within a dozen years was increased from \$6 million to more than \$25 million. This has provided a financial base for a national mission strategy, needed in our nation with more than 80 million persons without a personal relationship to Christ.

Two important documents emerged from the Home Mission Board and its staff. The first was simply called 14 mission guidelines. Adopted in 1966, these guidelines became influential in directing the staff toward priorities in evangelism, cooperation with the states, attention to urban centers, placing priority outside the stronger states, focusing on all persons apart from race, culture, language, economics, or religion. They called for flexibility, experimentation, emphasis on persons not buildings, and cooperation.

The second document was called the Long Range Planning Base.

An important first paragraph read: "The over-arching purpose of the Home

Mission Board is to develop and promote a single uniform missions program to assist churches, associations, and state conventions in crossing barriers to make disciples for Christ of all people in the homeland."

Then the statement discussed crossing cultural-religious, socio-economic, geographical and scarce resource barriers. More than any other papers, these have provided the philosophical base for a national mission strategy.

Meanwhile, the agency was defining its role as a national missions agency, as the Atlanta staff grew to make it possible for planning and for the equipping of others for missions. A strong shift took place with the mission force, as missionary personnel undertook the task of equipping others for the work of mission. An emphasis developed on the role of the laity, the volunteer, and suddenly as never before Southern Baptists began to see that each Christian was not only a minister, he was a missionary and he could perform this task "as he was going into the world." The manpower base began to emerge for a national mission strategy. Christian Service Corps, Student Summer Missions, Sojourners, Campers on Mission, lay renewal associates, Christian Social Ministries volunteers, and now the most massive call and search in history is planned for Bold Mission Thrust.

Building on a department that once spent its time in door-to-door surveys, the Home Mission Board created an entire planning section with the ability to tap into the national data resources, with a knowledge that made possible indepth studies of specific geographical areas and an assessment of that information.

Out of this ability have come two tools important for a national mission strategy, the church index and the evangelism index which isolate and rank those areas of greatest need and Southern Baptists' least effective witness. For example, King County in Washington, which includes Seattle, ranks as one of the least evangelized and congregationalized areas of the nation. So far, these indexes have simply been given to the states for inclusion into their strategy and they have not dominated the national strategy as they may come to in the future. Such data gathering and analyzing ability have created the data base on which to establish priorities for a national mission strategy.

The denomination has always been

Continued

COMMENT

caught up in periodic emphases instead of in mission strategy. Churches, associations, and state conventions often feel they are being led in many directions by different agencies with their own emphases, and seldom do they feel they are participating in a national strategy. It is easy to set an emphasis, but difficult to create and to carry out a strategy. It is interesting that Bold Mission Thrust itself is part of the denominational emphasis on Bold Mission. It is not an accident that Bold Mission Thrust arises out of an emphasis. Given the nature of the denomination, it was probably the only way it could surface. I predict that it will transcend the emphasis for the simple reason that it does demand—for success—a national mission strategy. However, if Bold Mission Thrust is to consolidate recent Convention progress toward a fuller concept of the Gospel, as evidenced by Havlik's "whole gospel for the whole man..." then we must give the two concepts—evangelize and congregationalize—the fullest definitions. Let us sound the call to evangelize, for man alienated from God needs a new birth, a conversion. But conversion is best understood as a radical turning from faith given to faith owned. Conversion

should be radical because it implies ownership and the corresponding transformation of our lives. Only after a person honestly exclaims, "I believe," is he able to live the radical political, economic, social life of the Christian in the world. True conversion—authentic Christian life—is personal and social life lived on behalf of God's reign in the world. Neither the pietist who has no commitment to the struggle for justice and righteousness in the world of institutional life, nor the social activist who has no personal commitment to Christ, is converted to mature Christian faith. I recently attended the national meeting of renewal evangelism associates at Toccoa, Ga. I was touched and impressed by the freedom and the warmth with which persons related to each other. I liked the emphasis on persons and on relationships. The participants came to the sessions with expectancy, and they stayed through until near midnight. Had my impressions stopped there—after being warmed and filled—I would have been disappointed. Christianity's most subtle perversion is the temptation to stop with one's personal experience with Christ and not allow his love to work itself out through our lives for others, to embody

his ministry to free the captives, to heal the sick, and to give sight to the blind. Toccoa went the second mile. Participants shared the struggles of their ministry with alcoholics, with the mentally ill, with prisoners. A businessman from Maryland told of his decided change in lifestyle, including giving up golf to care for the hurting and the invalid. When we call persons to mature faith we fulfill the whole gospel for the whole person. Our efforts to congregationalize must be to establish the community of faith which is truly the embodiment of Christ in the world, a community that by the world's standards is a radical new way of relating, which seeks to accomplish his mission in the world and is open to all persons. Christ is dishonored when services are cancelled and men turned away because of race. Thank God that day is passing. I see no evidence that the new congregations we are establishing will reveal such prejudice, but our call to discipleship and to the new community of faith should lead individuals to know that they are part of the Kingdom which God is building—the righteous rule of God in a redeemed society where the vision of shalom is fully realized. •

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READERS' REACTIONS

I did not order your magazine!

Thank you for the beautiful article on Chaplain Wayne Hulon (Nov. HM). This reveals much about our work in the industrial chaplaincy program.
Don Scott
Wichita, Kan.

• I do not know how I keep getting your magazine. I did not order it. After your article on tongues (Aug. HM), I am certainly convinced I do not care to receive any further issues. I do believe in all gifts of the Holy Spirit, but I have been a member of a church that had tongue-speaking, and it was terrible. If you stood outside the church it sounded very sick. Tongue-speaking got to be a symbol of "better-than-thou" and many problems developed.

I am leaving the Southern Baptists and searching for a church where I can be assured of "true" teachings, not a conformist to new trends; if I find no church then "so-be-it" but I have seen what so-called tongues of angels do and to me, it's just a person that has gone too far.
Charles Spillers
Shawnee, Okla.

• ... thank you for the article on the Sunbelt (Oct. HM). I appreciated the balance ... along with the in-depth information available throughout the article.
Bob Saul
Atlanta, Ga.

• "Journey's End" (Oct. HM) was an excellent presentation of the opportunities and the problems of working with Indian people.

We spent two summers as missionaries working with the Navaho and Zuni Indians in New Mexico. While I was attending seminary, we were members of the Fort Worth Baptist Indian Mission for two years. We have seen both the reservation life and the city life of the Indian and are familiar with the situation.

We appreciate the openness and honesty reflected in the article. The writer didn't try to cover up a huge failure in our home mission efforts as Southern Baptists to reach the Indian in the city. Sociologists point out that people who are transient are more open to the gospel than at any other time in their lives. We would like to challenge our Home Board and the local churches where American

Indians live to wake up to the opportunity and the responsibility to minister to these people.

George and Helen Gardeman
Greenville, S.C.

• ... (the "charismatic movement") is a continuation of what happened on the day the Holy Spirit first was poured out upon the church. Peter said it was fulfillment of Joel's prophecy which he quoted—but only in part, since the early people didn't have to be so deprogrammed to receive a real move of God.

... Joel prophesied a "former and a latter rain." Today in the Body of Christ—and there is only one Body, not many, and they are not all Baptists—is the latter outpouring (rain).

Experimentally, most of us Baptists don't have enough "dunamas" in our lives to blow the dust off the family Bible. Mark 16:20 is still valid today—if it isn't, who has the authority to take it from the Bible? So is Hebrews 13:8. God still wants to confirm the Word with signs and wonders following. Praise God that some Baptists are discovering that Acts 1:8 is for real today.

R. J. Seals
Chandler, Ariz.

• Essential to understanding our problem of women in ministry is the New Testament concept of a plurality of ministry which involves all born-again believers. Are not all members of the body of Christ ministers? ...

If a female member has been equipped to minister professionally should not the body of Christ recognize, approve and encourage her in "the ministry" even if her gift is that of prophecy?

Only two functions of New Testament ministry describes males in their qualifications: that of an overseer and that of a deacon. (1 Timothy 3) Other than these I see no problem with a woman in any other phase of ministry.

Our problem with the woman minister professionally or otherwise is based on our failure to recognize the New Testament teachings and practices related to ministry plus our unwillingness to relinquish a traditional male-dominated ministry.

Jon D. Gilbert
Montgomery, Pa.

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AND IN PASSING ... by William G. Tanner
Lessons from "the Chief"

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first column by the Home Mission Board's new executive director. His column will appear regularly in HM.

Hopefully this will be the first of many opportunities we will have to talk together about home missions. I wanted to use this initial opportunity, however, to express my appreciation for and gratitude to Arthur Rutledge, recently retired executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board. For the past eleven years he has conveyed integrity, openness, optimism and Christian love as he has managed the helm of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

His leadership style has been characterized as dynamic, flexible and fair. In the past hundred days, as I have worked by his side and on occasion looked over his shoulder, I have concluded that Arthur Rutledge is without question one of the finest Christian men I have ever known. He has consistently and, I must add, patiently shared with me dreams, plans and strategies regarding our home mission thrust for the next two decades. There have been several occasions when not having grasped the full content of our session concerning a particular phase of the work I would have to request, "Dr. Rutledge, would you please go over that again with me?" Without exception "the Chief" (as he has been affectionately called by our personnel) would smile, reassure me and quietly begin again to explain.

Consequently, these past several

months my life and ministry, as well as my knowledge of home missions, have been enhanced by association with Dr. Rutledge. First, he is a man whose Christian convictions run deep in the warp and woof of his faith. During the late sixties when the Home Mission Board began the crucial and often painful task of trying to sensitize Baptist people to social responsibility, Dr. Rutledge took an uncompromising stand on racial equality. I have heard him say more than once that Christianity not put into practice in the arena of human relations, down where people are hurting, has very little value.

Again he has impressed on me the necessity of putting our emphasis on people as opposed to goals, objectives, purposes or programs. It is not that these are not important, but rather that they must be viewed in proper priority and perspective. To him people must come first; and as far as I can ascertain, the little motto on his desk which reads "People Count" has truly become his marque in designing a home missions strategy to win our nation to Christ. Not too long ago he was quoted as saying, "... unless everything I do, somewhere or other, contributes to touching people for Christ, then it doesn't have real value."

He has reminded me not to be afraid of new ideas. I have watched him quietly listen to one of our colleagues outline and detail a totally new concept, one that would literally stretch our posture of flexibility. He would then poke at the idea or program with some poignant and

incisive questions. Finally, that smile would come into his eyes and he would grin and conclude, "You know, that's not a bad idea at all. Let's have a go at it." His ability to perceive the trends of the future and his willingness to launch out in faith have made the Home Mission Board one of the most viable agencies in our denomination. It is this attitude exemplified by "the Chief" that has kept us on the "cutting edge of tomorrow."

Arthur Rutledge has been perfectly open in his planning. I have never detected any hidden agendas in the meetings we have shared and he chaired. He has been candid and always honest in his leadership. This is not to imply that he has always agreed with various proposals—he hasn't. It is to imply that no person could ever fault him at the point of not listening and letting them have their say. Many times he has answered "no" with an unmistakable firmness, but always couched in a frame of reference that concluded: "While I cannot agree with your proposal, I respect you as a Christian."

I am extremely grateful for the past 90 days plus, and my privilege to have been closely associated with Arthur Rutledge. He has by his life and his actions defined for me what it means to be a Christian gentleman in every sense of the word. While it may to some sound trite, it is nonetheless true that only time and eternity will be able to appreciate the great worth this man of God has brought to the Kingdom enterprise in his mission involvement in a program to win America to Christ. •