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GLOBE-TROTTING With GINNY.....

By Virginia Harris Hendricks

HONOLULU, Hawaii--(BP)--My sister, missionary Josephine Harris, and a small group of Baptist friends stood with me at the airport, waiting for my 'plane call. I was a frightened, inexperienced traveler, a young mother with two babies clinging to her skirts.

My husband was 5000 miles to the west, my parents 4000 miles east. I had been stranded in my efforts to join my husband in Manila by the Korean conflict and must now return to the mainland.

One of the friends, Dr. M. T. Rankin, late secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, glanced about the Honolulu air terminal. "Let's step outside near the runway," he suggested.

Oblivious to the curious crowds, he motioned us into prayer attitude and began to pray. He asked God's blessings upon this lonely, scared housewife. The prayer of this extensive traveler, always about God's world business, settled like a mantle on me, banishing my doubts and reaffirming my faith that all would be well.

During the days that followed, which saw our family reunited in the Orient, I gained a new appreciation for travel. Dr. Rankin's prayer and example as a Christian traveler impressed me deeply.

I realized that God uses modern transportation to shrink distances between his peoples, and that he uses traveling Christians to help extend his kingdom.

In my travels as an Air Force wife, I have learned that where Baptists are despised minorities, they are encouraged by visitors from the Baptist millions in America who express Christian interest and friendship. I have seen that most of the world is in desperate need of Christ.

I have found there are as many similarities in peoples that make us one as there are differences that make us uniquely interesting to one another. I am convinced that when the Christian is willing, even his pleasure trips can be used for God's purposes.

Baptists were aware of this as they distributed Christian literature en route to the Baptist World Alliance in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Americans working abroad are conscious of their Christian ambassadorship as they serve in local churches. Missionaries are aware most of all as they dedicate their lives to taking the gospel wherever God leads them.