

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICESBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
James Lee Young, Feature Editor**BUREAUS****ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041**DALLAS** Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996**MEMPHIS** Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 254-5461**RICHMOND** Richard M. Styles, Acting Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151**WASHINGTON** W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

August 20, 1976

76-138

**Refugees in Guadeloupe
Await Volcanic Eruption**

POINTE-A-PITRE, Guadeloupe (BP)--For some 76,000 persons evacuated to refugee camps from the south side of Basse Terre Island near here, the wait continued for an expected eruption of the volcano, La Soufriere.

"Already Pointe-A-Pitre (on the twin Guadeloupean island, Grande Terre) is feeling the strain of overcrowded conditions," Carel (Mrs. Robert W.) Shehane, Southern Baptist missionary, explained, "But everyone is helping to relieve electrical failures and water and bottled gas shortages."

Southern Baptists, too, are helping by sending 600 tents, 1,000 blankets and 1,000 pounds of meat to be distributed to the refugees. The government evacuation plan assigned those in the danger zone to certain refugee camps in the country.

The Shehanes are currently the only Southern Baptist missionaries in Guadeloupe, assigned to Pointe-A-Pitre. However, the L. Wayne Fredericks on vacation in San Juan, Puerto Rico, are attempting to return to assist in this time of "alert." The Alvin L. Garys are in the states on furlough.

On March 24, 1976, the Guadeloupean volcano whose summit reaches 4,860 feet in height, became active. Specialists were sent from Paris to evaluate the danger of eruption, according to Mrs. Shehane. They judged the situation serious, adding that some 70,000 Guadeloupeans were in danger.

According to reports, seismographs, placed half-way up the volcano normally register about 150 tremors of weak intensity in a given year. During the first four months of this year, there were 1,386 tremors recorded. In March 1975 four shocks were recorded, but in March 1976, 607 were recorded. During the first 24 days of April there were 647. Thirty times since the beginning of the year, the inhabitants of the town, Basse Terre, as well as those of Sainte Claude have felt the ground move. One of these quakes registered 4.0 on the Richter Scale.

Michel Feuillard, Guadeloupean specialist in geophysics, explained that three times already an eruption of La Soufriere has been feared. Those times were in 1798, 1843 and 1956. Each time nothing materialized. Not even one death can be attributed to the volcano.

According to Mrs. Shehane, the mountain has cracked in three places emitting old magma, showers of water and sulfur gases. On July 9 many people of Matouba, St. Claude and surrounding cities evacuated to the refugee centers assigned them, returning only to work and care for their cattle and other animals.

At the time of the complete evacuation on Aug. 14-15, many were still living in the centers, Mrs. Shehane said. "No one will be on the south side of Basse Terre Island until the expected eruption is completed, and the government tells the people they may return," she said.

Robert Shehane has been in contact with W. L. (Wimpy) Smith, the board's assistant disaster relief coordinator, and W. Eugene Grubbs, disaster relief coordinator, concerning disaster relief plans for the country.

POW Evaluated Career Aims
In North Vietnam Prison

WACO, Tex. (BP)--A former prisoner-of-war (POW) in North Vietnam was graduated from Baylor University School of Law here and says the six years, 1966-73, as a POW gave him time to evaluate his career objectives.

Ronald G. Bliss, 33, an August graduate from the Baptist school, believes, "My imprisonment has been an asset in terms of stability and self-confidence. And law school requires a tremendous amount of self-confidence."

The former United States Air Force pilot was shot down north of Hanoi, 75 days after his arrival in Takli, Thailand. He spent most of his POW years in or around Hanoi,

"When you've had a chance to sit down and think about what you want to do or be, you begin to accept yourself and gain peace of mind," Bliss said. "Once you're satisfied with yourself you're okay. It's not the external that has so great an effect. It's the internal," he said of time he spent in solitary confinement.

After North Vietnam leader Ho Chi Minh died in 1969, treatment of POWs changed drastically, Bliss recalled. The prisoners were allowed to spend more time together. So, he began teaching Russian to the other Americans, using two textbooks he found in the camp.

"One night a week I would stay up under my mosquito nets and copy the books onto contraband paper with my contraband pencil. I would sleep for one whole day and instruct the remaining five." He also taught beginning Spanish and history to the other POWs.

The last eight months of Bliss' confinement was spent on the Chinese border while arrangements were made for his release, which came Mar. 4, 1973.

After his return to the U. S., Bliss flew with the Air Force for a year. Then he decided to attend law school. He resigned as a captain after 10 years in the Air Force and commuted from Temple, Tex., to Waco.

"It's an experience to go back to school as a married man," Bliss said. "Last time I was in college I was a 21-year-old bachelor."

He and his wife, Charlene, were married prior to his going to Thailand. In fact, the Air Force interrupted their honeymoon; he spent part of it in a survival camp in Reno, N v. They now have two sons.

Bliss said he will begin work with a Houston, Tex., law firm in September.

"I think I've benefited in many ways from my experience," the Baylor graduate noted, "but I want to make a contribution in some other way than as the man who was shot down. "

-30-

CORRECTION

In (BP) Feature of 8/18/76, titled "3,200 Hot Water Heaters Piping in Living Water," first line, first graph, Ojos Caliente is in Mexico.

And change Madden to Maddin, throughout the story.

Thanks--Baptist Press