



February 24, 1977

77-35

**He's Spanish Missionary in
City Where There's No Barrio**

By Everett Hullum

SEATTLE, Wash. (BP)--On the wall of Andrew Viera's make-shift office is a large map of Seattle, containing dozens of scattered colored-head pins.

Each pin locates the home of a family with a Spanish surname beginning with B.

"There's no barrio in Seattle," says Viera, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) language missionary serving metropolitan Seattle. "There's no place where you can go down the street and knock on all the doors and all the people that answer will be Spanish-speaking people."

Seattle has somewhere between 35,000 and 50,000 Spanish-speaking people, depending on the season and who's giving the count.

In the summer, hundreds of Spanish-speaking migrant farm laborers work in the area. Most go home--to California or Texas--after the harvests. But others remain to add their names and needs to the growing Spanish-speaking population.

"They see the Northwest as a great job opportunity, a great place to stay," says Viera. "So they make Seattle their home."

Latin-American clubs and Spanish-speaking service organizations have grown up; government programs offer aid for "physical needs," says Viera, from food stamps to health clinics to job training and location services.

But Viera doesn't think that is enough.

"I've seen some people helped over and over again and they always eventually return to the same conditions. Jobs or food stamps don't seem to do any good in bringing them out of their situation.

"We need to get involved in people's spiritual needs--very few are in that and that's the only way to significantly change lives."

Since coming to the Northwest Baptist Convention about three years ago, Viera has tried to offer people "a spiritual alternative."

But he's not had many takers. Capilla Bautista--the little Baptist church he serves--has grown from 13 members--when he came to the area--to 26.

"Still," he adds, "we're not satisfied."

Neither are his church members. Nick Medina, whose eight-member family is a church mainstay, says, "We're all praying that the church grows; I don't think we're knocking on enough doors..."

Medina, a Texan who's lived in the Northwest several years, believes "There are a lot of people out there who don't attend any church." Yet he finds in his visits, "If you invite them to go to church, they say no; if you invite them to a dance, they're right there."

Part of the problem--in addition to finding the Spanish-speaking people--Viera feels, is the general attitude of Northwesterners toward church attendance.

"The religious scene does not have that much influence on people's lives," says Viera. "The unchurched in this area are just--I can't think of a number--astronomical. They're everywhere.

"This is such a beautiful land; there's always a temptation to worship the god of the weekend instead of the true and living God."

Like most members of his church, Viera came to the Northwest from the Southwest--having been raised in Albuquerque. He attended Southwestern Baptist Theological seminary in Fort Worth and was a pastor in Fort Worth before accepting the pastorate of the little, two-year-old Spanish-speaking mission in Seattle.

He was not accustomed, therefore, to what he sees as a lack of concern with religion.

Some of the church members, in fact, had been in the region almost eight years before they recovered from their "church drop-out-itis" enough to want to begin a Baptist Spanish-speaking service.

Joe Vasquez, with encouragement from Harold Hitt, language missionary for the Northwest Baptist Convention, agreed to begin a work in the summer of 1971.

Capilla Bautista grew from that. When Vasquez resigned to become a foreign missionary, Viera replaced him.

Viera has been struggling ever since to get a toehold in language missions. Visiting has been difficult and extremely time-consuming: but he's through the phone book's A's and almost through the B's now.

"It's such a big area," he laments. "I might drive 25 or 30 miles--one way--to visit a family. And then I'm lucky if they're there.

"But I always visit in person.

"We tried to call on the phone, but it was very hard to get a result just calling. That is a very poor way, because when they are looking you in the face they are more friendly and welcome you; but they are more likely to slam the phone down than slam a door in your face."

Some opportunities have fallen his way purely by chance, however. In one vacation Bible school, for instance, Viera looked up from his piano playing to see a strange face peering in at the assembly. He later met the girl and her friend, both Vietnamese refugees who were "just passing by and heard the music."

She returned the next day, talking with Viera in hesitant English, telling them about the rest of her family nearby. Her father was a Buddhist, but the young woman showed an interest in what was happening at the Baptist church.

Viera contacted Hitt for Vietnamese Bibles, tracts and information on witnessing to Buddhists and setting up language classes.

The technique of providing language missions opportunities for ethnic people is a strong part of all HMB language missions work. The need was evident for Jane Barron, another of Viera's church members, she says.

"When I came to Seattle from Huntsville, Tex.," Mrs. Barron says, "I was a member of a Baptist church. But after there was no church here, I strayed away from God.

"I was used to a Spanish church...I understand English fine, but I was used to Spanish," says Mrs. Barron, who now teaches Sunday School.

It's that realization that keeps Viera "concerned about souls and really caring about people."

And it's that concept that picks him up from nightly television or studying or playing with his new baby and sends him out on the sometimes cold, often wet Seattle streets.

After all, when he finishes visiting the B's, there are always the C's...and D's...and E's...

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77-35

Myers Honored For
Refugee Ministries

By Dan Martin

MIAMI (BP)--Lewis Myers Jr., a former foreign missionary to Vietnam, was given the first Exemplary Service Award of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's language missions department during the department's annual conference here.

The award--which will be given annually--is designed to give recognition to "Christians involved in meaningful service" to language missions.

In presenting the award, Oscar Romo, language missions director, noted that on May 1, 1975, "We woke up aware that things were brewing for us" in Southeast Asia.

The event was the fall of Vietnam and the influx of refugees to the United States.

"We needed someone at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida to help with resettlement. We found Lewis Myers Jr., who had been a Southern Baptist missionary in Vietnam for 15 years, and was on furlough," Romo said.

Myers stayed with the refugee resettlement program throughout his furlough, assisting the Vietnamese and Southeast Asians however he could. At the end of his furlough, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board "loaned" him to the Home Mission Board for a year, which will end in June of 1977, Romo said.

The language missions director said subsequent awards will be presented in three categories. The Exemplary Service Award will be given to someone who has performed distinguished service to language missions. The Language Pastor of the Year and the Language Missionary of the Year also will be honored.

The language missions conference--in the heart of ethnic Miami, Fla.--drew language missionaries from across the nation. Part of the approach of the conference is to give people an experience in ethnic worship service and in an ethnic area.

In a presentation to the participants, Romo noted that much of the church growth movement currently in vogue puts emphasis on the giving church rather than on the receiving church.

"Many times the sending church does not take into consideration the receiving group or what it needs, only the needs of those who send," he said.

Romo noted that the Home Mission Board ministers to people in 46 language and dialect groups and said the federal government's Department of Health, Education and Welfare currently is spending \$19,000,000 to develop materials in 68 languages and dialects.

"As we move into 'Bold Mission' activities of the Southern Baptist Convention, we must have a modern missionary, different than we have ever had before," Romo said. "The new missionary," he said, "must be a theologian, a skilled listener, a sociologist, and a 'real strategist'.

"The new missionary also must be a writer, able to develop mission materials for the mission field . . . not just translations. The opportunity that is ours today may cease to exist unless Baptists provide materials designed for ethnic missions in America . . . materials designed to relate to the ethnic culture.

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"Materials which have been developed for Americans of the Southern culture do not necessarily fit the pattern for different ethnic groups across our land."

Romo added that future missionaries also must be administrators, not manipulators, and catalysts who can make things happen.

"The future of our nation is in the hands of ethnic America," Romo continued. "Baptists can be the architects of the future if our efforts are done in the context of the gospel and not of acculturation."

Also participating in the conference were A. R. Goldie, executive director of Canadian Baptist Missions, Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec; David Morgan, a retired home missionary who now is pastor of a Jamaican mission in Miami; Juan Clark, a Cuban refugee who now is associate professor of sociology at Miami-Dade Junior College in Miami; Tommy Jones, president of the Home Mission Board's directors; Robert Lynn, president of Louisiana College, and Alfred Hawkins, coordinator of community services for the U. S. Census Bureau.

-30-

David Garland Named
To Seminary Faculty

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LOUISVILLE (BP)--David E. Garland, a native of Baltimore, Md., has been elected to the faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here as assistant professor of New Testament interpretation.

He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and Southern Seminary, receiving his doctor of philosophy degree in December, 1976. While a student at Southern Seminary, Garland served as a Garrett Fellow and was president of the graduate student body in 1975.

Garland was formerly pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, Ky. He has also served as mission pastor for First Southern Baptist Church, Clarksville, Ind., under appointment by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

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WMU Announces National
Acteen, GA Award Winners

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BIRMINGHAM (BP)--The Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), has announced the winners of both its national "Acteens" and "Girls in Action" Bicentennial Creative Arts Contest.

Winners for Acteens, mission education program for girls in grades 7-12, are Jodie McAlister, Greenville, S. C.; Leigh Ann Cromwell, Savannah, Tenn.; Cheryl Conner, Bartlesville, Okla.; Michelle Wainscott, New Liberty, Ky.; and Margaret Caine, Pensacola, Fla. Winning Acteens leader is Mrs. Carrie Lou Caddell, Dallas, Tex.

Winners for Girls in Action (GAs), mission education program for girls in grades 1-6, are Dorothy Lillian Brooks, Moneta, Va.; member division, and Miss Alona Bright, Erie, Pa., leader division.

Acteens winners are featured in the March issue of Accent, the WMU magazine for girls in grades 7-12. Girls in Action winners are featured in the March issue of Discovery, the WMU magazine for girls in grades 1-6.

-30-

President Carter Pursues
Defense of Human Rights

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter continued his campaign for human rights around the world during his press conference here.

The President, who earlier had condemned the suppression of human rights in the Soviet Union and in other places, turned the spotlight on Uganda, where thousands of people have died under the regime of President Idi Amin.

"In Uganda, the actions there have disgusted the entire civilized world," Carter declared.

The most recent outrage in Uganda has been the death of Anglican Archbishop Janani Luwum and two other government officials. The official Amin version of their deaths was that they were killed in an automobile accident while seeking to escape from questioning for subversive activities.

On the other hand, the Tanzanian government newspaper, the Daily News, reported that Amin personally shot Archbishop Luwum during a torture session. Andrew Young, U. S. Ambassador to the United Nations, described the Luwum death as an "assassination," a view that has been backed by President Carter.

During his presidential campaign, candidate Carter pledged support of efforts by the United Nations and other bodies to attract world attention to the denial of freedom. Since becoming President, he has actively supported dissidents in Russia and political prisoners in South Korea, Cuba and South America.

Continuing his comments at the press conference in reply to a question on human rights, the President declared:

"We have, I think, a responsibility and a legal right to express our disapproval of violations of human rights. The Helsinki Agreement's so-called Basket III Provision, ensures that some of these human rights shall be preserved. We are signatory to the Helsinki Agreement.

"We are, ourselves, culpable in some ways for not giving people adequate right to move around our country or restricting unnecessarily, in my opinion, visitation to this country by those who disagree with us politically.

"So I think we all ought to take a position in our country and among our friends and allies (and) among our potential adversaries that human rights is something on which we should bear a major responsibility for leadership. And I have made it clear to the Soviet Union and to others in the Eastern European community that I am not (going) to launch a unilateral criticism of them; that I am trying to get a standard in our own country and make my concerns expressed throughout the world and not singled out against any particular country."

Among other things, President Carter has received a letter from and has written to Soviet dissident leader Andrei Sakharov. In his letter to Sakharov, the President said, "We shall use our good offices to seek the release of prisoners of conscience, and we will continue our efforts to shape a world responsive to human aspirations in which nations of differing cultures and histories can live side by side in peace and justice."

Although the President has made no specific references to imprisoned Baptist pastor Georgi Vins in Russia, it is presumed that his expressed concern for all dissidents will include the Baptists, Jews and other religious groups whose freedoms are restricted in the Soviet Union.

The Helsinki Agreement, to which reference is frequently made, was signed on Aug. 1, 1976, by the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and many other nations of the world.

Among other things, the Helsinki Agreement says in part on human rights:

"The participating states will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

"They will promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms, all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development . . .

"In the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the participating states will act in conformity with the purposes and principles of the charter of the United Nations and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They will also fulfill their obligations as set forth in the international declarations and agreements in this field, including international covenants on human rights, by which they may be bound."

-30-

Southaven Minister Forming
National TV Protest Body

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SOUTHAVEN, Miss. (BP)--Donald E. Wildmon, the Mississippi minister who urged a nationwide "Turn The Television Off Week" (TTTOW) to protest the violence and sex seen on the tube, says that he is forming a national organization to continue the drive for better TV and to fight pornography.

Wildmon, pastor of First United Methodist Church, Southaven, said that papers are now being drawn up for the National Federation for Decency (NFD), which "will not be confined only to television, but will also branch into other areas which are of concern for most Americans.

"One problem which I know we will go at is the porno on the newstands," he said. "The NFD will exercise its economic muscle at both the national and local level in behalf of decency. Economic boycotts are not only a possibility, but will be a reality."

Wildmon stated that the NFD would form its own local chapters in every city and hamlet in America. "But we are also going to have affiliate clubs. These will be organizations which are already established. Nearly every local church and synagogue in America has a group in their local unit already organized to do exactly what we will be doing. We are going to try to tie these groups in with us as affiliate chapters."

-30-

College Expands Tuition-Free
Offer For Elderly, Disabled

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BLUEFIELD, Va. (BP)--Bluefield College's tuition-free senior citizen program which received wide recognition at its inception last September has now been broadened to include more people.

According to Gary Poulton, the Baptist college's director of development, the program now defines senior citizens as any person who has reached the age of 60 and has been extended by the college administration to any person permanently disabled and retired for health reasons. The original program admitted only persons 65 and older on a tuition-free basis.

A college spokesman said he believes Bluefield College's program is the only one of its kind among private colleges in the country, although the Virginia legislature is considering legislation which would institute a similar program in state schools.

Tuition is normally \$630 per semester at Bluefield College, a small, liberal arts college offering bachelors and associate degrees. Senior citizens and disabled persons will pay only a \$25 registration fee per semester.

The senior citizens program is an outgrowth of another of the college's innovative programs, known in the community as "Try One," which admits any person who has been out of school 10 years or more at a reduced tuition rate for one semester so that person can determine whether he or she wishes to return on a regular basis.

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