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April 26, 1991

91-64

NOTE TO EDITORS: Martha Skelton, associate editor of The Commission magazine, and photographer Charles Ledford are in Peru covering response to the cholera epidemic.

Cholera still killing in Peru;
Baptists continue fighting it

By Martha Skelton

LIMA, Peru (BP)--New cholera outbreaks in Peru -- and a new estimate that at least three out of four Peruvians carry cholera bacteria -- underscore the deepening crisis this Latin American country faces.

While cholera cases in urban and suburban hospitals had leveled off by mid-April, health officials expected new outbreaks in areas previously untouched and recurrences of the disease in already-infected areas.

Southern Baptists' quick response to the epidemic continues to provide medical assistance and spiritual ministry to the suffering.

A shipment of 216 tons of intravenous medicine, the largest single response to the cholera crisis since its outbreak, was expected to dock in northern Peru April 28. The shipment and an earlier airlift of 60 tons of medicine were sent by Texas Baptist Men in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Iquitos, the Peruvian city near the headwaters of the Amazon River, is in the beginning stage of a cholera outbreak, prompting reports the disease will soon course through the vast Amazon system. And several major fiestas scheduled for June have officials worried people will transport cholera around the country as they travel to the celebrations.

Cholera also has spread to neighboring countries, raising fears of a continental epidemic for years to come.

Since its appearance in January, cholera reportedly has stricken 147,000 people, hospitalized 48,000 and killed 1,080 in Peru, a country of 22 million people. Those statistics include only certified hospitalizations and deaths. Many more people in rural areas have suffered and died of cholera unreported.

Texas Baptists' 60-ton shipment of intravenous solutions and kits for administering the medicine arrived April 6. In less than four hours workers hauled the medicine off the airplane and loaded it onto four trucks bound for the hardest-hit areas -- Cajamarca, Trujillo and Lima.

"It was a day of miracles," said Southern Baptist missionary Hayward Armstrong, administrator for the Peru Baptist Mission. Because of the cooperation of Peruvian officials, the missionaries and relief workers left the airport without signing a single piece of paper, he said.

Most volunteers unloading the medicines were members of Baptist churches in Lima, but government and health professionals also assisted. One doctor who helped later told Armstrong he went home that night, cried, and told his wife, "I don't understand why foreigners are willing to do so much for us."

The experience also touched Baptist church members, missionaries and pastors, Armstrong added. It gave Peruvian Baptists a window on the larger world. "It helped them realize what a big family they're part of," he said.

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Seventy-three Southern Baptist missionaries work in Peru alongside 117 Baptist churches with 8,800 members.

Baptists distribute the medicines directly to hospitals and through clinics set up in churches to serve cholera victims. Missionary nurse Caroline Conerly has helped hospitals in the hardest-hit areas to coordinate delivery of medicine such as antibiotics and rehydration fluids.

Conerly contacted hospitals earlier this year while disbursing a general medicine shipment from MAP International through the Foreign Mission Board. When she got involved in the cholera shipments, hospital directors "already knew who Baptists were. The doors were open. It's incredible how the Lord works," she said.

Churches located near the designated hospitals have trained volunteers to distribute the medicine in a cooperative effort between the hospitals and the Baptist clinics. Volunteers also try to get patients' family names and addresses for follow-up counseling or church contact.

The missionary disaster relief team devised this system to ensure the medicine actually reaches cholera patients and to provide for spiritual counseling, including church contact with families affected by cholera.

Peruvian Baptists want to focus on spiritual needs. Armstrong told of seeing a TV news report on a dying man brought into a hospital. The man's two sons had carried him for a long distance. He was pronounced dead in the background as the TV report continued. His sons' grief went unnoticed.

Even members of the medical community see the spiritual side of the tragedy. One hospital director, a non-Christian, asked missionary Beryl Boswell in Lima to bring Bibles and tracts to give to patients and their families facing this crisis. New Testaments are being distributed in another hospital in Lima with the permission of its director.

All the Baptist distribution plans have been implemented with the support of Peru's government ministry of health. On April 19 the government agency and the missionaries signed a joint agreement for the government to advance 65,000 vials of medical additives to Baptists for use with the first shipment of medicines. The mission will resupply the government from a shipment of additives expected to reach Peru May 17.

Government officials, including Carlos Garcia, second vice president of Peru, were to be in the northern port city of Paita for the late-April arrival of the 216 tons of medicines.

"In quantity and dollar value, evangelical sources have given more than the Peruvian government could generate," said Garcia, a former Baptist pastor and Peruvian Baptist leader. No government or private agency has given more.

Because of the continuing outbreaks, international assistance will be necessary for months to come, according to Garcia. A long-term response to the cholera epidemic and other needs in Peru was to be discussed by missionaries and Peruvian Baptists at a meeting in Lima April 26-27.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Costa Rica mission plans
relief distribution

By Donald D. Martin

Baptist Press
4/26/91

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries planned to deliver four truckloads of food and clothing to earthquake victims in the outlying areas of Puerto Limon, Costa Rica, April 26 if roads were cleared by then.

The earthquake -- which killed 82 people, left hundreds injured and destroyed thousands of homes April 22 -- registered 7.4 on the Richter scale. Missionaries in the Costa Rican capital, San Jose, said a smaller earthquake hit April 24. They did not know of any additional damage or loss of life.

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Missionary Frank Lay, coordinator of the relief work, plans to concentrate Southern Baptist efforts in Puerto Limon's isolated areas, which so far have been unreached by relief teams. The city is located on the Caribbean coast about 70 miles east of San Jose.

Puerto Limon has been without water and electricity since the quake hit. The mission relief team members, consisting of Lay and three other missionaries, have secured supplies for about 300 families. They have spent about \$10,000 in mission funds and Southern Baptist world hunger and relief funds.

Lay, from Union, Miss., also hopes to distribute water purification tablets in the area, if Southern Baptists in the United States can secure and ship them.

Missionaries also have helped Baptist churches in Puerto Limon set up distribution centers for relief supplies.

Southern Baptist disaster relief teams in the United States have contacted the Foreign Mission Board, saying they are standing ready to go to Costa Rica. However, the Costa Rican government has not extended the necessary invitations to the Baptist relief teams, said Trudy English, the board's associate director for mission work in the area.

Costa Rican government officials said they and the Red Cross are "handling the situation" in San Jose and Puerto Limon. However, once current relief teams meet the immediate needs of food, clean water and temporary shelter, area residents will need assistance in rebuilding, English said.

"We can't use teams at this time, but in the future we'll probably need volunteer construction teams to repair and rebuild homes and churches," she said.

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Medical volunteers bound
for Kurd camps in Turkey

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
4/26/91

DALLAS (BP)--Four Texas Baptist physicians left the United States on April 25 bound for southeastern Turkey where they will offer medical treatment to Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraq.

The medical mission volunteers initially will provide health care for Kurds along Turkey's southeastern border, and they eventually hope to initiate community health programs among the Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq when the situation there stabilizes.

The medical volunteers are: Marietta Crowder Walker, internist and Texas Health Department regional supervisor and her husband, Kerfoot Walker, internist and health care services director for Tyler/Smith County, both of First Baptist Church, Tyler; Robert Mann, pediatrician and member of Fielder Road Baptist Church, Arlington; and Terry Elder, trauma physician and member of Second Baptist Church, Corpus Christi.

Also leaving the U.S. on April 25 were Dale and Frances Stroope, Lake Pointe Baptist Church, Rowlett, Texas, and Shaun Shorrosh, member of the Arabic Mission of University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, and a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Stroopes will work as facilitators with their son, Mike, an employee of Global Partners of England, who are helping to coordinate medical relief efforts in Turkey. Shorrosh will serve as translator.

The Texas Baptist Men organization has secured two water purifiers -- each worth \$10,000 -- for use in field hospitals in Turkey. They were scheduled to be trucked from Dallas to South Bend, Ind., on April 26 and then flown along with other medical supplies to Van, Turkey, on a cargo plane operated by LESEA Ministries.

The medical teams were scheduled to arrive in Istanbul, Turkey, on April 28 after stop-overs in London and Frankfurt. They then will travel by land rover or by helicopters to the Kurdish camps in southeastern Turkey.

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Twelve other volunteers tentatively are scheduled to leave the United States on April 30 as part of Southern Baptist disaster relief teams that will set up field kitchens among Kurds in western Iran.

Texas Baptist Men assembled the four portable field kitchens -- each capable of serving up to 25,000 people two meals per day -- and enlisted the volunteers to teach Iraqi Kurds who have crossed the Iranian border how to operate them.

Each kitchen is valued at about \$15,500 and includes a water purifier capable of processing 10,000 gallons per day, ten propane stoves and double boilers, pots, pans and other utensils.

The Foreign Mission Board has agreed to allocate \$1.25 million from relief funds for the emergency food service program in Iran, \$25,000 for Kurds in Turkey and along the Turkey-Iraq border, and \$120,000 in hunger funds for food distribution within Iraq.

Texas Baptists serving with the field kitchens are: John LaNoue, state Baptist Young Men director; Richard Hurst, physician, Tyler; John Lilly, retired from IBM, Houston; Warren Hart, associate director of missions, Bell Baptist Association; Tommy Dulin, electrical supplier, Harlingen; and Larry Blanchard, retired electrician, Lindale. Mafa Barsani, a Kurdish resident of Dallas, also will accompany the group as liaison and translator.

Other Southern Baptist volunteers slated to work in the field kitchens are: Jim Furgerson and Jim Burton of the Brotherhood Commission; Cal Jones, Brotherhood office, Louisiana Baptist Convention; Dennis Quinn, construction business, St. Peters, Mo.; and Reggie Quimby, Brotherhood office, Alabama Baptist Convention.

The volunteers will be the first Southern Baptist workers allowed in Iran since soon after Ayatollah Khomeini rose to power in 1979.

Korean Baptists also are slated to send a medical survey team into Iran on April 29 to review possible medical service by Korean volunteers working together with the food service volunteers. The survey team includes Kim Song Jin, medical director at the Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, and Dan Jones, Southern Baptist physician.

The 34,400 blankets purchased by Southern Baptists -- 14,400 secured by Texas Baptist Men and 20,000 by the Foreign Mission Board -- are being airlifted to Kurdish refugee camps as part of the U.S. Defense Department's "Operation Provide Comfort."

Also, the Foreign Mission Board has allocated \$92,500 for the distribution of 14,000 Arabic Bibles and study aids in the Middle East.

Persons wishing to contribute financially to the relief effort should mail checks designated "Kurd Refugees" to the Treasurer's Office, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, to "Persian Gulf Response," Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230 or to "Kurdish Refugee Disaster Relief," Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104.

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Peru's crisis compounded
by cholera epidemic

By Martha Skelton

Baptist Press
4/26/91

LIMA, Peru (BP)--Both an eerie emptiness and a sudden onslaught of suffering haunt visitors walking through the halls of Peruvian hospitals during their worst-ever cholera epidemic. Wards set aside for cholera patients have tides of new, desperately sick arrivals that ebb as patients get well enough to leave.

But most of the hospitals are empty and quiet. Except for cholera patients and emergencies, most hospitals have been shut down by a medical workers' strike. The strike, and the living conditions that would give cholera such a swift and devastating stronghold on Peru, are part of an ongoing struggle in this country.

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"Cholera is a problem of underdevelopment," says Moises Rosario Chirinos, a local Baptist physician. "Before cholera, people were undernourished, and there was lots of tuberculosis, typhoid, brucellosis, malaria and yellow fever." Peru has the second-highest infant mortality rate in South America.

At Collique Hospital in the Lima suburb of Comas, family members change sheets and empty bedpans for loved ones as doctors and contract workers treat them. This hospital serves a population area of 1 million and receives many patients who walk for hours and days from mountainous areas to get to a hospital.

Since the outbreak in January, Collique, a 315-bed hospital, has treated 2,410 cholera patients and reported 10 certified deaths -- only a small portion of at least 1,080 Peruvians who have died of the disease. Many more people in rural areas have suffered and died of cholera unreported.

"Cholera is a disease of hours," says Luis A. Reategui Guzman, director of the hospital. "The incubation period is hours, dehydration (from vomiting and diarrhea) comes in hours, treatment must commence in hours." The hospital's most severe cases have been villagers from outlying districts or Comas residents who wait too long to get to a hospital. Complications such as liver failure are possible.

Reategui and others cite the obvious spreaders of the disease -- unclean water, poor or nonexistent sanitation, eating infected raw vegetables or fish. One Peruvian national dish, cebiche, includes raw fish. And many city dwellers buy food from street vendors.

Until Peru addresses needed water, sewage and lifestyle changes, health officials predict cholera will never be eradicated. "We're treating the result, not the cause. This is the biggest worry," says Reategui.

Government hospital care in Peru is free. "You can't charge people who don't have anything," the hospital director says of his area. Before the cholera epidemic, the most frequently treated diseases at Collique were respiratory and digestive problems.

Hospitals keep most cholera patients for rehydration, then send them home with antibiotics and instructions for continuing recovery and prevention. Many churches in Lima and other cities have had missionary or local medical personnel give talks on sanitation and hygiene for cholera prevention.

The response of Peruvians themselves has varied as the cholera outbreak has spread and deepened in both urban and rural communities. Some are fatalistic, putting off or never seeking medical help. Rural people in particular have a survival-of-the-fittest mentality, according to one observer.

Other Peruvians want to follow prevention suggestions, but don't have the resources. Health officials are starting a campaign to encourage people to use lime or bleach for their water since some cannot afford the kerosene or firewood to boil it. Others don't change their lifestyles because if they get sick, the medical care is free, says one health care worker.

At Daniel Alcides Carrion Hospital in Callao, the port area of Lima, a pilot project has been set up to get medical professionals and their prevention information into more than 30 nearby primary and secondary schools. They are training 300 teachers to spot early symptoms of cholera and educating children in prevention techniques to take home with them.

The strike by medical workers has complicated the response to the cholera, but has had more effect on patients needing other treatments or surgery. The month-long walkout is an attempt by medical workers -- nurses, orderlies, aides, public health employees -- to call attention to their low wages (the equivalent of about \$40-\$50 a month) and need for job security and seniority.

The Peruvian government announced it doesn't have the money to raise those wages. But the low pay means these workers often have to get another job to feed their families. Some resort to stealing supplies and equipment.

Missionaries and Peruvian Baptists will discuss these even harder realities as they work to provide spiritual and medical aid and direct the flow of tons of medicine Southern Baptists are sending into the country.

Christians in the United States need to be aware of and pray for other parts of the world and for the suffering people with no resources who are trying to survive, says Southern Baptist missionary nurse Caroline Conerly.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Affiliates from seven states
honored at ACTS awards ceremony

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
4/26/91

FORT WORTH (BP)--Local ACTS affiliates from seven states were recognized at the sixth annual American Christian Television System Awards ceremony at Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, April 25.

ACTS of Bossier City, La., received top honors as affiliate of the year.

Other honorees from Louisiana were ACTS of Shreveport, best promotional announcement for "Shreveport Christmas Festival," and ACTS of Baton Rouge, best musical/theatrical special for "Greater Baton Rouge Christmas Celebration."

Cullman, Ala., ACTS received the best short feature award for "Managing Animal Waste Lagoons," produced for the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Little Rock, Ark., ACTS took top honors in the best religious series category for "Just Kids" and in the best educational/informational program and best program of the year slots for "PowerSource: Satanism -- the Seduction of the Supernatural."

Springdale, Ark., ACTS was recognized for best Christmas message and best spot of the year for "A Special Place."

Texarkana, Ark., ACTS posted best in the human interest series category for "Positive Alternatives" and best event coverage series for "Texarkana Game of the Week."

Channel 39 of Phoenix, Ariz., was recognized for best musical/theatrical series for "Video Zone" and best network series by an affiliate producer for "Richard Jackson."

Jackson, Miss., ACTS took top honors in the best commercial category for "Dallas Printing," and ACTS of Mississippi received the award for best event coverage special for "That They All May Be One."

TeLicare of Long Island, N.Y., was honored in the best public service announcement category for "Catholic Charities," and in the best human interest special slot for "The Enemy Within."

Wichita Falls, Texas, ACTS was recognized in the best religious special category for "A Heart for Africa" and in the best Christmas special category for "Living Christmas Tree: The Word Alive."

"Missions '91," produced by the Home and Foreign Mission Boards of the Southern Baptist Convention, was named the best network series by an associate producer.

Singer-author Anita Bryant and contemporary Christian musician Wayne Watson were featured program personalities at the awards presentation, along with the Jubilation Brass instrumental group from Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas.

The awards ceremony recognized ACTS affiliates, including cable television stations and churches, for innovative and creative methods of community outreach.

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ACTS is a satellite-delivered, 24-hour-a-day television network owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission in Fort Worth. The network offers religious and family-oriented programming accessible to 7.2 million cable television households and 2.5 million households via full- and low-power television stations.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Following are two stories on the same topics with different opinions.

Plan to channel tax dollars
to private schools criticized

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press
4/26/91

WASHINGTON (BP)--Bush administration proposals to use tax dollars to help parents send children to private and parochial schools are coming under fire from several congressional, educational and religious quarters.

The administration plans to ask Congress for authorization to spend \$200 million to provide incentives to school districts to operate "choice" programs that allow parents to choose which schools their children attend and another \$30 million for states and local districts to set up "choice" demonstration programs. The administration plan also calls for existing Education Department program funds to follow students to public, private or parochial schools they attend under "choice" programs.

The educational "choice" proposal is part of a reform package announced April 18 by President Bush. The president's America 2000 strategy touts better and more accountable schools for today's students and a new generation of schools for tomorrow's students. The plan also emphasizes adult education, lifelong learning and the development of communities that nurture learning outside the school setting.

President Bush's announcement speech and Education Secretary Lamar Alexander's April 23 testimony before a Senate committee sketched a broad outline of the strategy but left many specifics unanswered. Alexander told the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee the department would provide Congress specific legislative proposals by the end of May.

The administration is expected to propose legislation that would authorize grants to provide incentives to school districts to operate voucher programs that allow parents to choose which schools their children attend. The federal grants would not be used to finance the "choice" programs but to serve as incentives for states and districts to establish them.

The general push for educational reform and parts of the administration package have been applauded, but the "choice" proposals that would channel tax dollars to private and parochial schools drew immediate criticism from several sectors.

"While there may be other elements in the grand plan that are acceptable, 'choice' is a misleading banner for the same old repeatedly rejected schemes to divert tax dollars to private and parochial schools," said Baptist Joint Committee Executive Director James M. Dunn. "Such approaches are unconstitutional, regressive, unfair, destructive of the public schools, expensive, inflationary, undemocratic, intrusive and divisive in the religious community. Other than that they may be all right."

Representatives of major education organizations and Capitol Hill lawmakers have also raised questions about the "educational choice" portion of the strategy.

In opening remarks at the Senate committee hearing, panel chairman Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., told Alexander that the Senate has endorsed the idea of choice for public schools.

"But the administration's proposal goes overboard on choice," he said. "By offering public dollars to private schools, including religious school, the administration is reopening the bitter and divisive policy and constitutional debates of the past about aid to private schools."

Another panel member, Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., questioned whether the program would be well-funded enough to make private schools a realistic option for children in lower-income families. "I think this could very well widen inequities," he said.

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Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., told Alexander that she is concerned that the cost of the "choice" program would "grow and grow."

Alexander told the Senate panel he suspects the most divisive elements of the proposal will be those connected to "choice." The former Tennessee governor also said First Amendment provisions separating church and state and Supreme Court rulings in that area may also present obstacles in providing aid to parochial schools.

Asked by Kennedy whether private and parochial schools would be subject under the administration's "choice" plan to the same requirements and regulations that apply to public schools, Alexander said any school in the program, including parochial schools, would have to be publicly accountable.

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Land sees need for
parochial discussion

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
4/26/91

NASHVILLE (BP)--The proposal to use federal tax dollars to help parents send children to parochial and private schools is an area that needs far more discussion in Southern Baptist life, according to Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The Bush administration plans to ask Congress for authorization of up to \$200 million to provide for "choice" programs which would allow parents to choose which schools their children attend. The government is also expected to ask for \$30 million for states and local districts to set up "choice" demonstration programs.

In the plan, existing funds in the Education Department also would be used to allow students to attend public, private or parochial schools under "choice" programs.

Land, responding to a request from Baptist Press for an opinion regarding the administration proposals, said he thinks the overwhelming, and virtually unanimous, position of Southern Baptists is against any kind of direct aid to parochial or religious schools.

"Clearly, there are growing numbers of Southern Baptists who do not see vouchers or tuition tax credits which go to parents, to enable them to make the same freedom of choice that those in the upper middle class have, as direct aid," said Land.

"Many of them have expressed to me they don't see why it is perfectly acceptable for 19-year-old students to receive Pell Grants and tuition equalization grants to go to Baylor, Notre Dame or Brigham Young University, but it is not all right for a student who is 17 or 18 to receive a voucher letter which his parents can then choose to use in any private or religious school they wish.

"There does seem to be an inconsistency to many Southern Baptists. I think the question needs to be debated and discussed far more widely in Baptist life than it has been and the discussion needs more light and less heat," Land said.

Land cautioned Baptists and Baptist schools, encouraged by the administration proposals, schools which receive vouchers and tax credits, if the proposals are approved, should remember Education Secretary Lamar Alexander did say they would have to be "publicly accountable."

"In other words, there are some Southern Baptists who will not see the voucher itself to parents as the equivalent to parochial aid, but who could nevertheless deem it unwise for Southern Baptist elementary and secondary schools to accept such vouchers because the history of such situations is it will inevitably lead to government intrusion into the policies of those schools," Land said.

The "choice" proposals in the administration package are just one part of the educational reform sought by the government which has generally been applauded. The reform package was announced April 18 by President Bush who said it would provide better and more accountable schools.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Asia correspondent Michael Chute and photographer Charles Ledford recently returned from a coverage trip to Cambodia.

Cambodia: jail
without walls

By Michael Chute

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (BP)--"How can we be happy with all that's happened?"

The question was asked by the guide at Tuol Sleng in Cambodia. He was a young boy in the 1970s when the communist Khmer Rouge tortured and killed nearly 18,000 men, women and children at this place, now a genocide museum.

Another young Cambodian standing nearby motioned toward one of the buildings: "I took my exams on the third floor."

Before the Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot, wrested power away from the American-backed Lon Nol government in 1975, Tuol Sleng was a secondary school. Pol Pot turned it into the most notorious of his many detention centers.

In December 1979 Vietnam invaded Cambodia, driving the Khmer Rouge from power and forcing Pol Pot into internal exile.

But every adult Cambodian has a Pol Pot story.

At a Phnom Penh training institute where Southern Baptist worker Bruce Carlton is trying to begin work, posters show Khmer Rouge cadres holding children by the ankles, dashing their heads against a wall.

"I saw that," casually mentions Carlton's government-provided driver, So Kong, as if he were reporting on the weather. He says nothing more.

"We'll never be able to measure what damage has been done to these people," says Carlton, Cambodia program director for Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization.

Carlton talks about people who display symptoms of what he calls "Pol Pot Syndrome" -- they talk one moment, then slip into a mental disappearing act the next. Much of the country often awakens from horrific nightmares in a sweat.

Cambodians themselves are short on answers to the Pol Pot riddle. In their docile Buddhist society, the atrocities never should have happened. But they did -- repeatedly. Sources outside the country estimate 1 million people died during Khmer Rouge rule. Cambodians put the figure closer to 3 million.

The root cause was hatred, fueled by evil. At first Pol Pot aimed his hatred at the "haves" -- teachers, doctors, businessmen, government officials, soldiers. Educated people tend to resist. Pol Pot tried to "purify" a system he deemed corrupt.

But soon he unleashed unbridled savagery on his own followers. Everyone was suspect; paranoia bred on itself. Thousands of cadres, including many former Khmer Rouge leaders, died in the three-year killing spree. The cruelty was unprecedented in Cambodian history. Bringing back Pol Pot would be like asking Nazis to rule over a united Germany, Cambodians believe -- unthinkable.

Ask anyone on the street: nobody really escaped, even those left alive. All are victims. "I was lucky, I only lost two children," says one. "I only lost my parents," adds another.

In fact, Cambodians say the genocide never ended. They point out Cambodia's Vietnam-backed government is still fighting -- some say losing -- a 12-year war against the Khmer Rouge. Now other Cambodian rebel factions, most notably Prince Norodom Sihanouk's forces, have thrown in their lot with Pol Pot. Thousands of people still live the Pol Pot experience: "coolies" for Pol Pot who live in areas he controls, reportedly from a base in Thailand.

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Khmer Rouge soldiers butchered the parents and sisters of Van Ly, one survivor. Only she knows the full extent of her family's tragedy. She wants a better life for her children, yet she refuses to think about the future.

Whether gracing the national flag, adorning a military cap or woven into a straw mat, the five spires of the sacred Buddhist temple at Angkor Wat represent the soul of Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge understands fully what the temple represents and has targeted the ancient site for destruction.

Yet Van Ly has no desire to go to Angkor Wat, the ancestral seat of glorious Khmer culture and still the country's spiritual nerve center.

"Oh no, Pol Pot's there," she insisted. "I've seen Pol Pot. I don't want to go anywhere near him."

Van Ly's fears find echoes thousands of times every day in Cambodia. Most Cambodians believe their country will endure even more difficult years before finding peace. They have no hope.

Even now, Cambodia ranks among the world's poorest countries. A per capita gross national product of less than \$10 a month places it well below neighboring "weak sisters" like Bangladesh and Nepal. It has one of the highest percentages of paraplegics anywhere in the world. Beggars, many showing scars of the war, fill Phnom Penh's streets. Nearly everyone looks like a refugee.

Yet 60 percent of the national budget goes to the continuing war effort against the Khmer Rouge and other rebel factions. Even the meager support offered by former East European allies has been withdrawn. The country is cut off, isolated by a U.S.-sponsored trade embargo honored by much of the world.

Bruce and Gloria Carlton walked into this place a year ago as Southern Baptists' first resident workers. He is from Georgetown, Ky.; she is from Elkins, Ark.

Besides the physical needs -- which everyone agrees are massive -- spiritual needs strike hardest at the Carltons. Because the nightmare continues, emotions are laid open like raw sores. Cambodians have not had a chance to do the grieving necessary for full recovery.

"They don't know what it means to be loved and trusted," Carlton says. "Love is lost because of what they've been through. Hate is the thing here."

Cambodians are noted for their hospitality, generosity and "forgive and forget" attitudes. But when it comes to Pol Pot, forgetting is too difficult. As Buddhists, they are nonviolent, yet every May 20th they organize a "Hate Day." It keeps well-nurtured anger burning.

"Pol Pot can't pay for his crimes," says Rit, who lost his sister and her whole family in the genocide. "His crimes are so great, no revenge would be enough. To kill him would be too easy; to torture him would be no use."

Carlton just shakes his head. Tears well up in his eyes and his voice cracks: "When we look at all this, as Christians, how can we not respond? The time is ripe. We couldn't ask for a better time to work in Cambodia."

The Carltons plead for other Southern Baptists to join them in the work. In job requests sent to CSI headquarters in Richmond, Va., they ask for two agriculturists, a primary health care worker and English teachers. Without more personnel, well-laid plans to help will have to be revamped and narrowed.

"We have a foundation now on which to build, to really sharpen our focus," says Carlton. "We're implementing new projects, anticipating that within a year, we'll have people volunteering to help."

But unless the United Nations' Security Council can come up with a peace plan, and quickly, all the work going into humanitarian aid may be lost. This ravaged land -- characterized by one Cambodian as a jail without walls -- exists on the edge.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Carltons' Cambodia motto: 'Unless
you're opportunity ... don't knock' By Michael Chute

Baptist Press
4/26/91

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (BP)--For months Gloria Carlton kept a packed suitcase beside the door in Phnom Penh.

No one expected Cambodia's communist government to last long after Vietnam pulled its troops out in late 1989. This year she unpacked.

Carlton, of Elkins, Ark., and her husband, Bruce, of Georgetown, Ky., are Southern Baptists' only representatives living in this ravaged land. They brought their children, Elizabeth, age 8, and Mary, 7, with them. Carlton coordinates humanitarian aid projects in Cambodia for Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization.

When the Carltons arrived a year ago, people told them the government wouldn't last past December 1990 in the face of attacks from the Khmer Rouge and other rebel groups. Other expatriates with non-government organizations started shipping personal belongings out of Cambodia. Sporadic gunfire and exploding mortar rounds reminded them their adopted country was still suffering through a 20-year fight for survival.

"You hear things like that, and when you're new to a situation, it just reinforces the idea that you're not going to be here very long," Mrs. Carlton said in her living room in Phnom Penh.

She admits months went by before she even wanted to go look for a place to live or buy furniture. The Carltons operated out of a hotel room. Why set up a household if all expatriates would soon be leaving?

"Then I realized we weren't leaving, so I might as well get something to live in," she added with a smile. "It wasn't that I didn't feel the Lord would protect us. It was the feeling that it's not permanent. But it is."

The Carltons transferred from Hong Kong in April 1990 to direct CSI work in Cambodia. They begin a six-month U.S. furlough in June. This first year, CSI administrators asked them only to maintain ongoing relief projects, build relationships and learn to speak Khmer.

Since Marvin Raley, a medical doctor, first opened Southern Baptist work in Cambodia in the mid-1980s, CSI has worked with the Mennonite Central Committee to open a nursing school at Prey Veng. It also has built a RINE (short for rehydration, immunization, nutrition and education) center, outfitted a medical library, supplied medicines and medical equipment to two hospitals in Phnom Penh, and begun construction of a hospital in Oreang Oeu.

But the Carltons quickly learned the government had its own expectations. Once they established a residence, authorities needed a reason to allow them to stay. So they were thrust into developing a wider program of work.

Their new program focuses on factory workers and their families. Huy Han Song, a medical doctor who directs work at Kbal Thnol Dispensary in Phnom Penh, is the Carltons' main Cambodian counterpart. Responsible for health care in 57 government factories with 13,000 workers, Song is a bridge for the Carltons into the lives of more than 50,000 family members.

Using a "community impact" approach, the Carltons decided to concentrate on four areas in the factories:

-- teaching workers and their families to grow gardens. Food supply is a problem and malnutrition is the basis for much of the disease in Cambodia.

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-- helping managers improve safety. A Chinese Baptist from the Carltons' former church in Hong Kong recently did a three-month study in several factories. He found every one has major safety problems as workers -- lacking such basic equipment as masks, goggles and earplugs -- are exposed to many hazards.

-- doing primary health care. Tests in several factories showed, on average, more than 50 percent of all workers tested positive for the typhoid virus. Three of the five food handlers in one factory tested positive.

-- conducting Bible studies and trying to be public Christian witnesses as far as the government allows.

In March the Carltons signed a protocol with the ministry of industry to expand CSI work with Kbal Thnol Dispensary. The project calls for installing an \$8,000 water treatment facility and building a \$70,000 polyclinic.

In April CSI allocated \$60,000 in relief funds to help fight a typhoid epidemic in Phnom Penh. The Carltons have requested typhoid vaccine for 10,000 factory workers. Phnom Penh also faces a cholera epidemic.

"I'm physically tired. Exhausted," Carlton admitted, slumping into an overstuffed armchair. "It's about killed me," he said of the past 12 months. "But the Lord's taken care of us. We're only here right now by the grace of God. I don't see how people could come out and live here without having the Lord (in their lives). It would overwhelm me."

The Carltons aren't overwhelmed, perhaps, but they certainly have been affected. The stress of Cambodian life -- coping with poverty and disease -- as well as a hectic pace, contribute to Carlton's high blood pressure. And feelings of instability persist. The country remains unstable as war rages on, keeping Cambodia in the basement of the Asian economy.

Loneliness often gets to them, too. They admit an "outpost" mentality often creeps in as they feel like "Lone Rangers." At times, they have gone months without mail. They don't have a telephone. A fax machine, an impersonal medium at best, handles urgent communication with the outside.

Although CSI allows the family trips out of the country every three months, Carlton says the usual trip to neighboring Thailand doesn't meet the "support system" role a traditional organization provides.

Another real "stresser," as Carlton puts it, is never knowing exactly what the government will allow. It took months to get permission to visit a CSI project in a province 60 miles from Phnom Penh. Only threat of withholding funds finally produced the necessary travel documents. Rules often are made as situations arise.

"There's really no difference between us and those in more traditional roles," Mrs. Carlton said. "We have the same goal: to tell people about the Lord. We're invited here to do humanitarian aid, and that's how we reach the people."

"Sometimes we just do things we feel we need to do and wait for the government to come back and tell us we can't do it," she continued. "Government people tell us one thing and the local church people tell us something else. As a Westerner, you really never know."

For instance, Carlton taught an English class in one of the Christian house churches in Phnom Penh for several months. Recently, he was told by a government official to stop teaching because he used the Bible.

The Carltons sense spiritual oppression in Cambodia, describing a "spiritual darkness" that hovers over the land. Cambodians witnessed at least 1 million countrymen killed in the Khmer Rouge's frenzied three-year genocide.

"There's an evil that pervades this country," said Carlton. "I just feel it. I don't know how to describe it. The Bible talks about principalities and powers of darkness: they rule this land."

Praise hymns drift from a cassette player as Carlton starts each day with Bible study and prayer. He jots down helpful Bible verses on "post-it" notes and pastes them around like markers to guide his path through the day.

Getting through tough days is nothing new to Mrs. Carlton. She learned early on to make the best of what she had. She picked beans as a child to pay for school clothes. As a teen-ager, she milked cows every morning before school. She paid her way through college by working at a hamburger stand.

A cross-stitch picture hanging in the Carltons' home declares: "Unless you're opportunity ... don't knock." They really mean it. She stitched the slogan nearly 10 years ago, and it has accompanied them through every move.

He is the determined overachiever. She is the unsung hero, feeling successful when he is successful. Together they make a team tailor-made for a place like Cambodia.

Their start firmly in place, now they try to be realistic about what they can accomplish and watch and pray for the day when others will join them in helping Cambodians.

"We can put long-term people here," Carlton said. "Anytime you can place long-term workers in a situation where they can build lasting relationships, you can make an impact."

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