

MISSIONARY

AUGUST 1987 20p

HERALD



*Ministering
to One Parent
families
in Brazil*

Laura Hinchin in Cuibá, Brazil



Editorial Comment

TRADITIONALLY, each August, we have devoted a whole issue of the *Herald* to agriculture and rural development, linking it with the supportive work of Operation Agri. This year, however, it has proved difficult, for a variety of reasons, to concentrate on this one theme. Instead we are looking at the needs of the poor and in particular a section of the population in Brazil and how the Baptist Church and our BMS workers are involved in a Christian response to those needs.

We still have our critics who think that this kind of work is not real mission. In fact in Brazil itself, as David Brown pointed out in Edinburgh in June, there are those who ask, 'Why are you doing it?' 'How many are being converted?' 'Some are, but that's an added bonus,' said David.

David went on to say that the good news for the world is that God loves people. 'But when we say that God is love, where is the evidence that God loves? Only through His people.'

The approach to mission which says that it is alright to get involved in social and caring work as long as it leads to conversions is in fact a denial of the Gospel. 'Jesus had compassion for all,' said David Brown, 'not just those who decided to follow Him. He didn't bribe anyone. When He healed the leprosy sufferers and only one returned, He didn't withdraw His healing. There were no strings attached to His compassion and love.'

MISSIONARY
HERALD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY



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El Salvador	Nepal	Zaire



As mothers go off to work in the sugarcane fields, the Day Centre run by the Baptist Church at Nova Londrina, in the state of Paraná, Brazil, is helping to provide much needed love and care for their children.



Gerry Myhill

'DONA MARIA and Dona Edite, her next-door neighbour, have virtually been abandoned by their husbands. They both have to work to maintain their families.

Dona Maria has five children. Three of them attend the day-centre regularly and the youngest is a baby girl, Viviane, born in July last year. After the baby's birth she also underwent an operation.

The expense of the operation was met by the church at Nova Londrina,' says BMS missionary Gerry Myhill. 'The church also offered to help her financially during the first three months after the baby's birth so that she could recuperate properly from the operation and also have time to give to her baby in its first phase of life.

'The Ladies' Fellowship rallied round her and collected a complete layette for the new baby. The family also received a good supply of clothing against the colder weather.

'Viviane has been enrolled on the Cradle Roll run by the Ladies' Fellowship and so receives visits, and generally comes under the care of the church during her formative years. The ladies have 20 young children enrolled in this way, and the Cradle Roll has become quite an important part of their



Dona Maria and baby

work in the community since many of these children are from non-Christian homes. At least five of the mothers have recently been attending the church services and two have expressed an interest in baptism.

'Dona Edite has six children. An older daughter, Luzia, now works as a child-minder at the day-centre. Through this contact with the day-centre they have come into contact with the life of the church and Edite, Luzia and Maria have all made decisions for Christ. Together with the younger children they are attending church regularly. Luzia is a member of the young people's group and fully involved in the singing group. We are very pleased about these new members of our family in Christ as they are fruits of our outreach into the community through the day-centre.

'Over 60 children are now registered at the day-centre and there are new

enquiries every week, so we are having to be discerning about those we accept.

'Two of our children were badly burned when the house they were living in caught fire. Their mother had gone out and left them locked in on their own and, fortunately for them, the night watchman from the nearby coffee warehouse saw the flames and managed to break open the door to get them out. The house was razed to the ground. After a spell in hospital they made a good recovery.

'When we see the condition of some of the children who attend the day-centre, suffering from all sorts of skin diseases, open sores, and other ailments, we wonder what sort of homes they must come from. But when we visit these homes we can only marvel that the children are not in a worse condition.

'We have taken advantage of the local hospital's offer of free consultations and treatment. Several children have been examined by the Paediatrician, Doctor Flavio. He shows a keen personal interest in the well-being of the children. Most are now being given medicines for worms, microbes in the skin, burns, skin ulcers, lice, chest complaints, anaemia and other deficiencies. It is good to see how these children respond to the care and treatment they are receiving.

'We are undertaking a visitation programme during which we hope to visit all the homes of the children registered with us so that we can come to an understanding of the whole



Medical treatment being given to day-centre children

situation and so discover the most effective way of helping both the children and their families.

'One little boy attending the centre is being cared for by his 86 year old grandmother. On a recent visit to her we found that she also needed care. She is lame in both legs and can only walk with the aid of crutches. Her house is little more than what we would call a garden shed.

'Three young brothers, who had lost their mother, were brought to us by their father in very poor physical condition. They were also emotionally disturbed by the death of their mother and this was

revealing itself in anti-social behaviour. For a while they made good progress, but unfortunately their father took them away again to a remote area of the interior of Paraguay, where he has relatives.

'After a while he brought them back, all three suffering from malnutrition following several months on foot on the roads without regular care or food. Now, after being settled once more at the centre and being built up physically, the father has yet again taken them off, this time to Mato Grosso.

'It grieves us to think of the suffering inflicted on children like this. Please pray for all the children attending the day-centre and also their families.'



Happy Day Centre children

FLOWER BAGS, TABLE CLOTHS, and CHRISTIAN LOVE IN ACTION

Peter Amies, one of the BMS Area Representatives, was able to visit Brazil last year. He highlights one aspect of the caring work in which BMS workers are involved.

I WAS very wary when I first met Laura Hinchin and more than a little alarmed at going to her house. That might seem surprising to those who know her, but I first had to overcome the fierce (very fierce!) protective instincts of her dog. And having been regaled by her colleagues with stories of Brazilian dog-bites and subsequent 'gi-normous' anti-rabies jabs my apprehension seemed understandable and quite reasonable.

My fears, however, proved groundless and, emerging unscathed, I realised that here was a dedicated dog owner

who did not resemble her pet. Quite the contrary in fact. It was a joy and privilege not only to meet her but to see her at work.

Called to serve the Lord overseas, when most people of her age are looking forward, in a few years, to their first rail-card, Laura's ministry amongst the shanty towns of Cuiabá is unique. Keenly aware of the conditions of abysmal poverty in which so many Brazilian women live and bring up their families, Laura has awakened in them an aesthetic sensitivity that has responded to her own artistic skills.



Laura Hinchin visiting a poor family

What to me was an empty sugar or flour bag is to Laura a piece of material which, sunbleached and gaily painted, becomes a potential and attractive table-cloth, tea-towel or mural decoration. These are much sought after and saleable articles providing a source of cash to supplement meagre family incomes.

Now that's what I call practical Christianity or, if you prefer John's comment, 'Have love which shows itself in action' (1 John 3:18).

Quite apart from demonstrating these particular skills, Laura spends much of her time in visiting the women in their homes. Visiting with her I soon became aware of her pastoral gifts as she talked with the women and their children. Not knowing Portuguese, I couldn't understand what she was saying, but I could sense and see in

their faces, that they were responding to the love of Jesus that flowed from and through her.

Here and there also I saw a reclaimed sugar bag that had been withheld from sale in order to bring a little colour and beauty into an otherwise drab and dull shanty home.



Flower bags to table cloths

FAMILIES HEADED BY WOMEN

A RECENT nation-wide family profile poll in Brazil reveals that the number of the country's families headed by women is increasing. By 1985, 5.8 million (19.8 per cent) of an estimated 32 million Brazilian families were headed by women. In 1977, women had headed 15 per cent of all Brazilian households.

Brazilian economist Maria Valeria says that increasing misery, not women's

liberation, is responsible for the increase. She argues that 'greater poverty and increased migration' are causing males to abandon their families. The problem is more acute in the country's poorest regions. Twenty-five per cent of families living in Brazil's north and northeastern cities are headed by women, compared with 18.7 per cent in São Paulo.

FIGHTING FOR BASIC NECESSITIES

POOR women are organizing throughout Brazil, even in its remotest areas. In the process, they often risk their marriages, their survival or even their lives.

Their demands are basic: economic survival, health care, education for their children, adequate food and housing and, for those who are farmworkers, land to cultivate.

Many women's groups are getting together to demand changes to the country's constitution. Their proposals, submitted to the National Council for Women's rights, in Brasilia, aim to improve women's working and living conditions. Several women elected to last November's constituent assembly are lobbying for specific constitutional proposals designed to protect and further women's rights.

One of the strongest campaigns from local organizations is for severe penalties for sexual crimes and violence against women. Rape and domestic abuse cases have recently received increased attention in the Brazilian press, especially after the government set up women's police stations in the country's major cities.

'The impunity of male aggressors has ended,' said Rosemary Corra, chief of the main women's police station in São Paulo, which registered 4,374 complaints in its first nine months of operation.

Popular health education projects designed to teach women about personal and reproductive health have yet to overcome traditional taboos about discussing sexual matters. Women of all classes tend to have a negative view of feminism and commonly consider feminists to be cliquish groups of man hating radicals. Women's groups in urban slums are

more likely to call themselves 'feminine' than 'feminist'.

Women's issues now receive considerable attention in the media and the government. Several state governments have set up councils to try to improve the conditions under which women work and live. Staff from the National Council for Women's Rights are educating the public about health, safety and legal issues.

The São Paulo state council sent a representative to the United States and Canada to gather information on centres for battered women and hopes to set up similar centres in the near future. The Women's Information Centre, also funded by the São Paulo state government, is organizing a library and archives for the public.

Independent women's organizations flourish in the big cities. The most famous, *SOS-Mulher*, helps rape and domestic violence victims and runs several educational programmes.

Mothers' clubs are often the first organizations which lower-income women join. Research and support groups of middle-income women have surveyed these clubs and helped them publish newsletters and reports.

In the past five years, women's studies centres have been set up in several Brazilian universities. Some sponsor or participate in community development projects, while others are exclusively research-oriented. All publish newsletters and monographs available at low cost and books on women's issues have also appeared.

It is too early to say whether their findings will spread beyond a limited, mostly intellectual audience to the slums and villages where women struggle to provide basic necessities for their families.

CHILDREN LOCKED UP

SOME children in Rondonia, Brazil, are locked-up in the house all day while mother goes to work. There is no choice if, abandoned by her husband who has gone elsewhere to look for work, she is to support the family.

At the missionary rally at Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, Brazil missionary, David Brown told of a single-parent family with children aged six, four and a baby.

'The six year old had the responsibility of looking after the others when Mum locked them in and went off to work each morning.

'Sometimes there are power-cuts and one day, when the electricity went off, the six year old did what she had seen her mother do. She lit a candle. There was a fire and the baby was burnt to death.'

Sheila Brown is hoping to start a creche/day-centre in Porto Velho to look after the children of these families. The local authority has offered a piece of land for it.

Sheila is already involved in community health work amongst the large population in the poor suburbs. Several congregations have been established in these areas and with the help of some trained Christian workers three clinics have been developed. In one month 700 families attended and received help through a feeding programme and teaching in hygiene and nutrition.

EL SALVADOR

At the BMS General Committee meetings in Edinburgh last month, the Society made the decision to accept an invitation to work in El Salvador. In a report presented to the Committee, Angus MacNeill, BMS Overseas Secretary spoke of his recent visit to the country.

THE CHURCH

'Did you know that the British started Baptist work in our country?' I was asked. I didn't so they recounted the story of Mr Humphreys and Mr Chapman, two Englishmen who were sent to Central America at the beginning of this century by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

These men began an evangelistic work, which later became part of the work of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, now the Board of International Ministries of the American Baptist Convention. Mr Humphreys and Mr Chapman became 'American' missionaries once they had persuaded ABFMS to take up the challenge of the work in El Salvador.

At an old people's home, belonging to the Baptist Association, at Ayutica, I met 94 year old Pastor Raffael Ovidio Funes, who worked with Mr Humphreys around 1912. As he swung in his hammock, pushing himself from side to side with his stick, his eyes lit up with pleasure when he shook me by the hand and told me of the past.

The Baptist Association was founded in 1932 out of two smaller Associations in the East and the West of the country. There are now 57 churches in twelve out of the 14 provinces and 15 preaching points.

Since 1975 the leadership of the Association has been in the hands of El Salvadorans, although close links continue with the American Baptists who have three people working in the

country at the moment. El Salvadoran Baptists depend heavily on an annual grant from the BIM/ABC, but with an average peasant's income not much more than £30 per month there are understandable problems in financing even a modest central organisation.

In Santa Anna, the second largest city in the country, a Seminary is housed in a building belonging to the Baptist Secondary School. It became a fully-fledged seminary in 1983 and it is hoped that most of the pastors will be trained there rather than having to go to Costa Rica, Puerto Rico or Mexico City. The Seminary is trying to make theological and pastoral training relevant to the realities of life in El Salvador.

Churches within the Association vary from the 'proper' traditional Baptist Church of the First Baptist Church in San Salvador, to the less formal, more socially orientated Emmanuel Church and to the typical country church which I visited at Candelaria near to the border with Guatemala.

The Association works to a five year plan. Commenting on the 1985-90 plan, Carlos Sanchez, the Executive Secretary of the Association, thinks that it is over-ambitious in some of its goals, but that it has helped to keep the Association moving forward. There are definite plans for church planting and pioneer work, although there is a great need for a proper stewardship emphasis.



Angus MacNeill

Carlos Sanchez was pastor of Emmanuel Church in San Salvador for twelve years. He is now a significant voice within the Protestant churches, having served for some years as the part-time General Secretary of Diakonia. Diakonia links together people from different churches, including the Roman Catholic church, and it helps to run and organize support for relief and welfare projects.

POVERTY

For the first time visitor to the country, it is not the political problems which stand to the fore, rather it is the general poverty of the people which cries out so stridently.

A visit at the end of April and beginning of May, just when the long dry season is coming to an end, shows up the people's year-long poverty against a particularly trying, dirty, dry and hazy background. The white ash from volcanic eruptions forms the top soil in the San Salvador area, and while red soil



brief visit up city where the rich have their houses. It was like entering another world.

Political problems are never far away from the poverty and it is the army, and those behind the army, which loom large in people's lives. The soldiers are always present. Somewhere along the road they will be there, standing armed at the roadside, beside a bridge, next to a toll barrier or passing you in a jeep or truck.

The government, under President Duarte, the army and the guerillas are the political realities which dominate the people's thinking when they get round to wondering who will sort out their problems.

The church also comes into the equation. Every Sunday journalists attend mass at the Roman Catholic Cathedral to hear what the officiating priest has to say about the government.

LIVING

appears in the cuttings of the main highways it is the white dust which predominates and clogs everything. Houses and huts appear perched incredibly on the steep slopes of young hillsides. When the rains come many of them must be in jeopardy.

The disaster of the 1986 earthquake and the constant necessity for the people to leave their home areas and become refugees of the civil war, has led to a huge growth of the desperately poor in San Salvador city. Out of a population of around 700,000 it is estimated that 400,000 are 'homeless', living in shanty town areas in and around the city. This time, not in Asia, but in Central America, I saw again the pavement dwellers.

The effects of the earthquake are still evident. In the centre of the old city some buildings lean over at crazy angles. One six storey building collapsed like a concertina on to its first storey, leaving a lop-sided five storey building instead. Many other buildings

have cracks which have been repaired in a sort of way. In the poorer parts of the city, houses crumpled into a heap and gaps and rubble are all that is left.

These experiences force many people into a subsistence style of urban living, where there is not much point about thinking of tomorrow until you have managed to make it through today.

However, the major part of El Salvador's population lives in the rural areas or in the small towns. Two visits which I made into the Province of Santa Anna about 40 miles from San Salvador, let me see a little of peasant poverty. Others had to tell me about the big landowners and the export cash crops, which have squeezed the *campesinos* off the good land until, like their urban brothers in the shanty town', life has become a struggle to exist. What I did see was evidence of a very hard life.

It was poverty on a par with Asia's worst that left its grim impression on me. Somehow this was highlighted by a

In spite of all, life goes on. For me this was symbolized by the row of market stalls in front of a ruined and partially demolished building which had been destroyed in the earthquake. People laughed, smiled, did business and shouted with the determination of those who are set on survival and who will not lose hope.

The people I met were warm-hearted and generous. 'I do hope you like El Salvador,' a slightly tipsy El Salvadoran kept repeating to me after we had struck up a casual acquaintance.

He said it three times and the third time I said to him, 'That is the third time you've said that to me. Of course I like El Salvador.'

'I just want to be sure,' he mumbled.

I sat quiet for a moment overcome by a peculiar sensation as the familiar pattern of words which I had used came home to me. Had there been a betrayal somewhere along the line?



NEW PRESIDENT

AFTER 24 years as President of the French Baptist Federation, André Thobois is standing down. He asked not to be re-elected when his term of service expired in June this year.

French Baptists held their Convention meeting on 27 May and added Robert Somerville to the group of Council members. Robert also becomes the Federations' President.

EDUCATION IN MISSION

THE British Council of Churches has appointed Mrs Helen Lidgett to the post of Executive Secretary for Education in Mission. She succeeds the Rev Dr Peter Leung, now Secretary for Relations with China.

Mrs Lidgett has served the World Church and Mission Department of the United Reformed Church as Secretary for Communication since 1979 and has been a member of the Conference for World Mission's Home Committee for seven years.

As Secretary to the Home Committee, she has the task of raising the awareness of Christians in Britain to the nature and purpose of the church in light of its mission. This work is strengthened by the Adult and Junior Education Groups. She will continue to build ecumenical relations with the Caribbean to which Dr Leung made a notable contribution.

Mrs Lidgett is an honours graduate in history at University College London. Her husband, Patrick, is a URC minister in Streatham.

BRAZIL

SOUTH AFRICAN Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking in six of Brazil's largest cities during a five day visit in May, called on Brazil to condemn apartheid by breaking diplomatic relations with his country.

Leaders of Brazil's black people's movement were dismayed when only about a tenth of an anticipated 200 thousand people showed up for a rally with Tutu in Salvador, capital of Bahia. The region's Episcopal bishop, Clovis Rodrigues, succeeded in having the government restrain the participation of religious groups that planned to stage Afro-Brazilian *candomble* rituals during the event.

Brazil's Foreign Minister Roberto de Abreu Sodre rejected Tutu's requested diplomatic break, arguing that Brazil's chargé d'affaires in Pretoria monitors problems there and offers help to those fleeing racial persecution. He reaffirmed President José Sarney's August 1985 decree, which broke cultural and athletic exchanges between the two countries.

US TO DEP

THE Reagan administration has refused a request by Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte to give 'preferential treatment' to Salvadorans illegally living in the United States. An estimated 400-600 thousand Salvadorans are now expected to be deported as a result of the new US immigration law which went into effect on 5 May.

'On the one hand, the US government says it is very concerned about terrorist actions, but then it suddenly passes a law that could favour the subversives, said Roberto Vicra, El Salvador's vice minister of culture and communications.

According to Vicra, the new immigration law could spark an influx of returning Salvadorans precisely when the economy is in a tailspin and jobs are scarce.

'There is no doubt that these returnees will be targeted by left-wing groups for their political objectives and create problems,' he said.

Early in April, Duarte sent a personal letter to President Reagan asking him to give special treatment to Salvadorans living in the US because their massive

What's happening in the Church around the World

PORT SALVADORANS

return 'will add to the now disastrous levels of unemployment and economic crisis'.

The spectre of a massive return of their compatriots is also causing panic among Salvadorans who have come to depend on the remittances sent from family members and friends living in the US.

The strength of this dependency is now being tracked by researchers at El Salvador's Central American University. According to a report soon to be released, the number of Salvadorans who have migrated north and their economic input may be far greater than previously estimated.

According to sociologist Segundo Montes, who conducted research for the study, as many as one million Salvadorans may now be living in the US. Most of these are undocumented workers and at least half arrived after the 1982 cutoff date qualifying them for US citizenship.

Montes says that these émigrés send home an average of \$110 per person per month – matching the yearly amount in US government aid to El Salvador. The money is crucial because the minimum wage in the Salvadoran countryside is \$70 per month and unemployment or underemployment affects 65 per cent of the population.

Montes believes that most of those returning will go to the cities. The vast majority of Salvadorans who left for the north came from the countryside, but moved into the cities to live and work.

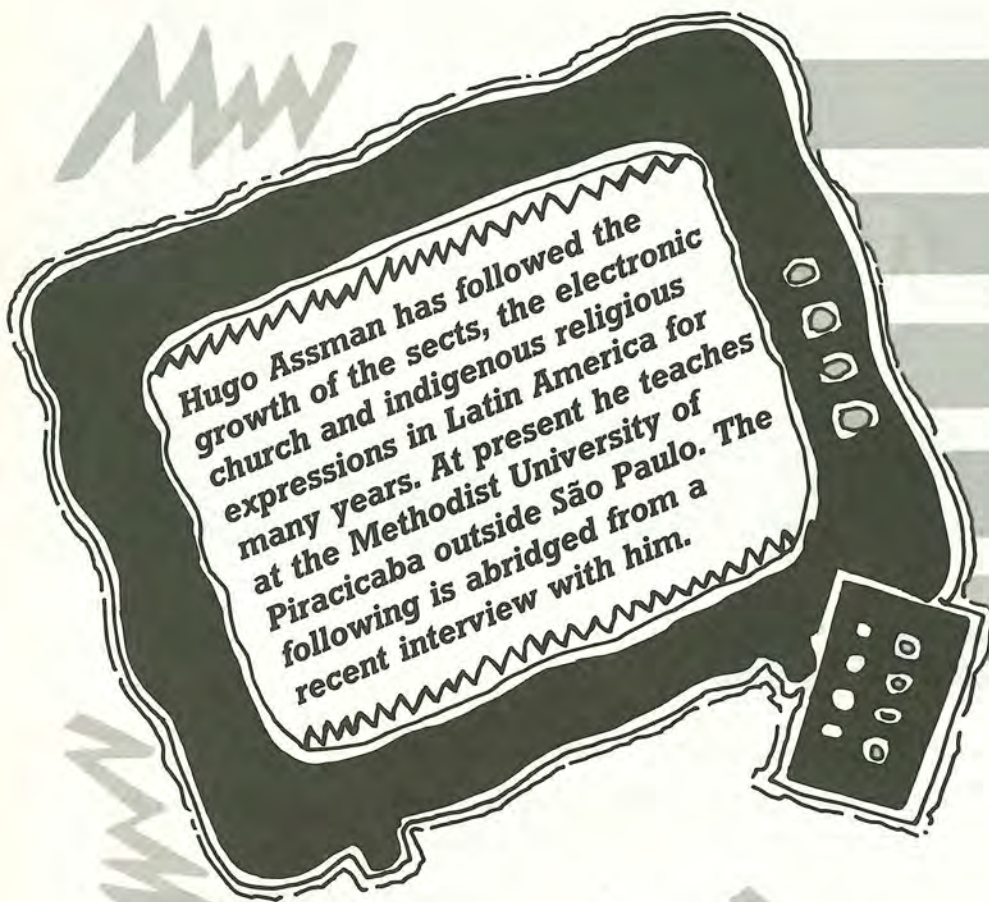
'The process of urbanization is irreversible,' he says. 'And those who return will go to cities here, which are already overcrowded, perhaps moving in with relatives with enough money to last for six months or so. After that, what will they do?'

The capital, San Salvador, has more than 200 thousand homeless residents as a result of last October's devastating earthquake.

The government, already grappling with 500 thousand people displaced from their homes by the seven-year-old civil war, is particularly anxious about the impact those returning will have on its political control. Even as they come back a national movement has started to repopulate abandoned towns with internal refugees. In most cases this effort is being co-ordinated by groups hostile to the administration.

The effect of the new US immigration law is also alarming other Central American governments. In May the region's labour ministers met in Guatemala to evaluate how the law will affect Central America's already severe unemployment picture. They agreed to co-ordinate efforts to deal with those who are returning home.

The Guatemalan government has decided to give a medical examination to all returning refugees to screen them for AIDS. So far this year Guatemala's public health ministry has reported 38 cases of AIDS, 26 of which have been fatal.



THE new religious movements in Latin America have been successful not because of all the dollars involved or because US religious imperialism is strong. Of course, powerful groups in the United States are interested in assuring that these sects prosper. But in my opinion, only a serious analysis of the social, economic and historical problems burdening Latin American's poor can explain the success of these movements.

Those incapable of doing this will continue to be alarmed and frightened by the way these contemporary religious movements are 'stealing' members from their churches. Only by leaving aside 'panic' questions and asking the more fundamental ones will we be able to understand the phenomenon.

The Consultation of Latin American and Caribbean Bishops and Pastors, held in Ecuador last November, concluded that the only sensible way to approach the subject is by first addressing the domination, the injustice and the oppression that exists in Latin America.

The Brazilian Institute for Religious Studies is studying the wide variety of new religious manifestations, not only so-called fundamentalist sects, but also the many esoteric, transcendental forms, whose adherents appear to be searching for ways and means to overcome the modern world's technocratic saturation. The Institute is also studying the religious manifestations that have survived both from the ancient Latin American culture and from the enormously important African cultures found in Brazil and the Caribbean.

In Latin America, 80 per cent of all non-Catholics belong to fundamentalist sects. But it is a mistake to describe this broad spectrum of movements as Protestant. Everywhere historical Protestant churches are losing members to these groups.

The poor are the victims

The characteristics of these groups are very diverse and defy simplification. Some groups are tied up with radio stations, others offer religious rites, and still others are born of missionary efforts independent of the churches, but they all have some things in common.

Some take the Bible very seriously. During moments of crisis, simplified doctrine and Biblical literalism tend to arise.

Unfortunately, the predominant feature of the sects is 'supernatural quackery' and involves all sorts of miracle making and exorcisms, exploiting people's immediate needs. The poor are the most frequent victims of this quackery.

Religious manipulation flourishes in the world of Latin American misery. This is something peculiar to Latin America and I think it is important to emphasize it because it has led to deep divisions in Brazil.

SECTS, ELECTRONIC CHURCHES AND POVERTY

Broadcast evangelism

So what about the electronic church? It has several distinguishing features, most notably the fact that it comes to the people over the radio more than the TV. Radio broadcasting is cheaper and takes place at all hours of the day and night, while TV programming is expensive and limited to the early morning hours, when no one is watching.

Because of the increased import taxes on foreign television programming in Brazil during the last five years, native Latin American TV evangelists have appeared. Among them Yiye Avila, Brother Paul and others whose programmes are supported throughout Spanish-speaking Latin America.

In terms of radio programming, several Brazilian stations have continuous transmission. The radio network Transmundial transmits from Bonaire Island in the Caribbean and reaches 100 affiliated stations. Spanish-speaking America has countless local stations reached by Radio Transmundial and the well-known Voice of the Andes broadcasts in many indigenous languages.

The second distinguishing feature is that the great majority of these programmes are aimed at the poor. Imported programmes geared to middle-class audiences usually don't last long because of the small number of listeners they get in terms of the heavy investment they require. That's what happened to Rex Humbard in Brazil. He went off the air in 1984. And I think the same thing will happen to Jimmy Swaggart, despite all his trips through Latin America.

The entire organization of many pentecostal groups rests on their radio programmes. In Brazil, the two largest pentecostal churches would never have grown so fast if they hadn't created an enormous radio network. One, owned by the Brazilian Church of Christ, has more than 200 stations that transmit their principal programme all week long. The other, God is Love, has included radio along with mass preaching as its means of expression. Without radio, some Brazilian denominations wouldn't exist at all.

In Brazil there are two major branches of pentecostalism. On the one hand Manoel de Melo's Church of Christ emphasizes baptism in the Holy Spirit, ecstatic manifestations and divine healing, but it does so in a moderately serious way.

On the other hand, his brother-in-law, Davi de Miranda, who broke away from

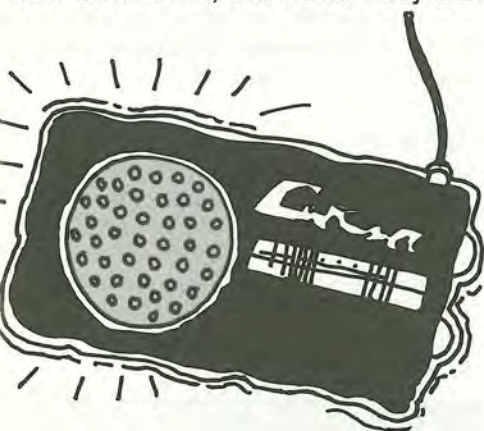
that are already present in the traditional churches.

Catholic devotion to the saints, for example, served as a prelude to those current miraculous manifestations. Some refer to this as 'the mirror theory'. By looking into it we see our own situation. Understood this way, it becomes an opportunity for self-examination or self-criticism.

And the historic Protestant churches, which have few poor people as members, may see the great success the more fundamentalist denominations are having among the poor and become willing to expand into poor areas. The pentecostal churches in Brazil depend very little on foreign missionaries or imported financial and material resources. Although their pastors normally have very little formal training, their social class extraction is extremely valuable in their work.

I believe the Catholic church still has not come to grips with the fact that the great majority of its membership is poor. It has traditionally opted for middle class criteria. Changes are coming, but they are slow. In consequence a part of the Catholic church's membership is being drawn towards the sects.

Again, one wonders whether Brazil's Catholic church has ever taken seriously the fact that more than 40 per cent of the country's population is black. But liberation theology is serious in including the role of blacks, indigenous people and women in its reflections.



de Melo's church 20 years ago, has founded the God is Love church, which is much more extreme. It practices exorcisms and expulsions of the devil. Several members have died as a result of flagellation meant to expel demons.

But passing through Brazil's *favelas*, one sees the desperation poverty has brought about. It's no wonder they become involved in these religious practices in their search for relief.

The mirror theory

All this is a huge challenge for the historical churches. We should first of all recognize that these new religious movements exaggerate religious practices

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK



'Hopefully this will open up a way for others to share in the work in El Salvador,' says David Mee

A NEW WORK

THE Baptist Missionary Society has accepted an invitation to work in Central America with the El Salvador Baptist Association.

'There is a viable work for us to do there in the task of mission, and Baptists in El Salvador are keen to have British involvement,' Overseas Secretary, Angus MacNeill told the BMS General Committee at its meetings in Edinburgh in June.

Mr MacNeill has recently visited El Salvador in order to learn something of the country at first hand.

'I found a poor country and a people looking for understanding. The church there is asking questions about its message within that situation and there is an eagerness that we in Britain should reach out to them. El Salvador is stretching out its hand that we may hold it and be with them.'

The invitation to work in El Salvador came from the El Salvador Baptist Association through its General Secretary the Rev Carlos Sanchez. A previous visit to El Salvador made by the Rev David Mee, minister of Darkhouse Baptist Church, Coseley, sparked off the series of contacts between the BMS and the El Salvador Baptist Association.

At the same General Committee meetings, held in Edinburgh, Mr Mee was accepted as a missionary to serve in El Salvador.

'He will go as a pastor,' said Mr MacNeill. 'His task will be to help strengthen the work of the church particularly in its missionary task of demonstrating a faith in Jesus Christ in a way that is appropriate for El Salvador.'

The Board of International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches in the USA supports the work of the El Salvador Baptist Association and currently has three missionaries serving in the country. The Southern Baptists also have three workers there.

'Our American friends, in both conventions, say that British involvement would be a plus,' said Mr MacNeill.

There was some discussion in the General Committee about the way the invitation had come to the BMS through an individual, but the general view was that this was the call of God which should be heeded.

'There is a wide open door in front of the Society to share in a work in El Salvador,' said the Rev Brian Tucker, chairman of the Overseas Committee. 'This is a door we had not sought, or pushed, yet here it is in front.'

'This is a golden opportunity to give the kind of help that Marta Benevides was asking for when she addressed the Baptist Union Council five years ago,' said Dr David Russell.

Reg Harvey, BMS General Secretary, said that the invitation to work in El Salvador was a shared one from the Baptist Association and the Board of International Ministries of the Baptist Churches in the USA.

'There is the feeling that a British presence will strengthen the work of

God in that part of the world. It is surely right that there should be a British connection. There is a growing concern amongst Baptist Churches in Britain for El Salvador and many of them are already well informed about the country and praying for it.'

Mr Harvey answered those who wondered whether the BMS was now spreading itself too thinly, especially since workers were still being sought for France and Thailand.

'The Society is not a commercial concern. We are responding to the leading of God who grants His resources in an ongoing fashion. In His good time He will call those who are needed for work in France and Thailand. But He will call different people from those who go to El Salvador.'



'... a British presence will strengthen the work of God in El Salvador,' says Reg Harvey

DELAYS

Because of a breakdown of the colour press at our printers last month the printing of the *Herald* was later than usual and meant that the despatch of the magazines was delayed. This was aggravated by an industrial dispute at the Post Office holding up both incoming and outgoing mail. We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused.

RELIEF FUND

THE disastrous fire, which has devastated large areas of north-east China, and the floods which have now come with the rains, have caused untold suffering. Seeking to respond to the needs of the area, the Amity Christian Foundation in China has asked its partner bodies to contribute \$370 thousand to a disaster fund. The BMS General Committee agreed to give £3,000 from the BMS Relief Fund.

It was also agreed to give £1,500 from the Relief Fund to Bolobo Hospital, Zaire, in connection with a recent

outbreak of cholera. The money will go towards the purchase of drugs and essential medicines and will also pay for the cost of transporting them by air from Kinshasa.

There have been outbreaks of cholera in the Yakusu-Kisangani area of Zaire also, and recently there have been reports of the disease in Angola.

The Society is always pleased to receive donations towards the BMS Relief Fund, which is used to respond quickly in cases of emergency.

DON'T HOLD ON TO BMS MONEY

A PLEA to treasurers to forward gifts to the BMS as quickly as possible was made at the BMS General Committee in Edinburgh.

In the first six months of the year the Society spent £340,000 more than had been received by the churches.

'This emphasizes the importance of churches sending money into the Society as early as possible in the year,' said Reg Harvey.

However, for the first part of the year the income showed an increase over the previous year of seven and a half per cent.

'This is encouraging because it is higher than inflation and most salary and pension increases.

'But,' Mr Harvey pointed out, 'it is still less than the ten per cent we requested.'



MISSIONTALK
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MISSIONTALK

They can't always do what we ask

'There are no simple solutions to the needs of the poor,' says Dr Suna from Diptipur.

It is not enough just to treat the immediate needs of people coming to the hospital for treatment. Unless some of the social and economic problems are also solved, they will keep coming back.

'It is really an educational problem,' said Dr Suna, medical director at Diptipur Hospital, Orissa, India. 'But it will take a long time to change things.

'But people cannot always do what we ask of them. If I tell them to go onto a good diet – proteins, vitamins, fresh vegetables – they haven't the means to buy them. They can't even grow the food they need, because they have little land, and it's dry land without a

water supply or irrigation facilities. All this gets in the way of our educating people into better ways.

'So in my view we shall have health problems due to poverty and malnutrition, unless we have some project to help them. A project to provide jobs, or improve their agricultural facilities, or to provide irrigation, so that they can grow more than one crop in a year. I think that if they can grow three crops each year most of their problems will be solved.

'The small cottage industries, which they had in the past, have now been taken away by the big industrial developments. The factories can produce goods in large numbers,

which are sold to people in rural areas at a cheaper rate than they can be produced by the villagers themselves. So the industrial development of India as a whole is not helping them much.

Food is being produced in India. I think that we are self-sufficient in food, but the villagers don't get it. There is no equal distribution. Although they produce food, they have to sell rice in order to provide for their other needs. Sometimes they have to get a job in order to buy food for themselves. But there are not many jobs available.

'It is really an educational problem'



'So as a Christian institution in Diptipur, although we cannot do things on the same scale as the government, we are making a small contribution. In times of drought and famine, with the help of funds from aid agencies, we do what we can to help. But we are also trying to help in the long-term through our agricultural centre. We are teaching farmers how to irrigate their land by constructing small dams. We are helping them to improve their wells. We are also showing them how to grow different kinds of food. As a result the farmers will be able to grow a cash crop and get money out of that.

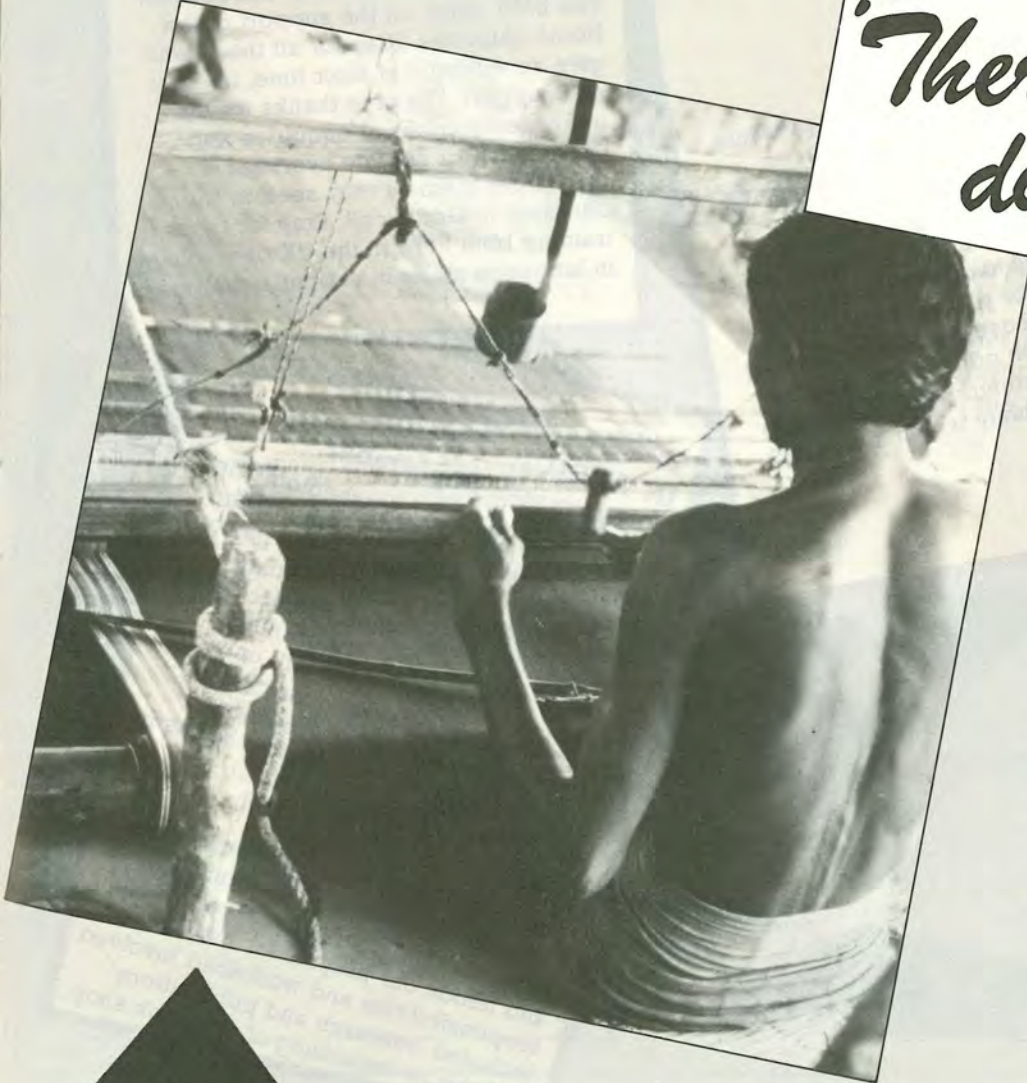
'The forests of India are being cut down, in spite of government restrictions. Wood is the only fuel source for cooking our food. So we are promoting the alternative fuel of biogas. This is manufactured out of cow-dung, providing also the useful by-product of manure.

'As well as treating people in the hospital we are also trying to help them in the villages by promoting a programme of community

'The forests of India are being cut down in spite of government restrictions'



'There is no equal distribution'



health care and preventive medicine. Our next project will be to provide maternity and child health care in a community health centre. This will be of service to the surrounding villages and will especially give care for the under-fives.

'We are also reaching out to a new area in the Kond Hills, where the tribal people are poor. They take roots and leaves from the jungle, and they grow a little food on the slopes of the hills. But they need to be shown how to grow enough for the needs of their families.

As we educate we can also show good Christian care and witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

'We may be without British missionaries now, but this is not preventing our establishing new missions like this one at Rampur.

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**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
IN BRAZIL**

2-8 August

After 24 years in the pastorate, the BMS Overseas Representative for Brazil and the Caribbean, David Doonan, and his wife Doris, have just returned to this country to take up a pastorate. We thank God for their long and dedicated service. David's place is taken by John Clark who has been serving at the Baptist Seminary in Campo Grande. Remember John and Norma Clark as they settle into these new responsibilities at São Paulo. Brazil is suffering from the effects of soaring inflation and huge foreign debts. There are stark contrasts between the rich and poor. Many Baptist churches are engaged in a 'multi-ministry' which aims at sharing the Gospel in practical ways that serve the needy, sick and unemployed. Remember BMS Personnel involved in community work - Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite involved in development and evangelism in Campo Grande; David and Irene McClenaghan in Varzea Grande; David and Pat Holmwood in Piraquara and Mary Parsons in the Litoral.

**SOUTH AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN**

9-15 August

'My children, love must not be a matter of words or talk; it must be genuine, and show itself in action.' Last year's motto of the Brazil Women's Missionary Association indicates the growing awareness of the need to put the gospel into action as well as preach it.

The most needy among the millions of poor in the city of São Paulo are mothers and children. Glauci Rocha, a Baptist and sister of an active Christian politician encourages using state provided food and salaries, to care for children of working mothers by

Pastor Elias Mangabeira and his wife Neli run an ante-natal group in the church building, which is located in a favela (shanty town). Expectant mothers receive instruction about child care, receive clothes, receive food and hear the gospel. Several WMA groups run clubs where teenage girls from favelas can learn handicrafts, have a snack and receive Biblical training. Four groups have been established in the town of Diadema. More voluntary workers from the churches are needed for such projects.

ADMINISTRATION AT HOME

23-29 August

Over 100 members of the BMS General Committee are elected by the churches and serve on different sub-committees. The BMS relies on the support of the Home churches. Pray for all those who give so willingly of their time, interest and support. We give thanks for the increased number of enquiries and candidates for service overseas - remember them as they seek to be obedient to God's call. Pray for those in training both here in the UK or involved in language study in various countries.

**CHURCH IN ASIA -
NEPAL**

16-22 August

The Church in Nepal despite pressure on Christians from official sources, relatives and neighbours continues to grow at a fast rate. Some congregations are large enough to have their own building, but many meet in small groups usually without a trained leader or pastor. Pray especially for those Christians isolated from contact with other believers, for increased opportunities for leadership training and for unity within the church.

**THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
IN AFRICA - ZAIRE**

30 August-5 September

There is a great need for theologically trained pastors for the church in Zaire. Parishes are very large and the pastors travel around from village to village. Many of the village churches are cared for by catechists (lay leaders) and evangelists. Most pastors will only have two or three books when they leave college. Pray for better provision of commentaries and theological books in Lingala and Kikongo (the local languages), as well as French.

Tim and Barbara Bulkeley work in the Theological Faculty of the University of Kinshasa. Tim is now the Vice-Principal and needs our prayers for the extra responsibilities and work-load involved included 'research and publications' and the re-organizing of the book shop.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies, and gifts sent anonymously (to 21 May 1987).

Legacies	£
Miss D N Adams	1,000.00
Miss Mabel Airey	9,400.00
Violet Evelyn Alice Cox	3,500.00
Mrs Gladys Day	100.00
Miss Dorothy M Gowland	500.00
Mrs Humphreys	100.00
Mr Frank Illingworth	40.91
Mr Alfred C Joy	250.00
Mrs Margaret Louchlan	5,000.00
Miss Winifred Minett	100.00

Mrs Margaret Sands	150.00
Mrs Ethel Spyree	100.00
Mr Leonard G Squirrell	9,725.75
Miss Dorothy Ward	1,000.00
Arthur Ernest White	250.00

General Work:

Anon: £25.00; Cymro: £65.00; Anon: £20.00;
Anon: £20.00; Catford: £5.00; Anon: £50.00; FAE
Aberdeen: £10.00; Cymro: £80.00; Anon:
£100.00; Anon: £5.00.

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Miss J Willis on 3 June from Andhi Khola, Nepal.
Rev & Mrs R Deller on 13 June from Porto
Alegre, Brazil.

Rev & Mrs M Bonser on 13 June from Port of
Spain, Trinidad.

Miss R Montacute on 19 June from Kinshasa,
Zaire.

Rev & Mrs D McClenaghan on 20 June from
Cuiabá, Brazil.

Mrs D Clark on 26 June from Kinshasa, Zaire.

Departures

Mr & Mrs D Kerrigan on 11 June to
Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

Births

On 4 June, at Pontyclun, to Mr & Mrs I. Thomas,
a daughter, Rochelle Sian.

Deaths

On 4 June, Rev Philip Henry Austin (Angola
1920-28; Zaire 1928-51).

NEW MATERIALS FROM THE BMS

These two new slide sets are now available

S154 SCHOOL FOR BLIND GIRLS

The latest on the developing story of
help given to blind girls in Bangladesh

S157 THE FRENCH CONNEXION

This new and popular presentation of the BMS's
new involvement in France is now available in a
new version for Wales with a Welsh commentary
and a Welsh script

Project Material

THE FRENCH CONNEXION

— project pack is now available containing
material to interest all those taking part
in this year's Young People's project.
It contains recipes, games to play,
ideas for prayers and discussion,
songs, recipes, prayer cycle, etc.

HEALING HANDS

leaflet, poster, background material, order of
service, prayer — these are now ready to help those
sharing in the current Women's project

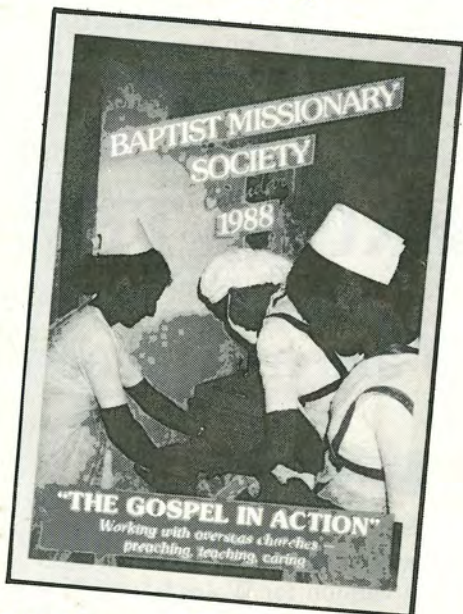
For any of the above material please write to:

**Baptist Missionary Society
93 Gloucester Place
LONDON
W1H 4AA**

NOTICES

1988 CALENDARS

These are now available!
Yes really! Just write into Mission House
and your order will be despatched
immediately.



It is an engagement calendar, A4 in size
with 14 full colour photographs
illustrating the areas where BMS is at
work.

The cost? £1.50 or £1.75 by post.

MAKE MISSION LIVE!

Workshops for

**Missionary Secretaries, Ministers,
Youth Leaders, etc.**
and all interested in mission education

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

PLYMOUTH – Saturday 12 September
at Mutley Baptist Church

TRURO – Saturday 7 November
at Truro Baptist Church

Further details from:

Rev Peter F E Amies
9 Newport Close
Clevedon
Avon
BS21 5DZ
Tel: 0272 875563

HARVEST APPEAL 1987

Special material – leaflets, posters,
discussion starters, worship aids,
etc. have been prepared for this
year's BMS – Operation Agri joint
Harvest Appeal for the work of
Agriculture and Rural Development.

Please use the special order form
which has been sent to every
church.

COLOUR POSTERS

The first two in our new series of full
colour A3 size posters are now available
at £1.00 each, inclusive.

By popular request we have reproduced
the cover photograph of the March 1986
Herald featuring the two young girls from
Nepal.

The second poster is of a Baptism scene
in the Kond Hills, India.