

April 1995

MISSIONARY **HERALD**  
*mb.*

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The Missionary Herald is the magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society

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# *mh.* editorial

## ***mh.* Missionary Herald**

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COVER PHOTO  
LOOKING THROUGH THE  
10/40 WINDOW...  
SEE PAGE 6

The good news is that every year the church, world-wide, is growing numerically. There are many more new Christians in Asia, Latin America and Africa. But before we start slapping each other on the back in congratulation there is a more sobering piece of news. Since the beginning of this century, the number of Christians as a percentage of the world's population has hardly changed, staying fixed around 33 per cent. Two-thirds of the world remains to be evangelised.

The other major world religions are also growing rapidly and, more alarmingly, those who profess no religion are becoming a major group on the world-scene.

"It is estimated that atheists and other non-religionists, many influenced by materialism and by the process of secularisation, are now approaching 20 per cent of the world's population and increasing," said BMS General Director Reg Harvey when he initiated the discussion on a new BMS strategy last Autumn.

Not only are the other religions, and some new religions, expanding, they are becoming "more aggressive" in missionary activity.

So as BMS identifies areas of the world where it believes Christian mission could be focused, there is the other question of "how?" Should we be setting out to evangelise unashamedly using all the modern technologies and techniques available to us? Or should we be entering into dialogue and discussion seeking to understand what Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists believe as much as to seek their understanding of what we believe? We begin to explore some of these issues this month particularly remembering that the BMS is "committed to the view that women and men find salvation and forgiveness uniquely in Jesus Christ..."

What is obvious is that there is still a great task of mission to be done and BMS can hardly do it alone. It has to be done in partnership with other members of "the world church..." "The Two Thirds World church is particularly lively and the fastest growing numerically in terms of missionary outreach," said Reg Harvey. ●

# travelling

“The challenges and possibilities of living distinctively

**Y**ou can't sit in the rickshaw by yourself!" said Fatima's father. "My nephew's son will go with you and our brother is on his motor bike to keep you safe."

Once again I'm breaking cross-cultural barriers by sitting alone in a cycle rickshaw, hood up, for a 15 minute ride across town to catch a coach for the 250 mile journey back to the capital. Heads shake and tongues wag about this strange white woman who has no husband, no son, no brother to care for her!

Another problem at the coach station: "Where can we put her? There are no single seats and she can't sit next to a stranger!" Eventually it was agreed. But the man sitting alongside didn't keep his hands to himself and the journey took on nightmare proportions! Was I angry? No! I was in the wrong, travelling alone, proclaiming that I was "fair game".

This has been repeated endlessly in the 25 years I've travelled by train, road and boat, throughout my country. Air travel is less fraught. Passengers have a broader world-view but they still comment: "Where's her husband? Is he a national or expatriate? How old are the children?"

In this Muslim society women are "special and protected". The daughters

of my middle class friends are escorted to and from school and college, their friends are closely monitored and their marriages will be arranged by the parents, even if it's to someone they meet at university.

However, middle class women are able to meet at the YWCA, learn new skills, begin to be concerned for under-privileged sisters, understand women's rights, laws of inheritance and divorce. The six YWCA centres are making a significant impact and are well accepted. It's good to be involved and to encourage professional, committed Christian women who are local, national and international leaders.

Daughters of poor farmers and fishermen within the Christian community often aspire to be nurses. Nursing gives them a secure job and helps the family. As the government expands health services more Moslem

girls are also entering nursing. But selection isn't based solely on education or on a sympathetic referee. It also depends on whether they can pay the head of the nurses' training school to gain admission! Usually it is far above the means of the genuinely poor.

For 20 years I've listened to nurses telling of their hopes, fears, joys and woes. Christian nurses are more understanding of my singleness and my years of work in a local Christian hospital provide a useful means of contact in many government hospital around the country.

It's a joy to visit district hospitals and see those I helped train now respected members of the nursing department. To see them happily married to a Christian, part of a local church, bringing up families to love Jesus Christ, makes the hassle of travel fade into insignificance.

**Below:  
Safe  
travel?  
Running  
risks on a  
single  
ticket**



# g alone

as a Christian woman in a Muslim land."

For some the pressure is too great: afraid of singleness, the promise of a secure future as the wife of a doctor, businessman or bank manager, the lack of initiative from parents who "need" the daughter's income. So the nurse marries a non-Christian (usually a Muslim, occasionally a Hindu). Many deny their community background and embrace Islam. Some make token adjustment. Others say: "One day I'll return."

It's easier for me. At 60 or 65 I'll return home and not face being a nuisance to my brothers, of no use or value, not "fitting-in" yet needing to be fed.

Village girls are migrating to the capital to work in the garment factories. Their wages help families buy land, repair a house, educate a son, but there's no thought of making a marriage arrangement until it's too late!

They form another group needing someone to listen, to pray with, to encourage them to believe that the God and Father of Jesus Christ is Sovereign, and able to keep those who trust in Him.

Some mission groups don't permit single women to serve here except in established institutions where the living situation is secure and respectable. When I transferred from an institution to the capital it took two years to establish myself in the neighbourhood. This meant not going out after dark unless accompanied by another lady and always telling the gateman where I was going and when I'd be returning.

My rubbish bin is closely examined. "Does she eat pork or have alcohol in the house?"

Either would prevent neighbours from accepting invitations to tea in case of "contaminated" plates or

glasses. Door to door vegetable sellers save me the taunts of market traders. I have an excellent rapport with the local grocery store so I'm always served quickly. The shop keeper fends off awkward questions and keeps beggars at bay.

Local rickshaw pullers and baby-taxi drivers know me and my flat mate because of our regular trips to the office, bus station and bank. They greet us with a cheery smile, statement of destination and price when we wonder which rickshaw or baby taxi to approach!

Physical freedom may be restricted, clothing may be limited to the appropriate but the spiritual possibilities are great...

To ask God to pour his love into one's heart for the people; to be open to the imaginative opportunities he gives to share that love by word or deed; to give God the praise that is his due on behalf of the people; year by year to cry to God for the other sons and daughters of Abraham; to identify and empathise with a small, entrenched, frightened, discriminated - against Christian community, many of whom do not have a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In these is a challenge worth a resounding response. "Here am I, Lord send me." ●



# Drawing back the

Jan Kendall looks through the 10/40 Window, the area on a map of the world between the latitudes 10° and 40° north of the equator, which sweeps across Africa to the Middle East and Asia.

**T**hey may only be statistics, (and we all know about statistics!), but nevertheless the figures haunt us inescapably, not least because behind each statistic is a person.

What am I talking about? The 10/40 Window, the area on a map of the world between the latitudes 10° and 40° north of the equator, which sweeps across Africa to the Middle East and Asia. Luis Bush, the creator of the concept and international director of AD2000 argues that this "Window" has the world's areas of greatest physical and spiritual need, most of the world's least reached peoples, and most of the governments that oppose

Christianity.

Now for the statistics! Of the world's 50 least evangelised countries, 37 are within the 10/40 Window, and put another way, 97 per cent of people in the least evangelised countries live in the 10/40 Window. If we take the top 50 of the world's least evangelised megacities, that is, cities with over one million population, all 50 are in the 10/40 Window.

This area also contains people following three of the world's dominant religions, that is, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

Working from east to west cross this map, we see that much of the Muslim world pushes across North Africa into the Middle East,

**82% OF THE WORLD'S  
POOREST LIVE IN THE  
10/40 WINDOW**

shading on the map that in fact represents 700 million people.

The subcontinent of India, with its 904 million people, around 80 per cent are Hindu. And the Buddhist world, encompassing countries such as Thailand, and Vietnam, embraces the whole of China, (1.2 billion people) which while officially atheist, includes many adhering to their own blend of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and folk religion.

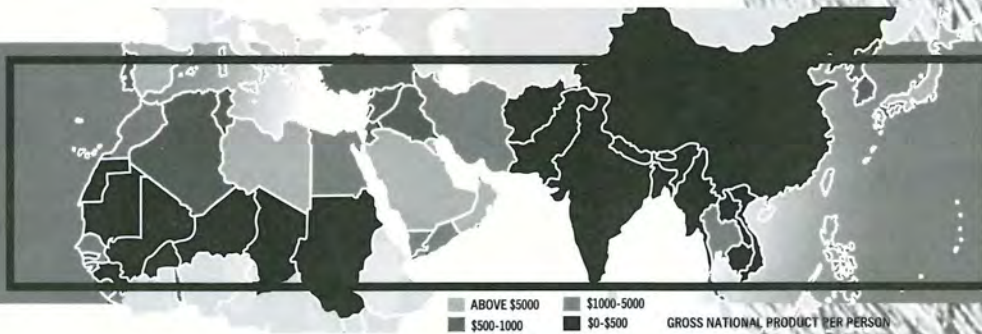
More statistics: 82 per cent of the world's poor live in the 10/40 Window. On average they exist on less than \$500 (about £320) per person per year. Luis Bush says: "Committed Christians



■ MUSLIM      ■ BUDDHIST  
■ HINDU      ■ BUDDHIST, SHINTO  
■ BUDDHIST, FOLK RELIGIONS, ATHEISM

**2.7 BILLION BUDDHISTS,  
HINDUS AND MUSLIMS  
IN THE 10/40 WINDOW**

# Curtains



cannot ignore the reality that there is a remarkable overlap between the poorest countries of the world and those which are the least evangelized.”

This concept may seem a little strange to some, but if nothing else Luis Bush and others who have taken on board his vision, have enabled us to look at our world in a new light.

Perhaps these people, this 44 per cent of the world's population, will stay as a statistic in our mind, and no more. But if we are thinking of a strategy to reach all people with the Gospel, it is surely something that cannot be ignored, unless, of course, you can come up with something better! ●

## COUNTRIES IN THE 10/40 (61 countries)

Afghanistan	Lebanon
Algeria	Libya
Bahrain	Macau
Bangladesh	Mali
Benin	Malta
Bhutan	Mauritania
Burkina Faso	Morocco
Cambodia	Myanmar
Chad	Nepal
China	Niger
Cyprus	Oman
Djibouti	Pakistan
Egypt	Philippines
Ethiopia	Portugal
Gambia	Qatar
Gaza Strip	Saudi Arabia
Gibraltar	Senegal
Greece	Sudan
Guinea	Syria
Guinea-Bissau	Taiwan
Hong Kong	Tajikistan
India	Thailand
Iran	Tunisia
Iraq	Turkey
Israel	Turkmenistan
Japan	United Arab
Jordan	Vietnam
Korea, North	West Bank
Korea, South	Western Sahara
Kuwait	Yemen
Laos	

One boy's view through the 10/40 Window. But will he remain just a statistic?





## Reaching an

# unreached

# people

Alan Wood in Niger, tells us about the arrival of a much needed vehicle, which will be used to accompany nomadic herdsman and their families.

**F**rom the Benin shoreline we stood and watched as the ship eased itself safely into Cotonou port. Blue and red containers stacked almost bridge-high on its open deck gleamed in the yellow late-afternoon light. And somewhere on that deck was our friend Robbie's long-awaited car. No ordinary car either, for this one had been specially built to be a vehicle of God's love. Let me explain...

SIM missionaries are evangelising and discipling nomadic cattle herders, the Fulani. The nomads wander around a central belt of desert and sparse scrubland seeking water and food for their cattle. Church planting among these people has been rewarding but has also brought its frustrations.

According to one missionary: "You can set out to talk with a group and discover they've moved on by the time you get there!"

How can missionaries spend time with the nomads, time needed for building up understanding and relationships, for introducing them to Jesus Christ, for strengthening them as his followers and as evangelists to others? Answer: the 'Nomadmobile', Robbie's special car.

Robbie and Leanne Kennewell had

already spent three years working in eastern Niger, during which time the problem of intermittent contact with nomadic groups became increasingly apparent. The Nomadmobile was intended to be a solution to real church ministry problems, not an expensive eye-catching gimmick. Once designed and built, it took several months to ship the car from England to West Africa. The Kennewells travelled from Niger to Benin to fetch it but passed five frustrating weeks in Cotonou before deciding that Robbie would have to wait alone until it turned up.

Once the port agent had notified SIM that the ship had berthed, the mission administration spent a few days preparing the import-export forms for the customs officers. Robbie had to send faxes to the UK and make telephone calls to SIM in Niamey before some of the papers could be completed. (The situation was particularly complicated since the car was being imported through Benin for final registration in land-locked Niger). Finally, all was sorted and permission was given for him to collect the vehicle.

Its delayed arrival had been the subject of many prayers at the monthly meetings held at all the

mission bases, including our own at Galmi hospital. You can imagine our excitement when Ruth and I were amongst the first to see the answer to those prayers. The Nomadmobile was just recognisable as a Land Rover. The chassis was extended, with a double rear axle. It sported an air-conditioner on top (essential for the Sahel) and had a full-length roof rack. The machine was powered by a V8 engine, so that the car could drive over, and escape from, sand dunes. The control panel had a small forest of toggle switches for the in-built extras, and looked as if it had been lifted straight from a space shuttle!

Robbie's background as an Army engineer was evident not just from the design but from the extensive collection of spares locked inside the vehicle. They included a replacement engine, batteries, a dozen shock absorbers and no less than three sets of tyres. With such stocks, the missionaries could have years of uninterrupted use out of the car.

According to import-export regulations, Robbie had 72 hours to get the vehicle out of Benin. He emptied and repacked the spare parts, fitted suitable tyres for travelling at speed on asphalt roads, refuelled and test drove the car around Cotonou.



Obtaining fuel could be difficult. An oil workers' strike in Nigeria had caused shortages in neighbouring countries. Happily he managed to fill his tank, drive the length of Benin (500 miles) and cross into Niger with half a day to spare.

Some days later we flew from Cotonou to Niamey and on to Galmi. We met the Kennewells at the hospital compound, staying overnight before driving further eastwards to Fulani grazing areas. There, the car will serve as home, a correspondence schoolroom for Josh (their ten year old son), a dispensary and a store for Christian teaching materials.

The Kennewells will live in it for weeks at a time, accompanying nomadic herdsmen and their families wherever and whenever they move on. Thus they will gain the time needed to effectively establish and teach new Christian believers. Christ's great commission will be fulfilled amongst these nomads through ingenuity, hard work and divine responses to persistent prayer. ●

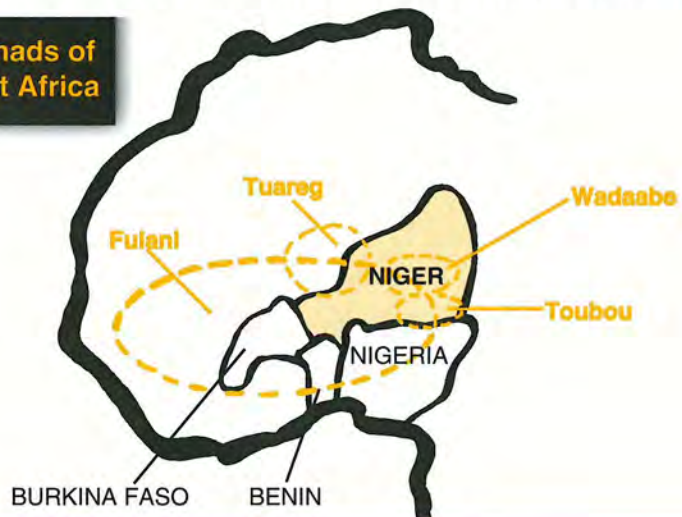
**Alan and Ruth Wood** left Zaire during the 1991 conflict and were seconded by BMS to the Sudan Interior Mission.



## Profile of an unreached people: the Toubou

Alan Wood focuses on one of the nomadic groups of Niger.

### Nomads of West Africa



**T**he Toubou are spread eastward from Goure to Chad. They originally came from the mountains of northwestern Chad and Libya and large populations of Toubou are still located in there. In Niger, the 95,000 Toubou are divided into two dialect groups: the Teda in the north, around Bilma, and the Daza in the south east around Lake Chad. The Teda are almost completely nomadic, travelling with their camels and goats between oases and trading towns. The cattle-owning Daza remain close to wells and often live in towns.

The Toubou have a long history as desert warriors who ruthlessly controlled the caravan routes in their area. They converted to Islam from animism during the last century after a thousand years of contact with Arab traders. Currently there are no known

Toubou Christians and no Bible translation. Translators and church planters from Summer Institute of Linguistics/Wycliffe, Frontiers Mission and SIM International are making a joint effort to reach them. Galmi hospital staff, including Alan Wood, have provided medical kits and basic health care briefings for missionaries who are passing through on their way to such geographically isolated areas.

Obstacles to reaching the Toubou include their adherence to Islam, the remoteness of the areas they inhabit, their warrior traditions and values, and a strong sense of identity which keeps them from readily learning other languages.

This ministry, like all those for unreached peoples, requires missionaries and supporters alike who can prove themselves committed to prayer and lovingly hold a vision for years. ●



# town ablaze

Risking his life,  
Christian elder  
Bapak Mambor  
demonstrated  
God's love to  
his Muslim  
neighbours.

**F**ire! Fire!" was the cry raised by the people, as the market was razed to the ground. People ran from all corners after the tiny open cooking flame of a house-boat lit the spilt fuel from a 44 gallon drum by the waterside. The timber town sparked and blazed as the fire spread from shop to shop, clearing the little Muslim market centre of people, goods and property.

Not just the flames cleared the goods. The "Christian" community of this Indonesian town helped themselves too, as the looters set forth.

But through the flames ran one lone soul, one agent of God's love, staking his life - for the sake of the mosque.

The Muslim

community bustled, trying to save their stock and businesses, as their mosque went up in smoke.

Not Bapak Mambor. Bapak, a Christian elder, ran in and returned carrying the Koran and prayer mats to the safety of amazed onlookers. In he went again, returning with the loud speaker system which had so often bellowed out during Sunday services, deliberately disrupting Christian worship. He dropped it at the feet of Muslim onlookers and returned once more, this time with crow-bar in hand to knock a hole in the tank of holy water, used by Muslims to wash before prayer. The flames were licking the steps of the mosque as the water flowed from the tank, quenching their thirst and leaving a clear

path around the mosque.

A week later, the charred remains of the town market place could be seen - with one solitary act of love visible. A mosque stands as a symbol to God's love shown through one man's incredible act.

The story didn't end there. It began, as the Muslims began to ask why. Why would a Christian risk his life for them? Why would he do it?

The Muslim leaders wanted to offer Bapak some money for saving their mosque. However, he refused, which is not a normal thing to do when money is involved. Rather, he pointed out that it was good that they could be friends, respect each other's faith and beliefs, and work



alongside each other.

They persisted and asked if there was anything else that they could do in return. Eventually he replied, asking that when the Christians meet for church on Sundays, that others drive past quietly so as not to disturb the church service.

The following Sunday before church began, the Muslim community erected signs which blocked off the road past the church, indicating a detour while the Sunday service was running so as not to disturb the Christians' worship.

They even gave Bapak the opportunity to sit with Muslim leaders and speak of God's loving act in the sending of his Son, of his life, and of his death for us, who did not recognise him. This was that Muslim community's opportunity to begin to recognise Christ. ●

From Vision the magazine of the Australian Baptist Missionary Society.



## Steve Woolcock, 28:19 Action Team Co-ordinator introduces the 28:19 ALBANIAN ACTION TEAM



**Albanian 28:19 Action Team:  
Rachel, (top) Lucy, Danny.**

Our three intrepid missionaries, Lucy, Rachel and Danny boarded the plane bound for Tirana on a cold evening last October. Armed with enough winter clothes to keep an entire Antarctic expedition warm and cosy, and enough toilet rolls to supply all Tirana for six months, I watched them boldly go where no 28:29 Action Team has gone before. The three of them knew very little of the life they were about to embark upon. They thought that it was probably going to be very interesting, demanding, rewarding and, at times, hard. From all accounts they were right.

The "Three Musketeers" have recently completed four of their six months in Albania. On arrival they spent five days on a

language course in the capital, Tirana, they then left Albania. They travelled to Rome to organise a children's programme for the BMS European Missionaries' Retreat.

Returning to Albania they started work alongside BMS workers Heather and Ryder Rogers at Bregu-i-Lumit. Bregu is a village 20 minutes from Tirana which the Team describe as "a muddy place" where ex-political prisoners, persecuted families and Gypsies live. The Team live in Heather and Ryder's house which also acts as a church building.

Their day begins at 6.30 am and work starts at 9.00 am. Weekly activities include lots of visits where their knowledge of the Albanian language is put to great use; a twice weekly music club, English conversation classes, Rachel's children's Bible classes, Lucy's drama club (not sure whether this got off the ground), prayer meetings, Bible studies and the Sunday service.

The Team is also building links with the local Gypsy community. In Albania Gypsies are despised by the majority of people but the Team is finding a welcome into this community. The people are very open to them.

The church has grown during the past few months, although church attendance is erratic. Christmas was a high point for the Team although the majority of Albanians are nominally Muslim and so don't celebrate. The churches in Tirana got together for a big celebration on Christmas Eve and on Christmas morning the Bregu church service had 80 people crammed into the hallway of the Rogers' house with more outside.

BMS, as part of a European Baptist Federation team, has only been working in Albania for a short time. So the Team is making a huge contribution in getting the church established in the local community by getting alongside people and making God's love a living reality. ●



**Above: Ryder Rogers at the first communion service at Bregu.**

**Below: Preparing for Easter witness.**



# ways & m

**F**riends of mine have just been on the receiving end of “the hard sell”. A salesman offered to clean their living room carpet for free. But it soon became clear that his real aim was to sell a vacuum cleaner, for £1,175 no less! A few small squares of carpet were cleaned as part of the demonstration. My friends were invited to use their own cleaner after sprinkling salt on the carpet and were then shown with the new cleaner how much had been left. The demonstrator was singularly reluctant to let the two cleaners be used in reverse order!

The lessons for reaching those of other faiths are surely clear. We must be careful not to misrepresent or disparage the beliefs of others. Instead, respecting others, we need to “commend Christ”, and to do so with sensitivity and openness.

After four hours he finally left, without success.

No doubt such tactics sometimes secure a sale, but the methods were not fair, the initial approach was not straight, the comparisons were misleading. If the product is as good as claimed, it is indeed worth commending, and it can stand on its own merits.

It is worth asking ourselves, “Who could reach me, and win me to their faith?”

In a meeting of Muslims and Christians, I once endured a long harangue from a renowned Muslim scholar and “evangelist”. Briefly, his message was: “Whatever you Christians say, you actually believe in three gods – stop it!” When he finished, we Christians could hardly wait to put him right. A Muslim lady beat us to it: “Would all those Christians in this room who believe in three gods please stand up!” We stayed firmly on our seats. “Would all those Christians who believe in one God stand up!” We rose as one, in a scene of high drama.

If either of those two Muslims could reach and convert me, it would be the lady with her sensitive appreciation, and not the evangelist. No doubt the latter believed what he was saying, and it would win great applause at the Muslim equivalent of a missionary rally. But he had not listened sensitively in dialogue to Christians’ own account of what they believe. He can probably count the number of conversions resulting from



**Top right:** Face from a communist age but open to a message that can be trusted.  
**Above:** An Albanian market place: No high-pressure sale of the gospel.

# eans



his efforts; but how many more has he turned the other way?

You do not magnify Christ by belittling others

The lessons for reaching those of other faiths are surely clear. We must be careful not to misrepresent or disparage the beliefs (or practices) of others. Instead, respecting others, we need to “commend Christ”, and to do so with sensitivity and openness.

In India, one of the finest Christians I knew was a high-caste Brahmin until he was in his early twenties. Educated like so many Indians in a Christian school and college, he was nevertheless zealous for Hinduism. Then, facing the temptations that come to a young man and finding no answer in his own religion, he turned to the Christ of whom he had learned at college.

“O Lord, if you are, save me from

myself.” His prayer was answered, and from then on he became a devoted servant of Jesus.

He faced bitter opposition from his family and persecution almost to death. I would love to have been the missionary who made Christ known to him, but I am glad he did not press him too hard; that would be a fearful responsibility. It is God who converts. This man made his choice freely, on his own, and his suffering of persecution was no one’s responsibility but his own.

Christian faithfulness may indeed bring opposition; but we cannot assume that all opposition is a sign of our faithfulness! Remember the hard-selling salesmen. There have been too many instances of undue inducement, of “getting at people” when they are vulnerable, and of “rice Christians,” and resentments may be well-founded – like my resentment of that Muslim “evangelist”. There are also unavoidable consequences from the days of imperialism; Asian or African Christians can evangelise their own people in ways unthinkable for the missionary or indeed for any outsider.

But whoever evangelises, the golden rule must be: magnify Christ, and do not belittle others. ●

**Edward Williams** is secretary of JOPPA, the Baptist Group for Christian Witness in a Multi-Faith Society. Now minister of Alcester Baptist Church, he was for 10 years on the staff of Serampore College in India, and then for 16 years at Sparkbrook Baptist Church in a mainly Muslim area of Birmingham.

## Living Side By Side

The Thais call their country “Land of the Free”. It is the only state of South-East Asia to have never come under colonial rule. To some observers it could perhaps be seen to be free in another way: though 95 per cent Buddhist, it is remarkably tolerant of the other religions of Islam and Christianity.

Thai Buddhism follows the Theravada tradition which aims to preserve the way of life described in the oldest Buddhist writings. (The other strand of Buddhism, Mahayana, with its own distinctive features, is strong in China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam.) Christian missionaries have found Buddhists to be tolerant of gospel preaching. They take the view, “It doesn’t matter what you believe as long as you believe something...but don’t expect me to believe it too.”

You may be surprised that on 25 December Buddhist Thailand celebrates Christmas. For the Christians, however, Christmas can be celebrated anytime from 14 December through to 3 January. This is to enable the leaders of the district to lead the celebrations in all the different locations.

BMS missionary, Geoff Bland, recalls talking to a number of shop assistants on 26 December. They wanted to know what he had been doing on Christmas Day. Later that day he asked a Christian from another church what she had been doing for Christmas but she could not understand, because Christmas had not yet happened in her church!

Easter usually happens around the same time as Songkran, one of the major Thai festivals, marking the Thai New Year, and the hope of the forthcoming rainy season. The church has adapted the custom of a water blessing; water is poured onto the outstretched hands of the congregation whilst prayers of blessing are said.

Christianity does not always live cosily side by side with Buddhism in Thailand. Death causes problems.

Buddhists are cremated. Traditionally Christians have been buried, and when the church has no graveyard this can lead to contention. “Common” land can be allocated, but then it cannot be used for anything else. There is also a deeply held fear of ghosts; firecrackers will be let off by Buddhist men at the funeral to frighten away unwelcome spirits. One funeral of a Christian who died of liver cancer led to the group of believers being told: “In future there will be no more burials.” For once the predominantly elderly Christians became agitated. They were not used to the feeling of displeasure from their Buddhist neighbours. ●

# GO

## Go and tell the world. It's part and

In the fourth of his articles, **John Wilson** talks about the 'going' of the gospel in Matthew 28:19.

**H**ere is one of the most exciting, adrenalin releasing words in the New Testament. I was 15 when I heard Jesus call me to come to him. Not long after that I heard him tell me to go. I was baptised on 8 July 1973 and four days later I was on the way to France for a French language exchange.

That next Sunday, I was alone with no service to go to and so I spent time reading and praying in my room. There the Spirit came upon me in such a way that I began to speak in tongues. This was no high pressured moment but certainly being surrounded by "foreigners" meant that the Pentecost ingredients were there! My immediate reaction was not to go and talk about my experience but to go and talk about it to Jesus.

It was in that French family that the first person I can remember suggested that I should become a pastor (or was it a priest?). Once we come to Christ, we can't help but go and tell people how marvellous he is, how he has changed our lives and filled us with good things. When Christ calls us to himself, he gives us the energy and zeal to go and share it.

I'm never more excited than when I can tell someone about Jesus and what he has done for me. Go and tell the world. It's part and parcel of being a Christian. British Baptists feel so strongly about this that their third "Declaration of Principle" states categorically: "That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world."

"Go" is an exciting word but it doesn't represent all that Jesus said. (Matt 28:19). Matthew uses the present continuous tense: "Going." It doesn't appear to have the same dynamism as the imperative form but there is something important here. "Go" is punctual. It's like the start of a race. All the energy and excitement is released when the starter fires the pistol. But there has to be more than excitement if we are to finish the race. "Going" involves training and preparation. It needs support and determination. Perseverance and patience are also required, so that the initial adrenalin doesn't dissipate into general fatigue and inertia.

When Jesus sent the disciples it was not just with a command or an





**John Wilson after a church service in Bron, France.**

# GO

## parcel of being a Christian.

enthusiastic send off. It was with all the forethought and knowledge of the long-haul and endurance as well as back-up and support that would be needed.

When we send missionaries they do not go alone. Scores of people surround them, people praying, people giving, people involved in administration and pastoral support.

This part of the “going” doesn’t always seem so dynamic. We might fall into the danger of thinking that it is only missionaries who are doing the real work of mission. Paul and Barnabas were sent out with the support, guidance and encouragement of the church in Antioch, as well as the oversight of the Jerusalem brethren. They came back to give their reports and became key co-ordinators of the churches’ relief programme.

If we only see “going” in individual terms then we miss the glorious commission that Christ gives his church. Together as a committed thoughtful determined group of believers we are working to sustain the reaching out of the good news to all nations and peoples.

Sometimes BMS is criticised for

not being a “faith mission”. But faith for mission is not just an individual experience. “Going” includes corporate faith. How are we putting our faith into practice for the “evangelisation of the world?” Supporting individuals both nationals and expatriates is part of the “going” but projects, aid, scholarships, printing are also part of the going.

Too often mission centres on personality rather than strategy. BMS spends valuable money on publicity in order to inspire giving. If local churches were committed to “going” on a global scale, informed themselves and intervened through the decision structures available to them, then world mission would go on unabated.

Such comment seems naïve in a society where compassion publicity is becoming an industry. We are in danger of giving to the glossy and pitiful, rather than the thoughtful and faithful ministry that perseveres.

“Going” was a community experience for Jesus’s disciples. The BMS was begun as an expression of community faith amongst Baptist believers. Is it in danger of losing that identity today in the push to compete with charity appeals? ●

## Questions

1. How do you relate to the BMS? Do you know how decisions are taken and to whom to make representation.
2. Do you think mission should be expressed through denominational allegiance? Why?
3. In which order would you put: “finance”; “call”; “strategy”, when talking about mission? Explain your reasoning and relate it to your experience.

## ARTHUR GARMAN



Arthur Garman, Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, died in February at the age of 59, after several months of illness.

Until he took early retirement, Arthur was Treasurer of Watford Borough Council. He also served Leavesden Road Baptist Church, Watford, as Church Secretary. He succeeded Victor Oxley as BMS Treasurer in 1983.

Arthur Garman saw the Society through many major changes. He was at the heart of discussions about introducing computers into BMS and was latterly concerned about updating the systems. As a BMS officer he was fully involved in the arrangements for moving BMS headquarters from London to the joint headquarters with the Baptist Union of Great Britain in Didcot. He also had the honour of being Treasurer during the BiCentenary.

He saw the giving from the churches rise to £2 million and then £3 million and the total income of the BMS rise to over £4 million. But he was always more interested in the work of sharing the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ that this could

NEWS

achieve. When he appealed for more sacrificial giving by churches and individuals, it was because of a passionate concern for the needs of people worldwide and the conviction that these could only be met by making the gospel known in word and in deed.

He had a deep interest in the welfare of missionaries which was reinforced after a visit to Zaire.

Involved in the discussions about the Society's management structures he was Chairman of the vital nominations committee.

The Society has lost a good servant and advocate. We praise God for all that he was able to do through Arthur.

## Landmines

Angola has the largest number of amputees in the world. One person in every 150, that is 70,000 people, have lost legs, mainly because of landmines. The United Nations believes that roughly the same number have been killed by mines.

The mines were laid indiscriminantly by the warring parties - Portuguese, UNITA, Government, Cuban, South African - that have ranged up and down Angola for 35 years.

Some of the latest mines are made of plastic and designed to fool metal detectors. They are about the size of a tin of salmon and can be detonated by no more than seven pounds. Others, once they are triggered, bounce into the air and explode at chest height to kill anyone within a range of 100 feet.

Understandably there is a shortage of artificial limbs. Angola cannot possibly produce

all that are needed to give people some mobility and so thousands of people resort to begging in order to survive.

But the greatest problem is psychological. Some aid workers talk about people, particularly children, being in a state of shock several years afterwards.

At a meeting of the Association for Baptist Action in Mission (ABAM) last year, Alvaro Rodrigues of the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) appealed for assistance for the relief work which Baptists are involved in. Baptist groups as far apart as Belgium and India agreed to see what they could do. In fact the small Belgian Baptist Union immediately got in touch with the King appealing for surplus tents and other supplies from the military.

## BMS Microdome

Coming to the Baptist Assembly in Plymouth next month? Then you must visit BMS Microdome World. Situated in the exhibition area, the BMS is running an event where you can meet, hear and talk with missionaries and BMS staff.

This exciting programme allows you to encounter mission close up, rather than just hear about it in the main auditorium.

An event not to be missed! Watch out for who's on and when, in the Assembly Updates.



## Publicity Manager

Newspaper editor Richard Wells has joined BMS to head its publications and publicity operation. He started work as Publicity Manager in the Constituency Support Department in March.

Richard (43), who has 25 years experience in journalism, has edited The Bucks Herald, for eight years, following six years as deputy editor of the Bucks Free Press.

One of Richard's first tasks will be to get to grips with recommendations in the review of Constituency Support activities which examined the awareness and image of the society, its publications and its resource material.

Richard and his wife, nursery teacher Dorothy, have three children - Anna (15), Mark (12) and Laura-Jo (10). They were both brought up in the Baptist tradition - Richard at Queen's Road, Wimbledon, and Cape Town Baptist, and Dorothy at Green Street Green, Kent.

Richard and Dorothy, married at Oaklands Baptist Church, Surbiton Hill, in 1974, were youth



Richard Wells



and Sunday school helpers there and later, at Forest Row, Sussex, they were asked to lead young people's work.

Richard says that for the past year he has known a stirring of God in his spirit about the direction of his career - a challenge to use his journalistic skills and experience directly for his kingdom.

"The current move of God's Holy Spirit through the Church is making us more sensitive to his desire to build his kingdom through us," said Richard. "This is bound to make us more aware of our role in mission - whether it be at the sharp end of missionary activity, giving time and money or in prayer support."

Richard relaxes by playing keyboards. He is a keen amateur photographer, an average badminton player and he and his family enjoy walking.

They worship at The King's Church, High Wycombe, where Richard is a member of the management team and one of the musicians.

## From YFC to BMS

Phil Marsden is now heading the BMS Youth Team.

Classic tracks by Elvis Presley and Cliff Richard now sit in someone else's collection because of the call of God on the life of Phil Marsden. Phil sold his prized record collection, his hi-fi and his car and ploughed his life savings in a three year Active Christian Evangelism Course (ACE).

That was seven years ago. Today Mancunian Phil (27) is the new BMS Young People's and Children's Co-ordinator. Phil will be building on the Young People

and Children's initiatives such as the highly successful 28:19 Action Team mission programme now in its fifth year.

His sacrifice in 1987 took him through practical training for Christian ministry and leadership, experience in youth and schools evangelism, and into the directorship of South Trafford Youth for Christ.



Phil Marsden

"Joining ACE changed the course of my life," said Phil. "I ended up with nothing. I'd sold all that I had. I got to know what living by faith was about. I didn't know where the next tube of toothpaste was coming from."

Phil, a singer/songwriter and musician, is known among friends and colleagues as someone who makes things happen and relishes the challenge of turning ideas into reality.

Apart from YFC presentations to schools and youth groups using his own Christian songs and mimes, Phil put a show together for the stage of the Garrick Theatre, Altrincham - and performed as well.

A high spot of his years with YFC was as a telephone counsellor with Granada TV's Air Care service, a religious broadcast at Easter and Christmas which allowed viewers

to call in.

Phil, who is married to Sandra, a former British Rail training and development officer, is father to four month old Amy.

"We are delighted that Phil is joining our team," said Andy Stockbridge, BMS Director for Constituency Support. "Our work in stimulating interest in overseas mission among young people is essential to the future of BMS. Phil's breadth of experience gained with YFC and his vision for young people in mission will help us meet that challenge."

## Into all the world

"The books you sent are tools for my own and others' upbringing and maturing as believers," wrote G Geutcheva of Bulgaria to Sovereign World Trust. "During Communism, believers here felt forgotten and separated from the world-wide church. These books speak of care and of God's love flowing from one Christian to another."

"For nine years we have sent new books on Biblical subjects which are culturally relevant to needy pastors in the Third World. We try to send the best books available, not our Western, 'left-overs' said Sovereign World Trust Director Jan Mungeam.

Most go by post; some go with those with an itinerant ministry.

The Trust also funds 60 translation projects ranging from Burmese to Albanian, Swahili to Russia.

Donors, many of whom have joined the Trust's book club to give rather than receive a book each month, have enabled around one million books to be distributed.

### CHECK OUT

APRIL 1995

#### ARRIVALS

Paul and Jackie Wicks from Nepal.  
David and Yvonne Wheeler from Albania.  
Saverio and Betsy Guarna from Albania (in May).  
Chris and Marion Collicot from Brazil.  
Roger and Angela Collinson from Brazil.  
Derek and Joanna Punchard from Brazil.  
29:19 Action Teams from Belgium, Zimbabwe, Jamaica and Albania.

#### DEPARTURES

Paul and Elizabeth Towlson to Albania.

#### VISITS

David Martin to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.  
Eric Watson to Bangladesh.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

##### Legacies

Bate, Arthur	2,755.45
Bushill, Miss Marion	5,000.00
Cocker, Mrs Priscilla	71.07
Collins, Berkeley E	200.00
Curry, Edward	100.00
French, Mrs Vera M	3,000.00
Johnston, Miss Barbara	9.05
Lewis, Miss Kathleen	1,000.00
Madaley, Marjorie	5,000.00
Marsden, Edward C	309.38
McAdams, Miss Emily	35.49
Mouncy, Miss W J	978.29
Nelson, Mrs D M	150.00
Patrick, Mrs D	100.00
Rawlinson, Miss Dorothy	26.46
Robson, Mrs Janet	200.00
Terrell, Revd Stuart	200.00
Turnbull, Miss Mary	25.29
Walker, Mr William T	400.00
Ward, Irene M	4,492.87
West, Miss Irene G	250.00

TOTAL 1,005.88

#### ANONYMOUS GIFTS

CAF voucher	129.94
Cardiff	5.00
Consett	10.00
Ely	25.00
GYE 190	99.94
Glasgow	20.00
Harwell	5.00
Leicestershire	20.00
Nottingham	21.00
Oxford	5.00
Rickmansworth	10.00
Romford	600.00
Taunton	5.00
Woolwich	40.00

TOTAL 24,303.35

## order form

World mission in the 1990s is exciting, invigorating, and challenging. And you are part of this every time you pick up the *mh* magazine, read it, use it as a stimulus for prayer, or pass it on. From a recent survey here's what other readers have said about the *mh*:

"I feel the magazine presents a superb image, very professional yet caring and Christian."

"I enjoy reading the *mh*. I learn far more about the needs of people in other parts of the world and then am more able to appreciate the various ministries being carried out by our missionaries. Names become more familiar and prayer becomes more meaningful."

"The more one learns of those persons prepared to give up all for the Gospel's sake, the more one feels the necessity to become a more effective local witness for Jesus."

## how to order

**1** If your church has a magazine secretary, please give your order to them. *mh* will then cost £5.00 (10 issues).

**2** If you are not part of a church with a magazine secretary, you will then have to obtain your *mh* magazine directly from BMS, and you will have to pay for postage and packing. At present for a year's subscription (10 issues) this will cost £9.40.

Please send me  copies of the *mh* starting with  (month)

Name

Address

Post Code

Home Church

Are you the church magazine secretary? YES /NO

MAGAZINE SECRETARIES AND FOR BULK ORDERS PLEASE NOTE: MINIMUM ORDER £15.00

Please return this form to the Administration Manager Baptist Missionary Society PO Box 49 Baptist House 129 Broadway Didcot Oxon OX11 8XA BMS is a registered charity



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### Action Card Briefing

#### NEWS FROM TUZLA

Are you surprised by this month's Action Card picture? It isn't the sort of image of a refugee camp that we see on TV. And the young boy holding the kitten so protectively looks like someone we know. But he comes from a country in the middle of civil war and he is at risk in so many ways.

The ceasefire negotiated on 31 December 1994 for Bosnia-Herzegovina has, for the most part, held, except in Bihac. In January civilian casualties were many fewer, prisoners have been exchanged, hospital patients evacuated and aid routes re-opened. Despite this, patients at the Bihac hospital are being fed only once a day.

There are signs of increasing tension between Bosnian and Croat communities within the Bosnia/Croat Federation, especially in Mostar. President Tudjman of Croatia announced that Croatia would not renew the UNPROFOR mandate beyond its expiry date of 31 March. Croatia

says it remains committed to a peaceful resolution, but there are fears that if UNPROFOR withdraws there will be fresh fighting.

Ceasefires, to remain durable and effective, must be complemented by political negotiations and initiatives towards common and comprehensive security, normal community life in terms of families and towns on all sides of the conflict. Common security is the way to lasting national security.

Common security means an end to the so-called "soft ethnic cleansing" of minorities from northern Bosnia. It means respect for human dignity rights. Initiatives like the committee on displaced persons, minorities and human rights which has recently been established in Tuzla, chaired by the UNHCR and attended by civic and community leaders, is one such mark of respect and search tolerance.

Please send your card of encouragement to the UNHCR Office, 55-56 Rudarski Institute, 5700 Tuzla, Bosnia.

# Call to Prayer

Supplementing the BMS 1995 Prayer Guide. Week numbers correspond to those in the Prayer Guide. Copies can be obtained from BMS, price 60p (inc p&p).

## Week 17

APRIL 23-29

### Indonesia

The Convention of Indonesian Baptist Churches (KGBI) has a vision: to evangelise the whole of Indonesia. At present Indonesia is mainly Muslim, with Christians making up somewhere between five per cent and ten per cent of the population. But the vision for mission persists: one church in one town (or village) in one generation. Instead of sending missionaries to Indonesia BMS is supporting Indonesian Baptists in their missionary activities.

Pray for Revd Youtie Legoh, the President of the KGBI, and Revd Jether Mokodaser, the National Secretary. The KGBI have already established three Bible schools and are planning more.

## Week 18-19

APRIL 30-MAY 13

### Baptist Assembly and the Home Base

Give thanks that numbers are up for the first ever Baptist Assembly to be held over the Bank Holiday weekend. For some delegates, this may be the first time they have been able to attend an Assembly. Pray that all who come will both contribute to and benefit from the weekend, and will share in a sense of being part of a larger Baptist family.

Pray for the two new incoming Presidents: Peter Tongeman - Baptist Union, and David Wilson - BMS, and the two new Vice-Presidents whose names will be announce/elected during the Assembly.

## Week 20

MAY 14-20

### Church of North India

Carole Whitmee, working in Balangir in the CNI Sambalpur diocese, was not able to get a permit to take her to the recent BMS All Asia Missionaries Retreat in Thailand. As she had already booked a ticket to Calcutta, she travelled there, and was able to phone home to the UK and to talk to members of her family, including her mother, who was ill with angina. The day after she telephoned her mother was taken into hospital, and died a short while later. On the day of her funeral her last letter to Carole arrived, with her hopes for the year, "I pray the Lord will help us through it." Pray for Carole as she adjusts to life without her mother, and pray that the support the Church has given (especially the congregation on the Mission Compound) will continue.

Carole also works with babies whose mothers have died. Remember Rosi who continues to make good progress, and will soon be a year old. Another baby

comes whose mother died when she was born, and at two months old she weighed just over 4lb. Carole writes: "I then discovered that they were mixing half the amount of milk powder to double the amount of water! That has now been put right and the little girl is making much better progress."

## Week 21

MAY 21-27

### Angola

A war-torn, aching land, with its capital Luanda described as a refuse tip and an open sewer. It had been hoped that a new peace treaty would end the fighting between the government and the UNITA rebels, but so far, nothing has happened.

Pray for Angola:

- For the rapid urbanisation particularly centred on Luanda and the problems this causes, for people living in slums, drinking dirty water and contracting cholera and other diarrhoeal diseases. (One recent survey of 6,000 houses revealed 25 per cent of families had diarrhoea.)
- For adults and children whose lives have been shattered by having one or more limbs blown off or amputated.
- For the beggars and the bandits, and those whose days are riddled with boredom.
- Remember also BMS doctor Simon Collins, who is preparing to go to Angola next year and stand alongside these people in their suffering.

## Week 22

MAY 28-JUNE 3

### Belgium and Italy

The Belgian Action Team write of their work in Morlanwelz: "Our door-to-door work has been hard. We have spent two months doing

this with few results which, from time to time has been discouraging. However we have had some good contacts which illustrate God's faithfulness to us and the way he always keeps his promises. We spoke to an elderly man who had been forced to become a Jehovah's Witness in order to marry his wife, despite not really understanding their beliefs. Since his wife's death, he had abandoned his contacts with the Jehovah's Witnesses and was open to discuss and share his confusion and his search for the truth."

In Altamura, Italy, David and Ann MacFarlane ask for prayer for the downfall of the mafia. "We have just learned that the leader of one of the local 'gangs' was shot and killed in the centre of the town at 4.00 am (one morning). His killer then dumped his body at his home in our street. "Pray for a strong leader and government to emerge for these poor, frightened people and pray for many Christians standing up against the corruption here in Italy, both Catholics and Protestants together."

**Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**  
Matt 28:20b

*Lord,  
you don't make it easy for us  
with your commission  
to make disciples  
of all nations  
even the difficult ones  
close at hand  
in modern Europe  
but it's there  
especially  
that Christians  
need the assurance  
that you are with them  
always.*



## UNREACHED PEOPLES & 10/40 WINDOW

### Islam in Europe.

Table of statistics on Muslim Presence in Europe 1991

Country	Population	Muslims
Albania	3,100,000	1,938,000 (70%)
Bulgaria	9,000,000	1,000,000 (11%)
France	55,600,000	2,400,000 (4.3%)
Germany	79,000,000	1,900,000 (2.4%)
Greece	10,000,000	150,000 (1.5%)
Netherlands	14,600,000	308,000 (2.1%)
United Kingdom	57,000,000	1,534,000 (2.7%)
Yugoslavia	23,400,000	2,600,000 (11%)
		11,830,000
Total for Europe	493,300,000	15,418,500 (3.1%)
C.I.S.	285,000,000	51,120,000 (18%)
European Section	11,500,000	

Statistics derived from David Barrett - World Christian Encyclopaedia 1982; Albrecht Hauser - Comparative Status of Christianity and Islam in Continental Europe; The World Almanac and Book of facts 1991; Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies World Population (revised May 1988) and compiled by Borge Schantz, SSSDA Global Centre for Islamic Studies, April 1992.

### FACT

The 10/40 Window has 44% of the world's population, but only 6% of the world's missionary force working there.

### FOREIGN MISSIONARY DEPLOYMENT

Different mission agencies use different principles to determine where they work. These are broadly as follows:

**Principle 1** Operating through the existing churches. The 1.9 billion Christians in the world thus become the primary entry point, whether in World A, B, or C countries. This is called the partnership principle.

**Principle 2** The world's 4.6 billion who have already heard the Gospel should be the main entry point and target in World A, B, and C countries.

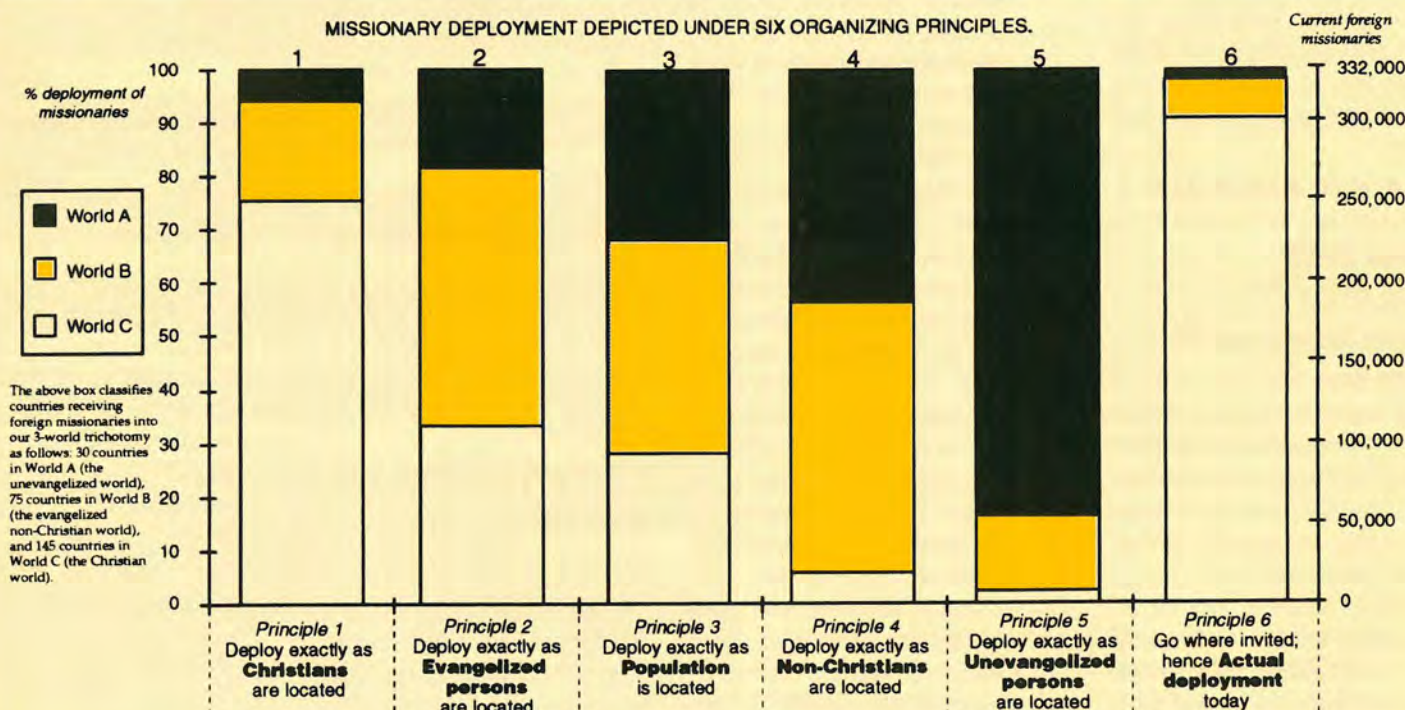
**Principle 3** Every person in the world is equally deserving of the attention of the global missionary force. World A, B, and C countries should thus receive foreign missionaries in exact proportion to their populations.

**Principle 4** Thinking more strategically, some agencies target those who belong to non-Christian religions or no religions at all.

**Principle 5** A small number of agencies the 1.1 billion World A individuals who have never heard the Gospel, and thus deploy missionaries exactly where the unevangelized persons are located.

**Principle 6** Deployment of missionaries is purely based on invitations from churches in the field, and there is no strategic planning as such.

MISSIONARY DEPLOYMENT DEPICTED UNDER SIX ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES.



## QUOTE

“Statistics are signs from God”

Prior Schutz of Taizé

### World Population

	1900	1970	Year mid 1994	2000	2025
Total population	1,619,886,800	3,697,849,000	5,672,815,000	6,260,800,000	8,504,223,000
Adult population (over 15)	1,025,938,000	2,311,156,000	3,857,514,000	4,294,908,800	6,420,688,000
Urban poor	100 million	650 million	1,570 million	1,998 million	3,050 million
Urban slum dwellers	20 million	260 million	780 million	1,300 million	2,100 million
Unevangelised population	788,159,000	1,391,956,000	1,165,809,000	1,038,819,000	600,000,000
Unevangelised as % of world	48.7	38.6	20.6	16.6	7.1

Figures taken from the International Bulletin of Missionary Research Vol 18, No. 1 January 1994

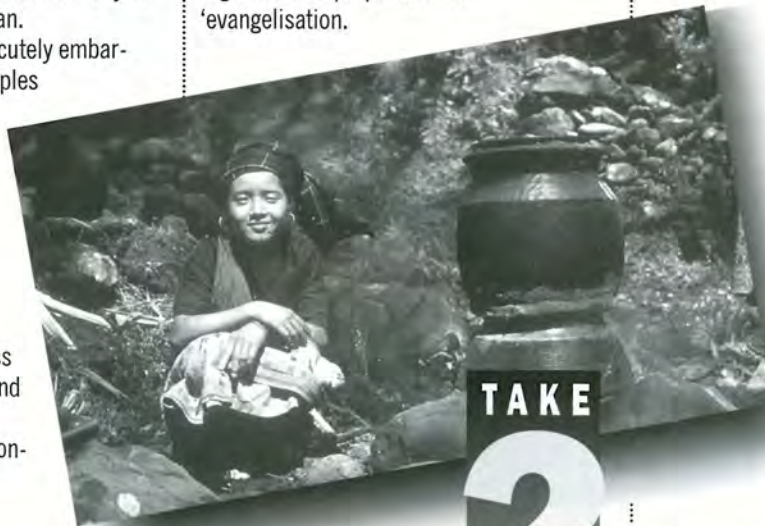
## DOS AND DON'TS WHEN MEETING FACE TO FACE

- Whilst it is well known that Jewish people readily bring humour into their religion, to be light-hearted or flippant in talking with a Muslim would scandalise.
- Jews and Muslims do not eat any pig products.
- Where touching and eating food is concerned, with Muslims one should be careful not to use the left hand.
- Muslims avoid alcohol.
- When sitting one should not allow the soles of one's feet to face other people.
- Muslim women should not normally be addressed directly by a man.
- Hindu girls are often acutely embarrassed to see Western couples showing physical affection in public.
- Burgers should not be offered to Hindus in view of their respect for the cow.
- Sikhs are normally non-smokers.
- Western women's dress can embarrass Muslims and Hindus when it reveals rather than conceals the contours of the figure.

## TO THINK ABOUT

“I gave up the Hindu religion because I came to see that it was not a religion given by God. The errors of it I condemn. But I never found fault with its teaching that God becomes incarnate. Indeed many stories of Krishna and Ram, whom the Hindu religion teaches to be the incarnation of God, used to be very affecting to us... And thus our countrymen have been prepared, to some extent, to appreciate and accept the thoughts of Christianity.”

Nehemiah Goreh, who was a Sanskrit scholar and former exponent of traditional Hinduism. He believed that some conceptions of Hinduism should be regarded as a preparation for 'evangelisation.



TAKE

2

TAKE TWO TAKE

# Fat Calves— emaciated people

What is Hinduism? "It is a vast river. It combines the waters of countless tributaries; it has many ripples and cross-currents; it meanders now one way, now another; but its goal is the ocean of deity." (T. Trautmann)

**W**hen BMS General Director, Reg Harvey visited India recently, he met many Christians. They were making evangelistic inroads with tribal peoples, but were very conscious that little work is being done to reach the 700 million plus Hindus, who make up 80 per cent of the population.

India is not so much a nation, as a sub-continent, with each of its 25 union states as big as a country in its own right. Here 16 per cent of the world's population live. It is estimated that by the year 2020 India will be the most populous country in the world with nearly 1.3 billion people. These people have a great racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity, and, as might be expected, Hinduism is not one homogenous whole. Instead it is made up of different strands and styles ranging from what might be called popular Hinduism with its veneration of 200 million holy cows and a pantheon of 33 million gods to a more intellectual, philosophical Hinduism which does not go in for idol worship at all.

One of the most widely known features of Hindu life is caste, or people grouped in classes, in order of status: the priests (brahmins), royalty and warriors (kshatriyas), merchants, farmers and artisans (vaishyas), and the servants (shudras). Caste restrictions concern every aspect of daily

life, such as controlling contacts for eating, working, marrying and sharing wells. The guiding factor is purity. Those in contact with the gods must be ritually clean and so those who sweep up the dirt or deal with latrines are polluted by their work. It is also possible to be excluded from the system (for an act such as killing a cow) and lose one's caste altogether. These people are the untouchables, called Harijans by Gandhi (God's people).

The caste system is so strong, it pervades all religious and social structures in India. Although it is actually forbidden by the constitution, this legal banning has provoked intense conflict between the higher castes and the untouchables. About 80 per cent of Christians in India are from lower castes, and this is a great stumbling block to higher caste Hindus, attracted by the gospel, but repelled by the low social origin of the Christians. It is a major request for prayer that the Christians of India may set aside the pride and inferiorities of caste and yet reach out to those still bound by them. ●



# *mh.*

It is good for the BMS to seek a clear vision for its future strategy. May I ask some theological and strategical questions concerning Reg Harvey's outline of this strategy as reported in *mh.* in January.

How does the BMS believe it will achieve not only that "all humankind" but also "the whole of creation recognise and accept God's reign of love, joy, righteousness and peace, revealed supremely in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit"? This is a position that opposes not only biblical doctrine but also Baptist tradition. Is the BMS considering equipping and sending missionaries to save animals and plants? The whole of creation? A bewildering passage! Also the characteristics given of God's reign fall short of the truth, as they only constitute the "acceptable" part of God's character. Surely the BMS exists because it is aware that God is also the judge who demands repentance for salvation? And: his character is not revealed "supremely" but only in Jesus Christ.

The whole wording of the article contains a certain doctrinal twist which makes one wonder. A few more examples: "... faith in the dying and risen Saviour God." Jesus Christ has died and is not dying! This phrasing sounds very much like Liberation Theology and is therefore unfortunate.

"Sharing the good news of the kingdom" sounds weak and pale in the context of a mission strategy. One would wish a more dynamic and substantial approach. What about adopting Jesus' own policy, "Seek and save the lost"?

When I looked for a clear strategy for the future I was equally confused. As well as trying to shoulder the immense task of reaching "all mankind" with the gospel, the BMS intends to sort out all the problems of the world, including reconciling countries at war and being involved in political activities!

This article left many questions open concerning the BMS's theological and, connected with it, strategic stand. I am afraid it did not achieve its aim to assure us of a clear vision of the BMS.

**Michael Fenske**  
Westcliff-on-Sea Essex

The article was, in fact, entitled "Seeking a Clear Vision" and was a report on the beginnings of a BMS discussion, which it wishes others to be involved in. There is also surely a difference between a God-given vision for mission and the working out of strategy for BMS's part in the fulfilment of that vision.

I found the Take Two statistics given in the February issue most interesting but I wonder whether I am missing something in understanding the Sunday School attendance figures.

What is it a percentage of? Is it of Baptist churches or all Churches. Is it UK or worldwide? Is it a percentage of church attenders? Is it a percentage of perhaps 1940 being 100 per cent?

As for the statement under these figures concluding (from the stated statistics) that many under the age of 25 have no Bible knowledge, this may be true, but does this assume that children only gain Bible knowledge through Sunday School?

You may know of the tremendous numerical growth of Crusaders in the UK over the last few years and many children are gaining Bible knowledge through this movement and others, so perhaps the days of Sunday School are numbered. (We do have a Sunday School in Burford Baptist Church, but called Sunday Club, which sometimes outnumbers the adults).

**Roger Godfrey,**  
Pastor, Burford Baptist Church, Oxon

The figures are for UK and cover Sunday school attendance in all churches. They are a percentage of the whole population. Bible knowledge does not come from Sunday school alone but it does depend on how high a priority parents give to their children's spiritual development.

## Waves

A personal and independent look at reaching the unreached by **Nic Wood**

**A**ll mission is by definition "reaching the unreached" - or is it? How accurate is it to label nations, peoples and cultures in such a general way? Unreached by what or by whom? By the Christian gospel maybe, but unreached by the God who created the world and all that is in it, who from moment to moment sustains the universe and every creature in being?

Behind our use of such terminology as "unreached peoples" is there lurking a hidden presumption that the people of the "10/40 window", or whatever other jargon is the current vogue, are somehow the disadvantaged, the heathen poor, in need of "Christian Civilisation"? In other words does this language actually convey something of the imperialism of an earlier generation of mission?

Actually many of the people who live within the 10-40 window have for generations been in contact with the "Christian" west but their experience has often been that of crusade, enslavement and exploitation. In reaching out to these "unreached" people we may find they recoil in fear because of what has reached them all too directly in previous generations.

When Jesus set out the Kingdom Agenda in his sermon at Nazareth, his exposition of Isaiah 61 found little favour amongst his fellow citizens:

*He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people. (Luke 4:16-30)*

This was certainly not their idea of "reaching the unreached"! But it is only as we allow the values and methods of the Kingdom of God to permeate our mission that we shall truly be free of cultural imperialism and western arrogance. Only then shall we obey the commission of the crucified and risen Christ: "As the Father has sent me so I send you". (John 20:21)

John Stott describes this as the costliest and hence the most neglected form of the Great Commission. It presumes all that is summed up by that earlier verse "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" - all the vulnerability, all the risky engagement with a fallen and a broken world, all the pain and all the sacrifice. This is the only way to "reach the unreached" - God knows!

**Nick Wood**, a member of the BMS General Committee, is Minister of South Oxford Baptist Church and an Associate Lecturer at Regent's Park College, Oxford.

# Deka

**NEW!**

## Children's Project 1995 DEKA BANGLADESH



In response to many requests, we now have an annual project especially for children up to the age of 12!

'Deka Bangladesh', is the BMS Children's Project for 1995.

The Project is to help the children at the School for the Blind in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Through 'Deka Bangladesh', British children have the opportunity to help raise £4,000 towards the upkeep of the school.

Send for a free 24 page project booklet, with stories, games and Bible-based activities and a poster.

Please send me the project materials for  
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