



Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church **IN TOUCH MONTHLY**

1 April 2006

This month we remember the sacrificial death, burial and glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. By His precious blood He provides salvation free to all who believe. The faith we have to believe is the gift of God, not of works. *Ephesians 2:8,9* There are some very nice “optional extras” that we can add on. Peter supplies an attractive list of things to “*add to your faith*” such as *virtue, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love*. Unlike the latest fully loaded model at the auto mall, the vehicle of your life does not come with these features as standard equipment. You must add them one at a time. Have you checked your inventory recently?

Avoiding Chaos in the Congo

Only a few old timers (like me) will remember the Belgium Congo, and that mainly from the *Tarzan* movies. The Belgians founded the city of Elizabethville, (now Lubumbashi) in 1909. It prospered with the development of a regional copper mining industry and later served as a distribution center for other minerals including cobalt, zinc, tin and coal.

Baby-boomers may recollect the Wars of National Liberation sparked across Africa by the communists in the early 1960s. In January 1960 the Belgians caved in and had completely withdrawn by June that year causing an economic vacuum.

Chaos followed with 110 political parties (mostly tribal) stirred up by neo-colonial communists and supported by the UN. The only peaceful part of Congo was Katanga, which, in July 1960, announced its independence. The central government in Leopoldville called in the UN to “restore order and end Katanga’s secession.” UN atrocities akin to genocide followed. I can vividly remember the bloody Congolese civil war (1960-63) followed by Moise Tshombe’s declaration of independence for the Katanga province.

The 13,000 UN troops were deployed to force Katanga to rejoin the communist chaos in the Congo. They

were brutal. Innocent civilians were gunned down at roadblocks and checkpoints; hospitals and schools were bombed and there were massacres in many areas. The scars of those atrocities remain in Lubumbashi.

After the Belgians bolted and following the civil war, Mobutu Sese Seko, a totalitarian kleptocrat, assumed power and Congo became Zaire.

in the government, making Congo a beacon of hope on the Dark Continent. Having read Dr. Peter Hammond’s *Biblical Principles for Africa*, he invited the Frontline team and organized a very full training program for the 500+ delegates.

The elections this year, tentatively scheduled for June 18, are the first since the Belgians bailed-out in 1960 and the communists took over. Bishop

Lamba Lamba is the President of an organization with the cumbersome name *Rassemblement des Enfants de Dieu pour la Transformation du Congo* or REDTCO. Translation: “Gathering of the Children of God for the Transformation of Congo.” While the name may be ponderous the vision is positive: get Christians involved in the policy and decision making activities of government. His motto, oft repeated at the conference, “Pagans must not run the Congo.” We certainly endorse that conviction.



Sunday morning worship.

A special invitation.

Earlier this year Bishop Leonard Lamba Lamba in Lubumbashi (say that ten times quickly!) invited us to the Congo for a series of Biblical Worldview training seminars in preparation for the upcoming elections. His goal is to train Christian teachers and leaders to offer themselves as candidates in the political system and thus serve as *salt and light*



Seminar delegates take notes.

The Mullah's Achilles Heel: No Sense of Humor

The publication in Denmark of cartoons lampooning Islam and the Prophet Mohammed caused a delayed-action stir in mosques from Morocco to Mindanao. Delayed because there were not enough Danish flags available to burn worldwide. It took over four months to manufacture the “spontaneous” demonstrations and insure the TV cameras were right on hand rolling to record the ruckus.

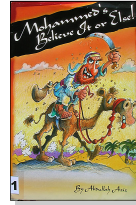
Crocodile tears from this contrived media circus flowed from Cairo to Casablanca. Danish embassies burned around the world as the sons of Ishmael took to the streets with bloodshot eyes and raised fists. Why all the fuss?

What does it tell us? Simply this, Muslims have no sense of humor. Now that might not strike you as vital, but to those of us who work in restricted-access countries this is a very strategic discovery.

During the 50+ years of Cold War, Christians managed to

survive the cruel mocking of heathen communists because, in spite of all the horrors, they could see the funny side of desperate situations. I even included a chapter in my book, *Going Through*, about the importance of being able to laugh at impossible situations. Laughter is therapeutic.

Elijah taunted the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. Check out his sense of humor in I Kings 18 verse 27.



“Mohammed’s Believe It or Else!” is one of the most effective comics ever published. It quotes from both the Qur’an and Hadith. It is both enlightening and entertaining.

Humor definitely has a place in the current struggle with Islam – a peaceful religion of course, and they’ll want to chop your head off if you disagree.

“But Thou, O LORD, shall laugh at them.” Psalm 59:8



Presentation of Seminar Certificate.

Our team was made up of ITMI’s **Charl van Wyk, Peter Hammond** and myself. We flew from Johannesburg on one of the thrice-weekly flights directly to Lubumbashi’s Luano International Airport. The pot-holed single runway strip is located in the bush 3,000 feet above sea level, a few miles south of the dusty Katanga capital. I foolishly took a picture of the team standing in front of the terminal under the “Welcome” sign, which consequently delayed us almost two hours as the security people haggled and harangued about my photographic transgression. I explained that satellites could much more efficiently violate their security and record the license plate numbers of all the cars in their parking lot (both of them), but they were unimpressed. They probably only wanted a bribe, but that was not an option.

Charl and Peter provided the Biblical Principles teaching portion of the conference and I concentrated on the evangelistic and inspirational aspects of the Word.

Most of the long weekend, Charl was a 2-hour flight further north in

Mbuji-Mayi (pronounced Boojee Myya), a remote commercial diamond-mining center with little connection to the outside world. There, with electricity for his PowerPoint provided by a generator, he challenged some 250 delegates to Biblical Worldview thinking in every aspect of life including education, culture, economics, justice and principles for Godly government. His lectures were translated into French and Tshiluba (the local vernacular).

While there, he was told of a nearby Church that had been held up at gunpoint the previous weekend. The congregation was tied up and each one robbed by armed thugs. These people are extremely poor and it’s sad to think that the little they had was taken from them by these criminals.

Without question, Congo needs a government based on Christian principles. The Biblical Worldview Seminars are an important step in that direction. Adding to the impact, **Frontline Fellowship** has printed a new French edition of Dr. Hammond’s book *Biblical Principles for Africa* and the team took enough for each delegate to have a copy.

Sunday services were 4-hours, packed with over 3,000 enthusiastic Congolese Christians crammed inside and hundreds more standing outside the Church, singing and praising God – then listening for 1½-hours to a hard-hitting, straight-from-the-shoulder message from the Word of God. It was like old times in the Deep South. These folks are not

“playing church.” Rather than looking for comfort they are demanding commitment, both of themselves and from others. We were revived!

Sunday evening we were guests on a Capital-wide TV program with a potential 2 million viewers. The interviewer asked how we had enjoyed our visit. Each of us gave our individual impressions. Peter looked straight into the camera and told them, “You’d attract a lot more people to Congo if your officials were more polite and cut out the corruption at the airport.” The next morning when we left, some of the officials (who’d seen the program the night before) came up and apologized to us. You *gotta* love these people!



The BWS team on TV Sunday night.

Having cut and run in 1960, now Brussels is twisting the arm of European Union defense ministers to send an EU military force to back UN peacekeepers in the DRC as Congo prepares for the upcoming presidential election – the first in over 45 years. These elections will only produce

Dear Team,

The old saying about March, “in like a lion out like a lamb” was true last month, which began in Congo and concluded quietly putting the finishing touches on my next book. Congo is huge. If you superimposed it on a map of Europe, it would extend from Berlin to the tip of Italy's boot and from London to Warsaw.

The **Biblical Worldview Seminars** held in the Katanga province were rich in both information and inspiration. In all there were approximately 1,000 students. We took lots of practical things too, like tape recorders that can run on solar power or wind-up, to be used by field evangelists. The French edition of Dr. Hammond's book, *Biblical Principles for Africa*, was gratefully received everywhere. Those *principles*, by the way, are not just for Africa. They all apply to American and European Christians too. (Maybe you'd like to order a copy from ITMI.)



Hammond presents his book to the bishop.

We owe you an apology. Last month's ITM newsletter was dated 2005. We're really not *that* far behind! It was an oversight during the proofreading process. Sorry folks!

This month hosts my favorite Christian celebration: **Easter**. “Christ is risen!” The tomb is empty! Hallelujah! We have Good News for the world. Our Savior, Jesus Christ is alive forever more. Tell it to everyone you know. Surely every saved person this side of Heaven ought to be concerned for every lost soul this side of hell.

This month, **Harriett** and **Lenora** will travel to Austria to celebrate 75th and 45th birthdays respectively. It's a combination of work and play. Harriett has never seen our two great-grandchildren, so that will be a treat. Please pray for strength and safety.

Next month I am a guest speaker for the annual KwaSizabantu Ministers Conference, held this year in Kaltbrunn, Switzerland (near Zurich).

ITMI's **Charl van Wyk** and his wife, **Sonja**, welcomed a new baby girl to their family here in Cape Town. I discovered 2 weeks ago that they don't have a family car. Charl usually drives a Frontline *bakkie*. Now with four children (2 boys and 2 girls) they really need some proper form of family transportation. ITMI has opened a “van Wyk transportation fund” which currently has about \$150. Let's help them get some wheels.

Speaking of wheels, we now have approximately \$5,600 in the “Field truck for Sudan” project, first mentioned in our February letter. So we're about a quarter of the way toward this goal. We're grateful that you share this vision with us.

As mentioned last month our Eshcol Project to abused and abandoned children in South Africa is closing down due to health problems of the co-founder, Jene. We have prayerfully considered another ministry that most closely resembles the goal and format of Eshcol. The ministry under consideration is **Talitha Home** – currently with 8 children, both adopted and natural. The parents are Gerhard and Elmane LeRoux, co-workers of KwaSizabantu in Malmesbury, Western Cape.

The ITMI Board of Directors is investigating the possibility that ITMI “approve Talitha Home as an ongoing ministry [of ITMI] and make their work known in our monthly newsletter.” We'll have pictures and more information next month.

Yours in His grip,



Bill Bathman

(Continued from page 2)

“more of the same old” unless Christians are really involved.

Judging from the enthusiastic reception of our Biblical Worldview Seminar team, and their sincere appreciation of our ministry there, evangelical born-again Christians – ready and willing to be *salt* and *light* – are going to make a definite difference in the political process this time around. Please pray for them.

Bill Bathman – Cape Town, South Africa

Romania

Deeply concerned about the high divorce rate in their country, ITMI’s Dr. Adrian Ban and his wife, Ema, are busy conducting much-needed Pre-Marital Counseling Seminars. They have ten couples in the present course. Based in Oradea’s Emanuel Baptist Church, they have for 5 years provided this vital service to young people all over the country.

In February the Bans traveled to Brasov, presenting the course in Family Counseling to pastors and their wives who minister in East-central Romania. Ema writes, “We enjoyed the interaction with these couples. Their eagerness to help families from their church is contagious!”

Last month they launched another Young Couples Group made up of students that went through their Pre-Marital program last spring. Later this month Adrian and Ema will travel to Bulgaria, where Dr. Ban will teach a Christian Education course at the United Theological Faculty in Sofia. This is an annual invitation. They go as a family and thus serve as a role model to the students.

Pray for their health needs. Adrian has some serious dental problems that require urgent attention and their son, Eduard needs vision correction.

Poland

Last month we were blessed with a visit from Rev. **Piotr Zaremba**, ITMI’s European Director. He encouraged many of our partners interested in going to Poland as missionaries, participated in Mission conferences, and inspired church congregations, small groups, and Sunday School classes. Piotr did all this while continuing work on his translation of the New Testament from Greek to modern Polish, scheduled to be printed in August this year! At the end of the trip, Piotr shared that he was a little tired, but greatly blessed by those he fellowshiped with while he was here.

Both the **Boones** and the **Nungessers** have returned to Poland and are eager to get back into the rhythm of their work with the **International Church of Poznan** and **Bread of Life**. ITMI’s Polish team hardly finished celebrating the birth of their newest female team member, **Adelyne** Nungesser, before the March 19th arrival of Master **Ansel Alcott Boone**.



Ansel joins his two older sisters **Paisley** and **Bethany** to make up the Boonie trio. We thank God for these dear families and their precious children.

Please keep the **Gniezno Church** in your prayers. ITMI missionaries, **Bob and Sue Taber** joyfully report that the renovations to the church building began in March. They are still seeking a temporary place to meet until next fall, when the renovations are scheduled to be complete.

The container of medical supplies sent to Poland by ITMI and **Project CURE** for **Maranatha Baptist Church** is still entangled in customs’ red tape. Keep praying!

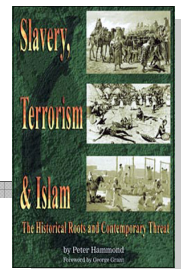
Summer Kelley – Tempe, Arizona

Slavery, Terrorism and Islam – *The Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat*

by: Peter Hammond

Dr. Peter Hammond cuts through layers of misinformation and uncovers astonishing historical facts and details long buried by Islamic revisionist. You’ll find out their real agenda for tomorrow by discovering what they actually did yesterday – plus a field-tested plan of how to win Muslims to Christ.

\$10.00 S+H



For Praise . . .

1. Safe arrival of **Ansel Alcott Boone**, born on 3/19/06, newest member of our Polish Team!
2. Enthusiastic response of Christian leaders in the Congo to the Biblical Worldview Seminar.
3. **Peter Hammond**’s meeting with the President of Zambia and several Cabinet members.
4. Many ministry opportunities for **Piotr Zaremba** on his US visit last month.
5. Encouragement for **Dr. & Mrs. Adrian Ban** in their Pre-marital Counseling ministry.

For Prayer . . .

1. Zimbabwean co-worker, **Colin**, interned in South Africa and threatened with deportation.
2. Transportation needs for **Charl van Wyk** family and the “Field truck for Sudan.”
3. Resolution of the PROJECT CURE/ITMI container hold-up in northern Poland.
4. The children’s ministry of **Gerhard & Elmane LeRoux** and **Talitha Home**.

Authorized to Accept  

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