

Reporter's Notebook

By Kenneth D. MacHarg

Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua—Without a doubt, the Lord is at work in every nook and cranny of the globe. From bustling cities to dusty small towns to the deepest jungle, the love of Jesus Christ is being shared with spiritually-hungry people world-wide.

But getting to those places is another story.

Take this hot, sultry, dirty, remote town on Nicaragua's isolated Caribbean coast. Where ever you are in the world, you can't get here from there. You have to go somewhere else first, and the trip itself is an adventure.

So, you either take a bone-rattling, almost-impossible 24 hour or more trip by bus, through mosquito and bandit-infested jungle and scrub land, or you hop aboard a creaking, rattling, vibrating, wheezing two-engine, 15 or so passenger Shorts SD3 60 airplane and fly from Managua's international airport to the landing strip at Puerto Cabezas, or Biliwi as it is known in the local Miskito language.

I did just that recently to visit a struggling but exciting evangelical radio station that serves the almost 100,000 people, mostly indigenous, who live in the area. There, in the midst of illiteracy, crime, drug trafficking and unemployment, Rev. Salvador Sarmiento and his staff broadcast the Gospel in Miskito, Spanish and English, sharing biblical answers to daily concerns and offering people hope in the midst of serious problems.

The isolation and thus self-dependence of the town reminded me of another airborne adventure that I experienced back in 1994. Then, I accompanied a team of missionaries into the Amazon jungle of Ecuador to recover the airplane piloted by Nate Saint which carried five missionaries in their attempts to reach the Auca Indians back in the 1950s. Those men of God were martyred and yet, in His power, the Lord used that event both to reach the Auca Indians for Christ and to inspire thousands to dedicate themselves to missionary work around the world.

I remember the feeling of isolation as the MAF missionary airplane took off from the jungle air strip, our last physical contact with the rest of the world until at least the next morning--weather permitting. Yet, over the years, missionaries such as Elisabeth Elliot and Rachel Saint went to that unbelievably remote corner of the world to share the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Then, my mind flashed back to the 1970s as I joined some other missionaries aboard another MAF airplane to fly from Panama City to the remote San Blas Islands off of Panama's coast. There, missionaries had established a hospital and carried the biblical message to yet another indigenous group for whom Christ

died. We went to deliver supplies and encourage those who had chosen to live so far away from the world they know in order to introduce others to the Lord of all the world.

For most of us, getting to church is a simple drive or a short walk. For many who serve in developed nations the living is comfortable, the pay adequate, the transportation quick.

For others, getting to a place of ministry involves work, hours of travel, risks and frustration. But, whether in a city, the countryside, or the remote parts of the world, God cares for each and every person and sent Jesus Christ, His only son, to give them fullness of life and eternal salvation.

To God be the glory!

Reporter's Notebook, *Missionary Journalist*, August 3, 2006