

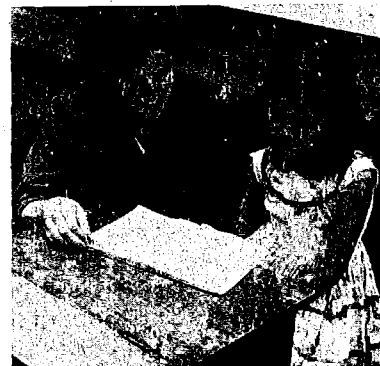
April 1, 1963

NUMBER THIRTY-FIVE

THIS IS A
CALL TO PRAYER
FOR
THE LORD'S WORK
IN
COLOMBIA

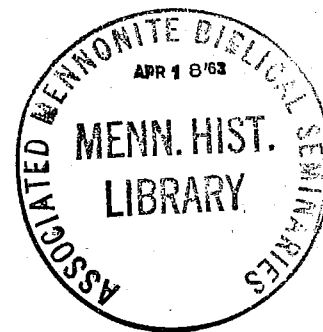
COLOMBIAN NEWS

Cachipay, Cund., Colombia, S. A.



INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE MENNONITE MISSION IN COLOMBIA

EVANGELICAL TEACHERS INSTITUTE	1
ELDON SAYS	2
HABEGGERS LEARN SPANISH IN COSTA RICA.	2
YOUNG PEOPLE'S RETREAT	3
CACHIPAY SCHOOL TRANSFORMS LIVES	4
MENNONITES MEET IN PUERTO RICO	5
EVANGELICAL CONFEDERATION OF COLOMBIA.	5
PRAYER AND PRAISE.	6



EVANGELICAL TEACHERS INSTITUTE IN CACHIPAY

During the first weeks of January, the Mennonite Mission and the Colegio Americano of Cachipay, were the hosts to the Evangelical Teacher's Association of Colombia.

The seven days were filled with inspiration, instruction, and social fellowship. The group of 125 primary and secondary teachers was privileged to listen to messages from outstanding Christian Colombian educators. One could not only help but be thrilled by that which Christianity has helped to bring to this country.

Men and women experienced in their fields brought us much information on how to teach Science, Religion, English, Visual Aids, etc. Practical ideas were given as to how to prepare and to grade examinations. Open forums brought much light to the critical problems facing evangelical teachers.

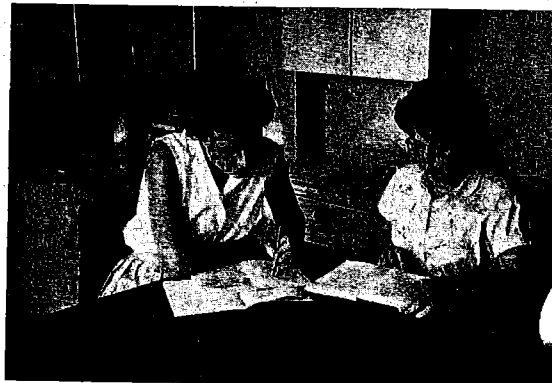


Teachers of Colombia

Leaders in organizing the Institute were Dr. James Goff, director of the Colegio Americano of Bogota, Dr. Hector Valencia, director of the Colegio Americano of Barranquilla, and Rev. Gerald Stucky, director of the Colegio Americano of Cachipay. The purpose of the Congress was to make possible interchange of ideas, receive some practical help on the many problems that confront schools in Colombia, and fellowship and inspiration.

ELDON SAYS:

It is six months now, since we left the United States. My, what hasn't happened in those months! While we are precautious in drawing conclusions rapidly, we are definitely conscious of numerous things which we enjoy, things for which we are grateful and significant aspects of the missionary effort here.



Helen Bergen Studies Spanish

We enjoy the physique of this place, its climate, its view, and its hill topography--breathtaking in both senses of the word. It is hard yet to believe that there will come no "winter." I am moved by the nature of the work that I am called upon to do; diversified, and challenging with my switching cultures and of different facilities available. We enjoy the daily learning and use of the Spanish language. We are fond of the people themselves.

We are grateful for the privilege of being here, sensing the concern of the many persons backing us and this program. We are grateful for the patience shown by the persons here toward our adaption to the program. We are grateful for the including of us so warmly in the many activities--hikes, parties, play, walks, church services, Sunday school and trips to La Mesa, Bogota, and Cachipay.



Eldon Bergen
Painting Mission Jeep

We sense some of the significance of the church and school programs in neighboring Anolaima, La Mesa, and Cachipay both the freedom from fear, ignorance, and poverty that Protestantism has brought these people, as well as the challenge and struggle that this brings.

All in all, one is filled with a sense of gratitude, and is inspired to learn and grow into this total effort here.

HABEGGERS LEARN SPANISH IN COSTA RICA

Howard Habegger informs from Costa Rica: "To the great Prophet Jeremiah came the calling of God "to speak" to the nations. Jeremiah's call was clear but the question arose in the Prophet's mind, 'Behold I do not know how to speak...' God has clearly called us to Bogota, Colombia, to speak for HIM. The message of Christ is in our hearts but not in our mouths in the Spanish language.

Our sole purpose for being in San Jose, Costa Rica, at this time instead of Bogota, Colombia, is to learn to speak Spanish for HIM.

Spanish by "linguistic standards" is purported to be one of the easier foreign languages to learn. There are approximately 135 language students in San Jose who question that statement. Although we have had a considerable amount of formal education prior to this venture language study cannot be compared to other forms of education.

Only by the daily grace of God, many disciplined hours of listening to tapes, repetition of words and sentences, and patient correction by national teachers is it possible to speak. At best, during these first months of study, we speak what can best be described as 'spanglish.'

A new language coupled with a new country, a new climate, and a new culture makes language study an exciting but sometimes trying experience. However, we are confident that God will put "the words into our mouths," as we continue to persevere.

It is our hope that within about ten months we will be able to communicate to those to whom we have been called in Bogota the message of Jesus Christ. We call upon all our "prayer-partners" to stand with us during this difficult but important part of our preparation.

Mailing address: Spanish Language School, Apt. 2240, San Jose, Costa Rica, Central America.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RETREAT

How can young people be challenged to a deeper commitment in their Christian lives or to give their lives to Christ for the first time?

A partial answer to this question seemed to be a spiritual retreat which alumni, young people from the area, and other friends could attend for a few days.



Each one Precious to God

Starting in 1961 the retreat has become an annual affair with the attendance increasing every year. This year the retreat was held from the sixteenth to the twentieth of January with about sixty people attending.

Speakers for the occasion were the Rev. Ross Clemenger and the Rev. Glen Klaassen. Rev. Clemenger has been a missionary in Colombia for almost 17 years and at present is located near the Atlantic Coast of Colombia. He brought Bible studies on the book of Philipians and also very fine messages.

Rev. Glen Klaassen is on our Mission staff and teaches at the Normal School in Ibague. He directed studies on the subject of "Temptation."

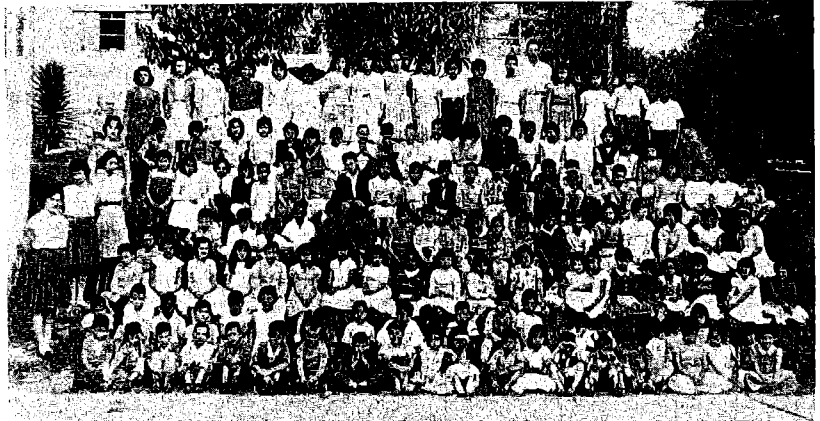
One night the retreaters listened to Mr. Bob Schneider tell about the efforts being made to translate the Bible into many different dialects of the Indian tribes. Mr. Schneider is the director of the Wycliffe Bible translators in Colombia.

On Saturday night a campfire gathering was held and on Sunday the retreat ended after several days of Christian fellowship and inspiration.

CACHIPAY SCHOOL TRANSFORMS LIVES

On Feb. 4, 1963, the Colegio Americano of Cachipay began its seventeenth year of school. We praise God for the way in which He has blessed the school and helped it progress during the past years.

We are also thankful for the young people who have come to know Christ as their personal Savior during their stay here and who now are letting their lights shine in many different parts.

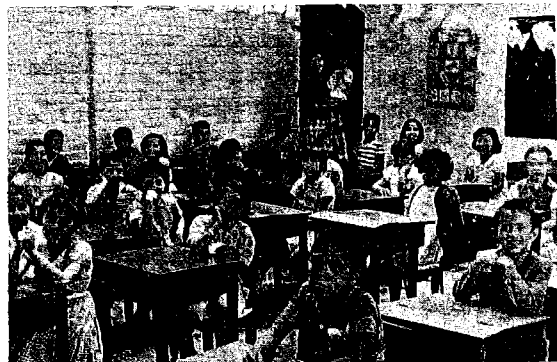


Cachipay School Children - 1963

Of course, preparations were necessary before school started but on February 4, approximately 145 children were present for classes. This is the largest student body that has been enrolled here and year by year more and more parents make petitions to enroll their children.

About half the students are boarders--some of them coming from homes where the parents have leprosy, some of them coming from Evangelical families in places where it is difficult to find opportunity for an education, and others who have critical needs.

The rest of the student body is made up of day students who come from the vicinity. Many of these students come from a neighborhood called La Estrella (the Star) which is about a 45 minute to an hour's walk.



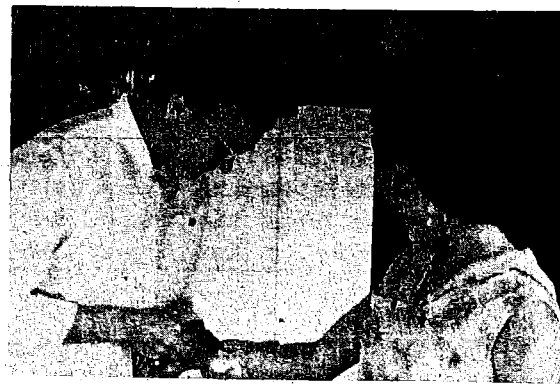
Each one loved and taught

There is a group of children that comes from Cachipay to study and there is one girl called Angelica who has such a great desire to study that she is willing to walk for two hours if necessary to come to school.

Since the school started in 1947 under the joint auspices of the American Leprosy Mission and the General Conference Mennonite Mission the school has grown from a student body of 22 to the present one of approximately 145.

"Ay, Ay! It hurts!".... The beginning of the school year also marks vaccination time. During the second week of school two representatives from the Public Health Service came to vaccinate the pupils against smallpox.

Since typhoid fever is also a common illness in Colombia, the missionary nurse gave each pupil their weekly shot. Everyone was happy when the third week rolled around, as this meant the last shot. Some little children, of course, really seem to suffer.



A good shot in the arm

Since our nurse, Janet Soldner is due for furlough the latter part of this year, we are asking and praying that there might be a Volunteer who would be willing to be school nurse during her absence, which would be the greater part of 1964. We have no other nurse to replace her. This is a wonderful opportunity for some trained nurse to serve in Missions for nine months during 1964. Anyone interested should write to the Board of Christian Service in Newton, Kansas, or to Gerald Stucky, Cachipay, Cund., Colombia, S. A.

MENNONITES MEET IN PUERTO RICO



On March 4-7 Gerald Stucky went to Puerto Rico to attend meetings destined to explore cooperative efforts between various Mennonite groups in the field of Spanish literature.

The various branches of the Mennonite church have work in Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Colombia, Mexico, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo and in the United States among Spanish speaking peoples.

Gerald Stucky

Since the task of reaching our generation with the gospel is so great, and since the resources of any single Mennonite group have definite limits--it was recommended that the various Mennonite Boards take steps to provide in a cooperative way, Spanish literature which reflects the Mennonite message for the building of Christ's church and which at the same time helps to fill the gaps in existing evangelical literature.

EVANGELICAL CONFEDERATION OF COLOMBIA MEETS

Some 35 delegates, including our Glendon Klaassen, representing most of the evangelical missions and organizations working in Colombia met for three days to share mutual interests and concerns. Appropriately, the meetings began with several sessions of prayer and worship in thanksgiving and fellowship with our common Lord. This was a great blessing.

During the business sessions each organization presented a report of the work accomplished and of anticipated projects. It was a time of rejoicing, but also of concern. Some of the concerns were these: the thousands who are still unevangelized in Colombia, the lack of national workers, the need for relief for many poor evangelicals, religious persecution, the Alliance for Pro-

gross funds going directly to help the Catholic church and its organizations and discriminating against evangelicals, the illiteracy problem, and others. Steps were taken toward a solution of many of these concerns.

In closing the sessions, a call to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives and work was made by the newly elected officers as we all realized that organization alone is not sufficient for the great task. Won't you also pray for the Lord's work in Colombia?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

THANK HIM for increased Inter-Mennonite Cooperation
for the new open door and benign atmosphere for the preaching of
the gospel

PRAY FOR the Habeggens as they study in Costa Rica
a voluntary service nurse for this fall and 1964
the annual retreat and convention to be held the first of July
many more laborers for the harvest in Colombia
the Glendon Klaassens as they go on furlough

COLOMBIAN NEWS
Board of Missions
General Conference Mennonite Church
722 Main Street
Newton, Kansas



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