

The Story of the Martyrs in Ecuador

# The Sunday School Times

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## Alone With Thee

By Elisabeth Howard Elliot

(Written while a student at Wheaton College, class of 1948.)

**P**ERHAPS some future day, Lord,  
Thy strong hand  
Will lead me to the place where I must  
stand  
Utterly alone.

Alone, O gracious Lover, but for Thee.  
I shall be satisfied if I can see  
Jesus only.

I do not know Thy plan for years to  
come,  
My spirit finds in Thee its perfect home,  
Sufficiency.

Lord, all my desire is before Thee now;  
Lead on—no matter where, no matter  
how,  
I trust in Thee.

## Why Did It Happen?

"How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33.) God does not explain to His people all His doings, and it is not profitable to try to delve too deeply into His reasons. If ever William Cowper's well-known words were applicable they are to the tragedy in Ecuador: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." Miss Ruth Paxson told of a godly Norwegian woman who lost both hands in an accident, but she continued to serve God cheerfully and did not give way to futile questions and discouragement. She said she had learned not to

ask, "Why?" but, "What?"—that is, What has God to teach me through this circumstance? Very evidently this is the attitude of the five young widows and the parents of the young men, who, we must remember, are "with Christ: which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). One of the profoundest passages on the Crucifixion, which contains strong meat for such a time as this, is in the following words in Peter's speech at Pentecost: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). W. W. Rugh, one of the founders of the Bible Institute of Pennsylvania and a Bible teacher of beloved memory, said that in this text we have the "upper and nether millstones" which ground out the fine wheat. Here we see Christ crushed between the sovereignty of God and the will of man; and from His death has come eternal life for multitudes. Commenting on the same text, Sir Robert Anderson wrote: "The murderers of Christ were acting in fulfillment of divine decree, and yet their deeds were really and absolutely their own. Theirs were 'wicked hands,' and guilt of necessity supposes the action of an independ-

ent will. When this can be explained, that they who set up the cross on Calvary were fulfilling a divine purpose, though acting in direct antagonism to the divine will, the clew will have been found to every difficulty here alluded to." All who knew them can say with conviction that Ed McCully, Pete Fleming, Nate Saint, Roger Youdarian, and Jim Elliot put the will of God first in their lives, and therefore there is no question that their death was permitted by God for His own purposes. Speaking of the wisdom of God, Paul said, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). And if the poor Aucas had had even a faint idea of it, doubtless they would not have killed the five heralds of the Good News. But already good is coming from their supreme sacrifice, for Christian hearts everywhere are being humbled, softened, and stirred to new zeal; and the way into the hearts of the Aucas is being prepared. Other brave pioneers will follow in the steps of the five men; and we may live to see the day when some, even from that cruel tribe, will be redeemed and tell others of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Letters From Friends and Family

**P**ROBABLY not since the martyrdom in China of John and Betty Stam on December 8, 1934, has anything so stirred the Christian world as the massacre by the Auca Indians in Ecuador of Nathaniel Saint, Roger Youdarian, Peter Fleming, Edward McCully, and James Elliot. Below are given extracts from some of the beautiful letters of

sympathy which have come to the Editor in the few days since the final outcome of the tragedy was made known. But these, of course, represent only a small part of the great volume that will be pouring in from all over the country to the families of the young men and their widows. They bring refreshing and comforting evidence that the redeemed, whether of Assemblies or denominational churches, "are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

"For our devotions at the LeTourneau project in Peru the other evening, I took the passage in Mark 14 containing this question, 'Why was this waste of the ointment made?' What seems waste to materialistically-minded people like Judas is devotion and love to the Lord

### Comfort for Dark Days

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5, 6).



Jesus. Nothing given to Him is wasted!

"Life's last chapter is not written here; for we need the perspective of eternity to understand the tragedies, tears, and triumphs of this life."—*Dr. V. Raymond Edman, president, Wheaton College.*

"Our hearts are sharing with you the sorrow and the triumph of these days of severe testing. The apostle did not just give us as the word of the Lord, 'that ye sorrow not,' but, 'that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope.' The hope that is ours does not wipe away our tears—not yet; but it makes them so many sparkling lenses through which we see the glory beyond. Even with aching heart, we remember the empty tomb, and cry over the graves of our best beloved, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' We know that this victory is yours as you stand with dear Betty in her great trial.

"I have been thinking of Revelation 12:11: 'They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.' It seems to take the last to be able to wield the first two weapons victoriously. So long as we love our lives the victory of the Blood and of the Word cannot be known. The martyrs are the real victors, and we can expect to see the fruit of their victory in that very tribe. Mr. Cook, our missionary teacher [Moody Bible Institute], tells me that the name of that tribe simply means 'barbarians.' They will have a new name, which only God knows. The blood of the martyrs is not redemptive, we know, in the sense that the blood of Jesus is redemptive, but it is a making up of that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ for the church's sake. The Lord must have many chosen ones among the Indians of Ecuador when the price of entrance is so great."—*Dr. Joseph C. Macaulay.*

"As with thousands of others, our hearts are deeply stirred over the sudden and seemingly tragic death of Jim Elliot and the other four men, who gave their lives for the Gospel's sake.

"The real tragedy and heartbreak is for the young widows and children, and we do claim the promises of God on their behalf.

"Knowing the Fred Elliot family, having visited in their home and they in ours brings the sorrow even closer.

"Perhaps this may be the beginning of a great missionary revival and deepening of devotion on the part of many of God's people."—*Robert E. Nicholas, trustee of Wheaton.*

"I can write but a line because of weakness, but I must express my sorrow at the sad news from Ecuador and

my deepest sympathy with Betty, with you and Mrs. Howard, and with the sorrowing widows. Before the end comes the Gospel must be preached to all nations and ye shall be hated of all nations—a double witness of evangelism and martyrdom.

"As to myself I may linger along for some time, but my days are numbered and my work done. I cannot answer mail. . . . If you care to announce my state to the public, it will be all right. I have, however, quite a bunch of articles to provide for 1956 and will send them shortly. With warmest sympathy to your bereaved family.—*Ernest Gordon. (Mr. Gordon will be eighty-nine on March 2.)*

#### TO HER PARENTS FROM BETTY ELLIOT Shell Mera, January 11

"Just a wee note before the big plane takes off for Panama. I want you to know that your prayers are being answered moment by moment as regards me—I am ever so conscious of the Everlasting Arms. As yet we know only that two bodies have been sighted from the air but not identified.

"Sam Saint tells me you heard the news through the Embassy and Clyde Taylor. I'm glad.

"The Army, Navy, and Air Force Rescue Squads are here now. I came out to Shell [from Shandial] on Tuesday as soon as possible.

"The Lord is standing by all us wives wonderfully—remember that the Lord emphasized to me a long time ago—'When [not if] thou passest through the waters . . . ' and He is fulfilling His Word.

"Jim was confident, as was I, of God's leading. THERE ARE NO REGRETS.

"Nothing was more burning in his heart than that Christ should be named among the Aucas. By life or death. . . . Oh, may God get glory to Himself!

"Pray that whatever the outcome, I may learn the lessons needful. Oh, I want to serve the Lord in the future, so pray for His continued grace and guidance. I have no idea what I will do if Jim is dead, but the Lord knows, and I am at rest.

"A helicopter will be ready for take-off at dawn tomorrow. A land expedition is on the way, equipped with radio. Three big aircraft, and our little plane, will all be going out to the site of the incident. We hope for final word tomorrow and trust our loving Father who never wastes anything. All my love, Betty."

#### CABLE FROM BETTY, JANUARY 13

"REVELATION 14:5b. PERFECT PEACE. PRAISE."

(The last clause of the reference reads, "for they are without fault before the throne of God."—Editor.)

#### THE LATEST WORD FROM BETTY

Shell Mera, January 18

"The Lord keeps me in peace. Oh, the joy of thinking of dear Jim, without fault, before the Lord he so passionately loved! I can't get over it. The glory and the triumph! What must it be! Have no fears for me. Isaiah 43:2 wonderfully fulfilled."

"This sad, sad thing has unnerved many and brought them to their knees; and now we must be before the Lord instructed to be in His will in every testimony and witness that there may be no opportunity wasted or lost to give the right answer and show forth His mercy, compassion, love, and glory as His purposes are worked out."—*Clara Elliot, mother of Jim.*

"How blessedly true—if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it!

"Men may place God's flock in separate fields, but the dear sheep ignore the fences when a crisis comes, and prove that they are taught of God to love one another.

"We have felt the power of the prayers of thousands of His people for all concerned and have been wonderfully sustained.

"He giveth more grace (as it is needed). 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' Our darkest days on earth, if taken from the Lord, will prove to be the greatest cause for praise in His presence, when we see and know as He knows now.

"Oh, may God bring those very Aucas who threw the lances to slay our loved ones, to stand by our boys in Glory and praise the Saviour forever."—*Fred Elliot, father of Jim.*

"We understand, and know how to sympathize with you, and do so sympathize. . . . Yes, in Christian love, we suffer with you in the human loss, but rejoice with you in the ineffable bliss of Heaven that is theirs now and forever.

"It is well for us constantly, and in godly comfort, to remind ourselves that acceptability of service to Christ consists not in many years of service to Him; rather in the quality of that service—'putting Christ first, even in motives,' as our Betty, now in Glory with her John, repeatedly wrote to her brothers and sisters; and she would add: 'and at any cost! . . .

"God wisely causes us always to meet our supreme tests of loyalty to Him in the circumstances and environment of our lives in which He has placed us."—*Dr. Charles Ernest Scott.*

"God can use the dedicated lives of these five young martyrs to make many Christians ask themselves the question: 'Do I love Christ so much that I would

(Continued on page 95)



# Five "Valiant Saints, Their Hope They Knew"

"O God, to us may grace be given  
to follow in their train"

ON FRIDAY, January 6, the first friendly contact with the savage Auca Indians was made on the beach of the Curaray River by five evangelical missionaries. The five men are Nathaniel Saint of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, Edward McCully, Peter Fleming, and Jim Elliot of Christian Missions in Many Lands, and Roger Youdarian of the Gospel Missionary Union. The last word heard from these five men came at noon on Sunday, January 8, when they indicated that everything was going well and that they would give a further report by radio at 4.30 p.m. the same day. They did not send the scheduled report. John Keenan of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship flew over the site on the Curaray River the next morning, and found a Piper Super Cruiser the men had used to get to the Aucas. The plane was standing on the beach with all the fabric stripped off it. On this first and a number of subsequent flights there was no sign of the five men in question.

## The Purpose That Animated Them

Before additional facts concerning the above are given it is imperative that we give a complete report concerning the purpose which animated these missionary colleagues and the very thorough preparation which they made in this supreme attempt to establish friendly contact with the Auca Indians and present to them the Gospel message. We believe that a few paragraphs of a letter written by Nate Saint on December 18, 1955, adequately express the purpose and feeling of the entire group of men and give a very justifiable reason for risking their lives to reach these savage Aucas:

"As we have a high old time this Christmas may we who know Christ hear the cry of the damned as they hurtle headlong into the Christless night without ever a chance. May we be moved with compassion as our Lord was. May we shed tears of repentance for those whom we have failed to bring out of darkness. Beyond the smiling scenes of Bethlehem may we see the crushing agony of Golgotha. May God give us a new vision of His will concerning the lost and our responsibility. Would that we could comprehend the lot of these Stone-Age people who live in mortal fear of ambush on the jungle trail. . . . Those to whom the bark of a gun means sudden, mysterious death. . . . Those who think all the men in the world are killers like themselves. If God would grant us the vision, the word 'sacrifice' would disappear from our lips and thoughts. We would hate the things

Bishop Reginald Heber's well-known hymn fits the tragedy in Ecuador. The Editor is deeply grateful to Dr. Clarence W. Jones, founder and director of HCJB, and Mr. Van Der Puy for their many kindnesses in recent days and for getting to him so promptly the official story of the martyrdom of the five young men. (Jim Elliot was the Editor's son-in-law—"son-in-love," as H. C. Trumbull used to say.) He is also thankful for the splendid help of the Air Rescue Squadron from Panama, requested by Ambassador Mills and under the command of Lieutenant General William K. Harrison, Jr., who knew Betty and Jim and visited them at their station last year. He feels profound sympathy with all the other parents involved, and believes that they, too, have found God's grace sufficient even at this time.

that now seem dear to us, our lives would suddenly be too short, we would despise time-robbing distractions, and charge the enemy with all our energy in the name of Christ. May God help us to judge by the eternity that separates the Aucas from the comprehension of Christmas and Him who, though He was rich yet for our sakes became poor, so that we through His poverty might be made rich."

For some years now a number of evangelical missionaries in Ecuador have been deeply concerned about reaching the Auca Indians. A party went in search of them by balsa raft down one of the jungle rivers only to be ambushed by the Indians at a river bend when the current of the river carried the raft near to the bank. Fortunately all the people on the raft escaped with-



James Elliot

By ABE C. VAN DER PUY

President, Intermission Fellowship of Ecuador,  
Field Director of HCJB, Quito

out any serious injury. Then during the past year it has been possible to be in contact with four Auca women who fled from their own tribe and who are now living in the territory of the Quechua-speaking Indians of the northern jungle. From one of the women especially, a limited vocabulary of Auca words and verbs has been obtained so as to make contact with the Aucas feasible from this standpoint. The last visit to these Auca women was made in December, 1955, and from them additional words and phrases were obtained. With this background we can continue this story of heroic missionary sacrifice.

## The Thorough Preparation

This particular incident begins with sighting the Auca Indians from the air on September 29, 1955. From that time forward the five fellows involved made very thorough, ingenious, and remarkable preparations to establish contact with the Aucas. The journal of flight carefully kept by the pilot, Nate Saint, indicates that from October 6, 1955, until the end of the year a total of twelve flights were made to the village of the Aucas—about ten minutes flying time from Arajuno. On all the twelve flights gifts were freely dropped from the plane or sent down to the Indians by the unique "bucket method" perfected by Nate Saint. The gifts consisted of aluminum kettles, shirts and trousers, machetes, combs, and brightly colored ribbons. With the exception of the first flight the gifts were immediately appropriated by the Indians. The regular flights, made about a week apart, seemed to make the Indians increasingly friendly. At first the plane flew at a high altitude above the Indians and gradually came down lower in succeeding flights. This continued until the missionaries were flying at such a low altitude that all of the characteristic features of the Aucas and their environment could be clearly established. Perhaps the most interesting feature of these preliminary contacts is that after a number of trips the Indians became understanding enough to return some gifts of their own when the bucket method of dropping things to them was used. The first such incident occurred on November 12, when the Indians placed a feather crown and some combs in the bucket as their return gifts. On six other occasions the Indians returned gifts, including a parrot, a large black bird, and some of their own foodstuffs, such as yucca, fish, cooked meat, etc. There were at least three other things the Indians did which gave evidence of a



certain degree of friendship. First, they cut down large trees around their village, making a clearing so it would be easier to drop gifts to them. Second, they made a crude model airplane and put it on the roof of one of their houses. Third, they built a platform about twenty feet high, from which they could establish better contact with the low-flying airplane.

#### Notes From Reports and Diary

Based upon the increasing friendliness of the Aucas, the five men now made specific preparations to fly to a beach on the Curaray River just a few miles from the Auca village and make an all-out attempt to reach these Indians whom they had contacted in twelve flights over their village. Plans were made in an impressively thorough way. The plans included provisions for many days, a prefabricated tree house, carrying hidden weapons in case of dire emergency, good radio equipment, and contact points. The base of operations and point of departure was Arajuno, which had been occupied as a mission station by the McCullys. The entrance was made on Tuesday, January 3, 1956. From the diary of Peter Fleming dated January 4 we read the following: "Second day of the Auca project . . . yesterday I helped as Ed, Jim, and Rog were slipped down to the *playa*, where they put up a tree house on the edge of it with real toil, sweat, and torture from the sweatbees and tiny flies. Nate made six flights or so to get all the equipment out, and they really had a day of it. The weather was perfect and God's hand was also seen in the split-second timing kept up for the initial flights." The rest of the day's entry speaks of difficulties encountered especially from the insects, and about the attempts to advise the Aucas of their presence. The day's entry ends in the following way: "Tomorrow will be another day of it—perhaps giving us the contact we long for. The Aucas are definitely looking for us somewhere. They may have already spotted us and are now watching us, or they may mistakenly be heading up here [Arajuno—the place from which Pete was writing that particular note.] May God control in all."

Additional information of the first days is given by Nate Saint in his written report, which has just reached us here in Shell Mera. He gives a pilot's version of the difficulties in landing and taking off from that beach during those first few days. Two snatches from this report are of exceptional interest: First: "Thank God for the unusually evident blessing we have seen yesterday and today. Thank God for a good team and forbid that any man should fail to praise Him." Second paragraph: "We find that we have a friendlier feeling for these fellows [Aucas] all the time. We must not let that lead us to carelessness. It is no small thing to try to bridge between the

twentieth century and the Stone Age. God help us to take care."

Now for a continuation of the story we refer again to the diary of Pete Fleming. The entry in Pete Fleming's diary is dated January 6. It begins as follows: "This is a great day for the advance of the Gospel of Christ in Ecuador. On a 200-yard long *playa* in the middle of the Curaray River about 11:15 this morning an Auca voice boomed out a barrage of unintelligible, excited sounds to give us the long-awaited-for and much-prayed-for first contact with these savages. Midmorning found Ed on one end of the *playa*, Jim on the other, and Rog, Nate, and I in the center near the shack, all of us shouting phrases periodically. Suddenly from directly across the river a strong masculine voice began jabbering at Ed and immediately three Aucas stepped out into the open on the opposite bank . . . two women and a man. My heart jumped and thumped wildly as we walked slowly to join Ed and to shout phrases with him."

Jim Elliot went into the river to meet the Aucas. Jim caught them by the hand and led them back to the fellows. Here we continue with the diary of Pete Fleming:

"The man was a young fellow of twenty or so . . . the girl younger, and the woman perhaps thirty or so. They were completely naked except for a 'G' string around the waist. They showed neither fear nor comprehension of what cameras are and some excellent shots were taken. The man was interested but not forward, completely unafraid, unembarrassed, and at home. He was natural and self-possessed. Soon the fellow began to show interest in the plane and we guessed from his talk that he was willing to go to the Auca village. . . . We put a shirt on him and he climbed into the plane with no sign of any emotion except eagerness to do his part. Nate taxied down the strip and took off while the fellow shouted all the way.

#### That We May Share

Since Christian friends throughout the country have expressed the desire to help the five widows and their children, a special fund has been established. President V. Raymond Edman, Wheaton College, is the chairman of the Board of Trustees; and the other two trustees are Lieutenant General William K. Harrison, Jr., Commander-in-Chief of the Caribbean Command; and Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, executive secretary of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

The name and address are: "Five Missionary Martyrs Fund," Box 385, Washington, D. C.

After circling and shouting briefly, Nate landed again, thinking to give the fellow a rest before making the flight to Terminal City (their name for the Auca village). Nothing doing, he was ready to go then. I guess he shouted all the way over and back and thoroughly enjoyed the trip." We continue reading from Pete's diary: "They stayed right there on the *playa* when we left, evidently preparing to spend the night there. We can earnestly pray that the others come over and invite us to go to their place. This fellow has seemed reluctant whenever we mention the subject. Or it may be that he lacks the authority to invite us on his own."

We have given all the pertinent information that can be obtained from the diaries available. The only additional further word is that mentioned at the beginning of this report, this word being sent by radio from the beach on Sunday at noon. At the time of writing this report, what has actually happened is still a total mystery. We are deeply grateful to the Air Rescue Squadron—MATS, U.S. Air Force—under the direction of Captain DeWitt for their great help in surveying the site. Also to the officials of the American Air Mission in Quito, Lieutenant Colonel Hellriegel, Major Pollard, and Major Nuernberg helping out in Shell. To the military attaché, Colonel Woodford, and to the American Ambassador, Mr. Mills. We appreciate the co-operation of the Ecuadorian Air Force in bringing aviation gasoline and in providing troops for the ground search party. We are thankful for the help of Tao Airlines in making necessary trips in to Arajuno with supplies and personnel. Missionaries and colleagues of different groups are banding together to help in the greatest way possible. Larry Montgomery of the Summer Institute of Linguistics is directing operations in Shell Mera in conjunction with the Air Rescue Squadron. This morning a land party started out from Arajuno in the direction of the place where the five fellows had their rendezvous with the Aucas. The party is composed of the following missionaries: Frank Drown, Maurice Fuller, Dee Short, Jack Shalanko, Dr. Art Johnston, and Don Johnson. In addition there are thirteen Ecuadorian soldiers and some Indians. This party hopes to reach the site in two days and have already reached the Oglan River. Two C-47's of the Air Rescue Squadron have just arrived. They contain a small helicopter and service crew. The helicopter will be flying tomorrow at 7.30 a.m.

#### The Radio Report Continues

It is very evident that our missionary colleagues have been attacked by the Aucas, and that there are some casualties. At least two bodies have been sighted from the air—one of them with an Auca lance in the body. These are located very near the stripped plane. . . . One



word should be said concerning the five missionary wives who are awaiting news concerning the condition of their husbands. Wonderful peace and calm reign among them. There is of course evidence of deep sorrow and anguish; however, there is also in evidence the sustaining and comforting power of our great God. The Apostle Paul desired that Christ should be magnified in his body—by life or by death. This we know was the heart cry of the five fellows who went out to make contact with the Aucas. There are three important principles that we would like to underline as we conclude this report. First, we greatly admire our five missionary colleagues for this project they have undertaken. We heartily approve of their all-out effort to reach the Aucas and the methods which were employed to do so. These men took all possible precautions that were consistent with this daring step of faith. Second, whatever the final outcome of the incident, we know that the Lord will use it for His glory and the blessing of many. God is never mistaken. We trust Him just as fully now as we have done down through the years. Third, we trust that we all continue to have a burning desire to reach the Auca Indians with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We feel that earnest prayer and careful preparation must go on with greater intensity until the Aucas know and accept the message of salvation in Christ Jesus.

NEWS BULLETIN NO. 2—THURSDAY,  
JANUARY 12

The first paragraph concerns the secrecy of the whole endeavor and the reasons for it. It is very interesting that the five missionary men who entered Auca territory to establish contact with the savages covered all their preparatory operations and their actual entrance into Auca territory with the greatest of secrecy. In this the missionaries demonstrated very wise judgment. The possible success of the whole endeavor depended much on absolute secrecy. If the public had known all about their preparations a long series of problems would have developed. Other planes would no doubt have begun to fly over if the word had gotten out. Curiosity seekers would have converged on Shell Mera and possible bold adventurers would have tried to beat them to the contact. All this activity and movement would have made the Aucas completely apprehensive as to just what was going on. We need to underline again the motive that drove the five missionaries into Auca territory. Their purpose was to bring to the Aucas the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which Gospel is the only hope for transforming and changing this savage tribe.

The co-operation of the military of both the Ecuadorian and American governments is appreciated beyond measure. It is appropriate to underline

especially the wholehearted co-operation of the commander of the Ecuadorian Army detachment at the Shell Mera-Pastaza Base of the Ecuadorian Air Force. He is Lieutenant Colonel Nelson Paz y Mino. This morning he personally accompanied the search planes so as to be able to evaluate the situation. We were also very pleased to see Colonel Izurieta upon his arrival from Quito yesterday. . . . It is very encouraging to see the way the men of the helicopter group of the Air Rescue Squadron went to work to get the machine into flying condition as soon as possible. The residents of Shell Mera having never seen a helicopter until last night are watching every move with undivided attention. The co-operation of Tao Airlines and its pilots Captain Ruales and Mr. Drexel, is indeed appreciated also. . . .

Contact with the ground party on its way to the site has been definitely established. This morning Major Nuernberg, flying with John Keenan of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, talked by UR C-4 radio with Frank Drown, who is heading the land party. Their progress is satisfactory and the members of the party are in good shape. . . .

NEWS RELEASE NO. 3, JANUARY 12

The air search party that went to the site of the accident this afternoon, including the helicopter crew with the pilot, Captain McGee, and with Major Nuernberg, landed at the site. Major Nuernberg had the opportunity of being on the beach, there locating four bodies; but it has not been possible to identify them completely.

Now we'll go back to give you just a few of the details of the incident up to that time. Weather was very bad early in the morning and finally, after weather improved, at about 1.45 p.m., three planes took off for Arajuno: a C-47 of the United States Navy, an H-13 helicopter of the United States Army, and the Piper Pacer of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship. A landing was made at 2.30 p.m. at Arajuno at which time the helicopter was refueled. At 2.50 p.m. the helicopter left immediately for the site of the accident. At the same time the Albatross of the Air Rescue Squadron took off from Shell Mera under the direction of Captain DeWitt and the helicopter landed at a point where the ground party was, moving toward the site—this party under the direction of Frank Drown. The helicopter landed and the pilots had an interview with the ground party at 3.10 p.m. At that time the ground party was about ten river miles from the site of the accident. So they should reach the damaged plane very easily early tomorrow.

After finding the four as yet unidentified bodies, Captain McGee and Major Nuernberg flew downstream in the helicopter a distance of about seven miles at treetop level and then returned. They did not find any additional bodies on

this particular survey down the river, leaving one individual still unaccounted for. It is very interesting to notice that the airplane on the beach is still almost entirely intact except for the mutilation of the tail surfaces and the fabric being torn off the plane. The seat in the plane is also badly mutilated, but the rest of the plane is in good condition—the engine, the propeller, the wings, and the instruments.

This afternoon the ground search party told the airmen that the eight Quechua Indians who were sighted yesterday in two canoes had made contact with the land party. These friendly Indians had gone down as far as the site of the accident and, while there just a short time, went up into the tree house and looked around. They found a radio receiver of the missionaries which they took out with them and turned over to Frank Drown when they met the land party. Sometime around 9 o'clock tomorrow, weather permitting, the planes plan to leave once again from Shell Mera with the helicopter going first to Arajuno to refuel and then to the site of the damaged plane once again for the second meeting with the land party. There, one of the members of the Rescue Mission will join the ground search party about 10 a.m. and do everything possible to find the last individual, as well as to make all necessary identification of the four bodies already located.

There are two things that I would like to emphasize: First of all, the wonderful co-operation of the Air Rescue Squadron directed by Captain DeWitt; the very splendid service of Major Nuernberg of the Air Mission to Ecuador of the U.S. Air Force; the Navy C-47 that is also here; as well as the wonderful co-operation of the two U.S. Air Force helicopter pilots and their crew headed by Captain McGee. We don't have words to express what these men have done and the willingness with which they have done it. We should also mention that Colonel Izurieta of the Ecuadorian Air Force was also at Arajuno this afternoon and stayed until all the news had been received. We appreciate this tremendous co-operation on the part of the Ecuadorian Army and Air Force, the Air Rescue Squadron, the United States Air Force, and the U.S. Army and Navy. The second point of emphasis is this: It is amazing to see the wonderful sustaining grace that God has given to the wives of these five men. It's a revelation and a demonstration of the power of the Gospel and the consolation that the Holy Spirit and our wonderful God can give. We admire them and thank God for them!

Even though this is a tragedy from the human standpoint, we nevertheless thank God for the devotion and consecration of these five men who were willing to pay the supreme price in their effort

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