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Casilla 2424, Quito, Ecuador, S. Am.
May 8th. 1953.

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Elliot

Our united love in Christ. How lovely it would be to be able to put on a pair of wings, and pay you a little visit in your hospitable home, and have a little rest, rest from the continual strain of wondering what next in this day when Rome abuses, pushes, calumniates, threatens, and now even persecutes in this land that been so free.

If only we could tell you what a big thank you our hearts are saying to you for your great kindness in passing on to us the gift from Mr. and Mrs. Snyder. It was such a Godsend. On my desk was the notice of a very nice gift from England; but the much red tape makes it ages before the money reaches our hands, and I have had it eight days and still no money in sight; and then this loving letter from you, with this precious gift that we could change immediately. It brought such relief and joy. We humbly thank God, and we thank you and your friends. We shall be writing the Snyders immediately. Times are very precarious in this little land, and there were threats of grave trouble; and at such times it is wise to have a good stock of foodstuffs in hand; so we were able to run out and buy a sack of potatoes, a sack of flour and another of sugar. Thereby we were assured of supplies for ourselves and for our workers both east and west whom we usually supply, as buying in quantity we are able to get a slightly lower price for all concerned.

We don't usually tell folk thus intimately of our situation; but you know of these things, and I felt it would give you joy to know what a special blessing your kindness had been to us.

The cutting of the railway line some two months ago by floods has brought much difficulty, especially in producing an acute shortage of gasoline, so that have not been able to use our car. Things are better now, and I was able to get four gallons this afternoon. General distress up in the mountain regions dependent upon the railway has been the result. Hunger brings discontent. Official nerves get frayed. And in general unrest becomes serious. On account of all this we have still not been able to get our rights to preach in the open air restored. Also in the little town near here where things were going so well, all has been brought all but to a standstill. We hired a room, but could only hold our first meeting. The town was stirred into such an uproar that the people were ready to kill me. From the pulpit they were told that the floods and consequent distress were the proof of God's wrath upon them for having allowed the Gospel to find its way into their midst; that their country would waste away; that a great earthquake would come if they allowed the Gospel to be preached again. So the people were worked up into a frenzy. On one occasion a foreigner went to the town on holiday. He was attacked in mistake for me, and the populace were preparing to burn down the house where he was staying!!! Influential friends there have warned me not to come for a while. Alas, too, they all know now that the Minister of Government is against us, and that he has said that the police cannot defend us if attacked. A further result is the general persecution of the few believers and of the interested persons. We pray that God will overrule that soon we may be able to get back there. Until then, we try to

encourage the interested people to come out to Quito and meet with us in our house so that we may comfort and encourage them, and teach them the scriptures.

Though curtailed in some of our activities, we carry on with the little printing press, and it keeps us busy. You would be amazed at the torrents of lies that some off the R. C. press in their weekly propaganda leaflets - the most abject lies, and usually very inflammatory. Thus - the other week; we found this sort of thing in a pamphlet: Don't you know that the masons (their epithet for us) hate the Virgin Mother with a mortal hatred. And she is your mother. So we are just about to issue a leaflet entitled: The Evangelicals, who they are and what they believe - and we shall seek to introduce the blessed Gospel message at the same time. For people here who read all those things against us really think that we do not believe in God or Christ even. Here is another instance that has come to my notice. In one church it was given out that the evangelicals have a great image of Christ in their church, and every member is obliged to slap it in the face on entering - and similar blasphemies are told against us - and the people believe these lies, and hate the evangelicals.

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from all this you will see that Rome is making a tremendous drive and this drive reaches to every last ~~neek~~ recess of life. Thus even the children who attend my wife's so-called "Religion" class are persecuted in their school. Lots of children who would attend, the R.C. teachers refuse to let them leave the classes though it is all ordered in the running of the school!

To balance your picture of conditions, I should add that STILL on every hand there are many many people eager and anxious to hear the Gospel if only they were allowed to do so; but all fear to be seen either attending meetings or in contact with evangelicals.

Pray for us, please, and for this discouraging situation; that God will turn the tide of things once more. It is encouraging to know that in other parts of the republic things are much easier than up here in the mountain region; thus down on the coast, the whole atmosphere is much more liberal.

Now a little news about the others. Pete is here in Quito these days, in the dentist's hands, or better - forceps. He has had an impacted wisdom tooth removed; and there are two others needing the same treatment, but I guess he will wait awhile for them. He is feeling better now after his grueling visit two days ago. Jim is holding the fort at Shandia but hopes to come up to Quito early next week for a few days. All the different evangelical groups are having a little get together and devotional conferences for four days, so he thought he would come out for this refreshment, and Betty hopes to come up to be Quito at the same time. She has done wonders in her unraveling of the Colorado language. The little assembly down there goes on growing, and I went down the other week for a baptism in which eleven were baptized. I refused to baptize myself, and asked one of their own elders to do so, in order that all could see that they had the right and the power to do so, and there was no special virtue in being baptized by me as a foreign missionary - in that way we are able to back up the elders and strengthen them and their testimony. You have ready learned how well the boys have got on with their jungle Quichua. They are now browsing in my most difficult and involved sentences collected through the years, and when they master these they will be second to none in speaking the language, leaving far behind their teacher whose memory is now getting very rusty about all except the most common

and frequent usages. There is a happy spirit at Shandia, the work is growing and going on well. I was down there at Easter time and gave a week's conferences in Dos Rios, the oldest station in that language region where I served the Lord when I first reached Ecuador. The boys did well, speaking in the afternoon sessions.

We so enjoyed your letter. Sorry that Mrs. Elliot's leg is troubling her so much. do hope that she is resting sufficiently and that she will soon feel it better and less painful. Gwen is only fair. Her back varies, sometimes better, sometimes less so; and now she is troubled with much indigestion. The altitude changes so many characteristics of digestibility or otherwise of so many foods. Robert continues his studies at the missionary school. Little Jimmy grows and grows. He is very bright, but at times very obstinate. He will be four years old on Sunday. And the writer? Thank God I enjoy a very good measure of health, and of God's enabling to carry on. We wish we could sleep better; and feel that if this were possible we could attain so much more for the Lord. However, the Lord's goodness to us is just wonderful. We would feel happier if we were able to accomplish more for Him, but we keep going at full pressure at what we do have in hand.

IN the little press we have just completed the second syllable book for the jungle Indians; it will look very nice. Jim will be delighted with it. We hope that it will not only serve to teach the now-reading pupils of the school who have been taught to read Spanish to get the mastery of their own language, but will enable the boys to teach the adolescents who have never come into the school to read. Then we produced a little text-card kit with ten salient Gospel verses on them, after the style of Navigators verses, in Quichua, and took them to the conference. And this was a special surprise for Jim as we knew how he was longing for something of the kind. So the boys took on the task of teaching these verses at the conference and new at Shandia, with great success. Now we have done the same for our folk at the little town near here where the persecution is. We believe God will make them a blessing.

Good bye for now. Our love in Christ to all the family, and to the Saint too.

Yours in His blessed service,

Wildred & Gwen Tidmarsh