

c/o VISION INCORPORATED
Box 1,
Spokane, Washington

October 15th, 1955

Our dear Faithful Friends,

We are back in the States again for a few months furlough. On February 1, 1956, we expect to return to Indo-China to a new field of service among our beloved tribespeople. We believe the Lord is going to fulfill our dream of many years and enable us to make plans for the evangelization of every unreached tribe accessible to the Gospel. We look upon our past years of missionary service as a prelude, a preparation for what lies ahead - the most difficult task of all.

We are no longer connected with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Our 27 years of wonderful blessing and fellowship with them in our work in Indo-China, which today covers the 12 tribal areas in the Banmethuot district, are now terminated. We have deep, aching sorrow as we leave behind our precious Raday, Mmong and other tribal friends and the happy old days. Our former work is being carried on by the staff of C. and M.A. missionaries in that area - six in the Leprosarium and five in evangelistic work. It is our earnest and sincere desire that our faithful friends in the homeland who have stood by this work will continue to help support the 52 native preachers, 3 Viet Nameese missionaries, and the 250 or more leprosy patients and their healthy babies in the nursery. There is tremendous need there.

Because this important work will need all the support our Christian & Missionary Alliance friends can send there, we shall no longer be soliciting their funds or sending our circulars to them unless especially requested. Since we may be sending circulars to some C. and M.A. friends unknowingly, we would appreciate if they would kindly let us know about it.

"Farther into the Night"

We expect to spend our first months on the field in a wide and intensive survey of every tribal area accessible to us, in vast unreached mountain districts inhabited, some of them, by wild and dangerous people. This survey will enable us to choose the strategic places where tribal mission centers should be established, and the language groups which should have their dialects reduced to writing. We shall also have to spend a great deal of time studying the official language of the country, Vietnamese. This is a tonal language much like the Chinese, but with Romanized characters, and it has now become obligatory to speak it instead of the French. During the dry months of February to May we shall be on the road most of the time.

We shall be keeping you informed of this new venture of faith and pass on to you from time to time the challenges that come to our hearts as we see the needs and the opportunities. We covet your earnest prayers.

Many years ago God gave us a vision of these mysterious mountain areas in the heart of Central Viet Nam and South Laos where countless brown-skinned tribes are still without the Gospel message. We first visited the Jeh, the Katu, the Kha Leu and other tribes 15 years ago and wrote about them in our books. Last March, I was able to visit some of them again, as the cease-fire had made their territory accessible.

We believe that God is now calling us to move into the forefront of the battle and make the title of our latest book, "Farther Into the Night," more and more a practical reality.

We are not unmindful of the difficulties involved in starting this new venture. It means exploring great mountain areas of hostile, unsubdued tribes, who have never been touched by civilization. These are the true "Blood Hunters" who to-day still sacrifice human beings to appease the evil spirits. They live independently with no administration or authority over them, having no medical assistance or help from the outside world. They are a cruel and treacherous people who fortify their villages and place hidden lances, poisoned with curare and dipped in decayed rat flesh, on their trails.

Their country is exceedingly difficult of access, with no roads whatever beyond the end of navigation of the shallow rivers. It is practically impossible to enter many areas during the height of the rainy season.

This is the second half of the twentieth century, and it is not right that people who are now accessible to the Gospel should remain in such misery, darkness and hopelessness. THIS IS GOD'S TIME FOR THESE TRIBES!

We are going out in complete trust in our faithful and loving Heavenly Father, not only for our outfit, passage money and monthly support, but for our housing, office equipment, Jeep Station Wagon, outboard motors, etc. Our main expense besides these, will be for gasoline and for the upkeep of the car as we travel extensively day in and day out for months at a time. Later on we shall tell you of the various projects in which many of you will surely want to have a share.

God has permitted us to pass through some very fiery trials during the past few months. We are thanking Him for them, for we have learned deep lessons through it all. God's discipline is the heritage of every child of His. We believe that He would prepare us to endure perhaps greater trials than ever before, which trials could not be endured without this training. We have put ourselves entirely in the hands of God and are willing to obey Him and go wherever He sends us.

The strong, deep, abiding desire to see these tribes evangelized now, no matter how much Satan would oppose us, is presumptive proof, we feel, that God intends us to do this work while the doors are open, and in humility, faith and utter dependence upon Him we undertake it.

May the burden of these last tribes burn also in your hearts like a fire. These thousands are dying without ever having had a chance to know that Christ died for their sins. May you have a share in getting the light to them now.

We ourselves have worked since 1929 in and for Indo-China. We have labored in hope and sorrow and love, with tears and our very life blood to plough up and cultivate the Banmethuot portion of Christ's vineyard. Now we want to give the rest of our lives to carrying the message of salvation to the vast outlying regions yet untouched - at trail's end. We would take the Cross into these unknown, unexplored regions, walking in the footprints of our Captain Christ. A great gladness and a great humility possesses us. We continue in the Great Commission to be pathfinders - to blaze new trails. In His Name we ask that He will have these new tribes of people in in these uttermost parts as a possession, and we claim that from them also, shall be taken out a people for His precious Name.

Our three boys

Douglas, ~~our~~ our oldest son, and his wife, Ruth, and two sweet children, Linda and Baby Douglas, are out in Saigon doing a good piece of work in the American Embassy, Information Service, helping to stem the tide of Communism.

Leslie is also in Indo-China helping as an interpreter to some of the U.S. Army officers.

Stanley is a junior at Wheaton College, majoring in anthropology.

During November, December and January:

We expect to spend the next three months challenging people with the need of these tribes. Our wonderful friends of VISION INC., are now producing their great new film of these very tribespeople in CINEMASCOPE, (using a great screen 21 feet wide) entitled -

"TRAIL'S END"

This will be shown in large auditoriums in various cities. The premiere will be held in the Coliseum (seating 8,000) in Spokane, Washington, on November 3rd. This film is professionally made, with special camera and lenses, and portable lighting equipment for interior and night scenes in the jungle. It will have a great challenge for young and old, saved and unsaved. It will show the tigers the Vision, Inc., team shot in the Banmethuot area this year, our tame gibbon apes at our home and the real "Blood Hunters" in their mountain villages.

This is the VERY FIRST TIME that Foreign Missions will have been presented in this exciting, modern method. This film is in full color and many sounds are synchronized through tape recordings made on the spot. You will see inside the dim smoky longhouses and not only watch a sorcerer chanting and gongs being played, but you will hear the actual sounds. You will see inside a Christian longhouse, and notice the difference as they pray before their meals.

A choir of the finest professional (Christian) singers in Chicago flings out a great challenge in top-flight special music composed for the film, and we can truly say that nothing like it has ever been shown to the Christian public.

We expect to be present each time the film is shown, along with one or more of the VISION INC., team, until we take our plane from San Francisco on February 1st.

The Vision Inc., team visited our work on the field twice and have seen the need at first hand. We are sharing our mailing list with them so that they also can send you frequent bulletins and photographs of our work. They will continue to promote the tribeswork along with other projects on their daily radio programs. Vision Inc., have been used of God on many fields during the past years through various missionary societies.

Gifts for our new work may be sent to us in care of Vision, Inc., Box 1, Spokane, Washington. We shall let you know our field address later on.

Ever sincerely yours in Him,

Raura I. Smith *Gordon H. Smith*

P.S. If you would care to arrange a showing of "Trail's End" in your area, either in a very large church or high school auditorium (because of the size of the screen) kindly get in touch with Vision Inc.

Since a special projector is required the film cannot be rented, but must be shown by one of the Vision Inc., team.