

## News from our Unification Church Missionary in the South Pacific:

Vicki Tatz  
October 1975



*Making roast pork*

### **June 24, 1975:**

I'm teaching English and art at a school here. The children are poor, as is the whole country, and there is very little in the way of materials and tools for teaching. The students love me because I don't beat them, and because I praise them for even a tiny victory. I'm a member of the local church and teach Sunday school each week to a class of students, ages 16 to 20. The church also runs the school where I teach. My sister works in the library at a college and attends one of the churches here.

The people are easygoing and desire a change in the church. But the colonials, I feel, want to "protect" the country from any more missionaries. Baha'i missionaries came not long ago and now four percent of the population is Baha'i, which to me shows the need for truth and the desire to prepare for the Messiah's coming.

### **June 1975 (undated letter):**

It's a hot day and the bread man just came and delivered our bread. The milk man came this morning and the milk has been boiled and is cooling. It's a lazy morning and we are writing letters.

That's the way things go here. We wait for our brother and study and talk and go for walks. It's difficult to just wait and wait day after day when I know how urgent the work is. But at this point I think patience is the best solution. Meanwhile we have several long prayer conditions each day, one in the morning from 6:00 until 8:00 a.m., and one in the evening from 10:00 until 11:00 p.m.

The people are so wonderful here, but so slow. We have to move at a snail's pace so we don't rush ahead of them. I've met several Peace Corps volunteers and find them open and possibly responsive to my ideas and beliefs.

I have been spending time with the people who own our boarding house, a wonderful family with seven loud children, a few squealing pigs, many crowing chickens, a playful dog, and a grandmother, all of whom make a wonderful noise, especially in the mornings.

The people here live outside most of the time. Cooking, washing, playing, eating -- all of this is done outside, and outside is dirt. They share their lives with pigs and ducks and chickens. They sleep inside little homemade houses.

Yesterday the family gave a feast for the first birthday of their only daughter. A large pig was killed and also a baby one -- it was delicious. We had raw fish, coconuts, pineapple pie and other native foods, and we all ate until we couldn't eat anymore. It was a bright day, a day much different from all the others, which are usually all the same.

Religion is very deep in the customs of the nation but not so deep in the hearts of the people.

**June 1975 (undated letter):**

Everything moves so slowly here. It tests my patience. We went to church this morning and saw the king. Today being Sunday, everything is closed and no one works.

The Beach House is wonderful but too expensive, so I'm searching for a house. It's indescribably beautiful here. The people care for each other, and I met one boy who said he'll help me learn the language and translate, etc. I haven't discussed God or politics with him yet, but he's nice and very honest.

An American dollar is worth 62 cents here, so I may be getting a job. We'll see what happens. It's difficult to save a nation that doesn't feel it needs saving, a contented nation that has yet to see the light.

**June 18, 1975:**

Good news. Guess who just happened to be flying with me from Hawaii to here? One of the seven chiefs of the country, who lives across from the palace of the king. He liked me and invited me to visit him at his home. Of course I intend to do so, but only after I learn my manners. Before I knew of his high position I walked up and smelled the garland of flowers he wore around his neck and he smiled. My gesture was mostly an attempt to feel out what might give joy to the people. He's an old man and very kind.

On a flight I also sat next to the secretary of agriculture, who immediately took charge of me. He taught me a few words and told me a few of the customs and answered all my many questions as best he could. He was a sincere and young hearted man who told me that someday he would introduce me to the princess, who is his friend. He seemed to like me, though I was a nervous wreck thinking I might do something impolite without knowing it. The chief, I'm sure, has never had anyone extend such awe and respect before; he seemed to enjoy it, and so did I. I will meet the king.

Don't worry about this country. It's a place with great potential.

**July 1, 1975:**

Some friends are here on a visit from Fiji, making a nice break from the usual routine. I teach every day until 2:30 p. m., and my sister works at another school until 4:30 p.m. Our brother can't live with us here. We can hardly walk together without everyone naturally assuming we're married!

Sometimes I feel like I'm in the land where time stops. I wish you could work here for just one week. You'd grow to love it so much.

This country is like a room where many people live. Privacy is nearly non-existent, especially since our flat is below the Peace Corps office and the head of the Peace Corps is my friend, as are the volunteers.

As you know, because everyone from surrounding islands came here, we held our first "South Pacific Conference," and as a matter of fact is still in progress and we are greatly enjoying each other's company. All our visitors are praying to be able to go back to their respective countries soon. They all have people they are teaching. I want so much to go forward, too, and it seems as though I'm doing nothing, but we are in reality doing much in the line of getting ourselves embedded in society. I'm comforted by something Dr. Kim once said: "A large pot boils slowly." This island is small, but it's a large pot.

Our flat rents for \$30.00 a month and is quite alive with many other inhabitants: centipedes, huge friendly spiders, hungry mosquitoes, ants by the 10 millions, a few roaches, and a multitude of unidentified flying creatures.

Our brother screened all the windows, which has cut the population down. We also have some shy lizards that skitter across the walls or the ceiling when they think we're not looking. They're so transparent you can almost see their little spines.

The people here don't seem to think deeply, on the whole, and teaching them Principle will be difficult at this point, but they can be won by sincerity and love. The country is poor, to say the least the rich here would be considered poor in most countries -- but no one goes hungry except out of laziness.

So vast are their networks of relatives and kin that among them there is enough to allow a man to enjoy the leisurely life even if he has a wife and children.

The word "why" doesn't exist in their thinking and questions of "purpose" don't arise.

The Bahia's were here some time ago and did successfully convert four percent of the population, but the

Christians don't like them and on some islands the people throw stones at them.

It's been good these last weeks, moving into our flat and learning native cooking and ways of life. Our home is right on the lagoon, which is probably the reason we have so many four legged, six-legged, and 1,000-legged and winged visitors. It's a good flat, though we've had to spend a lot fixing it up and getting it usable.

### **August 1975:**

I'm working with several young men who are very good in morals and righteousness. One boy comes over every day and helps me in my vegetable garden.

In fact, he's doing most of it on his own with my instructions. He really wants to change his life into a clean one centered on God, but he knows it's not easy. He's one of the students at my school.

We and the mosquitoes and the hibiscus and the cat (which we got to eat the centipedes) are all fine and working hard.

### **September 16, 1975:**

Each day I go to school and teach a noisy bunch of children how to draw and speak English. I adore them and, as I said before, it has opened wide a window to Heavenly Father's heart.

Physically the people here are absolutely striking to look at. I must say, for a person who loves beauty, this is the place to see it: plump and lovely brown women with faces that look as young as infants and yet 100 years old, and men that are slim and strong. They are lovely, with mischievous eyes that positively sparkle with innocence. Children glow with life and health.

Each day I do a little work in the garden before my afternoon art class, then come home and read or write letters. Then we eat, and usually study some after dinner. Many times I grade tests or try to read and study some grammar or spelling, which you've probably noticed are not my strong points. We often visit friends or have a guest for dinner.

We are working with many Christians. I teach Sunday school and we attend Bible studies with an Anglican priest and his wife. He is the one who's really giving us hope for our future work here.

Each Thursday we get together and speak quite deeply, and I've felt the spirit of God so strongly several of those times that I would just open my mouth and hear the most beautiful stories and the clearest understandings pour out.

Each time I tremble so violently that I wonder if they can all see this, but I can't, by any effort, stop it. It's most exciting.

As far as social contacts go, tonight we had dinner with the secretary to the ambassador from Taiwan, and I have my usual Sunday breakfast with a wealthy noble who is a very dear old man. A good friend of the king's has moved into the flat across from mine and invited me to a party she gave, which was interesting. It's quite easy to have these experiences, even meeting the prince at breakfast, but hard to develop things further. It's going to take much more patience and work to bring success here.

The closest thing to a member we have is the 18-year-old boy who helped me build the garden and whom we've all adopted as our son. I've been slipping the Principle to him bit by bit, but his understanding of it is limited at this point, though we love him as if he were already a member.

We've been busy with the usual things -- teaching school, working in my garden, going to church, holding Bible studies, and making friends. Things are going slowly externally, but internally they seem to be moving at a quicker rate. My heart blooms and my spirit tingles with love for the people and for the country itself.