

Ukarumpa, P.N.G. August 1988

Dear

Where's the soap? Where in the world is the sugar? I can't find the dustpan anywhere! The Stutzmans are trying to settle into the 19th place in less than five years. After six months in Sopu village we returned to Ukarumpa for a two month break from village life. We are enjoying being together as a family again, enjoying some of the comforts of Western civilization, and also the fellowship of Christian friends. During this time we will enter our language data into the computer and continue with language analysis.

After sharing with other more experienced translators it has become apparent that we have one of the most difficult places in Papua New Guinea to work in. In our last letter we mentioned the fight over the sorcerer being taken to jail. Sunday morning, July 10th, we witnessed another violent outbreak in our village. This time it was over the Provincial Government election results which were announced over the radio at that time. Our village had two candidates that were standing for election, but neither of them won. The clan members of one of the candidates went into a rage and ran around the village smashing houses (including their own), the clinic building, and the airstrip storage building. They also destroyed the village water system. To see 50-100 men running around with axes, spears, bows and arrows, destroying property, and to hear the women and old men screaming at the top of their lungs, and some of the youth crying, was quite an experience! We were still in our pajamas when this happened and again Robert was successful in calming down **one** man. A few days later we found out that some of the women had also been screaming to have our house burned down. In this culture when something bad happens to a person, he will try to get compensation or pay back the person who did it. If this is impossible he will destroy his own property or family and thus get compensation from others in the form of pity. The days following this Sunday were filled with attempted peace offerings (pigs were killed) and raids on neighboring villages.

We decided to leave the village earlier than planned and booked an SIL flight to leave on Wednesday, July 20th. That morning we were all packed to leave and were listening to the radio for the pilot to tell us his expected time of arrival. When he finally called for us, it was to tell us that the Sopu airstrip had been closed indefinitely due to 'work-in-progress' and as a result, he could not land. We had been aware that one of the candidates had threatened the people he would close the airstrip permanently if he did not win. But we didn't know whether he had the power to carry out his threat. Evidently he did! We assured the pilot that there was no 'work-in-progress' and that the airstrip was in great condition. Based on our testimony, SIL's aviation department was able to get the airstrip opened officially. Two days later we left Sopu and came to Ukarumpa. At the moment we are not sure whether there will be any retribution against us for defying this man's attempt at closing the airstrip.

We praise the Lord that he has protected us and our house during this time. We also are thankful for good health and some extra financial gifts to pay off our village house debt.

Please pray for the following items:

1. That we will have the **courage** and **desire** to return to Sopa and continue with the work.
2. That God will **protect** us and our property.
3. That God, by His Spirit will move among the Tauade people, bringing them to Him.
4. That we will have continued **good health** and **finances** to do the work.
5. That God will make it possible for us to have our own house in Ukarumpa, so that when we come in from the village we will have a place to rest and work.

Thankyou for your **prayers** and your **financial gifts**.

In His Service,

Verna

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