



INTERNATIONAL

I'm pacing the room. The phone rings. It's not OC International, so I quickly get off the phone. We've been expecting their call all day and don't want to miss it. Today we find out our country options . . . where the President's Leadership Team believes we can be most effectively used.

Finally, Jim Van Meter, OC's director of training, calls. We both huddle around the speakerphone to hear the news. News which will shape our future for at least four years.

"Tim and Annette, after much prayer and discussion we have decided on two possibilities. We consider them equally important options. They are Argentina and . . . Romania."

After a good half hour of excitedly asking questions about work in the two countries, we thank Jim and hang up. We sit in silence, our minds abuzz with images, ideas, and questions about these two countries.

This scene occurred October 30, about the same time you received our first letter. Since then we have spoken with people who have worked or are working in these countries. We've read everything we can get our hands on about them. And boy have we prayed! I was hoping God would write ARGENTINA or ROMANIA in the sky. But He didn't. We are leaning toward Argentina. Please pray for us as we walk through this process. Our sense of God's leading in our lives must be confirmed by an invitation from the field as well as official appointment by headquarters.

So what's next? Well, first we must raise all of our support. This includes funds for travel, office supplies, administrative costs, national support staff, and our insurance, as well as our salary. This can be a rather awkward task. However, God has encouraged us in that 65 percent of our annual support has already been pledged . . . and in only six weeks.

Second, this spring we hope to visit the team in our country of assignment. Third, in July we will attend a required five-week intern training session at OC

headquarters in Colorado Springs. This will help prepare us for cross-cultural ministry and train us how not to be obnoxious guests in our new country. Fourth, if we've met our minimum support requirement, we plan to leave as soon after our intern training as possible. This could be as early as August or September '95.

Just a couple of months ago we were simply Tim and Annette. Now we're "Tim and Annette, that cute missionary couple." As insignificant as that shift may seem, it has probably been our biggest adjustment so far. Everyone has these amazing mental images of what a missionary is. Some see us as virtual martyrs, sacrificing all for God. Others see us as misguided, overzealous dreamers out to "save the world." A few imply that maybe we're only seeing the world at others' expense. Most think it's wonderful that we are responding to God's call and are very glad that it is us, not them, who got the call.

10-SECOND UPDATE

- * We're leaning towards Argentina.
- What's next?
- * Raise \$ support (65% down, 35% to go)
- * Early spring: trip to visit new team
- * July: five-week intern training
- * September (approx.): move to field
- What's been our biggest adjustment so far?
- Being referred to as "that cute missionary couple, bless their hearts"
- Prayer requests:
- * That God will prepare us for our new ministry, country, and team.
- * To keep our focus on Christ, not our ability (or lack thereof).

And us? Well, our image of ourselves as "missionaries" is a composite of what we know of youth ministry and youth leadership training combined with the unique challenges and adventures of living in a foreign culture. Believe it or not, 98 percent of trained Christian youth workers are in the US where only about 5 percent of the world's 12 to 20 year olds live. The two of us are drawn to help assist, equip, and train youth workers outside of the States in order to enable the church around the world to reach the next generation for Christ.

If this is something you would like to be a part of -- terrific! We need prayers for all that is ahead of us. And we need an average of about 60 people to give \$35/month to complete our support. We'd love to hear from you and keep in touch.

For Christ and His kingdom,