

PURE RELIGION

Reports from Area Welfare Agents

In 1994 the Welfare Executive Committee approved a recommendation to establish area welfare agents as special welfare assistants to Area Presidencies and directors for temporal affairs. One indication of the effectiveness of these couples is that four years ago, there were no functioning international regional welfare committees. Today, in 1999, there are over 250. Not only are the committees organized, but they are experiencing success. During the disaster that accompanied Hurricane Mitch, for example, members of these regional welfare committees worked heroically organizing the relief effort in Honduras and Nicaragua. The following excerpts from recent reports offer insight into the influence of area welfare agents:

Elder Lloyd and Sister Julie Richmond, Europe North Area

“Our assignment to package hygiene kits for the Kosovar refugees was completed on May 12, 1999. The spirit of love and cooperation was so strong that several times during the day people spontaneously started to sing hymns such as ‘Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel’ or ‘Called to Serve.’ We had elderly people with canes, hearing-impaired people, elders from the mission, the young and strong, the older and slower, and everything in between. There are 35 pallets of kits waiting at the distribution center for shipment. No one can remember having had

this kind of opportunity before and they are clamoring for another chance to help.”

Elder Craig and Sister Marcie Bramwell, Chile

“In a discussion of fast offerings in a recent meeting, a chairman of a stake bishops’ welfare council reported that he had discovered that neither of his counselors was paying fast offerings nor had ever fasted. He interviewed the balance of the ward leadership with similar dismaying response. In each instance he challenged them to fast and test the promised blessings. It didn’t happen overnight, but a year and a half later the results were

obvious in terms of obedience to the principles of the law of the fast, resulting in unity and sweetness of spirit of the ward.”

Elder and Sister Whetten, Mexico North Area

“As we met with the leaders in the training meetings, we felt a marvelous spirit of interest and a desire among all present to function in a meaningful way in their welfare callings. We have been welcomed most warmly. The focus of our training has been the information contained in *Providing in the Lord’s Way*. We teach this manual from cover to cover.”

