

McCRACKEN MEMO

Panagiotou 3 Papagou 15669 Athens, Greece

E-mail: scott.mccracken@iteams.org

INTRODUCTION

I (Scott) was privileged to grow up in a church pastored for many years by **Dr. O.S. Hawkins**. One of the things he taught our church was that "numbers are not important for the sake of numbers" but rather they are significant insofar as they represent individual souls for whom Christ died. **Each "number" is a personal life** with a personal story in need of a personal Savior. He showed us Biblical examples highlighting numbers: the **12** Apostles, the **70** disciples, the **500** who Christ appeared to after His resurrection, the **3,000** who came to the Lord after Peter's sermon, the feeding of the **4,000** and the **5,000**; even a whole book in the Bible entitled "**Numbers**".

One of the things we try to **AVOID** in our ministry here is an **over-emphasis** on numbers (i.e., how much "bang" for the "buck"?, how many "souls per dollar"?, etc.). **We do not play the "body count" game.** We do not know how many refugees have come to the Lord through this ministry. God, and only God, knows the hearts of men. Our job is to be strategic (wise) and faithful.

However, there are some people (I am not one of them) who have a fascination with numbers and statistics. **This letter was written with those people in mind**, in order to give a brief look at some of the "numbers" we do know about in this ministry.

For those of you (like me) who enjoy stories more, we will try to "tailor" our next letter to you. ☺



Reaching the Nations Through Athens

ATHENS REFUGEE CENTER

- A.** It costs **approximately 65 cents** to feed a refugee at the **Athens Refugee Center**
- B.** We currently give physical and spiritual food to somewhere between **1300 and 1500** refugees a week.
- C.** Almost **17,000** refugees (mostly from Muslim countries such as Iraq, Iran, and Kurdistan) are estimated to have been ministered to at the **A.R.C.** in the **first 3 months of 2003**.
- D.** We currently have **\$33,811** (toward the **1 million we are raising**) in **The Refuge** account.

LIFE IN GREECE...

- In the last 12 months the **value of the US dollar** against the Euro has **DROPPED 25%** (many in the US do not think about how the exchange rate affects the financial situation of missionaries)



- Due to *improved economic structures* at **I.T.**, our monthly support needs will be gradually increasing another **5 %** between now and **2004**.
- The average rate of inflation **the last 12 months was 4.3%** in Greece.
- Prices have shot up across the board, **with bread up 3.1%, doctors' visits 4.8 %, and prices in cafes 20-50%**. The **General Consumers' Federation of Greece** identified a **10% increase in basic goods**. Fruit and vegetable prices have at least **doubled and tripled**. Olive oil, for instance, went up **15%** over last year. Prices at the Athens central **meat market increased 4-16%**.
- *Examples of daily expenses:*
 - Gas...**\$2.65/gallon**
 - Milk...**\$6/gallon**
 - Sandwich bread...**\$2/loaf**
 - Ground beef...**\$5.00/pound**

IN THE NEWS...



- Some **50,000 Iraqis** are already waiting to cross into Greece from Turkey as soon as the weather conditions improve. Despite the bad weather conditions, up to **30 migrants enter daily** from Evros and are intercepted by the Greek police.
- **10% of Greece's population** is made up of immigrants and refugees.
- Approximately **400,000 asylum seekers** and **500,000 illegal immigrants** enter the European Union every year.
- The Aegean is considered a RED ZONE for the influx of mass refugee arrivals. Greek authorities **estimate more than 200,000 attempting to head for Europe through Turkey** (most will pass through Greece after Turkey).
- More than **70,000 Africans and Asians** are awaiting at the Greek-Turkish border to cross over.
- Recently, traffickers have been using unsafe boats, resulting in their capsizing before reaching Greek shores. **Between 2000 and Dec. 31 2002, in 21 boats which sunk, 197 people are known to have lost their lives**- a conservative estimate. (The Herald Tribune 31/1/03)
- In 2002, Greece granted asylum to only **36 refugees out of 5,600 applications. That's 0.3%** (down from 11% the year before)
- "We will **not accept** (receive and accommodate) **ANY** new refugees and migrants in the near future."






---the (Greek) Prime Minister, March 28, 2003).

MCCRACKEN FAMILY NUMBERS

1. We currently have **4** wonderful children and are in the process of adopting **#5** from Vietnam.
2. Due to additional space use (to prepare for adoption), our rent this year is being increased by more than **30%** (utilities will increase for the same reason).
3. **Our monthly financial support is 14% lower than what we need to meet our monthly financial obligations.** It has been a long time since we have needed to mention our personal support needs (and we do so with great hesitation), but it is truly necessary to mention it again. **We are not asking those who are already giving to give more!** *We are asking those who are not to prayerfully consider it, and we are asking everyone to share about this investment opportunity with your church missions committee, your S.S. class, friends, etc.*
4. The McCracken Family will be on a furlough in the US from **June 16th to September 8th, 2003**. We will be based in **Mobile, Alabama** from **June 16th to July 12th**, and in **Eugene, OR** from **July 12th to August 23rd**, and again in **Mobile, Alabama** from **August 23rd to September 8th**.
ALL of our weekends are already booked but we are looking for some **weekday** speaking opportunities near the Mobile and Eugene areas.



PRAYER REQUESTS

-  More funds for **The Refuge**
-  A **Kurdish Teammate** (we need one)
-  The McCrackens' **finances**
-  Partnership with Campus Crusade's **New Life Training Center** (an intensive discipleship training program), **Global Aid Network** (relief ministry), and other opportunities
-  All on our team (many dealing with residency problems)

Financial Contributions: Write checks to **International Teams**, and *specify* for the McCrackens account OR for the "Helping Hands" account

Thank you.

Send to: International Teams
411 W. River Rd.
Elgin, IL 60123-1570 USA

OR to:

IT/UK
PO Box 11
Brecon, Powys
United Kingdom

OR to:

IT/Canada
1 Union Street
Elmira ON N3B 3J9

Canada

OR

IT/Australia
PO Box 1123
Baulkham Hills NSW 1755

Australia



If you would like to be placed on our "Kneemail" prayer updates, please contact us at :

scott.mccracken@iteams.org