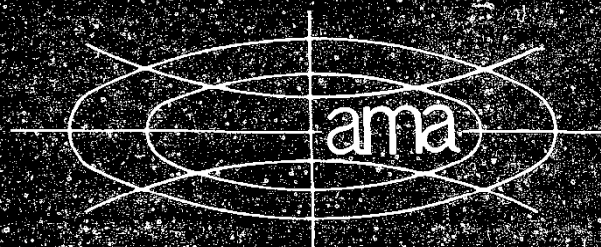


asian missions advance



BULLETIN OF THE ASIA MISSIONS ASSOCIATION Number 20

INTEGRATION IN MISSIONS-- CAN IT WORK?

Petros Octavianus

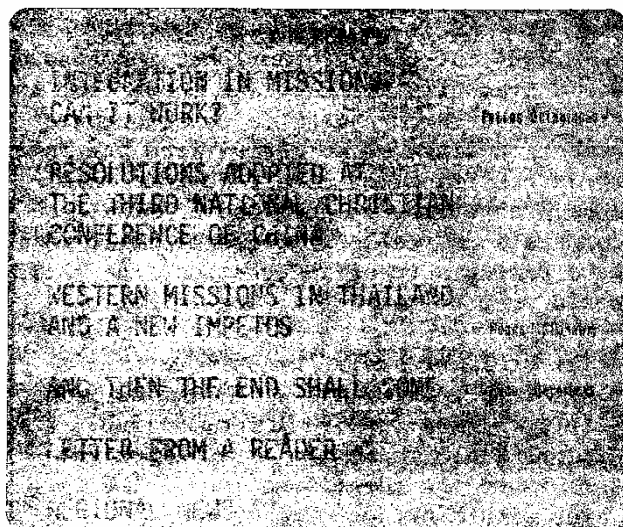
PREFACE

In these 35-45 post-War years, about 100 Asian and African nations have gained their independence. They have succeeded in throwing off the yoke of colonialism. Dr. Ralph Winter, in his book "The Twenty-Five Unbelievable Years", speaks about the success of the third world nations in freeing themselves from their colonial masters in such a short time.

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However, together with independence gained, a change in thought patterns has also become evident among the Asians, the Africans, and the Latin Americans. Looking at it from a psychological angle, it is evident that these nations want to express their ability to stand on their own feet. This in itself is positive, but their way of expressing it seems to be negative, since it comes out in explosions and eruptions. Needless to say, a transitional period is a period of crises. The important thing is that we do our best to minimize these crises.

In the course of gaining independence, the governments took over churches and church institutions, stressing that leadership must be handed by the missionary to



the national worker. It is important for the missionary to be sensitive to the mental attitude, the thought patterns and philosophical outlook, and the efforts of the national churches and institutions.

In 1810, William Carey proposed the First International Missions Conference to be held in Capetown, South Africa. However, his efforts did not materialize. Had these plans been carried through, it would have been evident that what was meant by "International Missions Conference" was in fact a conference of first world missions, because at that time missionaries were predominantly from the first world European countries and missions. Third world missions were just then beginning.

A hundred years later, John Mott succeeded in bringing about the first Missions Conference in Edinburg. At the time, second world missions played the most important role (USA). Until the present, the second world has held the most important role in missions. (Missions statistics in 1978 show that from a total of 55,930 missionaries in the world, 50,200, or 88.3%, come from the second world, while 5,730, or 10.1%, come from the third world.)

It is clear that the understanding of international missions in 1910 was still confined to the first and second world, while the third world was represented by less than 2% out of the 1,200 delegates. Therefore, at that time the third world had little to say in missions.

In 1974, at the International Congress on World Evangelization, it was shown that in these last thirty years, a considerable number of missions societies from the third world (Latfricasia) have come into existence. Therefore, in speaking of missions cooperations, reflecting itself in forms like partnership or integration, the third world must be taken into consideration.

The biblical basis for integration is taken from Philipppians 2:1-8; John 1:14; 20:21; Acts 4:33-35; I Cor. 9:19-23; II Cor. 8:9. There are three important aspects to the identification of the Lord Jesus with mankind:

1. He was willing to empty himself,
2. He was willing to become like men,
3. He was willing to suffer for men.

In II Cor. 8:9 Paul also stresses that Christ who owns everything was willing to become poor that we might become rich. Here we see that Christ's purpose in ministry resulted in his identification with mankind. Paul himself proved that he integrated with those whom he served (I Cor. 9). So great was his sacrifice that he might by all means save some. So the foundation for integration as a living relationship is found in this:

1. The willingness to leave something behind,
2. The willingness to become like your fellow-worker in some aspects,
3. The willingness to suffer for others.

These three aspects are made possible and can be worked out in the life of the Christian (missionary) only through the power of the cross of Christ.

INTRODUCTION

There are three forms of cooperation demonstrated between foreign missions and national groups:

- I. Partnership, the most common and widely practiced form,
- II. Workers on loan for a limited time and for a specific task,
- III. Integration.

Before we go into more detail concerning each of these forms I want to emphasize that we have to look upon each of these different forms as a particular mission or church body. We have to beware of regarding any particular form as the only and the best, and by that regarding the others inevitably as inferior. It is necessary to have a genuine appreciation toward all the different forms and at the same time to obediently embrace and enter into the specific form which the Lord gives to a particular mission.

In the mission the author belongs to, we hold to integration as the God given principle for us. The members of our fellowship

come from very different backgrounds, denominationally and culturally. If we start to separate ourselves according to our differences and tend to emphasize our individual uniqueness rather than seeing the whole, then we are surely in for difficulties. We have to place unity first. This has to be our fundamental principle. Thus we have to hold to one particular line, being conscious of the fact that it is not the only way or the best way which allows us to reject every other way, but that it is the way given to us by the Lord. For us this is important not only in relation to the members who come from abroad but also in relation to Indonesians among themselves.

The people from Minahasa are quite different from the Javanese, or the Batak from the Timorese, and they all surely have their own identity, their way of thinking and their cultural background. Therefore, we all need the attitude of receiving the principle of integration as the form which God gave to the Indonesian Missionary Fellowship and at the same time being appreciative of other forms.

I. PARTNERSHIP

Partnership means that two agencies work together, but each runs its own business without interfering with the other's. For instance, the Baptist mission works together with the local Baptist church, and the Lutheran mission works together with the local Lutheran church. In partnership the two agencies have common characteristics, but they operate separately with each having its own leadership. There are times when they meet together in order to talk over particular issues, but togetherness in the daily routine is not important since each have their own rules to follow. Of course, there is the positive side to this since members of the mission have freedom to develop a lifestyle which is more in accordance with their own cultural background and do not have to concern themselves with the culture of the national brethren with whom they work. Basically there is nothing wrong with this, and we have to appreciate it as one way in which the Lord works.

We can see many positive factors in part-

nership, like effective ways of building personal relationships, developing standards of education, arranging financial matters, etc. In the history of missions, partnership has been used by the Lord in various countries. For that we have to be thankful.

II. WORKERS ON LOAN

This is not so much a relationship between mission agencies rather than a relationship on an individual level, where a certain person feels the need to be loaned to a mission agency or church for a specific time. Therefore this relationship is limited in time, and the person concerned is therefore not involved in the issues which concern the agency as a whole, to which he has been loaned. This line is being followed in many churches in Indonesia.

III. INTEGRATION

Integration is the God given principle and vital theme in the life of the Indonesian Missionary Fellowship. It is one among three factors which has contributed to its very identity since its inception in 1961.

- Its international character. Of course, our mission is a national body in the sense that it is not a branch or representative of any foreign mission or evangelistic group. However, the actual ministry of the IMF is being carried out not only by Indonesians but also by fellow believers from other countries. The very beginning of the IMF dates back to the combined initiative of Indonesians in fellowship with Westerners. In 1964, when the Lord gave us the Word from Isaiah 45:2-3 as a foundational promise, that Word was received in one night by two people of different national backgrounds.

- Its interdenominational character. We seek to give room to each denomination that is represented in our ranks. Our members come from various church traditions and join forces in pursuing our main goal, namely the propagation of the Gospel.

- Its integrational character. Integra-

tion as a form of living together, working together and ministering together has enabled us to develop to our present capabilities, even though people of various backgrounds are involved. Therefore we want to discuss integration in more detail.

A. THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

The Word of God which we have to consider as we discuss integration is found in Philippians 2:1-8; John 1:4; 20:21; Acts 4:33-35 etc. As we look at these passages we notice three important points:

1. Integration means that we do not hold on to defend ourselves and our interests in relation to others. This has to be applied very widely within an evangelistic fellowship. Everyone surely has his own identity relating to doctrine, denominational background, level of education, and social status. Yet integration is the motivating force for him not to hold on to himself and his identity for the sake of developing and promoting the ministry together in fellowship with the brethren.

2. Integration means that we seek to identify ourselves with those to whom we minister (compare John 1:14). This identification is very important and is one of the conditions for effective communication between the one who ministers and the one being ministered to. And it is as important in relationships or evangelistic groups.

3. Integration means that the common needs, the common fellowship and the common ministry is more important than the individual interests of each member.

B. THE MEANING OF THE WORD "INTEGRATION"

In order to gain a deeper understanding of integration it helps to look at the actual meaning of the word "integration". Webster's dictionary gives the meaning as follows: "to put or bring together parts into a whole, unify" where the important aspect is that "unity is in the whole". The word "integration" originates from the Latin word "integratus" which has three main meanings:

1. "to make whole or complete by adding

or bringing together parts". The whole consists of the parts, however the "whole is different from the parts".

2. "to put or bring (parts) together into a whole, to make unity".

3. In connection with psychoanalysis integration means "to organize various traits or tendencies into one harmonious personality".

From this we see that the main point is "the whole, the unity" where the parts have a vital function and develop toward perfection within the whole. This gives us a general picture of the meaning of "integration".

C. EIGHT ASPECTS OF INTEGRATION

I want to state that it is necessary that each of the following aspects be accepted wholeheartedly by every member of a mission who holds to the principle of integration. Much of my discussion is based on actual experience within the Indonesian Missionary Fellowship, but I believe that integration has a wider application in cooperation among missions.

1. Theological Aspect

The IMF holds to three factors: Faith in the Bible as the Word of God, the importance of the new birth, and the commission to propagate the Gospel. All those who join the IMF agree to these factors. A problem arises when a member starts to promote his own denominational teachings on other matters without due appreciation of another's view.

I am convinced that the weakness of the one denomination can be complemented by the strength of another. For instance, that which has been lacking in the Lutheran orientation is being entrusted to the Baptists, and that which in turn was lacking in the Baptist orientation has been given to the Pentecostals, and that which is lacking in the Pentecostal orientation is present in the Reformed, etc. Within the IMF we do have room for the various "pluses", but we must never regard our differences as more impor-

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE THIRD NATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF CHINA

(Nanjing) October 13, 1980

(1) We, 176 representatives from various provinces, cities and autonomous regions all over China, including nine brothers and sisters from five minority nationalities, held the Third National Christian Conference of China during October 6-13, 1980, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we earnestly prayed together, jointly reviewed the path through which the Lord has led the church in China during the past thirty years, and discussed the pressing responsibilities and serious problems confronting the church in China today. The conference was a great success.

(3) With one mind we believed that the accomplishments achieved by the Three-Self Patriotic Movement have been very great. On account of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, the patriotic consciousness and ethnic self-respect of Chinese Christians have been greatly raised. The colonial image of the Chinese church as relying on foreign countries was changed, and (the church) has become a self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating Chinese church that befits the New China. Because of this, the perception of the Chinese people toward Christianity has also changed enabling the light of the Gospel to shine in the New China.

(4) We must continue to raise high the banner of patriotism leading the multitude of believers to walk the same path as that travelled by the Chinese people, making our contribution toward protecting China's national stability and unity, toward the realization of the Four Modernizations in our country, toward the realization of Taiwan's rejoining the Motherland, toward anti-hegemony and anti-aggression, and toward the protection of world peace. We must insist on loving our country and keeping our laws, not permitting anyone to conduct illegal activities in the name of Christianity, thereby injuring the physical and mental

health of the people, disturbing the peace of society, and disgracing the name of the Lord. We must also continue to make every effort to protect the freedom of religious belief for our citizens, and to assist the government in fully implementing the policy of freedom of religious belief.

(5) To manage well the church that belongs to Chinese believers according to the truths of the Scriptures is the great task which God has given us today. With one mind we support the recommendation made by the Enlarged Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee held this spring. This recommendation was earnestly endorsed by a large number of fellow workers and fellow believers. It was to establish a national organization for church affairs, which we are calling the "Chinese Christian Council." Its relationship to the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee will be one of cooperation, with division of labor. In accordance with the present needs of the church in our country, the Chinese Christian Council will take care of various tasks in pastoral work, train preachers who will be used of the Lord, publish Bibles, devotional books and periodicals, and strengthen communication with churches and believers in various parts of the country.

(6) Presently in our country, the number of brothers and sisters who believe in the Lord by far surpasses that of former days. All who serve the Lord in spirit and in truth according to the teachings of Christ, whether in the (official) churches or at home, should all have one desire, earnestly looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, as we walk together the path of loving the country and loving the faith.

(7) While insisting on the Three-Self Patriotic way, the Chinese church, under the principle of mutual respect, desires to engage in friendly relations as equals with churches and believers in foreign lands, thereby promoting fellowship in the Lord. But we are firmly against the small minority outside our country who persist in their hostile attitude toward the New China, who disregard the sovereignty of the church in China, and who disregard the position of our Three-Self Patriotic principles, who desire to split the Church in China, and conduct all kinds of anti-Chinese and infiltrating activities in the name of "evangelism." Many believers from other lands are also against this. The designs of these people will surely come to nought.

(8) From beginning to end this conference was bathed in the grace of our Lord. The Spirit of the Lord moved in our midst every moment. Because we have already for many years abandoned the denominational biases that divided us, we all deeply enjoyed the warmth of dwelling in unity and peace, and the joy of the communion of the saints. Because the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep himself led us, and because brothers and sisters throughout the land sustained this conference with their prayers, we were able to achieve outstanding results, everyone having participated in serious and heated discussion. We all, with one mind, deeply believe that God will continue to lead us to overcome various kinds of difficulties as we walk the path before us.

tant than our common convictions.

2. Cultural Aspect

When culture is mixed with the Gospel, the true message is unclear. This has been experienced, for instance, in China. The Chinese felt they had to leave behind their culture in order to become Christians. They felt their cultural identity was threatened by the Western missionaries. In Java itself it is known that Javanese who wanted to be baptized were required to leave their habit of wearing the sarong to dress Western style, exchange their sandals for shoes, etc. We, too, have the tendency to bring our customs and culture into the propagation of the Gospel. Our customs will cause trouble, unless the cross of Christ is applied. In integration, we must allow the Holy Spirit to teach us to be objective about our every custom and cultural form. Only on that basis is it possible to accept each other.

The outworking of this is surely difficult, because everyone of us has to be open and willing to receive help from another. Up to the present we have received 11 different nationalities into our IMF ranks, in addition to the various tribal backgrounds represented from within Indonesia. We do not seek to disregard the cultural differences which are present, but we do accept that the Lord wants to form us and shape us, and sometimes this happens in a hurting process. We are convinced that the Lord wants to give us principles of conduct which are commonly acceptable. Therefore, we cannot afford to think we have individual freedom to just do as we are used to doing without regard to that which others are used to doing in that same matter. Integration can be a help to us in order to accept that which the Lord wants to do for us as individuals in the midst and through our felt differences.

3. The Educational Aspect

Within a fellowship the differences in educational backgrounds can create difficulties. In our mission there are those who have received advanced theological training, those who have received education of an intermediate level, and those who do not have

full theological education.

Within the IMF every member receives the same financial allowance without regard to the individual's educational standard. Doing otherwise could create tensions and divisions within our fellowship. But integration helps us overcome those problems. We recognize our educational differences, but what is the real uniting element for us is knowing that we are serving together in a joint ministry.

4. The Cooperational Aspect

Within our mission integration is the basis for cooperation. We do not favor any particular national, educational, or social background, but the decisive factor for leadership is the proven ability and gift of the individual concerned. Of course, this cannot be separated completely from his educational background. However, the foreign worker does not always have to be in the lead. If there is an Indonesian capable of leadership, why should a foreigner be in that place? On the other hand, if the foreigner is able to lead, why should he be rejected?

In the history of missions in Indonesia the white person had to be the leader. If he was not in the leadership position, he held the power. The Indonesians in general had felt that the Westerner was superior in every way to the Indonesian. Such a feeling is wrong, and we have to be wary of it.

5. The Aspect of Ministering Together

In the IMF we have experienced something very beautiful in working together and ministering together. We have no opinion or impression that our members of foreign origin are the ones who hold the power even though they are not in leadership positions. We have also witnessed how it is possible for spiritual gifts to develop in our ministry even though the gifted person may not have the same educational status as someone else. For this we want to give glory to the Lord.

6. The Aspect of Leadership

Seen from the human side, a leader needs

to be formed. He needs training and maturity, skill and experience. Seen from the spiritual side, he needs the special anointing of the Holy Spirit because in a work of the Lord it is not enough for the leader to have ability, training or experience. He must have the special endowment from the Lord. In the choice of a leader, every member has to be able to say with conviction that this is truly the leader chosen of the Lord. This is very important to us in IMF.

Several of the conditions for spiritual leadership are:

a. A leader has to understand the personality and the spiritual condition of each member to be able to give personal counsel to them.

b. The leader has to be able to orderly arrange the financial matters of the fellowship and to overcome particular financial problems.

c. The leader has to have a prophetic vision. He has to be able to look ahead and see possible developments over the years to come. The leader has to have an understanding and a concern for the signs of the time. It is also possible that tension arises because the leader looks ahead and sees things which the other members do not see yet.

d. The leader has to be able to think through the problem of continuity for the work in case someone drops out or moves to another place.

e. The leader has to be able to rejoice with those that rejoice and feel the grief of those who are grieved.

Here we also see the importance of the wife taking her place, being a helper to her husband in his leadership position. The wife of a leader has to be able to understand the whole of the work, and for that she needs training and forming.

There are also three basic conditions for a leader in the IMF:

a. Spiritual qualifications

b. Understanding of missions and churches in Indonesia and the world. This understanding has to include those mission agencies and churches who enter into a cooperative relationship with us.

c. Able to function at a national scope. He must be recognized by the government and by the churches as a leader.

The leader also has to commit himself very definitely to the spiritual principles which play a decisive role in the development of his mission. In our mission, these principles are Fellowship, Faith, Sacrifice, and Holiness. To be able to give direction is not dependent on ones denominational background but is closely related to a firm grasp of these spiritual principles. Let us never exchange them for mere human endeavor and effort.

The political development and the signs of the times demands that the IMF have a leadership consisting of Indonesian brethren. This does not mean that we refuse the leadership of non-Indonesians, but it does mean that we need to give strong motivation to the Indonesian brethren who will carry on the leadership. On the other hand, our brethren from outside have to be able to accept and appreciate the leadership exercised by the Indonesian brethren.

7. The Financial Aspect

In Acts 4:33-35 we notice two things. First, the believers brought the money gained through selling their property and laid it at the feet of the apostles. Secondly, the money was distributed among the believers according to the need of the individual. Thus we see that the amount gained through the sales was brought together and then distributed.

Within the IMF we need a financial policy which reflects something of this principle practised among the first congregation. Charles Spurgeon once said that the effort to equalize finances completely is impossible and also not permissible. To do so would be contrary to Scripture, as differences form a very part of the Lord's creation and in being different individually

the way is opened for mutual complementing, expressing love and ministering to each other.

However, we need a certain standard of financial allowance to safeguard against there being those who suffer working side by side with those who enjoy an abundance. We also need to feel near to each other, being willing to help each other and take part in one another's burdens so that those who have plenty feel responsible to share with those who suffer want.

The possible way to follow is pooling money for a common allowance. Tied to this is that national believers are being motivated to contribute to the Lord's work because they trust the system of leadership when there is their common standard. The members of the fellowship do not feel that they receive as individuals from individuals but feel that they receive together from the Lord. The money available is seen as the result of praying together and trusting the Lord for the supply of it.

This is a very important factor for Asians who are prone to strong feelings of owing gratitude and of feeling obliged to repay in other forms. Such feelings could cause reservations against openly criticizing where it is necessary. Another consequence could be that the national worker might suddenly cut off the relationship as the only way out for him because he cannot bear suppressed feelings any longer. Therefore it is of such vital importance that the financial aspect be handled in a way where the money is genuinely regarded as being received together.

8. The Aspect of Living Together

The problem of living together has some deep sides to it, and we need to give careful attention to them. Integration within our mission is so important that there has been no development of, for instance, Germans fellowshiping only with Germans, Norwegians fellowshiping only with Norwegians, or the Eastern people only seeking fellowship among themselves, etc. If we were not integrated, little islands would form where each nationality would live on their own

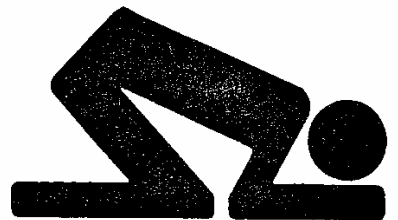
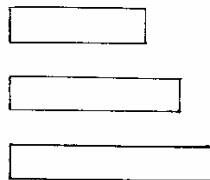
complexes/campuses. We consciously seek to avoid that kind of situation and up to the present we have to give praise and thanks to the Lord for helping us in this respect. Our policy concerning housing is that various workers coming from different nationalities are put side by side, so that the mechanism for relationship is strengthened.

Integration also has to be practised in the daily activities together. The individual has to be willing to come to know and to learn something of the etiquette, customs and culture of another who is of a different national and cultural background.

New members also need a facility for learning to adjust to a life together in the context of the local situation. In our fellowship, missionaries coming from abroad go through a time of adjustment together with the applying members from inside the country. Together they live and learn the language, fellowship regulations and local customs. In this way the missionary experiences the most natural initial adjustments. He can then develop a sensitivity, appreciation and understanding of the situation in the country and the existing church life. This probationary period lasts for two years and then the leadership decides whether or not he/she will be accepted into the fellowship.

CONCLUSION

These are some remarks on integration and its practical out-workings within a mission such as the Indonesian Missionary Fellowship which holds it as their God given principle. I am convinced it can have a wider application and can serve in solving many tensions existent in other missions cooperations in the twentieth century.



WESTERN MISSIONS IN THAILAND AND A NEW IMPETUS

Boonsri Glinhawm

In the eyes of non-Thais or foreigners, Thailand is understood to be a beautiful land of lovely customs and cultures. The people are friendly and warm. Some call Thailand the "land of smiles", which is probably true for the Thai love fun and get along easily with any nationality. The Thai usually follow new trends, accepting new ideas about culture, customs, scientific matters, education, society, or the latest fashions from Europe or America. The Thai will follow almost everything from the West. However, they do not readily receive or they refuse to accept the Christian faith or the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only do they refuse to accept it, but they strongly resist it. The Thai feel that their Buddhist faith was here first. They have followed the teachings of Buddha for almost 1,000 years, so its influence is great on their daily living. Most feel that Buddhism is essential and that every Thai should be a Buddhist. They forget that Buddhism came from India and did not originate in Thailand. The heart of the Buddhist can be compared to soil that is full of

gravel. It is difficult for the Christian faith to spread and grow fast. The Thai readily accept things of the world, but the things of the spirit they strongly resist. It is like a battle between darkness and light.

However, the preaching of the "Good News" in Thailand is not hopeless. Even though the growth is very slow, it is sure and steady. The gospel has been rooted in the hearts of many Thai through the concern and care of missionaries. We can compare the situation with planting a tree in a flower pot which prevents it from maturing and growing to its full height. It is now time to break the flower pot and plant the tree in our own land, meaning it is time that the Thai Christians show their Thai friends that Christianity is Thai, proclaimed and preached by the Thai, and governed by the Thai. We must show that we feel the same about Christianity as the Thai majority feel about Buddhism, namely that our faith is truly Thai. To do this, we must study new ways and test new methods of evangelism for a new age in order to improve the hardened soil so it will become crumbly and receptive. Then the gospel can grow beautifully and there will be lots of fruit later on.

It is worthwhile to study and review the work of western missions in different periods related to establishing the church in Thailand starting in 1828.

A. A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN WORK FOR THE LAST 152 YEARS.

1. BEGINNING PERIOD (1828 - 1851)

In 1828, or 152 years ago, the first Western missionaries worked valiantly enduring many problems. They never gave up trying to build a solid foundation for the gospel. It was not until 20 years later that the first Thai became a Christian despite strong opposition and many obstacles.

2. SLOW GROWTH PERIOD (1852 - 1883)

Even though the opposition to missionaries seemed to be on the decline, Thai who be-

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came Christians faced opposition from the non-Christian community. In this period of 50 years only 600 people became Christians.

3. RAPID GROWTH PERIOD (1884 - 1914)

The number of Christians related to the Presbyterian mission of the Church of Christ in Thailand increased dramatically from 450 members to 7,755 within a period of 30 years. The reason for this rapid growth was because of the dedication of God's servants, especially Dr. Daniel McGilvary, a true son of God who had a special talent for evangelizing and who believed in the power of the Holy Spirit. Most important he was a true man of faith and prayer. His goal was clear - to establish Christ's Church in Thailand.

4. NON-GROWTH PERIOD (1914 - 1940)

There was very little growth during this period. The main reason for the standstill was the lack of spiritual leadership in the church. Another reason was the lack of vision on the part of missionaries in following early methods. During this period we find them pouring their time, efforts, and money into improving Thailand, particularly in the areas of education and health, to meet the basic societal needs of the day.

5. TESTING PERIOD (1941 - 1945)

During World War II, many Christians denied their faith in Jesus Christ because they were afraid or were persecuted. By 1945 there were only 8,000 Christians.

6. POST-WAR GROWTH PERIOD (1946 - 1978)

After the end of the war, many of the fervent and dedicated Christians went around visiting and encouraging others who had left the church and scattered to return to their faith in Jesus Christ. Many revivals were held in churches, particularly in the north. Not only those who gave up their faith but also hundreds outside the faith repented and believed in Jesus Christ. During this period missionaries of many denominations came into Thailand to help evangelize and preach the gospel and start new churches. The Christian church revived

and grew.

In 1970, there were about 36,000 Protestant Christians in Thailand. Membership in some churches increased almost monthly. In 1978, Protestant Christians totalled about 50,000. This means that during the last 10 years, Protestant Christians increased by about 14,000.

B. SUMMARY

1. The statistics of a survey done in 1978 - 79 showed the total Protestant Christian membership at 58,579.

2. Statistical break down of the members by areas in Thailand.

Area	Population	% of Chrns.	Approx. No. of Chrns.
Bangkok	5,000,000	0.28	12,880
North	8,000,000	0.67	30,820
N. East	15,000,000	0.05	2,300
Central	14,000,000	0.03	1,380
South	4,000,000	0.06	2,760

3. During the last 10 years (1970 - 1979) the total number of Christians increased from 36,000 to 50,000. An increase of 14,000 means an average increase of 1,400 per year.

4. Some other interesting statistics in the year 1979.

- The total number of churches in Thailand, 678. Additional worshipping groups, 559.
- Total number of pastors, 446. Full time evangelists, 294.
- Total number of missionaries of all denominations, 967.
- Protestant organizations working in Thailand, 75.

5. Statistics of churches in the Church of Christ in Thailand as of October 1980.

a. The Church of Christ in Thailand is
(Continued on P. 19)

AND THEN

THE END SHALL COME

Peter Beyerhaus

The future of the Church and of mankind as a whole has been my central concern during the past years. I am especially glad that pre-eminence has been given to missions in three forums on futurological issues. The command to evangelize the world is that function of the Church which according to many scriptural passages is most directly future oriented. Our present history has a future only in order to make allowance for the completion of the Great Commission. Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a witness to all nations - and then the end shall come (Matthew 24:14)."

I found myself in basic agreement with much of what was said in the first two forums (1. Evangelicals Face the Future, 1977; 2. An Evangelical Agenda 1984 and Beyond, 1979, both edited by Don Hoke, William Carey Library), but I was provoked to question not only some of the findings but also some of the presuppositions on which the discussions were based. To state it squarely, there cannot be any "evangelical agenda for 1984 and beyond",

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if 1984 is to be taken as a symbolic figure meaning the appearance of "Big Brother", whom I take as George Orwell's synonym for Antichrist. I was particularly struck by the apparent ambivalence and paradoxes which run right through the various views presented there, and sometimes even through the argumentation of the same speaker. I regard this to be symptomatic of our evangelical scene today.

I believe that it is of utmost importance that we place our futurological deliberations into a very clear biblical (and that means eschatological) frame of reference. This disallows us three things:

1. We cannot behave like secular technocrats who analyze some present trends, extrapolate from a collection of data and then compose a plan for action. We cannot act as the theological branch of the Club of Rome, for there is an irreconcilable cleavage between their ideology of one-world-survival and our hope for the messianic kingdom.

2. We cannot follow the liberal theologians who demythologize and symbolize the biblical prophecies on account of their alleged self-contradictions and historical failure.

3. We cannot follow a sectarian eschatology which plainly disregards the warning of Jesus to want to know times and epochs which the Father has fixed by his own authority (Acts 1:7).

It is probably on account of this third temptation and the fear of new disputes that leading evangelicals currently tend to evade the eschatological reflection entirely, and instead tend to embark on evangelical strategies as if the future was entirely open and at our disposal. I sensed this tendency even during our recent COWE (Consultation on World Evangelization) in Thailand.

If we, however, want to remain faithful to our evangelical calling, we must be bold in exercising a prophetic ministry, of course not by promoting our own visions and dreams, but by taking the revealed data of

God's dramatic plan of cosmic redemption seriously and by relating it to the signs of the times as predicted by Christ and his Apostles and as appearing to our own generation.

In his thoughtful presentation at the first forum in 1977, Leighton Ford discussed three different "images of the future" in an evangelical perspective. Two of them are relevant because they are biblical predictions. One is the prophecy of the two great beasts related in Rev. 13 and 14, and the other is the prophecy of the messianic reign of peace in Is. 2. But as he was not sure at what exact stage in history we are now, Leighton Ford expressed his uncertainty about which of these images was applicable to our task today.

However, we have to realize that the Word of God does not present these two visions as alternatives from which we have to choose or which we can place into a dialectical relation. Rather, they are two infallible predictions which are equally certain and relevant to our task. Thus our hermeneutical assignment is to see them in their proper sequence and inner relation in the future history of salvation. The NT describes the period between the first and the second coming of Christ as the overlapping of two opposed ages:

1. The world still suffers under the remainder of the old age which is ruled by Satan as the prince of this world. This age is speedily heading toward its cataclysm. The demonically inspired rebellion is ripening until Satan will play out his final card by setting up the worldwide reign of Antichrist.

2. As Christians, however, we witness at the same time the beginning of the new age, which was ushered in by Christ's victory on Good Friday and Easter morning. This age manifests itself in the worldwide expansion of the Church as the body of Christ, and it will come to its triumphant conclusion when Jesus returns visibly to establish his universal rule in power and glory.

This means that we have to be prepared both to endure the imminent fulfilment of

the prophecies about the two antichristian beasts, and at the same time to comply with our missionary assignment to prepare the return of Christ as the universal Prince of Peace. In other words: Our biblical expectation of future events reminds us Christians of our dual mandate to faithfully resist antichristian temptations and to faithfully work for the salvation of all those for whom Jesus shed his blood.

This dual mandate has been the task of the Church ever since the calling of the 12 Apostles. But as the history of salvation is heading for its conclusion, the tension between Christ and Satan is mounting, until the appearance of Antichrist will bring us to the final trial.

It is my firm conviction, supported by the events of each new day in this present period of world and church history, that we are rapidly approaching that apocalyptic crisis where the prophecy about the visible power encounter between the transitional rule of Antichrist and the abiding rule of Christ will reach its ultimate fulfilment. This eschatological awareness does not alter our permanent dual mandate, but it forces us 1. to bring all our activities into proper eschatological focus; 2. to adjust our priorities; and 3. to mobilize our last reserves to concentrate on the great cause.

It has been described here how secular leaders today are overtaken by a sense of alarm. Almost daily we read apocalyptical warnings regarding the menace to the political, economic, social, and ecological survival of mankind. The newspapers reported Dr. Aurelio Peccei, the founder of the Club of Rome, as saying that "the world is in a much worse condition than it was 10 years ago. Looking back to the 70's he challenged anyone to show any major arena of human affairs where things are going better than they were ten years ago." Summarizing his remarks the Toronto Star noted: "The world begins more and more to resemble a ricocheting bullet careening from disaster to disaster." Such secular pessimism is matched by the observations of Christian leaders and also people in the pew that the spiritual and moral situation at least in our

once Christian Western society is deteriorating. Last autumn our German Confession Movement at a large rally in Hannover issued a "Watchman's Cry" expressing our utmost concern about the rapid breakdown of ethical standards in our social order. Jesus and Paul described the scene of the last times as dominated by the spirit of anomia, i.e. of lawlessness. It will find its embodiment in the appearance of the anthropos tees anomias, i.e. the "man of lawlessness", Paul's name for Antichrist. According to 2 Thess. 2 he will complete his dissolution of all norms by taking his seat in the Temple of God, thereby making man the ultimate object of worship. Hereto I only want to comment that this is already becoming real in the shape of those ideological distortions of the Gospel which we find in the anthropocentric en vogue theologies like the theologies of revolution or liberation which ever since 1966 have been constantly advocated and promoted by the WCC.

We have arrived at a definite countdown of the old age. We do not know how much time in space is still given to us. The countdown may be slowed down by the grace of God, but it is irreversible. This realization could and would drive us to despair, if we did not know the other biblical vision is equally true and even more real and abiding. The establishment of Christ's Kingdom in power and glory.

This will not happen as the result of our christianizing mankind and the socio-economic world order, but by Christ's final intervention. This hope is also attested to and confirmed by at least two other outstanding signs of our time. The first sign is the unexpected new opportunities for missionary outreach. The new formation of mission minded evangelicals since the Berlin and Wheaton Congresses in 1966 leading up to Lausanne and Pattaya have made us aware of this. Many receptive populations on all six continents present ample opportunities for the new zeal exhibited by evangelical Christians all over the world. I had the unprecedented task of addressing an evangelistic rally of 2.7 million Christians in Seoul on the "Second Coming of Christ and the End of History".

In Seoul we became witnesses of the amazing event that following the challenge of Dr. Joon Gon Kim about one million young Koreans showed their readiness to devote one year of their life to evangelistic witness.

The other positive sign is the events in the Holy Land since 1948. The new formation of the people of Israel in the country of Israel is perhaps the most unquestionable historical confirmation of our conviction that the history of Salvation is approaching its conclusion. True enough, Israel is still heading toward dramatic and even catastrophic events, until she will finally in repentance turn to Jesus as her true Messiah. But the external stage for this additional countdown has been set.

What is the Church's future with particular reference to World Missions?

1. As both Christ and Antichrist are approaching, and as many people, even Christians are confused by the question Who is who? the first task of the church-in-mission today is to give clear and bold guidance in discerning the spirits, to exercise a prophetic ministry, and to prepare Christians for their coming temptation and tribulation.

2. Let us be true witnesses to the will of God for man's living in society. We have to counteract the spirit of anomia and resist the break-down of individual and social ethics by applying God's commandments to our social order.

3. We have to constantly keep before our eyes the unfinished task of world evangelization. It is the one reason why the impending consummation of our age is still kept in suspense. We can boldly face the apocalyptic threat to world survival in the assurance that the end will not come and that nothing will stop the obedience of Christ's messengers until all nations have heard the testimony of the Kingdom. Therefore we must seize and utilize this remaining period by discovering the indications how the Lord himself wants to have his work completed. My Korean experience
(Continued on P. 19)

LETTER FROM A READER

Dear Editor,

The January issue of Asian Missions Advance arrived recently. I was glad to see the announcement of your Third Triennial Convention which will take place in October of this year. It appears that you have a very fine program outlined and I trust that it will attract a large number of executives and missiologists who can come together to discuss the future of missions from around the world.

I certainly wish it were possible for me to attend this gathering. It obviously will be a very important one as we see the continued development of emerging missions.

It is my hope that my week of seminars in churches will give me an opportunity to continue my educational work of the North American Christian public. I am finding that it is surprisingly difficult for them to grasp the reality of the situation where churches in the other parts of the world are now mature churches and are forming mission societies and sending out their own missionaries.

I was interested in your experience in Scotland as you described it in your editorial. It seems incomprehensible that someone who has any kind of knowledge about the church around the world could ask the kinds of questions they asked you and fail to pick up on your replies. I see the role of the Missions Commission of WEF as having an important ministry in this area. I believe that it's a place where we will be able to begin to develop understanding of the strength and importance of emerging missions and through its channels communicate it back to the national fellowships and to the churches. It is not going to be an easy process because people do have preconceived ideas as you suggest in your editorial, and it takes time to overcome these difficulties and communicate the reality of today's world. I believe we are going to see two things happening. In addition to emerging missions growing and becoming stronger, there is also a new surge of missions (at least in North America--I can't say for sure about Europe at this point). The new statistics have just come out from the research done by MARC at World Vision. These indicate that there has been an increase in the number of missionaries as well as the resources committed to missions from North America. In the previous handbook there was an indication that things had leveled off and we were on a plateau, but the new information shows a new upward trend. If you add this to a seeming new spark of missionary interest in Europe and the rapid growth in emerging missions, we have a very encouraging picture.

My concern is that we maintain a sense of unity in all of this so that we can together continue to work with Bible-believing Christians from all parts of the world in establishing the missionary force that is needed to get the job done. I believe that the new awareness of missions in relation to unreached peoples is going to help us in communicating the challenge in North America.

I am anxious to use my influence with those who are talking about unreached peoples to keep it from becoming another way of expressing a sense of superiority. In order to make this happen we need to have the full cooperation of the emerging missions so that this can influence the whole movement and keep it in the proper perspective.

I trust that all goes well with you and that your programs are developing in strength and effectiveness.

Yours in joyful service,
Wade T. Coggins



A. M. A.

THE HOST COMMITTEE OF
THE THIRD TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF
A. M. A. WAS LAUNCHED

The Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches has been officially designated to host the forth-coming Third Triennial Convention of the Asia Missions Association. The host committee for the Convention was launched on March 9, 1981, when Dr. David J. Cho, General Secretary of the A.M.A., was in Manila. Mr. Agustin Vencer, Jr., Executive Secretary of the PCEC, was chosen to the host committee. Dr. Cho gave a brief orientation to the leaders of the PCEC, and together with Mr. Vencer, made preliminary arrangements to reserve a convention center and lodge for the occasion.

The Philippine International Convention Center, which is one of the first well equipped convention centers in Asia, will be used for the convention. All participants from outside the Philippines will be lodged at a hotel, the Philippine Plaza, which is conveniently located near the Convention Center. The charge for room and board will be a special conference rate.

Dr. Cho will travel through the United States and South East Asia from April 27 to June 25. He will meet with missiologists, mission leaders, and prospective Western participants. He will also visit A.M.A. member nations. Delegates from each agency and association will be screened carefully in cooperation with the National Association of Missions.

Dr. Cho states, "Our main objective is to build a highway for the newly emerging missions in the third world rather than to be a lateral branch of old mission structures. The events at Manila '81 will be the signal to begin construction of this highway for the people of the world." (Is. 62: 10)

INDIA

LEADING INDIA'S CHURCHES FORWARD

An excerpt from a report by Rev. Herbert M. Carson appearing in Evangelical Times, November 1980 reads : "As I was ministering at pastors' conferences and at an evangelical leaders' conference, I was able to hear Indian pastors speaking about the state of evangelicalism - and let me emphasize that the comments which follow come from them, not from my brief survey of the situation. Their very deep concern was in three areas.

First, they lamented the influence of the surrounding culture on the churches - a sadly familiar problem this when we think of similar compromises nearer home! They deplored the persistence of caste divisions; the continued payment of the bridal dowry, which can cause such unhappiness if it does not meet the hoped for financial standard; and the constant recourse to litigation in many of the churches.

The second area of concern was the proliferation of para-church organizations supported by western finance, governed by western policies and creaming off men from pastoral ministry. One American body had recently advertised for men to 'head up' (the accepted term!) their work across India. The salaries were, of course, beyond what an Indian church could afford.

The third area was lack of expository preaching in the churches, which clearly explained the presence of some of the other problems. I could not but recall a similar situation in England in the 1950s when the powerful expository ministry of Dr. Llyod Jones was beginning to awaken men to the true need of the churches. His reiterated emphasis on the primacy of the local church and the need for expository preaching had been desperately needed in the UK at that time. India's need would seem to be the same!

It was refreshing to find Indian leaders who were aiming at an indigenous missionary work without any dependence on outside

money. It was thrilling to hear of one group with their vision of 400 missionaries in the villages and to find that over 200 were already in action. If India should be isolated as China was, and if western support dries up, it is these indigenous ministries which will persist when the artificially funded enterprises fold up.

It was an encouragement to meet some leaders of the Evangelical Fellowship of India and the Union of Evangelical Students, to whose staff I was speaking in Madras. Here were men and women with a great concern for evangelizing the great masses of India, with an emphasis on godliness and with a desire for a revival of expository preaching in the land.

EVANGELICAL LITERATURE SERVICE (ELS)

AFFILIATED

An interdenominational missionary organization devoted to literature work, ELS is affiliated to Christian Literature Crusade, a worldwide body. ELS has over forty workers and are on the look out for more young men willing to engage in sacrificial service.

Their last annual staff conference was held in Madras, January 26-28, 1981 with Mr. Les Coley, Director of Christian Literature Crusade, U.K., as the devotional speaker. ELS has one printing press and six book shops in various parts of South India. They publish many books in English and other South Indian languages. Several expensive English books have been reprinted as Indian editions and thus made available at considerably reduced rates for their Indian readership. ELS also imports good books from U.K. and U.S.A. In fact, they serve as distribution agents for several leading publishers in the U.S.A. Through their mail order system they are able to reach the farthest corners of India.

U. S. A.

UNREACHED PEOPLES '81

NOW AVAILABLE

UNREACHED PEOPLES '81, the latest volume of the *Unreached Peoples* series, takes the continent of Asia as its emphasis. The tremendous

challenge to missions in this part of the world is squarely faced in four articles and five case studies. Seventy Asian people groups are described in detail, and the cumulative unreached peoples registry now has grown to list almost 3000 groups from around the world.

The case studies in *Unreached Peoples '81* describe a variety of situations which show the diversity of the missionary task in Asia. Case studies in the urban context cover Singapore's English-speaking teenagers, Chinese factory workers in Hong Kong, and college students in Taiwan. Strategies for reaching rural people groups in Korea and the Philippines are highlighted as well. A separate article on China outlines the current status of Christianity and future possibilities of evangelism in this country.

The shift in theme from year to year heightens the value of the entire series which began in 1979, and cumulates as one of the most valuable written resources on mission.

Edward R. Dayton and C. Peter Wagner as editors contribute a helpful article on "The People Group Approach to World Evangelization." In it they discuss the goal of world evangelization and give a short history of the people group concept. Categories of unreached peoples are defined for more effective strategy development. The implications of this approach are examined for future work.

Beginning with this volume a new section entitled "The Task Remaining" has been added to the series. Ralph Winter, of the U.S. Center for World Mission, presents world statistics in missionary perspective. His rich gifts of insight take the facts of world evangelism and make them understandable. He gives the current breakdown of the world's unreached peoples by their religious and geographical areas. The article also shows how many North American missionaries are working with these groups. Each year this table will be updated with statistics from the Population Reference Bureau.

Unreached Peoples '81 continues the tradition of practical research that has characterized this series. The book shows how the unreached peoples concept has been applied, and can be applied, to further the goal of world evangelization.

LATIN AMERICA

PROGNOSIS FOR LATIN AMERICA IN THE EIGHTIES

San Jose (MNS) - Some significant findings have been distilled from consultations with experts from Latin America and printed in the Latin America Evangelist (January-February 1981). In the article entitled "Latin America in the 1980s" W. Dayton Roberts cites "A cautious swing to American Protestantism" - "A rapid buildup of internal social pressures" - "A worsening of the ecological crisis" - "All this in a situation of overall political stability, highlighted by the explosion of revolutionary violence in the smaller countries."

The article says "The consultants found reason for much encouragement about the state of the Gospel in the Latin World, (i.e., the Portuguese-Spanish language blocs). A vibrant faith in Jesus Christ is an increasingly common phenomenon in Latin America."

Dayton and the consultants conclude that the "brakes will soon be applied by the hierarchy . . . to the 'openness' trends" which have been evident in the Catholic Church during the past number of years.

The article sees a "return to traditionalism and supersition" and a "cooresponding return to centralism in authority."

"The Pope is trying to get the reins back into his hands, and he will seek increasingly to control the political and religious expressions of clergy and people", Roberts says.

"Basic church communities" (*comunidades de base*), which are led by one or more laymen meeting for Bible study, worship, charismatic sharing, evangelism, social outreach or political activism are expected to survive and grow. In the view of the writer, "in some cases, they constitute Catholicism's best hope for revival and renewal."

The Protestant community is expected to grow at about 10% per year.

"Some of the things that most concern the consultants are the current crisis in theological education, the erosion of the Christian family, the lack of missionary vision and the complacent pietism of the

evangelical community in Latin America." according to the article.

"The consultants see the need for a vast increase in the ministry of family counseling and in Christian education, but they are pessimistic about the evangelical church's present capacity to meet this challenge."

Roberts believes "there will be continuing political radicalization in both the Catholic and Protestant churches. This will put Christian believers on the spot and require them to define their faith in Christ in both spiritual and political terms."

What do they see as the continent's hope? "An enlightened pietism--with an active evangelism and concern for social justice and service--would be the greatest blessing a troubled continent could hope to enjoy."

ENGLAND

UK MISSIONARIES DECLINE

London (MNS) - The number of British missionaries has gone down by 2.4% per year through the seventies and now stands at 4,209, compared with over 5,000 in 1972, according to a news release from the Evangelical Alliance here.

Those on short-term service doubled in number in the last four years and now comprise 12% of the total.

These are two of the trends revealed in the new edition of UK Christian Handbook Vol. 1 Overseas published jointly by the Evangelical Missionary Alliance and the Bible Society at the end of November.

Fewer British missionaries are serving in Africa in 1980 than in 1976, and more in Britain itself, mainly among immigrants. The country with the largest number of British missionaries is India with 387, followed by Nigeria (233), and Kenya (226).

The top position for numbers of UK missionaries is shared by the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society, with 369 each. The Overseas Missionary Fellowship is third (279), and Worldwide Evangelization Crusade fourth (238).

(Continued from P. 11)

- divided into 14 districts. There are 208 churches and 80 additional worshiping groups.
- b. Communicant members (not including younger children), 30,895.
- c. Ordained ministers, 99. Bible teachers serving as pastors, 70. Evangelists, 32. Fulltime pastors, 108.
- d. Hospitals, 7.
- e. Christian schools under the Church of Christ in Thailand, 23. Total numbers of students, 33,908. Christian students, 3,617.
- f. Christian university, 1. Professors, 148. Special professors, 27. Other staff and workers at the university, 113.
- g. Degree level seminary, 1. Bible schools (Awarding certificates), 2.
- h. Other institutions and major departments of the church, 10.

An aggressive church planting project in the Lampang Province of northern Thailand is presently being planned by the Church of Christ in Thailand in cooperation with the Korea International Mission. A Thai church leader will work with a Korean missionary as a bicultural team in each location. The goal is to have twelve such teams. This new approach may bring a period of rapid growth and development in the church.

Surely it is now time for the Thai church to spread its branches and produce fruit. And so, we continue to be full of hope, looking forward to what our God will do to advance the gospel in Thailand.

asian missions advance

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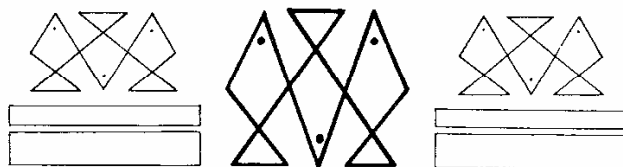
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has strengthened my conviction that the initiative in carrying the Gospel to Asia's and Africa's unevangelized billions will increasingly be taken over by missions from and to the Third World. This does not provide us with a pretext to relax. Our task is to mobilize our whole potential and to work out new patterns of cooperation and partnership in world evangelization that do not stifle but rather encourage the evangelistic activities of non-western churches and mission agencies.

We need a frame of reference which at the same time is faithful to God's revealed plan of salvation and also realistic with regard to the overwhelming and frightening material of information which is thrown before our feet by secular and Christian students of present day developments. It suffices that the ecumenicals have perverted the eschatological concept of the Kingdom - let not our evangelical eschatology become hazy, too!



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