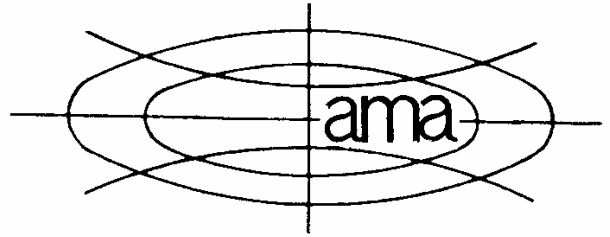


asian missions advance



MAY, 1979

BULLETIN OF THE ASIA MISSIONS ASSOCIATION

Number 8

EDITORIAL

SOCIAL CONTEXT AND THE CHRISTIAN TEXT

David J. Cho

I. FROM DEMYTHOLOGIZATION TO CON- TEXTUALIZATION.

Ever since famed Bultmannian "Demythologization," efforts have been made at "Actualization" of the Christian Gospel in the past two decades or so from New Delhi '61 through the Humanization, Secularization, Indigenization and Contextualization movements. At this juncture it is appropriate to evaluate the consequences of these mental disciplines of the West.

The deviation of the Christian message from its spiritual and ethi-

cal concerns as well as from the affairs of an eternal sphere onto the understanding of man's state in the actual world has had both its benefits and serious misconception. The benefit was to help man find his dignity and right, and the misconception was the fact that Christianity has been misled from a religious track into socio-political activism.

During the period between Demythologization and Contextualization, the predominant trend of the ecumenical missions has been towards the negation of the historical confessions of faith and the adoption of the action-oriented mission of God.

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Consequently, the monolithic divine authority of historical and orthodox theology has been undermined by demythologization theory, and social and anthropological sciences have begun to rule over traditional theology. As a result, the ecumenical missions, lamed through the loss of its divine text due to demythologization process has substituted secular text within contextualization for Christian Gospel.

II. THE DISCOVERY OF CONTEXT AND THE CORRESPONDING LOSS OF THE TEXT.

The impact of humanization and secularization upon the Christian message has, so to speak, contextualized the missionary issues, downgrading the capabilities of the Gospel from its former might of potent human cure to a dormant potential for sectional treatment. As the result of a deeper probe into the nature of Context, the understanding of the Gospel and the direction for missions has been confounded by the substitution of a Social Text for the Divine Text of Orthodox Christianity.

The path of decline of the ecumenical missions from a divine mission to socio-political one has been characterized by the following: 1) Emphasis shifted from the worth of individual life to social structure. 2) Justice substituted for righteousness. 3) The reinterpretation of sin at a structural level. 4) From forgiveness to accusation. 5) From love to violence. 6) From compromise to struggle. 7) From human salvation to social revolution.

In short, the Marxist Text had taken over the Text of Christian Missions. The failure of ecumenical

missions to harbor the essential reconciliatory attitude of the Gospel ever since it got involved in the politics, economy, interstate tensions, racial and other worldly issues could only be understood as the mistaken and unconditioned response on the part of some of the Third World leaders to equate the traditions of Western imperialism and Western missions. Moreover, the over-repenting response of some leaders of the Western World has resulted in an implicit recognition of, if not active support for, the revolutionary view of society. This has been the major cause in fostering an atmosphere of distrust around Christian missions and in accelerating its further loss of identity.

III. THE MISSIONS OF THE FUTURE AND THE JUDGMENT OF GOD.

Unless the Western Missions return to the Divine Text and the Third World be legitimate successors to it, the future of Christian Missions is catastrophically clouded.

The Theology of Liberation of Latin America, African Theology, the Political Theology of Europe, Black Theology, Industrial Theology of North America, and the Asianization of Asian Theologies---all these have culminated in paganization and a wholesale nihilization of Christianity through Detextualization of historical Christianity by the sabre of Contextualization, thus giving Satan the ultimate victory.

Two alternatives are waiting for the Third World: a rugged path leading to the narrow gate and a smooth one to the wider gate---What will be our choice? This is a decision that must be made before the decades of the 80's open its vista.

THE ROLE AND STRATEGY OF A MISSIONS' ASSOCIATION

Ernest Oliver

INTRODUCTION. General features of Associations.

We live in a day of associations of all kinds. Associations are formed for a variety of reasons. The least complex of those reasons is that of the pleasure and inspiration which arises from like-mindedness. i.e. "We like each other, we have the same interests and objectives, let us get together". Some associations regard that as sufficient reason and do not want to entertain any other. Such associations, however, while admittedly uncomplicated and holding the fewest seeds of conflict, have little muscle or influence on the world and society in general.

There have been attempts to form missions' association for this reason and some have said that it is best because it enables mission executives to get together and pray together without any programme of active cooperation in any department of a missionary society's activity. As each society is responsible to God and its supporters it should not be inhibited in activity by any form of responsibility to another society.

1. Its Origins. For many years in Britain the Fellowship of Interdenominational Missionary Societies (FIMS) operated in this way. It did two things: firstly it fulfilled its primary function of fellowship on the basis of shared information and prayer but, secondly, it created a desire to introduce other factors into the association and it was at that point, in 1958, that the Evangelical Missionary Alliance was formed sharing the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance. The life of FIMS was a valuable prelude to the life of the EMA.

2. Its original Purpose and Aims.

From its inception the EMA has not jettisoned this original purpose of the FIMS, it has shared information, has sustained its prayer emphasis through the bi-monthly Missionary Mandate, a digest of world news for prayer and an annual prayer conference for member societies. Initially the EMA added two new reasons for the associating together of missionary societies viz. the encouragement of support and prayer for missions among the Christians of Britain, and also the determination to promote ways and means of avoiding duplication in administration, publicity and work on the part of missions. There might well be labelled the reasons of solidarity both in a defence and publicity of the cause of missions, and of cooperation in order to achieve together the maximum use of available resources. Both of these reasons i.e. solidarity and cooperation are common to associations of all kinds including Trade Unions.

Few who helped set up the Evangelical Missionary Alliance could have successfully charted its progress over its first 20 years of life. The

security of the identity of the individual society was something highly prized by the founders, as was the liberty of each society to enter into other associations without affecting its membership within the EMA. The founders were quite clear that they did not want this Alliance to be the embryo of a monolithic missionary society, nor did they want it to be an exclusive club which jealously deprived its members of the privilege of making other associations at home and overseas.

These two safeguards were clearly written within its Constitution along with the essential doctrinal grounds of membership. It has a common doctrinal basis with the Evangelical Alliance (founded in 1846) and the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (formerly the Inter-Varsity Fellowship). These three elements introduced at the inception of the EMA, viz:- (i) the independent identity of the members (ii) the liberty of the members, and (iii) the unity of the members in matters of doctrine are the permanent elements of the association, and any attempt to eradicate any one of the three must lead to schism or dissolution of the Alliance.

Apart from those three predictably sustained elements, however, few, I say, would have been able to forecast the development of the EMA.

3. Its Development. The EMA's structure has not changed during the 20 years of its history. It has a governing body of twenty four members, known as the Committee of Management, and these members are elected by the total society and college membership of the Alliance to serve for a period of three years. The Committee of Management's work is administered by a Chairman, a Secretary, a Literature Secretary and one office Secretary.

(i) For the first eight years of its life the EMA's work consisted of (a) the arranging of an annual conference for the Executive Officers of its member bodies. These conferences consisted of addresses on various aspects of missionary work and the presentation of methods. They provided the invaluable service of bringing the people who counted in mission administration together once a year and helped to create a climate of understanding and mutual respect where previously, it must be admitted, there had been the aloofness which sometimes springs from zeal needed for the promotion of a particular object (b) the Publication of booklets on subjects relevant to the total missionary endeavour (c) the examination of the "missions" curriculum of the various training colleges and an attempt to propose a minimal syllabus (d) the setting up of short courses of training in such subjects as "motor mechanics" for all missionaries. Finally (e) it held an annual EMA Day for the general Christian public with a view to let the public know that the missionary societies were endeavouring to unite in some way. This incidentally, was later seen to be something of a distraction and the EMA resolved that it would not compete with its member bodies for public attention and support, but confine its activities to the arena of its member bodies.

(ii) In the past twelve years there have been two significant developments in the EMA's work.

(A) Most important, perhaps has been the formation of three or four continental groups with societies working in the same area of the world meeting together four times a year. These groups have varied very much in what they attempted to do.

(a) The Indian sub-continent Group began meeting to discuss the work of

societies in the whole of the sub-continent, but very quickly concentrated almost all its efforts upon work among immigrants from the sub-continent into Britain. Eventually it became an Immigrants' Committee and was dissolved when specialist groups took up this important work. The EMA has maintained an interest in that work and has participated in Conferences on Islam etc. Only during the past year has an Asia Group been formed to enable societies to look together at the whole of that massive Continent.

(b) The Middle East Group met regularly until four of its five members decided to form the Middle East Alliance which had as its ultimate goal the amalgamation of its member societies. That was not achieved but three of the four are now one new society, the Middle East Christian Outreach. Significantly this is now one of the members of the EMA's new Muslim World Group instituted to face up to the growing challenge of Islam throughout the world. This group has already held two concentrated ten day courses for those going out to both secular and Christian work in Islamic countries.

(c) The Africa Group is the oldest EMA group and has confined itself very largely to the sharing of information and prayer about the various countries in Africa. It has, however, prepared joint material for students conferences and is currently organizing a month of conferences to present the challenge of Africa to the Christian universities in the Midlands region of England.

(d) The Latin America Group has developed into the Latin America Coordinating Committee with the set objective of trying to coordinate the presentation programmes of six member societies to the churches in Britain. It believes it also has the function of examining together not only strategic needs in the Latin

American countries, but also in forming links with the church leaders in that area and encouraging their ministry in Britain. Again some joint publications and university tours have been arranged.

(B) The second major development lies in the area of education for mission. In 1969-70 the EMA surveyed missionary interest in Britain and in the latter year assisted the Evangelical Alliance in its Commission which produced the Report "One World - One Task", which attempted to put before Christians in this country the missionary situation in the world both from the aspect of sending and receiving missionaries by Britain. The EMA has sponsored teams, made up of people from a number of member societies, visiting groups of church leaders throughout the country to discuss the subject of the local church and world mission.

(C) Other developments include:- a literature advice service to our members; a Radio Committee which among other things arranges an annual course of programmers; the arranging of regular refresher courses and communications courses for missionaries; it works in very close association with and assistance to the Evangelical Alliance Relief (TEAR) Fund in its rapid growth in Britain (the Secretary of the EMA is also an Associate Director of TEAR Fund); co-sponsoring with the Evangelical Alliance of INTERSERVICE, an information service in the pattern of INTERCRISTO of the USA, which has developing organisations in other countries in Europe; domestic issues of accommodation for missionaries etc.

4. Its Strategy. Strategy is often seen in retrospect although the 85 or so member societies and colleges, representing about 40% of the Protestant missionaries sent out from Britain, believe that the EMA's

strategy quite simply consists of the highest degree of cooperation at all levels of our common endeavour. The strategy of the EMA is to try and persuade its member societies that they not only need each other, but they can help each other without despite to their own interests. While it is not the strategy of the EMA, for instance, to achieve an ultimate of one missionary society for Africa, one for Latin America, one for literature, one for radio etc, it is its strategy to create and maintain an increasingly warm climate for closer cooperation between its members so that it becomes principally the joint activity of the leadership of its member societies and colleges. On the other hand it will not be denied that the creation of such a climate has led already to a number of significant amalgamations and mergers among its member colleges and societies.

As the EMA's brochure states "If the EMA does not bring societies and agencies together for constructive action, the net result will be a fragmented endeavour. This fragmentation is inadmissible for a future which includes increased mobility, emergent national churches, and shifts in the ratios of power and wealth". An organisation like the EMA can provide a prophetic voice which has the confidence of evangelical Christians in Britain.

CONCLUSION.

This paper has not included the function of a Missions' Association as an accrediting body, or as a body which gives guidance on the conduct of missionary administration and publicity. This is probably because so far the EMA in Britain has not given sufficient thought to this wide area. It sees itself as a stimulating body rather than a directive body. It could also be that it is only a temporary body. Developing structures among its member bodies

may demand a new structure altogether as the instrument of cooperation. Missions' Associations must be flexible and like all other Christian organisations be prepared to die to give life to new and more effective structures for the work of a God who is always ahead of times.

Also this paper has confined itself to the national functions of a Missions' Association, and has not ventured into the area of international Missions' Associations' relationships. It is for this present Conference in Liebenzell to begin to probe forward into the unknown territory of international cooperation at this level.

(Continued from P. 19)

THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAM, BOTH GOOD AND THREATENING

ings. Christians are warned against a cultural triumphalism. They are reminded that some characteristics evident in Muslim society are more desirable than some western imports. Cited are the apparent durability of family relationships, the rejection of pornography and sexual permissiveness, communal concern for widows and orphans.....

Islam is a missionary religion. Every year, in Cairo, thousands of missionaries are graduated and sent into all the world...the heads of 37 Muslim countries recently resolved to expel Christian missions from their lands.

Many Christians believe that the time has come to develop new approaches in presenting Christ to Muslims. It was for this purpose that the Colorado Springs Conference was held.

A STRATEGY FOR THIRD WORLD MISSIONS

Orlando E. Costas

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is a summary of Dr. Orlando E. Costa's lecture given at the Missions Commission Conference of W.E.F. held in Liebenzell, West Germany, during January 1979.

The flurry of debating discussion among Asian and African representatives was centered on the definition of the Third World as espoused in the paper and on other contents.

The A.M.A. plans to hear from time to time voices from different parts of the Third World in order to evaluate their challenge to Western Missions. We hope that through the antagonism and views of missiologists with different backgrounds, the vista leading to a more creative and positive missionary work will be opened.

The editorial to the present edition of the A.M.A. is intended in part as an answer to and a clarification of our stand against Dr. Costas's paper.

LOCATING THIRD WORLD MISSIONS

What is meant by "Third World"? This is a problem much discussed in socio-political circles today. In its original expression, it was used to designate the nonaligned

nations which at that time (Bandung, 1955) meant basically Asian and African nations. Most recently, some have used it as a synonym for Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, which together comprise two-thirds of humankind. Others, however, among which I would include myself, prefer to define the Third World not in terms of geographical boundaries, but rather of social, economic, cultural and political conditions. The Third World would then be the world of the sociologically oppressed and margined.

By this definition, the Third World is also present in the so-called First World (Western Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and white Southern Africa). It is also present in the so-called Second World (the socialist, eastern European countries). While in the latter there are hardly representatives from the two-thirds world, it is true that there are significant minorities who find themselves in oppressed situations (though, granted, more for political, cultural and/or religious reasons than for socio-economic ones). There is a historico-cultural correspondence between the oppressed and margined in the First and Third Worlds, and between their situation and that of their oppressors. The only difference between the Third World in and outside the First is that the former represents the majority of Africans, Asians, Oceanians, Latin Americans and Caribbeans while the latter is a minority. (Obviously in Southern Africa the Third World is the majority!)

To speak of Third World missions is then to refer to missionary organizations from the world of the oppressed. With the exception of Latin America, the Caribbean, certain parts of Oceania, the Philippines and North American ethnic minorities. these organizations come from lands where Christian faith is still a small minority. Accordingly, many of them have their radius of activity in different cultural units within the same geographical space.

Missions from the world of the oppressed are not by any means a recent phenomenon. Apart from the fact that the early missionary movement originated in situations

of poverty and oppression, the modern missionary movement itself has been accompanied by the missionary activity of Christians in situations of oppression, whether in an organized movement, as in the missionary outreach of the West Indian Church to West Africa in the 19th century, the work of the Brazilian Baptist Foreign Mission Board (founded in 1907) or the individual collaboration of believers in the extension of the gospel in and outside their geographic and/or cultural boundaries.

What is new and different is that there should be a growing number of missionary efforts from the Third World at a time when the churches in the traditional sending lands are facing numerous roadblocks in their missionary out-reach. At a time when churches in these lands have more resources than ever, doors begin to be closed. This has brought about an enormous concentration of missionaries from the First World in fields overpopulated with the foreign missionaries (like Latin America, which having approximately 8% of the world population, had in 1975 35% of the total Protestant missionary force from North America).

What could possibly be the meaning of the phenomenon of Third World missions at this particular hour of history? Is it that God is raising a new elan of acceptable servants to carry on the yet unfinished task? If so, will they be able to fulfill their task in spite of their limited resources? Will these missions simply be copies of their traditional Western counterparts, or will they mark a significantly new contribution to the world mission of the Church? Will they develop independently or will they be coopted by the dominant missionary enterprise of the First World?

TOWARDS A HOLISTIC STRATEGY

A particular strategy for Third World missions is not only possible, but urgently needed. For without it they would not

be able to operate. The question is not whether they should have a particular strategy or not. It is rather what kind of a strategy they will have.

The complexity of our world, the comprehensive character of the Christian world mission and the diversities of Third World missions point to the need for a holistic strategy. That is, one that is comprehensive enough to allow for the multiple gifts of ministry, the multidimensional nature of the gospel, the different situations in which each missionary organization must operate and the diversity and complementary nature of mission work in the six continents of the earth. At the same time, it would have to be sufficiently specific as to enable Third World missions to understand their part in the world of mission and thus their integrity and uniqueness as gifts of the Holy Spirit for the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ends

What would be the ends of Third World missions? What do they exist for? The ultimate goal of Third World missions should be the final revelation of the kingdom,

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understood as the total transformation of history by Jesus Christ and the power of His Spirit. This will involve the redemption of creation, the definitive abrogation of evil, chaos and corruption and the birth of a world of love, peace and justice. Third World missions, as any Christian mission, should see themselves, fundamentally, as witnesses to the coming Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God, however, is not just a future, transcendent reality. It is also a present and imminent order of life, characterized by the forgiveness of sins, the formation of a new community and commitment to a new ethic. This order of life is centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Hence to witness the kingdom is to declare the name of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour of humankind. This in turn implies that the announcement of Jesus Christ in the world has personal, communal and socio-political dimensions. Personal, in the sense that it is accompanied by the call to faith and repentance and the concomitant experience of forgiveness of sin. Communal, in that it implies incorporation into the church, understood as a community or fellowship of faith and commitment. And socio-political, in the sense that it involves a new life style based on love whose practical expression is justice and ultimate hope is peace (or well-being) for all.

To lead others to Christ implies guiding them not only to a new experience but to a new commitment and a new way of life. This means that Third World missions, if they are to be faithful to God's Kingdom, will have a threefold orientation: (1) the communication of the gospel, (2) the growth and development of the church and (3) the advocacy of a fraternal life-style, social justice and world peace. This triple orientation will have its fulcrum on Jesus Christ. It represents rallying points for the organization of the missionary endeavor. In the process of organization, however, it should avoid atomization and compartmentalization. For if these penultimate ends are to be intermediate goals between the future of the kingdom and its present manifestation, they must be kept together.

In fact, each should be able to point to and presuppose the other, otherwise mission will lose its wholeness and the gospel will end up being truncated.

Means

Third World missions should then be at the service of the kingdom, spreading the gospel in each parcel of the world, incorporating and enabling the community of faith to experience integral growth, incorporating into its fellowship those who respond in faith and repentance, and promoting, in word and deed, community, social justice and world peace as a living witness of faith in Jesus Christ, Lord of history and Savior of humankind. To accomplish the aforementioned ends, missions from the Third World will need to equip themselves with adequate personnel, develop the necessary material and spiritual resources and elaborate effective methods. The issue of personnel underscores the importance of recruitment and education. The reference to resources points in the direction of stewardship and spiritual animation. And the need for adequate methods suggest the importance for program planning, experimentation and evaluation.

There is no mission without people. The missionary movement is contingent upon dedicated women and men who have caught the vision of a world without love, faith in His Son and hope in the power of His Spirit.

These people do not come out of the clear blue sky. They are called by the Holy Spirit who uses multiple ways to call those he wishes to use in the Father's vineyard.

Third World missions will need to become instruments of the Spirit in the recruitment of missionary personnel. Yet mission is not merely the work of a chosen few; it is rather a network of different types of persons, each contributing, in their own way, to the spreading of the kingdom. Hence missions must not only recruit specialized persons, but stimulate and challenge the whole church. In fact, what is often needed is not more specialized personnel (missionaries) but greater under-

standing, sensitivity and commitment on the part of the church.

All this implies that Third World missions cannot do away without missiological education. They need if not only to form its candidates for God's mission, but inform them about the world in which they are to live and minister, the work they are to perform and the tools they will need to have at hand. Here lies one of the greatest needs of Third World missions: the development of educational programs that will impart relevant information and will give their personnel and constituency a contextual formation. This calls for new education models. Unfortunately, too many Third World missions are either quite weak in missiological education or very dependent on the traditional models and educational centers of the First World (of. BERGQUIST and MANICKAM).

If Third World missions are to fulfill a unique role in God's mission, they will have to deal with the challenge of stewardship. With the increase in travel and living costs, the poverty of Third World countries and the limited financial resources of the churches, missions from these lands are bound to be affected. It is remarkable how in spite of the poverty of the Third World church, there has been in recent years such a growth in the number of missionaries and indigenous societies. Certainly one basic factor has been the spiritual depth of those churches and Christians which have participated in the missionary movement. They have revealed an amazing dosage of sacrificial love, an unshakable faith and a hope against hope.

Yet, we must avoid falling into historical or sociological navetee. We must not forget the ties that have existed, throughout the period of modern missions, between the missionary movement and the capitalistic system. From the early work of the Baptist Missionary Society in India to the present quantitative expansion, the western missionary movement has always had, directly or indirectly, conscious or unconsciously, ties with the business world. Even the Moravians, who developed a radically different model, were forced

eventually to develop a parallel business in order to support their missionary endeavor. Some have praised this operation (cf. DANKER); others have lamented it (cf. COSTAS) because in so doing the one authentically different model was coopted by the free enterprise system.

Sociologically, Third World missions cannot avoid the danger of selling themselves out to the dominant and richer Northern Atlantic missionary enterprise, or being controlled by the new emerging elan of Christian business persons in parts of the Third World. The only way they can overcome this danger is by developing different models of financial support and more contextual and communal mission structures, where the chains of dependence can be broken. Indeed this may be today the only way the gospel may significantly cross unevangelized spaces in the Socialist countries.

This puts us in the territory of missionary methods. What methods should Third World missions and missionaries employ?

Methods arise out of concrete needs and life situations. They are particular procedures employed to solve specific problems or fulfill particular tasks. Given the comprehensiveness of the Christian world-mission, Third World missionary organizations will need to have a pluralistic approach to their missionary situation. Likewise they will need to understand their mission in the light of the whole of God's mission. They will need, therefore, to develop multiple methods for the multiple dimensions of the missionary task.

How should Third World missions go about in developing such methods? For one thing, they should become aware of the methods that traditional (First World) missionary societies have employed. Indigeneity should have no room for chauvinism. To be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the methods utilized by western missions is to avoid unnecessary mistakes in the future. At the same time, Third World missions should not hesitate to make critical use of their own intuitions. Rather than

developing elaborate methods, they would do well to adapt a "learn-as-you-go" attitude, experimenting with various approaches and critically analyzing them in the light of the concrete reality. For mission methods are neither transplanted nor created out of nothing; they are neither the product of efficient planning or situational intuitions. They rather emerge out of the dialectics of reasons and feelings, past and present, and trial and error. Ultimately, they are part of the multiple gifts the Spirit entrusts to the church for the fulfillment of its mission.

The question of method has to do, therefore, not only with the particular procedures to be used in mission, but with the charisma of each organization. For methods are counting at upon ministries and ministries are gifts of the Spirit in mission. A missionary organization that has received the gift of urban evangelism, for example, will develop methods which are appropriate to this ministry. To ask about the most suitable methods for a given missionary organization is to probe into its particular gifts and thus into its specific calling.

Rationale

We must now outline the rationale for this strategy in embryo. On what principles is the foregone argument grounded?

It is grounded, first of all, on the biblical imperative of world mission. The fact that God's mission constitutes the central thrust of the economy of salvation puts mission in the center of the church's life and action. This has at least two implications. On the one hand, it implies a necessary awareness of God's redemptive commitment to humankind not as an abstract concept, but as historical reality. This is the only perspective from which Jesus of Nazareth can be understood. He is Emmanuel, God with us, God becoming man (specifically, a Jew), and identifying himself with the sufferings and woes of men and women in order to redeem them through His death on the cross.

As the center of God's redemptive ac-

tion, Jesus Christ comes through the Holy Spirit to all men and women in their concrete human situations. This is so because sin is revealed therein. Redemption must, therefore, also be manifested in the concrete human situation.

God's mission is no spiritualistic, escapist, non-historical enterprise. Rather, it is oriented towards and realized in the concrete situations of sin. It wants to transform men and women historically, that is, not only religiously (in their relationship to the transcendent God), but socially, politically, economically, psychologically and culturally as well. Little wonder then that the New Testament describes the ultimate goal of God's purpose in Christ in terms of the creation of a new humanity.

The centrality of God's redemptive mission in the message of the Bible also underscores the importance of the church as a missionary agent. Indeed, the church itself in a direct result of the missionary enterprise and by its very life a living witness of God's redemptive action in Christ. It is called not only to be a living word (cf. "living stones" I Pet. 2:5), but to proclaim "the wonderful deeds of Him who called it out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

The church is both a missionary (sent-out) and an ecumenical community. Hence every part should participate in the whole of God's mission.

But here lies the problem (and the second pillar of our proposal). Heretofore the missionary movement has been in the hands of a part of the church. This has not only truncated the ecumenical nature of mission, but has curtailed its effectiveness in the diffusion of the gospel throughout the world.

The Christian world mission is faced today, as in no other period of history, with an enormous challenge. Millions around the world have not yet had the opportunity of receiving the Good News and responding favourably or unfavourably to its call to repentance and faith. One can-

not "pay lip service" to the biblical imperative of world mission and remain unmoved by the fact that after 2,000 years two thirds of humankind has not yet to have a chance to consider the Gospel as an option for their lives.

I am referring not only to the millions who have literally never heard, but also to the millions who are geographically near, but live on distant socio-cultural frontiers. To say, for example, the de-Christianized masses of the West have had ample opportunity to reasonably consider the option of the Christian faith is to oversimplify the complex reality of western society, with its fantastic input from the mass media, the socio-cultural roadblocks in the clusters of men and women that make up the western mosaic and the psychological distance which syncretistic religious tradition has brought about between them and the faith of the New Testament.

I am also referring to those who confess to be religiously Christian, but who have never personally experienced the Gospel. This includes, for instance, the masses of nominal Christians who go to church once or twice a year at most; the so-called popular Catholic and Protestant masses; and the thousands in hetero-Christian religious bodies in Latin and Anglo-America, Europe, the Philippines and parts of Africa.

When all of these millions are put together, we begin to realize that much more than two thirds of humankind still needs to be evangelized. Who is going to accomplish this tremendous task? How? With what resources?

Of course, these questions can be brushed aside by simply answering, "the church." But the church is scattered in little communities all over the world (the churches) which much too often spend more time bickering with one another about the faith than living and sharing it with the world! Obviously, in order for the church to live up to its calling and rise to the challenge of the millions who are beyond the frontiers of the faith, it will need to have the participation of all of its parts around the world.

This is particularly crucial, as I pointed out earlier, given the impedimenta euro-americana. This has curtailed not only the numerical possibility of outreach, but what's worst, it has damaged the credibility of the gospel.

The missionary challenge is today before the church in the Third World. It is both a quantitative and a qualitative challenge. For, on the one hand, this is the church who has the opportunity to get into places heretofore closed to the gospel. On the other hand being (that it is) a church of the have nots, it has a privileged position. As poor church, it is able to understand the biblical fact that the gospel is a message of liberation to the poor and the oppressed. This enables it to communicate the gospel integrally and faithfully. Put bluntly, this means that the church in the Third World can re-possess for the whole church the integrity of the Christian message and push forward the mission of God. The reality of Jesus' prayer becomes evident once again; "I thank thee, Father, ... that thou has hidden these things from the wise ... and revealed them to babes ..." (Mth. 11:25). Likewise Paul's statement to the Corinthians acquires a new significance: *not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (I Co. 1:26b-29).*

This privileged position enables the church in the Third World not only to understand the depth of the Good News, but to minister to the other (affluent) church. Indeed, the missionary movement from the Third World can help liberate the church in the First World from its bureaucratic captivity, its historical alienation, its missiological triumphalism and its theological provincialism.

When and if this takes place, then a third principle will be disclosed; the

fact that the Holy Spirit has endowed the whole church with manifold, complimentary gifts. He has not only given to each church the saving gifts (faith, love, hope), the traditional ecclesial gifts (evangelist, apostles, teachers and pastors; cf. Eph. 4:11ff.) and the many operational gifts listed in I Cor. 12-14 and Rom. 12ff; he has also endowed them with complimentary socio-economic, political and cultural gifts. To some, he has given an effective human-power which is able to penetrate frontiers closed to the rest. To others, he has given financial resources able to make possible the strategic endeavor of the former. To all of them, he has given many collective and individual talents capable of mutually enriching the life and ministry of one another.

Properly exercised, these gifts should be more than adequate is to enable the churches to get the task done. Given the varieties of situations in which the churches find themselves, they could engage in a world-wide missional effort that would surpass the impressive impact of the Christian faith upon the Roman world.

However, such a partnership, in my opinion, is not fully possible at the present moment. It is not fully possible, first of all, because the church in the two-thirds world is still in the process of discovering its theological and socio-historic identity. It is not possible, secondly, because the church in the one-third world has yet really come to grips with the depth of its missiological crisis. Meanwhile, therefore, we must continue to awaken the church in both worlds.

We began by asking whether a strategy for Third World missions was possible? We answered that it was not only impossible but urgent. We have tried to give a general outline for such a strategy. We should now analyze this outline critically in order to strengthen whatever weakness it may have, elaborate it in greater detail and articulate it with clarity among those who shall be ultimately responsible for its implementation: the missionaries (from the Third World) who are spread all over the world, their sending organizations and the churches that support them in prayer, moral encouragement and financially.

WRITERS' PROFILE

- Mr. Ernest Oliver is a Secretary of the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (Britain) and is an Ex-chairman, the Missions Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship (1973-1978).
- Dr. Orlando E. Costas comes from Puerto Rico. He holds a doctorate of theology from the Free University of Amsterdam. He serves as Director of the Latin American Evangelical Center for Pastoral Studies.



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REGIONAL NEWS

KOREA

REPRESENTATIVES OF BROADCASTING MISSIONS MEET

The Far East Broadcasting Company and the Asia Broadcasting Company jointly sponsored a meeting of representatives of Broadcasting Missions on April 17 to discuss effective ways of reaching the people through the air. Some 60 attended the gathering which Prof. Suh Jung Woo of Yonsei University and others lectured on the Holy Spirit, the Creeds and practical issues of broadcasting missions. There was also a report on the present state of reaching the Communist countries through the air.

CONVENTION OF OVERSEAS KOREAN CHURCHES

The first Convention of Overseas Korean Churches was held at Young Nak Presbyterian Church in Seoul. It was planned to provide an opportunity for strengthening the ties between local and overseas Korean ministers and to search for effective missionary strategies. About 60 from abroad and another 500 local participants shared precious opinions on the "Role of the Korean Churches in the World."

CHINA MAINLAND MISSION STRATEGY DISCUSSED

The China Study Subcommittee of the Korean Christian Leaders Conference held its regular monthly session at the Tokyu Hotel in which the possibility of missions to China mainland was discussed. Dr. Kim Eui

Whan, who has been to China lately as one of the U.S. good-will mission, lectured on "Some Problems in Missions to China as Seen Through the Tour of China." He stressed that the combined efforts of the entire Korean Church and a deeper understanding of the land can only lead to a possible strategy for reaching the China's billions.

SINGAPORE

A. E. F. MINI-CAMP

AEF will hold a stay-in mini-camp on "Missionary Involvement and Missions" during the weekend of June 22nd-24th at the National Youth Leadership Training Institute, South Bouna Vista Road. Only 40 Campers will be accepted - on a "first-come first-served basis."

This Conference is specially planned for those interested in Missions or who are praying about full-time Christian work. Besides the five (5) theme messages, there will be several workshops on:- 1. "How To Know the Missionary Call" 2. How To Prepare For Missionary Service" 3. "Missionary Opportunities And Service Overseas" 4. "Problems The Missionary Encounters" 5. Forum (panel of speakers) on "Asian Missionary Work Today".

The Conference begins at 5 p.m. on June 23rd and end at 9.00 p.m. on Sunday 24th. Sunday morning after Breakfast is free time to allow campers to return to their church for services and other activities. The Conference will resume again at Lunch time on Sunday.

Those interested should write immediately to AEF for an application

form. The cost is S\$20.00 per person for board & lodging.

DYNAMIC CHALLENGER - ACTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN OF AMA

Dr. G. D. James, vice-Chairman of AMA, had a very busy Easter season speaking at Missionary Conferences in Adelaide, Melbourne and Katoomba. His dynamic and Bible-centered ministry was greatly appreciated at these meetings, when many were blessed and challenged.

At the Swanston Street Church of Christ (Melbourne), half of which congregation consists of Asians, 55 Christians committed themselves to fulltime service. The Katoomba Convention (Sydney) saw a steady nightly attendance of 500 people. During one of the meetings when Dr. James spoke, 22 people dedicated themselves to the Lord's service. Dr. James will be in Manila to speak at the Philippines Congress on Evangelism (May 21-26) and then be in S'pore & Malaysia for crusades and AEF functions from June 1-24.

JAPAN /LIA

JAPAN'S FIRST CHRISTIAN PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Masayoshi Ohira has been elected prime minister of Japan. It is our prayer that he, as the first professing Christian of his generation, might lead this increasingly influential and affluent nation according to the will of God. Mr. Ohira was converted to Christ as a high school student and even preached the Gospel on the street corners. We are impressed with his zeal for Christ before entering the political life. He shuns all alcoholic beverages, a rarity among Japanese (and all) politicians. We would support him with our prayers that he might

continue to be a witness for Christ in his gloriously uplifted position.

ETHIOPIA

GREAT REVIVAL AMIDST SEVERE PERSECUTION

Ethiopia is experiencing a great revival movement. Though Christians are subject to extreme suffering at the hands of the Marxist government in Addis Abbaba, they are becoming increasingly courageous and are winning more and more people for the Gospel. According to the German Evangelical Alliance, "a great Bible movement is spreading through the prisons" in that country. From the "torture chamber" of many prisons "songs of praise" could be heard.

The rulers in Ethiopia had all the technical possibilities for torture at their disposal and made good use of them. Priests and other church workers are chased like dogs. About one-third of the school children and students in the capital city had been murdered, sometimes with great brutality. Of the 26 million inhabitants of Ethiopia, approximately 55% are Christians.

THAILAND

THE FIRST MISSIONARY CONVENTION FOR THAI SPEAKING CHURCHES

Rev. Mark Cheng Kor, originally from the China mainland the separated from his family for the past 26 years, was greatly used to challenge the Christians concerning missions. The afternoon forums with pastors and leaders were well attended and very stimulating. The evening meetings has smaller crowded than anticipated, but the atmosphere showed God's Spirit at work. At

least four made definite commitments to mission service, during one of these services. Some Thai suggested TCGC hold an annual nationwide missions convention.

STUDY GROUPS ON GOSPEL COMMUNICATION

Two study groups have been started to research and discuss the clear and effective communicating of the Gospel to Thai Buddhist people. One is in the N.E. Area at Udonrthani, and the other is in Bangkok. The objective of these study groups is to consolidate research into the communicating process so that the Gospel can be presented more clearly and meaningfully to the Thai. Then an experimental project of several months in developing special media tools and testing them out, will be done. The findings of all of this will then be compiled in a report to be presented at the Congress on World Evangelisation in June, 1980, at Pattaya, Thailand.

INDIA

HISTORY MAKING EVENT IN CHRIST CHURCH, MADURAI

Why shouldn't Christ Church, Madurai send a missionary to an unreached area? This was a question in the hearts of many for several years.

As answer to this, on 3rd December 1978 Mr. Paranjothi Sathianathan and his wife Mrs. Beulah Sathianathan, IEM Missionaries in Himachal Pradesh, were commissioned by Rt. Rev. David Pothirajulu, Bishop of the Madurai-Ramanathapuram Diocese, Tamilnadu, of the Church of South India and sent out as missionaries by Christ Church to work in Kulu Valley. For many years several believers among the young people and mothers of the Church who had a burden for mission-

ary work, were praying about this. In early 1978, when Mr. Emil Jebasingh was invited to speak at the Annual Youth Conference, he challenged them and the Church leaders to send a missionary to North India. Later on at the three-day missionary retreat held at the Church, he spoke on missions and as a consequence several indicated their willingness to pray and support a missionary.

When the Church began to look for a missionary to send on their behalf, the Lord showed them Mr. & Mrs. P. Sathianathan working with the Indian Evangelical Mission in Kulu Valley in Himachal Pradesh. The church leaders approached Rev. Theodore Williams, General Secretary of IEM and indicated the desire of the Church to send this couple as their missionaries fully supporting them. The IEM agreed to this.

A Festival of Missions & Evangelism was held in the Church from December 1 to 3, 1978 with Mr. Premkumar, Dean of the Hindustan Bible Institute, Madras as the main speaker. On the third day Bishop David Pothirajulu commissioned the Sathianathans during the Missionary Commissioning Service. Rev. Theodore Williams and Mr. Emil Jebasingh spoke on that occasion.

All honour and glory be unto Almighty God. May God help us to send forth several more missionaries.

TAIWAN

TAIWAN'S CEF TO HOLD YOUTH MISSION CONVENTION

The Campus Evangelical Fellowship in Taiwan has organized the First Youth Mission Convention to be held in Taipei's suburb on July 2-9 this year. About 1,200 participants are expected.

The convention, with a theme

called "Behold the Field," has a fourfold purpose: (a) To propagate evangelistic visions (b) To challenge evangelistic workers (c) To know the harvest field, and (d) To bring forth evangelistic actions.

WEST GERMANY

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PLANS OF THE MISSIONS COMMISSION

Twenty-seven participants from all six continents gathered at the Liebenzell Mission (Bad Liebenzell, Germany) January 27-31, 1979 for the first meeting of the full Missions Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship.

The meeting brought to fruition some four years of planning. A previous smaller meeting called the Bombay Consultation of 1977 was held at Bombay, India in that year.

Those coming together represented national, continental and international bodies related to active missionary work all over the world. The chairman estimated that the participants and their organizations represent about 40% of the known Protestant mission activities.

While some people today do not take seriously Christ's great command to disciple the nations, the commission holds not only that in response to Christ's command it is the Church's responsibility to proclaim the Gospel in all the world. But that the time has come for the closest cooperation among emerging and established evangelical missionary agencies in completing the task.

In order to further such cooperation, the WEF Missions Commission has developed plans for the coming years. To give leadership, the Commission elected an Executive Com-

mittee to consist of the following: Chairman - Ernst Vatter (Germany) - Association of Evangelical Missions, Executive Secretary - Theodore Williams (India) - India Missions Association, Panya Baba (Nigeria) - Evangelical Missionary Society of the Evangelical Churches of West Africa, Chun Chae Ok (Korea) - Ewha Women's University, Seoul, Ernest Oliver (United Kingdom) - Evangelical Missionary Alliance and, Wade Coggins (United States) - Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

When Dr. Chun Chae Ok announced that it would not be possible for her to continue as Executive Secretary because of her teaching duties at Ewha Women's University, therefore Williams of India was chosen Executive Secretary of the Commission. The Commission office will now be located at 38 Langford Road, Bangalore 560025, India

1,400 PARTICIPANTS AT EASTER CONFERENCE GAVE 10,000 DM

Marburg (idea) - 1,400 mostly young people donated a total of nearly 10,000 DM for missionary work at an Easter Conference they were attending in Marburg, West Germany. The meeting was organized by the Seminary for Home and Foreign Mission, which is associated with the Gnadau Union (association of evangelical fellowships within the regional Protestant Churches).

The conference from April 13 to 16 had as its theme: "Peter - called by God, failing, empowered by God". Lecturers included Pastor Horst Marquardt, Director of Evangeliums-Rundfunk (German-speaking branch of Trans World Radio), Wetzlar, and Pastor Arno Pagel, Marburg, President of the World Union of Christian Endeavour (CE) and Director of the Marburg Mission.

ISLAM DEMANDS EQUAL STATUS AS CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN GERMANY

Frankfurt (idea) - "Islam is a message of peace for all men regardless of their faith." In this sense, Moslem congregations were ready "to cooperate in partnership" with all other groups of society, states a declaration of the communities belonging to the "Centre for Islamic Culture, Cologne".

The Centre of the largest Moslem community in Germany, the Suleymanli movement, which comprises about 60 per cent of the 1.4 million Moslems living in the Federal Republic of Germany, was the initiator of the first Moslem Conference in Germany on Easter Sunday in Frankfurt.

The almost 1,000 delegates from 158 Moslem congregations demanded the same status for Islam as Christianity enjoys in Germany. The president of the Centre, Necdet Demirgulle, hopes for the help of the Church "which is united with us through faith in the One God".

CHINA

CHINA'S POPULATION GROWING

China's population will grow to about 1.3 billion by the year 2000, keeping China as the most populous country in the world.

The United States Census Bureau reported in late February that this figure will constitute nearly one-fourth of the world's population of six billion in the year 2000.

U. S. A.

INTEREST MOUNTS IN GLOBAL EVANGELIZATION

Explosive global developments have underscored the importance of the upcoming consultation on world evangelization, according to Dr. David Howard who will direct the international gathering. He cited recent changes in Iran, Indo China, and the Middle East.

The Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE), to be held next year in Thailand from June 16 to 27, is expected to bring together about one thousand evangelical leaders for an in-depth analysis of world evangelization strategy for the coming decade. Sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), the consultation is to be preceded by intensive regional preparation that will provide input for the ten days of deliberation in Thailand.

Dr. Leighton Ford, chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, states that the primary objective of the consultation is "to develop realistic evangelistic strategies to reach for Christ the estimated three billion unreached people of the world."

THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAM. BOTH GOOD AND THREATENING

The Muslim world's mounting pressures lent a note of urgency to the North American Conference on Muslim Evangelization which was held from Oct. 15 to 21, 1978 in Glen Eyrie, Colorado Springs, U.S.A. 150 delegates attending that gathering unanimously agreed that Christian churches in North America (and the rest of the world) have for too long neglected the Muslim world.

The conference explored Christian responsibility toward that militant religion. Its population is estimated to be about 720 million -- one Muslim out of every six human beings.
(Continued on P. 6)

EDINBURGH

1980

World Consultation on Frontier Missions

TO MISSION EXECUTIVES:

Undoubtedly you have followed over the years the discussion that originated in 1972 concerning a 1980 world-level mission executive conference of the kind that was convened in 1910 at Edinburgh. During the past 3-4 years our emerging awareness of the 1910 purposes has required us to focus on the remaining frontiers of unreached, "hidden peoples". The name of the meeting is being changed from World Missionary Conference, which was used in 1910 and proposed in 1972, to *World Consultation on Frontier Missions (WCFM)*. The WCFM is tentatively scheduled for August 11-15, 1980, in Edinburgh, Scotland. Invitation will be restricted to evangelical Protestant mission agencies in every part of the world.

The WCFM will seek to augment the planting of churches and missions among the "hidden peoples" groups. Mission agencies will *translate contemporary research and studies*, such as being developed by many agencies as well as COWE, into *committee application and assignments of additional laborers to new work among selected "hidden peoples"* within a target date. Tentative plans, strategies, and projected new work can be refined and enriched by *interaction between western and non-western* mission agency executives and other delegates at WCFM.

The 1910 conference was organized in two years. Our superior communications ought to allow us to do as well in the two and one-half years that remain.

But the largest obstacle is in our own hearts. Somehow Christians around the world need urgently to regain the pioneer mentality of the early missionary movement. Our successes have clouded our eyes and diverted our energies to many other good things. The unfinished task is more nearly finished today than ever. One example: in 1910 Asians not Christian outnumbered Asian Christians 75 to one. Today, only 21 to one. But the unfinished task is still unfinished.

Suggestions welcome!

Write to: Dr. Leiton E. Chinn, Coordinator
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1605 East Elizabeth St., Pasadena, Calif. 91104, U. S. A.