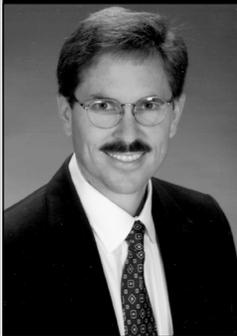




Mission Leaders Respond to the Dawn Report Assessment of 'Table 71'

U.S. Director,
Pioneers



Steve Richardson

While the conclusions of the "Table 71" group, including delineation of the four-step process leading to the discipling of a people group, is a positive development, I would hesitate to describe this as "the most significant missiological breakthrough since 1974." My observations would be:

1. The four steps that have been identified are essential and appropriate, but not new. It seems to me these steps add little to definitions established many years ago by the

USCWM and others.

2. The group suggests we eliminate the term "unreached" for lack of a biblical definition of "completion of the task," yet the article by Steele and Montgomery continues to employ the term throughout. (For example, even Ted Olson's leading role in following up the conclusions of "Table 71" includes establishing a "definitive list of UPGs.") The fact remains, as long as there are unreached peoples and a need for the church-planting process to occur among them, we will need terminology to describe these groups. We may not all agree on the specific definition, but the related dialogue serves its own broader purpose.

3. The writers contend that a "process" can be completed. Perhaps so, but the challenge of ascertaining when a church-planting movement "no longer needs outside help" will be significant.

4. I believe there is value in

churches and organizations "adopting" unreached groups. The mistake is when anyone views adoption as anything other than the first step in a long process.

5. The writers suggest that this four-step process "not be entered upon in any UPG unless there exists an indigenous partner from the beginning." Certainly this is the preferred option wherever possible, but there may yet be situations in which no suitable indigenous partner can be found. Surely there is a legitimate pioneering role to be done, perhaps to include harnessing the resources of neighboring churches, among such peoples.

In summary, there seems to be a felt need in some quarters for a new missiological paradigm through which to view the unfinished task. "Table 71's" concepts may be helpful in this regard, but in my view, they do not represent a major breakthrough.

Director, Mobilization Division,
U.S. Center for World Mission

Basic to my concern is the area of definitions. There seems here to be a confusion of terms, which can lead to totally different conclusions. For example:

- Confusion of "adoption" with "selection"
- Confusion of "evangelized" with "reached"
- Confusion of the adoptable, unreached people list with a selected group of mega-peoples

- Confusion of the "most significant missiological advance since 1974" with something that has always been part of any successful people-group adoption.

We need clarification of concepts if we are to have successful people-group adoptions. Erosion of understanding of the terms used in adoptions is a major concern to me.

Jerome Hannaman



**President,
International Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention**

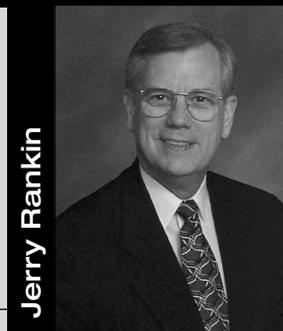
Table 71's description of the four-step process as the "most significant missiological breakthrough since 1974" may be an exaggeration as there have been many components that have contributed to progress toward completing the Great Commission. However, it is very significant in that it represents a practical level of partnership among organizations capable of leading the effort to close the gap among unreached people groups. Table 71 has identified a "how to" strategy that is unprecedented.

Up to this point we have seen an enhancement of awareness and "adoption" growing out of Lausanne, Ralph Winter's emphasis on "hidden peoples," and the AD2000 and Beyond Movement. The focus has been on adoption, but what does adoption mean? – awareness, prayer, advocacy. We have been hard-pressed to find

organizations and churches that were committed to and capable of wide-spread "engagement."

My perception has been that Dawn has worked primarily with established churches and mission agencies to encourage saturation evangelism and church planting with the goal of a country or political entity being discipled from a geographic perspective, but without a great deal of focus and assistance on how to break through the cross-cultural barriers among people groups within a country, barriers between the evangelized and unevangelized. So, in this sense the Table 71 process does converge with the DAWN emphasis to define a new potential of synergy for completing the task.

I believe all our organizations recognize that we cannot begin to complete the task by ourselves and that



Jerry Rankin

our strategy must involve a catalytic role of challenging, mobilizing and equipping indigenous believers and churches for church multiplication and cross-cultural outreach. The "four-step" process would be futile without indigenous partners, and Dawn is one of the organizations best positioned to nurture the relationship between mission partners and indigenous churches.

**Senior Vice-President of Overseas Operations,
International Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention**



Avery Willis

I see this as more of a breakthrough in implementation than a breakthrough in concept. Since AD2000 began Jerry Rankin and I have longed for another type of organization that actually reached the unreached. So much of AD2000 was mobilization (and it was very much needed), but we could hardly get things done with the participants, who were at all stages of awareness of the mission task and of the best missiology to get it done. Because

of their positions, those in Table 71 can involve thousands of persons in reaching the unreached.

I think it is more accurate to say the Table 71 helped DAWN join the Unreached Peoples movement. That is not to say that Dawn did not ever include unreached peoples in their DAWN strategy, but it was not their focus since they more normally worked in countries with a significant Christian population that could plant the churches in saturation church planting. We welcome them and their unique contribution to Table 71.

As to people-group adoption, "adopted" has meant many things to many people. We are saying that "adopted" means that there are people intentionally focusing on and doing all they can to engage them (i.e., send missionaries). I do not interpret our highlighting of the four-

step process as being a substitute for "unreached" and "adopted," but the process moves us a long way toward our goal. It makes practical what has often been theoretical.

Although it is certainly preferred that there be indigenous partners from the beginning, it is not a requirement. However, we did say that we would try to connect with other nearby groups who would work among that people group. We believe that they will be more culturally akin and better able to communicate the gospel cross-culturally. However, we do not set any limits on any Christian group adopting and engaging any unreached people group. It will take all of us to make sure there are no more unreached people groups. Table 71's primary role is to mobilize Christians to engage these groups and then resource those who adopt them.

