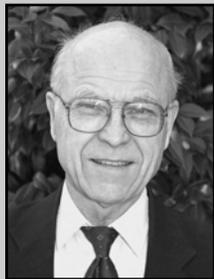


Editorial Comment

Ralph D. Winter



This concluding issue of *Mission Frontiers* for 2002 addresses the meaning and significance of an exciting new collaborative effort between major mission organizations called the "Table 71" group.

Second, here's an amazing offer regarding a marvelous new video tool. (I also have something dire to report regarding my personal future, but I will save that for last.)

It is heartening to see a greater willingness for missions to work together than at any time prior to or since the era of the Student Volunteer Movement, when the International Missionary Council (IMC, founded in 1921) provided a truly extensive service to the mission movement.

The IMC was so successful, in fact, that the flood of 22 resulting National Christian Councils around the world (made up of mission agency personnel) gradually added to their membership many representatives of newly-planted church movements. These kinds of additions continued to the point where virtually all 22 mission partnerships were replaced by National Councils of *Churches*. Most of these newly reconstituted bodies then excluded the representation or voting rights of mission agencies!

Right now, however, the "Table 71" group is made up of mainly mission agency representatives, not church leaders. That is significant, and all to the good. The three major agencies originally represented were Wycliffe Bible Translators, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, and Campus Crusade; in recent years Campus Crusade has become more and more of a standard mission agency, organizing church fellowships and dealing with addi-

tional languages and peoples beyond the reach of the present mission movement.

For me it was a pleasure a few days ago to see Wycliffe's new and expansive, recently dedicated Orlando headquarters (USA, not International), deliberately built right next door to the even larger Campus Crusade international headquarters.

It would be somewhat of an overstatement, however, to portray this new "Table 71" collaboration as a major missiological breakthrough, no matter how important it is organizationally. This group has warmed over the "tried and true" definition of an unreached people group without adding any novelties beyond rewording.

That's OK. But the tried and true definitions in this area were probably the only definitions in the history of missions ever hammered out by as prestigious a group meeting for that sole purpose. (It was in March of 1982 in Chicago, a Lausanne- and EFMA-sponsored two-day meeting of 35 widely representative mission executives.)

The "Table 71" people were not all involved back in 1982, although Wycliffe and the Southern Baptists were there. It is true that the succinct technical definitions produced in

1982 have been extensively ignored and misinterpreted, but they really have not been improved.

In one area of implementation (see the last two lines on page 11) a strange and unwise concept is now being introduced by Table 71: "A significant corollary they have insisted on is that the process should not be entered upon in any Unreached People Group unless there is an indigenous partner from the beginning."

It is actually impossible to find an indigenous partner if you are entering a truly unreached people group, since such groups by definition have no indigenous church with which to work.

If, however, a partner external to the unreached group is what is meant, then that external partner cannot be called indigenous to the unreached people group. Furthermore, it is tragic but true that almost all remaining unreached people groups are enemies of their near-neighbors. To expect to partner with a near-neighbor group, even if Christian, would be like partnering with North Ireland Catholics in trying to evangelize nominal Protestants there. Or, it would be like trying to partner with Iraqi Christians (there are 500,000 in Iraq) in

**For me it was a
pleasure a few days
ago to see Wycliffe's
new and expansive,
recently dedicated, USA
headquarters in Orlando.**

outreach to the Kurds of Northern Iraq, whom they despise and hate. Or, it would be like partnering with Palestinian Christians in an evangelistic outreach to Jewish Israelis.

Such things are not necessarily the best strategy, since unreached peoples are almost always surrounded

It is actually impossible to find an indigenous partner if you are entering a truly unreached people group, since such groups by definition have no indigenous church with which to work.

by a sea of hostile peoples. Partnering with such groups is rarely wise (missionaries have tried this hopelessly many, many times), while partnering with indigenous believers within the unreached people itself is totally impossible in the beginning. (It may be delightfully possible once you get started and the group is now no longer “unreached.”)

Empowering new believers in a new group, in fact, hardly needs to be “insisted upon.” Amusingly, when Ziegenbalg and Plutschau disembarked in India in 1706 (one hundred years before Carey), they found letters from home that arrived there ahead of them, asking anxiously if they were busy raising up national leaders. Nothing new about that!

But who can deplore this new burst of enthusiasm for completing at least the task of initial breakthrough? That continues to be the more crucial need, since once that breakthrough has been made, the growth of faith and the proliferation of churches is much simpler to achieve.

Here is one way to look at it: Anyone can open a door and walk through it, but only a locksmith can deal with a locked door. Missions is “locksmithing” new groups. Once the lock is open (a very special skill), expanding the number of churches is by comparison a relatively simple task.

Two cautions

First, multiplication of churches is not likely to happen no matter what strategy is employed, in certain major places like, say, Japan, where (as astute observers indicate) the all-important initial missiological breakthrough to the Japanese culture has not yet been achieved. That is, there is not yet a truly Japanese church movement.

Second caution: Churches?

The New Testament portrays to us prominently the “ecclesia,” a family or household-level fellowship, the kind of thing which makes the Mormon movement so strong. The New Testament would clearly seem to value weekly family worship and accountability more highly than “churches” planted from gathered fragments of families, as we do in most of America.

Spectacular, powerful video

Using state-of-the-art technology, a video has been made of the tiniest world of complexity—the hu-

Nothing in the last 100 years so powerfully displays the glory of our Creator God as does this video for the thinking intellectual who is overwhelmed by the secular perspective of our time.

man cell—and does so to show the inevitable conclusion that “intelligent design” had to be involved, not mere evolutionary chance. Nothing in the last 100 years so powerfully displays the glory of our Creator God as does this video for the thinking intellectual who is overwhelmed by the secular perspective of our time. And you and your church can get 50 for the price of eight. Page 22 describes this phenomenal opportunity.

Lastly, something personal

I now have terminal cancer.

It has been six years since my first

wife contracted a slow-but-sure type of terminal cancer called myeloma which invades the bones and slowly destroys the bone marrow which is essential to fight off diseases. There is no written-up story of her fight for her life, although you may have gained hints from time to time in these pages.

This is a fairly rare form of cancer. It does not seem to be contagious. But a few weeks ago the doctors in my HMO concluded that now I, too, have this same incurable disease. Many cancers can be cured. Multiple Myeloma is slow and can be slowed a bit in some ways, sometimes, but has never been cured. The prognosis is “two to four years.” My wife lived five. It could be less or more than that.

For me, for whom not a whole lot of time is left anyway (I’m 77), knowing fairly exactly what time I have left is sort of convenient. It is also nice, if you have to die prematurely, to get a disease which you already know so much about—you don’t have to rush to the library to read up on it or listen frantically to bits of information from doctors.

Okay, dear reader, your days are also numbered. “Teach us to number our days so we may apply our hearts unto wisdom,” is one Biblical counsel.

One thing this means is that my involvement in the Roberta Winter Institute cannot flag by slipping my mind, especially now with a marvelous second wife at my side! For the first few months I will face very few disease-related burdens, if things go as they usually do. I just signed in again to the local support group for myeloma patients, this time not as a care-giver but as a patient. Very, very gradually, new drugs are being discovered to fight cancers.

MISSION FRONTIERS LETTERS

Professor Makes Good Use of *Mission Frontiers*

... I have just returned from 14 years in Kenya with Campus Crusade for Christ, serving as the Field Ministry Coordinator and member of the missions committee of the Nairobi International School of Theology (NIST). ... [Y]ou sent me a bunch of ... *Mission Frontiers* every time you printed an issue. I not only gave out these copies to all the students at NIST (rotating groups and faculty), but I also used the article contents in some of my classes. My students loved *Mission Frontiers*, and most of them subscribed.

Dale Fisher,
Redlands, CA

Praising God for the Generosity of Others

Thanks very much for sending me ... *Mission Frontiers* over the years. These magazines have been a very great help to me in encouraging for missions. Presently, I am the pastor of a refugee congregation, the Danane Inland Church. Here we are involved in missions and church planting. The magazines have been very helpful in these areas.

Praise God for those who give towards this magazine, which made it possible for us to receive these free of charge. May God richly bless them.

Yours sincerely,
Rev. Benjamin T. Munford

Students and Missions

I think Ryan Shaw hit the nail right on the head in his article "The Student World and Missions—How are we doing?". I can say that as a college mobilizer I see the same trends. It is very unusual for college students to actually be challenged to be "long-term, cross-cultural, foreign missionaries" for fear of offending some who desire to work here or somehow communicating that working in America is "second-class," which we know is false. Yet, this is the very challenge that college students, the most mobile, sendable people on the planet need to hear!

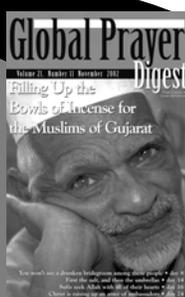
Ryan Shaw is right. In order to see missions vision sweep through the United States and cast fire in the hearts of college students, we need to have "more students who have a heart for the world begin to exhort and challenge their fellow students on these issues." We are constantly brainstorming how we can raise up more Campus Mobilizers, college students who are able to pass on their world vision to other students. Thanks, Ryan, for the stirring and insightful article.

Todd Ahrend
The Traveling Team (Conway,AR)

Every day, 45,000 people around the world join together to pray for a specific unreached people group or a key mission effort. You can join them by committing 30 seconds a day and \$12 a year. You can get a prayer group going by ordering at least 10 copies to one address, and the price drops to \$70 for all 10 copies, within the U.S. Single subscriptions within the U.S. are \$12/year.

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Is This Really a Breakthrough?

A Review of Claims for the "Table 71" Task Force

Editor's note: On pages 9-12 we've reprinted (by permission of Dawn Ministries) an article that appeared in the June 2002 issue of *Dawn Report*. We invited a variety of mission leaders to critique this article; four (including one participant in Table 71) responded, and on pages 13-14 we present those responses. We asked these leaders a variety of questions, including the following:

Q. Steele and Montgomery characterize Table 71's development of a four-step process as the "most significant missiological breakthrough since 1974"? Do you agree? Why or why not? Is this exaggeration? Is this confusing *conceptual* breakthroughs with advances in *implementation*?

Q. The authors indicate that Table 71 brings together DAWN and the unreached peoples movement, which had heretofore been running in parallel (but separate) streams. Does Table 71 really "solemnize the union" of these two streams? Or are the two streams better understood and applied separately?

Q. Have the authors fairly represented the Adopt-a-People movement and what leaders in this movement have actually said and done?

Q. In answering the question of what needs to be done differently to reach every people, the Table 71 participants point to a "clearly defined" four-step process and propose

to entirely do away with the terms "unreached" and "adopted"? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Q. Table 71 participants have reportedly insisted that their four-step process "not be entered upon in any UPG unless there were an indigenous partner from the beginning." Do you agree? Why or why not?

To conclude our cover theme, on pages 15-16 Greg Parsons, General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission, adds his own assessment of Table 71, comparing this task force's work to previous efforts to understand, describe, and minister among unreached peoples.



STRATEGY CORNER

The DAWN idea and the unreached peoples movement had been running in parallel streams. That is, until 'Table 71' burst on the scene and solemnized the union of these potent forces.

'Table 71' creates most significant missiological advance since 1974

by Steve Steele and Jim Montgomery

Totally unaware they were even going to meet at Amsterdam 2000, the participants of 'Table 71' have produced, in our opinion, the most significant missiological advance since the original Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 1974.

For they brought together in marriage the two most profound concepts for completion of the Great Commission that emerged from that historic 1974 gathering. More about Table 71 to follow, but first take a look at the historical setting.

Ralph Winter opened our eyes

One major milestone achieved at Lausanne was the brilliant presentation of Ralph Winter that opened our eyes to the vast number of still unreached people groups (UPG's) of the world. People group thinking since then has become the heart of much planning and action toward the completion of the Great Commission in our time.

The U. S. Center for World Mission, the Adopt a People Movement, the AD2000 and Beyond Movement, the Joshua Project, the massive promotion and

prayer for the 10-40 window and a host of other initiatives focusing on unreached peoples have all been major thrusts flowing out of Lausanne '74.

The other profound concept emerging from this 1974 gathering actually received no more attention than one line on page 1424 of *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, the huge compendium of papers and responses presented at the International Congress.

In "The Philippines National Strategy Group Report," the 57 delegates to the Congress in line three of their report committed themselves to "Establish a local congregation in every barrio (neighborhood) in the country."

The DAWN flame spreads

Returning to the Philippines, national leaders fleshed this out to mean they would increase from 5,000 churches in 1974 to 50,000 by the end of AD 2000. What became known as the DAWN (Disciple A Whole Nation) 2000 Philippines Movement, last year celebrated the accomplishment of this goal, and in the process set a

new goal to plant another 50,000 in the following ten years.

One milestone was the presentation that opened our eyes to the vast number of unreached people groups.

Now the flame of the DAWN Movement, fanned internationally by Dawn Ministries in Colorado Springs, for a growing majority has become the generally accepted strategy for completing the task of the Great Commission in our time.

Well over 60 nations have held DAWN Congresses where goals have been set—and in many cases already reached or exceeded—to plant more than three million new churches. In addition, projects in India and China in aggregate envision more millions of churches. In about an eight-year period beginning in 1992 the national Church in 14 Latin America nations planted 87,500 new churches and Church leaders of the whole region in 1998 set a goal of 500,000 new churches by 2010. Church-plant-

STRATEGY CORNER

ing projects are even underway in all but a couple of the Arab nations!

TABLE 71 MEMBERS

Steve Douglass, Campus Crusade for Christ
Ted M. Olsen, Dawn Ministries
Mike Steele, Dawn Ministries
Larry Cox, Southern Baptist IMB
Steve Evans, Southern Baptist IMB
David Garrison, Southern Baptist IMB
Avery Willis, Southern Baptist IMB
Nils Becker, Jesus Film
Dan Grether, Mission Spokane
David Payne, SEED CO.
Bob Creson, Summer Inst. of Linguistics
Wayne Johnson, Table 71
Robert Varney, Table 71
Terry Sparks, Walk Through the Bible
Roy Peterson, WYCLIFFE
Mark Anderson, YWAM
Steve Cochrane, YWAM
David Hamilton, YWAM

The DAWN idea—which generically is referred to as Saturation Church Planting (SCP)—and the unreached peoples movement have been running in parallel streams. That is, until ‘Table 71’ burst on the scene and solemnized the union of these potent forces. The conceptual marriage of these two could well loft world evangelization to a whole new level of understanding and effectiveness.

Mission leaders ponder our failure

This is how the “Table 71” group came into being. Everyone in the Strategy Coordinators Task Group

of the Amsterdam 2000 conference was seated around numbered tables. The leaders that “just happened” to sit at table 71—hence their name—included Steve Douglas, newly appointed president of Campus Crusade; Mark Anderson of YWAM; Bruce Wilkenson of Walk Through the Bible; Avery Willis with the Southern Baptists; Mike Steele of Dawn Ministries; Roy Peterson, President of Wycliff; David Garrison of the Southern Baptist’s IMB and Dan Grether of Mission Spokane.

Their assignment at table 71 was to discuss the question, “How do we reach the rest of the UPG’s of the world?”

Two questions quickly emerged as they began their discussion: “Why hasn’t the job been done in the last 2,000 years?” and “What do we need to do differently to make sure the job gets done

now?” In the process of finding answers, they not only came to a watershed missiological conclusion but actually formed a continuing Task Force to see the new concepts carried out.

Facing inadequate, misleading data

Several things surfaced relating to why the job is still unfinished. For one thing, though a great amount of research had been done in recent years, that data was still far from adequate.

For example, they had been given a list from the Joshua Project that

enumerated 253 UPG’s in the world that contained at least 10,000 in each that still had not been “adopted.” When this information had been shared in the whole assembly, the delegation from India sent up a collective gasp. For by their reckoning, there are around 4,635 people groups in their land alone, but the vast majority of Christians come from only about 130 to 135 of them.

Others at the table suggested from their knowledge that many of the groups listed were in fact language groups, not UPGs. Some of these language groups had been resourced with tools for evangelism and church planting. They knew of other unreached groups that were not on the list. (Incidentally, they had been told ahead of time that the list did need some further work before it would be complete and accurate.)

Redefining terms was necessary

Another major concern they identified was simply the definition of “adopted.” Their collective impression was that this was a very elastic term. For instance, a local church in America with very good intentions could indicate it was adopting a certain people group on the list. They may have then

The other profound concept emerged from the Philippines strategy group.

generated interest in their congregation through promotion, prayer, preaching or even a visit by a church member to the group.

This group gets checked off the unreached or unadopted list, but it

STRATEGY CORNER

may be decades before anyone in the country is actually addressing

They asked, 'why hasn't the job been done in 2000 years?'

them. Furthermore, there might be a vast gulf between a group being adopted and a really significant strategy developed and implemented for *discipling* the group.

An example of this also came from India. They were told about the unreached Ahir (Yadav) people numbering something like 57 million scattered throughout 14 states. Even if an adoption were to result in a few churches planted, it would be the barest of beginnings in a harvest field of this magnitude.

An integrating process formed

When they got to the question of what needed to be done differently, Table 71 came to several significant conclusions.

In the first place, it became obvious that there needed to be a change in the definition of when a people group could be checked off the "unreached" or "unadopted" list. It had to be more than a congregation or another institution merely agreeing to "adopt" a group. There had to be strong, verifiable evidence that a process was in place that could ultimately lead not merely to the "entering" of that group, but to the "discipling" of that group.

This called for the completion of four different steps, steps that saw the marriage of the initial "adoption" and the commitment to saturation church planting (SCP.) The steps identified were:

1. There are identified Christian-worker networks targeting that group.
2. There are churches being planted.
3. There is mobilization of indigenous church planters and Christian workers taking place.
4. There is a self-sustaining, flourishing, reproducing church-plant-

WHEN IS A PEOPLE GROUP 'REACHED'?

Table 71 concluded that all four of the following must be happening before a people group could be checked off the list of the 'Unreached':

1. There are identified Christian-worker networks targeting that group.
2. There are churches being planted.
3. There is mobilization of indigenous church planters and Christian workers taking place.
4. There is a self-sustaining, flourishing, reproducing church-planting movement that no longer needs outside help.

ing movement that no longer needs outside help.

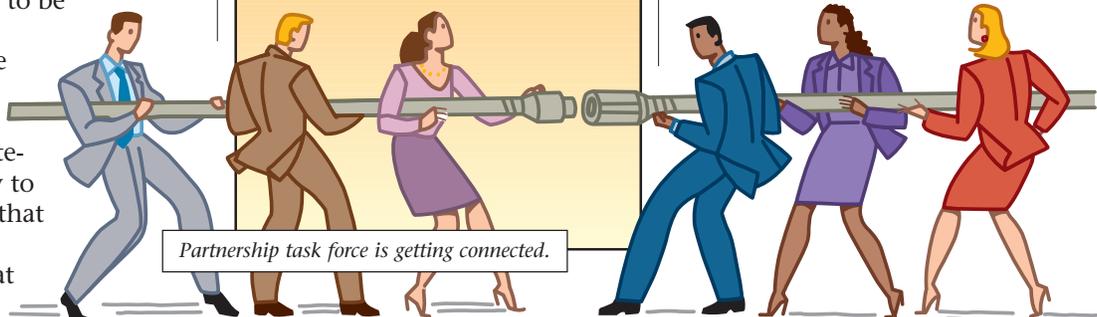
This is the missiological breakthrough we refer to as the most significant since 1974. But a deeper look into their thinking is needed.

They concluded that this four-step process removed the problem of the many different definitions of "unreached" and what it meant to "adopt" an UPG. In fact, they decided not to use these terms anymore at all, for no group can be totally reached until the Lord returns. There is no definition in the Bible for "completion" of the task.

But a "process" can be completed. As soon as step four is accomplished, indigenous church-planting movements continue the task until the day of the Lord. There is no arbitrary percentage figure for missiologists to wrangle over concerning the number of converts needed to say the people group has been "reached."

The four-step process, however, can be clearly defined. The point of completion of the process can be pinpointed. The indigenous church is now capable of continuing the multiplication of converts, disciples and congregations indefinitely.

A significant corollary they insisted on was that the process should



STRATEGY CORNER

not be entered upon in any UPG unless there were an indigenous partner from the beginning. This would overcome the situations where an outside mission force entered a group but at some point had to leave, got kicked out or otherwise had to abandon the work with nothing left to follow through. Table 71 efforts would function as servants to the local leaders.

Partnership task force is formed

They saw, however, that merely redefining the task could end up being only a dynamic intellectual

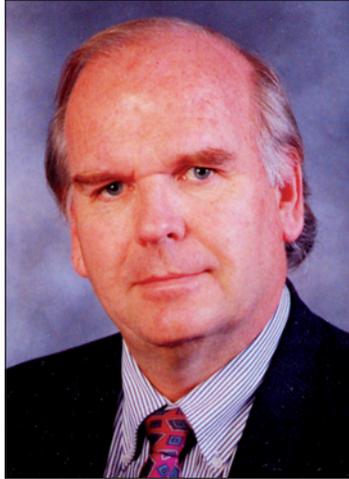
There had to be a change in when a people group could be considered "adopted."

exercise with no significance in the real world. These heads or top-level leaders of organizations saw they were in a position to implement what they were discussing. Why not form a task force of member bodies to implement this new understanding of the task of the Great Commission?

They did.

In subsequent meetings, priorities were set and work begun. It was determined, for example, that rather than take on the whole world of the unadopted they would select a prototype for a case study. With that in mind, they settled on India.

This is a nation so large and with so many UPG's that a success story here would open doors for the rest



Ted Olsen is taking a leading role in the Table 71 Effort

of the world. Furthermore, there were already a number of very able indigenous mission societies that could be partnered with.

With Dawn missionary Ted Olsen taking a leading role in this effort, we are thankful to have some part in this breakthrough endeavor. At this point, further research is being carried out in India to establish a definitive list of UPG's, to find out what models are working, to see where the greatest needs are and who can meet them, to begin serving the indigenous partners and to mobilize both foreign and indigenous churches to participate.

Exponential growth already happening

It is also true that in India the idea of exponential church multiplication has already caught on with many top leaders. These have

proven models where growth takes place from a handful of congregations to hundreds and thousands within months or a very few years.

Having been involved from the inside both with the UPG and SCP

Table 71 efforts would function as servants to the local leaders.

streams that have flowed out of Lausanne 1974, it is our conclusion that the concepts and action steps of Table 71 truly bring us to a whole new level of insight in how to work most directly towards the completion of the Great Commission in our time.

It is making sure that all the UPG's are identified and entered with a process that culminates in a continuing multiplication of churches and congregations unto the return of the Lord.

When the partnerships of Table 71 agencies and indigenous Indian mission societies have demonstrated the viability of this model, we will truly be on the way to "hastening the day of the Lord" (II Peter 3:12). 

DAWN vs. Dawn—an important distinction

We've found that sometimes our readers are confused about the difference between DAWN the movement and Dawn the organization.

Throughout our magazine, DAWN in upper case letters refers to a whole-nation *strategy* developed by the Church of that nation for saturating every community with congregations of believers.

Dawn Ministries or Dawn, in lower case letters, is a small *agency* of full-time men and women headquartered in Colorado Springs, USA, which serves the DAWN movement worldwide.



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**

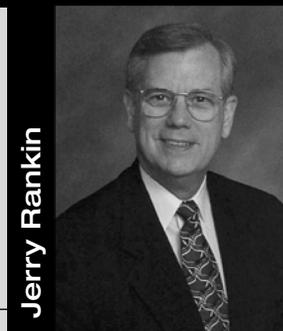
Table 71's description of the four-step process as the "most significant missiological breakthrough since 1974" may be an exaggeration as there have been many components that have contributed to progress toward completing the Great Commission. However, it is very significant in that it represents a practical 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.





Reviewing Our Concepts and Definitions

General Director,
U.S. Center for World Mission



Greg Parsons

The quiet, strong commitment of the “Table 71” participants will undoubtedly push forward the effort of the Church to reach every unreached people group. Of course, any broad effort needs clarity of vision to maintain its focus. Perhaps then, a brief look at some of the concepts and definitions will help us see the context of these and other renewed efforts to reach every people. Does “Table 71” represent a change of direction for the unreached peoples movement? To what degree does “Table 71” help to clarify efforts at outreach?

The core of Ralph Winter’s presentation at Lausanne 1974 was the idea that even if the Church all over the globe were to reach out in evangelism as far as it could, there would still be thousands of people groups without a viable church within their culture. Why? Cultural difference.

That presentation, called “Cross-Cultural Evangelism: the Highest Priority,” opened the eyes of mission leaders to the fact that much mission work was becoming preoccupied with the growing church around them. Winter more than once noted that many missions efforts (and even missions training) looked more like we were trying to “go ye into the world and meddle with the national churches” instead of making sure there are disciple-makers in every biblically-defined nation on earth.

The really amazing thing is that this is still true today. Even with the amazing Church growth since 1974, we still have gaps in large blocs such as the Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist worlds. The complexities of the Tribal world and issues like nomadism within all of these spheres highlight the stark reality that we still have significant barriers to cross.

So what is needed? Beyond factors like prayer, faith, and Pauline determination, there is the factor of *strategy*. Like the other factors, strategy is crucial. Unlike the others, without strategy, we can end up setting or even reaching our goals, only to find out they were only part of the picture at best—like leaning your ladder up to a tall building and, when you get to the top, finding out it is leaning on the wrong building.

The ideas reflected in Ralph Winter’s 1974 presentation and subsequent definitions included strategic thinking. A group of mission leaders and strategists met in 1982 and grappled with these issues in depth. They discussed both when a people is a people, when that people is unreached, and what stages will be needed to reach each people—step-by-step.

First, this group indicated its belief that a people group (distinguished from a political nation-state) is key to the biblical method of spreading the message of God’s Kingdom. A **people group** was defined as:

A significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc. or combinations of these.

For evangelistic purposes the idea of people group was further refined to:

The largest group within which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.

An **unreached people group** was defined as:

A people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize this people group without requiring outside (cross-cultural) assistance.

Another angle from which this can be viewed is that a people group is considered “reached” if it has a viable, indigenous, self-reproducing church movement in its midst. Such a people group has strong churches pastored by their own people using their own language, and these churches are actively evangelizing their own people and planting daughter churches.

Seems clear enough. But the application of such definitions requires that in each context someone on the field knows both the cultural boundaries of the people as well as enough of the situation to know if the church is “owned” by the people themselves. These insights can’t be discerned by those at a distance working with lists and databases alone.

Though the 1982 definitions were disseminated widely, the use of the terms is not (and cannot be) policed. For example, many people have used “unreached” to refer to friends and neighbors near them (and similar to them culturally), when they really mean “unevangelized” or “unsaved.” The AD2000 Movement used additional criteria to refine their mobilization efforts, but they were not changing the 1982 definitions so much as



Stage 3 Evaluated: Research and evaluation is done on the people so that Christians outside the group can decide to reach them.

Stage 4 Selected: A mission agency capable of reaching the group has made the commitment to do so.

Stage 5 Adopted: One, or several, churches or fellowship groups has made the establishment of a strong church among the unreached people group their goal. They agree to support the work with prayers and finances. The mission agency they are partnering with has the needed resources and a team ready (or soon to be ready) to begin the work.

Stage 6 Engaged: The work has begun, and cross-cultural workers are “on site” with the goal of establishing a “viable, indigenous church-planting movement.”

Stage 7 Reached: A strong, indigenous church-planting movement has been established that is of sufficient size and strength to evangelize the rest of the group with no (or very little) outside help.

Later, Stage 2 was merged into Stage 1, and Stage 3 was merged into Stage 4. This was done, in part, because the volume of information available since 1982 enables more to be known about the people sooner.

As mentioned above, this whole process needs solid prayer to back it. That is why there has been a prayer campaign called Adopt-A-People. The goal is to have serious, committed prayer by thousands of individuals and churches all over the world for every people to be reached. “Adoption” can mean more than prayer commitment for some churches, but it cannot mean less.

But Adopt-A-People is not a field strategy; it is not for mission agencies or denominational sending structures to “adopt.” Agencies “select” peoples to which they believe God

is leading them to send missionaries. Then churches connect with them to “adopt” these peoples.

With this historical background in view, it seems helpful for the “Table 71” network (and Dawn) to further clarify what is meant when we say a group is “reached.” Compiling lists of peoples never ends. But it would seem that the problem of getting work started among many of these peoples is much bigger than the question of when they are “reached” and can be removed from a checklist.

It also seems to me that the four steps anticipated in the “Table 71” process are actually very similar to the seven stages agreed upon in 1982:

Step 1 (identified Christian workers and networks target the group) seems parallel with stage 4 above.

Step 2 (churches are being planted) is an explicit statement of results which the “Engaged” Stage 6 above has as a goal, and that the “Reached” Stage 7 above explains more fully.

Step 3 (mobilization of indigenous church planters and workers) is a further fleshing out of the Reached Stage 7 in the 1982 definitions.

Step 4 (self-sustaining, flourishing, reproducing church planting movement) restates much of what was in the original definitions and Stage 7 (Reached).

We should seek to bring “closure” to that part of the task that establishes a church movement in each culture. Matthew 24:14 (whatever the timing is eschatologically) speaks of the gospel being preached as a witness to all peoples. It seemed to those mission leaders in 1982 that the best witness is to establish the living, viable, expanding Body of Christ as a witness in every people. “Closure” does not mean that Christ will return when that task is done. I believe He could return right now. At the same time, let’s strive to see this witness spread to all peoples until He decides when that task—and whatever else He desires to accomplish through us—is done.

clarifying how a group got on (or off) their list of unreached peoples. (They emphasized groups less than 2% Evangelical or with less than 5% Christian adherents.)

To attempt to bring additional clarity, Ralph Winter began to emphasize a concept and a word to describe it: “unimax.” Some didn’t like it because it wasn’t a known word, but to me that was part of the beauty: it’s harder to “mess up” an idea if you have to define it every time you use it. So what is this idea?

A *unimax people* is the maximum-sized group sufficiently unified to be the target of a single people movement to Christ. (“Unified” refers to the fact that there are no significant barriers of either understanding or acceptance to stop the spread of the gospel).

Beyond the basic definitions for peoples and unreached peoples, the 1982 huddle also defined the stages for reaching a people. These originally included:

Stage 1 Reported: The people group is reported to be unreached.

Stage 2 Verified: A reliable source verifies that the group meets the qualifications of a people group and that they are unreached.

NEWS

Notes

✉ The 2003 National Missionary Training Forum is scheduled for January 9-11 in Richmond, Virginia at the International Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center. Sponsored by Next Step – The North American Partnership in Mission Training, the Forum draws from evangelical agencies, schools, and churches. The January gathering will feature keynote speaker Ken Blanchard and a variety of workshops led by missionary trainers. Housing at the Missionary Learning Center is free for the first 200 participants. For further information, see www.thenextstep.org or E-mail Gene Kissinger at gkissinger@chcc.org.

✉ In the July-August version of this column I referred to Philip Jenkins' *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford University Press, 2002). In a future issue of *Mission Frontiers* we hope to comment further on Jenkins' work. Until then MF readers may wish to check out his related article in the October issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* and the interview at www.theatlantic.com/

unbound/interviews/int2002-09-12.htm. It's worth asking, for example, how Jenkins' descriptions of non-Western Christianity compare to what we read from Patrick Johnstone (*Operation World*), David Barrett (*World Christian Encyclopedia*), and others.

✉ The October 2002 issue of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* rallies around the theme of "Challenges to Missions in a Post-9/11 World." Not surprisingly, many of the articles focus on ministry among Muslims: "How Islam Sees Itself," "Free to Live Under the Law: A Model for Islamic Witness," "Growing Churches in Resistant Areas," and "A Church Built By Muslims." "The Web and World Religions" includes sites to promote better understanding of Islam. In addition, Mark Harris contributes a provocative piece on "How Our Understanding of Conversion Can Help or Hinder Our Evangelistic Efforts." You can learn more via www.wheaton.edu/bgc/emis or contact EMQ at PO Box 794, Wheaton, IL 60189, Emis@wheaton.edu.

✉ Mission journals are normally text-intensive, but the October 2002 issue of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (IBMR) is less so. In fact, this issue is dedicated to "Rediscovering Missionary Photography" and includes descriptions of new projects helping us to utilize vast photographic collections. These include missionary collections at the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London); the Missionary Periodicals Database (Britain); the Internet Mission Photography Archive (scheduled to launch in December 2004); and the MUNDUS Gateway (a Web-based guide to more than 400 collections of overseas missionary materials). You can learn more via www.omsc.org. For subscriptions, contact the IBMR at PO Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834.

✉ The Rethinking Forum convened its second annual gathering September 6-8, 2002 in Los Angeles to reflect on issues of contextualization in the interface between Christianity and Hinduism. Leaders of this informal network anticipate an annual gathering, seminars for local churches and resource distribution. The Forum will seek patrons to donate \$100 per year (\$500 for institutions). For more information, contact rethinkingforum@aol.com.

✉ Pioneers (USA) of Orlando, Florida dedicated the Frizen Missionary Training Center September 27. The first beneficiaries of this new facility include the 180 Pioneers appointees currently preparing for church-planting among unreached peoples. To learn more about this fast-growing agency, visit www.pioneers.org.

✉ Also to be found in Orlando is Wycliffe Bible Translators' new WordSpring Discovery Center, intended to provide visitors with a dynamic view of Bible translation. The mix includes multimedia presentations, interactive computer games and simulations, audio dramas, and children's activities. Learn more at www.wycliffe.org/WordSpring/home.htm.

✉ The eyes of the world are on the Arabian Peninsula, partially because of the aftermath of September 11 and partially because this region may become the staging ground for a war against Iraq. Meanwhile, an international coalition of mission agencies is sponsoring a 2003 prayer campaign, "Praying Through the Arabian Peninsula," to seek God for breakthroughs among the peoples and countries of the peninsula. Learn more at www.pray-ap.info.

Darrell Dorr

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A Follow-Up to "The Student World and Mission – How Are We Doing?" (from September-October *Mission Frontiers*)

During October 3-5 meetings were held in Amherst, Massachusetts to pray and plan for the birth of another student volunteer movement. The next step planned is a prayer gathering to be held in the Chicago area at Trinity International University, November 23, 12-8 p.m. Organizer Ryan Shaw explains, "The meeting hopes to draw young people from many backgrounds, churches, and schools to fast and pray for a revolution of Message Bearers, passionate for global evangelization." For further information, contact Ryan Shaw at ryshaw@netzero.net or Jennifer Bloch at jenniferbloch@hotmail.com.