



Does it not make sense for agencies from different parts of our planet to compare notes about the majority of people groups which are today to be found in more than one part of the planet?

Ralph D. Winter



Dear friend,

If I had the chance to “replay” on a TV screen just two minutes of some single distant past event, I know I would be cross-eyed with indecision.

But, one of the leading candidates for those two minutes would certainly be a snippet from the “Northfield Conference” of 1885 when the burly, fidgety D.L. Moody jumped to his feet, cut off the famous speaker (A.T. Pierson) in mid sentence and waved to the rapt audience, “Do you believe it can be done by 1900?”

The huge crowd roared approval. Moody did not stop there. He was a practical man. He appointed an illustrious committee which in three days hammered out in just 1,038 words an eloquent, impassioned “Appeal to Disciples Everywhere” (see p. 11). Buried in that brief document are these key words based on Pierson’s calculations:

If but ten millions, out of four hundred millions of nominal Christians, would undertake such systematic labor as that each one of that number should, in the course of the next fifteen years, reach one hundred other souls with the Gospel message, the whole present population of the globe would have heard the good tidings by the year 1900!

This document, the committee’s “Appeal,” echoing consciously Jonathan Edwards’ 1747 “trumpet-peal calling upon disciples everywhere,”



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could easily have been expected to become the most significant breakthrough in mission history, tied as it was to a specific “closure” date of 1900.

But it wasn’t.

The appeal was addressed by church leaders to a church audience, not by mission leaders to a mission leaders audience.

What was wrong with that?

Was not Moody even at that date the most prominent and influential evangelist/revivalist of American history? And what more auspicious springboard could there have been than the famous Northfield Conference?

Yes, but. It was just a little like proposing to an Oscar awards ceremony that we fight a war in Iraq. This fabulously visionary document was addressed to “disciples everywhere” and sought a large emotional gathering of “disciples” to consider evangelizing the planet. Such gatherings were held: 1888 in Liverpool, England; 1900, in Carnegie Hall in New York City (President McKinley giving the opening address).

But this profound Northfield appeal to get out and do the job was soon forgotten.

Meanwhile, a year later, in 1886, at Mt. Hermon (a Moody-founded school a few miles down the Connecticut River from Northfield), 100 students stood forward, again inspired by A.T. Pierson, to form

the Student Volunteer Movement. These students soon infiltrated the existing boards of missions and twenty-four years later convened the less-public “Edinburgh 1910” conference made up exclusively of delegates of mission agencies, where, an incredible younger mobilizer, John R. Mott, now replaced A.T. Pierson who was close to death.

This 1910 conference, after the hiatus of the 1st World War, generated a concrete basis for global level coordination of mission strategies, namely the International Missionary Council, which worked effectively for forty years but eventually transitioned into a council of overseas church councils, with little mission vision.

However, once again at Edinburgh in 1980 another global meeting was held, intentionally similar to the 1910 meeting. More agencies were represented and fully one-third now came from the non-Western lands. It attempted to re-establish a global network of mission structures but just barely failed.

The appeal was addressed by church leaders to a church audience. What was wrong with that?

Many other global meetings, the 1966 Berlin conference sponsored by Billy Graham, the 1974 Lausanne, Switzerland

International Congress on World Evangelization, the Lausanne meetings in Thailand in 1980 and the Philippines in 1989, and the various, marvelous global AD2000 meetings have valiantly promoted concern for the whole planet to a very wide range of Christian leaders.

These wonderful meetings were all similar to the one shouting its approval to Moody’s plea at Northfield in 1885. But they are, at best, meetings of the global church’s “state governors” not “private enterprise CEOs.”

And today there is not even a modest global office functioning as a vital network of mission agencies from all the world.

Thus, other than Edinburgh 1910 and Edinburgh 1980, there have been no global level conferences open simply to delegates from mission structures from both North and South.

And today there is not even a modest global office functioning as a vital network of mission agencies from all the world. The need for such an office may not be "all-important" and yet may still be of highest priority. It does not legislate against any other kind of meeting. But such relationships are already very helpful on the national level—both India and Nigeria have substantial national level offices linking dozens and dozens of mission agencies.

But, today more than ever people from India, for example, can be reached in the Silicon Valley not just in India. Overseas Indians are

one fifth of one percent of India's population but these 20 million people earn as much as the entire Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India.

Does it not make sense for agencies from different parts of our planet to compare notes about the majority of people groups which are today to be found in more than one part of the planet?

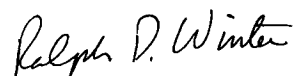
Closely related to the concept of a global mission network is Robert Blincoe's article on page 15. He pointedly stresses that vast democratic bodies of Christians in the form of denominations rarely take the risks of starting brand new work. Minority initiatives are the backbone of the history of missions. Yet, all over the world from Nigeria to Korea local mega-churches are confidently sending out missionaries on the assump-

tion that the role of veteran mission agencies are not necessary. One more reason for a global network of mission agencies.

The current, Vol 20:2, issue of the *International Journal of Frontier Missions* (www.ijfm.org) has far greater detail to offer on the present move toward a global network of mission agencies. To subscribe, send \$15 per year to Rory Clark, *IJFM* Managing Editor, 1539 E. Howard Street, Pasadena, CA 91104. Look at the sample issues below. Why not begin with volume 18 (half of what you see below) and get 18, 19, and 20 (which is for 2003). In that way you can follow many fascinating new frontiers in missions. Or, phone 626-296-7501 with your credit card handy and we will take your order over the phone. Do it. You will not regret it!

Ralph D. Winter 🌐

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Ralph D. Winter

P.S. Please see the end of my editorial above for subscription details and web site information.

18:1, Spring 2001 (partial list)

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Why Are Christians Persecuted in India? Roots, Reasons, Responses Herbert Hoefler *Why is violence increasing against believers in India and what opportunities does this situation hold?*

The Dalit Situation in India Today John C. B. Webster *Four strategies the oppressed peoples of India have adopted on their way to "Dalit solidarity."*

An Indian Constantine? Vishal Mangalwadi *Will history remember the Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax in New Delhi as India's Constantine?*

Fatal Hindu Gospel Stumbling Blocks D. D. Pani *Is our Western rights-orientation keeping Hindus from considering Christ?*

Message to the West: India Needs You! Satya Shodhak *Like Moses, the Church must help free the Dalits from Brahmin bondage.*

The Conversion Confusion Herbert Hoefler *Is it conversion—or church membership—that's the trouble in India?*

18:2, Summer 2001 (partial list)

Field-Governed Mission Structures in the Bible and throughout the Centuries

Part I: In the New Testament Joseph & Michele C. *What really happened in Acts 13?*

Part II: Patrick of Ireland and his Celtic Peregrini Successors Joseph & Michele C. *Did Patrick actually operate under a field-governed structure?* [Note: Parts III, IV, & V continue in 18:3 & 18:4.]

Frontier Missions and Beyond: An Emerging Paradigm for Missions in the 21st Century

Part I: The Frontier Mission Movement's Understanding of the Modern Mission Era Alan Johnson *Origins of the most momentous mutation in 20th century mission strategy!*

Part II: Major Concepts of the Frontier Mission Movement Alan Johnson *"Nothing said at Lausanne had more meaning for the expansion of Christianity between now and the year 2000."* [Note: Parts III, IV & V continue in 18:3.]

Christian Health Care and Holistic Mission Tetsunao Yamamori *Is the holistic question deeper than just clean water or getting people to heaven?*

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The Case for a Global Inter-Missions Network

Patrick Johnstone

Editor's Note

In my perspective, two keen people stand out at the global level today as the most influential in the cause of missions:

Patrick Johnstone, through his various books, especially Operation World, and Luis Bush, through his brilliant initiatives in the AD2000 movement and now his follow through country-level studies.

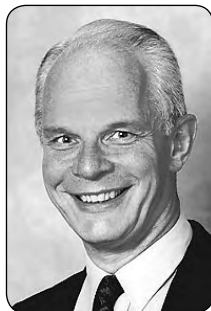
In this passionate statement Patrick gives a mass of vital reasons why it is bad that we are missing some sort of global network of precisely mission leaders.

In other correspondence he deplores the demise of the follow-through structure of Edinburgh 1980. Much of what is brilliantly envisioned in this preliminary document several years ago will be greatly helpful now as moves are made to bring a global network into existence.

Just how to do that has been further discussed a great deal. See the addendum to this document.

The last two hundred years of evangelical growth have been amazing. Evangelicals grew from 85 million in 1960 to 420 million in 2000, but the non-Western component rose from 30 million to 300 million over this period. There are four major strands that contributed to this growth—a growth which has accelerated over this period, peaking in the last 2–4 decades:

Patrick Johnstone has for many years headed research for Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (WEC), the mission founded by C.T. Studd, one of the famous "Cambridge Seven" athletes who became missionaries responding to Moody's speaking at Cambridge.



1. The modern missionary movement initiated by Carey and others.
2. The global world evangelization conferences of the past 40 years.
3. The massive increase of newer and indigenous church movements over the same period—often but not exclusively Pentecostal and Charismatic.
4. Missions becoming global in the last 20 years. According to our latest statistics for the new Operation World, almost exactly half of all national/international missionaries are non-Western. Korea has now become the second-largest sender of foreign missionaries.

My concern is for the lack of effective communication between the missions/apostolic and the other streams listed above.

The Marginalization of Missions in Church History

What has increasingly concerned me is a deficient ecclesiology among Evangelicals which has contributed to the lack of intertwining fellowship between these strands and a downplaying of the biblicality of the apostolic structures. This whole massive cycle of seed planting in the non-Western world and the resulting harvest has been an amazing success story of missionary activity. Yet, the apostolic or mission component in the Church has been downplayed, marginalized and even denigrated as "unbiblical" or "a temporary phenomenon because the Church was not doing the job". This is a re-run of church history which has been an oft-repeated "Kill the prophets and silence the apostles"! Many examples could be given, such as:

- The Early Church. How rapidly the first century Church—with apostles, prophets, evangelists,

pastors and teachers—changed into a 2nd century model of only pastors (and bishops!) and teachers. The apostolic and prophetic were eliminated.

- The Reformation, which rejected and even sought to destroy the prophetic and apostolic radical reformation of the best of the Anabaptists. This led to the nearly 300 years of Protestant passivism in missions.
- The Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 became the seed-bed for the World Council of Churches, which ultimately eliminated the International Missionary Council.
- The modern Evangelical movements, which rapidly move from a mission agenda to an increasingly church agenda. It must be added that this trend is positive in that the rapid growth of the Church requires such attention, but negative if the vital and biblical apostolic component is forgotten or marginalized.

Yet, if world evangelization is to be furthered—and even brought to conclusion—this global apostolic component must be given its rightful place in strategic planning and action in proclaiming the Gospel to the unreached. The problem is that no global (and few regional) mechanisms exist for effective networking among missions for sharing common concerns or for presenting a common voice in international mega-movements.

The Marginalization of Missions in Modern Evangelical Movements

For the past twenty years I have had the privilege of involvement in both the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) and the AD2000 and Beyond Movement, and therefore have been involved in a number of the global visionary

conferences in the years since 1966. One thing that has struck me is that, generally speaking, the major mission agencies have not had a high profile at best, and at worst have scarcely been consulted or involved. Most of the individuals who had a leadership role in international agencies that did participate, did so because of their expertise or gifting, not specifically as representative of their own agencies.

To give an example, the AD2000 and Beyond Movement drew together a remarkable and gifted group of activists with a vision for world evangelization. Some were leaders of key agencies with areas of specific expertise such as John Bendor-Samuel (Bible translation—Wycliffe Bible Translators), George Verwer (Mobilization—Operation Mobilization), Paul Eshleemann (Jesus Film—Campus Crusade for Christ, International), Patrick Johnstone (Unreached peoples—WEC), but each of these men were there as individuals, not because they represented the missions movement. My concern grew when I watched the emergence of the Great Commission Roundtable (GRC) initiative from 1999 onwards and realized that only a few mission leaders would be involved in the discussion (I could only identify 3 out of the 270 network representatives gathered in the recent conference in Malaysia).

I therefore initiated correspondence in the midst of the efforts to finalize the 2001 edition of *Operation World* to seek to address the problem. I found a varied reaction—from very positive to fairly negative—among the international leaders with whom I shared. I was grateful that John Robb, the convener of this series of discussions, circulated my letter of concern to all participants in the August 2001 gathering in Sweden.

A number of practical reasons could be given for this deficiency:

- Missions were too busy just getting on with the job to become involved in global talking jamborees. One only has to look at leaders involved in global events to realize how many large and significant mission agencies have not been present. Personal involvement of key motivators within mission structures would be needed for

global visions to be embraced at the field level.

- Mission leaders have enough problems of their own without exposing themselves to the problems of others. Many leaders are too busy and so involved in meetings and committees that yet other expense and foreign trips are not worth it unless there is sufficient “value added” throughput for the agencies themselves.
- The organizations sponsoring such conferences (such as the World Evangelical Alliance [WEA], Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, LCWE, and AD2000) were generally not specifically cross-culturally involved. The latter achieved a somewhat higher level

The problem is that there are no global and few regional mechanisms for effective networking among missions...

of agency involvement than earlier global networks. However, it must be added that much was achieved in envisioning the Church for missions through all of them, and this paper is not intended to be an implied criticism! I believe it is more a matter of lack of awareness of what has happened.

- The structure of WEA is such that though the Missions Commission has a very important role globally, the constituent members of WEA are more church- than mission-related. So, although the Missions Commission has done much in the conceptual and fellowship aspects of missions, it remains somewhat distant from the harvesters themselves. In fact, the Missions Commission is a very small body indeed, and is hardly able to be fully representative of mission agencies in global conferences in more than a very general way. One exception would be the valuable WEA conference on attrition of personnel in missions.

- The national Evangelical Alliances (or equivalent) that exist in many countries, while generally supportive of missions, have a national agenda which is more congregationally-oriented. Some have the equivalent of the British Evangelical Missionary Alliance (EMA) or the US's Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies (EFMA) that serves the interests of member missionary agencies. But even these bodies, though able to speak for mission agencies represented in their country, are not equipped to handle international issues.
- The almost complete lack of an international forum at the regional or global level where mission practitioners can discuss issues vital to their calling, or where a collective voice can be raised in the forums of evangelical Christians. One exception is COMIBAM in Latin America. Leaders such as Jerry Rankin of the International Mission Board (Southern Baptist) in the USA and Stanley Davies of Global Connections in the UK have also sought to facilitate such informal forums. At the Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE) in South Africa in 1997 there was a specific Conference track for mission executives, but many did not desire to see any continuing network and even sought to torpedo the idea. What a pity.

My concern is that because of this lack, the whole momentum for world evangelization has not been as it could have been. We need the activists involved in pioneer outreach to be warmly appreciated and accepted as a vital component for world evangelization.

Towards a Reintegration of Missions into Global Movements

We are now in a state of flux as the torch of world evangelization is being passed on by AD2000, etc. to something new which we want to see emerge in and for the 21st Century. Is not this the point when we make an effort to correct this deficiency by encouraging a new network of networks as envisaged in the discussions between LCWE, WEA and AD2000

in 1999 and initiated by the GCR in Malaysia and Sweden since then?

For any such network to function it needs to be:

- Gathered round a visionary statement related to the fulfilment of the Great Commission.
- An informal structure with minimal extra expenses.
- Of value as a meeting point or forum for discussion and representation.

What would be the objectives of such a network? It would basically provide a regional or global forum for both discussion of international issues of mutual concern and also act as a voice in international gatherings to ensure adequate representation and two-way communication. It would have no legislative or directive power. It would also need a commonly agreed doctrinal position (e.g., WEA Statement of Faith, Lausanne Covenant).

What would be the practical value in such a network?

It could be:

- a mechanism for international sharing of resources, research results, experience and information;
- a forum for consultation for newer missions; and
- a forum for inter-mission consultation about starting new fields.

It could address such issues as:

- Effective deployment of personnel—secondments, partnering, etc.
- Providing field entry, stay and evacuation co-operation.
- Member Care.
- How best to help in MK issues.
- Ministry issues—church planting, social ministries, NGO/tentmaking, health issues (especially AIDS, TB, malaria).
- Church-mission relationships.
- Coping with Christian tourism, short term ministries, direct sending churches, etc.

While we praise God for all the value given through international discussions involving missions concerns (such as definition of unreached peoples, contextualization, the gospel

and social concern, missiological issues, etc.), the practical issues that directly affect operational issues are what concern many mission agencies. For example, no mechanism exists on a global level (and only rudimentary

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ones at the regional level) to address the following scenarios:

- A Norwegian mission looking for a new field in Africa.
- A Korean agency desiring a partnering or entry strategy for a new field.
- African missions struggling to cope with draconian legislation which prevents funding of their international operations.
- The lack of common policy on crisis management—such as in the evacuation of a field in an emergency.
- The sharing of costs and personnel to set up a viable inter-mission MK school in Africa.
- Finding out key information on a specific unreached people that is found in more than one region.

So we need something simple, practical and global in scope, but often regional in operation.

A Proposed Starting Mechanism

It is better to start small and lean, yet with mechanisms for growth as its value is perceived and felt needs met.

I therefore suggest that we need to:

- Establish a focal point with a small email-based committee of those mission leaders already involved in leadership roles in international bodies.
- Specifically involve the larger evangelical mission agencies of around 500 workers or more which recruit and deploy workers from and in multiple countries. The reason for this is that national missions with a single field of operation will usually be effectively served and represented

by their national networks. It is the international missions who have no meaningful means of intercommunication.

• Set up a communications tool. The best model could be BRIGADA, but with a circulation largely comprised of middle and upper leadership of international missions. This would do several things:

- Provide interactive news from mission agencies—not publicity, but the information fitting for a mission executive.
- Provide addresses for more specialist e-discussion groups and for key resource people.
- Act as a clearing house for mission executive inquirers.
- Become a contact point for international mission events.
- Give a mechanism for commonly agreed public statements or communication with global and regional networks.

A specific regional or global conference would be arranged only as and when it felt right and met a specific felt need. Such a conference could well be planned to piggy-back other larger events.

Summary

I hereby propose that we initiate as soon as possible an informal network mechanism for the leadership of mission agencies with international recruitment which could be linked by means of an e-zine for information and email forum(s) for discussion.

Addendum: How To Get Started

It is perfectly reasonable to consider Patrick's reasoned statement a "motion" to proceed. Most of this issue of Mission Frontiers can be considered a serious "second" to that motion. The Singapore '02 conference also constitutes an impressive "second" to Patrick's motion.

A letter is going to all of the 212 Singapore participants inviting them to come together in a fairly brief meeting to issue a formal Call, what we are calling The Third Call.

If you are a mission leader, would you want to be part of that meeting? You are invited. Respond to thirdcall332211@aol.com. 🌐

How Did The Edinburgh 1980 Conference Come Into Being?

Ralph D. Winter

Editor's Note

The reason for presenting a highly condensed statement from something written back in 1980 is to illuminate the steps now being taken to call a similar meeting for 2004.

The original article, entitled "Precarious Milestones to 1980," was first published in the Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 1980. It has recently been republished in IJFM 20:2 (April-June 2003).

A Southern Baptist missionary, Luther Copeland, as the outgoing President of the (U.S.) Association of Professors of Mission (APM) in June of 1972 made the original proposal as a part of his presidential address. This was out of the blue. But winds were stirring.

R. Pierce Beaver, surely one of the world's greatest historical misanthropologists, provided the organizing wisdom for a Consultation on Frontier Peoples in December of the same year. This could have underscored the value and feasibility of the Copeland proposal, pulling together as it did representatives of ninety United States missions of all stripes, and creating a solid book, *The Gospel and Frontier Peoples*. But it may have influenced the writer of this review more than anyone else.

In June of 1973, at the following meeting of the APM, the writer made a small presentation in effect "seconding" the Copeland proposal. There was still little noticeable response.

In June 1974, however, when the Association of Professors of Mission met at Wheaton, virtually everyone present participated in the Copeland led discussion, which developed a statement of a "Call" for the 1980 meeting. Here are the words:

It is suggested that a World Missionary Conference be convened in 1980 to confront contemporary issues in Christian world missions. The conference should be constituted by

persons committed to crosscultural missions, broadly representative of the missionary agencies of the various Christian traditions on a world basis.

A few days later at the International Congress on World Evangelization meeting at Lausanne, Switzerland, a group of about forty gathered in a side meeting to discuss the now public Call.

Copeland, in a 1973 article noted, "a programme of the [WCC] Commission on World Mission and Evangelism is inevitably limited by virtue of the fact that vast reaches of the missionary enterprise in terms of agencies and churches are not affiliated with CWME." The 1974 Call does not envision that kind of initiative but retains the 1910 reliance on the initiative of the mission agencies themselves.

In late 1975 a detailed summary of events going back to 1910, and an analysis of the 1974 Call, was the work of this writer, appearing in the April 1976 issue of *Missiology, an International Review*. The gist of this article is that the Call deliberately chooses the same name as the 1910 conference, and defines the same all-important uniqueness of its constituency: mission agency representatives, whether denominational or interdenominational.

In the fall of 1976 the writer (on an unrelated trip to Korea) was invited to the Hong Kong meeting of the Executive Committee of the Asia Mission Association, at which time those six key leaders present from all over Asia favorably discussed the 1974 Call and added some wisdom of their own, which became part of later plans, as we shall see below.

In 1977 both the World Council's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) decided to launch world level conferences in 1980. It was pointed out by the latter that the

1974 Call (employing the original name used in 1910 World Missionary Conference) could too easily become confused with the LCWE meeting unless it was changed. This was a helpful impetus, because the passage of time since 1910 had so extensively modified the meaning of the words "mission" and "missionary" that the use of the same title would no doubt have failed to carry forward the sharpened focus of the earlier conference. Thus "World Consultation on Frontier Missions" was finally adopted. But I am getting ahead of myself.

In 1978 the backing for the conference was still completely ad hoc. Suddenly, with the full momentum of the Lausanne Congress tradition behind the Pattaya meeting, and a full-time coordinator, David Howard, appointed, it became necessary on occasion to defend the very existence of the Edinburgh 1980 meeting. This has not been difficult. Edinburgh '80 (E80) and Pattaya '80 (P80) have different sponsorship, goals, and constituencies.

E80 is not sponsored by any previously existing organization. It enjoys the favor of a number of existing agencies, associations, commissions, and so forth, but is sponsored precisely by an ad hoc group of mission agencies, as was the 1910 meeting, and as defined in the 1974 Call. P80 is the successor to the Berlin 1966, Lausanne 1974, and LCWE sponsored series of meetings. Furthermore, the mission agencies convening E80 have established a credentials committee, which may under certain circumstances (see below) turn down missions expressing an interest in participating. By contrast, no one applies to P80, and individuals, not organizations, are invited.

P80 will involve a spectrum of scholars and leaders from both church and mission (as equals) and will concentrate on the identification of Unreached Peoples and Hidden

Peoples (*see Editor's Note) and the best strategies for reaching them.

E80 will be a conference of representatives, sent as delegates strictly from mission agencies, and the implementation of what is studied and strategized at P80 will be in order. The mission agencies, after all, must take the implementing lead in the actual development of plans (as contrasted to strategies) and the commitment of funds and personnel. Of twenty-two missions in Norway at this writing, only two have had any of their people invited to P80. All twenty two will be welcome at E80, and some of them can send more than one delegate, in proportion to their size.

Just as the LCWE regional committees themselves are primarily church, not mission, leaders, so the choice of P80 invitees is primarily in the hands of church, not mission, leaders. This does not mean that P80 will not invite any mission leaders. Furthermore, not all can be invited. For example, invitees related to only 12 mission agencies of the 100 in the United Kingdom will be going to Pattaya. All could apply for attendance at E80.

But rather than considering all these matters an unfortunate contrast, the writer would prefer to see them as a providential convergence. For P80 to stir up the church world about missionary frontiers is entirely complementary and foundational to the work of E80. In turn, E80 will allow the crosscultural outreach structures to further plan and deploy forces to new Unreached People groups, and can gratefully build on the new mood of outreach among the churches created by P80. If also the WCC-CWM sponsored meeting in May 1980 at Melbourne (M80) functions in somewhat the same way as P80, then we can see a great deal of good deriving from Copeland's 1972 proposal, his 1973 article, the 1974 Call, and the three nonconflicting meetings resulting: E80, P80, M80.

At this writing (late 1979) so many details have been settled with regard to Edinburgh 1980 that space does not allow for all the particulars. Precise organizational and theological "participation criteria" have been laid

down and specific goals and objectives have been developed. An elaborate set of committees has been defined, and different national and regional committees are forming and stepping forward to shoulder the various roles.

As might have been expected, the first initiative outside the United States was British, but the largest and most auspicious committee outside the United States is, at this date, in Korea. These same committees' representatives compose an International Council of Reference, which will function without actually meeting. A central office in Pasadena, California, established by the first regional committee to form, has a full-time office manager, Leiton Chinn, who has performed efficiently and sensitively from the moment his mission (ISI) offered his services.

E80 has chosen Edinburgh partially for historic reasons, but has turned away from any non-Western site primarily for reasons of economics. The overall cost of convening a world meeting, especially when there is still a slight majority of mission agency headquarters in the West, is smaller for a gathering somewhere near the Frankfurt-Geneva-London triangle, and in the case of this meeting, as befits mission societies, expenses are definitely to be minimized. A travel pool will "level" all travel costs, everyone ending up paying approximately the same amount. This way those coming from a great distance will be aided by a sizable fund created by a substantial registration fee that will not only cover consultation expenses but provide financial assistance to those coming from a distance. One of the early decisions of the first committee in Pasadena, made in consultation with the host leaders in Scotland, was to define the conference as Protestant Evangelical and, in addition, to adopt verbatim a statement drawn for the discussion of the Executive Meeting of the Asia Mission Association in Hong Kong, in a section called "Theological Criteria for Participation." Added also was the phrase "agencies that are in agreement with the tenets of the Statements of Belief of the IFMA or the EFMA or the Lausanne Covenant."

The first of six objectives of E80 speaks of, and centers the conference upon, "the world's 'Hidden Peoples': those cultural and linguistic sub-groups, urban or rural, for whom there is as yet no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize their own people."

For many people this kind of meeting is "out of due time." It seems anachronistic precisely because of the extensive trend in the past thirty years to the belief that, now that there are churches overseas, the mission agency structure itself is no longer needed.

To be sure, for a few rare people the situation is rather different: it is a case where Western missions need to be sensitive to the rise of Third World missions, and for this rare group it is reassuring that E80 welcomes mission societies from all parts of the world.

But for a considerably larger group of people, and for a still different reason, it is also startling to see such a meeting promoted this late in history. The conscientious opinion of people in this large group is that pioneer mission societies are no longer needed, and that church departments or councils that lend interchurch workers are all that are needed.

Such observers have not yet recognized the fact that fully 80 percent of all nonChristians live in subsocieties in which there is not yet an indigenous church tradition to which workers can be sent, and that to reach into these 16,750 remaining pockets will require mission agencies from somewhere employing essentially pioneer missionary techniques, not normal, culturally near-neighbor outreach evangelism.

Fortunately for the 1980 WCFM, enough agencies have in fact discovered the "new" world of Hidden Peoples (*see Editor's Note), long invisible to the average outsiders who tend not to take subtle cultural differences seriously. Pattaya 1980 will throw a great deal of light on the subject; perhaps Melbourne 1980 will as well. Edinburgh 1980 can be the ideal complement: to clarify the key administrative decisions that will move from facts, strategies, and dreams to plans, bold moves, and realities. ☉

* in 1982 these terms were agreed on as synonymous

An Introduction to a Call That Didn't Work

After many startling and unusual accomplishments in America, Scotland and England, D.L. Moody consented to hosting the annual Northfield Conferences, held right in the little town of his birth in Western Massachusetts. Thousands attended. The third year this conference was held, in 1885, the theme of missions came up and A. T. Pierson was asked to speak on that subject at the evening meeting.

As he poured out his soul, citing reasonable statistics to base his challenge that “believers everywhere” get busy and try to complete the Great Commission by the Year 1900, his words were apparently so impelling that Moody, a huge, fidgety man jumped up at the precise moment when Pierson said it ought to be done by the year 1900, and waved for approval from the crowd. The roar of response was so great he appointed a committee of six which worked for three days to produce a remarkable document, “An Appeal to Disciples Everywhere.”

One of the signers, J. E. K. Studd, the older brother of the famous cricketer and missionary C. T. Studd, and later to become Mayor of London, went from this conference to stump U.S. colleges for missions, snaring John R. Mott at Cornell for the 1886 student conference again under Moody and Pierson which formulated the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions.

And, a year later, in 1886, this document was published as part of a widely read book by Pierson. The next year, 1887, it turned up in a ponderous volume published in England by the China Inland Mission (today the Overseas Missionary Fellowship). The very next year what this document calls for actually transpired—the largest mission conference ever held up to that time, in London, where the whole world was in the picture.

But, “believers everywhere” did not respond. The reasonable challenge (note Pierson’s calculations) was only partially met. Lavish parties often run by Evangelicals characterized the U.S. in the following “gay nineties” and while some made great effort, others satisfied themselves with a new slogan which had no date attached: “the evangelization of the world in this generation.”

Even so, the largest single surge forward to the ends of the earth did in fact take place in the years following this remarkable “heavenly vision,” due in great part to a different type of meeting.

Yes, the surge was paralleled by American expansionist political sentiments. Sure, Americans had already consolidated their hold on gold-rich California, and would in a few months thrust their way to the North Pacific to keep Canada out of what is now Washington and Oregon, moving clear out into the Pacific to grab Guam, Western Samoa and the Philippines.

But a careful reading of the record shows that the key student leaders, like John R. Mott, did not build on that wave. On the eve of the U.S. invasion of Cuba he announced to a Student Volunteer Movement convention that “the war WE fight cuts through every nation and family and individual heart...”

However, as described in the “Granddaddy Meeting” article on p. 13, that same former student mission leader, Mott, witnessed the strategic value of field meetings of mission leaders in China and then in India. He suddenly became convinced that a similar world level meeting strictly of mission agency leaders was needed, and within 24 months, with his wide following, set it up for 1910 in Edinburgh.

We will let words from Latourette describe that event. That we are calling “The First Call.” *Editor*

An Appeal To Disciples Everywhere

Issued by
the Northfield Convention
(August 14, 1885)

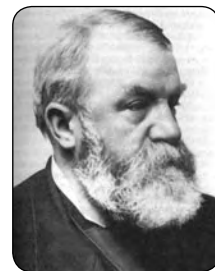
To Fellow believers of every name, scattered throughout the world, Greeting:

Assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with one accord, in one place, we have continued for ten days in prayer and supplication, communing with one another about the common salvation, the blessed hope, and the duty of witnessing to a lost world.

It was near to our place of meeting that, in 1747, at Northampton, Jonathan Edwards sent forth his trumpet-peal, calling upon disciples everywhere to unite the whole habitable globe. That summons to prayer marks a new era and epoch in the history of the church of God.

You can hardly imagine a more illustrious committee document.

D. L. Moody (pictured) who appointed the group and worked with it did not sign it. Probably no one in U.S. history has had greater spiritual influence. A. T. Pierson and A. J. Gordon were the two most famous mission promoters in that era. J. E. K. Studd, deriving from Moody's Cambridge breakthrough, at Moody's request stumped U.S. colleges attracting hundreds, including John R. Mott, into missions. Studd was the older brother of the famous missionary C. T. Studd (who founded Patrick Johnstone's mission, WEC). J. E. K. Studd later became mayor of the City of London.



Praying bands began to gather in this and other lands; mighty revivals of religion followed; immorality and infidelity were wonderfully checked; and, after more than fifteen hundred years of apathy and lethargy, the spirit of missions was reawakened. In 1784, the monthly concert was begun, and in 1792, the first missionary society formed in England; in 1793, William Carey, the pioneer missionary, sailed for India. Since then, one hundred missionary boards have been organized, and probably not less than one hundred thousand missionaries, including women, have gone forth into the harvest-field. The Pillar has moved before these humble laborers, and the two-leaved gates have opened before them, until the whole world is now accessible. The ports and portals of Pagan, Moslem, and even Papal lands are now unsealed, and the last of the hermit nations welcomes the missionary. Results of missionary labor in the Hawaiian and Fiji Islands, in Madagascar, in Japan, probably have no parallel even in apostolic days; while even Pentecost is surpassed by the ingathering of ten thousand converts in one mission station in India within sixty days, in the year 1878. The missionary bands had scarce compassed the walls and sounded the gospel trumpet, when those walls fell and we have but to march straight on and take possession of Satan's strongholds.

(God has thus, in answer to prayer, opened the door of access to the nations.) Out of the Pillar there comes once more a voice, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." And yet the church of God is slow to move in response to the providence of God. Nearly a thousand millions of the human race are yet without the Gospel; vast districts are wholly unoccupied. So few are the laborers, that, if equally dividing responsibility, each must care for at least one hundred thousand souls. And yet there is abundance of both men and means in the church to give the Gospel to every living soul before

this century closes. If but ten millions, out of four hundred millions of nominal Christians, would undertake such systematic labor as that each one of that number should, in the course of the next fifteen years, reach one hundred other souls with the Gospel message, the whole present population of the globe would have heard the good tidings by the year 1900!

Our Lord's own words are, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations;" and, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Peter exhorts us both to "look for and hasten the coming of the day of God;" and what if our inactivity delays His coming? Christ is waiting to "see of the travail of His soul;" and we are impressed that two things are just now of great



"The Mount Hermon One Hundred in 1886"

importance: first, the immediate occupation and evangelization of every destitute district of the earth's population; and, secondly, a new effusion of the Spirit in answer to united prayer.

If at some great centre like London or New York, a great council of evangelical believers could meet, to consider the wonder-working of God's providence and grace in mission fields, and how fields now unoccupied may be insured from further neglect, and to arrange and adjust the work so as to prevent needless waste and friction among workmen, it might greatly further the glorious object of a world's evangelization; and we earnestly commend the suggestion to the prayerful consideration of the various bodies of organizations. What a spectacle it would present both to angels and

men, could believers of every name, forgetting all things in which they differ, meet, by chosen representatives, to enter systematically and harmoniously upon the work of sending forth laborers into every part of the world-field!

But, above all else, our immediate and imperative need is a new spirit of earnest and prevailing prayer. The first Pentecost crowned ten days of united, continued supplication. Every subsequent advance may be directly traced to believing prayer, and upon this must depend a new Pentecost. We therefore earnestly appeal to all fellow-disciples to join us and each other in importunate daily supplication for a new and mighty effusion of the Holy Spirit upon all ministers, missionaries, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and Christian workers, and upon the whole earth; that God would impart to all Christ's

witnesses the tongues of fire, and melt hard hearts before the burning message. It is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, that all true success must be secured. Let us call upon God till He answereth by fire! What we are to do for the salvation of the lost must be done quickly; for the generation is passing away, and we with it. Obedient to our marching orders, let us "go into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,"

while from our very hearts we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

Done in convention at Northfield, Mass., August 14, 1885, D. L. Moody presiding.

Committee:

- Arthur T. Pierson, Philadelphia, Presbyterian, Chairman.
- A. J. Gordon, Boston, Baptist.
- L. W. Munhall, Indianapolis, Methodist.
- Geo. F. Pentecost, Brooklyn, N. Y., Congregationalist.
- William Ashmore, Missionary to Swatow, China, Baptist.
- J. E. Studd, London, England, Church of England.
- Miss E. Dryer, Chicago Avenue Church. ☉

The First Call

The Granddaddy Meeting: 1910

Kenneth Scott Latourette

The following is from *A History of Christianity* by Kenneth Scott Latourette, pp. 1343-1345 (Harper & Brothers, 1953).

The most notable in the succession of the international, interdenominational assemblies was the World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh in 1910. It became a landmark in the history of the Ecumenical Movement, for it influenced profoundly some of the most important developments of the next forty or more years. In several ways it was in contrast with its predecessors and was an advance beyond them.

First, it was more strictly a delegated body, made up of official representatives of the missionary societies. Second, it was a deliberative body, seeking to formulate policy for the years ahead. While it possessed no legislative authority, it could suggest, and because it was composed of leaders of the various societies there was reason to hope that its recommendations would be followed by action. In the third place, as a preliminary to the deliberations prolonged and extensive studies were made of the several aspects of the missionary en-

terprise and in their preparation hundreds of correspondents were enlisted in many different parts of the world,

later, the International Missionary Council emerged. In the sixth place, the Edinburgh gathering also was in part responsible for the two organizations, the World Conference on Faith and Order and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, the two bodies which, after 1914, merged to form the World Council of Churches.

A seventh feature of major significance was the fashion in which "Edinburgh 1910" either brought to the fore or enlisted men who were to have an outstanding part in the growth of the Ecumenical Movement. John R. Mott was active in the preparations for the confer-

ence, presided at most of its sessions, and became the chairman of the Continuation Committee and then of the International Missionary Council. By deliberate choice, the Edinburgh conference confined its attention to missions to non-Christians and therefore did not in-

clude Protestant missions among the Roman Catholics in Latin America. As an eighth result of the gathering, some who believed that this huge area should be covered in cooperative fashion in 1913 had the Foreign Missions Conference of North America call a meeting from which emerged the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, a body which was to have a notable history. ☉



John R. Mott

thus stimulating widespread thought. In the fourth place, the gathering was more comprehensive ecclesiastically than its predecessors. The latter had, in general, enlisted only Evangelicals. At Edinburgh several Anglo-Catholics were present and took part. Moreover, members of what later came to be called "the younger churches," namely, those founded by eighteenth and nineteenth century Protestant missions, while few, were prominent. Of first-class importance, in the fifth place, was the fact that provision was made for carrying forward the work of the gathering. A Continuation Committee was appointed. Through it conferences were held in 1912 and 1913 in various centres in Asia preparatory to more permanent cooperative bodies, a comprehensive scholarly journal, *The International Review of Missions*, was inaugurated, and, after 1914, as we are to see

Of importance, was the fact that provision was made for carrying forward the work of the gathering.

Latourette felt compelled by the Student Volunteer Movement. He went to China, got terribly sick (kerosene is not an effective cure for dysentery), came home with broken health and broken faith, revived, became, as a Yale professor, the foremost church and mission historian of all time.



Still Two Structures After All These Years

Robert A. Blincoe

Some of church history's greatest pioneers—Samuel Zwemer, Mother Teresa, William Carey—did not wait to get permission before they started new mission structures. They began, attracted others to the task, and only subsequently were they honored for their leadership. Samuel Zwemer, the first American missionary to Arabia, was told by the Reformed



Samuel Zwemer Mission and sailed to what is Bahrain today. Four years later the Reformed Church adopted Zwemer as its missionary (and it cost the denomination not a penny!). Today's new denominations—Vineyard, People of Destiny, Calvary Chapel—as well as older, mainline churches should look for pioneers who are already working “without permission” to accomplish tasks that congregations have never done well.

Even television's Mister Rogers, it turns out, first started a public

broadcasting company—a kind of mission structure—and then went to seminary so that Fred Rogers could be ordained by the Presbyterian Church to continue what he was already doing!

Today's denominations should look for pioneers who are already working “without permission” to accomplish tasks that congregations have never done well.

Denominational governments should monitor these upstart “task” structures, in the same way that state governments monitor private industry. These two in combination—denominational government and private enterprise (mission agency)—are the “two structures of God's redemptive mission” that Dr. Ralph Winter identified more than three decades ago.² A task structure (mission agency) registers with and reports to the government structure. Tension between the two is normative, but this is not to say that they work at cross-purposes. A mission agency (Habitat for Humanity, the American Bible Society, Youth with a Mission) turns out a “product,” while a denominational government (Presbyterian, Baptist, Calvary Chapel) has the task of monitoring “quality control.” (Of course, mission agencies are responsible to monitor themselves as well; hence their membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, annual audits, et cetera.)

We can learn a lesson from the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholics, famously centralized, permit their entrepreneurial members to begin structures and attract

bands of men and women to do good works. Consider, for example, Mother Teresa's mission order: Mother Teresa founded her order in 1948, and Pope Pius XII subsequently sanctioned it in 1950.

Luther and the 250 Years of Silence

Because Luther dismantled the church's monastic structures—Franciscans, Dominicans, and his own order,

the Augustinians—the Lutheran church had no means for mission to the non-Christian world. Luther believed in the proclamation of the gospel for all the world, but that is the whole point: without the voluntary structures Luther could do “exceedingly little” to put his belief into practice.³

Calvin as well dismantled the Catholic monastic structures, and like Luther ended up with no means to move his message beyond the Christianized world. It was not that Protestants did not traverse land and sea; they did, for profit. Catholic missionaries, meanwhile, for the sake of the Great Commission pushed the limits of knowledge and exploration until they reached India, China, Japan, Vietnam, Africa, the South Seas, and the Americas.

A Jesuit historian, Johann Baergert, writing in the 1790s, said in effect, “We know why the Protestants are heretics: *because they have no missions.*” The problem preventing some Protestant denominations from “making disciples among all the ethne” is not theological but structural. If the governing powers (“grow the church where it is”) do not permit and monitor the pioneer

Robert A. Blincoe is general director of the Presbyterian Order for World Evangelization, which has been reporting to the Presbyterian Church (USA) since 1969. He is also U. S. Director of Frontiers.





William Carey

missionaries to “grow the church where it is not” then God will find other ways and other structures to complete His task of world evangelization.

We owe to William Carey the recovery of the means of apostolic church-planting. Here is Carey’s original proposal:⁴

Suppose a company of serious Christians, ministers and private persons, were to form themselves into a society, and make a number of rules respecting the regulation of the plan, and the persons who are to be employed as missionaries, the means of defraying the expense, etc., etc. This society must consist of persons whose hearts are in the work, men of serious religion, and possessing a spirit of perseverance; there must be a determination not to admit any person who is not of this description, or to retain him longer than he answers to it.

So Carey and thousands of serious Christians have formed themselves into societies. It was as though the Holy Spirit had been blowing past the Protestants, who had to hoist small sails to catch the divine wind. Those sails are the missionary structures of the church.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Remarks by Dr. John Beardslee, New Brunswick Seminary, April 1989 at the Arabia Mission Centennial.
2 Winter, Ralph D. "The Two Structures of Gods Redemptive Mission," reprinted in Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, William Carey Library, 1999.
3 Luther's attitude was at least partly due to unfavorable circumstances, which James Scherer states as: a desperate shortage of preachers at home; no Protestant monastic orders; preoccupation with the Protestant struggle for existence in Europe; and lack of contacts with non-Christian lands and peoples (Anderson 1998:416).
4 Reprinted in Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, p. 299, 1999 edition.

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Baeger, Johann 1771 Observations in Lower California. University of California at Berkeley. Reprinted 1952
Carey, William 1792 "An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens," reprinted in Perspectives on the World Christian Movement (1999) William Carey Library: Pasadena, CA

The above brief taste of a longer article by Bob Blincoe article can be found complete in the International Journal of Frontier Missions, 19:1. See the end of my editorial on page 5 for details on how to get this journal and, at the bottom of the page, the contents of some sample past issues. RDW, Editor.



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A catalyst among God's people, for His glory in all peoples.

How the World Inquiry Began!

Luis Bush

Between July 2001 and March 2003 thousands of Christian leaders from more than six hundred cities heard stories from their colleagues of “God-at-work” in their cities and countries, then pondered in small groups the challenges, opportunities towards what they sensed God was calling them to in the twenty-first century.

One hundred twenty Christian leaders and scholars will gather in Seoul, Korea, May 7 to 9, 2003 as the World Inquiry International Coalition, to carry out a mid-course assessment of the preliminary findings and ongoing process of the World Inquiry.

How did the World Inquiry begin?

The World Inquiry, short for Evangelizing our World Inquiry, started out as an exercise to probe the minds and hearts of evangelical leaders in the major cities of the world. The Inquiry began and has continued not as a rigorous, methodologically driven research project, but rather a “listening venture” that seeks to tune-in to God’s voice through his people, especially those voices and leaders who are now emerging onto their local, regional and national scenes in the Two-Thirds World.

In the last months of the AD2000 Movement (AD2000) an abiding question was: Where do we go from here in world evangelization? The encouragement of my fifteen-year accountability group led me to reflect on this question through a doctoral study at Fuller School of World Mission. While looking through the lenses of the Scriptures, theology, missiologists, church history, global mission conferences, Christian leadership, etc.—it soon became clear that the focus of the dissertation

Luis Bush is the former International Director of the AD2000 Movement, and is one of the foremost leaders in the mission world. He now heads the World Inquiry project.



“Catalysts of World Evangelization” would more appropriately be on informing The Question, rather than seeking to provide answers.

In the process I observed that certain catalytic impulses of world evangelization are constant, including a God-given purpose, renewal as a means, conferences leading to structures and human leaders as agents. The study

The Inquiry began and has continued not as a rigorous, methodologically driven research project, but rather a “listening venture”

of catalytic antecedents of today’s mission, plus review of AD2000 as an institutional and contextual framework of mission gave preparation for the final

section, which anticipates future mission directions by means of an inquiry process.

The Evangelizing Our World Inquiry compresses the reflective process into a practical instrument. It seeks to become a tool for listening to voices that can help construct a missiology capable of empowering the global church for participation in God’s mission

for the twenty-first century. As we listen to one another and seek God through his Word to hear “what the Spirit is saying to the church,” we can expect a fresh missiology to emerge that both deepens and extends our witness through the gospel.

From early on, the faculty of the School of World Mission and Fuller President’s Cabinet have greatly served this World Inquiry, providing advice at various stages of the research, design and conduct of the inquiry process. It is being conducted in collaboration with the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, with a view to a presentation of the Inquiry findings at the World Evangelization Issues Forum, sponsored by Lausanne in Thailand in 2004.

[To order the dissertation go to <http://www.lib.umi.com/dxweb/search> and enter 3050032 in the “order number” box.]

...we can expect a fresh missiology to emerge that both deepens and extends our witness through the gospel.



Clarifying Changes in a Key Latin American University

I'm concerned by some of the casual information provided in the article written

by Dr. Joel Carpenter, "The New Evangelical Universities" (Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 6). The words "and a collegiate venture that the Church of the Nazarene started in 1992 from a pre-existing theological school, but then abandoned", in reference to the Universidad Evangélica de las Américas (UNELA), caused me distress because: 1) There was not such abandonment, but rather a legal and ethical issue that needed to be dealt with; 2) the way how the words are played ("venture" and "abandoned") does not make justice to the denomination efforts and the investment made by her in the theological education endeavor for the entirety of the evangelical church, both in the world and in Costa Rica. 3) I was a key player in working with the leadership of the evangelical church in Costa Rica to transfer "Universidad Nazarena" (the first two letters of UNELA were kept as a reflection of the negotiation that took place) to UNELA. 4) Seminario Nazareno de las Américas (SENDAS) has been more than a "collegiate venture" by the denomination. Without interruption, in its 40 yrs of existence or so, today is more active than ever before in preparing at university level hundreds of ministerial students in the 20 countries of Latin America. As a key instrument to that end, I am very pleased that UNELA exists to fulfill a very important task in God's kingdom. And I am also pleased that a Nazarene professional and ordained minister is the head of UNELA.

In Christ,
Mario J. Zani, Director
School of World Mission
and Evangelism
Nazarene Theological Seminary

Response to "Debt and Training"

I couldn't agree with you (Further Reflections March-April 2003) more that college debt is one of the major factors preventing students from actually getting to the field after catching the vision in college. My wife graduated from a major Christian college with about \$50,000 in school loans. Because we knew that getting overseas was a major priority, we decided that all our financial decisions would be made in light of that goal. Therefore, both of us got jobs out of college and we chose a purposefully simple lifestyle. We bought a used car, a small apartment, didn't eat out a lot, etc. In addition, we decided to use 100% of her salary (after tithing) for debt repayment. As a result, we were able to pay off our debt in less than two years!!!

"Joe"

Will Donors Support Needed Programs?

Today I was pleased to read in the most recent issue of *Mission Frontiers* [the] article, "Pitfalls of Student Selection in Leadership Training in Russia." I just wanted you to know that I think that it was the best written article in that issue and that I agree with everything that you say in it. Of the four reasons in your partial list, I think that the first is still the main problem. Most "residential" programs of theological education and ministry training are not accessible to those who are actually leading the churches in Russia as pastors and missionaries.

However, I would add another reason to the "short list": potential donors (i.e., individual Christians, churches, and foundations) are mostly indifferent to supporting seriously the kinds of strategies and programs that could/would make such education accessible to those who need it but cannot get it. Therefore, serious ministries of theological education and ministry to church leaders that have families, jobs and ongoing local ministry responsibilities (and so cannot make the time for study in a regular daytime/residential program) are unable to expand and continue to have only a limited impact....)

I cannot say how it is in other fields, but church leadership training is still the main need of the church in Russia. As long as that need is essentially unmet, there will be only a limited fulfillment of the Great Commission among most of the unreached people groups to be found within the borders of the Russian Federation. ...

Chuck Schwarz
Director for Russia
Biblical Education by Extension
International

Rethinking Western Influences in Japan and Africa

I'm writing to question a point you make in two separate articles in a recent [Jan-Feb 03] *Mission Frontiers*. It has to do with your use of Japan as an illustration of how the problem of non-growth is that the Western garb of the gospel was never exchanged for the indigenous way of looking at things.

I question the thesis in two ways, unless you have a large amount of data not evident here. The first problem is that my decade-long study of Japanese values and culture led me to believe that much that inhibited growth was precisely the opposite of what you say. Japanese church life from structure to expectations is so thoroughly Japanese I sometimes despair. I can document the cultural patterns that seem to me to inhibit growth--both in society and in the church. The other problem--and I have to leave this one to you since your knowledge and insight are so vast--if the thesis is correct, what's with Africa? Now there's a church that has totally adopted Western ways of doing church, and a church that has grown phenomenally. How does that figure?

Why do I hassle you with this? Since this approach to missiology seems to be one of your "biggies" coming on line, I'd like for it to be based on more than Japan's example, which seems to me flaws your thesis. Your thesis--like so many of your innovations through the years--may prove to be helpful. But it may need refining if not re-thinking.

Robertson McQuilkin
Columbia, SC



Presenting Ourselves to the World

Rethinking how we talk about ourselves and our message.

Greg H. Parsons



With the “loss of innocence” in the West since September 11, those who work in almost any part of the world realize things are different. Even if things haven’t changed much, they easily could. While many in the States go on now as if nothing has changed—and wish inside that nothing will—most mission fields will never be the same for Americans.

So what should we do differently? Recently, several emails have circulated warnings about secular journalists who are in the Muslim world reporting on current events and writing up articles about evangelicals working in those areas. Already, several have been published in both magazines and newspapers—including the Wall Street Journal.

This is both sobering and exciting. It is exciting because we realize that we have brothers and sisters that have been sent out into these sometimes remote, difficult places. Often, the only outsiders in the country are missionaries. I remember a few years ago CNN was reporting on a crisis that occurred in a remote area. The only person in the area who could be interviewed was an American missionary. Fortunately, he didn’t call himself that, and wasn’t known as that.

What may be necessary is a new way of thinking and talking about what we are doing. We need to get away from some of the jargon that



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission. He’s been on staff at the USCWM for 20 years.

has developed around the mission world. Since the Bible doesn’t use the word missionary per se, we certainly don’t need to be tied to this. Of course, many missions have already recognized this. In several countries, it is a well known fact among all those serving in the region, that there are no “missionaries” there, just “workers”! Back in their churches, they are still known as missionaries, and I’m sure that many in the church would not understand it if you had a “workers” prayer board in your church lobby.

Whatever we call them, their work may be focused on church planting, discipleship, development work and/or medical work, but they are all about being like Christ in that

We are, in the simplest and yet most profound terms, seeking to demonstrate the glory of God to the nations.

place. We are, in the simplest and yet most profound terms, seeking to demonstrate the glory of God to the nations.

We could talk about serving and we can send servants. We could talk about encouragers around the world. (Don’t forget the aspect of exhortation in this New Testament concept.) Perhaps we should see them as extensions of the pastoral staff of our church—working through sister organizations (missions structures) with experience in doing missions. We could call them international or global staff.

But I’m not as concerned what we call them as that we consider how we talk about this, and how we think about it.

All these new (to some) sensitivities lead us to the underlying thinking of our mission task. I don’t ask, “Why do they hate us so much?” but, “What could I do to better live out Christ through my life?” While some of that hate is not focused on Christ or Christianity—but all things American—the Scriptures do talk about the fact that the world will hate Christ and his followers. Yet we can hide behind that with an easy answer approach, or a cultural blunder and then say we should expect ridicule and persecution. Perhaps a better question for us is: how often do I bring persecution on myself? How could I do a better job of communicating in this situation? Is what I am doing able to produce lasting fruit in this culture when I’m gone? Or is it so foreign that only people on the fringe will buy into it? Let me illustrate.

Just today in my car, I heard a major ministry leader in this area give an invitation at the end of his broadcast. He said that if you prayed the prayer he led, then Christ had taken up residence in

your life. Is that really true or is it modern Christian jargon? When we get to heaven, does God look back at what we said in our lives and if He sees the right words in the right order He will let us into heaven? Or—as one mission leader said recently to me—does God open our heads, look inside and see if we “think correctly” and let us into heaven? Where is repentance and obedience in all this? Are we thinking clearly? We do need to confess Christ with our lips and produce fruit!

This is another area where we need to look at what the Bible says, not necessarily the patterns in our church culture, which may not fit another. 🌐