accomplished through any number of means: by teams or individuals; by westerners or by missionaries from the Two-Thirds world; and/or by catalyzing people groups which live in proximity to the unengaged group. The main thing in this criterion is that apostles are in residence among those to whom their efforts are focused. Thus the short-term (or what Ralph Winter calls “amateur” or “drive-by”) workers who blitz in – and within a few months are out again – do not sufficiently meet this criterion.

Exciting new strategies to bring the Good News to the unreached are being developed every day. The efficacy of these new strategies must be analyzed at the point where impartation of the Gospel takes place, not merely on our activity prior to that point. Not until the last step is accomplished (that is, the arrival on the field of those who will minister among a given people) should we consider this criterion to have been met.

2. Commitment to work in the local language and culture

Essential to the task of sharing the gospel is the question of effective communication. Central to this decisive factor is the conviction that the gospel must be translated into the recipient culture. Lamin Sanneh notes, “Translatability is the source of the success of Christianity across cultures” (Translating the Message). This requires the significant commitment and work necessary to acculturate oneself and one’s message to whatever degree possible (without falling into syncretism) in order to

All Four Items Necessary in Every Engagement?

Jim Haney

In our help manual, distributed to all IMB field personnel, we include the following statement:

Engagement is about church-planting. Specifically, engagement is about implementing church-planting strategy among each unique global entity. ... An entity is engaged when the implementation of church-planting strategy is underway. ... Finally, engagement is not adoption, provision of materials or media, focusing on a people through a prayer emphasis or the implementation of an advocacy strategy, although these are critical to church-planting.

Although we affirm many of the components of the working definition that Jeff indicates for Frontiers, we do not see these four items as necessary in every engagement. Let me take them in turn:

1. apostolic effort in residence
   Those who bring the witness must not stop short of church-planting, but do they have to be resident within the people group they are engaging? Would this not rule out the non-residential missionary approach to engagement? It may well be possible and desirable that trainers are not resident within a people group but will train trainers from outside, especially if those sent are from the same affinity bloc or people cluster as the people group engaged.

2. commitment to work in the local language and culture
   Again, Jeff’s assumption appears to be that the actual engagement will be done by those from outside the

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(continued on page 12)