

FORWARD FROM LAUSANNE

PREAMBLE

The International Congress on World Evangelization convened in Lausanne in July, 1974. Before the participants left for their homes they expressed a strong desire that what under God had begun would be continued, and that the spirit of Lausanne would never be lost.

Now six months later the Lausanne Continuation Committee, appointed by the Congress Planning Committee out of the larger number nominated by the regional groupings at the Congress, has met in Mexico City from January 20-24, 1975.

The basis of our coming together was our common evangelical commitment to biblical doctrine and duty, especially as the Lausanne Covenant both defines these and defends them against contemporary distortions. We are grateful to God that through free and wide-ranging discussion we have been led to a common mind about the next steps of what we hope will be an unfolding process.

MANDATE

Signatories of the Lausanne Covenant have committed themselves "to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world." To this end the Covenant urged "The development of regional and functional cooperation for the furtherance of the church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience."

POST- LAUSANNE INITIATIVES

We have been encouraged to hear of numerous initiatives which have already been taken in different parts of the world. The Covenant has been published in many languages, is being widely studied, and attempts are already begun to implement its recommendations.

A Commentary on the Covenant, The Compendium containing all the Congress papers and responses, a series of six studies on evangelizing the world for Christ entitled "Reaching All", and other materials including cassettes and filmstrips have also become available.

THE ROLE OF THE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE

The Continuation Committee understands as the Covenant indicates, that "the furtherance of the church's mission" means the encouragement of all God's people to go out into the world as Christ was sent into the world, to give themselves for others in a spirit of sacrificial service, and that in this mission evangelism is primary. More than that within our primary task of evangelism our two particular concerns and burdens must be the 2700 million unreached peoples and the other millions of people in nominally Christian areas who have not yet heard or responded to the true Gospel.

In fulfillment of its mandate the Continuation Committee believes that its role is primarily to serve as a stimulus and catalyst, to communicate widely what God is doing and what we believe He wants to do, and to seek to stir God's people to more effective action. Verbs which have kept recurring in our discussions which define our responsibility are "research", "communicate", "stimulate", and "assist".

REGIONAL GOALS

During our conference we have several times broken up into regional groups to consider what goals could and should be set for the next few years, and what resources and structures would be needed to attain them. A wide diversity of desirable goals was mentioned. Virtually all the regional groups were anxious to see fresh cooperative initiatives taken in cross-cultural missions, in development of regional and national strategies for evangelism, and in motivating and training both clergy and laity for active evangelism. In addition to this primary emphasis on evangelization, several groups asked for an information network, for evangelistic tools and for some coordination among evangelical relief and development agencies. The African and Asian groups stated the need to strengthen biblical theological education at all levels and to provide more scholarships. The Latin American and European groups were concerned to increase evangelical influence in the mass media and to secure better training facilities in communication. In the Arab world and elsewhere, more full-time national evangelists are needed. The European group reiterated the importance of continuing the debate begun at Lausanne in such areas as Christianity and culture, evangelism and social action, Christian ethics, and the renewal of the Church.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

In order to help evangelicals to set their goals and work toward their attainment, the Continuation Committee anticipates the formation of Regional Committees on World Evangelization as envisaged in the Lausanne Covenant. In fact, the Continuation Committee is convinced that the spirit of Lausanne was so opposed to the bureaucratic model that it encourages and/or authorizes all the members of the Continuation Committee in each major region of the world unitedly to form such a network or committee, as or if needed, believing that in the respective regions the ministry of Jesus Christ through His Church will be most effectively carried out. The Continuation Committee urges its members from each region to be highly sensitive to all those already existing associations and fellowships which share similar aims and spirit, to seek the largest-hearted measure of cooperation, and to use whatever flexibility is necessary where these may be needed for internal reorganization, structuring and programming in ways which are appropriate to its culture and geared specifically to this task. It is thought that some regional committees may find it helpful to set up a regional office.

CONTINUATION COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In order to give the regional committees the opportunity to organize and let their functions surface and be defined, it has been decided to reconvene the Continuation Committee in one year's time in order to review their reports. Bishop Jack Dain of the Anglican Church in Sydney, Australia, who was Chairman of the Lausanne Congress, has accepted the unanimous request of the Continuation Committee to be its Chairman Pro Tem. The Continuation Committee has resolved to develop a low profile for itself and to operate with a minimal budget and a small staff. It does not wish to duplicate the work of other existing organizations or structures. The Continuation Committee has appointed an Executive Committee of eleven members, representative of the major regions of the world.

The members of this Executive Committee who will serve until the Continuation Committee reconvenes are:

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| AFRICA | - Festo Kivengere
Byang H. Kato, Alternate |
| EAST ASIA | - Philip Teng
Petrus Octavianus, Alternate |
| WEST ASIA | - Saphir Athyal
I. Ben Wati, Alternate |
| EUROPE | - Armin Hoppler
Peter Schneider, Alternate |
| LATIN AMERICA | - Nilson Fanini
Samuel Libert, Alternate |
| NORTH AMERICA | - Thomas Zimmerman
Leighton Ford
Robert Coleman, Alternate |
| OCEANIA | - A. Jack Dain
Bishop Reid, Alternate |
| UNITED KINGDOM | - John Stott
Gordon Landreth, Alternate |

Chairman, Finance Committee - Kenneth L. Chafin
Executive Secretary - ?

CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

It was decided that the wider body which was nominated by the Lausanne participants, and out of which the Continuation Committee was chosen, are to constitute the Consultative Council, and that its membership should be built up to about two hundred in order to make it more representative, especially of all major countries, denominations and functional interests. We are very happy to announce that Dr. Billy Graham has accepted our unanimous invitation to become Honorary Chairman of this Consultative Council. It is to meet every five years or so and its members are to serve for a stated period of time.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

An invitation has been extended to a third world evangelical Christian leader to accept appointment as an executive secretary for a period of two years. He will be responsible to the Continuation Committee and its Executive Committee to serve the Regional Committees, to be available for ministry, and seek to stimulate world evangelism in every possible way.

MEMBERSHIP

Each regional committee will of course be free to make its own decisions about the members or affiliates it admits. The regional committees will themselves all be linked to the Continuation Committee through those of their members who serve on it and through the Executive Secretary.

FINANCES

The work of the Committee will be funded by gifts and donations from interested groups and people from around the world.