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APPENDICES

1 BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN INTERDENOMINATIONAL 'FAITH' MISSIONARY SOCIETIES *and the AWARE Broadsheet*

Barbara Baigent

How AWARE came to be

At a consultation of Christian Brethren leaders held at London Bible College in 1981, several specific suggestions were made which the organizing committee summarized as: training and development; mission abroad; and information dissemination. One possibility linking the second and third of these was the development of a broadsheet which might reach a wider readership than that of *Harvester*.

In 1982, John Polkinghorne was approached with a view to editing such a broadsheet to disseminate information about full time workers and churches in UK. He was favourable to such an idea. By 1983, *Harvester* had agreed to publish such a bulletin. It was felt that there should be a similar one dealing with world mission. *Harvester* was approached early in 1984, and agreed to the idea. In August 1984, I was asked to edit this. The first issue was to be in March 1985. It would be quarterly, published as an integral part of *Harvester* but also available separately, in quantities of five. We conceived the title AWARE with its logo of an eye on the world.

The First Questionnaire

Prior to publication of the first issue, a questionnaire was sent to 1,200 Brethren churches in England and Wales asking them to send in names of full time workers both at home and abroad other than those serving in fellowship with Counties Evangelistic Work (in UK) or *Echoes* (overseas) since these were already served by their respective publications. The

churches were asked to give the names of the societies with which they were working, and to indicate if they would be prepared to subscribe to a world mission bulletin.

By November 1984, we had received 168 completed questionnaires. 107 churches welcomed the idea of a news bulletin and the returns indicated that they would take up 1,000 copies in addition to those received as part of *Harvester*. In the event, this figure proved over optimistic, and only about 250 copies have been taken up. 101 churches sent details of 198 commended full time workers (other than those with *Echoes* and 'Counties'): 54 married couples and 90 single people.

The Current List

At the time of writing this paper for the 1987 consultation I had 211 names of people working with 42 societies, or 246 names when such people as Hebron School teachers are included.

Subsequently, Partnership has surveyed the Brethren churches of UK. Returns from just over 300 churches, collated with existing records indicates that there are now at least 276 working in world mission apart from those with *Echoes*. 230 of these are abroad, 40 independent and 190 in societies (56 societies) and 46 are in the UK either with societies (43 in 16 societies) or independent (3). This of course does not include full time workers and evangelists working in UK either independently or with 'Counties' etc.

The reason that I believe these numbers to be only a fraction of the total is illustrated by two examples. When I wanted an article on Operation Mobilisation I wrote to them in 1986 and their computer produced 44 names of Christian Brethren full time with OM (I had only 4 names). In 1987 when I wrote to New Tribes Mission for news they gave me 28 as the number of Christian Brethren from UK with their mission (I had only 11 names).

Some societies are not prepared to give me a breakdown of which of their missionaries are 'Brethren', saying, 'We are all one in Christ Jesus—no labels!' And many churches still have not heard of AWARE and have not sent in a list of their missionaries.

In the appendix to this article I have listed the societies with which we have missionaries. (Numbers are only given where they are significant).

One of the big problems is trying to discover whether or not a person is on short term service and if so, when they have returned to the UK. I know of no method of keeping the records updated at present.

The Second Questionnaire

This was sent in 1985 to all the missionaries on our list asking them if they

would like their names to be included on a list for prayer. 65 people abroad responded to this, giving their name, society, location and a prayer request. The list was published in *Harvester* in May '86. It is on the computer at Paternoster Press but is in need of someone to keep it updated.

AWARE and its parameters

The aims were stated clearly in 'Editor's Eye' of the first issue. Broadly they were:

- 1 To keep readers informed of what was happening in mission around the world.
- 2 To increase prayer support for and fellowship with God's servants working alongside national Christians.
- 3 To challenge us at home with the needs and opportunities.

We hoped to publish news of national churches where there is no missionary; news of medical electives and other short term service; ideas for twinning churches in Britain with those abroad; news of those working in societies who meet with Christian Brethren either abroad or when at home; information about training courses; advance notices of missionary meetings and reports of such events.

I must confess that, in the main, the response has been disappointing. The letters of appreciation have mostly come from missionaries abroad. No church has sent me an advance notice of a missionary event (perhaps there are none!). No church has sent me a report of one either!

One or two churches have sent me an up-to-date list of people abroad and I have been able to publish details of nine 'sending churches'. In the first 8 issues we featured 24 different societies or groups, and 27 missionaries or national workers, plus their families. 200 different people have actually been named in at least 17 countries. The national workers featured are in Portugal, Spain, India, Singapore, France, Jamaica and Zambia.

The scripture the Lord has given me throughout is Philippians 1:5,18,27; 'partnership in the gospel . . . the important thing is that in every way . . . Christ is preached . . . in one spirit contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.'

Developments from AWARE

I had hoped to include in AWARE opportunities for service abroad, but I rarely receive any. Also I felt it important to provide an opportunity to re-educate readers regarding mission. As a result *Harvester* ran a series which we called 'Going Global'. Between January and December 1987, there

were 12 contributions on such matters as pastoral care, rehabilitation, retirement, tent-making opportunities, responsibility of elders etc.

The AWARE Exhibition When I went to Spring Harvest and saw the vast mission exhibition there, I was saddened to discover that there was no exhibition to show the input of Christian Brethren abroad. We have been able to put together a small exhibition which has been set up at the Swanwick Conference, and is available to be used at conferences, holidays, celebrations etc. It advertises *Harvester*, AWARE and mission.

The future

As Ernest Oliver has stated in his paper, 'the pattern of the international, interdenominational, united mission set up and sustained during the past 30 years provides an outstanding example of modern missionary method'. AWARE is appreciated by missionaries because they are the ones who know that when you get out there, abroad, *you work together with other Christians*. If you don't, you are setting up exclusive churches which may miss the tide of blessing that is sweeping across the world.

Ernest also states that he knows only one missionary society that includes workers from other churches and organizations in its prayer diary because those workers are in the same physical area. We have seen that AWARE is seeking to link together in prayer workers all over the world who have one common bond—that they are commended by Brethren churches—but do not come within the criteria drawn up by the editors of *Echoes*. There are many such people, working with many societies. What AWARE is achieving and where it is going is open to discussion.

I would like to suggest that maybe we should consider praying and working towards *one monthly magazine* which would be a combination of *Harvester*, *Echoes*, AWARE and *News from Counties*. It would be a news magazine of what British Christian Brethren are doing in UK and worldwide, with Bible teaching and feature articles. This may be an impossible dream for Britain but it is actually being done in Switzerland!

I believe that things are happening abroad that we at home don't realise because the missionaries don't tell us, and, at the same time, for some Christians serving God abroad things change so fast at home that they can't keep up with us. Such a magazine as I envisage, sent free to all missionaries, would keep them and us up-to-date with current thinking and events.

Incidentally I was interested to read an article in *Echoes* (August 1986) about the *Missionary Study Class Movement* which in 1911 led to the publication of a magazine called '*Links of Help*'. The article tells us that *Links of Help* published missionary material and opinion not available in other publications and with the object of encouraging personal missionary

study. It included surveys of many parts of the world; general statistical information; the basic tenets of various world religions and touched upon . . . problems that assembly workers were often called upon to face. The Editor set out not only to provide an informative magazine but material for conferences and displays of all kinds which were then very much encouraged.' It was eventually absorbed into *Harvester!*

I would also draw your attention to the last two chapters of the ten-volume series *That the World may Know* by Dr Tatford. One chapter is about change, and the other is about the relevance of mission today. He quotes both Stan Warren and Michael Griffiths and also refers to the MSC Movement. 'Practically all missionary societies' he wrote, 'employ deputation secretaries to visit churches and report on current conditions and needs, using *exhibits*, maps and other visual aids. . . . A great deal might be done in the different regions of the U.K. if those capable of doing so, gave themselves voluntarily to this service, as some did in the early days of the M.S.C. Movement. *An assembly agency* formerly existed to provide information to those who were prepared to take up secular appointments in other countries in order to be in a position to engage in evangelism and teaching in their spare time. It would be well if such an agency could be recommenced.'

One of the reasons why people go out with societies is that they hear of specific opportunities which they can fill.

I would make a plea for the setting up of a *Mission Resource Centre* where opportunities could be advertized and volunteers referred; where books, news, statistics etc could be available, and which was really appealing and exciting to young people.

I wonder, too, if the various Brethren initiatives could not aim to work together more. Should not Gospel Literature Outreach, the London Missionary Meetings, *Echoes*, Partnership and AWARE be represented on a joint committee that met at least annually, since many of their desires and concerns overlap.

Finally, I am concerned that there should be a way of receiving regular news of European and Third World churches where there is no UK presence. We should be encouraging them to set up their own missionary training!

APPENDIX

SOCIETIES WITH WHOM CHRISTIAN BRETHERN ARE ASSOCIATED

People working in UK

Asian Ministry Partnership
Evangelical Union of South America
Far East Broadcasting Association
Gospel Literature Outreach
In Contact
Interserve (formerly Bible and
Medical Missionary Fellowship)
Movement for World Evangelism
Operation Mobilisation
Scripture Gift Mission
Tear Fund
Transworld Radio
Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade
World Vision
Wycliffe Bible Translators

People working abroad

Afghan Border Crusade (now North
West Frontier Fellowship)
Africa Evangelical Fellowship
Africa Mission (?)
Africa Inland Mission
Belgian Evangelical Mission
Christian Literature Crusade
Church Missionary Society
Council for World Mission
European Christian Mission
European Missionary Fellowship
Evangelical Union of South America
Evangelism in Action
Far East Broadcasting Association
France pour Christ
French Village Workers
Grace Fellowship International
International Christian Fellowship
(merging with SIM 1989)

International Fellowship of
Evangelical Students
Interserve (formerly Bible and
Medical Missionary Fellowship)
Indian Bible Society (11 people)*
Japan Evangelistic Band
Lighthouse Harbour Ministry
Mission Aviation Fellowship
(14 people)*
Middle East Christian Outreach
(10 people)*
Mennonite Board of Missions
Navigators
New Tribes Mission (11 people)*
Operation Mobilisation (over
20 people)*
Overseas Missionary Fellowship
(8 people)*
Open Doors
Qua Iboe Fellowship
Regions Beyond Missionary Union
Red Sea Mission Team
Ruanda Mission
Sahara Desert Mission
South American Missionary Society
Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture
Readers Association
St Stephens Society
SIM International
South Seas Evangelical Mission
Tear Fund
Transworld Radio
Unevangelised Fields Mission
United Mission to Nepal
United World Mission (?)
Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade
Wycliffe Bible Translators
(21 people)*
Youth with a Mission