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CBRF JOURNAL

Special Issue

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TODAY

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SPECIAL ISSUE

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TODAY

In November 1965 the Wellington Assembly Research Fellowship of New Zealand issued an interesting and helpful report of a seminar on missionary strategy. In this issue of the CBRF *Journal* we are happy to present a largely American contribution (from both north and south of the continent) on the same topical and important subject. We are privileged to include papers from some eminent students of the subject, and feel that the importance of what is here said justifies the publication of this issue as a Special Issue (the second *Journal* to be so denoted), available to the general public.

Domestic matters concerning the Fellowship are therefore held over to the next issue of the *Journal*, as are our monitors' and other sections. It is hoped that that issue will follow fairly closely upon this.

Further copies of this issue are available from the publications office of the Fellowship, in accordance with the details given inside the back cover of this issue.

PREFACE

This issue of the CBRFJ seeks to focus the thought of the members of the Fellowship and other interested Christians upon Christian witness in the world today.

From its inception the Brethren movement has been characterized by a concern to share the Good News with others. Anthony Norris Groves was the first representative of this movement to leave the British Isles for foreign shores to preach and to suffer for Christ. Thousands from the U.K. have followed him in the hundred and thirty-odd years since; others have left America, New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, Germany, France, and a few other countries. As a result of this missionary fervour, there are few countries in the world where Christian Brethren churches have not been established. You may not find them listed in the lists of published statistics concerning missionary work—Brethren do not generally keep statistics, which may be a good spiritual principle but is a great disappointment to the historian or missionary statistician—but they are there. They are often (though not always) quite indigenous to the country in which they are found. In some cases they make up a much larger proportion of the Christian population than in the so-called sending countries. And there are no signs of a growing disinterest in missionary outreach.

In a later issue of the *Journal* we hope to survey the world-wide witness of the Christian Brethren, attempting to fill in some of the gaps in the available information concerning our churches in all parts of the world. In the present issue we are concerned to provide an introduction to a few aspects of the thought that is being devoted to the missionary responsibility of the Church today. It would be, of course, impossible to survey the whole subject and all that is being said and written about it. We have only attempted to introduce the reader to a few significant aspects of the subject. A select bibliography is contained in the issue to guide the reader in further thought concerning the aspects emphasized by the articles we have selected and other subjects which may be of interest.

Church Growth

In the light of the changes that have taken place in more recent years many are very pessimistic concerning the future of missionary work. Rather than adapt themselves to the times and abandon old methods and think of new approaches, they can only think of missions in the traditional terms of the mission station and the pioneer missionary among a culturally inferior people. And it is true, if this is the limit to one's concept of missions, then today is indeed a day for pessimism, for this type of missionary work is definitely on the way out. Yet there are others (including the writer) who feel that the opportunities for Christian outreach are greater today than ever before in the history of the Church and that the best is yet to come. Donald McGavran, the author of the first article in this issue of the *Journal*, represents this latter point of view.

The most significant research in the areas of missions in recent years has been done by Dr. Donald McGavran and his students. Dr. McGavran was formerly a missionary in India. For more than a decade now he has been studying the nature of church growth in various parts of the world. His earliest works were *Bridges of God* (London: World Dominion Press; New York: Friendship Press, 1955) and *How Churches Grow* (World Dominion; Friendship, 1959) in which he sought to observe how people have become Christians in history and how people today are becoming Christians, and to draw lessons from this for missionary work today. As director of the Institute of Church Growth he has led missionaries in the study of the areas of the world with which they are most familiar in an attempt to discover general principles concerning the growth of the church and to see whether his earliest observations were valid. As a result, those concerned with missionary work have available to them a stockpile of useful information which will help them to evaluate the work being done by their church or mission and to alter their programmes, if need be, in ways which would lead to more and stronger churches. Any missionary or missionary-minded Christian should be familiar with the work of Dr. McGavran and his students. And, in this connection, we are deeply grateful to Dr. McGavran for sharing this article on 'The Church Growth Point of View and Christian Mission' with the members of the Fellowship.

Missionary Strategy

Many object to the idea of using the term 'strategy' in connection with Christian witness. This is a denial of the Lordship of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, they say; God Himself is the Divine Strategist, and we are wrong to think in terms of strategy, which implies that we are in charge of the operation. Now it is certainly true that God is in charge of the whole operation, and that His ways are not always man's ways. But can He not lead His people in their thoughts and in their plans? If we can admit that God can and does guide individual Christians in deciding how they can most effectively invest their lives for Him, and if we can admit that He can and does guide the leaders of local churches in planning for the feeding of the flock and outreach in the community, then we should have no objection to thinking in terms of missionary strategy. The Apostle Paul made plans and had a basic strategy, as is obvious from a careful study of his writings and the Book of Acts. And it is no less important for twentieth-century missionaries to have a strategy.

Michael Cassidy is a young man who has thought deeply about contemporary missionary strategy. He was born in Africa, is a graduate of Cambridge (where he became a Christian through the witness of CICCU) and Fuller Theological Seminary. While at Fuller he and a small group of fellow students formed an association known as 'Africa Enterprise'; it is not really a 'mission' in the ordinary sense, but an evangelistic fellowship aimed at reaching the educated leadership of Africa for Christ. In this issue of the *Journal* he shares with us some of his thoughts on missionary strategy, especially as related to the Africa of today.

The Student World

One of the most exciting aspects of the work of God today (to me, at least) is what He is doing in the universities of the world. We read in the newspapers about students demonstrating and governments falling as a result. We read about the impact that Communism has on the student world. We seldom read about the conversions to Christ which take place regularly in the universities of the world, or about the small Bible study groups and cells of Christian students that are a part of the majority of the universities of the free world. Many people think of the universities as places where young people lose their faith; yet many, many young people find Christ there. Most of the readers of this *Journal* will probably be aware of the growing number of conversions that are taking place in the universities of the U.K.; however, this is merely representative of what is happening all over the world (though not always, admittedly, in the same quantity).

The groups which are doing most to present the claims of Christ in the university world today are those national groups associated with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Dr. René Padilla is representative of the leadership of these fellowships of students. He is a Latin American, born in Colombia. He is a second-generation Christian; his father was a convert from Roman Catholicism and the pastor of an evangelical church. Following his graduation from university in the U.S.A. he worked with IFES in Ecuador and Colombia. He has recently completed his Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Manchester University, which makes him one of the few South-American born evangelicals in Latin America with this type of educational background. It would be hard to think of anyone better qualified to write about 'Christian Witness in the Universities' than Dr. Padilla. His contribution is all the more significant in that he is not a 'foreign missionary' in the traditional sense, yet one who is vitally engaged in missionary outreach.

Roland Allen

The most original and relevant exponent of New Testament missionary principles of this century was Roland Allen. Although his books were written in the early part of this century, they are being read today as regularly as when they were first written (and perhaps even heeded a little more often). Allen went to the New Testament to examine the principles which governed the missionary work of Paul and then sought to evaluate the missionary methods of his day by this criterion. He felt that missions of his day in general fell very far short of the New Testament standard, and this led him to be quite outspoken in his criticism of what he saw around him. Some few were influenced by his thought, but most considered him to be a hopeless idealist. Yet history has proved him to be basically correct in his views; and, with the exception of a few dissenting voices, his views are accepted by modern missionary theorists (although they are not too often acted upon in a way which would change missionary policy).

K. G. Hyland, a veteran student and minister of the Word who has

recently retired from his practice as a dental surgeon to be able to devote more time to the ministry, has been keenly interested in missionary work from his student days, when his life was brought under the influence of godly men in Bristol who had been trained by George Müller. As a young man his thought was profoundly influenced by the writings of Roland Allen. We commend his article on 'The Man who Understood New Testament Missionary Principles' and the writings of Roland Allen to the readers of the *Journal.*

WARD GASQUE

THE CHURCH GROWTH POINT OF VIEW AND CHRISTIAN MISSION

Donald McGavran

Christian Mission continues, in the midst of a tremendous world wide revolution which affects almost all segments of mankind and aspects of life. Small wonder that, amidst the multitudinous adjustments called for, no one knows quite what 'mission' is. It is being redefined on the right and on the left.

Louis and Andre Retif, noted Roman Catholic missiologists, in *The Church's Mission in the World*, for example, say that 'mission properly so called consists in bringing a non-Christian to the faith or in marking some non-Christian reality with the stamp of the Gospel'. Thus the mission 'is exercised not only in the geographical and ethnic spheres, but also in those of civilization and sociology'.

D. Y. Niles in *On This Earth*, says that 'a missionary is a Christian as a Christian simply being there'.

To some, the mission is a many sided enterprise in which Christians go out to do good to men in the name of Jesus, healing, teaching, helping younger Churches, evangelizing, administrating, and making nations more friendly to each other. The mysterious dictum that 'The Church is Mission and Unity' further complicates the issue and enables almost everything the Church does outside her four walls to be called mission in some sense or other. The word has become so broad as to be almost without meaning. The vast effort to state a theology of mission (which includes everything the Church now does) results in the KKD formula (kerygma, koinonia, diaconia) whereby worship, service, and proclamation, become that which God is doing in the world through the Church and hence mission.

The Church Growth point of view arises in sharp contradistinction to all this. It grants that God is doing and the Church should be doing many good things in the world; but as long as more than two billion men yield no allegiance to Christ in addition to the uncounted millions of nominal Christians, it insists that 'mission' should properly be limited to proclaiming Jesus Christ by word and deed as divine and only Saviour and persuading men to become His disciples and responsible members of His Church. Given mighty multiplication of churches of Christ throughout the earth—the members of each church living out the Gospel in each person and in the corporate structures which make up society—the 'non-Christian realities' which Retif speaks about will truly have 'the stamp of Christ' put upon them. Until there is mighty multiplication of churches, most realities in most lands will remain firmly non-Christian.

The Church Growth point of view is rooted in theology. God wants church growth. He wants His lost children found. The multiplication

About the author. Donald McGavran is the Director of the Institute of Church Growth and the Graduate School of World Mission of Fuller Theological Seminary (California).

of churches is theologically required. Christians, churches, and missionary societies are correctly concerned about communicating Christ. They *should* be propagating the Christian religion. Indeed, growth, as Winburn Thomas pointed out in an article in a recent *International Review of Missions*, is a test of the Church's faithfulness. 'The Gospel', Paul says in Romans 16: 26 (New English Bible) 'is now disclosed and . . . by eternal God's command made known to all nations *to bring them to faith and obedience*'. Christians are ambassadors to reconcile men to God in the Church of Jesus Christ.

While Christians are commanded to preach the Gospel to the whole creation, the New Testament never intends proclamation for proclamation's sake. It intends proclamation that men may believe, be baptized in the Name of Christ, be saved, and manifest the fruits of the Spirit.

Thus the Church Growth point of view sets itself off, on the one hand, from the inclusive obscurantists who furiously label everything 'mission', with the result that the word becomes meaningless; and, on the other, from the neutral witness school which seems to believe that mission is summed up in witness of some sort whether any believe or not. *Theologically* mission is bringing men to faith and obedience, multiplying churches, and leading them to further self propagation. In short, finding the lost and bringing them back to the Father's house is a chief and irreplaceable purpose of Christian missions to Asia, Africa and Latin America where tremendous numbers are living and dying without placing their faith on Jesus Christ. I am writing from America. Were I writing from India, I would equally easily say that Christian missions to Europe and America have as a chief and irreplaceable purpose finding the lost in these lands and bringing them back to the Father's house.

True, men have multitudinous needs of body and mind. Meeting these needs is thoroughly Christian. The Church is properly engaged in relief of suffering, pushing back the barriers of ignorance, and increasing productivity. But such activities must be carried out *in proportion*. They must never be substituted for finding the lost. Christians must never be guilty of turning from the Spirit to the flesh or of mocking men with false securities, as Lesslie Newbigin has said. As long as mission is clearly the planting of churches and yet more churches, it can and should carry on many auxiliary enterprises, some of which contribute directly to world evangelization and some of which do not.

What must not happen, however, is for a vague amorphous enterprise consisting of many parallel thrusts, none of which has an inherent priority, being called Christian mission. Christian mission is not an ecclesiastical peace corps, with some preaching of the Gospel thrown in. It is not helpful to confuse the issue by saying that mission is search for Christian unity or Christianization of the framework of society. Those are good activities. In the interests of clarity, they should be carried on and accounted for not under 'mission' but under other heads.

The primacy of church multiplying is theoretically accepted by most Churches and written into the constitutions of their missionary societies. The promotional addresses of most missionaries stress preaching the

Gospel and winning men and women to Christ. Practically, however, liberals and conservatives, state Churches and gathered Churches constantly under-emphasize and betray church planting. They agree that it is the heart of mission, but examination of their budgets reveals that a relatively small proportion of their total strength is devoted to it.

Missionaries and mission organizations today, faced with many human needs, often defeated by resistant populations, always bound by previous patterns of action, cumbered with institutionalism in advance of the Church, burdened with cultural overhang which leads them to proclaim Christ in Western ways, committed to a non-biblical individualism, not understanding multi-individual accession as a normal way in which men come to Christ, and deceived by their own promotional efforts (whatever missions do is 'wonderful') engage in 'splendid church and mission work'. They are not frequently engaged in specific, purposeful, well planned, and efficient church planting. This is true of both liberals and conservatives. Bitter experience teaches them to entertain small expectations of church growth, and they spend most of their time and missionaries for other things. They claim that these other things contribute to church growth, or are intended to do so: but they almost never evaluate what they are doing or revise their programs in the light of whether churches are in fact planted.

Furthermore, at this very time, the mosaic of peoples which makes up the world is much more responsive than it has ever been. Numerous pieces of the mosaic have become winnable. Segment after segment can be discipled. For example, in Sierra Leone ten or fifteen major tribes compose the principal population. Each tribe is a large piece of the mosaic. Each tribe in turn is composed of many small pieces—dialects, chiefdoms, political or geographical divisions, and the like. Not all of the mosaic but small pieces of the Mende, Kissi, and Kono tribes have Christward surges operating in them. The small pieces demonstrate winnability. Out of them men and groups of men are being baptized and 'added to the Lord'. In nation after nation, such responsive units of the population can readily be identified.

Many resistant and rebellious sections of the mosaic also exist. Some populations have set their faces like flint against the Gospel. They literally will not hear. Other populations are merely indifferent: they hear and go blithely about their business. It may be that of the scores of thousands of segments of mankind more than half are resistant. No one has counted and classified them.

Nevertheless, it can be stated confidently that thousands of more or less receptive pieces of the mosaic exist. Some are found, and many more would be found if the missionary forces of the world would diligently search for them. Enough receptive populations exist so that the entire missionary force could be poured into them and there would be room for yet more.

However, not all the winnable are being won. Most responsive units are being mishandled. God's servants are coming out of ripening fields with fewer sheaves than is necessary. Partly because mission suffers from

paucity of knowledge about finding lost men and building them into churches, enough 'discipling' is not happening. Each generation of missionaries and national ministers inherits a going work and, without a clear goal in sight, intent on doing good church and mission work, repeats many of the mistakes made by previous incumbents.

A frequent sequence is the following. Mission work in a resistant field is adjusted to meet resistance. Methods suitable for working among the resistant are used. Expectations of church growth are curtailed to fit what the past has shown to be likely. Then the resistant population turns receptive (or, more often, one section of it turns receptive). Changing methods and escalating expectations to fit the new situation is a process which most missions and churches find difficult. Often God has to send in a new missionary society or a new Church, not shut up in the prison-house of past practices, before the potential church growth begins to be realized.

The paucity of available knowledge of how churches multiply—so characteristic of missions—can now be ended. As a matter of fact the Church Universal has a great deal of knowledge of how churches grow. She has grown from nothing to hundreds of millions. But this knowledge is not available: it is shut away in denominational, geographical, and linguistic compartments. Exchange centers dedicated to finding out about church growth do not exist. The information in these thousands of pockets can be pulled out, evaluated, organized, forced to yield the secrets of growth, and shared by all Christian missions. The hard facts of church increase can be ascertained by researches. Where has the Church grown? Where have churches multiplied? How much have they multiplied? What non-Christian reservoirs are left? Above all, why and how have churches reproduced themselves. What is God teaching us through past successes and failures in the propagation of the Gospel?

Christians often show greater intelligence in conducting their worldly business than in conducting missions. They spend hundreds of millions on research in how to make synthetic fabrics, get mail faster to its destination, land men on the moon, paint houses, and do innumerable other tasks; but on research in discovering how men of other cultures can be led past barriers to accept the abundant eternal life available in Jesus Christ perhaps a few thousands now and then are spent. The time has come for all Churches and their missionary societies to invest at least five per cent of their income in planned, continuous, purposeful research dedicated to finding out how the Gospel may more effectively be communicated.

The hard facts of church growth, once discovered, should be published. Hundreds of books on various aspects of Christian mission (by which I mean the communication of the Gospel to unbelievers) should be published and made available to Christians. Missionaries will, of course, read these. They should be read also by thousands of missionary minded Christians in all churches. The mission is the task of the Church. The Church—to borrow that mysterious phrase from the obscurantists—is mission. Innumerable Christians, all who take seriously their Lord's death on the cross for all men, and His commission to disciple the nations, should come

to have an exact knowledge about their mission, which is also the Lord's mission.

The sciences of man—anthropology, sociology, and psychology—have much to tell us about how society is put together, how it 'works', how it initiates changes, and how these ramify throughout the corporate structure. All such knowledge can be used by mission to extend the Church. These sciences are in themselves neutral. They can be used to build up totalitarianisms or advance the Kingdom of God, Harnessed anthropology, by which I mean anthropology which has been applied to the propagation of the Gospel, should become the common property of all missionaries.

Research, devising of more effective methods, publication of church growth books, dissemination of knowledge made available by the sciences of man, and much else is ancillary to the actual planting of churches. It must be judged by the effectiveness with which it does plant churches. Christian missions are already cumbered with too many good plans which ought to work, but don't. Every mode of mission should be submitted to the test of whether it does in fact operate to multiplying churches in receptive populations.

Another way of saying the same thing is that actual church planting should be greatly increased. The means and methods will be multitudinous. Let us have more church planting by laymen, and by missionaries, and by ministers. Let denominations turn their most intelligent efforts to claiming given populations for Christ and making available to them the liberating power of Christ in viable churches. Let church planting by the indigenous church method, mass evangelism, people movements, personal work, literature and radio increase mightily. Where schools and hospitals do, in fact, work to the increase of churches, let us use them greatly for sowing a countryside with hundreds of congregations.

The great urban conurbations which mark our day should be—but are not—among the most responsive areas of human life. The task in them is not to 'do urban work': it is to multiply congregations. If that is done, urban work will look after itself. The task is not to 'extend a witness to new villages', but to establish cells of baptized believers there. The task is not to 'build Christ into the foundations of Brazil' or to 'maintain a Christian presence' in modern industry. These vague phrases are confessions of confusion and defeat. The task is much clearer—to seed Brazil with hundreds of thousands of churches of Christ and bring multitudes who comprise labor and management in the industries of the world to a saving experience of Christ.

Finally, theological education in the seminaries of the world has been largely planned and theologies have been largely framed with other Christians in view. Other Christians, must, of course, be kept in view; but over and above doing that, with two billion and more who have never considered becoming Christian a real option must be held firmly in view as theological education is laid out and theologies are developed. God, the Father Almighty, as revealed in Jesus Christ and the Bible, has set forth a plan of salvation for all mankind. He sent His only Son to die for all men. He is the Author of Mission and remains in charge of it at all

times. Any theology, worthy of the name, must be intensely concerned in every doctrine with liberating the world through a fantastic multiplication of Christian churches.

The Church Growth point of view takes the discipling of the nations seriously. Entirely friendly to all good mission works, to all Christian enterprises, and thoroughly aware of the rushing revelation of the twentieth century, the Church Growth point of view quietly insists that precisely in times such as these we must maintain the biblical priorities. These must regulate our preparations. These priorities must operate in a cool, clear understanding of each segment of mankind. Each of thousands of plans of operations must be defensible when hailed before the Lord and questioned as to whether it is the most effective possible plan for bringing the segment for which it was designed to faith and obedience.

Bibliographical Note

In addition to the books by McGavran listed in the bibliography to this issue of the *Journal*, special attention is called to the studies by Read, Shearer, and Grimley. 'Receptivity: Missions' Great Challenge' (*The Christian and Christianity Today*, May 6, 1966, p. 12) by McGavran provides the reader with a brief introduction to some of the basic principles of church growth. Studies on church growth in (1) the Andes Mountains, (2) New Guinea, (3) Guatemala, (4) Costa Rica, and (5) Jamaica—in addition to those on church growth in (6) Mexico, (7) Brazil, (8) Korea, and (9) Nigeria, which are listed in the bibliography—are available from the Institute of Church Growth, 135 North Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101, U.S.A. The writings of Roland Allen are also relevant.

Contemporary Africa and Christian Strategy

Michael Cassidy

Africa covers one-fifth of the total land area of the world and could contain within its shores all Western Europe, the United States and Canada, and still have some spare space for most of China. And if the stage is constructed on an epic scale, so also is the play. The plot does not revolve around the ticklish and refined, but around the bold and stark and startling. The players are not motivated by genteel and subtle emotions, but by driving passions of love and hatred and jealousy and revenge and self-preservation and greed. Nor does dialogue revolve around subtle points of Christian theology, but around whether to junk Christianity or keep it. The debate is not over whether Republican democracy or Democratic democracy is best, but whether democracy is workable at all. And dominating everything is the almost unbridled passion of nationalism. Nations threaten to rise against nations. There are wars and rumours of wars. Harold Macmillan spoke of 'winds of change'. There are no winds here. Only hurricanes.

And it is in the midst of these forces that the Church must live and love, and sometimes laugh. It is an exciting and breathtaking challenge.

The second largest continent, Africa stretches 5000 miles from Cape to Cairo and 4,700 miles from east to west. It has some 300 million people in 44 countries. It has 800 languages and 3000 dialects, which as one might guess complicates things right from the start. Said *Time Magazine* in March 1966: 'though it is a geographical entity . . . Africa suffers from such deep and profound differences as to make it seem like a collection of different worlds'.

What is alarming is that these different and so often apparently incompatible worlds are leaping overnight into supposed adulthood. The achievements of centuries in other lands are here expected to be compressed into a few short decades. In fact, of the 44 countries on the continent 33 have become independent in the last ten years. Many of these have already abandoned all but the trappings of democracy, with no less than seven military *coups d'etat* in the last year (June 1965-June 1966).*

This in itself is significant for Christians because it reminds us, as Richard Halverson says, (*Perspective*, Vol. XVIII, No. 12) that 'democracy doesn't work without the Bible'. He adds pertinently: 'The very heart and soul of democracy is the inherent dignity of man and the supreme

* 1. 1965 June 19 — Algeria
2. „ November 25 — The Congo
3. „ December 22 — Dahomey
4. 1966 January 1 — C.A. Republic
5. 1966 January 3 — Upper Volta
6. „ January 15 — Nigeria
7. „ February 23 — Ghana

About the author. Michael Cassidy is a native of South Africa, educated at Cambridge and Fuller Theological Seminary, and is presently engaged in evangelism in Africa.

worth of the individual. That's an exclusively Biblical concept. It is foreign to non Biblical cultures'.

This is true, and until such time as Africa is much more thoroughly evangelised and imbued with the so called 'Judeo-Christian tradition', both the continent itself and the outside world are going to have to live with the joys and woes of everything ranging from straight dictatorships, to oligarchies of varying quality, as in Rhodesia and South Africa.

Apart from a galloping case of political intoxication, Africa also has very real economic problems which are inevitably affecting its stance towards the outside world, and towards different ideologies from East and West.

Independence, as many nations in Africa are finding, has not brought any economic Utopias. This means that economic development and growth are amongst the continent's major needs. It is significant that the average income of nine out of ten Africans is about $100 (or £35), and in some states it is less than $39 (£14) per annum. Covering 20% of the earth's land surface the continent generates hardly 2% of the world's total gross product.

It is quite clear in the light of this that Africa cannot finance its own development. For example, development plans in Kenya call for 90% of the wherewithal from outside. It is small wonder then that Africa appears ambivalent in its political and ideological objectives—now looking to the United States, now to West Germany, now to China, now to Russia, now to Israel. The fact is that it looks wherever there is money, and capitalizing on the cold war in more senses than one, it is playing the game of international blackmail with a considerable measure of success. There is hardly a major nation in the world not falling over itself with Africa-bound largesse sent with the express purpose of winning friends and influencing people.

Quite evidently, if the 19th century saw a political scramble for Africa, the 20th century is seeing an economic one. Through it all Africa is trying to straddle the fence of political and ideological neutrality—but its chances of achieving this goal seem remote. For the ideological forces that are competing for the heart and soul of this strangely schizophrenic Giant are not the kinds of forces that tolerate neutrality.

It may be well at this point to make one or two observations about nationalism in so far as it creates a problem for Christian outreach and strategy.

It would appear actually that nationalism in Africa represents by and large a normal growing-up process in which Africans demand primarily the freedom to determine their own political, economic and cultural future. Africa rejects Western or any form of foreign domination. It wants to assert, as someone has said, 'an African presence, to contribute an African concept to the world's pool of civilization'. It is groping towards the mystique of 'negritude' and African personality.

The process, of course, has been accelerated by education, travel, overseas study, and indeed evangelism, for it is the Bible after all that has

presented the explosive idea of human dignity and equality. Then there was the impatient mood of the historical moment.

Inevitably however as the movement rushed precipitately forward with no timetable but 'today and now', the restraints and checks which are built into more advanced societies, but which are minimal in Africa, ceased to operate at maximum efficiency. So ends became absolute, and means, relative. Ends were seen as final; means, as incidental. Thus nationalism has become a pseudo-religious force with no ethic save the majority vote and the requirements of the desired end. Christianity can never tolerate this. The *vox populi, vox dei* idea is deadly and totally contrary to the Biblical view both of the depravity of man and the holiness of God. The devastating apotheosis of the nationalistic voice, whether white or black, has to be resolutely resisted by Christians. The Church must always condemn nationalism when it serves causes beyond its legitimate bounds, and when it reduces all life and value to a narrow equation with the so called liberation struggle.

The Christian must also remind those who are intoxicated with the temporal and material that man does not, even in Africa, live by bread alone. This may not be popular, but it is important. For political advancement and economic progress may, in the absence of the redemptive message of Christ, simply create societies where one can enjoy one's rebellion against God in a little more comfort. The vote, a full stomach and a place in the sun do not of course prevent a man from being eternally lost. And what shall it profit . . .?

Both individually and corporately men must be called to live their lives under the judgment of the Word of God. This involves commitment to means as well as ends. It creates an allegiance above and occasionally in, opposition to, the state. Amongst other things it slows things down, nationalism included, from man's pace to God's.

In connection with the nationalistic movements it is often said that these are Communist inspired. Actually this would be hard to substantiate though there is little doubt that in many places these movements have been Communist infiltrated.

It is noteworthy that way back in 1920 Lenin expounded one of the Communist obligations as 'to help, not merely with words but with deeds, all the liberation movements in the colonies: to demand the expulsion of the imperialists from the colonies'.

Therefore, while one must resist the temptation to see a Communist under every stone one must nevertheless be alert to the fact that Communists have sought to infiltrate nationalist movements and have often inflamed the nationalist spirit to unreasonable heat and intensity. The communist effort appears to be directed primarily at separating African territories from the Western world and securing from them an initially neutralist national line-up. The theory, which has not so far worked too well in practice, is that neutral countries can then be wooed and won into the Communist bloc.

Interestingly enough Moscow had shown little interest in Africa before

1957, but in that year the Soviet Africanist Co-ordinating Conference was held. Out of all the Soviet specialists on Africa only two at the Conference had even visited Africa.

However, in 1958 a special African Department was created, and a special African commission appointed under Prof. Ivan Potekhin. He urged thorough study of 'the African mentality', and a rapid securing of economic control, particularly through infiltration of African trade unions.

Potekhin also preaches that Africa has lost its true cultural identity through imperialism, but that this can be truly rediscovered with the help of the Soviet Union. Red China, of course, thinks that she is the best cultural catalyst at this point—as, unlike Russia, she is not white. There can be little doubt that both are misguided.

Anyway, in Communism Africa has a powerful force with which to reckon, even though according to Soviet estimates there are only about 50,000 active Communists today in Africa south of the Sahara. They estimate that there were 5,000 ten years ago.

The Christian Church by contrast has some 52 million members South of Africa's religious divide—the tenth parallel of North Latitude. The difference between the fifty thousand and the fifty million? The majority of the former are truly active in propagation of their beliefs, while the majority of the latter are asleep at the switch. The Early Church grew by every member witness. Never before in history was there such a desperate need for the rediscovery by Christians of this simple formula.

Apart from Islam, with its 90 million adherents and very rapid rate of expansion (supposedly some seven times that of the Church), Christianity is the main religious force in Africa today. It has had a long, chequered, and colourful history on the continent. The Christian Gospel may have been preached here within months of Pentecost, and it spread so rapidly that by the end of the second century a very strong church had been established. Names like Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, Clement and Augustine brought renown to the North Africa church and lasting contributions to the church at large. But internal dissension, lack of missionary vision, isolationism, and a tendency to 'Romanize' rather than Africanize led to the collapse of the church in the face of Moslem militancy in the seventh century. This was 'the church that disappeared' and for reasons that we do well to heed today. It disappeared so completely that very little further Christian advance was made until the 19th century, though Portuguese missionaries were in the Congo in the 15th and 16th centuries, and in E. Africa in the 17th.

However, when the great missionary advance came in the 19th and 20th centuries, it came with tremendous impact. Indeed the church has been the main civilising influence on the continent. It has been responsible for most of Africa's schools, and hospitals, and has brought millions to know the Saviour.

But there have been serious weaknesses. Amongst the more obvious undoubtedly have been the rigid denominationalism of many missionaries (i.e. 'my denomination has a prerogative on truth'), an over-close identifi-

cation of the gospel and colonialism, a false insistence on cultural change along with conversion, and in some cases a perversion or distortion of the New Testament message. All this must stop, or yet another African church will disappear. Indeed no effective strategy for the future will emerge unless or until the church will seriously evaluate both its mistakes and achievements in the past.

And here we come to some of the less obvious failures. Undoubtedly this absence of the willingness to evaluate must be ranked amongst them. The importance of evaluation, self-evident to all commercial enterprises, seems to be largely unappreciated by the church. Perhaps an excessive fear of intruding upon an area of divine responsibility and sovereignty, has led many to ignore the phenomenon of 'results', or 'success', or 'effectiveness'—all words to be used with great caution, but to be considered nevertheless.

It would appear from the New Testament that when the Gospel is communicated in the right place, at the right time, and in the right way, there should be some response. 'I have appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain'. (John 15: 16) '. . . By this my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit'. (John 15: 8)

Quite often the absence of response to the Gospel is blamed upon the 'hardness' of the recipients. This may sometimes be true—but it is not always so. Could there not be other causes of failure? Maybe the message is wrong. A message that is not truly Biblical will not be attended by the supernatural blessing of the Holy Spirit. Maybe the method is wrong. People vary in cultural, aesthetic and social outlook. A method that will reach one person will perhaps offend another. Alternatively the music in a service may be alien to the culture or aesthetic taste of the listeners. The American Gospel Song, for example, is not everybody's cup of tea. The problem with many of us in the evangelical wing of Christendom is that we become irrevocably wedded to some particular forms of ministry and activity and seem to feel that heresy consists as much in altering the form as the essence. This is patently false.

Or again the problem may be not with either message or method, but with the messenger. Lack of preparation or prayer, judgmental attitudes, negativism, rigid dogmatism in inconsequential areas of theology or behaviour, can all restrict the power of the Gospel and limit or nullify response.

Another danger lies in the not uncommon phenomenon of answering questions no one is asking. This basically is the problem of relevance, or the point of contact. It is always necessary to ask ourselves if we are coming in on the wave length of our listeners. To have an audience and speak to it irrelevantly is little short of criminal, for it leads to rejection of the Gospel on the incorrect assumption of its irrelevance.

Worse only than having an audience and speaking to it irrelevantly is having no audience at all. It has been truly observed that the Gospel has not lost its power, but its audience. This is our fault. Far too often we are not fishing where the fish are. Like the disciples we need to cast

our nets on the other side of the ship. Somehow or other most Christian fishing is done in Sunday services. Not surprisingly there are only a few nibbles and rarely a bite. Actually, unless all the church members are very active in bringing the unconverted into church, the fishing is so much wasted effort, for the fish are on the golf course!

This raises the potential of the 'special meeting' (and here for the moment we come from Africa closer home). Perhaps it might be a series of lunchtime films (e.g. Moody Science) for business and professional men. Hold these by special invitation in a hotel—a venue which holds no fear or threat or associations of boredom—and you will have an audience. They might even then come to church. Or maybe the meeting might consist of a tape-recorded talk in a home, a Bible study in a student dormitory or lounge. How about bull-sessions over a sandwich-lunch in the office of a Christian business man? or else breakfast meetings for political leaders, as put on by International Christian Leadership?

All I am urging is that real thought and planning go into our evangelism and that we fish where the fish are. It is impossible to give too much thought to the problem of locating the right waters. The disciples asked Jesus for advice. We could do no better.

In Christian strategy and planning we should also remember the diversity of tools and media available to the twentieth century church. There are films, tape-recordings, slide-shows, film strips, radio, television and a multitude of teaching aids available to the teacher or preacher with the initiative to seek them out.

There is also the printed word. Samuel Zwemer wrote 'No other agency can penetrate so deeply, witness so daringly, abide so persistently and influence so irresistibly as the printed page'. Everyone engaged in Christian witness should ask himself whether he is getting maximum mileage out of literature. Is he using the book-stall, the volume, the pamphlet, the religious press, the secular press? Is he drawing on the literature agencies—Pocket Testament League, Scripture Gift Mission, Christian Literature Crusade, etc.?

The Christian leader needs, in addition, to ask himself whether he is channelling the energies of the whole church properly. Christianity is not a clerical, but a lay movement. Indeed Paul says that the different divine gifts are given so that the 'saints' may be equipped and trained 'for the work of the ministry' (Eph. 4: 11-12). It is tragic but true that the church has the largest body of untapped manpower of any organization the world has known. Its *modus operandi* is as insane as the football team that goes on to the field with three men.

Finally, in terms of strategy in its broadest terms it would appear that two priorities should be kept in mind. First is the need to touch the cities, and second is the need to touch the leadership circles within the cities (students, businessmen, politicians, etc.). On the whole, the twentieth century church has ignored the strategic target of the cities. However, it is those within urban areas (in Africa 6% of the population) that shape the destiny of those in rural areas. And the 6% in the cities are themselves

governed in their ideological and spiritual commitments by that very small proportion of people called 'opinion makers'. These must be a prime target if the twentieth century church in Africa or elsewhere is to hold its own.

But when all is said and done—when we know our field, our methods, our message, and our strategy, there remains above all else the prime need to know our God. For unless we know Him—intimately, warmly, vitally—it is as certain, as day must follow night, that we will not be able to make Him known.

Christian Witness in the Universities

C. René Padilla

Theological perspective

Missionaries are often tempted to think that the work in which they are engaged is *the* answer to all the evils which hamper the growth of the Church of Christ. We are liable to imagine that the particular ministry we have been called to exercise encases the key which will unlock the treasures of new life to the enrichment of those whose spiritual welfare has been committed to us. And our excitement for 'the work' reaches proportions without measure when some well-known 'missionary strategist' happens to make a pronouncement which confirms that which we have always suspected—that our field of activities is the most strategic one with regard to the spread of the Gospel in the world. If only every Christian could see what we have seen . . . !

Of the danger of such an attitude, I am well aware. It is nearly impossible for me to forget that a recognized authority in world missions has said that 'the most urgent missionary task in the world today is to win university students in Latin America to Jesus Christ'.[1] And how can I disregard the forcefulness with which others have argued for the limitless strategic possibilities of student work in relation to world evangelization?[2]

With this sort of encouragement, it would surely be easy to place pragmatic considerations above the central motives of a missionary work patterned after the teaching of the Scriptures.[3] I believe, however, that important as such considerations are, they remain secondary to a fact which belongs to the very essence of the Gospel—that God's action in Jesus Christ embraces *all men* in a purpose of grace. Paul's denial of a distinction between Jew and Gentile with regard to the possibility of redemption,[4] which lay at the basis of his Gentile mission, may quite legitimately be extended to the denial of the same kind of distinction between the educated and the uneducated. Christ died for *all* and 'the same Lord is Lord of *all* and bestows His riches upon *all* who call upon Him' (Rom. 10.12). Whatever we think of the strategic importance of reaching students with the Gospel,[5] we leave the field of the New Testament unless both our theology and practice of missions allow no withholding of the message from them.

Regrettable neglect

That such a withholding has persistently been allowed in the mission fields of the world hardly needs be argued. The failure of the Church in the evangelization of the educated is apparent to the most inexperienced observer. This is certainly so at least in the case of Latin America. Here, where the Protestant movement is said to be increasing at a rate which

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surpasses the rate of over-all population growth,[6] the presence of the educated in the churches is proportionally so negligible as to be virtually non-existent.[7] The impression one would gain is that the Gospel has no appeal for the higher classes.

As an explanation of this phenomenon, the distinguished anthropologist Eugene A. Nida has suggested that there is a connection between the readiness with which the message is being accepted among the lower classes and the fact that these classes have much to gain and very little to lose by becoming Protestant.[8] There is, however, an even simpler explanation: *the history of the modern missionary movement is marked by an almost complete neglect of students and professionals. With a few notable exceptions, the large majority of missionaries have orientated their work primarily to savages in the jungles and secondarily to peasants in the rural areas and the underprivileged in the cities, to the total abandonment of a whole segment of the population—the educated.* A few possible factors for this regrettable neglect may be suggested:

1. *A 'romantic' view of missions:* There has been a tendency in the 'older' churches to see in their missionaries the epitome of dedication and sacrifice, a sort of 'heroes' willing to leave the 'Homeland' in order to take the Gospel to the uncivilized. Missionaries have often been expected to make dramatic presentations of their work in order to maintain among their supporters a 'romantic' image of their vocation. And it is an undeniable fact that the witness among students lacks those elements which make the work among a primitive tribe an ideal subject-matter for the most moving reports—the uncomfortableness, danger, and adventure of life in the jungles; the first contact with people hitherto unknown to white man; the excitement of a language reduced to writing and of the production of Scripture in another tongue . . .[9]

2. *The educational level of most missionaries.* In a large measure, the modern missionary movement may be traced back to the eighteenth-century evangelical awakening which spread from England to the English colonies in North America.[10] The flame kindled through the preaching of Whitefield and Wesley was kept burning and eventually resulted in a Bible-school movement which became a veritable storehouse of missionary manpower. Whatever our own opinion concerning it, this movement must be recognized today as the greatest and most influential missionary force of the Church in the modern period.[11] Its contribution to the evangelization of the world is not for us to measure. Finding expression in non-denominational societies, it has flooded the ends of the earth with missionaries who appeal to the Bible as their only source of authority and emphasize man's need of regeneration.

It would be true to say, however, that the virtual absence of the educated from the 'younger' churches reflects a common weakness of the modern missionary movement: the neglect of students and professionals answers to the low educational level of the large majority of missionaries in the 'non-historic' groups. Constituted mainly of Bible-school graduates, these groups have usually adopted an attitude of indifference to people in the

upper strata of society. Their anti-intellectualism and the lack of concern for an honest facing of the questions which are being raised among those who think has made it impossible for them to gain a hearing.

3. *Inability to communicate the message.* No task involved in missionary work is more exacting than the communication of the Gospel across cultural barriers. It demands not only a knowledge of the message itself, but also a thorough familiarity with the thought pattern and values of an audience which, in a larger or a smaller measure, remains removed from the herald. The task is doubly difficult when the missionary himself fails to distinguish between Christianity and the cultural accretions of his own background. If it is true that, as has been claimed,[12] the isolation of evangelicals in North America has resulted in an inability to communicate with those outside their circle, it is not difficult to understand the proportions of the problem with which missionaries with this sort of background are faced in trying to proclaim the Gospel abroad. Naturally, these 'monastic' tendencies hamper communication at all levels; but the situation becomes critical beyond measure with regard to communication to people who are particularly sensitive to the importation of foreign patterns of thought and conduct and to any disregard of their own cultural heritage. It is no wonder that such a high percentage of missionaries, who have never really entered into the life stream of the nation, have comfortably settled to a ministry to simpler folk among whom they are more apt to reproduce the congregations they have left behind in the 'Homeland'[13]!

Two tragic consequences

The consequences that this neglect to which we have been pointing has had for the Church can hardly be exaggerated. It is my own conviction that some of the most serious problems which the Protestant movement, and more particularly the 'fundamentalist' wing of it[14], faces today are a direct derivation of both the emphases and failures of missionary work from its beginnings in the nineteenth century. Two of these problems may here be mentioned:

1. *Lack of well-trained national leaders.* It would hardly be in accordance with the Spirit of Christ—He who chose a few peasants from Galilee to be His apostles—to deplore the presence of hundreds of those who today have taken upon their shoulders much of the responsibility for the building up of the Church of Christ in Latin America, despite all the limitations which their lack of education places upon them. Yet, we do deplore the almost complete absence of a national leadership equipped *both* spiritually *and* intellectually to meet the challenge of the day. Three areas where this absence is felt may here be suggested:

(*a*) The ministry of the Word. It can hardly be over-emphasized that the large majority of churches throughout Latin America have no concept of the meaning of Bible exposition. There is a proliferation of Bible schools, most of which function at a level below that of secondary school; seminaries are few and far between.[15] The net results are:

(1) a common disparagement of the ministry on the part of the educated (is a Christian university student to be regarded as 'unspiritual' if he feels that for him it would be a waste of time to study in a Bible school where a high percentage of students hardly know how to read?); (2) an evangelical community living on a starvation diet—the preaching of the rudiments of the Gospel with variations in texts but scarcely in content.

(*b*) The relation between Christianity and culture. There has been no serious effort to relate the Gospel to the social context. On the whole, the Protestant movement in these lands is devoid of theologians and thinkers able to show the relevance of the message to Latin American culture.[16] Its ethic is patterned more on imported moulds than on Biblical principles. It may at times be described as a small minority of anti-intellectual isolationists with a faith characterized by a maximum of emotionalism and a minimum of reality.

(*c*) Church organization and policy. With a few exceptions, missionaries remain in the positions of leadership within the church and responsible for the policies which govern its life and outreach. All too many missionary societies have failed to produce evidence that the concept of an indigenous church is to them more than an ideal to which one may readily pay lip-service. In a large majority of cases such institutions as Bible institutes, radio stations, hospitals, printing shops, etc., connected with the work of the Church, are completely dependent upon missionaries for orientation and management.

2. *The foreign character of the Protestant movement.* The thesis common in Roman Catholic circles in Latin America, that Protestantism is essentially a foreign movement, remains on the whole unchallenged. The lack of a practical application of the Gospel to the local situation, the importation of ways and modes from outside, the predominance of missionaries in the positions of leadership—these are only some of the factors which seem to lend support to it. True as it is that Protestantism is now a demographic quantum which cannot simply be disregarded by the 'established' Church, it is nonetheless undeniable that it has been so far unable to extend its roots into the soil of Latin American thought and life. In a great measure, Richard Patter's dictum written over two decades ago, for all the numerical growth of the Protestant movement, remains true: 'Latin America is what it is because Catholicism is what it is'.[17] By contrast, we South American Protestants on the whole continue to be appallingly unaware that the Christ brought to us by the conquerors is by no means the only one known within the Spanish tradition,[18] and looking outside our own borders for those who will do all serious thinking for us.

New prospects

The foregoing discussion has been necessary in order for us to understand the great importance of the Christian witness in the universities in relation to the life of the Church in the fields of the world and particularly in Latin America. It cannot be sufficiently emphasized that the description here given is intended as a *general* picture of the situation and therefore

it leaves room for all necessary exceptions. As such, however, it provides a background against which we are better able to discern the significance of student work today. We thus come to the admission that, even though we began our thinking on the missionary responsibility of the Church with regard to students from a theological perspective, we cannot escape the tragic consequences of our neglect of them. We may not evangelize students *because* they are a strategic class, but the neglect of our spiritual task will always render a harvest of deplorable results, such as those described above.

The opposite, however, is also true. The handful of missionaries, both national and foreign, who constrained by the love of Christ are now engaged in the witness among students cannot avoid the conclusion that here is a source of vitality with unlimited possibilities not only for the Church but also for society at large. What God is already doing cannot be measured in terms of statistics. Nor can a report of the latest developments in this area of His work be attempted within the limits of the present article. Here it will suffice to point to some of the features of the type of ministry in which the writer has been given a share, features whose bearing on the situation described above will be obvious to the reader:

1. *Presentation of the whole Gospel.* Paul's concern was that those who came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ would come to an experiential knowledge of the whole counsel of God. By contrast, all too often we have been satisfied with an evangelism which hardly goes beyond the level of emotions; our zeal for conversions has led us to a reduction of the Gospel to a naive philosophy of success. We have failed to show the cost of discipleship and the lordship of Christ in all aspects of human existence. In our witness to Christ among university students we must, therefore, emphasize not only conversion and regeneration as an *initial* stage of the Christian life, but also growth into the likeness of Christ. We cannot separate the *kerygma* from the *didache* and salvation from discipleship. Furthermore, conversion means far more than 'believism'—the ready assent to a doctrinal formula—and manhood in Christ transcends the mastery of pious techniques. It is imperative that we lead the seeker to a commitment of the totality of his person to Christ as Lord and that, beyond the point of decision, we help him to discern the implications of Christ's lordship in relation to each aspect of life in his own historical context. Whatever else, Christian maturity certainly involves freedom before God and the exhilarating discovery in our own personal experience that, as revealed in the Bible, the God of redemption is also the God of creation and that there is no divorce between faith and reason.

2. *Student initiative.* Not only do we deprive ourselves of an incomparable joy: we also fail to develop the sense of responsibility—essential to true leadership—among Christian students, when we withhold from them the task of initiative in witness among their peers. That there is a place for instruction and practical help, no-one would deny. Christian students need to be shown not only the *what* and the *why*, but also the *how* of university evangelism. But we are far from fulfilling our commission

unless we fully recognize that there is no better evangelist among students than those who are students themselves, and that making mistakes is a part of the learning process in the forging of leaders. The continuous intervention of 'full-time' student evangelists may produce immediate statistical results, but in the long run it will be inimical to the development of responsible leaders. 'There must be nothing willy-nilly about evangelism. It is not the job of only a few professionals, but the joyful privilege of millions of articulate, self-giving Christians'.[19] And the Holy Spirit is able to see to it that through the unexperienced, at times fearful student, Christ is presented, by life and by word, to those forming part of the university community. No-one has a monopoly on the Spirit, and we certainly fail to trust Him when we fail to trust the Christian student and to curtail his own initiative.

3. *Autonomy.* There is no place for missionary paternalism in the witness among students. Our call is not to reproduce ourselves with all the thought patterns and ways of doing things which we bring from our own background, but to make disciples of Jesus Christ—followers of our Lord, not of a system or an ideology. In practical terms this means that we must leave Christian students free to choose their own approach and methods in student work. This is not to deny the existence of Biblical principles which remain constant across national boundaries; but our aim must be a student witness in which Biblical principles are applied to the local situation, without being forced into ready-made jackets imported from abroad. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom', and only a ministry characterized by the freedom of the Spirit will result in the formation of national leaders able to think by themselves and to discern the meaning of discipleship in their own world.

There is no limit to what God can do through students who have caught the vision of Himself and of His purpose for humanity as revealed in Jesus Christ. The Church stands in need of a renewed sense of her vocation; the world awaits the message of deliverance from the powers of darkness. In a quiet way God is moving into this situation through students who by His grace are walking with Christ in the way of discipleship.

1 The reference here is to Dr. Clyde Taylor, Executive Secretary of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

2 Cf. Eric S. Fife and Arthur F. Glasser, *Missions in Crisis* (London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962), chapter 10: 'Reaching the Strategic Students'.

3 For an examination of Scriptural missionary motives as exemplified in Paul's life see Donald G. Miller, 'Pauline Motives for the Christian Mission', *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, ed. G. H. Anderson (London: SCM, 1961), pp. 72ff.

4 Cf. e.g., Rom. 3: 27ff; 10: 12; Gal. 3: 6ff.

5 A good case for reaching students as an aspect of missionary strategy is made by Eric S. Fife and Arthur F. Glasser, *op. cit.* We must deplore, however, the attitude of Christians engaged in student evangelism, who conceive of the preaching of the Gospel as a means to detain the spread of Communism. Our views on Communism aside, the idea that 'Communists are taking over the universities—we must proclaim the Gospel to the students' reflects a regrettable mixture of Christianity with political and economic interests. Taking Scripture as the starting point, we must proclaim the Gospel to the students whether Communists are taking over the universities or not.

6 The Protestant constituency in Latin America has been estimated at approximately 10 million, out of a total population of 200 million.

7 This is more applicable in some countries (e.g. Colombia, Ecuador, Peru) than in others (e.g. Brazil, Argentina), and to 'non-historic' than to 'historic' churches. Even in the case of the former the situation is changing slowly; but still the number of educated people in the membership of Protestant churches in Latin America as a whole is proportionally insignificant.

8 Eugene A. Nida, 'The Relationship of Social Structure to the Problem of Evangelism in Latin America', *Practical Anthropology*, Vol. V, No. 3 (May-June, 1958), pp. 101ff.

9 No disparagement of tribal work is here intended, but simply the recognition that this type of ministry lends itself more readily to sensationalism in the interests of promotion. It must be admitted, however, that student work may also be surrounded by the glamour of impressive statistics and the overtones of a cosmic struggle against Communism.

10 Cf. Thomas J. Liggett, *The Role of the Missionary in Latin America Today* (New York: The Committee on Co-operation in Latin America, 1963), pp. 8ff.

11 That the Bible-school, 'non-historic' groups have continued to develop while the 'historic' churches (with the exception of the Southern Baptists) have remained stationary with regard to missions is a matter of common knowledge. In Latin America alone it is estimated that 80% of the total missionary force proceeds from 'non-historic' churches.

12 Fife and Glasser, *op. cit.*, pp. 204f.

13 It would be a mistake to believe that *all* missionaries fit into this pattern: there are honourable exceptions. The above paragraph, therefore, must be taken for what it is intended to be—a *general* description of the situation.

14 Neither liberalism nor neo-orthodoxy has ever amounted to much in the Protestant community in Latin America. It is a rebuke to Evangelicals that, now that new currents of theological thought are gaining momentum here we are beginning to see the emergence of a well-trained Latin American leadership under the aegis of non-Evangelicals.

15 It would not be at all unfair to say that many a Bible school bearing the name of 'seminary' simply does not deserve it.

16 Working on the compilation of a bibliography for Christian students I was recently struck again by the unbelievable drought of evangelical literature in Spanish. It must be furthermore noted that a high percentage of the existing works are translations from English.

17 Richard Patter, *Catholicism in Latin America* (Washington National Welfare Conference, 1945), p. 9.

18 This has been eloquently shown by John D. Mackay in *The Other Spanish Christ* (The Macmillan Company, 1933).

19 Werner G. Marx, *Latin American Evangelist*, (May-June, 1966), p. 13.

Roland Allen: The Man Who Understood New Testament Missionary Principles

K. G. Hyland

In 1921 four remarkable men were regularly meeting in London. Alexander McLeish, on his third furlough from India, wrote: 'On that occasion I had been asked to stay over in London for talks with Sidney Clark and Thomas Cochrane. I found Roland Allen daily present . . . These men formed a unique group and had very different backgrounds. Sydney Clark had been a successful business man and was a Congregationalist. Dr. Cochrane had been a missionary of the London Missionary Society in Mongolia and was a Presbyterian. Roland Allen was an Anglican and had been a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in China. There was no doubt as to the bond which united such different men'.[1] McLeish describes this bond as 'the conviction that a revolution was overdue in missionary work, not only in methods and principles, but also in the objective itself'. As to the source from which such a stream of prophetic thinking and writing came, he says that it was 'under the stimulus of what is called Biblical Theology we have begun to learn again to subject customary church and missionary practice to the scrutiny of the New Testament'.

Sidney Clark was the subject of Roland Allen's last book, published in 1937. He wrote, 'In 1907 the general managing partner of Bradley's of Chester resigned his office, in order to devote himself entirely to foreign missions'. He was forty-five. Thenceforward he travelled the world, surveyed mission fields, rethought mission principles, wrote on these extensively, founded the Survey Application Trust and the World Dominion Movement'.[2]

These two men worked together much and fertilised each other's thinking.

Roland Allen was born in 1868, went from Bristol Grammar School to Oxford and was ordained in 1892. He went to the North China mission of the SPG in 1895. After a furlough in 1901-2 at Christmas 1902 he wrote in pencil a quarterly report which survives in the archives of the SPG. It is evident that thus early he had already arrived at some of the conclusions which were to dominate the rest of his working life. 'But here I must say that the continued presence of the foreigner seems to produce an evil effect. The native genius is cramped by his presence, and cannot work with him. The Christians tend to sit still and let him do everything for them, and to deny all responsibility . . . A visit of two or three months stirs up the Church; long continued residence stifles it'.

In 1903 his health broke down, in 1904 he became Vicar of Chalfont St. Peter until in 1907 when he resigned. The general ground of this was

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the Erastianism of the Establishment. He wrote in his letter to his parishioners: 'In consequence we see the strange and painful sight of men and women who habitually neglect their religious duties, or who openly deny the truth of the creeds, or who by the immorality of their lives openly defy the laws of God, standing up as sponsors in a Christian Church . . . and as representatives of the Church on behalf of a new-born child, solemnly professing their desire for Holy Baptism . . . their steadfast faith in the creeds, their willingness to obey God's will, whilst they know, and everyone in the Church knows, that they themselves neither do, nor intend to do, any of these things . . . One form of protest, and only one, remains open to me; that is to decline to hold an office in which I am liable to be called upon to do what I feel to be wrong. I have chosen that. I have resigned'.[3]

From then on Allen never again held any formal ecclesiastical office, but 'tried to live as nearly the life of a voluntary priest as a man may who was not ordained as a voluntary cleric'.[4] This was not by the force of circumstances, for in his earliest major book, *Missionary Methods*, he stressed the non-stipendiary nature of Paul's service, and those he trained to be his companions and the elders of the churches he founded. In a paper, '*Non-Professional Missionaries*',[5] and his formal treatment of the theme in *The Case for Voluntary Clergy*[6] (1930) he stated the Biblical grounds for this major decision.

From about 1920 till his death in 1947 he lived in East Africa. In *The Case for Voluntary Clergy* published in 1930 he wrote: 'I have been a stipendiary missionary in China, where I tried to prepare young men for the work of catechists with a view to Holy Orders; and there I first learnt that we cannot establish the Church widely by that method. Then I was in charge of a country district in China; and there I learnt that the guidance of old experienced men in the Church, even if they were illiterate, was of immense value. Then I held a benefice in England; and there I learnt the waste of spiritual power which our restrictions involve at home'. These experiences, and his constant reference ot every question to the New Testament, were the fountain from which all his thinking was drawn. These conclusions he published in the form of some major works, a series of pamphlets, and many articles.

The plan behind this paper is now to take chronologically the more considerable writings as they came from his pen and it may be seen how his vision of missionary matters was developed as the years passed.

In 1912 was published the volume of some 230 pages '*Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*' The sub-title was 'A Study of the Church in the Four Provinces'. According to Charles Chaney, 'This has been his most influential work, and, though it is really not the most mature expression of his thought, it was fundamental to all that he later wrote'.[7]

Allen stated his thesis thus: 'It is impossible but that the account so carefully given by St. Luke . . . should have something more than a mere archaeological and historical interest. Like the rest of the Holy Scriptures it was certainly "written for our learning". It was certainly meant to be something more than a story from which ordinary people of

a later age can get no more instruction for practical missionary work than they receive from the history of the Cid or from the exploits of King Arthur. It was really intended to throw light on the path of those who should come after'.[8] Paul established churches; we start missions. Paul's churches were complete churches; he left behind him instructed societies, adequately officered, with the sacraments and a tradition, and that in a very short time. 'In a very few years he built the church on so firm a basis that it could live and grow in faith and practice, that it could work out its own problems, and overcome all dangers and hindrances both from within and without. I propose in this book to attempt to set forth the methods which he used to produce this amazing result'.[9] He then proceeds to deal with such matters as—did Paul have especially favourable conditions, or an influential class of convert either morally or socially? how did Paul present his message? and the place of miracle. He opens up the matter of how Paul handled finance, how he trained converts, for baptism and ordination.

With regard to church organisation he shows that Paul appointed elders very soon and gave them authority to adminster the sacraments. (It is perhaps wise at this point to point out that the terms being used are Allen's, who was a convinced High Anglican.) Paul only stayed long enough to do this and then, on principle, left them, allowing the Holy Spirit to develop the churches. He kept in touch by letters and visits. Allen pointed out that Paul did not trust his converts, but he trusted the Holy Spirit in his converts.

All this naturally raises the problem of discipline and highlights the different approach to this problem of Paul on the one hand and the Judaizers[10] on the other. This leads further to the matter of how Paul maintained unity. It is amazing how relevant this chapter is to current problems of unity:—

He refused to transplant the law and the customs.

He refused to acknowledge a central administrative body.

He declined to establish *a priori* tests of orthodoxy.

He refused to allow universal application of particular precedents.

Nowhere did Roland Allen so convincingly demonstrate that he was expounding the New Testament—thinking and writing far ahead of his time—than in his treatment of the moral conditions of the mission field. 'In the mission field we need to revise our ideas of the meaning of the Christian life. A Christian life is a life lived in Christ: it does not depend upon conditions. I mean that the life of a slave-girl, the concubine of a savage heathen, amidst the most cruel and barbarous surroundings, herself the instrument of the most vicious and immoral practices, may be a truly Christian life. Christ transcends all conditions'.[11]

In Part 5 he contrasts St. Paul's results with the fact that everywhere in our day Christianity is still exotic, dependent. The pattern is the same however different the cultures of the various countries are. It is a disturbing and just criticism.

He concludes by applying the lessons to missionary work to-day.

In 1913 came *Essential Missionary Principles*. In this work Allen goes far below the surface of men and methods to the underlying impulse to missionary work; to the hope before missionary work; and the means by which the impulse is worked out.

Perhaps the chapter on the impulse of missionary outreach is as fine an exposition of the Biblical contrast between Law and Spirit as can anywhere be found. Under the Old Testament it is command applied; under the New Testament it is the Spirit communicated. Under the Old Testament the letter is the standard; under the Gospel we have an ideal with no fixed point. 'The Father sent the Son by a command, but the command was a Procession of the Holy Spirit. So Christ sends his people not by external command only; but by a giving of the same Spirit'.[12]

As to 'the hope': we are not working for something, but toward the revelation of a Person, Jesus Christ. The revelation is seen in the conversion of individuals, in the growth of the Church. 'We need to take pains to keep clearly before our minds that the hope before us is not the perfecting of the church, but the Revelation of Christ in the perfecting of the Church'.[13]

The means is the expression of the missionary Spirit in activity. It is the Spirit of the Incarnation. It therefore must take material form; but only by spiritual means can spiritual results be obtained. For this reason it makes a great difference to us if we realise that the Spirit is the effective force. It makes a great difference to others to whom we appeal for prayer and money. It makes a great difference to those to whom we go, because they seek to assess the motive behind our going, and will inevitably discover its quality.

It has now become clear that the two dominating factors in Allen's thinking are the doctrine of the Church and the doctrine of the Spirit. So in 1917 followed his book, *Pentecost and the World*. This is a study designed to show that the Acts first record the fulfilment of the Promise of the Spirit, and thereafter the results of the receiving of that Promise. These results are wholly along the line of missionary activity, and all the events are recorded solely because of their bearing upon that activity.

Allen shows that there was an inner, inescapable impulse to spread the Gospel, and that the Gospel by the Spirit revealed the need of men for forgiveness and power to live anew.

He goes on to show that the apostles saw to it that the Spirit was ministered to all who believed (2 Cor. 3: 7, 8) and that those who were later set apart for special tasks were men who were already filled with the Holy Spirit.

He shows that it was the giving of the Spirit which authenticated new forms of missionary activity. It was Peter's argument as to his action in the household of Cornelius. It was the activity of the Spirit among Gentiles which silenced the critics at the Council of Jerusalem. They acted upon the supremacy of the Spirit. Allen's comment is: 'This is the danger which besets judgments based upon expediency, or upon anticipation of the results. Such judgments close the way to revelation of new

truth. The unknown is too fearful, the untried too dangerous. It is safer to refuse than to admit. So the possibility of progress is lost, and the opportunity. From this the apostles were saved by their recognition of the supremacy of the Spirit'.[14]

Lastly, the gift of the Spirit was the sole test of communion. On this ground they received uncircumcised Gentiles. 'If the Holy Spirit is given, those to whom He is given are certainly accepted of God in Christ'.[15]

This supremacy of the work of the Spirit led Allen to consider the ancillary activities of missions, and in 1919 he wrote a pamphlet entitled *Educational Principles and Missionary Methods.* Then in 1926 came *Missionary Activities in Relation to the Manifestation of the Spirit.* He shows that missionary activities—e.g., education, medicine—very often have been substituted for the 'Spirit in activity'. The activities of local churches are overshadowed by them; national believers may take little interest in them; they stamp the church as a foreign institution; means are put in the place of the Spirit; national believers are taught to rely upon them; and the manifestation of the Spirit in the national church is obscured. The remedy is truly indigenous churches.

In 1927, came his most mature work on missionary principles, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church, and the Causes which hinder it.* In this he pleads for the freedom of the Spirit in the converts and in the Churches. He notes the modern movements towards national and ecclesiastical liberty. It is interesting to speculate what benefit might have accrued to the work of missions in the content of nationalism if Allen's forward vision had been heeded. In Madagascar for twenty-five years all missionaries were driven from the island and a severe persecution instituted. Yet in that time the Church multiplied ten-fold.

Spontaneous testimony must be voluntary. If a witness is a paid agent, both he and the hearer are affected by it. Christian witness cannot be controlled, and we ought to rejoice that we cannot control it. The wind bloweth where it listeth.

Allen then posed the questions relating to doctrine and morals and shows that Paul relied upon teaching and exposition rather than upon an authoritarian control from outside the local church.

He then turns to organization and shows that missionary work today is presented as the work of societies rather than the work of the church. It leads us to attempt to organize spiritual forces; it immobilises missionaries. Mission implies movement; station implies stopping. Missionaries are a professional class, and lead the nationals to regarding money as the criterion of their own efficiency in the work of mission.

In 1930 came *The Case for Voluntary Clergy* in which the fruit of previous thinking becomes clear. 'My contention in this book is that the traditions we hold, forbidding the ordination of men engaged in earning their living by what we call secular occupations makes void the word of Christ . . . The stipendiary system grew up in settled churches and is only suitable for some settled churches at some periods; for expansion, for the establishment of new churches, it is the greatest possible hindrance'.[16]

Later in a quite devastating manner he contrasts the qualifications Paul lays down for the elders of a local church and the requirements for a young ordinand. He shows they are quite incompatible.

It differentiates clergy from laity, thereby creating a division in the Body of Christ; it hinders those who could develop to the full their life in the church. In *Missionary Methods* he has this to say: 'The meetings of the church were meetings for mutual instruction. Anyone who had been reading the Book and had discovered a passage which seemed to point to Christ, or an exhortation which seemed applicable to the circumstances of their life, or a promise which encouraged him with hope for this life or the next produced it, and explained it for the benefit of all. That is better than sending a catechist to instruct a congregation. The catechist conducts the service—the others listen, or get into the habit of not listening. The local prophet is silent. 'St. Paul did not send Catechists; he took them away'.[17] The stipendiary system puts over the church a man who is imported and not one of themselves as were St. Paul's elders. On the contrary the image of wholly disinterested service on the part of those closely in touch with ordinary life is needed.

Since World War II Allen's thought has begun to come into its own. He pleaded for churches that were self-governed, self-supported, self-propagating plus the manifestation of its own indigenous nature, and by that he meant something 'at home' to the country, not imposed from outside. There has been a spate of studies on Allen and his principles. Donald McGavran's books, *The Bridges of God* and *How Churches Grow* have voiced Allen's thesis. Allen himself felt his ideas would come into their own around 1968.

In 1932 Allen wrote from Kenya 'I hold that truth must win its own way and I stand aside when I have pointed to the truth—all I can say is "This is the way of Christ and His Apostles".'

'One day I shall know that I have nothing more to do here, no word to say more, and then I shall withdraw, as I came, silently. Whether I have done anything at all, or shall do anything at all is known only to God. The day will declare it'.

1 Biographical memoir in Roland Allen, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (World Dominion Press, 1965), p. ix.

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8 *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (Rpr. Eerdmans and World Dominion, 1962), p. 4.

9 Ibid., p. 8.

10 See 'St. Paul and the Judaizers: A Dialogue', repr. in *The Ministry of The Spirit.*
11 *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (World Dominion Press, 1960), p. 82.
12 *Missionary Principles* (World Dominion Press, 1964), p. 21.
13 Ibid., p. 90.
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Review

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND THE CREATION OF NORTHERN RHODESIA, 1880-1924. *By* R. I. ROTBERG. (Princeton University Press; Oxford University Press, 1965). Pp. xi, 240. $6.50, 52/-

Reviewed by J. K. Howard

The influence of the Christian Church upon the various countries in which its Gospel has been proclaimed has proved, over the centuries, incalculable. In this new book Mr. Rotberg attempts to assess this influence with relation to Northern Rhodesia (or, as it is today, the Republic of Zambia) from the period of earliest European contact with the Bantu peoples of the area until the British South Africa Company relinquished its rule and the territory became a British Protectorate under direct rule from Whitehall in 1924. The field of such a survey is immense, and as a professional historian the author should have been well aware of the impossibility of doing justice to such a task in less than 150 pages of text. The overall impression of the book is 'bitty'; it tends to make one feel that it is little more than a hasty compilation of facts; quotation is piled upon quotation, and his judgments—and especially the religious insights—are consistently superficial. Nonetheless, there is much of value in the book, especially his chapters on 'Christian Authority and Secular Power' and 'The Growth of Secular Initiative'.

A well-known and respected missionary once remarked to me that more money and man-power had been spent by the Church on Northern

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Rhodesia per head of population than in any other mission field, and with fewer spiritual returns. This may be an over-statement, but Mr. Rotberg's book makes clear some of the reasons why such a judgment could ever have been made. It is, as the book makes clear, one of the tragedies of Christian work in Northern Rhodesia that Christianity was all too often, by the missionaries themselves, equated with Western ideals and outlooks, and later with Western imperialism. This was true right up to the end of the colonial era; most mission stations, including those of the Christian Brethren, had the Union Jack fluttering above them. I have seen on Brethren stations photos of the Queen on the walls, but not one Scripture poster. Mr. Rotberg, with a certain amount of that 'holier than thou' attitude which is so often a feature of American writing on colonial matters, highlights the basic issue. Those who imagine that the Brethren missionaries were above secular politics and the miserable intrigues of white colonialists against the Bantu chiefs would do well to read the tragic story of the founding of Johnstone Falls mission on p. 69. It is small wonder that the Christian worker has today to deal with increasing suspicion and distrust. This is the legacy we have left behind.

The other important matter which is dealt with in the book is the vacuum produced by the deliberate eradication of tribal custom. With their Victorian presuppositions they considered evil virtually everything associated with the tribe, and, therefore, it had to be rooted out, lock, stock and barrel. Quite apart from whether they were right in their basic ideas about the necessary evilness of native customs (and I for one believe they were utterly wrong), in disallowing—in particular among those professing Christianity—certain practices which were basic to the well-being of the social unit, they put nothing in their place. The Bantu were incapable at their stage of social development of understanding and adopting a Western mode of life (I say 'Western' and not 'Christian' deliberately), and with their roots cut they drifted and became lost. The missionaries failed to grasp the concept of 'corporate personality', which is basic in Bantu society as it is in all primitive peoples; and they failed to understand the New Testament concept of the Church as a community. If they had but grasped this latter point, much of the tragedy unfolded in this book might have been avoided. The Christian Church must accept at least some of the blame for the moral decay and delinquency which increasingly marks Bantu life in Central Africa today.

From the technical point of view Mr. Rotberg's orthography is at times odd. It is not correct to write CiBemba in English; it should be written ChiBemba, and the same applies to a number of other languages (p. 48). On p. 20 he speaks of Ndebeleland, but this is on any reckoning an error, since Ndebele is singular. If he wishes to be pedantic he might call it Amandabeleland, but it has been called Matabeleland with general acceptance for at least seventy years. He is right with Barotseland on p. 20, but why Bulozi on p. 23? Again, on p. 27 the accepted orthography is Xhosa, not Xosa. One could mention several more instances; it is a pity he did not take the trouble to be consistent and correct with his spellings on Bantu names.

On p. 53 Rotberg is just not correct. The White Fathers were just as concerned with adequate living standards as the rest. Further, he misses the basic point that they were a thorn in the flesh of the administration all the time. Most of them were Belgians, Dutch or French and owed no allegiance to the British rule, and often went out of their way to undermine its authority. To have this sort of running sore in the middle of a community, especially in the state of development of Northern Rhodesia then (and for that matter Zambia today), naturally produces grave possibilities. For all its faults the British system never produced a Congo.

The author's concept of the 'creed' of the distinctively evangelical mission groups is something of a parody (p. 77), and it is in this field that his judgments are most at fault. Again, it is not true that originally the U.M.C.A. was a High Church group, although it is today. His delineation of the missionaries (Appendix II) is somewhat hard, although it must be conceded that a good many were poorly qualified, which may have been one factor in producing the 'beggar on horseback' type of situation. The biographical notes on various missionaries are too short to be very useful and are at times inaccurate, not so much by errors of commission but omission.

There are a great deal of other points which one could take up: the problem of tribal dancing, discipline on the mission station, and so forth. There clearly had to be some sort of discipline on the mission stations; and although it was, as Rotberg points out, at times excessive, it has to be understood against the viewpoint of the time and the savage and often arbitrary discipline of the tribe. This the author has completely misunderstood, and one feels deliberately so, since his ultimate purpose of the denigration of the missionary effort in Northern Rhodesia is clear from the beginning. The real problem was the development of mission stations at all, not the discipline on them.

In spite of these criticisms, however, this is a book which all who are interested in the task of the Christian Church overseas should read. His conclusions in his Epilogue, although perhaps overstated, are nonetheless broadly valid; and it is only against the background of this early situation in such countries that the present troubles in Africa can be seen in their true perspective. In view of the attitude of the Christian Church and its general tendency to be identified with the forces of social reaction, it is small wonder that militant African Nationalism is increasingly anti-Christian in its bias. Let us also remember that the Christian Brethren do not have clean hands in this regard.

It is unfortunate that such a valuable book as this should be priced out of the range of the average pocket; $6.50 or 52 shillings for less than 150 pages of text is extortionate.

. . .

(Some of the members of the Fellowship may be interested in Mr. Rotberg's article, 'The Plymouth Brethren and the Occupation of Katanga, 1886-1907', *The Journal of African History*, 4 (1964): 285-297. W.G.)

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