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The effective executive makes strength productive. He knows that one cannot build on weakness. To achieve results, one has to use all available [p.298](#) strength—the strength of associates, the strength of the superior, and one’s own strengths. These strengths are the true opportunities. To make strength productive is the unique purpose of organization. It cannot, of course, overcome the weaknesses with which each of us is abundantly endowed. But it can make them irrelevant. Its task is to use the strength of each man as a building block for joint performance.

Killinski and Wofford, in *Organization and Leadership in the Local Church*, say:

Organization and personnel objectives should be helpful in guiding the church in the coordination of its efforts toward the recognition, development, and use of spiritual gifts and toward the activities of church members in fulfilling other primary objectives. We are concerned with the establishment of an organization and the development of people who can most effectively fulfill the purposes of the church.

In effect, the minister must be a manager multiplying ministries in his local church. He is to evolve and develop managerial expertise to maximize his ministry to the glory of God. He must be a faithful steward. Otherwise, he is guilty of sinful neglect.

The prophet Elijah has a simple rule for success. “If the Lord is God follow Him” ([1 Kings 19:21](#)).

Attorney “Jun” Vencer is General Secretary of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches and a member of the W.E.F. Executive Council. [p. 299](#)

Philosophy and Structure of Accreditation: Theological Education Standards Today and Tomorrow

Robert W. Ferris

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This Keynote address of the 1981 Annual Meeting of Philippine Association of Bible and Theological Schools (PABATS) held at Cebu Foursquare Bible College, Cebu City, September 14–15, 1981 has perceptive insights for evaluating theological training in any part of the world.

My assignment is to discuss with you the very important subject of standards in theological education. Schools in the West have historically taken two approaches to the maintenance of standards. European nations reserve to their state universities the right to grant academic degrees. Students attending colleges which are not part of the state university system are required to take “external” examinations prepared by university faculty. By establishing a criterion for the knowledge and competence of degree

candidates, these examinations have effectively maintained educational standards in European education.

In North America we have taken a different approach. In order to make educational opportunities available to everyone, many schools and colleges have been empowered to grant degrees. Control of education by the state (as in Europe) has been exchanged for control by educators themselves. Associations of schools and colleges have been established for the express purpose of setting educational standards and certifying the adequacy of programmes.

Each model has its strengths and weaknesses. The examination model, with its focus on control at the point of programme outcomes, has proven more effective in assuring high standards of education. It also promotes elitism and is susceptible to philosophical, theological, and cultural bias. The accreditation model has traditionally focused on control at the point of programme processes, with wide variation observed in competency of graduates. Nevertheless, accreditation has proven a more adaptable model, preferable for application to the theological education in Asia and throughout the world. [p. 300](#)

Today accreditation is an idea which is gaining acceptance at an accelerating rate. The third TAP-ASIA consultation in Hong Kong approved a resolution to create a theological accrediting programme in 1974 (Ro, 1976:1), anticipating the scheme offered by Asia Theological Association today. Subsequent years have seen regional associations established in Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe. In March, 1980, the International Council of Accrediting Agencies for evangelical theological education (ICAA) was formed to provide a world-wide network for educators engaged in accreditation (ICAA, 1980). ICAA sponsored its second international consultation in Malawi, Southern Africa in August, 1981.

Inasmuch as the founding of PABATS in 1968 anticipated by more than a decade the rise of theological accreditation world-wide, it is appropriate that we should also assume leadership in the clarification and development of accreditation philosophy and structure. It is that task to which we now must turn.

A RATIONALE FOR ACCREDITATION

Every housewife knows she must keep her yard swept if her plants are to look their best. It is also useful to clear away ideological weeds before cultivating a constructive rationale. This is the approach I will assume—first to identify and expose inappropriate reasons for accreditation, and then to examine reasons which seem to me to justify accreditation within evangelical theological education.

Inappropriate Reasons for Accreditation

There is no shortage of inappropriate reasons for accreditation; perhaps the most discouraging factor is the frequency with which I encountered them in the course of preparing this paper. The first I would mention is the *perpetuation of colonial patterns*. No one would claim this as a reason for promoting accreditation, but anyone reading the literature begins to sense this is a hidden agenda for some. I would not even accuse anyone of consciously seeking to perpetuate colonial patterns. The stated commitment is always to “maintaining standards”. Sometimes we discover, however, that “maintaining standards” means doing things the way they are done in the West. Courses are designed, curricula planned, classes conducted, teachers hired, and buildings constructed all on the assumption that “West is best”. Doing things in non-Western ways is to “lower” standards. Accreditation standards are drafted, therefore, to assure that these colonial patterns do not change—in the name of “maintaining standards”. [p. 301](#)

The most unfortunate outcome of accreditation which perpetuates colonial patterns is that it creates dependency on Western resources. This is most noticeable with respect to faculty and finances. If standards for faculty are set to require Western scholastic credentials and degrees, then our schools will be forever bound to graduate institutions in the West.¹ If standards for programmes and facilities are set without sensitivity to the resources and economy of the Filipino church, then our schools will be forever dependent on dollars from the West. Accreditation, if it is valid at all, should assist us in breaking these colonial patterns. Accreditation standards which have the effect of perpetuating colonialism in theological education are wrong.

A second inappropriate reason for accreditation is the *imposition of irrelevant standards*. As noted above, the accreditation model has traditionally focused on process factors as criteria for programme evaluation. It generally has been assumed that a school with a highly trained faculty, a large research library, a low faculty-student ratio, and stringent requirements on student performance will produce graduates who are able to function effectively. As a matter of fact, research designed to test these assumptions reveals little or no correlation between the process factors listed and graduates' effectiveness in the field (Troutt, 1979). In another study, Carkhuff found that the effectiveness of professional counselling trainees was *negatively* related to the involvement of faculty in scholarly research (Carkhuff, 1969:201).

Why should this amaze us? At a common sense level we see that more Ph.D.s on a faculty cannot assure graduates who are more effective in ministry. Similarly, there is no self-evident reason a school with 10,000 books should produce better pastors than another with 1,000 books only. We see these things at a common sense level, why not when we set standards for accreditation?

It is high time for us to call irrelevancies by their name. We need to acknowledge that accreditation standards which major on irrelevant criteria tell little or nothing about programme quality. We need to affirm that accreditation criteria purged of irrelevancies represent a higher, not lower, standard for theological education. [p. 302](#)

A third reason for accreditation entirely inappropriate in theological education is the *enhancement of elitist values*. This is a subtle one; we all have to watch our motives carefully in this respect. Have you made a word study of use of the terms "haughty" and "proud" in Proverbs and the Old Testament prophets? It is enough to sober anyone! Jesus characterized himself as "meek and lowly in heart" and taught that the one who humbles himself like a little child best reflects the values of the kingdom of heaven. Secular education may strive for elitism, but this mentality has no place among evangelical educators. Any institution which seeks accreditation in order to boast of its high quality programme, seeks accreditation for the wrong reason. Accreditation is not just a ploy in the game of one-upmanship, and we must denounce every tendency to make it so. Yet I have seen this, and probably you have too. May God preserve us from this sin!

Appropriate Reasons for Accreditation

¹ If institutions in this country simply mimic graduate programmes in the West, our dependency is not reduced, it is increased. Any programme which is heavily dependent on expatriot personnel or Filipinos with Western training should make us nervous. There are colonial assumptions not far below the surface, and the sooner we recognize them, the better we can deal with them.

I do not mean to imply that all reasons for accreditation are inappropriate. (That would make for a very short paper and an equally short tenure as your Executive Director!) In fact there are at least three reasons which seem to me entirely valid.

First, I would mention *programme classification*. PABATS has identified four levels of ministry training programmes, ranging from “certificate level” to “post-college level”. It is useful for the guidance of churches and students to identify at which level each institution or programme is training. Prospective students and those who counsel them within your own denomination may (or may not) be aware of the level of training you offer. What about those from other churches, however? Prospective students may be the first to benefit from classification of your programme.

Programme classification is also important for meaningful transfer of credits from one institution to another. We all design our training programmes with the intention that students will begin and complete their training at our school. We also know that does not always happen. When a student is forced to shift from one institution to another, how are credits evaluated and what work must be repeated? From the perspective of the school this is a question of maintaining standards, but from the student’s standpoint the issue is justice. The considerations are complex, and it is not my intention to sort through them here. The task is certainly simplified, however, if we know the two programmes function at the same level.

Programme classification of PABATS member institutions also opens a door to meaningful interaction among schools with shared interests [p. 303](#) and concerns. I am sure this was the intent of the founders of this association when they provided for “Councils” corresponding to the levels of our programmes. I am personally eager to see these councils begin to function. I believe they would provide a context of commonality in which problems could be aired and strategies and solutions shared to great benefit.

A second reason why I believe every institution should seek accreditation is for *programme improvement*. I was greatly impressed by expressed desires for programme improvement on the part of delegates to the Southern Regional Meeting held in Davao City last July. The accreditation process can be a major stimulus to that end. Contrary to the expectations of many, this does not result from long lists of “standards” to which the school must conform. A well designed accreditation process, like programme evaluation studies in other fields, begins with identification and clarification of institutional goals. It is not my responsibility to tell you what your goals should be, but rather to assist you in defining goals to which you are already committed. Having defined our goals, however, we have a criterion both for measuring effectiveness and for planning improvement.

Measuring effectiveness must involve a comparison of institutional goal statements with programme process and outcome factors. Process factors should be examined for logical and empirical contingency (Stake, 1969). These factors afford only inferential data related to programme quality, however. Direct measures of programme quality necessarily involve studies of alumni in ministry (McKinney, 1980:6).

Accreditation can also contribute to instructional improvement by providing the necessary background and context for consultation. At this point it is advisable for an institution to look outside its own faculty. As a resource for consultation, PABATS is best able to help you improve your programme. By drawing on the skills and experience within our association we can provide the consultative services many of our schools both need and seek.

A third reason for accreditation is *institutional certification*. We are all aware that some schools are educationally irresponsible. We have each heard of institutions which are grossly mis-managed or which divert funds in unscrupulous ways. None of us belong in that camp, but the camp does exist. One of the valid functions of accreditation is to

assure financial donors, the families and churches of students, and the public at large that this institution has its house in order. We owe it to our respective constituencies to provide them that assurance.

Programme classification, programme improvement, and institutional certification. These, it seems to me, are the best reasons for seeking accreditation. I would suggest, furthermore, that these reasons are sufficiently important to place each of us and our institutions under obligation to proceed toward accreditation without further delay. p. 304

A PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR ACCREDITATION

Philosophical statements about accreditation standards are necessarily statements about the nature of theological education per se. Only by answering the question “What is the task of theological education?” can we establish a basis for evaluating and accrediting Bible school and seminary programmes.

It is also important to note that accreditation standards are value statements. To the extent that values are shared, standards can be agreed upon. Where significant differences exist regarding the task of theological education, there is little hope of developing meaningful criteria for programme evaluation. (That, by the way, is the principal argument for evangelical accrediting agencies.)

As evangelicals, we are far ahead of others who seek bases for agreement regarding the purposes, and thus the criteria, of education. Our concept of theological education is derived from our concept of the church and ministry. Our concept of ministry, in turn, is rooted in our shared commitment to the Scriptures as our final and sufficient rule of faith and practice. It is entirely feasible, therefore, for us to develop a philosophy of theological education which will serve as a basis for designing an accreditation programme.

My procedure in this section will be to propose a statement regarding theological education, and then elaborate some of the implications I see both for our training programmes and for accreditation.

Theological Education Should Serve the Church

Jesus Christ did not found a seminary; He did found the church. Theological education programmes, therefore, derive their legitimacy from relationship to the church. That relationship, furthermore, must be one of service. The seminary exists for the church, not the church for the seminary. If Bible school and seminary graduates are unprepared to provide spiritual leadership required by the church and consistent with the Scriptures, their training institutions are in a state of default. The school has forfeited its right to exist.

I doubt that many would challenge the statement that theological education should serve the church. Yet repeatedly we hear the complaint from pastors, “I wasn’t taught *that* in Bible school!” Churches p. 305 also grumble that Bible school and seminary graduates are ill-prepared for ministry. How can it be that some schools seem to be missing the mark in spite of good intentions and highly qualified faculty? When this condition exists, let me suggest that you look at the relationship between school and church. Almost inevitably you will find a gap has developed between the training institution and the congregations it serves. That gap must be closed if the school is to serve the church.

The first step toward closing this gap requires that *multiple linkages to the church should be developed*. The ivory tower syndrome is probably the seminary’s greatest impediment to serving the church. It is not that we want to seal ourselves off in ivory towers (although sometimes we do revel in the joy of uninterrupted study). More often the problem is overloading—the massive task of keeping the school running while carrying an unrealistic teaching load due to lack of teachers. Contact with the church is

just squeezed out. The problem is endemic and overcoming it requires deliberate action, building linkages to the church.

A logical place to begin is with the board of trustees. A well constituted board of trustees will include a broad representation of the church—businessmen and women, professionals, pastors, elders, Sunday school teachers. If such a board is drawn into decision making regarding the nature of the school and its programme, it can provide the most important single linkage between school and church. A wise administration will avail of its board of trustees as a contact point for building linkages to the church.

Any school that takes seriously the task of developing multiple linkages to the church can find other opportunities, as well. Selected laymen or pastors can make valuable contributions to almost every area of seminary life. Is there a reason why a churchman should not be invited to sit as a member of a school's administrative council? Men or women who understand the church and its needs could also make important contributions to the admissions committee, the curriculum committee, the Christian service committee, the student life committee, and most other committees which are a part of the machinery of our schools.

Some of you may be aware that Asian Theological Seminary is planning to offer a second Th.M. programme, currently scheduled for 1984. As part of the preparation for that programme, a curriculum advisory committee has been formed, consisting of prominent theological educators throughout developing Asia. I have personally applauded this step by A.T.S., but at the same time I have suggested [p. 306](#) to Dr. Dyrness that a parallel committee be established consisting of Filipino churchmen. The danger of any curriculum designed by theological educators is that it may serve their specialized interests better than those of the church. A curriculum advisory committee of churchmen would provide a powerful corrective against such a danger. One or two churchmen on your standing curriculum committee could have the same effect.

A third means of developing linkages to the church is through deliberate employment of part-time faculty. It has long been assumed that full-time faculty are to be preferred whenever possible, and parttimers represent a second-best alternative to which we fall back in extremities. Research on training for helping professions has demonstrated, however, that students are better able to function effectively when their trainers are also directly engaged in professional service (Carkhuff, 1969:149). Applied to ministry training, this research would imply that pastors employed as part-time members of our faculties will *improve* our training programmes, increasing the probability of graduates' effectiveness in ministry. Part-time faculty-pastors also provide an important linkage between Bible school and church.

A second step to ensure that the seminary serves the church requires that *the goals and objectives of the seminary should be defined with the church*. This suggestion is threatening, but I believe it is necessary. As long as we resist yielding control over our programmes, we will encounter doubts that the school exists truly to serve the church. By inviting the church to join as an equal partner in the process of goal-setting, we will put an end to all doubt and provide a demonstration of the servanthood role we all confess.

Shared goal-setting may be a traumatic experience for us. We may find some of our cherished values are not shared by the church. We may find our concept of appropriate leadership is challenged by the church. We may find the levels on which we prefer to train are not those most needed by the church.² But since our purpose is to serve the church,

² McKinney proposes a procedure for broad-spectrum leadership planning to assist the church in establishing theological education priorities. See McKinney, 1980:3ff.

we will welcome these correctives. Only with the participation of the church can we truly serve the church.

Ultimately, our commitment to goals and objectives defined with the church will be reflected in the ways those goals are employed. It seems reasonable that administrators should be held responsible to implement stated goals. Likewise, steps toward programme improvement, including faculty development, should be justified in terms of [p. 307](#) goals agreed upon with the church. (“Programme improvement” which leads in directions other than established goals simply dissipates energy and focus, and is not improvement at all.) Finally, mutually established goals should be the criteria of programme effectiveness. If graduates are able to serve the church in ways envisioned in goal statements, our programme of theological education is a success. To the extent that goals are unrealized, programme adjustments are still required.

Service to the church, then, is the first principle of evangelical theological education. When multiple linkages to the church are developed and goals and objectives of the seminary are defined with the church, service to the church and servanthood within the church is enhanced.

Theological Education should equip Leaders for Ministry of the Word in the Context of our Churches and our Communities

You will note this statement combines two aspects—ministry of the Word and contextualization. It is my opinion the two must always be taken together.

In 1972 I taught a class titled “Introduction to Theology” to incoming students at Febias College of Bible. I began the class with a discussion of the meaning of theology. After talking about several proposed definitions, I introduced Paul Tillich’s suggestion that theology is the science which seeks to give answers to matters of ultimate concern. In contrast to Tillich, I pointed out that theology, to be Christian, must seek the answer to those questions not in human experience or existential encounter, but in the Holy Scriptures. Building from this suggestion, I asked, “What is Filipino theology?” The answer cannot lie in the resource to which we turn for answers—whether it is Western or Filipino, theology which does not derive its answers from the Bible is non-Christian. The answer lies in the source of the questions. If the questions are Western, the theology is too. If the questions, on the other hand, spring from those issues of ultimate concern which constitute the life-breath of men and women in our cities and our barrios, then the theology is Filipino. To bring the water of life and the power of God to our people, the answers must be Christian answers, derived through prayerful and responsible study of the Scriptures.

I relate this because I think it illustrates the necessary relationship between contextualization and ministry of the Word. Christianity will lack authenticity and cultural fit unless our graduates are prepared to address the questions people are asking. Our churches will fail to [p. 308](#) communicate the power and Spirit of God to our communities unless church leaders are also prepared to provide the answers of God’s Word. We are bound to deal with both aspects together.

I see two implications of this principle for our training programmes. First, *theological education should focus on training for ministry in context*. One of the interesting realizations to come out of research on training for helping professions relates to the issue of programme focus. It was observed that professional counsellor training programmes are ineffective when focus is on preferred mode of treatment, rather than on training in counselling (Carkhuff, 1969:160). If we are to avoid the same error and benefit from this insight, we should establish training for ministry in context as the focus of our theological education programmes.

We have already observed that culture raises the questions we need to address in training for ministry. I also see in contextual issues organizing principles for our curricula. As we plan our courses and our subjects, contextual sensitivity and concern can guide us and determine the perspective from which we speak.

I do not mean to say all topics of contextual significance can or should be incorporated into our training programmes. Ministry experience must be allowed to dictate the limits of curriculum scope. We must scour our courses for any subjects unrelated to immediate demands of ministry. Pet subjects or topics of scholarly interest can be shown no partiality. On the other hand, churches and alumni should be polled to discover any aspects of ministry which have escaped appropriate attention. To train for ministry in context must become our controlling principle.

The second implication is equally important—*theological education should enable leaders to minister the Word with power*. We are all committed to the Word. We know that the Word alone is able to make men wise unto salvation. We know that the Word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. Our commitment to train for ministry in context does not diminish in the least our parallel commitment to equip our students for ministry of the Word. Mastery of the Word is indispensable.

The Bible provides the content of theological education. Just as contextual sensitivity guides its organization and ministry experience defines its scope, so the Bible provides its content. Only in this way can our training programmes effectively equip men and women to minister the Word in context.

Theological Education should prepare Leaders for Servant Ministry p. 309

Servanthood is a term which is encountered more frequently today than in the past, although I doubt it will ever become popular. For many the expression “servant leadership” seems a self-contradiction—either one is a servant or a leader, but not both. Richards has built an interesting study of Old Testament servanthood on the servant songs of Isaiah and the concept of the bond-servant in [Exodus 21](#) (Richards, 1980:103ff.). The principal didactic passages on servant leadership, however, are all found in the New Testament—[Matthew 23:1–12](#); [Mark 10:35–45](#); [John 13:1–17](#); [2 Timothy 2:23–26](#); [1 Peter 5:1–4](#). This rather massive body of biblical data is absolutely normative for those, like us, who train church leaders.

This is neither the time nor place for a full study of the biblical concept of servant leadership. A couple of quotations, however, will help to focus issues. Richards summarizes his own study in this way:

Here then we see the commitment of the servant to remain a servant always and to reject totally the leadership style of the world.

- Our attitude is a servant’s attitude, one of gentleness and humility.
- Our resource is the quality of our own lives, and gentle instruction in the truth.
- Our expectation is that God will act to change hearts.

(Richards, 1980:110)

In another helpful study, Ward contrasts the biblical pattern of servanthood with the common cultural pattern of tyranny. (Common in Filipino culture, as it is in contemporary North America and was in First Century Palestine.) Ward defines a tyrant as “a leader who aspires”, and goes on to warn: “Make no mistake, *anyone who aspires to leadership within the Christian community is potentially a tyrant*” (Ward, 1978:15). Self-seeking vs. self-

giving; arrogant vs. humble; powerful vs. gentle; domineering vs. modeling; aspiring vs. serving. The contrasts bear consideration.

Preparing leaders for servant ministry cannot be relegated to six lectures in “Introduction to Pastoral Theology”. It cannot be relegated to lectures at all. There are two factors, however, which can contribute significantly to training for servant ministry.

First, *the school and its faculty should model servant ministry roles*. For the school, this may begin with a formal acknowledgement that the institution exists to serve the church, but it cannot stop there. It will only become meaningful as servanthood is manifested through the implementing measures suggested above—as multiple linkages to the church are developed and goals and objectives for the school are defined with the church. [p. 310](#)

At a more personal level, this requires each of us to examine our own leadership style, assuring true servanthood in our roles and relationships in the church and on campus. An arrogant, powerful, domineering, and aspiring faculty cannot produce servant leaders for the church. A humble, gentle, self-giving, and serving faculty both can and will provide a continuing supply of leaders who conform to the example of Jesus. It is an immutable law of learning that we reproduce ourselves in our students. Only as our own lives and those of our co-faculty reflect the attitudes and priorities of The Servant can we expect our students to do so.

A second factor which can contribute to training for servant ministry suggests *training should be rooted in on-going ministry experience*. As a result of extensive research on training for helping professions, both Carkhuff (1969:151) and Combs (1974:149) have criticized traditional training programmes for inadequate involvement of trainers and trainees in helping relationships. With respect to trainers, the problem is similar to the one noted above. Trainers who are observed by students only in scholarly research and teaching roles tend to produce graduates who most naturally perceive themselves in similar ways. Likewise, students whose classroom training is not carefully integrated with continuing experience in helping relationships have difficulty making the transition from theory to practice.

For theological education, the implications are clear. Faculty members who are personally pastoring a church provide the best models for students in training for ministry. When faculty are engaged in ministry, they find it natural to draw from their own experience illustrations and applications of lessons taught. Better yet is the situation when students are able to accompany their teachers into ministry in the church and community. There is no more effective way to communicate servant attitudes or train for servant relationships. I am deeply impressed by Bible school administrators I meet who set an example for their faculty by their own discipling of students in pastoral ministry. I am convinced the hours they spend in this way contribute as much or more toward the goals of their schools than any other hours all week.

The principles stated regarding theological education and the implications drawn in this section provide significant criteria for evaluating our training programmes. Theological education should serve the church. Therefore multiple linkages to the church should be developed and goals should be defined with the church. Theological education should equip leaders for ministry of the Word in the [p. 311](#) context of our churches and our communities. Therefore the training programme should focus on preparation for ministry in context and should enable leaders to minister the Word with power. Theological education should prepare leaders for servant ministry. Therefore the school and its faculty should model servant ministry roles and training should be rooted in on-going ministry experience. Corollaries of these principles should offer a guide to some of the most important standards of any evangelical accreditation programme.

A STRUCTURE FOR ACCREDITATION

At this point we have completed the theoretical portion of this paper; what remains is to determine the steps required to implement an appropriate pattern of accreditation in the Philippines. We must first survey where we are before we can expect to identify procedures to move us toward that goal.

A Survey of the Present

The present situation with respect to accreditation of evangelical theological education is not at all discouraging. PABATS exists and is, without doubt, best able to provide accreditation services which are culturally, educationally, and economically attuned to the Philippine church. Considerable progress has been made, furthermore, toward the goal of providing accreditation for Filipino Bible schools and seminaries. A procedure for accreditation is outlined in the PABATS By-Laws, and certificate, diploma, college, and post-college programme levels have been defined. As a result of the untiring efforts of Orman Knight, Harold Matthews, Felipe Ferrez Jr., and others, a *Diploma Manual* has been published. (This slim publication is much bigger than its name implies, since it includes information and standards for certificate level, as well as diploma level programmes, plus perhaps 80% of the information needed for college level.) We also have a self-evaluation guide which lays down a rationale and procedure for self-study.

In addition to all this, we are presently negotiating with Asia Theological Association for regional and world-wide recognition of PABATS accreditation. The proposal which has been presented to A.T.A. calls for direct A.T.A. accreditation of post-college programmes, with PABATS assisting in arrangements for the A.T.A. "visiting evaluation team". At the college, diploma, and certificate levels, I have proposed that PABATS be fully responsible for establishing standards and conducting on-site examinations, with agreement that A.T.A. will provide recognition of PABATS accreditation when this is [p. 312](#) needed internationally. At present I am still in correspondence with Dr. Bong Ro on this matter.

The other fact which must be acknowledged relates to the current PABATS membership list. Thirty-five institutions are included in the membership list provided to me by our corporate secretary. Of these, I understand thirty-four are "provisional members", and only one, Ebenezer Bible College, has completed the accreditation process outlined in our documents.

A Proposal for Action

While we are thankful for the good work of the past, I believe PABATS is now in a position to fulfil its promise to theological education and to the church in the Philippines. I would propose, this evening, a six-point programme of action.

1. College and diploma committees should be appointed to review and/or draft standards appropriate to the respective levels related to training programme resources and curricula.

2. The PABATS *Manual* and "Self-Evaluation Guide" should be reviewed and up-dated. In my view, they are basically consistent with the principles suggested above.

3. The revised and up-dated PABATS *Manual* and "Self-Evaluation Guide" should be published and distributed to each member institution.

4. Accreditation procedures should be simplified by entrusting to the Executive Director initial review of self-evaluation reports.

5. A checklist for use by examination teams should be prepared. This is advisable both for the guidance of examiners and for the protection of schools being examined.

6. Active assistance should be available to schools initiating self-examination. As necessary, and within the limits of my time and budget, I am prepared to visit schools to render this assistance. I would expect, however, that Regional Chairmen and other members of the PABATS Board would also be able to provide assistance to schools seeking guidance.

A Vision for Tomorrow

This paper is sub-titled “Theological Education Standards Today and Tomorrow”, reflecting the theme of our meetings this year. It may appear this paper has related primarily to theological education today. As the rationale set forth is adopted, however, as the principles suggested are applied, and as the proposals above are implemented, I believe we can see significant improvement in our training **p. 313** programmes and an up-grading of educational standards in the years ahead.

It is obvious that the member institutions of PABATS have made tremendous contributions to the church in this country over the past decades. It is not necessary to minimize that fact in order to acknowledge that most of us desire more. This is a healthy, and greatly encouraging, dissatisfaction.

My vision for tomorrow is of a healthy church that is vigorously growing throughout the Philippines. My vision is for formal and nonformal theological education programmes working hand-in-hand to train leaders for this growing church. My vision is for schools all over this archipelago that exist for the single purpose of serving the church. My vision is for schools that equip leaders to minister the Word of God with power in the context of our churches and our communities. My vision is for schools that faithfully prepare leaders for servant ministry.

I have another vision, too. It is for an association of theological schools working together to these ends. Not just the thirty-five schools which now make up our association, but also the many other schools in this country that share our basic commitments.

Are these just empty visions? Perhaps. But I am convinced an important determinant rests in the action we take regarding accreditation. If we continue to hesitate, programme improvement in our schools will come haphazardly and PABATS will founder. The other alternative is to make our next meetings a point of new beginning. The task of developing our philosophy and refining our structures for accreditation must continue. It is only as we pursue accreditation for our schools, however, that these visions can become realities. Theological education tomorrow is in our hands.

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