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The Pattern of the Ministry in a Missionary Church

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The Willingen Meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1952 made the following statement:

"In many parts of the world there is great concern over the paucity of suitable men hearing and responding to the call to the ministry. Where there are large accessions to the Church through group movements the question is specially urgent. The proposal for a part-time ordained ministry should be considered in this connexion. This proposal raises many fundamental issues; in fact, it touches on the basic question of the nature and function of the Christian ministry and the churches' traditional conception of this office. The dangers of a part-time ministry are serious. Nevertheless, the prevailing assumption that a full-time, paid ministry is the norm needs to be reconsidered. Is it fundamental to the nature of the Christian ministry or is it an uncritical transplantation to another soil of what was appropriate to a different environment? Amongst other gains, the development of a part-time ministry would bring the sacraments within reach of many remote congregations who are at present denied them except on rare occasions. It would also enable a newly-planted church the more effectively to extend its witness. The proposal calls for study and experiment." *Missions under the Cross*, pp 197-8.

Owing to pressure of many concerns the IMC was not able to follow up this proposal, and at the Ghana Assembly it was decided to appoint a "Standing Committee on the Ministry," charged with the responsibility of study on this and many other matters. In July, 1960, the Reverend Dr. Wilfred Scopes was appointed to the IMC staff with responsibility for the concerns of the Standing Committee on the Ministry. During the years 1960-62 he is seeking opportunities to discuss with Churchmen in Latin America and Africa the questions which the Willingen statement raises. It is now proposed to convene in July, 1962, a small international consultation to attempt a sharper definition of the issues to be discussed and of the ways in which the churches

could be assisted in undertaking the "study and experiment" which the Willingen Meeting called for.

The present paper is offered as a starting point for discussion. It is a personal statement with no official authority. It is hoped that it can be used during the period from now till July, 1962, for the purpose of eliciting news of what is being done and views of what should be done in various parts of the world in this matter.

1. How the Question Arises.

The Willingen statement begins with the shortage of men for the ministry. In most places it is because of such simple and practical difficulties that questions have been raised. The following list indicates some examples of the kinds of situations which have led to questionings about the pattern of the ministry:

- a. In the laudable effort to secure self-support, a church serving an agricultural people with low standards of living finds itself compelled to pay very low salaries to its ministers. At the same time much higher salaries are being offered to men of the same educational qualifications in posts which are financially supported either by urban interests or by foreign funds. The result is that it is impossible to get men of high qualifications for the ministry, and large numbers of congregations are without proper pastoral care.
- b. At a time when – for whatever reason – large numbers of people are turning to the Gospel and seeking baptism, the church does not have paid workers available to teach and shepherd them. Therefore the opportunity is lost.
- c. In a period of strong national feeling, when dependence on foreign support is a liability to the church's witness, patterns of ministry which depend on foreign subsidies are sharply questioned.
- d. Where newly independent governments are taking over the primary schools formerly run by missions, the old system of teacher-catechists ceases to operate. The church has to face the question of whether it can replace these teacher-catechists by workers paid from its own funds, or whether it must find ways of getting the same work done voluntarily.
- e. In some areas movements of a pentecostal type have achieved remarkable expansion by discarding reliance upon a paid agency and working chiefly or entirely through the ministry of men and women who have received the gift of the Spirit and give their whole available energies to voluntary ministries of evangelism and pastoral care. Such movements pose a sharp question to bodies which, relying on the traditional type of paid agency, grow slowly or not at all.

In these and similar circumstances it is inevitable that the traditional patterns of ministry are questioned. Is it part of the eternal order of the church that the ministry should be a paid profession? Is the system of "mission agents" supported by foreign funds a permanent part of the church's structure? Does the church only expand when it has a financial surplus to employ new "agents?" These and similar questions become inescapable.

2. Deeper Questions

But these practical questions quickly lead down to more fundamental ones. In the end they lead to questions about the nature and integrity of the local congregation, about the nature of the ministry, and about the missionary character of the church. They have led, in some places, to fresh searching of the Scriptures, in which traditional patterns have been found to be under judgment, and to new endeavors to learn by experiment what the Spirit is saying to the churches today concerning the pattern of the ministry in a missionary church. What follows will be based largely on experience in the Church of South India. But lest it be thought that it is therefore of merely local relevance, it is well to quote here words written out of a completely different background. Here are two quotations from the IMC's "Survey of the Training of the Ministry in Africa" (Goodall and Nielsen) showing that these questionings are both widespread and deep.

"This Church of Christ does not live by education, nor does its life-nerve lie in social and moral progress; it lives, strictly speaking, on the Word of God only. This Church – whatever its order – must know that the Word of God is in its midst. In sign and seal of this there must be available to it the Christian sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as central to its life; and it must be cared for spiritually. The Christian minister is the 'minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God'; his place is in the midst of the congregation, not as the administrative – and usually absent – head of a certain organizational structure."

"...we risk the strong assertion that we are in danger of depriving this Christian community of the very roots of its Christian life, and we are doing this because we have become involved – almost inextricably, it seems – in a structural pattern for the church which is largely determined by economic considerations, educational standards and so on. We are in danger of making something other than the primacy of the Word the determining factor in the structure of the Church and the form of the ministry."

What is this "structural pattern"? How have we become involved in it? And is this involvement really "inextricable"? These are the questions with which we have now to deal.

3. How the Pattern Was Formed

At the very beginning of the modern missionary movement the question with which we are dealing rose in a sharp form. The Danish supporters of the Tranquebar mission at the beginning of the eighteenth century took the view that the missionaries should travel about in the manner of St. Paul, not founding schools, and not subsidizing converts or churches. The missionaries, Ziegenbalg and Plutschau took the opposite view. For this two good reasons could be given. In the first place, the new converts were often cut off completely from their former employment and the missionaries felt that they must support them. In the second place, it seemed obvious that the effect of the mission would be much greater if the missionaries, instead of trying to do all the work themselves, trained the ablest of the converts as evangelists and supported them as paid agents of the mission. The views of the missionaries prevailed, and in spite of opposition from Copenhagen they were able to raise the necessary funds to put their opinion into effect. Thereby the foundation was laid for a method which has been – in general – the method of their successors. Modern missions, in almost every part of the world, have proceeded in the way that Ziegenbalg proposed. They have made it their first business to train the ablest of their converts, to employ them as evangelists, teachers, and catechists, and to send them out to preach and to supervise the new congregations. These "mission agents" have been the infantrymen of the Church's advance during the whole of the "great century." Very rarely known outside the small circle of a mission district, often miserably underpaid, beset by all the spiritual power of evil in the pagan society around them, they have preached the Gospel, trained the converts, shepherded the congregations, healed the sick, helped the poor, lifted the whole of the society in which they were set. The "village level worker" of the modern community development project is but a secularized reflection of the old mission agent. One cannot withhold a tribute of admiration from this noble army of men and women.

This whole pattern of "mission agents" was – it is important to note – generally developed before there was any indigenous ordained ministry. At the outset the church became accustomed to an order in which there was no ministry except the occasional visit of the missionary, and in which the unordained village agent was all-important. The period which elapsed before an effective indigenous ministry was developed was in some cases very long, more – sometimes much more – than one generation. When such a ministry was developed it had to be – so to say – grafted onto a church which had already learned to live without it. This is of very great importance for the future.

The delay was due to the fact that the missionaries who took the Gospel from Europe and America to the rest of the world normally took for granted two propositions about the ministry which were, for the most part, regarded as axiomatic:

- a. that the ministry is a paid, full-time, professional service;
- b. that it requires, a general and theological education comparable with, if not identical with, that which is given to the ministers of western churches;

To these two axioms there was added in some missions, though not in all, a third:

- c. that the ministry should be supported by the givings of the people to whom it ministers.

These propositions do not arise out of Holy Scripture. They are not rooted in a theological doctrine of Church and Ministry. They arise from the particular history of the churches of Western Europe and North America, and especially from the history of those churches during the centuries since Europe became a society predominantly mercantile and urban, rather than agricultural and rural. When they were applied directly to the conditions of the predominantly rural societies of Asia and Africa they produced a pattern quite different from the pattern of the Western churches in which they had been formed and which they were intended to reproduce. In a wealthy urban society, or in a rural society where the landowning aristocracy was Christian, these propositions were compatible with a pattern of ministry in which there was normally an ordained minister for every congregation. In the relatively poor rural societies of Asia and Africa, in which, moreover, the landowning aristocracy was generally non-Christian, the result was quite different. Where all three axioms were accepted, the determinative question was not "How many people can one Pastor effectively shepherd?" but "How many people will be needed to support a Pastor defined as a full-time paid professional worker with a high academic training?" The answer to that question produced a pattern with which the churches of Asia and Africa are painfully familiar – one ordained minister nominally in charge of twenty, thirty, forty or even more scattered village congregations whose effective spiritual oversight in fact devolves upon the local unordained "mission agent." And even where only the first two axioms were accepted, the result was not significantly different. The indigenous ministry had to adapt itself to the pattern that had already been formed in the days when there was no ordained minister except the missionary. In that pattern the missionary was not the resident pastor of a congregation. He was – increasingly as the work developed – the administrator of a great program, the employer of a growing army of workers, and therefore inevitably an increasingly rare visitor to the growing number of congregations in his district. Even where it was not accepted as a principle that the ministry must be supported by the people, and where therefore foreign funds were used to pay the salaries of pastors, the development of a native ministry did not alter the pattern. The indigenous pastor became a part of the pattern, intermediate in the hierarchy of control between the district missionary and the village agent.

The further development by which the "District Missionary" has normally been replaced by an indigenous minister has not altered the essential character of the pattern. It has served, rather, to give it a greater appearance of permanence. Nor has there been any significant difference to be noted in this respect between churches of different confessional families. The strength and permanence of what we have called "the pattern" is indicated by the fact that one can visit churches of episcopal, presbyterian or congregationalist church order in the same territory and find that, while variations exist, the basic relationship of the ministry to the congregation is not significantly different. The original pattern, formed before there was an indigenous ministry, has been too strong to yield to the influence of the confessional doctrines of church and ministry which underlay the ministerial patterns of the parent churches. In other words, the patterns of ministry normally found in the younger churches of Asia and Africa are not derived from a theological understanding of the church and the ministry mediated through the various confessional traditions of western Christendom; they are the result of the interaction of certain beliefs about missionary method, with certain supposed axioms about the ministry. We have seen

reason to think that the axioms about the ministry have sociological rather than theological roots: we shall have to look later at the beliefs about missionary method and ask for their credentials.

4. Criticism of the Pattern

It has already been said at the outset that these questionings have arisen from the very practical problems which churches are facing. It is God's way to use the so-called "non-theological" factors to compel us to face issues of truth which we would otherwise evade. The very practical questionings with which we began provide an introduction to what must now be said by way of criticism, and we shall begin with them. This is important, for we must make it clear that if we now begin to criticize patterns bequeathed to us by those who went before us, this is not because of any wanton desire to criticize, not because we imagine ourselves better than our fathers, but because God Himself seems to be forcing us to ask questions. The purpose of the enquiry is not to pass judgment upon our fathers, through whose obedience we are "in Christ" today; but to seek answers to the questions which God Himself seems insistently to put to us concerning our obedience today. The Church is called in every generation to submit the traditions which she inherits to the scrutiny of that fresh light which God causes to shine out of His Word; and to accent that obligation is in no way to stand in judgment upon our fathers by whom these traditions were shaped.

a. Dependence upon expanding resources The pattern was developed in the period when the nations of western Christendom were in positions of unquestioned leadership in the world. Their economic and political strength was such that missionary agencies founded by the churches of such nations took it for granted that they could ask and expect free entry of missionaries into almost every part of the world, freedom to employ workers and to build up institutions, freedom to organize and support growing programs of work in which the directive authority remained in their hands. Today these conditions no longer exist. They have been abruptly and totally ended in China, and are being rapidly and continuously undermined in other parts of the world. Missionary advance can no longer proceed on the assumption of an expanding volume of human resources in the sending countries. This applies equally to the missionary activity of the younger churches, which do not command the human resources to undertake the type of missionary activity characteristic of nineteenth century western missions except on a very small scale.

b. Mal-distribution of Functions Even apart from the threat posed by the changes just mentioned, the pattern is open to the criticism that it distributed the work of those involved in it in the worst possible way. The "village agent" who has normally a very meager theological training or none at all, is the person responsible for the daily and weekly preaching and teaching ministry in the local congregation. The ordained minister, who has a full theological training, is obliged to spend a great part of his time in traveling from place to place, dispensing sacraments (which does not – in itself – require an advanced theological training) and administering the affairs of churches and (probably) schools over a large area. A great deal of his work calls for the gifts of an administrator rather than a preacher of the Gospel and teacher of the way of Life. Each party is given the work for which he has not been trained.

c. Destroying the proper character of the congregation Here we come to a far more fundamental issue, in fact to the real center of the matter. In the New Testament the word "church" is used to denote either the whole universal Church, or else the local congregation. The local congregation is not merely a branch of the Church – something of which the headquarters is elsewhere. It is the Church because the Lord is in its midst. In it, He is gathering together His elect, as He is doing in all the world. He is present – in all His authority – as Head of the Church. He equips the congregation with the gifts that it needs, including the varied gifts of ministry which are needed for its up-building. It is a body in which there are many members each having the distinctive office which the Lord gives. We never hear in the New Testament of local societies which are merely "out-stations" of some church, without a ministry, without the possibility of

celebrating the Eucharist together except on the occasions of a visit from outside, without authority to take a decision about their own life. We never find St. Paul addressing any body of Christians in a place except as the Church in that place, and though we find him rebuking such a church, sometimes severely, we never find him giving orders in the manner of a directive from headquarters to a branch.

The gravest criticism that must be directed against the traditional pattern developed in the "mission-fields" of the nineteenth century is that it has the effect of destroying this, the proper character of a local congregation. The vast majority of the Christians of Asia and Africa live in village communities which are not, and are not expected to be congregations in this scriptural and catholic sense. They are out-stations. They have no ministry as part of their own life. They cannot share in Christ through the Holy Communion except on the occasions – which may be rare – of a visit by a man sent in from elsewhere. They cannot baptize new believers except on similar occasions. They have not been taught to think of themselves as simply the people of God in that place, called by Him to be His representatives and witnesses to the people among whom they live. They have been taught to look for help and direction to a remote "headquarters" – even in such fundamental matters as evangelism, and even in such trivial matters as the repair of their buildings. They have been put in a position where it is almost inevitable that they should develop precisely those attitudes of dependence, imitativeness, and lack of spontaneous growth which those who have labored most among them most deplore, and which are the counterparts of that paternalism which is the gravest weakness in modern missions. The decision, which seemed so simple and natural in the beginning, that missionaries should employ paid, unordained "agents" to supervise groups of new converts, has created a pattern of church order in which some of the most fundamental scriptural elements in the life of the Church are subverted.

d. The nature of authority in the Church is mis-conceived. The question of the nature of authority in the Church is not an easy one. What has been said in the previous paragraph about the place of the congregation in the New Testament understanding of the Church precludes any form of church order for which the local congregation is simply a branch to which orders can be issued in the manner of an army headquarters or a business management.

Equally, however, this element in the whole life of the Church cannot be absolutised, as some forms of independency have seemed to do. The local congregation is part of the whole Church universal, which is intended by God to live and to worship as a harmonious unity. Between these two truths a delicate and difficult balance has to be maintained. Both the unity of the whole body and the integrity of the local congregation have to be cherished as essential to the wholeness of the Church. Ultimately this is only possible through the working in the whole body of that supernatural love which is patient, kind, which does not insist on its own way, which bears all things and hopes all things. taken that love is wanting, agonizing problems arise. They cannot be solved by simply assuming as a matter of principle that there is a "headquarters" which settles everything by giving orders to the "branches." But that is, in fact, the conception of authority which has been taken for granted over vast areas of the life of the churches which sprang from the modern missionary movement. With minor modifications one meets in country after country throughout Asia and Africa the same pattern of church order – a hierarchy of "control" stretching from the lowliest catechist in the remotest village, through a long chain of nicely graded distinctions of authority (and salary) to the person who, in what was once the office of the "District Missionary," supervises the whole area. It is taken for granted that this person has the ultimate authority to appoint, discipline, direct, transfer, and dismiss the "agents" through whom the life of the village congregation is guided and controlled. Those who serve further down the chain of command derive their authority from the same source. The most astounding evidence of the depth to which this conception of authority has penetrated into the thought of the church is to be found in the fact that it is not uncommon for the churches in a whole area to be "handed over" from the charge of one mission to another, over the heads of the members of the congregations concerned; and in the fact that this is done without any sense of astonishment. Perhaps the most celebrated example of this is the handing over of the work of the Tranquebar Mission in South

India to the S.P.G early in the nineteenth century, as the result of which (to quote Bishop Sandeager) "all the Christians in South India went to bed one night as Lutherans, and woke up next morning having become, without knowing it, Anglicans." Let it not be thought that such events are unknown today! The fact that they are possible is sufficient evidence of the depth of the distortion of the whole understanding of the nature of the Church which has been created by a wholly unbiblical conception of "control."

John Taylor's recent study on "The Growth of the Church in Buganda" has drawn attention to one consequence of this. As the Church grew, the missionary was – so to say – "withdrawn upwards." He was removed farther and farther up the chain of command, and became more and more remote from the life of the ordinary congregation. The same has happened, to a lesser degree, to the ordained pastor. He has become – to quote Goodall and Nielsen again – more and more the administrative, usually absent, head of an organizational structure. In certain parts of West Africa the normal title for an ordained clergyman is "The Reverend Manager," a title which derives immediately from his responsibility for the church schools, but is eloquent of much else besides. A similar title is often found in South India. The unstudied language of the ordinary church member here is an inescapable testimony to the corruption which has overtaken the whole conception of the ministry which has been shaped by the pattern we are studying. It is a deep corruption at the very root of the church's life, namely, in the understanding of the true nature of authority in God's household. No longer are Word and Sacraments the center; their place is taken by the apparatus of administration. The pastor comes to be honored and heard not primarily as one whose authority is derived from the fact that he is the appointed steward of these gifts of Christ's bounty, but from the fact that he holds an important place in a chain of "control" whose ultimate sanction lies in the superior secular power (financial, cultural, administrative), of "the mission." The fact that it is in very many cases a man of the country and not a foreign missionary who sits at the controlling desk is important, but does not alter the essential character of the pattern. The fact, moreover, that the grace of God in Jesus Christ continues to find a way through to nourish the church at the roots of its being is one which all who know the churches of Asia and Africa will acknowledge with gratitude. It does not alter the fact that the tendency of the pattern which we are studying is to distort and corrupt the church's understanding of the nature of the power by which it lives and the authority by which it is guided.

e. Spontaneous evangelism is inhibited. The pattern of evangelistic advance upon which Ziegenbalg determined would not have been possible if he had not been able to call upon large and expanding resources from his friends in Europe. When, owing to the waning power of the pietist movement in Germany, those resources were no longer available, the Tranquebar Mission also languished. It was only revived when it was "handed over" to the English missions newly strengthened by the evangelical revival in England and by the growing prosperity of that country. Growth, and even life, depended upon outside resources. It is difficult to deny that this weakness was inherent in the method chosen. If it is taken for granted that the Gospel can only win its victories when there are available the means to train and employ paid agents for the supervision of the new congregation, then it follows that when these means fail, evangelism ceases. But must it be taken for granted? The New Testament does not appear to do so. There is no evidence that St. Paul felt it necessary to employ paid agents for the supervision of all the congregations which came into existence through his preaching. Ever since the publication of the famous books of Roland Allen on the spontaneous expansion of the Church, there has been serious questioning among missionaries and others about this matter. As the result of this questioning, and of the experiments to which it has led, there is a growing body of contemporary evidence to prove that – even among the most culturally backward people – another method of evangelistic advance is possible. Here one may say that another set of "axioms" is beginning to appear, axioms derived from Scripture and supported by a growing body of experience. They might be listed as follows:

i. The Holy Spirit is the true missionary, and that He always goes ahead of the Church, with a strategy that is all His own, using all kinds of means to touch and open the hearts of men to prepare them for the Gospel.

ii. When the Holy Spirit does this, He also raises up men and women able to give the spiritual leadership that the new converts need. He equips the saints with the gifts they need. These leaders may be educated or uneducated; they maybe entirely voluntary, or they may be supported by the givings of the people. These are secondary questions. The essential point is that the Holy Spirit will Himself make clear who are the people whom He has chosen and equipped for spiritual leadership. From the beginning of the life of the new congregation, these will be the people upon whom primary responsibility rests. Those who are sent in from outside will be for help and brotherly counsel, not for supervision and control. From the beginning the relation of the new congregation to the older ones will be one of brotherly inter-dependence, not of unilateral dependence,

iii. Teaching, training, promotion of literacy and economic advancement are not to be confused with evangelism. These are part of the duty of mutual service which is as basic to the Christian life as evangelism is. But the spread of the Gospel is something different from these things. In it, the poor, the illiterate, and the outcast may have as important a part to play as the wealthy, cultured and powerful. All human resources have to be held in stewardship for all men; but the Holy Spirit does not depend upon human resources for bearing his witness to Christ; in fact it is very often the weak things that are chosen to confound the things that are strong.

iv. Evangelism is, therefore, part of the normal life of every Christian congregation, however "backward," from the moment of its birth. It is not to be identified with any kind of activity that demands for its performance large financial resources and high cultural attainments, though all of these can be and must be consecrated for use in the work of evangelism.

At the end of Section 3 it was stated that the pattern which we are studying arose from the interaction of certain beliefs about missionary method with certain supposed axioms about the ministry. At that point it was urged that these supposed axioms rest not upon theological foundations, but upon the sociological background of the western churches. We have now to ask whether the missionary method characteristic of the "great century" did not also rest too heavily upon the particular circumstances of a time in which western churches had access to the human resources of a powerfully expanding culture; and whether we are not now in a position where we are being forced to look rather to the missionary methods of St. Paul than to those characteristic of the nineteenth century.

5. Wider Questioning

What has been written so far has referred to Asia and Africa. It was with the situation in these continents that the Willingen statement with which this paper began was primarily concerned. But the questions raised have much wider relevance, and in fact similar questions are being asked about the pattern of the ministry in Europe, America and elsewhere. In some cases these questions arise out of problems of manpower. In other cases these arise from a desire "to bring home more effectively the relevance of the Church and its faith to the ordinary working life of men and women." (Lambeth, 1958) As the established churches of Europe face the deeper implications of the ending of the "Constantinian era," and recognize the missionary situation in which they are really placed, the inherited pattern of the ministry comes under sharp criticism. As an example one may quote words written by the present Bishop of Woolwich in 1952. "The identification of the ministry with the clerical profession will have to go. It is becoming increasingly evident that such an identification is evangelistically disastrous (one cannot convert a country with a single-class ministry) and economically insupportable.... The coming pattern of the ministry is bound to be largely non-professional, in the sense that its priesthood will consist in great proportion of men working in secular jobs at every level, both manual and administrative.... For the training of such a non-professional ministry the existing theological college set-up would be virtually irrelevant, for it is essential that it must be done without taking men out of the jobs and milieu in which they are." (J.A.T. Robinson, *Theology*, June 1952). The experiments made by some of the younger churches in the direction of a non-professional ministry have been watched with great attention in

England just because they seem so relevant to the urgent problems which churches in that country are facing.

In Latin America, where the sociological environment is in many respects very different from those of Asia or Africa, the issue has been posed most sharply for the "historic" churches and missions by the astounding success of the Pentecostal movement in that continent. The responsible leaders in that movement are themselves the first to recognize the elements of weakness which it manifests. But all other churches in Latin America are challenged by the phenomenal expansion of the pentecostal churches, achieved by the whole-hearted acceptance of the principles of a non-professional ministry and a spontaneously expanding congregation.

In the South Pacific area the questions arise in different forms. In the islands where the Church has been established for more than a century, and where Christianity has become the religion of the whole people, the issues no longer arise in the forms with which Asia and Africa are familiar. In the newly evangelized areas of New Guinea, on the other hand, the question of the pattern of advance arises in exactly the same forms with which Asia was familiar a century earlier. But the discussions on the ministry at the recent conference in Samoa showed clearly that there is a profound confusion in the churches about the nature of the ministry and the meaning of ordination, and that perhaps the central question is the question of the nature of authority in the church.

It is no part of the purpose of this paper. to give a general survey of questionings about the ministry all over the world. Much profound self-questioning is going on, and the World Council of Churches is planning a series of studies on the issues raised. The present paper seeks to keep close to the original question raised at Willingen concerning the "non-professional ministry," but it has sought to show that this question has far-reaching implications. How far the study of these implications should be pursued, and how they should be related to similar studies undertaken by the WCC in response to questionings in the churches of Europe and North America, are matters for discussion by the group which is to meet in July, 1962. It is clear that there must be close liaison between the two studies, and perhaps they may lead forward to something which combines them both. But it would seem wise for the group in July to begin from, and keep fairly close to, the issue raised at Willingen.

6. Next Steps

The following are suggested as the next steps in carrying out the instructions of the Willingen and Ghana meetings:

- a. Circulation of the present paper (making clear its purely personal and non-official character) to (say) 100 correspondents, and its use in the proposed African consultations, in order to elicit:
 - i. News of what is being done in various parts of the world by way of experiment along the lines of a non-professional ministry; and
 - ii. Views about what are the major issues that need discussion at the meeting next July.

- b. Preparation of papers for the July meeting as follows:
 - i. A paper on the biblical and patristic evidence about the professional or non-professional character of the ministry, with deductions from this evidence about any theological principles involved. This should also, if possible, include evidence of official positions taken by churches on the matter (e.g.) Lambeth, 1958 – Resolution 89)
 - ii. A paper giving as much as possible of what can be learned from experiments of the past 150 years; e.g., what happened in the area where Roland Allen worked?
 - iii. A paper summarizing the material obtained under "a. i." above.
 - iv. A paper based on the material gathered under "ii." above, and setting out the issues to be discussed at the meeting.

- c. Production by the July meeting of a document sufficiently weighty to be used as the basis for serious and systematic discussion by and with and among the churches during the next few years.

This is about as far ahead as it seems reasonable to look at the moment!

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