



Editor's Notes

1964

J.E. Lesslie Newbigin

The International Review of Mission 53: 248-51.

All material is reprinted with permission from the Newbigin family, the Newbigin Estate and the publisher. All material contained on the Newbigin.Net website, or on the accompanying CD, remains the property of the original author and/or publisher. All rights to this material are reserved. Materials are not to be distributed to other web locations for retrieval, published in other media, or mirrored at other sites without express written permission from the appropriate parties. The material can be used for private research purposes only.



These notes are being written only three weeks after the end of the Mexico meeting of the Commission, of which an account is published in this issue. It is difficult to distil into a few words the essence of a great meeting. In the account of the Tambaram meeting which he wrote for the April 1939 issue of the Review, William Paton commented: 'It is perhaps a little exasperating to read, as one so often does, that the spirit of a meeting is greater than its formal accomplishments.... Yet it is difficult not to begin an account of the Tambaram meeting by some such phrase.' Perhaps those who read accounts of the Mexico meeting may experience the same exasperation. The Editor can only testify to a profound sense of gratitude to God for the spirit of that meeting. The word most often used in describing it has been the word 'confidence'. There was, indeed, a sense of assurance and of direction – due fundamentally, I am persuaded, to the fact that the exposition of Scripture was the foundation of all else in the programme. The task of translating the insights given to us at Mexico into the daily practice of churches and missionary agencies is now in the hands of the delegates and those to whom they report. Popular interpretations of the meeting are being published in the next few weeks in Spanish by the Rev. Emilio Castro, and in English by the Rev. Robert Latham. The title of the latter will be *God for All Men*. Similar informal volumes are also planned in German and French. With regard to more formal reporting, readers will find the full text of the four section reports, together with the addresses given on the opening day by Mr M. M. Thomas and Dr Visser 't Hooft, in the *Ecumenical Review* for April. The full text of the ten Bible studies is to be published as a paperback in English and other languages. The formal minutes, including all official actions of the Commission, will be in print about the time these words appear and will be available from the offices of all affiliated councils and of the Commission. Finally, the full volume of reports and addresses will be published towards the end of 1964.

Among the important acts of the Mexico meeting was the decision to launch a Christian Literature Fund analogous to the Theological Education Fund. Necessary exploratory work had been done by a committee under the leadership of Dr Johannes Blauw and Dr Floyd



Shacklock, whose full-time services were most generously placed at the disposal of the committee. At the same time, sufficient assurance of support has been received from agencies in half a dozen countries to make it practically certain that the Fund can be established this year. Some time will be needed for basic planning and organization before the main work in connexion with the Fund can be begun. The mandate approved at Mexico makes it clear that the Fund will not be operational but will be primarily devoted to the strengthening of indigenous literature agencies.

The decision to establish a Literature Fund was in one sense a tribute to the effectiveness of the Theological Education Fund during the past six years. The Mexico meeting received a full report of the work of this Fund since its inception, and the report and recommendations of the Advisory Group on its future. Acting on these recommendations it resolved to seek resources for the continuance of the Fund, while at the same time altering significantly the mandate governing its work. In its new form the TEF, building on what has already been accomplished, will seek to use its resources 'to respond wherever evidence is found of creative development promising the achievement of excellence in the training of the ministry'. The excellence to be sought is defined as 'that kind of theological training which leads to a real encounter between the student and the Gospel in terms of his own forms of thought and culture, and to a living dialogue between the Church and its environment'. The new mandate opens up the prospect of a new and pioneering phase in the work of the Fund. The Commission received news of the intention of Dr Charles Ranson to resign from his position as Director of the Fund from next September, and nominated Dr James Hopewell for appointment as his successor.

At the time of writing, plans are being made for the Second Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference, to be held in Bangkok from 26th February to 5th March. The assembly will be preceded by a number of meetings, including one on the preparation and work of missionaries in Asia, which will have in its purview both Asian missionaries and those from other continents.

The new General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Mr Samuel Amisshah of Ghana, has taken charge of the AACC from the beginning of this year, and Dr Donald M'Timkulu is now Chairman of the General Committee of the Conference.

The Continuation Committee of the Pacific Churches' Conference will meet at Lae, New Guinea, April 25-28.



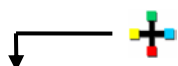
The evangelical churches in Cuba have recently had to face new problems arising from the decision of the United States Government to prohibit the transmission of funds to that island from the US mission boards. Added to the extreme general privations imposed by the US blockade this has brought great hardship to the churches. US church leaders have been active in seeking ways to continue their normal assistance and have also asked the help of the WCC in the situation. The Council arranged for the visit to Cuba of an experienced Swiss pastor, and the occasion of the meeting in Mexico was taken for a thorough discussion of the situation with Cuban church leaders. A token gift of \$20,000 has been sent to the Evangelical Council of Churches in Cuba, and it is hoped that more will be available. All the evidence indicates that the churches are facing the new situation with great courage and with a fresh determination to fulfil their obligations as national churches.

A small consultation to consider 'The Healing Ministry in the Mission of the Church' is being held in Tübingen in May under the joint sponsorship of the DWME and the Lutheran World Federation. Dr Erling Kayser, of Norway, who has been a medical missionary in Indonesia, is working full time on preparations for the consultation. Its purpose is to consider the best way of re-examining the healing work of the churches, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the light of such factors as increased government responsibility in medical work, rising technical

standards, the resurgence of prescientific forms of healing, and the growth of movements of 'spiritual healing' in the churches.

Plans have been completed for a five-week seminar on the Christian Home and Family Life, to be held in Antigua, West Indies, from July to September 1964. This seminar, under the leadership of Dr and Mrs David Mace, will seek to do for the churches in the Caribbean the kind of service which similar seminars rendered at Chiangmai and Mindolo. In preparation for it Dr and Mrs Mace have visited nearly all the principal islands and mainland territories of the region, and the seminar promises to be a significant milestone in church co-operation in the Caribbean area.

Readers of the Review will join with the Commission at Mexico in saluting Dr Norman Goodall on his retirement from full-time work with the World Council of Churches. Dr Goodall joined the staff of the International Missionary Council in 1944 as successor to William Paton, and served as London Secretary until 1955, when he became



the full-time secretary of the Joint Committee of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. He was also Editor of this Review from 1944 until 1952. When integration took place at New Delhi, he became Assistant to the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, with special responsibility for the development of relations with national councils of churches and Christian councils. Though now retired from full-time service, he has accepted the very heavy burden of chairmanship of the committee appointed to reconsider the structure of the World Council. In all these varied labours Dr Goodall has been an unfailing source of penetrating wisdom, wise counsel and affectionate personal concern. Those who have worked most closely with him know best how much he has given to the ecumenical movement. And the much wider circle of those who have read his writings have learned to expect from him a rare combination of catholic sympathy with evangelical passion, of grace with clarity, and all seasoned with the humour that comes from a well-balanced spirit. The happy consummation of the plans for the integration of the IMC and the WCC was, in a sense, the crown of his work in the ecumenical cause. Readers of the Review will wish to acknowledge with gratitude the work so faithfully done.

The World Council has called Dr Roland Scott to succeed Dr Goodall, after eighteen months of greatly valued service in the Geneva office of the DWME. The vacancy which this creates is a difficult one to fill; in the interim until a successor is found, the Division is thankful for the fact that the Board of Overseas Missions of the Methodist Church has generously made available the services of Dr Charles Germany during his period of furlough from Japan.

All material is reprinted with permission from the Newbigin family, the Newbigin Estate and the publisher. All material contained on the Newbigin.Net website, or on the accompanying CD, remains the property of the original author and/or publisher. All rights to this material are reserved. Materials are not to be distributed to other web locations for retrieval, published in other media, or mirrored at other sites without express written permission from the appropriate parties. The material can be used for private research purposes only.