

LAUSANNE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE
For World Evangelization

NEWS

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January 27, 1975

A meeting of world evangelical leaders has declared they are opposed to setting up a large bureaucratic organization representing world evangelicals.

The 48-member Continuation Committee which was elected following last year's Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization met in Mexico City, January 20-24.

The Continuation Committee has resolved to develop a low profile for itself and to operate with a minimal budget and small staff. It will initially be known as the Lausanne Continuation Committee for World Evangelization.

In a three-page report issued following the Committee's meeting, it was announced that Dr. Billy Graham has accepted the unanimous invitation to be honorary chairman of a Consultative Council of world evangelicals.

It was decided that this wider body which was nominated by the Lausanne participants is to initially constitute the Consultative Council which is to meet every five years.

The membership of this Council will be built up to 200 in order to make it more representative of all major countries, denominations, and functional interests.

Bishop A. Jack Dain of Sydney, Australia, who was executive chairman of the Lausanne Congress has been unanimously elected chairman of the Continuation Committee until the next meeting of the Committee. This meeting is expected to be held early in 1976.

The report issued by the Committee stated, In order to help evangelicals to set their goals and work toward their attainment, the Continuation Committee anticipates the formation of Regional Committees for world evangelization as envisaged in the Lausanne Covenant. The report continued by emphatically stating that the Continuation Committee was convinced that the Spirit of Lausanne was so opposed to the bureaucratic model that it encouraged and/or authorized its members in each major region of the world unitedly to form regional networks. It stated that in this way the

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ministry of Jesus Christ through His Church will be most effectively carried out.

During the Mexico City meeting the group several times divided into regional groups to consider what goals could and should be set for the next few years, and what resources and structures would be needed to attain them.

A wide diversity of desirable goals was mentioned. Virtually all the regional groups were anxious to see fresh cooperative initiatives taken in cross-cultural missions, in development of regional and national strategies for evangelism, and in motivating and training both clergy and laity for active evangelism.

In addition to this primary emphasis on evangelization, several groups asked for an information network, for evangelistic tools, and for some coordination among evangelical relief and development agencies.

The African and Asian groups stated the need to strengthen Biblical theological education at all levels and to provide more scholarships.

The Latin American and European groups were concerned to increase evangelical influence in the mass media and to secure better training facilities in communication.

In the Arab world and elsewhere, more full-time national evangelists are needed.

The European group reiterated the importance of continuing the discussion begun at Lausanne in such areas as Christianity and culture, evangelism and social action, Christian ethics, and the renewal of the Church.

Dealing with the mandate and role of the Continuation Committee, the report stated, 'The basis of our coming together was our common evangelical commitment to Biblical doctrine and duty, especially as these are defined in the Lausanne Covenant. We are grateful to God that through free and wide-ranging discussion we have been led to a common mind about the next steps of what we hope will be an unfolding process.'

Signatories of the Lausanne Covenant have committed themselves 'to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world.' To this end the Covenant urged 'the development of regional and

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functional cooperation for the furtherance of the Church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experiences.'

We have been encouraged to hear of numerous initiatives which have already been taken in different parts of the world. The Covenant has been published in many languages, is being widely studied, and attempts are already being made to implement its recommendations.

A Commentary on the Covenant, the Compendium containing all the Congress papers and responses, a series of six studies on evangelizing the world for Christ entitled 'Reaching All,' and other materials including cassettes and filmstrips have also become available.

The Continuation Committee understands as the Covenant indicates, that 'the furtherance of the Church's mission' means the encouragement of all God's people to go out into the world as Christ was sent into the world, to give themselves for others in a spirit of sacrificial service, and that in this mission evangelism is primary. More than that, within our primary task of evangelism, our two particular concerns and burdens must be the 2,700 million unreached peoples and the other millions of people in nominally Christian areas who have not yet heard or responded to the true Gospel.

The Continuation Committee has appointed an Executive Committee of 11 members representing the major regions of the world who will serve until the next meeting of the Committee. They are:

Bishop Pesto Kivengere - Africa
Dr. Philip Teng - East Asia
Ramez L. Atallah - West Asia
Dr. Armin Hoppler - Europe
Dr. Nilson Fanini - Latin America
Dr. Thomas Zimmerman - North America
Dr. Leighton Ford - North America
Bishop A. Jack Dain (Chairman) - Oceania
Rev. John Stott - United Kingdom
Dr. Kenneth Chafin (Finance Chairman) - North America
Executive Officer - when appointed

The Executive Committee will meet in Africa in August of this year.

Bishop Dain announced that an invitation has been issued to a Third World evangelical Christian leader to accept appointment as the executive officer of the Lausanne Continuation Committee.

