

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY CO-OPERATION

Report of the
JERUSALEM MEETING
of the
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
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PART TWO

STATEMENTS

ADOPTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL
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JERUSALEM, 1928

The statement in section I was prepared by a committee appointed by the section of the Council which considered the subject of co-operation through National Christian Councils. After consideration and amendment by the Council as a whole it was accepted by formal vote as their official statement.

The Revised Constitution of the International Missionary Council, which is printed in section II, was drafted by the Committee of the Council, and reported by it to the whole Council. After careful consideration by the Council in plenary session, it was approved for submission to the constituent national missionary organizations and for their ratification.

STATEMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

I

CO-OPERATION THROUGH NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCILS

THE FUNCTIONS AND SCOPE OF CO-OPERATION

THE International Missionary Council having surveyed the field of co-operation as it affects the working of national Christian councils in the light of eighteen years' experience since the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, reaffirms its conviction that these organizations offer to the Christian forces both in the East and the West a unique opportunity for concerted and united action, which, when rightly understood, creates a new Christian unity, a corporate life and a solidarity of aim and purpose among all who are working for the extension of the Kingdom of God.

When the Conference met in Edinburgh in 1910 only two national Christian councils were in being. To-day at least twenty-six such bodies are represented in this Council meeting. The growth of this movement has not been due to any centralized organization working to create such councils, but rather to the felt needs and demands of an ever-expanding work. In the first instance national Christian councils were almost entirely confined to the sending countries and were missionary boards

and societies working in co-operation. Whether we examine this movement from the point of view of the home base, or of missions in the field, or of the indigenous churches, we see a widespread desire for a closer unity and a deeper fellowship.

The result is that to-day there are Christian councils of varying types. Some, such as the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Conference of British Missionary Societies, and the Evangelischer Missionsbund of Germany, are still exclusively composed of missionary societies' representatives. Others are of an international character and combine within their organization the members of mission boards from different countries of the West and the nationals of the country in which the national Christian council is working. Others again have gone beyond this conception of inter-mission co-operation and have found their basis of unity in the growing indigenous churches themselves. Whatever the particular type of organization, we note an underlying principle governing all these bodies, namely, the deeply rooted desire to find in co-operation that unity of the Spirit, stressed in apostolic days, and lost through our unhappy divisions.

The spiritual implications of the Gospel demand unity among those who are seeking to spread the Good News, and we note with thankfulness to God the Divine guidance given in the past eighteen years to Christians of many races and denominations in their search for an immediate, if perhaps a temporary, way out of the difficulties of disunion and separation. We note too the fact that the measure of unity attained among different churches and missions has not meant any colourless and nebulous position, in which differences and convictions have

been hidden away, but rather the contribution of each section of the Church to the good of the whole. The basis of co-operation has been a frank recognition of differences by an honest search for unity in and through the Holy Spirit which transcends the divisive elements in present-day Christianity. Christian co-operation has therefore found its basis in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Its inspiration has been no cut-and-dry organization, but the spirit of Jesus, and unity has been attained through united service in a common task for the evangelization of the world.

We note that misunderstanding has at times arisen through the fear that national Christian councils were a plan for church federation. The constitutions of the councils presented to this meeting of the International Missionary Council show that these bodies do not seek to make federation their objective, but rather to recognize the different church organizations, and by drawing together widely separated groups of Christians to unite them in that spiritual fellowship which must be a necessary condition for any organic union that the future may hold for the churches.

It is our opinion that co-operation is not merely advisable or good, but that it is a vital necessity to-day. The world is now organized internationally. Races and nations are interdependent, and the outward unification of the world makes supremely important the spiritual unity of the Church. Christianity has thus been brought into an international environment, and through it the Christian forces are beginning to discover the true international character of the Christian Mission. The world situation is making increasing demands upon the

Church, and there is an insistent call for better thought out and better directed policies among Christian missions. The national Christian councils are not only a notable response to this demand, but in many cases the only means of attaining it.

Many types of co-operation have already been tested through the national Christian councils. The experience already gained shows that through this co-operative agency work is better done than formerly when each church or mission acted alone. Money is saved by joint effort, and tasks that were beyond the capacities of any one body are now efficiently undertaken by the united forces of the Church. The fact that Christians situated in a non-Christian land can now speak with one voice on great moral and social questions should, we think, be sufficient to commend this work to the whole Christian Church. Surveys of mission areas have been made, the forces at work appraised and attention called to the unoccupied fields. Overlapping has been avoided, and out of this fellowship there has come a new efficiency in work in many areas.

The production and circulation of Christian literature is an outstanding example of the value of co-operation. A common policy for literature has given a greater variety and a higher standard in the books produced. Reference should also be made to co-operation in education. Schools and colleges that were inadequately staffed or financed have been, by co-operation, lifted up to a new level of efficiency. The preparation and training of missionaries, once so neglected, has entered upon a new day through the language schools and kindred institutions carried on co-operatively. In this connexion we would cite the School of Oriental Studies in Cairo.

National Christian councils have been foremost in planning retreats and conferences, in organizing united evangelistic campaigns and in deepening spiritual fellowship among Christians of different races and sects. The headquarters of national Christian councils, such as those in India, China and Brazil, have provided for all missionaries central bureaux of information. They have proved themselves to be a base for progressive research and a clearing-house for new ideas. These councils glory in the fact that through them the Church has often been able to express a common Christian witness to a non-Christian people. Perhaps the most outstanding contribution of co-operation to the progress of the Gospel has been the help thus given to the indigenous churches. The place of the missionary within the indigenous church is better understood since missionaries and nationals have joined together upon a basis of equality for their common task.

PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having surveyed the scope and value of co-operation upon national lines, we wish to place on record some of the governing principles that have made for successful co-operation.

1. The organization of a national Christian council should not be regarded as the setting up of another mission with independent authority apart from those co-operating. The best national Christian councils have emphasized the fact that the powers they possess are only such powers as the co-operating bodies confer upon them, and that apart from the units which compose them, the national Christian councils have no existence.

2. National Christian councils should act on behalf of the co-operating bodies in all matters of common interest when they are satisfied that the action taken will be in accordance with the wishes of these bodies. A national Christian council, however, should be free to respond to any request for service on the part of any considerable portion of its constituency. But it should be made clear that the rendering of any special service at the request of a section of the national Christian council would not necessarily imply, on the part of the national Christian council, the unanimous endorsement of the services rendered.

3. In forming a national Christian council, care should be taken to make it as representative as possible and to preserve permanently its representative character. New members, as far as possible, should be added upon the principle of election. The council should provide where advisable for the co-option of a limited number of additional members. In order to secure the necessary leadership and continuity of policy the Council recommends that in all large areas there should be a full-time secretary, giving himself to the work of the council.

4. The national Christian council should be fully national in the sense of serving the nation, employing the methods and preserving the spirit of the indigenous Christian body, and calling forth indigenous Christian leadership. The missionaries and the indigenous church leaders, however, should endeavour to maintain the international and inter-denominational character of the membership of each national Christian council so as to embrace, in every co-operative effort, the richness of the contribution coming from the several nations and communions.

5. All duplication of effort should be avoided. There is a real danger in over-organization and in a multiplication of committees. The machinery of a national Christian council should be reduced to a minimum. Where opportunity offers, the national Christian council may well take the initiative in starting an enterprise, and when it has become established either transfer it to another organization or give it full autonomy.

6. National Christian councils will be judged, not so much by the efficiency of the machine, as by the spiritual fellowship they create. They can be regarded as worth the time and expense they cost to busy workers only where they generate life and lead to a deepening of spiritual experience shared by all co-operating

7. An essential to success is adequate financial support, if the great principles involved in co-operation are to be made effective in the life of the nations. The churches and boards should place the demands of this work, both in men and money, in the very forefront of their programmes. Co-operation is worth doing, as experience shows; and it is worth doing supremely well.

8. National Christian councils should, at an early date, seek direct affiliation with the International Missionary Council. The advantages of this have been abundantly proved by the experience of the national Christian councils that are now in affiliation. We would further instruct the officials of the International Missionary Council to get in touch with these unaffiliated bodies with a view to their affiliation.

9. The attention of the national Christian councils is called to the advantage of each council establishing

contacts with councils in other areas in order to facilitate the free exchange of experience and thought.

10. In view of the widespread ignorance about co-operation and the principles upon which it is based, we recommend that the proved value of national Christian councils should be brought to the notice of church authorities and leaders in order to enlist their whole-hearted support and sympathy.

CONCLUSION

The supreme hope of effective co-operation lies in Christ, who is the source of all creative and enduring work. The resources of God are at our disposal, and the limitless power of God can be made available for the great unfinished task, but there is nothing in the New Testament to show that these resources are ever cheaply available. There is a price to be paid and we are convinced that part of this price is the uniting of the divided forces of our faith, the creating of a fellowship in which prayer is a reality and the realization of that unity which always follows every new manifestation of the Spirit's life and power in the Church. St Paul faced in the young churches a situation which had many elements common to our problem to-day. The lack of concerted effort, the want of love and spiritual solidarity were marks of the Corinthian Church. The solution was and is the same. The divided brethren were summoned to love one another, and to serve one another. 'No man liveth unto himself' is a truth that applies with equal force to a mission field as to an individual. We are called to-day to a new discovery of spiritual unity, faith and power that we may prove our message to be adequate to a world need. It is our

conviction that this is impossible apart from that co-operation which is demanded by the Living Christ who indwells His Church. Only as we come back to the place called Calvary can we see the hindrances of our divisions and the failures of our Christian expression throughout the world. Only in penitence for the past and in a new sense of our oneness in Christ can we go forward in the task of the days to come.

II

THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

THE International Missionary Council, in presenting a revised constitution, desires to reiterate, with the added knowledge brought by the years, the case for an international missionary organization by suggesting the following reasons for its continuance and larger development :

1. The missionary enterprise is in all lands actually and manifestly international.

2. It is necessary to reveal the awareness on the part of the missionary movement of the international consciousness which pervades all departments of human progress.

3. There are many world situations involving missions with which it is impossible to deal except internationally.

4. A Christian missionary international organization is needed to represent missions in relations with other representative international bodies.

5. The essential spiritual unity already existing among Christians demands manifestation in international missionary co-operation.

REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONARY COUNCIL

(For submission to the constituent national
organizations)

I. *Preamble*

The Council is established on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the churches and the missionary societies and boards, representing the churches.

It is recognized that the successful working of the International Missionary Council is entirely dependent on the gift from God of the spirit of fellowship, mutual understanding and desire to co-operate.

II. *Membership and Meetings*

The Council is composed of the following national missionary organizations ¹ and Christian councils :

United Missionary Council of Australia.
Société Belge de Missions Protestantes au Congo.
National Christian Council of China.
Conseil Protestant du Congo.
Dansk Missionsraad.
Deutscher Evangelischer Missionsbund.
Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris.
Conference of Missionary Societies in Great
Britain and Ireland.

¹ The term 'missionary' is used in this constitution to describe the work of presenting the Gospel to non-Christian peoples, whether carried on by the older or by the younger churches.

National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon.

National Christian Council of Japan.

Korean National Christian Council.

Committee on Co-operation in Latin America.

Commissie van Advies (The Netherlands).

Netherlands India.

National Missionary Council of New Zealand.

Norsk Missionsraad.

Foreign Missions Conference of North America
(United States and Canada).

Evangelical Union of the Philippine Islands.

Missionary Societies of South Africa.

Suomen Lähetysneuvosto.

Svenska Missionsradet.

Association of Missionary Societies in Switzerland.

Council for Western Asia and Northern Africa.

§ National missionary organizations or Christian councils in other countries or areas may be added to those named above by the affirmative vote of the Committee of the Council, provided for later; and the Committee of the Council shall have full power to determine what qualifications shall be required of a missionary organization or a Christian council for membership in the Council. Among these qualifications the Committee would take into consideration the thoroughly representative character of the organization, its elements of stability and the extent and nature of the area that it covers.

The meetings of the Council shall be of two kinds, namely: (a) general Council meetings, and (b) special meetings for the consideration of particular subjects. The call for these general or special meetings shall

be issued by the Committee of the Council. In the case of general council meetings, the call shall be issued only after the proposal to hold such a meeting has been approved by two-thirds of the national bodies constituting the Council. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Committee after the proposal to hold such a meeting has been approved by two-thirds of the national bodies which will be expected to send representatives to the meeting.

The number of representatives which each national missionary organization and Christian council will be entitled to appoint for each meeting of the Council shall be as stated by the Committee in its proposal to call a meeting and as ratified by national bodies in their approval of the proposal. In arranging for the membership of any council meeting, the Committee shall provide, in so far as it is deemed desirable, for representation from countries in which there is no national missionary organization or Christian council and shall determine the method of choosing such representatives. The Committee shall also have the right to propose in regard to any particular meeting, whenever desirable, that a limited number of persons with special knowledge of the subjects contained in the programme of the proposed meeting may be invited to attend that meeting of the Council.

III. *Functions*

The functions of the Council shall be the following :

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation on questions related to the mission and expansion of

Christianity in all the world, to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in all countries, and to make the results available for all who share in the missionary work of the churches.

2. To help to co-ordinate the activities of the national missionary organizations and Christian councils of the different countries, and to bring about united action where necessary in missionary matters.

3. Through common consultation to help to unite Christian public opinion in support of freedom of conscience and religion and of missionary liberty.

4. To help to unite the Christian forces of the world in seeking justice in international and inter-racial relations.

5. To be responsible for the publication of the *International Review of Missions* and such other publications as in the judgment of the Council may contribute to the study of missionary questions.

6. To call a world missionary conference if and when this should be deemed desirable.

IV. *The Committee of the Council*

The Committee of the Council shall have the power to act for the Council in the intervals between its general council meetings.

The membership of the Committee shall be elected by the national missionary organizations and Christian councils, and the number of representatives, except as may be determined otherwise by subsequent action, shall be as follows :

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United Missionary Council of Australia	1
Société Belge de Missions Protestantes au Congo	1
National Christian Council of China	2
Conseil Protestant du Congo	1
Deutscher Evangelischer Missionsbund	1
Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris	1
Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland	5
National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon	2
National Christian Council of Japan	2
Korean National Christian Council	1
Committee on Co-operation in Latin America	3
Commissie van Advies (The Netherlands)	1
Netherlands India	1
National Missionary Council of New Zealand	1
Foreign Missions Conference of North America (United States and Canada)	7
Missionary Conference of Northern Europe (Den- mark, Finland, Norway and Sweden).	2
Evangelical Union of the Philippine Islands	1
Missionary Societies of South Africa	1
Association of Missionary Societies in Switzer- land	1
Council for Western Asia and Northern Africa	2

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For each meeting the Committee may elect other members, not exceeding three in all, to be nominated by the officers, from countries not otherwise represented, who shall for each meeting have the same rights and privileges as other members. In addition to the above, the Committee may elect other members, not exceeding five in all, to be nominated

by the officers, in order to supply special knowledge or experience, who shall be consultants without voting powers.

The Committee of the Council shall have the power to provide representation in the Committee of the Council for national organizations that may in the future be admitted to membership in the Council.

Members of the Committee shall hold office until their successors are appointed, the length of term of office and the method of appointment to be determined in each country or area by the national missionary organization or Christian council.

The officers of the Council shall be members, *ex officio*, of the Committee, and shall serve as the officers of the Committee of the Council.

The Committee of the Council shall, as occasion may require, consult with the constituent organizations in regard to the work of the Committee.

The Committee of the Council shall meet at the call of the officers of the Council, or upon request of a majority of the members of the Committee (sent to the chairman or secretaries in writing), or upon the request of three or more of the constituent organizations. Ten members of the Committee other than the officers shall constitute a quorum, provided, however, that these represent national missionary organizations or Christian councils, members of the Council, in three different continents.

V. Officers

The officers of the Council shall be a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen, of whom one shall be a woman,

Treasurer, and two or more Secretaries. These officers shall be elected by the Committee of the Council. Their terms of office, their respective duties and their remuneration shall be determined by the Committee. They shall be members, *ex officio*, of the Committee. The countries from which they come shall be allowed their full representation in addition to such officials.

VI. *Expenses*

The Committee of the Council shall prepare annual budgets two years in advance, which shall be submitted to the constituent organizations for approval and toward which they will be invited to contribute in a proportion to be recommended by resolution of the Committee. Since in a period of two years unforeseen developments may occur requiring additional expenditure, it is understood that such emergencies may be met by special funds which the Committee of the Council may be able to secure from private sources. If the objects to be sought involve permanent or recurring expense, the approval of the constituent organizations shall be secured before such work is undertaken, even if special funds are available for its support.

VII. *Procedure*

It is understood that the Council and the Committee of the Council will function internationally, and that the members of the Committee of the Council in any one country will not take action as a national group though they may be called together by the

officers of the International Missionary Council for purposes of consultation if this should seem necessary.

VIII. *Amendments*

This constitution may be amended at any future meeting of the Committee of the Council if subject to the approval of the constituent organizations.