

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### INFORMATION ON PRESIDENTS OF EIGHT BODIES PARTICIPATING IN NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*Dr. Franklin Clark Fry.*—Born August 30, 1900, in Bethlehem, Pa. President of United Lutheran Church in America (2,396,000 members) since 1944. Served six two-year terms, and current term of six years will expire in 1962. Has headquarters in New York City.

*Dr. Fredrik Axel Schiotz.*—Born June 15, 1901, in Chicago, Ill. President of Evangelical Lutheran Church (1,083,000 members) since 1954. Current term of six years will expire in 1960. Has headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn.

*Dr. Henry Frederick Schub.*—Born May 30, 1890, in Tacoma, Wash. President of American Lutheran Church (973,000 members) since 1951. Current term of six years will expire in 1962. Has headquarters in Columbus, Ohio.

*Dr. Oscar Algot Benson.*—Born April 7, 1891 in Derry, Pa. President of Augustana Lutheran Church (576,000 members) since 1951. Current term of four years will expire in 1959. Has headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn.

*Dr. John M. Stensvaag.*—Born June 1, 1911, in Bergen, Norway. President of Lutheran Free Church (77,000 members) since Oct. 1, 1958. Current term of three years will expire in 1961. Has headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn.

*Dr. William Larsen.*—Born May 19, 1909, in Racine County, Wis. President of United Evangelical Lutheran Church (65,000 members) since 1956. Current term of three years will expire in 1959. Has headquarters in Blair, Nebr.

*Dr. Raymond Waldemar Wargelin.*—Born June 25, 1911, in Republic, Mich. President of Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America or Suomi Synod (38,000 members) since 1955. Current term of four years will expire in 1962. Has headquarters in Hancock, Mich.

*Dr. Alfred Jensen.*—Born January 6, 1893, in Brenderup, Denmark. President of American Evangelical Lutheran Church (23,000 members) since 1936 and full-time president since 1942. Served 10 two-year terms, and current term of four years will expire in 1960. Has headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa.

## STUDY MEETINGS IN HOME MISSIONS

The News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council reports as follows on an article written by Dr. William H. Hillmer, Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions in North and South America of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The long-range Lutheran commitment to plant a church in every U. S. community of sorts got a rocket boost from a recent series of meetings between regional mission leaders of the National Lutheran Council and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The meetings, 13 in number and labeled Home Mission Study Conferences, began last September and extended into the new year.

The purpose of the meetings was to encourage a consultative relationship between the regional committees of the NLC and the District mission boards of the Missouri Synod in the interest of Lutheran expansion without wasteful duplication. Consultations had been going on in certain areas for some time, but they depended entirely on the good will of the individuals who were involved. Now consultation has been elevated to the status of a policy that has been put to its first official test.

Several years ago the Division of American Missions of the National Lutheran Council informed the Home Mission Department of the Missouri Synod that some of its District mission boards were conferring informally, some more formally, with the regional committees of the National Lutheran Council and that the Division desired to know whether this had the approval of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The matter was referred to the General Home Mission Conference of the Missouri Synod in early 1957, which was attended by representatives of all of the synodical Districts. To this conference a policy statement prepared by the Home Mission Board in consultation with the President of Synod was submitted.

The statement asserted the propriety of conferring with other churches in the placement of new Lutheran churches because the number and type of churches in a given area have a direct bearing on the growth of the proposed mission. Such conferring takes place with sister churches, with Protestant churches, and especially with other Lutheran bodies for the purpose of ascertaining whether a given locality really needs a Lutheran church. New churches should be planted where they are demonstrably needed. The need cannot be determined except in consultation with the churches that are already at work there.

The expected population rise in the next 25 years will tax the capacity of the Missouri Synod to maintain a growth corresponding to that of the population, to say nothing about an aggressive missionary outreach which the times demand. Hence manpower and money should be conserved. It is not good stewardship to plant two Lutheran churches where only one is needed and to deprive other areas that may stand in greater need of churches. Competitive overlapping is bad public relations in and outside the church.

So far the document. The General Home Mission Conference resolved to recommend that District home mission boards confer with the regional committees of the NLC in the planning of new churches "so that our church plants may be placed as strategically as possible for present and future expansion of the work."

The resolution went to the synodical President for a determination of "the steps that are necessary in order to make the resolution the official policy of Synod."

The resolution became the official policy of the Missouri Synod in May 1957. A postscript, however, was added by the President of Synod which reads: "Since The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is not in church fellowship with the churches of the National Lutheran Council, Synod's District mission boards still have the responsibility of serving our own people (and this may mean starting new places) where there is a concentration of such people and, therefore, the final determination for the opening of new places rests with Synod's District mission boards."

The District mission boards as well as the Division of American Missions of the NLC received copies of the statement, whereupon the latter initiated its arrangements for the study conferences.

The program of the conferences followed a pattern. Statements were read by representatives of the Division of American Missions and of the Missouri Synod Board for Home Missions in clarification of the purposes of the meeting. Then followed a county-by-county analysis of the religious character of the state in which the study conference took place. Other studies pertaining to the area were presented when they were available. The mission programs of the National Lutheran Council and of the Missouri Synod were reviewed, and a projection of future plans followed. Areas for further discussion were explored.

Meetings were held, in the sequence here given, at Buffalo; Detroit; Fargo, N. Dak.; Minneapolis; Fresno, Calif.; Des Moines; Kennewick, Wash.; Ohio; Florida; Washington, D. C.; Philadelphia; New York; New Jersey.

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE

*New York.*—Protestant and Orthodox leaders in this country reacted with mingled praise and caution to the announcement by Pope John XXIII that he will convene an ecumenical council to discuss ways of bringing about Christian unity. The American churchmen, while welcoming any effort toward unity, preferred to adopt a waiting attitude until they had studied the significance of the pontiff's announcement.

Among prominent Protestants expressing views were Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg of St. Louis, Mo., president of the National Council of Churches; and Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, chairman of the World Council of Churches' Central and Executive committees. These two agencies are leaders in Protestantism's ecumenical movement (worldwide church co-operation). Other leaders included Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtenberger of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Bishop Germanos Polizoides of New York, acting head of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America; and Metropolitan Antony Bashir of Brooklyn, N. Y., head of the Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church.

"Anything that would be a step toward unity of Churches would be welcome," Dr. Dahlberg said. "It would have to be recognized that it was a mutual coming together, not under conditions laid down by one Church for all the others.

"Any movement toward unity cannot be looked upon by Protestants as separated Christians returning to the Church of Rome.

"Anything that would bring together all the Churches of Christ would be blessed of God."

Dr. Fry said he would make no official statement until he had studied a text of the pope's statement from the Vatican. "If this official statement warrants," he said, "the matter will probably be discussed at a meeting of the World Council of Churches' Executive Committee in Geneva, Feb. 9—13."

Pope John's announcement was "welcomed" by Bishop Lichtenberger, who himself stressed Christian unity in a sermon delivered at his recent installation as head of the Episcopal Church. "I hope the convention (Ecumenical Council) might result in serious conversations between separated Churches to explore those things which we have in common and those things which separate us," he said.

Bishop Germanos said that his church "rejoices in" the Pope's proposal for a council to take up the question of Christian unity. "Our Church has always wanted and prayed for such unity, and we hope that

the appeal of the Pope is based on a desire to discuss the many problems and doctrines involved in a spirit of mutual equality and respect," he said. "Unity among Christians cannot be based on the premise that one group must yield completely to another."

Metropolitan Bashir said there is "no reason" why the apostolic churches should be divided. "There is only one Holy Apostolic Church," he said. "Its differences could be ironed out in ecumenical councils, Our peoples of the East are always willing to welcome such moves, provided they are sincere. Let us hope it will do some good."

Bishop Lichtenberger, voicing a strong plea for Christian unity in his inaugural sermon in Washington, D. C., said that "whatever may be our convictions about the right approach to unity, all of us should pray that the Church may be visibly one."

"There is one body, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all," he said. "This is the unity God has given us, but we have broken that unity and our witness is weakened because we are divided."

After his installation the bishop explained that the reunion of the church "should not leave out any branch of the Church and should not be merely a reunion of the Churches which came out of the Reformation."

*Vatican City.*—Pope John XXIII, in a move regarded as of epochal importance by religious leaders everywhere, announced his intention of convoking an ecumenical, or general, council, one of the chief purposes of which will be to study ways of bringing about unity between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian communities.

Ecumenical councils are gatherings of ecclesiastical dignitaries and theological experts representing the entire church for the purpose of discussing, defining, and regulating matters of church doctrine and discipline. The pope presides over such councils either in person or through a legate, and their decrees have no binding force unless he confirms them. The word "ecumenical" is Greek and means "from the inhabited world."

No date has been assigned as yet for the opening of the ecumenical council, but Vatican sources speculated it might be held this year, provided all the preliminary work can be accomplished in time. It was anticipated that at least 2,000 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, as well as other eligible clerics, would attend. This will be the largest gathering of bishops in the history of the church.

Special invitations will probably be issued by Pope John to the Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches to send observers to the sessions.

(In Geneva, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, commenting on the projected ecumenical council, said: "It illustrates the importance which the problem of unity has assumed in our times. It is too early to make any further comment. But, of course, we are especially interested in the question of how ecumenical this council will be.")

The ecumenical council will be the first since the Vatican Council of 1869—1870, at which the doctrine of papal infallibility was proclaimed. This council never actually adjourned but was suspended six weeks after Piedmontese troops entered the States of the Church and the reigning pope, Pius IX, became a prisoner in the Vatican. On October 20, 1870, the pope issued a bull suspending the council "until a more convenient and more opportune time."

Pope John's announcement was contained in an address to 20 cardinals on the occasion of a visit to St. Paul's Outside the Walls, one of the four major basilicas in Rome, to mark the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, the 19th centenary of the apostle's Epistle to the Romans. He met the cardinals in a monastery adjoining the basilica, where he had previously attended a Solemn Mass and recited a special prayer for an end to the persecution of Catholics in Communist China. In this prayer the pope also reasserted his claim to spiritual primacy and urged the Catholic flock to "remain obedient to the pontiff, who is the one universal shepherd."

A subsequent Vatican communique said the forthcoming council will be "aimed toward the edification of the Christian people," but it did not specify what topics, besides that of Christian unity, would be on the agenda.

The only hint given was that the pope, in his talk to the cardinals, had "underlined the daily increasing perils threatening the spiritual lives of the faithful, notably errors which are infiltrating their ranks at various points and the immoderate attraction of material goods, which have increased more than ever with the advent of technical progress."

Pope John, who spoke to the Cardinals in Latin, also announced the calling this year of a synod, or ecclesiastical council, of the clergy of the Rome diocese "to discuss the grave problems and increasing danger to the spiritual life" of Rome's two million population. Another major project, he disclosed, was to bring the code of canon law up to date and to publish for the Eastern, or Oriental Church, a separate code which has been under study.

The calling of the ecumenical council was the most dramatic move

made by Pope John in the fewer than three months since he was elected. It is said here that one of the factors favoring his election was that he had spent 20 years in Bulgaria and Turkey as a Vatican diplomat and thus was especially well informed on how Catholicism and the Orthodox and other Eastern Churches could be reunited. A major effort now to reunite the Catholic and Orthodox Churches would be the first since the Council of Florence in 1439—43 attempted to bring about lasting union between the Eastern dissidents and the Western Church.

Since the first one held at Nicaea in 325 all the ecumenical councils have been historic landmarks in the history of the Catholic Church. The first council developed the Nicene Creed, which defined the divinity of Christ and fixed a formula for dating Easter observances.

Other major decrees issued by ecumenical councils have condemned, among other things, various heresies, declared the Virgin Mary the Mother of God, regulated the veneration of holy images, laid down rules for papal elections, and ordered annual confession and Easter Communion.

The Council of Trent, the 19th and the longest in session, launched the Catholic Counter Reformation against the rise of Protestantism by issuing canons and decrees defining Catholic belief on matters of faith and practice.

The last ecumenical council opened in St. Peter's Basilica on Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, in 1869. It resulted in two major dogmatic constitutions. The first defined the Catholic doctrine on faith against the heresies of modern rationalism, materialism, and atheism. The second defined the Catholic doctrine on the institution, perpetuity, and nature of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff. This constitution contained the famous definition of papal supremacy.

The doctrine of papal infallibility was not on the original agenda of the Vatican Council and was not brought before it until the fourth session. In a final vote, July 18, 1870, only two of the bishops voted against the decision, and these immediately acceded to the will of the majority.

Although the Vatican Council remained unfinished, it was regarded as of great significance for having raised the moral prestige of the church at a time when the state was seen attempting to control all aspects of a country's life, including its religion, and anti-Christian influences were everywhere rampant.

The Vatican Council was over four years in preparation. It had been first discussed by Pope Pius IX in March 1865, when he con-



sulted with the cardinals on the necessity and expediency of convening it. In his bull finally summoning the council the pope, in words which are seen by many as just as appropriate today, wrote:

"No one, at the present time, can ignore how horrible is the storm by which the Church is assailed and what an accumulation of evils afflicts civil society. The Catholic Church, her most salutary doctrines, her most revered power, the supreme authority of this Holy See, are all assailed and trampled upon by the bitter enemies of God and man.

"All that is most sacred is held up to contempt; ecclesiastical property is made the prey of the spoiler; the most venerable ministers of the sacraments, men most eminent for their Catholic character, are harassed by untold annoyances.

"The religious orders are suppressed, impious books of every kind and pestilential publications are disseminated, wicked societies are everywhere and under every form multiplied. The education of youth is, in almost all countries, withdrawn from the clergy and, what is worse, entrusted in many places to teachers of error and evil."

Ecumenical councils are not absolutely necessary for the government of the church, but there are occasions when they may be deemed both advisable and beneficial. Catholic theologians hold that the pope, being neither the recipient of private revelation nor divinely inspired, is morally bound to employ all available human means in his investigations. Accordingly, they state, he is much helped in discovering the content of the deposit of faith by consultation with the bishops, who aid him in this way, as well as acting as judges of what may be decided.

Those who will be summoned to the forthcoming ecumenical council will be the cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops and residential bishops, even if they are not consecrated, abbots and prelates *nullius*, meaning ecclesiastics who rule over a territory not embraced in any episcopal diocese.

Also called to the council will be abbots primate, the abbot superiors of monastic congregations, and the chief superiors of exempt religious orders of clerics.

Titular bishops may also be called to the council, and they will have the right to vote in it. Expert theologians and canonists will attend in an advisory capacity but with no authority to vote.

*Dubuque, Iowa.* — Still under preparation, the *Lutheran World Encyclopedia* was tentatively scheduled here to be off the press in time for the next general assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Helsinki, Finland, in 1963.

Arrangements for completion of the encyclopedia and its publication "in four to five years" were made at a conference here by three principals involved in the project. They are Dr. Carl Lund-Quist of Geneva, Switzerland, LWF executive secretary; Dr. Julius Bodensieck of Wartburg Theological Seminary here, editor of the international reference work; and William Gentz, assistant manager, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, which will publish the encyclopedia.

Launched at the LWF general assembly in Hannover, Germany, in 1952, the reference work, under present plans, will comprise five or six volumes, with articles contributed by some 750 scholars throughout the world. Contents will include articles on such subjects as theology, history, biography, polity, liturgy, church activities, ecumenical relationships, and statistics.

*Columbia, Mo.*—A new ruling by the University of Missouri Board of Curators has reversed a decade-old regulation prohibiting religious services on any of the institution's property here.

The latest action will apply to the \$130,000 A. P. Green Chapel, now under construction on the campus, and to another chapel in the university's medical center. It permits religious services but not "regular, recurring services of any one group" and stipulates that "no advantage shall be given to any religious group over others."

Dr. Thomas Brady, dean of extradivisional administration at the university, pointed out that the restriction on "regular, recurring" services is to avoid limiting the use of a chapel to any one group of students.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE NEWS BUREAU OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*Milwaukee.*—A study has found that Lutheran colleges and theological seminaries in the United States and Canada "reflect a wholesome and agreeable atmosphere" in race relations. Results of a survey of the cultural and racial practices of Lutheran institutions of higher learning were disclosed here at the 41st annual meeting of the National Lutheran Council. It showed that some 400 to 500 "minority" students of 10 cultures and colors different from the dominant Nordic Caucasian group have spent 1,526 academic years in Lutheran colleges and seminaries since 1950.

Jewish students accounted for 569 academic years, Negroes for 501 years, Mexican Americans 55, Indian Americans 54, Japanese and Chinese, 48 each, other Orientals 122, Puerto Ricans 37, and others of marked cultural and racial differences 92.

"It is to the credit of our Lutheran schools that these good people

of other cultures and colors have enjoyed normal acceptance on the part of their fellow students and the faculty," commented the Rev. Alf M. Kraabel of Chicago, secretary for intercultural outreach in the NLC's Division of American Missions. The study was conducted by Mr. Kraabel's office and the Lutheran Human Relations Association of Valparaiso (Ind.) University, which is related to The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

*Milwaukee.*—A leader in student work reported to the National Lutheran Council at its 41st annual meeting here that a change in attitude concerning religion has taken place on the campuses of America's colleges and universities. The "conspiracy of silence" of a decade ago, which left with students "the inference that God doesn't matter either in education or in life itself," seems to have been broken, said the Rev. A. Henry Hetland of Chicago. Now, he added, there is "renewed interest in the possibilities of religion restoring a sense of moral responsibility and high incentive to students."

Mr. Hetland, newly elected executive secretary of the NLC's Division of College and University Work, observed that so many educators want religion brought into academic life that "we must be on guard lest we be caught up in a fad that lacks discrimination." He said the possibilities of introducing courses in religion are being considered by an increasing number of administrators who "have taken courage from certain legal experts who profess to see no danger of church-state conflicts being touched off by these innovations."

"Only the fear of getting involved in interchurch squabbles has deterred them from more aggressive action, and for this reason they look rather hopefully in the direction of anything or any movement which promises a minimum of denominational jamming," he said.

Even more significant than the desire to introduce courses on religion in the curriculum, according to Mr. Hetland, is the fact that religion is being discussed within inner circles of the academic world. Reasons for this development are "rather obscure," he said, "but apparently the challenge to the imperialism of science . . . has actually been made in the higher echelons of learning, and the bastions of scientism, positivism, instrumentalism, and objectivism have begun to show cracks."

*Milwaukee.*—More than \$86 million were spent last year by Lutheran health and welfare agencies in America to serve some 475,000 people in need. Dr. Henry J. Whiting, executive secretary of the Division of Welfare of the National Lutheran Council, reported the figures to the co-operative agency's 41st annual meeting here. Total expenditures amounted to \$86,127,373, of which \$11,502,937 was

received as subsidy from church bodies, contributions from congregations, and other sources, while \$74,624,436 represented earned income.

The services, given by more than 17,000 full-time employees, were directed to children, families, the aged, and immigrants. Also included in the figures were general health programs and chaplaincy activities.

There are 464 Lutheran health and welfare agencies in the United States, of which 401 are supported by churches of the NLC. The remaining 63 are related to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

*Milwaukee.*—More than 176 million pounds of supplies valued at nearly 18 million dollars were shipped abroad by Lutheran World Relief during 1958. The food, clothing, medicines, and other goods reached some 2,200,000 needy in 13 countries. Bernard A. Confer, executive secretary of LWR, announced the figures—an all-time high for the sixth consecutive year—in his report here to the 41st annual meeting of the National Lutheran Council.

He said this brings to 517,226,771 pounds the goods distributed in 29 countries and areas by Lutheran World Relief in its 13-year history. Total value of these shipments is estimated at \$95,132,695. LWR has served as the material aid agency of the eight church bodies participating in the Council since February 1946. The Board of World Relief of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has co-operated in the program since 1953.

*Milwaukee.*—Work is now underway on a *Pastor's Public Relations Handbook*, designed to help the Lutheran clergy in dealings with the press, radio, and television. Announcement of the project was made at the 41st annual meeting here of the National Lutheran Council by its Division of Public Relations.

According to the report, the handbook will be prepared jointly by the Division, the Department of Press, Radio, and Television of the United Lutheran Church in America, and the Department of Public Relations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

*Pacoima, Calif.*—Construction will begin here the middle of March on a two and one-half million dollar hospital, the result of co-operative efforts by 43 Lutheran congregations which represent nine Lutheran church bodies in the United States. Lutheran congregations undertook the sponsorship of the new community hospital in the San Fernando Valley after attempts by other groups to finance the building failed. According to the Rev. John G. Simmons, executive vice-president of the new institution, the 100-bed structure, to be called the Pacoima

Memorial Lutheran Hospital, will be open to the sick and suffering of all races, creeds, and colors.

Of nine Lutheran church bodies represented by the 43 co-operating congregations, six participate in the National Lutheran Council and the other three are members of the Synodical Conference. The number of congregations of the nine church bodies co-operating in the hospital venture are United Lutheran Church in America, 13; Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 13; Evangelical Lutheran Church, 7; Augustana Lutheran Church, 4; American Lutheran Church, 2; and one each of the Lutheran Free Church, Joint Synod of Wisconsin, United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, formerly the Norwegian Synod.

[EDITORIAL NOTE: In the article "Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger" of this journal (March 1959, p. 206) a quotation appeared without giving credit for its source. We regret this oversight. The article cited and discussed appeared in *The Christian Century*, Nov. 26, 1958, pp. 1359—1361.]