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BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

Buck Hill Falls, Pa.—A turning point in missionary activities has been reached by “older church” nations, and bold new approaches are now needed, a World Council of Churches leader and two other authorities declared here at the annual meeting of the Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference of North America. In their discussion papers each of the three speakers underscored the need for establishment of a new mission thrust, to be carried out in partnership with the younger churches in rapidly changing lands.

The Rt. Rev. Lesslie Newbigin, director of the Department of World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC, called for acceptance of a new mission philosophy based on joint church action and in recognition of the entire world as a mission field. Dr. R. Pierce Beaver, professor of missions at the University of Chicago Divinity School, cited the present as “a new age for pioneering” in mission work, and William J. Danker of St. Louis, professor at Concordia Seminary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, suggested projection of church mission effort into areas of economic activity.

About 60 delegates from LFMF participating groups gathered here on Nov. 26—27 to hear and discuss the study papers. The missions organization is a forum supported by some 20 Lutheran church mission boards and independent societies and meeting annually to air missionary policies and problems.

The group elected Dr. Herman A. Koppelman, St. Louis, executive secretary of the Missouri Synod Board for World Missions, as its president for the coming year. He succeeds Dr. Earl S. Erb of New York, executive director of the Lutheran Church in America's

Board of World Missions, who has held the post for the last four years.

A need for “radical changes” in the philosophy of missions was cited by Bishop Newbigin, who said today's mission task is directed to “six continents, not three.” Calling for “rethinking” and casting away of the mantle of 19th-century colonialism that shrouded early mission activity, the WCC leader said “the image the word ‘mission’ evokes is that of the white man going to Africa, Asia, or Latin America—we don't see those deeply committed Christians from Jamaica going to work in the pagan slums of Manchester and Birmingham.”

The need for common planning and less emphasis on maintaining “confessional” boundaries in mission activity is made mandatory, asserted Bishop Newbigin, by the increasing urbanization of the world, the heightening demand for educational facilities, the impact laymen are making in overseas areas, and the urgent need for mission effort in the many unevangelized areas of the world. “For every one person who goes overseas as a missionary,” he said, “100 go in some other capacity. Potentially the question of the future evangelization of the world rests much more on the 100 than on the one. . . .”

He called attention to the “paternalism” that has developed between the older “sending” churches and the younger “receiving” bodies and called for demolition of this situation by efforts to “develop a genuine partnership in decision.” Noting a proposal made at the WCC assembly at New Delhi, India, last year, he said it is hoped that churches, together with mission officials, can be brought together in specific areas to “put their cards on the table, expose fully their relationships . . . and together, as God's people, face the task.”

Dr. Beaver stressed violent changes in world economic and social structure, emphasizing "the magnitude of the metropolis and the population explosion." He said it is urgent that mission activity move into new patterns "by setting free a goodly number of men and women from the traditional duties and methods of missionaries and granting them complete freedom with plenty of time to experiment."

The Chicago theologian expressed the opinion that world conditions "will demand far more missionaries in the future" and said the church should augment its professional ministry through "the voluntary, unpaid action of laymen making witness and exercising a manifold ministry by virtue of their discipleship."

"A daring new openness is necessary," said Dr. Beaver, if effective new mission patterns are to be discovered. He criticized older churches as institutions "concerned with conserving their prestige, privileges, and remnants of power, with maintaining their peculiar traditions, and with carrying on ever more activities."

Prof. Danker cited personal observations of mission activity in many areas to support an argument that "the church will become truly indigenized . . . only when it lives economically out of the culture in which it is based." Describing examples of churches and missionaries successfully engaging in business ventures, the speaker suggested increased church participation in economic activities. "Not that the church should become rich," he said, "but through corporate as well as individual stewardship, it can be of better service to the world. We require far more in personnel and resources than anyone at present is doing."

Prof. Danker questioned the flexibility of the church in coping with "dynamic urbanization." Churches in the West today "are fleeing urban poverty and pursuing suburban money," he said. "Yet the church can change.

Until the 19th century many Protestant and Roman Catholic churchmen stood out against taking interest. Today denominational pension plans are based on it."

"Without a secure economic base the Christian congregation in mission lands often seems to spend nearly all its energies on its own marginal economic existence and has small resources left to succor others in their need," he said. He suggested that business enterprises should be separate in structure from the organized congregation, conducted "under the rules of the kingdom of God's left hand."

The major presentations received prolonged analysis in general floor discussion and through panels of "reactors." These included clergymen from Tanganyika, Japan, and Malaya studying in the United States.

Other speakers included the Rev. Carl Johansson, executive secretary of the Federation of Lutheran Churches of Tanganyika, who presented opening devotions; the Rev. James Scherer, dean of the LCA's School of Missions at Maywood, Ill., and the Rev. Conrad Braaten, executive director of the World Brotherhood Exchange.

Mr. Scherer charged that Lutherans "have not been true to the Reformation" by failing to relate theology to an understanding of the mission task. He called for "intense research to recover our true missionary direction."

Mr. Braaten reported that the WBE, an independent, laymen-supported organization which has the endorsement of the American Lutheran Church, has sent 52 volunteer technicians and professional men to underdeveloped areas — all at their own expense — since it was formed about two years ago. He said five college students are also studying now in India and will visit mission fields around the world under auspices of the WBE.

The ALC clergyman said the program could be greatly accelerated if additional personnel could be obtained to make contacts and administer the work.

Milwaukee.—Congregations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in the Milwaukee area are participating in an urban church planning study here initiated by the National Lutheran Council. The study, being conducted by Dr. Walter Kloetzli of Chicago, secretary for urban church planning in the NLC's Division of American Missions, involves some 200 congregations of four church bodies.

The mission board of the Southeastern Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Synod encouraged its congregations to participate in the study, stating that "none of the fellowship principles which the Wisconsin Synod has upheld are in jeopardy." Also participating are congregations of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, both participating bodies of the NLC, and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

In emphasizing the need for the study, Dr. Kloetzli pointed out that "in our highly complex and structured society it is next to impossible for a congregation to live in isolation from other neighboring congregations in a synodical family."

"The four great facts of contemporary society—growth, mobility, migration, and sprawl—point to the need for study and planning in the urban areas," he said. "The planning of congregation leaders 25 and 50 years ago just can't stand the pressure of the changed situation."

The planning study, the most comprehensive and inclusive ever undertaken by the urban church planning department, is divided into two phases. The first phase, gathering and analyzing community statistics, has been completed and the two-volume report will be available shortly to participating congregations. A field staff of three spent the summer contacting key community leaders in a variety of fields—planning, housing, welfare, and urban renewal.

The second phase, in which congregations

are grouped into three sectors for self-study, is now in progress. Various community leaders have addressed the sector meetings, including Frank P. Zeidler, former mayor of Milwaukee and an internationally recognized authority on urban affairs.

The self-study conducted by the participating congregations "will bring the churches to look at their ministry as it relates not only to their neighborhood but also to the entire urban community," Dr. Kloetzli pointed out. Results of the study will also be available to mission boards on the regional and national level.

The study, which will be completed next summer, is being conducted independently but concurrently by the four church bodies and all meetings in connection with the study are being held separately.

Chicago.—Formation of a new Lutheran Historical Conference to work toward coordination of archival, historical, and micro-filming activities of all branches of the denomination in North and South America has been completed here.

Organization of the conference marks the first time archivists, historians, and librarians of the major American Lutheran bodies have formally moved to provide a single channel of cooperation for the preservation and utilization of historical records and materials.

Members of all three of the largest Lutheran bodies in the country—the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod—took part in the organization meeting here on Nov. 8—9.

Creation of such a cooperative historical conference has been under discussion for several years, particularly among librarians of Lutheran theological seminaries, and since 1960 a planning committee has been working toward the actual organization.

Specific purposes of the conference, in addition to coordination efforts, include the encouragement of research and the produc-

tion of scholarly works on the history of Lutheranism in America.

The newly formed group also passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Lutheran historical research center in the framework of the new cooperative agency that has been proposed to succeed the National Lutheran Council. The resolution was directed to representatives of the ALC, LCA, and Missouri Synod who in January will open consultations to formulate plans to organize the proposed new Lutheran association.

A 9-member executive committee was elected to conduct conference activities between general meetings, which will be held biennially. The committee named the following officers: Dr. Dorris A. Flesner, ALC professor of church history at Northwestern Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn., chairman; the Rev. August R. Suelflow, Missouri Synod, director of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Mo., vice-chairman; the Rev. Robert C. Wiederaenders, ALC, a historian and pastor at Kankakee, Ill., secretary; and the Rev. William F. Goetz, archivist of the ALC at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, treasurer.

Other executive committee members are Miss Elizabeth L. Balz, ALC, librarian at Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio; Miss Helen M. Knubel, LCA, secretary of research and statistics and librarian for the NLC, New York, N. Y.; the Rev. Joel W. Lundeen, archivist of Augustana Lutheran Church, which this year merged into the new LCA, and librarian at Augustana Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Ill.; Dr. Carl S. Meyer, Missouri Synod, professor of church history at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., and the Rev. Henry Scherer, LCA, librarian at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa. Miss Knubel was designated as editor of the newsletter to be published by the conference.

The conference discussed microfilming

operations by various Lutheran church bodies and recommended this work be done through the channels of the American Theological Librarians Association Board of Microtext. Members of the conference executive committee were urged to continue offering their services as consultants to the different churches concerning microfilming projects.

In other conference action it was decided to continue work on two current cooperative projects — completion of a check-list of all Lutheran synodical reports and minutes and a list of all the denomination's periodicals — and to start work on a list of all Lutheran manuscript collections.

The executive committee scheduled its next meeting for November 1963 at Augustana Seminary and set the next general conference session for November 1964 at Concordia Historical Institute.

The conference was organized with 103 charter members, and it was decided to keep the charter list open until the end of 1962. A total of 30 archivists, historians, and librarians attended the organization meeting.

New Ulm, Minn. — The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has authorized funds to call two full-time pastors to serve military personnel of the synod stationed in the area centering in Washington, D. C., and in the vicinity of El Paso, Tex.

At a special convention of the synod here, Nov. 7—9, delegates also voted to provide funds for the appointment of 30 part-time pastors who will serve neighboring military installations in the vicinity of their congregations.

The Wisconsin Synod does not approve of the military chaplaincy, charging that under existing regulations it is not possible for a pastor of its synod to carry out his duties without violating denominational beliefs and practices.

The stepped-up program was necessary, the delegates were told, because "since our synod's suspension of fellowship with The

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod the possibility of referral of our armed forces personnel to local resources has been seriously curtailed.”

Prior to the suspension of fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in August 1961, Wisconsin Synod military personnel was also referred for pastoral services to Missouri Synod pastors when Wisconsin Synod pastors were not available. Since the suspension of fellowship the Spiritual Welfare Commission of the synod has terminated this practice.

According to the chairman of the commission, the Rev. Arnold Schroeder of Milwaukee, the two full-time pastors will be called as soon as possible. Many of the 30 part-time pastors have already been secured, he said.

In other action the convention approved a proposal that the “Board of Trustees of the Synod be empowered to use the amount previously voted by a convention for a joint building project in Madison (\$184,500) toward the establishment of our own student mission in Madison.”

At the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods have been carrying on joint student work. The approval of the convention means that there will be an eventual separation of the student work of the two synods.

“We have established no timetable, however, for this separation,” said the Rev. Raymond Wiechmann of Milwaukee, chairman of the synod’s General Board for Home Missions.

Helsinki.—Resignation of Prof. Osmo Tiirilä, prominent Finnish theologian and public lecturer on religious matters, from the national Lutheran Church, has stirred this country and aroused wide comment, especially in church and press circles. His withdrawal legally took force on Dec. 10. He said it was made in protest against modern trends which he asserted were leading the church away

from its central purpose and minimizing the importance of personal “new life in Christ.”

A main focus of debate concerns the possibility of Dr. Tiirilä’s continuing as professor of systematic theology at the University of Helsinki. This is the first time in the university’s history that one of its theological professors has left the church. However, Dean Aimo Nikolainen of the faculty of theology said no rule exists requiring theological professors to belong to the church.

Prof. Tiirilä resigned from the ordained ministry of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church more than a year ago. He has now given up membership on all church committees, including the Finnish Committee on Arrangements for the Lutheran World Federation’s Helsinki Assembly next year. Early in 1961 he gave up his place on the LWF Executive Committee, on which he had served since 1952, but at that time he gave poor health as the reason. He had suffered a heart attack while at the 1960 Executive Committee meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The 58-year-old theologian attended the federation’s Hanover Assembly in 1952 and its Minneapolis Assembly in 1957. He is a former vice-chairman of the Finnish National Committee for the LWF.

Archbishop Ilmari Salomies of Turku, primate of the Finnish Church, was quoted by the Helsinki Christian semiweekly *Kotimaa* as having commented that “this is a deplorable event in many respects . . . but I am happy to learn that, in his own words, Professor Tiirilä remains a friend of the ideal of our church.”

The archbishop also said, according to *Kotimaa*: “Professor Tiirilä is a person who has been, during many years and in many ways, very active in the service of the church. He has been deeply concerned about various phenomena within the Finnish Church, especially those that in his opinion need revision and change.

“His public utterances and books have

been gaining wide popularity, and I believe they have had their influence within hearts. For this reason it is particularly sad that he has not found it possible to continue his activities within our church."

Dr. Tiililä, in an open letter to *Kotimaa* announcing his resignation, said he had been profoundly considering the step for a long time. He added, though, that the decision had been brought to a head by the treatment given by the church press to a revival rally here at which he was the main speaker.

The rally took place on the first weekend in November in the Messuhalli, the city's large, modern assembly hall. He took exception to the coverage of it not only by *Kotimaa* but also by the weekly paper of the Helsinki parishes, *Kirkko ja Kaupunki* (Church and City).

When he addressed the revival meeting, Professor Tiililä criticized new methods of church work aimed at reaching and understanding modern man without primarily seeking his conversion from sin.

He was later quoted in *Kotimaa* as having stated: "I have not said in my lectures at the Messuhalli meeting that 'the greatest danger to the Church lies in its attempt to activize unconverted people to do God's will.' I mentioned this only as one example of the distorted direction of the present state of the Church.

"I wanted to stress in both my addresses that the greatest danger to the Church is the neglect of the message of eternal life, which is pushed aside in favor of some lesser aspects. I have by no means underestimated those other activities of the Church, such as the attempt to keep up with difficult present-day problems and deal with them through social work," he said.

"They are of great importance. But in spite of all this, we should remember that our Savior did not come into the world mainly to set in order our human relationships with our neighbors."

Geneva. — A fully equipped \$40,000 mo-

bile clinic and a check for \$100,000 were turned over here to the Christian Committee for Service in Algeria in the name of the Lutheran World Federation. Presentation was made on Nov. 30, by Dr. Bruno Muetzelfeldt, director of the LWF Department of World Service, in a joint ceremony at which an identical medical van was turned over to the CCSA by Dr. Leslie E. Cooke, associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

The CCSA is an ecumenical agency of 17 Christian organizations and churches representing numerous nationalities joined together in a common effort to bring relief and rehabilitation to more than a million Algerians left destitute by the war for independence from France.

Described as "a small hospital on wheels," the huge white mobile clinic was contributed by German Evangelicals through their *Brot für die Welt* program and Swedish Lutherans through the "Lutherhjälp" effort of the federation's National Committee in that country.

The \$100,000 check from LWF/WS, made available by Lutheran donors on both sides of the Atlantic, explained Dr. Muetzelfeldt, is "an undesignated contribution for CCSA service programs of general nature." Previously this year federation funds for Algeria aid totaling \$120,000 had been allotted to the CCSA, he said.

They included \$10,000 for a proportionate share of the administrative costs of the committee's work, \$35,000 for service to released prisoners, \$40,000 for the mobile clinic, \$20,000 for vehicles to transport material relief goods, and \$15,000 for airlifting 20,000 blankets donated by other agencies.

The LWF/WS director anticipated that another \$180,000 would be made available to the CCSA for its program in 1963.

At the presentation ceremony, Dr. Muetzelfeldt said the clinomobiles "illustrate a most significant Christian response to human need. They are a testimony that we who find our-

selves in a more fortunate position have discovered in the response to human suffering a bond of faith and service," he declared.

He characterized them as "gifts of love (that) are like the mighty arches of huge bridges which span the gaps between the affluent communities and the almost unspeakable privation in other parts of the world."

Referring to the CCSA, the federation executive commented: "This is the first time an experiment of this nature has been undertaken. A great deal as to the future patterns in interchurch cooperation depends on success or failure in Algeria."

Presenting the mobile clinics to the LWF and the WCC on behalf of the original donors was Dr. Rudolf Wolckenhaar of Stuttgart, director of the ecumenical department of the Inner Mission and *Hilfswerk*, an agency of the Evangelical Church in Germany. Receiving the vehicles from the World Council and federation officials was Dr. Charles W. Arbuthnot, European ecumenical representative of the United Presbyterian Church, USA, who is Executive Committee chairman of the CCSA. The benediction was pronounced by Dr. Kurt Schmidt-Clausen, executive secretary of the LWF.

Donations totaling \$500,000 have been received by LWF/WS from Lutherans in the United States, Germany, and Sweden for the cooperative Christian relief and rehabilitation program now under way in Algeria.

Of the total, \$200,000 has been obtained through the Swedish National Committee; the German National Committee has given \$118,000 and pledged an additional \$122,000; the U. S. National Committee has contributed \$50,000 from Lutheran World Action funds, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has given \$10,000.

Dr. Muetzelfeldt is a vice-chairman of the CCSA and the Rev. Eugene Ries, LWF/WS secretary for resettlement and material relief, is a member of the committee's executive body.

Sao Leopoldo, Brazil. — The Synodal Federation of the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil has dropped the first phrase in its name to emphasize the increasing organic unity of its three constituent synods. To be known henceforth as the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil, the body, with nearly 600,000 members, is the largest church in Latin American Lutheranism and the largest related to the foreign office of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD).

The name change was voted by delegates to the church's quadrennial assembly here. They also elected Dr. Ernesto T. Schlieper to a second 4-year term as full-time president of the church. He was part-time president from 1956 to 1958.

Attending the sessions were President Adolf Wischmann and Oberkirchenrat Johannes Bartelt of the EKD foreign office in Frankfurt, Germany.

The synods that constitute the Brazilian church are—in order of size—the Evangelical Church in Rio Grande do Sul, the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and the Evangelical Church of Central Brazil. The second-named of these was constituted in October by two synods that formed part of the Synodal Federation.

Together the synods have about 1,150 congregations and 280 preaching stations served by 207 pastors. Reports presented and decisions taken here showed that the church has made marked progress in the past four years not only toward closer internal unity but also toward self-sufficiency and missionary outreach.

Missionary work has been started among Indians in two places and is to be developed among Japanese settlers in the coming years. Plans for 1963 also call for establishment of an evangelical academy along the lines of the widely known Protestant lay conference and training centers that have proved so important in postwar Germany.