

*THE*  
***DISCIPLING***  
***OF A***  
***NATION***

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AND  
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To

our many friends in the Philippines who have caught the vision for "the discipling of a nation."

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Look at the nations and watch--  
and be utterly amazed,  
For I am going to do something in your days  
that you would not believe,  
even if you were told.

*Habakkuk 1:5 (NI V)*

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## **Preface**

A word on how this book came into being is in order. The idea for

producing a book for a series of church growth seminars in the Philippines in 1980 was Dr. Donald McGavran's. The idea for the theme of the book was mine.

Together, Dr. McGavran and I developed the outline of chapters. We agreed he would write five chapters, namely, chapters two, three, 14, 15 and 17. I would be responsible for the rest.

I received considerable help with my chapters. Drs. Leslie Hill, Leonard Tuggy and Met Castillo wrote original drafts for chapters respectively on the Southern Baptist, Conservative Baptist and Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches in the Philippines. I slimmed these down and edited them to fit the flow of the book. Much of the material for Chapter Five was originally published in McGavran's MULTIPLYING CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES and my book, NEW TESTAMENT FIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Of particular help to me was Bob Waymire, my Associate for Planning and Research at O.C. Ministries (formerly Overseas Crusades) in Santa Clara, California. Over a period of several weeks in March, 1978, and February 1979, Waymire dug out the stories of 23 denominations from their leaders in the Philippines. His research provided the basis for at least five of the chapters and he produced all the graphs in this book.

Our thanks and apologies go to Tom Steffen of the New Tribes Mission and Dr. Joseph Arthur of C&MA. At our invitation, these men wrote excellent papers on "Discipling Tribals" and "Planting Churches Through Student Work" respectively. In the final analysis we concluded these topics should not have been included in the original outline. Reluctantly, we withdrew these fine chapters from the book.

Many others have been helpful in providing information, in making helpful suggestions and in producing this book, Patricia Kelly, my Administrative Assistant, deserves special mention for her long hours of typing and proofreading.

For all of these involved in helping make this book possible, Dr. McGavran and I express our hearty thanks.

Jim Montgomery  
June, 1980

## The Idea Germinates

Early in 1966 while traveling in the mid-day heat by *banca* (outrigger canoe) for three hours between two islands of the Philippine archipelago, I was suddenly overwhelmed by the conviction that the peoples of this nation could be discipled. This had been my hypothesis since studying at the Institute of Church Growth (then in Eugene, Oregon) the year before. Now I was criss-crossing the nation studying the rapidly growing Foursquare denomination to test that hypothesis. By the time of my *banca* trip, I had interviewed enough of the Foursquare converts, pastors and missionaries for this conclusion to burst upon my consciousness: It was harvest time in the Philippines! It was time to take literally the command of Matthew 28:19 and 20 to "make disciples of all (the) nations"\* of the Philippines.

The idea of discipling *nations* had been churning in my mind also since studying in Eugene. Of course I had long since learned that the word "nations" in the English Bible referred *not* to states such as the 221 countries that make up the world family today, but to peoples, castes, tribes or other ethnic units. A people is any segment of society which marries chiefly within itself. It usually has a distinct consciousness of being itself and different from other peoples. Every country is composed of many "nations" or "peoples ."

Ralph Winter has recently estimated there are 16,750 peoples among the 2.4 billion "hidden people" of the earth. There are probably another 13,250 or so peoples among the remaining 1.8 billion of the world's population for a total of 30,000 peoples. This estimate may be close to or far from the truth. Whatever the actual number, these are the "nations," the peoples (*ta ethne* of Matthew 28:19), which the Lord has commanded us to disciple.

As this is being written in 1979, the Strategy Committee of the Lausanne Continuation Committee is encouraging us to think of world evangelization in terms of reaching all 30,000 peoples, each people constituting a particular task. It suggests that the task of converting three billion non-Christians and another one billion nominal Christians one at a time is too overwhelming to plan for. But to develop strategies for reaching a single people whose population might be a few thousand to a few million and which has a degree of homogeneity of language, culture, redemptive analogy and so on is more

reasonable. We can plan for it.

I am attracted to thus breaking down the task of world evangelization, but would like to suggest a further modification. I'm afraid missions and Churches which wisely start thinking in terms of reaching peoples will be satisfied when they have identified one unreached people here or there and have planted a single church in it. In correctly interpreting the *nature* of the task of Matthew 28 as being the discipling of "peoples" (nations), they might easily overlook the *scope* of the task, the discipling of "*all*" peoples.

I would like to suggest that missions and Churches think in terms of discipling *all* the peoples of each *nation* in which they work. (Some peoples stretch across national boundaries, but they are the exception.) There is a certain practicality to this. In one nation the number of peoples is small enough-from a few score to a few hundred-to appear possible, yet large and challenging enough to stretch faith and vision beyond the abilities of man. Also, the world's 221 nations are an understandable reality with well-defined geographical boundaries, national or trade languages, distinct histories, political systems, economies and so on. Each nation has its own policy on issuing visas to foreign missionaries. Furthermore, it is well within the realm of possibility for the missionary movement to have a central agency in each nation that has catalogued all the peoples of the country and has done enough research to know the relative responsiveness of each and which is being reached by whom. Such an agency could provide the Churches and missions of a country with necessary data and the coordination needed for the discipling of the peoples in a country. Were Ralph Winter's idea for a center for world mission in each country to be implemented these centers would provide such information. My own mission- O.C. Ministries- emphasizes working with the whole Body of Christ in a nation with the goal in mind of reaching the whole population of the country and therefore fits nicely into such a slot.

It dawned on me in the motorized canoe back in 1966 that since the Church of the Philippines had been commanded to make disciples of all her peoples and since in fact most of them seemed very responsive to the Gospel, the attempt ought to be made. I had done enough research to know that this responsiveness varied from place to place and from people to people. The population where Roman Catholic roots were deepest such as Zamboanga, Cebu City and the Bicol area were not notably responsive. The remainder of non-Muslims on Mindanao, on the other hand, were incredibly

open to the Gospel. I had heard of great response in some tribes and resistance in others. I was aware that animists in general were easier to reach than secularists. Response amongst Muslims is almost always negligible, but there were encouraging signs in the Islamic tribes of Mindanao. I knew there must be other resistant peoples such as the 5,000 Hindus in Manila, but my general impression of tremendous responsiveness among the many peoples and homogeneous units of the Philippines seemed reasonably accurate.

Hard on the heels of the exhilarating conclusion that the Philippines as a nation could be discipled in this generation came another insight. This one saddened and angered me. It occurred to me that Satan seemed to have the upper hand. He was determined that the ripened harvest fields would not be worked. Except for the denomination I was studying and a few other rapidly growing Churches, it appeared that during this all-too-brief harvest time the Body of Christ was expending most of its energy figuratively on mending fences and keeping the farmhouse in good shape. Instead of being mobilized to gather the grain that was so obviously there, it was immobilized by the hundreds of other good things that must be done but that so easily take the place of the one primary thing the Lord has commanded it to do.

In a still, small voice, the Lord seemed to whisper a third thing to me during that instant on the *banca*. It was that He wanted me to have some part in awakening the Church of the Philippines to the need and opportunity to make disciples of its peoples. The thought humbled me. I was new to the Philippines with less than two years experience. Furthermore, I was hardly in a position to carry any weight. Nonetheless, I hid the thought in my heart until such time as the Lord might make good on what seemed to me to be His promise.

In the meantime, there was much to ponder. It was one thing to take at face value that the Lord wanted us to disciple nations, it was quite another to understand what this *meant*. How many believers should there be in a nation before it could be considered "discipled"? How strong must these Christians be in their walk with the Lord? How many churches would there have to be to blanket a nation?

I wrestled with these and other questions about what it meant to "disciple a nation." In time I would have the opportunity to work through this concept by actually making the attempt, and later still I would be able to do further study at the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena. The process would continue. In fact, the immediate purpose of this book is to

provide a text of study for a three part Church Growth Congress in the Philippines with Dr. McGavran, Len Tuggy, others and myself in the Fall of 1980. Through the seminars and the book we want to help the Churches and missions of the Philippines consider the discipling of a nation and the incredible progress they have made towards this end particularly in the 1974 to 1978 period. This is the time to discuss and dream and pray and plan about what still needs to be done in the next 20 years for the discipling of the Philippines. The goal is not just carrying on a small piece of mission or church work. The goal is the discipling of the whole nation.

The book allows the reader to look at the theology and history of the discipling of nations. It takes him through my own experience as I tried to work out in actual programs the discipling of the Philippines. It tells the fantastic stories of various denominations as they caught the vision and will describe and evaluate what they have done and still need to do. Finally, it challenges the Churches and missions in other nations similarly to begin the process of actually working at the discipling of their whole nations. For some, such a task may seem far distant, but for some, we believe, the concept will appear urgent. They will hear God calling them to it, so that the power of Christ may liberate and enlighten every part of the whole nation.

Let's move ahead, therefore, with the chapters on theology and history. Dr. Donald McGavran, the author of the church growth movement and my mentor and friend, will tackle these crucial subjects.

### **Is It God' s Will?**

The question of whether the discipling of a whole nation is God's will must be answered. For Christians it is supremely important. Unless discipling a whole nation is God's will, Christians will not begin it. If it is, they will spend life and treasure to complete it. Is discipling a whole nation God's will? That is the key consideration.

Before we can speak to it meaningfully, terms must be defined. What is a "nation"? In archaic English, the word meant a tribe, as "the Mohican nation." The nation of Israel meant the twelve tribes. In the King James English Bible, therefore, the words *ta ethne* (Romans 16:26, Mathew 28:19, etc.) which means ethnic units, peoples or castes, were correctly translated "the nations," for in 1640 "nations" meant "tribes." But today, when the word "nation" means *nation state* – not "tribe", the words *ta ethne* ought to

be translated as the tribes or the castes or simply as the peoples. In the Hindi Bible, in India, *ta ethne* is translated as *jatiyan*, i.e., and castes. This is correct. In this book we never use the word *nation* to mean a tribe. This is archaic usage.

Since today "nation" means a politically organized community of peoples-note the plural-with a distinct territory and a single government, in this book "nation" always means a "nation state." The modern nation is a group of peoples which has become one geo-political entity, such as China, India, the United States, Burma or Brazil. We are asking, "Is it God's will for a geo-political entity, for a *nation*, to become substantially Christian, to be disciplined?"

What does it mean for a nation to be *discipled*? As I pointed out in the CHURCH GROWTH BULLETIN for May 1979, the word "discipling" has three meanings, which we may call D 1, D 2, and D 3. (a) When a significant number of men and women of an *ethnos* (a social class, caste, tribe or ethnic unit) declares itself Christian, renounces other gods, confesses Christ and its members are baptized and organized into congregations, then that *ethnos* or a part of it has been discipled D 1. (b) When an individual goes through the same process and becomes a member of a Christian congregation, then he has been discipled D 2. (c) When an existing Christian, learning much of the Bible and of what the Lord requires of him, becomes an illumined follower, he may be called "discipled" D 3. He has been "taught all things." He is no longer a babe in Christ, as were so many in the Church of Corinth. He has, so to speak, graduated from Christ's School with honors. He had to start as a first grader. He is now a graduate. This is the meaning of D 3.

In this book we use the word "discipled"-D 1-in the first sense (though by definition we also include thousands of individual conversions--D 2). When a large percentage of the citizens of a given people renounce all other gods, confess Christ as God and Savior, are baptized and organized into on-going congregations, then that people, that ethnic group, has been *discipled*-D 1. Christians, as at Corinth, may still be babes in Christ, and many who have been swept into "Christianity" still need to experience the new birth. But we may say the *ethnos* -the ethnic unit-has been discipled.

We can now answer the question: Is discipling a whole nation God's will?

While no passage explicitly commands Christians to disciple whole nations, the Bible does clearly command them to disciple *panta ta ethne* – "all the peoples." That is, the Bible commands Christians and churches to

disciple *all* the pieces of the mosaic, which make up every nation-state. *When in any nation that command is carried out, the whole nation will have been disciplined.* When all the parts have become substantially Christian, the whole has too. The discipling of each part, no matter how small, is more significant when seen as part of God's larger plan to disciple the whole nation.

Many passages of Scripture envisage such an outcome. We turn first to the Old Testament. This, from beginning to end, is primarily about God's relationship to the twelve tribes, to His people Israel, and what He intended for the Hebrews to be and to do. However, in many books of the Old Testament, God has revealed his concern for all men, His intention that all peoples be saved. Before the coming of the Messiah, the Savior, God's explicit missionary mandate was "hidden" (see Romans 16: 25); but it was definitely there. The inspired writers of the Old Testament repeatedly tell us that God intends His salvation to apply to all men.

God tells Abram "In you shall all *families* of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

In Psalms 72:8, I 1-14, 17 (RSV) we read, "May he (the King) have dominion from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.... May all Kings fall down before him, *all peoples (nations) serve him.* For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy. From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.... *May... all peoples (nations) call him blessed.* Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth."

Psalm 102:21, 22 reads "that men may declare in Zion the name of the Lord and in Jerusalem his praise, *when peoples gather together,* and the kingdoms, *to worship the Lord.*"

We read in 1 Kings 8: 41-43, "When a foreigner, who is not of thy people Israel, comes from a far country . . . and prays toward this house, hear thou in heaven . . . and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to thee *in order that all the peoples of the earth may know thy name and fear thee, as do thy people Israel.*"

The prophet Isaiah pens many passages concerning the salvation of the peoples. "Peoples (nations) shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising" (60:3). "I have given you as a light to the peoples (nations) to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from the

dungeons and from prison those who sit in darkness" (42:6). "Turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth. By myself, I have sworn and from my mouth has gone forth a righteous word that shall not return. To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (45:22). "I will give you as a light to the peoples (nations), *that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth*" (49:6).

Some of these passages have a double meaning. The inspired writers spoke to their own situation and possibly were not conscious of the deeper meaning which would become apparent as God's plan unfolded. These passages were not seen as missionary messages till the new order was revealed, the Messiah had risen from the dead and had sent the Holy Spirit on His followers. But in the light of the New Testament, the passages clearly show God's eternal and unswerving purpose to save men and peoples (nations) through belief on Jesus Christ.

In view of these Old Testament passages, we affirm that the discipling of whole nation-states -each composed of its many peoples- is part of God's plan. Christians see such discipling as clearly God's will.

The New Testament is explicit on the point. It was the patent intention of the Lord and His apostles that all men everywhere be saved by belief in Jesus Christ. The Sacred Scriptures record that intention most carefully. The goal is the discipling of *panta ta ethne*, "all the peoples" (nations) (Mt. 28:19). Many other passages witness to this ultimate goal. The Gospel is to be preached to all men (Mark 16:16). Jesus Christ is the Light of all peoples (John 8:12, Luke 2:32). The Gospel itself, long hidden, has been revealed by command of the eternal God Himself to "bring *panta ta ethne* to faith and obedience" (Romans 16:25ff NEB). "He who acknowledges me before men, him will I acknowledge before my Father in heaven. Whoever denies me before men, him will I deny before my Father" (Mt. 10:32). "The Lord is patient . . . not wishing that any should perish, but that all might reach repentance" (II Peter 3:9). "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). "Even us whom God has called not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles (peoples). As indeed he says in Hosea, 'Those who were not my people, I will call my people'" (Romans 9:24ff). "By thy blood thou didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and kingdom and people (nation) and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God" (Rev. 5:9-10). "God gave us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life, he who has not the Son has not life" (I John 5:11-12 RSV). "But rise and stand on your feet: for

I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from *the Gentiles (peoples)-to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me*" (Acts 26:17, 18). Paul speaks of those who "Oppose all men by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles (peoples) *that they may be saved*" (I Thes. 2:16). Finally, we read in Revelation 15:4, "Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord? For thou alone art holy. *All peoples (nations) shall come and worship thee*, for thy judgments have been revealed."

These passages speak of a salvation open to all men everywhere and to the discipline of all peoples (nations). There are many more such passages. I have not quoted several of the better known. The New Testament clearly teaches the following:

- a. God has a plan of salvation for all mankind, all peoples of all lands. This is the Good News, set forth authoritatively by all the inspired writers.
- b. Repentance and belief on the Son whom the Father has sent is an essential condition of receiving salvation.
- c. God commands that this plan of salvation be proclaimed to all men.
- d. God desires all ethnic units to be disciplined and incorporated in the Church of Jesus Christ. Chinese, Africans, Indians, Indonesians are as much His people as are Jews or Europeans. Until they believe on Jesus Christ, they are just as lost as were the unbelieving Jews, as lost as are the unbelieving children of devout American Christians.

All branches of the Church in all ages have so interpreted the Old and New Testaments and so understood God's will. The discipling of all the peoples that comprise each whole nation is clearly God's will according to the Scriptures.

Two objections will surely be made to what we say. Some Christians, facing difficult conditions and leaning heavily on certain passages, object that instead of the Gospel spreading to all lands the number of the faithful will diminish. To these I reply that the discipling of peoples must not be confused with the question as to what proportion of the whole population of any city, tribe, or indeed of the globe itself, will become mature, responsible Christians.

Our Lord did say, "Many are called, but few are chosen." He did call on His followers to enter by the narrow gate, and declared that those who did so

would be few (Mt. 7:13,14). He did ask a mysterious question: "When the Son of Man comes will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8). These passages and others (see John's messages to the seven churches) keep us from easily assuming that all men will acknowledge Christ and become His sincere followers. They remind Christians of the terrible danger that, while God does not wish any to perish, many alas will choose the broad way which leads to destruction.

Even in that nation where most citizens are members of some church and have their names on some roll, many neither are nor intend to be His dedicated followers. They are merely nominal members of some visible congregation. They believe themselves to be their own masters and-God pity them-their own saviors. They are thus no part of the True Church that only God knows.

These considerations, however, should not keep us from discipling *panta ta ethne*, and hence from discipling as many whole nations as possible. Wheat and tares grow together. At the Judgment, God will take the wheat to His storehouse and burn the tares. We are commanded to disciple as many men of all segments of society as will obey, leaving in God's hands how many, led astray by their own evil desires and by Satan, will perish.

Furthermore, we remember the huge populations of modern nations rapidly becoming still greater. We also remember the tiny percentages of the total population which are Christian-less than three percent in India and less than one percent in Mainland China. Who are we to declare that "the few" who are chosen are exactly the sixteen million in India who now call themselves Christians"? If *two hundred million* in India were to become radiant Christians, they would still be only "a few" compared to the total population. It is better in every way to seek to disciple the whole nation-the directive is clear that such is God's will-rather than to defend our poor harvesting by sheltering behind Scripture's warnings that being a responsible disciple is an arduous task.

A second objection commonly heard today is that the task is not evangelization but to cause justice to flow down as the waters and righteousness as a mighty stream. To this we reply that the only way of achieving the needed radical changes in social structures and bringing a lasting righteousness to society is through God's gift of divine grace. As the Gospel spreads, men and women are converted, soundly Christian congregations multiply and the Holy Spirit causes both individual and corporate changes. Through His redeemed, He causes justice to roll down in

families, neighborhoods, cities and states.

Any form of societal improvement not founded on God's Word and not fueled by God's grace in Jesus Christ is at best transient. It is directed to man's well being on the material level alone. Often it denies that spiritual values exist. Often it is led by agnostics or atheists. It is defective and soon institutes other forms of injustice, more displeasing to God and more damaging to men than the first.

Soundly Christian men and women, worshipping God in soundly Christian congregations, serving men as The Master did and changing society again and again as the Gospel has always done, are powerful instruments of social advance. Evangelization is the best friend of all reformers who desire the reconstruction of the social order along righteous lines.

But, someone asks, is not social engineering necessary? Indeed it is; but social engineering exercised on pagan societies yields only a trickle of lasting progress. Exercised on nominal Christians it yields a slightly larger trickle. But exercised on committed, illumined Christians it yields a mighty stream of abundant life, righteousness and justice.

Do we desire the uplift and transformation of any nation? *Disciple it.* Do we want an end to oppression and exploitation in any segment of society? *In it multiply Christians and churches.* Are we patriots working to bring progress, plenty and peace to our beloved country? *Create in it tens of thousands of cells of shalom, units of mercy and peace.* In these soundly biblical congregations, Christians constantly seek God's will, are forgiven and inspired by the God of all righteousness and gain new visions of what transformation of family and national life are pleasing to Him.

Yes, because the discipling of *all* peoples is commanded, the discipling of whole nations is definitely God's will. It is an integral part of His great plan to bring about that time for which all Christians pray, when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

## **God Has Often Done It Before**

The Bible tells us that when the Holy City, Jerusalem, descends out of heaven from God, "It will have no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb. The *peoples (nations)* shall walk by its light" (Rev. 21:21-24). The meaning is clear that the radiance of

the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, will shine on *whole nations* that have become His.

God has repeatedly blessed the efforts of His servants to disciple whole ethnic units. His command stands like a rock: "Disciple *panta ta ethne*"-all ethnic units. Through the centuries we can see God's sovereign plan unfold. Whole clusters of ethnic units, whole nations have been baptized.

But was discipling whole nations really Christian? This question is often asked. It troubles those of us who seek to be fully Christian. Ought we to try to disciple a whole nation? Let us consider the question carefully.

God carries out His purposes through fallible men and women. Till the Day of Judgment and our Lord's return, God's perfect plans are, therefore, imperfectly achieved. His Church does His will only partially. Often it acts contrary to His will. For a time the powers of evil prevail.

God's beneficent purpose-which is to create for Himself a distinct people-is barely begun when sinful men and women decide to do their own thing. Pagan customs and cultures resume control. God brings a whole nation out of Egypt with a mighty hand-and then His people worship some golden calf. Or non-Christians by fire and sword oppose the spread of the Gospel. They burn churches and kill Christians. These, in turn, when they have the power, take up arms. In the Dark Ages, many Christian leaders tried to further Christ's Kingdom by the sword. Some Christians today, dismayed by this, to us so wrong a procedure, swing to the other extreme and resolve to call out *only* thoroughly committed individuals and never even try to win segments of society. We believe this both unnecessary and unbiblical. Certainly as Christ is preached, men and women should be called to follow Him entirely, to yield themselves to Him body and soul, to abandon all other gods and to worship Him only. We are not advocating cheap grace, or a superficial turning which makes the Church an assemblage of baptized heathen. As we establish true churches, however, we recognize that the best Christians and the most sincere churches are made up of redeemed, fallen persons. Their best efforts often go astray. The saints in the churches founded by Paul owned, bought and sold slaves. Paul never urged them to do away with the institution of slavery. The climate did not permit that. God would bring it in His good time. Till our Lord returns, then, the perfect society will not be seen, but this must not keep us from carrying out the Great Commission and discipling *panta ta ethne*.

Consequently, the multiplication of soundly Christian churches

throughout all segments of society, throughout all homogeneous units, till every people, every ethnic unit is seeded with churches, is, we believe, a procedure well pleasing to God. That is what this book urges Christians in the Philippines, and in many other lands as well, to set their hand to. It is a goal well within our reach.

A turning to the Lord by some segment of society is always incomplete-sometimes woefully incomplete. It is easy to say that it is not Christian at all. Yet the group concerned has declared for Christ. In beginning and in promise it is Christian. Perfecting the Church and bringing salvation to nominal Christians is a process that goes on till the Lord returns. The Reformed Church is ever reforming itself. That is what God intends for it to do. That is what the Holy Spirit impels it to do. Each new generation of disciples in the light of the Bible ought to discover what God wants *it* to do, facing *its* opportunities, and sheathed in *its* technology and culture. Clearly the movement of whole nations to Christian Faith- *on whatever level is possible to them at that time-* is Christian. They have begun the march to the land flowing with milk and honey.

The movement of whole nations to Christian faith takes place in social, economic and political systems. God plans for man's salvation. His servants experience His power and the benefits of His rule. They sally forth at Christ's command to take the Good News to all men. But they are integral parts of their social webs. Their cultural, political and military situations bind them. They are children of their times. A thousand years ago when a powerful monarch conquered a tribe that had been preying on his subjects, he required that it accede both to him and to his religion. "Conquered and baptized" was often written across the pages of history. Charlemagne forced new Christians to pay tithes so that the Church immediately became self-supporting.

In the latter centuries when Spain and Portugal were extending their rule over Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the discipling of whole nations (Aztecs, Mayans, Philippine Tribesmen, Mukkuvas, Paravas,) was inevitably a part of conquest. In those days the ideal of freedom of religion was inconceivable to Buddhists, Moslems, Christians and Animists alike.

It would be naive to blame medieval Christians. Had we been in Charlemagne's place, we perhaps would have done what he did. And were he to find himself in ours-where the dominant goal is free assemblage of sovereign nations-he would do what many of us are trying to do.

The command of Christ is to disciple *panta ta ethne*. That, the Bible assures us (Romans 16:26), is what the Gospel itself by Eternal God's command has been revealed to do. When discipling had to be done by foot, that is how it was done. When sailing ships were all that were known, they were the vehicles used. When jet planes are available, God expects us to use them. He knows we will be bound by them just as our forebears were by their systems of transportation. The divine command was heard by men in the language and culture of their day. It could have been heard by them in no other. They spread the Gospel by means that appeared possible under their conditions.

When unqualified monarchy was the only successful form of government, unqualified monarchy had to be used. A weak ruler, who asked the turbulent tribes what *they* wanted him to do, was speedily killed and replaced by a real king who knew what he wanted them to do and made them do it. The discipling of whole nations was conditioned by that framework.

It was never completely conditioned. The light of the biblical revelation was shining then as now. About AD 775, when Charlemagne was forbidding pagans on pain of death to refuse baptism, Alcuin, the most brilliant of the literary lights with which Charlemagne surrounded himself, fearlessly opposing the Emperor, declared that only the instructed and the willing should be baptized and new converts should not be made to pay tithes.

The spread of other religions also was unavoidably heavily conditioned by their times. In India, for example, Ashoka, the great Buddhist Emperor made whole provinces Buddhist by conquest.

In those centuries the ultimate decision of a whole nation to change its religion was inevitably dependent on the command of its ruler. The command was issued by the *traditional* king as a result of his shrewd assessment of the advantages of being Christian outweighed those of remaining pagan, or it was issued by the *new* monarch who required all conquered chiefs and their vassals to belong to his religion.

It is easy and cheap to sneer at the ways in which whole nations became Christian and stupid to assert that the Christians of those days ought to have offered their people the same options we now offer to ours in the twentieth century. Individuals and whole nations become Christian within their own frameworks. With that settled, let us focus on the plain fact that *again and again whole nations have become Christian and that this is the manifest*

*will of God for all nations.*

During the long centuries hundreds of whole nations, regions and kingdoms have become Christian, but there is no need to tell of each one. Seven illustrations will suffice to display the process that went on continuously *and is still going on*. Latourette's seven volume EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY\* tells the whole story.

Each movement to Christ occurred during a period of time across a spread of earth's surface. No beginning of Christianization looked like the discipling of a whole nation. Rather, it looked as if a few hardy souls had declared themselves followers of Christ and separated themselves from the religion of their fathers. *But when the process was complete-when a significant number had declared themselves Christian, had been baptized and organized into congregations-the whole nation had been disciplined*. Our seven thumbnail sketches portray the concluding stages in long processes. They set forth the events of those decades only, during which the whole kingdom or nation declared for Christ and became Christian.

Between AD 290 and 310 the pagan nation of Armenia became Christian. Tradition ascribes the movement to a prince of the royal blood, sole survivor of the massacre of his family. He was carried as an infant out of Armenia and reared by a kindly Christian woman. Arrived at maturity, he went back to evangelize his nation, but was thrown into prison. Through miraculous acts and visions he was set free by Tiradates the King, and became his teacher. In the climactic 20 years, Tiradates, who wished to put as much distance as possible between Armenia and the Persians immediately to the East, became a Christian and led all Armenians to do the same. The tradition is a simplification; yet in those twenty years *the whole nation did become Christian, and remained staunchly Christian* through centuries of Muslim oppression that culminated in two terrible massacres during World War I and World War II.

Between 420 and 470 Ireland became Christian. A hundred and twenty-seven tribes, evangelized by Patrick and others, during those fruitful years declared for Christ and were baptized. At the residences of the chiefs, monasteries (Bible schools? theological training schools?) were built and the entire island became devoutly Christian. The form of Christianity was not the Roman, though eventually it became such. During the next three hundred years, Irish missionaries -peregrine or wanderers- continually sallied out to the pagan parts of North Europe and aided materially in winning them for

Christ. The Irish also lit the light of learning in many nominally Christian parts of France and Italy. They built monasteries and other centers of learning. Ireland shows that when an entire nation becomes Christian, the resulting version of the Faith does not have to be superficial. Even in Ireland, however, the first generation Christians (AD 420) would have offended many twentieth century ideas of what Christians ought to be.

While Ireland was becoming Christian, England {which had been largely Christianized in Roman times) was swept back into paganism because that was the religion of the conquerors from the East- Angles, Saxons and Danes. Then between AD 597 and 686 England became Christian again, partly because of missionaries from Rome led by Augustine, but mostly because of continuing evangelization from missionaries from Ireland and southwest Scotland. By the end of the sixth century *England as a whole had become Christian.*

Across the English Channel and away to the east lived the savage pagan Continental Saxons. The converted English Saxons sent them some missionaries, but to little effect. Then about AD 800 Charlemagne the Great conquered the Continental Saxons and baptized them. Despite the fact that the Faith was forced on them, the benefits of being Christian were so great that they remained firmly Christian and played a considerable part in the evangelization of other whole nations north and east of themselves.

Norway held out against the Christian Faith for another two centuries. Norsemen looted Europe, burned churches and carried off women and men as slaves. But between AD 950 and 1030 the whole Norwegian nation became Christian. Olaf Tryggvason, before the year 1000, played a notable part in this national turning. He was huge of stature, handsome, daring and fearless, the embodiment of the Viking ideal for a king. What he began was brought to completion a few years later (1016-1030) by Olaf Haraldson, who, we read, "Traveled through the land to see that conversion was completed, churches were built, and priests set over them." By AD 1030 *the whole nation had become Christian.*

During the tenth century, observing the great surge of new life which Christianity brought, many whole nations in North Europe were ripening. About AD 1000, far off Iceland, at an all-island assembly, decided to become Christian. About the same time Vladimir, a Viking who had conquered the tribes of Russia and whose headquarters were at Kiev, took his entire nation into the Orthodox Greek Church. He considered becoming

Roman Catholic (as had nearby Poland) but Rome was far away. He played with the idea of becoming Muslim or Jewish. Both had representatives in Kiev. But his closest connections were with Constantinople. There was the greatest church in the world-St. Sophia, a glorious building. From there came the greatest number of missionaries. There also his mother had been baptized some years earlier. *Another whole nation became Christian.*

The story could go on and on. Enough has been said, however, to indicate that in the normal spread of Christianity, the beginning period (when a few here and there have become Christians, perhaps two percent of the population has been baptized, and to be Christian is difficult) is often succeeded by a flowering season when *the whole nation swings over to the Christian faith and great numbers of individual men and women are born again.*

Nations do not necessarily remain Christian, however, and the time comes such as in the Reformation-when whole nations need to be disciplined again. During times when the Bible was locked up to the clergy and salvation was held to be by submission to the Church much more than by belief in Jesus Christ, the process of initial conversion produced medieval Christianity. It was an enormous advance over the paganism of ancient Greece and Rome and the Animistic/Polytheistic religion of the European tribes; but it was not biblical Christianity. When the Bible was printed and the conviction spread that Christians should live their lives as Christ and the apostles had commanded, tremendous changes had to be made. These were advocated again and again before the fifteenth century. But each reform movement was suppressed by the Church and came to naught. Then under Luther, Calvin and Knox, whole kingdoms, dukedoms, areas and nations turned from the sub-biblical doctrines, rituals and ways of life that the medieval Church insisted on and became Reformed Churches. Where the Reformation (which trumpeted abroad *sola Scriptura, sola tides*) won the whole nation-as in many German kingdoms, the whole of Scotland, England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway-there the new discipling prospered. Where the Reformation did not win the whole nation, there it was swept back into the Medieval Church and perished. The Counter Revolution intended to wipe out "heresies" proposed by the Reformers. It is only in the late twentieth century that the solid advance of the Reformers is being incorporated into the Roman Catholic Church.

We see that until a given discipling has won over a whole nation, its

chance of survival is not great. We do not live in a world in which even-handed exploration of the truth goes on in a climate coolly impartial to all beliefs. Convictions are formed in hot blood. Men and nations are so constructed that Christian teachings cannot be fully implemented *until the whole nation-paying* whatever price is *necessary-follows Christ*. And after that, the Church must beware lest men and women become disciples simply because Christianity is the prevalent culture. In which case they are "culture Christians" rather than conscious followers of Jesus Christ our Lord.

God's plan for whole nations to become Christian is reasonable. It is necessary for a whole nation to become Christian if the Faith is to be applied to all its life.

If each nation is a confusion of different ideas concerning what is right, then major ethical advance is difficult or even impossible. If within any state many contradictory hypotheses about God and man are held, society disintegrates. Some believe there is a personal God, some that there is only matter and blind chance. Some value a chaste life, others are promiscuous. Some believe human beings are free and responsible agents, others that they are automatons. Some declare that all life styles, all cultures, are equally right and every man ought to do "What is right in his own eyes." Some declare that right is what 51 percent of the people agree upon. Christians are sure that right is what God has decreed and made known in the Bible. In the welter of conflicting beliefs, moral advance is difficult.

Christians maintain that if *God's* will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven, the confusion of contradictory hypotheses must give way to a joyful acceptance of God's revelation on the part of whole populations. Each whole nation must accept God's Word as its rule of faith and practice. Each nation must become Christian.

To be sure, in the process of persuading men and women to follow the Light of the Nations, force and bribery must not be used. Ambassadors for Christ *beseech* their comrades to "be reconciled to God." Ambassadors do not force or bribe people.

The way in which the Gospel spreads is always dependent upon the political, military and economic circumstances of each new population. In the Dark Ages, it accommodated itself to those desperate times. Today it accommodates itself to these. The Living Water carves great canyons when it passes through tough limestone rock, but in flat sandy soil it spreads out into winding shallow streams. In both cases, God's purpose is that desert

blossom like the rose, and those perishing of thirst find abundance and eternal life.

Until quite recently, the way for whole nations to become Christian was sometimes by act of their rulers. But today, as the concepts of democracy, freedom of conscience and civil rights spread abroad, whole nations will *not* become Christian by command of their rulers. Rather, while maintaining freedom of religion, individuals and groups (in community after community, village after village, city after city, and high rise after high rise) will hear the Gospel. "Those who believe and are baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:15). The discipling of a whole nation, therefore, involves thousands of congregations and millions of Christians living the Gospel, incarnating the risen life, telling others of the Savior, gently persuading them to walk in the light and incorporating them through baptism into the Body of Christ. *Out of a multitude of personal and small group decisions the whole nation will come to "faith and obedience"* (Romans 16:26 NEB).

What this volume advocates, therefore, is that all Christians, pastors and missionaries lovingly persuade their relatives and fellow citizens that God has opened the way of salvation to all who believe on Jesus Christ. God has shown us what He requires of us. The Bible is the authoritative rule of faith and practice. Christ is indeed the answer.

As He is proclaimed, men and women believe. Here and there churches multiply. Larger and larger minorities become responsible Christians. God's justice spreads. That good beginning must never be considered the end. The end is nothing less than the discipling of the whole nation-to which multitudes of conscious decisions by individuals and groups contribute. Each small decision brings nearer the glorious day when His beneficent rule will extend over both individual lives and corporate structures.

Perfect and complete Christianization, of course, will not happen till Christ returns and establishes His Kingdom. The Word is clear on that point. Till then, wheat and tares grow together. Nevertheless, we must not multiply tares. On the contrary, we must constantly grow more and better wheat. Better families, better communities, a kinder and more just social order, a more equitable distribution of food, shelter, education and health, more beautiful barangays and cities, more productive fields and fisheries-all these and much more is what the discipling of the whole nation will inevitably mean.

Such discipling will not happen in a day-but it will happen. Today

data from nation after nation proves that it is now more possible than it has ever been before. The Philippines, and many other nations, too, *can be disciplined*. God wills it. He has given us the resources in persons and treasure. Let us boldly set our hands to the task of discipling whole nations.

## The Massive Opportunity For Growth

"The Philippines, and many other nations, too, can be disciplined," says Dr. McGavran. This is precisely what the Lord seemed to be saying to me on the *banca* back in 1966. On the one hand, "God wills it." On the other, "It is now more possible than it has ever been before" in nation after nation.

Many things make it more possible than before. Modern communications technology. New insights gained from church growth research. Better understanding of how to relate the gospel message to the thought patterns of target peoples. A maturing third world Church increasingly able to evangelize and send out its own foreign missionaries. The widespread, growing responsiveness to the Gospel in nations around the world. In view of these factors, surely the Lord expects His Church in this day to work seriously and systematically **at** the discipling of nations. Not all will agree with our definition of a "disciplined nation" or with our interpretations of history. Nonetheless, we are responsible for the opportunities and the light we have today. We cannot excuse ourselves from the discipling of nations because of what has or has not happened in the past.

Though the command of our risen Lord to make disciples of *all* peoples should be vigorously obeyed, it is also true that those units of mankind that are most receptive to the Gospel can be disciplined most quickly and should therefore be evangelized the hardest. Other nations should not be neglected. Sometimes it will be found that apparently resistant peoples are not resistant at all but merely neglected. Other times it will be found that a people has resisted not the gospel message itself, but rather the Westernized, irrelevant package it has been wrapped in. Some will be called to labor for decades amongst a people before a turning to Christ will be evidenced. In any situation, there will always be found those who are less resistant than the average. The best approach will usually be to start with these and work outward to the

rest of the society, always keeping the goal in mind of discipling the whole people no matter how long or difficult the task may appear.

The Philippines, however, falls into the category of nations that can be rapidly discipled. This was true at the turn of the century when Northern Baptist missionary Briggs quickly noted "How wonderfully God foresaw all and prepared the way for the salvation of this whole people." It was true in 1956 when Donald McGavran studied the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and wrote his chapter on "The Massive Opportunity for Growth." I certainly found evidence of it when studying the Foursquare Church in 1966 and wrote NEW TESTAMENT FIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES. Every knowledgeable observer of the situation comes to the same conclusion. In fact, the idea has been so well documented and accepted by mission and church leaders in the Philippines that we need not labor the point. A brief review of the highly favorable conditions for the growth of the church will, however, set the stage for a look in subsequent chapters at how the Church has responded to this "massive opportunity for growth."

In observing the situation, one might well conclude that there is nothing apparent that can stop the rapid growth of the Church. The economic situation is such that new believers can be organized into self-supporting congregations with sometimes simple yet adequate church facilities. There is a conscience on religious freedom and almost total lack of persecution of converts. The high degree of education and even the widespread use of English speeds the gospel message and enhances the adequate training of new disciples. The still largely friendly attitude towards Americans makes possible the effective utilization of personnel, money and training resources of the many committed American mission societies in the Philippines. There is little in the culture that hinders a natural acceptance of the Evangelical Faith. One has only to compare the situation in other lands-China, Iran, Thailand, India, to mention a few-to see the remarkably desirable situation in these islands.

The existing Church must be counted one of the chief assets of church growth. While it does not have quite its share of those at the very top or the land-less tenants and slum dwellers at the bottom nor of Muslims and some other tribals, all other elements of the population are abundantly represented. This membership at every level is well

integrated with its surroundings. Nowhere is the Christian sealed off from the non-Christian as he would be in India by effective caste restrictions or in Africa by language difficulties and tribal consciousness. The churches are so thoroughly in touch with their environment that Christian conviction is free to flow almost everywhere.

The extent of Filipino leadership all the way from the local congregation to denominational headquarters and interdenominational planning and working must also be counted high on the list of factors favoring church growth. These church leaders must be considered among the most knowledgeable third worlders concerning church growth principles. Added to this knowledge is the experience of the past five years gained through implementing growth principles in some magnificent projects.

The non-Roman world of the Philippines provides a fruitful source of church growth. These hundreds of thousands-perhaps millions-would call themselves Protestants and have some vague connection to denominations or sects from the extremely orthodox to the extremely heterodox. They are inactive "members" of these denominations or perhaps children who have grown up vaguely Protestant but neither read the Bible nor pray nor have any personal faith in Christ. Research of various evangelistic endeavors reveals that about 30 percent of the converts come from this category, many times what would be expected if all segments of the population were responding equally. Here is a large unit of society with no deep religious conviction to be overcome that is part of the massive opportunity for growth in the Philippines.

The Roman Catholic "world"-its nominal fringe-itself, of course, is one of the most favorable factors in the whole Philippine situation. The vast majority of Catholics belong to the Church of Rome in a very nominal sense only. If we believe that the nominal Protestant world should be sought out and won-and we do-equally vigorously do we believe that the nominal Roman Catholic world with its tens of millions who have never experienced the new birth need to be sought out and won. To many of these people (who consider themselves Christian but have never experienced Christianity's dynamic) the evangelical message looks *right*. Among them must be great numbers who would find-as many I interviewed in 1966 did-that the first time they heard the

Gospel they would know in their hearts that it was the truth. These two categories cover a large majority of the population and are to the Evangelical Church what a seam of coal twenty feet thick is to a prospector for fuel—a guarantee of responsiveness many years into the future.

As nominal Protestants and Catholics come to know Christ as Savior and Lord, they open doors to a long line of relatives that can be reached. Among Foursquare converts, for example, I found an average of ten family members coming to Christ for every nominal won. For the Philippine Church as a whole there are tens of thousands of parents, brothers and sisters and hundreds of thousands of cousins, uncles, aunts and in-laws of church members who present a field of unparalleled opportunity. If Evangelicals will reach out to the relatives of those currently on their rolls and pursue contacts through the web of family relationships of new converts, they will discover another "massive opportunity for growth." And as evangelism continues, this pool of winnable relatives expands geometrically.

Another massive opportunity for growth is the Mindanao frontier. Southern Baptists call it the most responsive island in the world. Most denominations that work both in Mindanao and other regions find they grow at least twice as fast in this "land of promise." Having pulled up stakes, said goodbye to their families and broken ties with the hometown parish priest, these settlers are ready for a new adventure of the spirit.

With the Filipino's natural responsiveness to the evangelical message, the tens of thousands of barangays without an evangelical witness present a Macedonian Call. Millions have but to see the Gospel lived and explained by ministers and laymen living and working in their midst before they too come to know Christ personally and congregate with other new believers. Much the same can be said for the two million tribal people. In many cases their animistic belief has prepared them for an acceptance of the true and most powerful Spirit of God. To be sure, conversion is not automatic in the tribes and barangays. Even where fish are abundant, he who casts no net hauls in no fish. But where effort is made, conversion potential is high and church planting quite possible.

Highly favorable conditions are brought about also by the fact of a

changing society. There was World War II with its great suffering. National independence was achieved, but it by no means solved all the problems of the Filipino people. The Huk insurrection, Muslim wars and Martial Law have all created further societal ferment. Urbanization, migrations, industrialization and the development of communications and transportation have stirred the pot. The fallout of Vatican II and many other pressures on the Roman Church continue to affect the way Catholics respond to their church. With so many changes to face, Filipinos are looking for solid rock on which to stand. Increasingly, the message and testimony of the evangelical believer looks to him like a good answer and will for some time to come.

These highly favorable conditions-and many more-could be illustrated and elaborated at great length and add up to a convincing case for a "massive opportunity for growth" in the Philippines. All of this argument pales in significance, however, in light of what is actually happening. The convincing argument for the responsiveness of the Filipinos is simply that people are currently turning to Christ when the Gospel is presented. Travel the country and listen to reports of personal witnessing, home Bible classes, prison services, Bible correspondence courses, radio and TV, campus ministries, open air evangelism, film showings, children's work and dozens more. Everywhere one hears of people turning to Christ. These converts come from all ages, from high government and military circles, from among priests and nuns, farmers and businessmen, the rich and the poor.

And-most importantly-churches are growing and multiplying, as we shall see again and again in chapters to follow.

The situation in the Philippines constitutes an opportunity of church growth so large, so inviting, so unprecedented, that it can scarcely be credited. It is likely to continue for some years. There is oil under Arabia. It does not automatically rise to the surface and worm its way into pipes. But it is there. If it is drilled for, planned for, sweated for, and paid for, it can be had.

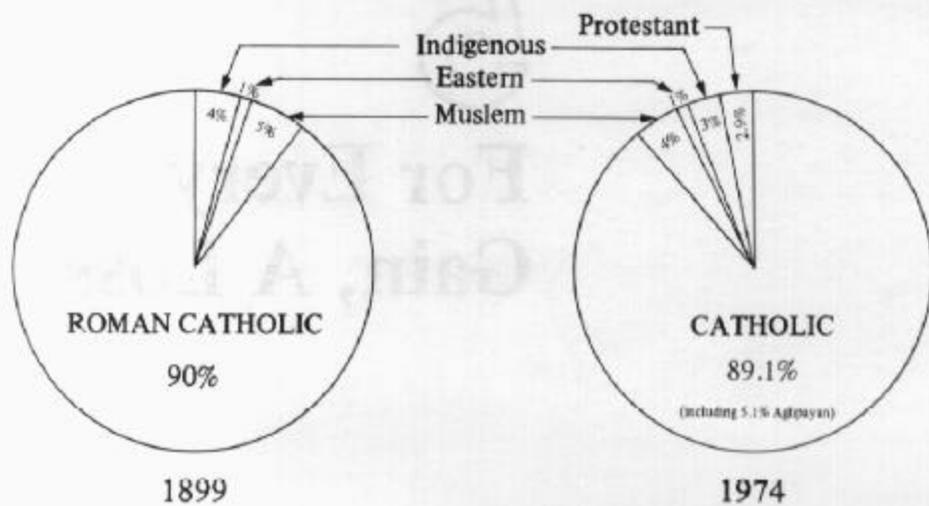
### **For Every Gain, A Loss**

The tragedy of this unprecedented opportunity was that-with a few exceptions-the Churches of the Philippines were letting it pass them by. This

is what broke my heart on that canoe trip back in 1966. A study of the facts—a necessary step to any planning for the discipling of a nation—reveals hardly any over-all change in the religious configuration of the nation during the first three quarters of a century of Protestant work. Graph One shows that the dominant Roman and Independent Catholics had lost only one percentage point to evangelical Christianity in 75 years. Furthermore, by 1974, two-thirds of the small Protestant force had slipped into the ecumenical movement and in the process had lost much of its authority and evangelistic zeal. In 75 years of labor in a very responsive nation, at best only one percent of the population had become and remained zealously evangelical.

This was hardly what was anticipated by the ten stalwart denominations that entered the Philippines after Admiral Dewey's victory in Manila Bay in 1898. With enthusiasm at a peak for the evangelization of these responsive islands, eight missionary societies sat down in 1901 and 1902 to divide up the sections of the harvest so that no field would be trampled with too many workers and no field

# 75 YEARS OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY 1899 — 1974



Graph I

neglected. Thus the Presbyterians, United Methodists, Northern Baptists, United Brethren, Disciples of Christ, Protestant, Episcopal, Congregationalists and Christian and Missionary Alliance entered into one of the classic comity agreements of all time.

Things didn't turn out quite as hoped. While some granaries began to fill at a moderate rate and a few rather rapidly, others barely had enough grain to cover the floor. Furthermore, when there were periods of good church growth, frequently something happened to slow it. For every gain, it seemed there was a loss.

The problems, however, appeared to have been institutional rather than contextual. They sprang from situations inside the Church and mission rather than from external pressures or resistance. The missionaries for the most part had the will and zeal to evangelize, the Filipinos were responsive, but one exigency after another thwarted the rapid evangelization of the nominal Roman Catholics and animistic tribes of the archipelago.

The *United Methodists*, for instance, experienced considerable growth in central and northern Luzon, which were assigned to them by comity. They suffered from splits, however, in 1909 when Zamora left to start the indigenous IEMELIF and again in 1934 when the Philippine Methodist Church was formed. The total growth picture of the three denominations was moderately good for some years, though the axiom "divide in order to multiply" was generally inoperative.

After World War II there was a spurt of growth by the United Methodists, but their membership plateaued near 60,000 between 1968 and 1974 (see Graph Two). Their missionary, Esteban Cahna, explains why in a School of World Mission thesis:\*

1. A reconstruction and rehabilitation program for church buildings and institutions destroyed during World War II claimed the center of the stage. Several church leaders and many members were killed and others scattered. It was a time of re-gathering of members who had fled to safety during the war.
2. The emphasis had shifted from evangelism to institutions and educational programs for Filipino leaders.
3. The establishment of Union Theological Seminary in Manila focused the minds of church leaders on theological issues rather than on evangelism. Church leaders desired highly educated ministers, but

some of the young people made the Seminary and the ministry stepping stones for their professional ambitions in other fields.

4. Too much involvement in the ecumenical program also contributed to the loss of evangelistic effort.

5. Several young ministers were actively involved in student demonstrations against the government, which led to their imprisonment. Church leaders and members were divided in their feelings about the activists, and their preoccupation over the issue led to further neglect of the main task of the Church.

6. Many pastors had totally neglected pastoral work, which is the bridge between pulpit and people.

The denomination is still sprinkled with zealous and godly evangelists, pastors and members, but they are caught in the tide, which is drifting towards ecumenicalism, institutionalism and social activism *as substitutes* for evangelism and church growth.

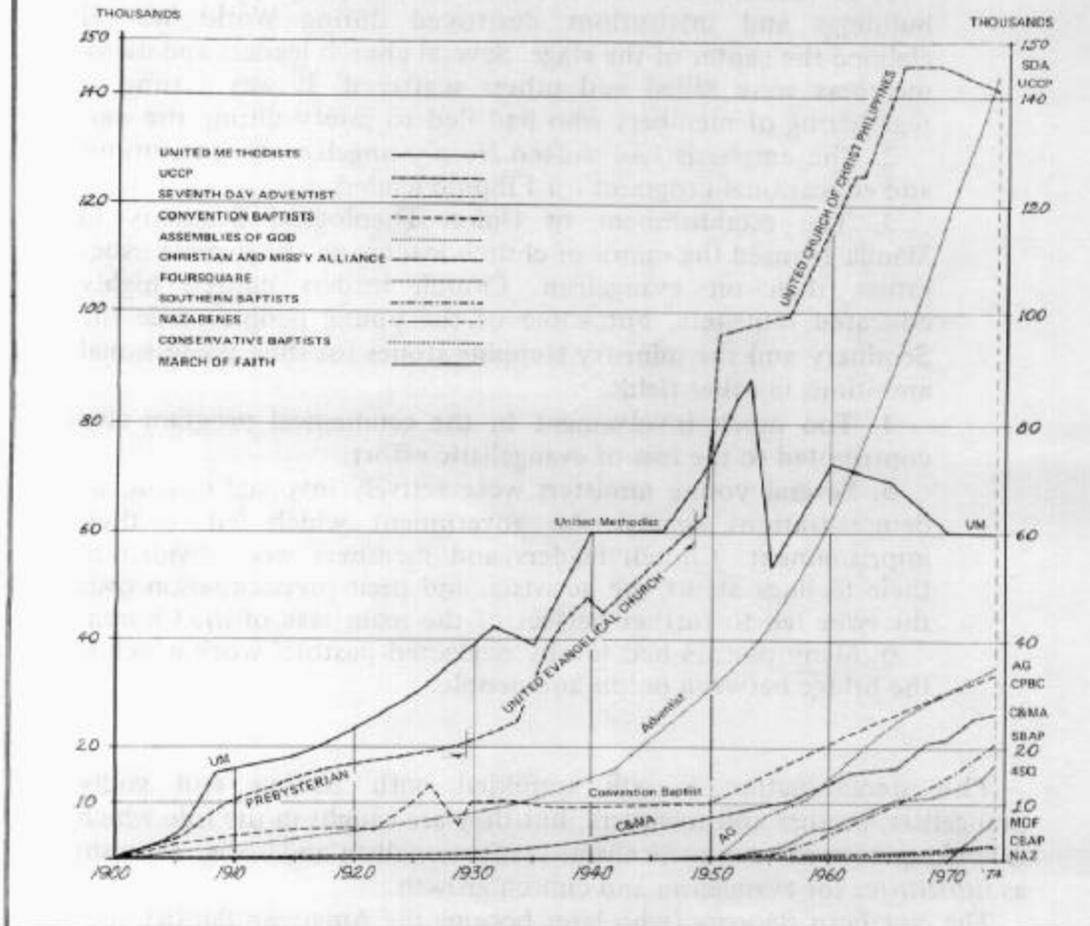
The *Northern Baptists* (who later became the American Baptists and

## Graph II

## GRAPH OF GROWTH-PHILIPPINES

1900-1974

Communicant Members



## GRAPH OF GROWTH-PHILIPPINES 1900-1974

Communicant Members

in the Philippines the Convention Baptists) in 1900 were jubilant about the potential in the western Visayan islands of Negros and Panay. Their evangelistic efforts, however, by 1925 brought their membership to about 10,000 only. There was a spurt of growth at that time as a result of the Presbyterians in the area transferring some churches to them. Three years

later there was a commensurate loss as a split occurred and the Association of Baptists for World Evangelization was formed. The ABWE, however, grew rather slowly, and the parent Convention Baptists were weakened by the unhealthy mix of Presbyterian and Baptist theologies.

The line going from 1955 to 1970 on Graph Two indicates steady growth of five percent per year or a decadal rate of 64.3 percent. This steady growth, however, is actually at a rate of only two percent above the population growth rate and indicates primarily biological rather than conversion growth.

Reasons for slow growth other than their ecumenical drift include: a) several missionaries went home between 1960 and 1970, taking their budgets with them. This financial loss compounded by an ineffective stewardship program forced many pastors to survive on very low incomes or else take secular jobs on top of their ministerial duties. b) The absence of measurable goals and plans and the assigning of scant personnel and financial resources for evangelism resulted in only 40 new churches planted from 1961 to 1974. In the Philippines, as in most lands, rapid denominational growth is tied to extensive church planting.

Though the bright promises of 1900 were not fulfilled, the Convention Baptists are one ecumenical group that in the past five years have recovered the fervent zeal for church planting and evangelism, as we shall see in Chapter 12.

The growth spurts and following plateaus of four other denominations that systematically set out to disciple the Philippines at the turn of the century are all recorded in the saga of the U.C.C.P., the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

From a good beginning in 1899 the *Presbyterian Church* continued growing well for its first full decade. Expansion slowed during the next 20 years, however, as their attention turned more and more to the development of various institutions. In 1929 the Presbyterians joined with the *Congregationalists* and *United Brethren* to form the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines. Nearly ten years later, in 1948, they were joined by the *Philippine Methodist Church* (the split from the United Methodists), the *Evangelical Church* and one branch of the *Disciples of Christ Church* to become the *United Church of Christ in the Philippines*. Later, the Tagalog speaking *Disciples of Christ* joined in. By the mid-fifties the UCCP had thereby become the largest denomination in the country. This had come about primarily by merger, however, and growth through winning converts from the world was minimal. At least with information available to us today,

this slow growth could have been predicted. Whereas multiplication frequently comes by division, multiplication rarely comes through union. After a spurt of growth between 1955 and 1965-during which time the Disciples of Christ joined-advances in the UCCP have come primarily through biological growth.

One indicator of the growth problem in the UCCP is that in 1966 the previously well attended Albay Bible School in Legaspi was closed. With this event there came a gradual phasing out of the training of workers to man the rural churches and multiply congregations in the barangays. Emphasis was placed on Union Theological Seminary for high level training, but few of its graduates ever make it back to the barangay. In fact, few are found in the ministry at all.

To be fair to the UCCP, however, we note that their more than 1,500 churches certainly indicate a good church-planting history. Furthermore, a good number of their churches are in the rural barangays or what Dr. McGavran calls the "poblacion partly" (see Chapter 15) churches where the building is in the poblacion but where many members live in the adjacent barangays. To disciple the Philippines will require a tremendous amount of such church planting in the barangays. The UCCP also needs to be credited for its sincere though perhaps misdirected desire to demonstrate the unity of the Body of Christ through organizational union and for its great success in nationalizing a large denomination, though this did absorb much of the energy that could have gone into evangelism.

At this point in time it would be easy to write off the UCCP as a force for effective evangelism and church planting, but there is at least one strong leader in the denomination with a determination to turn the situation around. More about that in Chapter 16.

The *Christian and Missionary Alliance* is the one Church of the original comity members that remained thoroughly evangelical from its 1902 beginning to the present. Paradoxically, however, the Alliance got off to the slowest start of all and it wasn't until 1974 that it began living up to its potential for growth. Indeed, the first 25 years while churches in other parts were gaining converts by the thousands-resulted in only 800 baptized members! By comity agreement, C&MA was given southwestern Mindanao, particularly the Zamboanga Peninsula and the Sulu Archipelago. The untimely death of pioneering missionary John A. McKee suspended the work for five years, after which it began again with Zamboanga City as its base. With its heavy Muslim population and conservative Roman Catholic

background, the city appeared to be resistant. Missionaries therefore started first a girl's elementary school and later a boy's school with the hope of reaching parents through their children. This resulted in only 97 converts in the first *five years* and less than 800 by 1926.

At that point, an emissary from international headquarters in New York visiting the Philippines saw the responsiveness of the Filipinos and the weakness of this strategy, closed down the schools and set up a Bible school instead. From then on the emphasis shifted to evangelism and church planting with the Bible school providing the needed ministers. A period of excellent growth followed. Membership increased by 525 percent in 14 years as it reached the 5,000 mark by 1940.

World War II arrested this excellent growth, and it took a while to get going again in 1946 when the missionaries returned, partly because of the independence given the National Church in 1947. Some churches did not qualify as members of the new C&MA Church of the Philippines (CAMACOP). Others refused to join. Several pastors left the Alliance due to what appeared to them to be untimely implementation of a self-support policy which abruptly cut off mission aid when both the country and churches were recovering from the damages inflicted during the war. In 1948 the influx of C&MA missionaries from China aided growth.

The 1947 to 1958 decade witnessed an exciting growth spurt as C&MA began pioneering work among the many Christiano homesteaders, exploiters, opportunists and adventurers who were flocking into Mindanao. During this period, membership more than doubled, jumping from 6,874 to 14,500. It turned out to be a somewhat hollow victory, however, as the nature of the growth became apparent. For during these years the rigid comity lines began to disintegrate as denominations began following up members migrating to the promised land of Mindanao. People who had sought temporary affiliation with Alliance churches began transferring to newly opened Methodist, Baptist and UCCP Churches as well as to some of the newer denominations entering the nation. Alarmed by the resulting membership dip to 12,880, the C&MA resumed heavy evangelistic emphasis and saw their membership climb to 17,500 in 1966 and 21,000 in 1970.

This heavy emphasis on evangelism was to grow in the early seventies and blossom into one of the most exciting programs of evangelism and church planting carried on by any of the denominations started by foreign mission societies in the Philippines.

Before concluding our survey of the early arrivals in the Philippines, we

should also glance at the *Seventh Day Adventists*. Three things distinguish them from the others who came before and who arrived later. One is their doctrinal position, which puts them in a slightly different category. Second is their refusal to become party to the Comity Agreement of the other eight. From the beginning they determined to cover the whole nation. Third is their steady rate of growth during their 75-year history that has recently resulted in their surpassing the UCCP as the largest denomination in the country with its 197,572 members in 1978. We will take a closer look at them in Chapter 12.

New mission societies began trickling into the Philippines in the 1930's and pouring into the country after World War II. With the mainline denominations for the most part turning to more benign ecumenical pursuits, God used these evangelical missions to rekindle the dampened fires of fervent evangelism. There were some early, notable successes. During my research on the *Foursquare Church*, for instance, I discovered that the spectacular growth of three Pentecostal denominations was producing 36 new church members per foreign missionary involved for every one new member in three other comparable evangelical denominations. The *Southern Baptists* with a large force of missionaries and money also burst on the scene during this period and grew at a decadal rate of 731 percent from 1953 to 1963. Other groups bent on discipling the Filipino peoples came during this period. They included the *Conservative Baptists*, *Nazarenes*, *Wesleyans*, *Free Methodists*, *Overseas Missionary Fellowship*, *the Assemblies of God*, *the Evangelical Free* and a number of others.

This proliferation of evangelical missions, however, did not immediately nor automatically make a major contribution to the discipling of the nation. The great bursts of evangelistic energy of the Pentecostals and the Southern Baptists, for example, soon settled into less dramatic rates of growth. The Southern Baptists slowed to a moderate 150 percent decadal rate of growth from 1964 to 1974 and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel that had spurred ahead at more than a 500 percent decadal rate from 1952 to 1962 slumped to a mere 25 percent in the decade prior to 1974. Most of the other missions were still so small that it was too early to tell whether their moderate-to-good rates of growth could or would be improved upon or even continued.

One thing *is* clear. By the late sixties and early seventies, very few of these denominations were satisfied with their growth. As with the denominations that entered at the turn of the century, results were for the

most part not living up to expectations.

Bob Waymire's research in 1979 brought to light considerable data relating to the problem of truncated growth as Mission and Church leaders gave evaluations of their work:

- Several leaders bewail their missionaries getting bogged down in administration and support ministries rather than being freed for evangelism and church planting. The Conservative Baptists, for example, in 1962 had 23 missionaries on the field, but only 20 organized churches! Most of their missionaries were doing other things than planting churches.

- Some missions, on the other hand, had too few missionaries in the first place. The early rapid growth of the Foursquare Church, for example, came with only three to four missionary couples on the field at a time. Their strategy of working in the cities and sending their newly trained converts to the barangays worked well. But many more responsive areas could have been opened with more missionaries.

- Almost all leaders concerned about growth recognized the need for better training for and mobilization of their lay people. "We do not have any lay training seminars," laments Mission Chairman Paul Turner of the Wesleyans. "We should!" he says. Others admit their need to start effective theological education by extension (TEE) programs, which constantly emphasize evangelism and train men to multiply churches.

- A number of societies conclude they simply were not planting enough new churches. A sure sign of this is when the average membership per church starts rising rapidly or when the denominational rate of growth for membership greatly exceeds the rate of growth for new churches. This is an indication that too much emphasis is being placed on caring for existing congregations and not enough on extension growth. The Nazarenes, for instance, from 1967 to 1974 were increasing their membership at a decadal rate of 537 percent, but the number of churches at a slower 294 percent.

- Another frequently mentioned problem is the lack of financial stewardship on the part of church members. One otherwise strong denomination finds its members give only about one percent of their income. A related problem mentioned was the misuse of subsidy given by the Mission.

Related to the lack of training for laymen and need for more church planting is the lack of a growing edge. If only ten percent of the effective force of a church is mobilized in an evangelistic activity intended to plant churches, the results are bound to be less than maximum. Some

denominations, for example, report an average of only one new evangelistic home Bible study group per church. This demonstrates a very minimal penetration into society. Some are as high as seven home Bible studies per congregation. With more hooks in the water, the latter group is bound to catch more fish.

- Follow-up and nurture problems are evident in many Churches. A case in point is the Southern Baptist record of getting 18,897 baptisms from 1950 to 1970 but membership gains of only 8,410.

- Poor relations among missionaries, personality conflicts, splits and even court cases account for some retarding of growth.

- Concentrating-inadvertently perhaps- on less responsive areas has kept some denominations back. The Conservative Baptist's startling growth of 1978 which resulted in part from breaking out of the more difficult southern Tagalog region and into a very responsive tribe in Mindanao illustrates the point.

- Most missions have suffered from organizational problems and mission/church relationships. When energies are absorbed in such tensions, evangelism and church planting suffer.

- One leader laments the fact that there has been much hesitancy in communicating with other Churches and missions. "We could learn so much.", he says.

All of the above problems are real and have undoubtedly driven growth rates much below what was evidently possible. At the same time, it is quite possible that these situations were not causes but symptoms of a more basic problem. It is a root disease alluded to by many leaders. Missions and Churches are neither seeing the harvest nor planning to reap it. They are not purposing or deliberately *willing* to grow, they have low expectations. Measurable goals, specific plans and commitment of time, people and money are absent. Some societies have almost unconsciously drifted into this situation, but others have chosen it consciously, believing that the Holy Spirit will bring the growth He desires irrespective of goals and plans.

That these reasons-or excuses-for slow growth were merely symptoms of a deeper problem was amply illustrated when one denomination after another began planning their evangelistic work and working their plans in the Seventies. As a climate for growth was brought into being and groups committed themselves to incredibly large goals, the symptoms began to disappear. At the very least, with their eyes on a larger goal, missionaries and nationals wrestled with their problems until they were solved so that as

soon as possible they could get on with the task.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. The point of this chapter is that over a period of 75 years one group after another entered the ripened fields of the Philippines with the intent of reaping the harvest. Tragically, after three quarters of a century, most of the grain was still bleaching in the sun. What would it take to shake loose Churches and missions from their problems and preoccupations and mobilize them into a force that would take seriously the command to "make disciples of all (the) peoples (nations)" of the Philippines? Praise the Lord, there were answers to this question.

## **Christ The Only Way Movement**

In the late sixties, three streams were forming that would eventually converge into a mighty flow of evangelistic outreach in the Philippines.

The first of these was the church growth movement. In the Fall of 1966, a group of leaders from five churches and mission societies working in the Philippines attended a church growth workshop with Dr. Donald McGavran at Winona Lake, Indiana. Those represented were the Baptist General Conference, the Evangelical Free Church, the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society, the Far Eastern Gospel Crusade and the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. After discussion, prayer and subsequent planning, Gordon Swanson, Ralph Toliver and Leonard Tuggy were commissioned by their missions to research the growth of the Church in the Philippines under the project title of Church Growth Research in the Philippines (C-GRIP). (Regrettably, Swanson was unable to continue with the project.) The book that resulted, *SEEING THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES*, was off the press in time for a major church growth seminar at Union Church, Manila, in 1970, with Dr. Donald McGavran, Leonard Tuggy, Ebbie Smith, myself and other church growth people. This book and others on the growth of the Church in the Philippines that followed made a profound impact on those concerned with the discipling of this island nation.

Also during the sixties and early seventies, other missionaries and nationals studied at the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary and came back to the Philippines to put into practice what they had learned.

A second stream was the international, regional and national congresses on evangelism in which Filipinos participated. Sixteen from the Philippines attended the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin in 1966. It was a challenging experience for them, but it resulted in no specific action. This was noted by 60 participants from the Philippines in the 1968 Asia South Pacific Congress held in Singapore. "When *we* go home," the delegates shouted to each other during their two Philippine delegation meetings, "let's not repeat the story of Berlin. Let's

make sure we come up with a plan and program for the evangelization of our country."

The delegates formed a committee of some ten members that in turn organized the National Fellowship for Philippine Evangelism (NAFE). Members of the fellowship included all those who had attended Berlin and Singapore and later would include participants in subsequent congresses on evangelism. True to their Singapore commitment, NAFE moved forward with plans for a ten day All Philippines Congress on Evangelism which would be held on the campus of Faith Academy in Cainta, Rizal, for about 350 delegates in 1970.

A third stream that had been flowing for some years that would converge with the other two was the ministry of O.C. Ministries, formerly called Overseas Crusades. This mission society, incorporated in Manila as Philippine Crusades, was established as a service organization to work side by side with national Churches in the discipling of nations.

The opportunity for me to have a direct role in the discipling of the Philippines came in 1968 when I was appointed Field Director of Philippine Crusades just in time to attend Singapore with the Philippine delegation. While there, I was asked to serve with the committee, which later became NAFE. As a committee member, I was now in a position to throw all the resources of Philippine Crusades into the movement. The office facilities, national and foreign staff, publications and money raising ability were all placed at the disposal of this budding evangelistic movement.

The three streams thus converged at the All Philippines Congress on Evangelism in May, 1970. As President of NAFE and Coordinator of the Congress, Philippine Crusades national missionary Eustaquio (Nene) Ramientos did a masterful job of coordinating the thousands of details necessary to the very smooth running of the Congress. With the enthusiasm generated by Berlin and Singapore, cooperation from virtually every wing of the Evangelical Church in the Philippines was forthcoming. Churches and individual Christians were able to raise about 40 percent of the \$10,000 budget from local sources. The organizational muscle of Philippine Crusades effectively blended with the wisdom and hard work of national leaders to make this one of the best interdenominational efforts in the nation to that date. The Congress program was blessed by the insights of those who had received church growth training and those who had attended Berlin and Singapore. To a large extent, therefore, the speakers focused their presentations on those activities that would be most productive in the discipling of the nation.

I was on furlough during the year of preparation for the Congress, but arrived back in time to deliver the paper on the evangelistic method that would become the backbone of the movement. My study of the Foursquare Church convinced me that evangelistic Bible study groups in Roman Catholic homes all over the country was the method God was blessing under the conditions of the Philippines. So I challenged the Congress participants to meet the need for putting "Legs" to the Bible, for getting it out where the people were. I therefore suggested the proliferation of *Lay Evangelistic Group Studies of the Bible* (LEGS). The word "evangelistic" meant that at least half of those gathering to study the Bible would be non-

Evangelicals. Estimating that an average of three LEGS for each of the 3,000 or so evangelical churches in the country would not be unrealistic, I challenged Congress delegates to work towards a combined goal of 10,000 such study groups (including those already in existence) within two or three years.

In the closing days of the Congress, Nene Ramientos led the delegates not only to accepting this goal for the Church of the nation but to establishing an on-going structure that would continue to challenge and equip the Church in this cooperative effort. Thus "Christ the Only Way Movement" was born. It would provide a focal point for the evangelization of the Philippines for the next five years.

This one chapter on the COWM does not allow a full description and evaluation of the movement. (A doctoral dissertation by Clyde Cook and a supervised study by Darwin Sokoken have provided at least partial evaluations.) Inevitably there were strengths and weaknesses. Looking back from the vantage point of the five-year interval since the last major activity of the movement, however, I conclude that the Bible study group method of evangelism was most significant. As will be seen in subsequent chapters, this method (used in one form or another under various names) is at the heart of virtually every effective denominational program of evangelism now going on in the Philippines.

And well it might be. It meets all the criteria for an effective evangelistic tool. It follows the pattern of the New Testament with its churches in the home and its teaching of the Word from house to house. The systematic week-by-week teaching of the Word produces "disciples" and not just "decisions." Follow-up is an intrinsic part of the method and not a separate program that must be begun after the fact. In this, converts simply continue doing each week what they have already been doing. The method is eminently reproducible on a local level in that there is potential leadership in every congregation, the cost is nothing or next to nothing and there are always meeting places available. This evangelistic approach leads to whole families considering the Gospel and accepting the Lord instead of individuals being plucked out one by one against the grain of family solidarity. It furthermore opens the door to people movements by making it possible for the Gospel to continue to flow to an ever widening network of family relationships. The method is appropriate to the Philippine culture with its large and close-knit extended families. It is effective in the Roman Catholic setting where the Bible, which has been kept for so long from laymen, is now eagerly sought after. It likewise overcomes the problem of Roman Catholics fearing to enter a Protestant church, which many have been taught, is of the devil.

Finally, and most significantly, LEGS is a most direct approach to the planting of new congregations. As non-Evangelical neighbors and relatives who have been meeting regularly together start making personal commitments to Jesus Christ, it is necessary to begin the nurture of these new believers. Elements of worship are added to the meeting, problems of the new convert are dealt with from the Word, Christians give testimony of their successful efforts

to witness to friends and associates and so on. In the meantime, the group leader, a layman, is beginning to function as the pastor-teacher. Perhaps in time he will become the lay pastor of this fledgling congregation, or perhaps another worker will be sent. As the congregation grows, it gains spiritual, organizational and financial strength and ultimately can stand on its own. Evangelism, making disciples and planting a church is therefore part of one continuum and not separate, disjointed activities.

Certainly not all evangelistic Bible study groups turn into churches, and of course many churches are started with other methods. But in recent years in the Philippines the LEGS approach has been the backbone of the major evangelistic and church planting thrust now taking place. The goal set before and accepted by the 350 delegates at Faith Academy was for 10,000 such groups. Later in the movement it was determined that, along with lay evangelistic outreach groups, there should also be small solidly Christian groups (Cores) for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. In these fellowships, Christians would encourage and pray for each other in relation to their evangelistic outreach in homes. The goal of 10,000 Cores was set. LEGS and Cores thus became the "twin dynamites" as Nene Ramientos referred to them-of the movement.

Elected as Executive Director of the COWM, Ramientos, from his base at Philippine Crusades, set his sights on the twin goals of 10,000 LEGS and 10,000 Cores by March 31, 1973, less than three years away. To set the goals and to reach them were two different things. There was much work to be done.

The first task was to get the message of the Congress out to every corner of the Philippines. The nation was divided into 17 COWM Districts, each covering two or three provinces. Philippine Crusades missionaries and a growing national staff joined forces with volunteer workers from a number of church and para-church organizations and were sent out to these 17 districts to mobilize the Church for reaching the goals of the movement. These mobilization teams, which quickly became known as "Mob Squads," took the message of the congress to about 1,500 additional ministers and selected lay leaders throughout the islands. Armed with newly written and printed Core and LEGS "how to" manuals, the Mob Squads challenged and trained these leaders and then helped form committees that would prepare for the more formal congresses that would follow in each of the districts.

These District Congresses were ultimately held for an additional 2,000 pastors and workers. At the end of each District Congress, delegates voted on the man or woman they wanted for their full-time District Coordinator who would continue to spread the message of the movement to local churches throughout the two or three provinces of his or her district. Hearing of the program, Dr. Stanley Mooneyham of World Vision began a personal telephone campaign to enlist 17 mission societies in the U.S. to pledge \$100 a month for the support of one Coordinator each. He came close enough to the goal of \$1,700 a month that COWM was able to commit itself to the support of the 17 newly elected District Coordinators. These

Coordinators were periodically gathered for training and consultation before being sent back to spread the message of Cores and LEGS and other COWM activities. Many districts took the further step of adding their own assistant coordinators.

The idea of Cores and LEGS was further buttressed by various publications that went out from COWM headquarters at the Philippine Crusades office in Mandaluyong, a suburb of Manila. At first, Philippine Crusades' CRUSADER MAGAZINE devoted much of its space to the movement. Then the publication was dropped in order to devote all its resources to ACTS 29 and then SPREE, eight-page tabloids that were exclusively devoted to COWM and promoting the discipling of the Philippines through the evangelistic home Bible study method. Every issue contained motivational articles, instruction on the use of the method, challenges to prayer and commitment and a steady stream of testimonies of conversions, church revivals and new churches being planted through the proliferation of Lay Evangelistic Group Studies of the Bible. In some issues of SPREE local churches reported as many as 40 LEGS started in their areas.

Other activities sponsored in whole or in part by COWM dramatized and promoted the use of LEGS. For years, Venture for Victory basketball teams had been coming to the Philippines to play against the top national teams and to present the Gospel at half time. Now COWM invited a team to come for one full year to help the movement in each of the 17 districts. This group of nine athletes--including one Filipino--quickly became known as the COW-boys. They eventually played about 200 games in as many communities before more than 200,000 local fans. Besides preaching and giving testimony at half time, these young athletes saw about 10,000 sign up for Bible correspondence courses. In the evenings, the COW-boys would gather local church people for challenge and instruction on the home Bible study approach. The local church would therefore not only be taught about LEGS, but would be provided contacts from the games for immediate follow-up. In one isolated town, 15 LEGS resulted from a single game!

Another significant project was "Revolution of Love Mindanao." COWM co-sponsored this socio-evangelistic program with World Vision International. Thirty young people from Canada, New Zealand and the United States along with 40 Filipinos volunteered to do construction work for ten months in the troubled Mindanao area with its heavy Muslim population.

Working hand in hand with local Christians, ROLM young people completed 33 major projects such as multi-purpose pavements, a public market water system, school rooms, medical centers, public litter containers and basketball courts. In the process they saw 370 LEGS started. Many of these began from those who came forward in the evangelistic crusades that ROLM conducted in key areas with Stanley Mooneyham as preacher.

One Way '74 provided another major opportunity to train workers all over the nation in various aspects of evangelism including the use of LEGS. One Way '74 was a series of major

Billy Graham-type city-wide evangelistic crusades conducted in 15 of the 17 COWM Districts. Over 11,000 of the 200,000 who attended these crusades came forward publicly to indicate their commitment to Christ. Led by Evangelists Ralph Bell, Roy Gustafson, Akbar Haqq, Howard Jones, John Wesley White, Clarence Sands and Marney Patterson, these crusades gave churches another opportunity to follow up converts with Bible study groups.

In many other ways Christ the Only Way Movement spread the word about putting "legs" to the Bible by taking it out to the people in their homes. Most notable among these ways was the work of the 17 District Coordinators who for three years traveled through the communities of their districts to encourage churches to establish many Bible study groups in the homes round about.

This activity continued throughout the whole of the five-year COWM period of 1970 to early 1975. The specific date for reaching 10,000 LEGS, however, was March 31, 1973. Each month District Coordinators sent in reports of progress to date. By the Fall of '72, less than 1,000 LEGS groups were reported. As months went by, progress seemed slow, and the February 1973, report still indicated we were short by several thousand. When in April the last report came in, however, it was found that 10,697 LEGS were reported in progress. In addition, Coordinators reported the existence of 6,538 Core groups.

Rejoicing at exceeding the goal that loomed so large at the 1970 Congress was sobered at the thought of what still needed to be done and even at the actual meaning of the reports. Some of the reports of necessity were "guesstimates." There was no way of knowing how many LEGS were in existence before the Movement began. LEGS could quickly be started and sometimes as quickly die. Nonetheless, COWM was a notable and historic achievement for the churches of the Philippines. It also provided the foundation for the massive church planting programs that would follow.

To this point in the Movement, church planting had not been particularly stressed. Reports do indicate, however, a goodly number of new congregations springing up as a result of COWM activities. What *was* emphasized was an evangelistic method that could efficiently and inexpensively lead to the multiplication of churches. An Evangelism/Church Growth Seminar in 1974 with Drs. Vergil Gerber and Donald McGavran-the last major activity of the Christ the Only Way Movement-would build on this emphasis and eventually lead to a vast new multiplication of churches in the Philippines.

Before we get to that story, however, let us analyze the contribution of COWM in bringing the Church of the Philippines to its present commitment to the discipling of the nation.

As this chapter is being written, almost five years have elapsed since the McGavran/Gerber workshop that climaxed COWM. My personal commitment and involvement makes it impossible for me to be a completely unbiased observer. Nonetheless, my very pragmatic concern for real church growth is buttressed by the research of Bob Waymire, a trained scientific observer.

First the positive side.

1. COWM was a Filipino movement. National leaders caught the vision for it and carried it out. Of the 47 full-time workers at the height of the Movement, 45 were Filipino. Many of these have now returned to positions of leadership in evangelism and church growth in their own organizations or denominations. One began a pioneer church planting effort that has seen over 80 congregations spring up. Another struck out on a full time faith venture to reach Roman Catholics in their own setting. The COWM vision of discipling the nation would not be dimmed with the passing of the Movement itself.

Furthermore, Filipino Christians raised large amounts of money for the 1970 All Philippines Congress on Evangelism. They took care of local expenses for such major activities as district congresses on evangelism and city-wide crusades. They purchased materials for use with LEGS and Cores. To the degree that the movement was effective, the Filipinos made it effective.

2. It was also a movement in partnership. Filipinos caught the vision as a result of foreigners who produced and paid for Berlin and Singapore and much of the cost of the COWM. O.C. Ministries, a foreign mission society, provided the organizational muscle for the Movement. World Vision, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, a number of mission societies, several literature foundations and many believers in several countries all made significant contributions. Within the Philippines there was excellent cooperation by OMF Publishers, FEBC radio and print shop, Christian Literature Crusade, Every Home Crusade, Campus Crusade, InterVarsity, Navigators, Young Life, Open Air Campaigners, and a host of schools, churches, denominations, mission societies and individual lay Christians. It was truly an effort by a significant part of The Body of Christ locally and internationally.

3. As a saturation evangelism movement, it broke new ground. It emphasized a basic method of evangelism that through research had been found the most effective for the nation at that time. It emphasized not just evangelism but the bringing of new disciples (D 2) into existing churches and ultimately the multiplication of new churches. While it was a cooperative effort, in its basic method it did not expect churches to drop their own programs to cooperate in something that would not result in fruit in their churches. The churches that equipped their people for LEGS after participating in a congress or seminar were the ones that benefited directly.

4. Most significantly, the movement performed the service of a scaffold. Its existence was not an end in itself but a temporary structure to help produce something significant and long lasting. Five years after the end of the Movement, for example, eight of the 40 or 50 denominations that participated in COWM in themselves reported having 6,928 LEGS. If figures could be gathered from all other denominations, surely the total would greatly exceed the 10,697 reported in existence in March 1973. Furthermore, that evangelistic Bible studies

continue as a basic strategy of the Philippine Church is demonstrated by the 1979 PHILCOL (Philippine Leadership Congress on Evangelism) Declaration which, in part, reads:

Many of our churches today grew out of home Bible Studies conducted by ministers and in most cases by laymen. Existing churches are growing because their members are engaged in evangelistic Bible Studies in offices, campuses and homes. It is one of the surest ways of carrying out the Great Commission and having rapid church growth.

We resolve to develop in our churches evangelistic Bible Study programs directed to equip every church member to become a Bible Study Leader. We are calling upon all Bible Schools and Seminaries to incorporate Evangelistic Bible Studies and its lay-orientation in its curricula. Also, we are urging for a partnership among evangelical bodies to share resources, personnel and expertise in developing trainers to assist local churches in this ministry.

Of course there were negative aspects as well.

1. Because Berlin and Singapore had seen the Philippines as a whole and because the representatives had come from all over the country, the leaders of COWM were hard put to begin anything but a nation-wide program. A more reasonable approach, however, might have been to develop the ministry in one section of the country at a time as is done by New life For All evangelism in Africa. This would have avoided some of the frantic efforts at fund raising, producing booklets in several different languages at the same time, simultaneously preparing 17 major District Congresses on Evangelism and 15 major citywide crusades. Such an approach might have resulted in more solid training for LEGS and planting daughter churches, might have resulted in some churches feeling less pressured than they were, and might ultimately have gotten even deeper cooperation and support.

Only Heaven knows whether it was urgent to mount a nation-wide program all at once or not. But those national Churches considering cooperative efforts towards the discipling of their peoples should weigh this second option carefully.

2. Especially in the earlier phases, the COWM approach was too broad. Our model was in part E.I.D. in Latin America, which attempted to get the Whole Church, involved in every type of evangelistic method all within one year. COWM was spread out over five years, but it still would have done better, in my opinion, had it not tried to get churches trained for youth evangelism, social action evangelism and door-to-door evangelism and a number of other activities all at once. It was too much to be communicated to a whole nation. In reality, churches did not participate in all these facets. It was LEGS and Cores and church planting that were most significant in focusing the Churches of the Philippines on the discipling of their nation.

On balance, COWM was a courageous attempt by the church leaders of the Philippines to

work specifically at the discipling of the peoples of the Philippines in obedience to the Great Commission. The nation was not disciplined in that five-year period. But in it the Church more clearly than ever before set its sights on that goal. To the extent that Christ the Only Way Movement had a part in this, the many Filipino and expatriate workers involved can be truly thankful.

## **How To Disciple A Nation**

As the months and then years of the Christ the Only Way Movement rolled by I found myself constantly immersed in the planning of, fund raising for and implementation of one major nation-wide activity after another. They were exhilarating years. Years wherein I was working out on the battlefield the theology and practice of Matthew 28, the discipling of a nation. The time would come when I would feel the Lord calling me to "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it" (Hab. 2:2). My life would take a new turn as I would attempt to communicate to others what I felt the Lord was teaching me. During the years of COWM, however, I would continue to wrestle with the basic idea relating to the discipling of a nation.

What I was looking for was a fundamental strategy for the discipling of a nation-any nation. I was struggling with the ultimate "How to" of the Great Commission, "How to Disciple a Nation." I felt I was making progress. Later as I would study Church Growth Strategy under Peter Wagner and Ed Dayton at Fuller School of World Mission, I would pick up some useful terminology to describe what I was learning. It will be helpful now to use that terminology to summarize my thinking at the time.

Wagner and Dayton spoke of not a strategy for any church growth project but of *four* strategies. I'll list the strategies here and then in each case explain how I felt the ministry of COWM related to them.

Strategy 1: The Right Goals. Among other things, Strategy 1 refers to the right end product of evangelism, i.e., the making of disciples and not just the proclamation of the Word nor the getting of "decisions"; to the stating of goals in such a way that they would be quantitatively measurable; and to the setting of goals that are large enough to be challenging and to require dependence on the Lord for fulfillment but not so large as to be discouraging and self defeating.

The goal of 10,000 Lay Evangelistic Group Studies of the Bible as a

basic method for reaching a nation fit that description nicely, or so it seemed to me at the time.

Strategy 2: The Right Place at the Right Time. This refers to the biblical principle of the law of the harvest and the church growth concept of responsiveness. The Philippines with its massive responsiveness was certainly the right place for an all-out attempt to disciple a nation. And if the time wasn't right then, when would it ever be?

Strategy 3: The Right Methods. As we have seen, there was at least one method that would truly lead to the making of disciples, that was indefinitely reproducible and that was universally working in the Philippines.

Strategy 4: The Right People. By following the Ephesians four concept of "equipping the saints (laymen) for the work of the ministry" of discipling a nation, we were focusing on the right people. Furthermore, the evangelistic Bible study method put to work not only laymen with the spiritual gifts of teaching and/or evangelism, but also those with the gifts of helps and encouragement in the gathering of people in homes.

If we were so well on target, however, why was there this nagging feeling that something was missing in the strategy?

In the nooks and crannies of time in my heavy administrative load I continued to grapple with this question through prayer, the study of the Word, meditation and through reading what the Holy Spirit was doing and saying to others in relation to the subject.

From the latter, I began to get encouragement first of all on just the *idea* that nations ought to be discipled. Dr. George F. Peters of Dallas Seminary, for example, wrote the following in a BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS\* (pp 265,266):

The discipling is to continue until "the nation" has been reached with the message of God. Our Lord does not limit the missionary command and activity to the establishing of a "beachhead" church in that nation. The process must continue until the nation has been *saturated* (emphasis mine) with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

While reading a paper prepared by the noted Korean leader Han Chul-ha for the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, I underlined the following:

Therefore all nations must become disciples of Jesus Christ. From our experience we may interpret this command to make disciples *out of* (emphasis mine) all nations, meaning that not each nation as a unit but individuals from each nation may become disciples of the Lord. But the literal meaning is not so, but to make disciples of all nations, namely make every *nation* (emphasis mine) his disciple....

Next, I began to find missionary statesmen making references to *measurable goals* for the discipling of nations:

There is only one way the Great Commission can be fulfilled, and that is by establishing gospel-preaching congregations in every community on the face of the earth. . (David Womack, *BREAKING THE STAINED GLASS BARRIER*, \* p. 88).

We therefore selected as a working goal for our experimental investigation that "there should be ten witnessing Christians in every town of more than 500 people in the world." Our assumption was that if this goal were met, this would be strong indication that the world had heard the preaching of the Gospel (Ed Dayton, *GOD, MAN AND CHURCH GROWTH* \*\* p. 417).

This truth applied to the world of mission, means first that giving the opportunity to all men to appropriate salvation can truly be done by establishing millions of congregations of practicing Christians- ideally one in every small community of men (*CHURCH GROWTH BULLETIN*, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 225).

With mounting excitement I began to find allusions to missionaries actually working out plans of what could be called saturation church planting:

In view of the present rate of evangelization, some national Christians and missionaries foresee that the missionary's role in the discipling of Tokaland will be nearly complete by the end of 1974. By this is meant that (1) half the adult population of the area will be actively Christian: and (2) there will be a church meeting within walking distance of every village (Shewmaker, *GOD, MAN AND CHURCH GROWTH*, \* pp. 221-222).

In 1966, Linton and his fellow-workers made a careful survey of (their) area.... They developed a seven-year plan to put a congregation in "each village of more than 100 houses four kilometers distant from the nearest evangelical church" (Radar, CHURCH GROWTH BULLETIN, July, 1973, p. 343).

Through this reading I found the missing element. My problem had been with Strategy 1: The Right Goals. Establishing 10,000 LEGS was a good goal and a right goal, but not a goal that, when reached, would result in the discipling of a nation. When 10,000 LEGS were established around the country there would still be multitudes out of range of the Gospel.

The goal I was looking for was one that when reached would result in a "gospel preaching congregation in every community on the face" of the Philippines, or a "congregation of practicing Christians in every small community" of Filipinos. For the Philippines this would be a church in every barangay (Tagalog word for the Spanish "barrio" or village) of the nation. At that time there were around 40,000 barangays in a nation of 40 million people, or an average of about 1,000 Filipinos per barangay. If there were a church amongst every 1,000 people of the nation, it would certainly be possible for every Filipino to hear the Gospel and see it lived by his own kind of people. Furthermore, every Filipino-even those in the cities-lives in a barangay that has its own captain and political structure. For the most part, these barangays are homogeneous units. The people speak the same dialect, are usually of the same economic strata, are many times unified by a common vocation such as farming or fishing and in some cases even consist of one or two extended families.

I began to think and pray about a goal of one congregation per barangay by the year 2000. Assuming that the size of each barangay would increase and that their number would also increase, I concluded there would be 50,000 barangays-and therefore a need of 50,000 churches! I tested this against the command of Matthew 28. To reach every barangay would certainly imply a lot of "going," and to plant a church upon arrival in each barangay would necessitate a lot of "baptizing" and "teaching." The one imperative of the Great Commission-to "make disciples"-would also be fulfilled. For the strategy would not end in mere Christian presence or proclamation in each community, but in persuasion of people to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and be incorporated into worshipping, growing,

learning, giving, gospel-preaching communities of believers. Such converts would become in at least the very minimum sense "disciples." The goal would also relate well to the scope of the Commission which was to make disciples of "peoples" and of "*all* peoples" (emphasis mine). To plant a church in every barangay would make it possible to reach every person of each people group of the Philippines and *all* the people groups of the country.

Satisfied that the goal of a church in every one of the estimated 50,000 barangays by the end of the century had solid biblical underpinnings, I began testing it first on such colleagues as Nene Ramientos and then on friends among the missionaries and national Church leaders. Encouraged, I began referring to the goal in speaking and writing.

In my mind I underscored the phrase "would make it possible," for it never occurred to me that a nation could be considered "discipled" when a specified number of its citizens had made personal commitment to Jesus Christ-unless, of course, every single person did! In the mind of Christ perhaps He considers a nation discipled when a percentage of the people actually accept Him as Lord and Savior. I did not want to guess what that number might be. But I did conclude that if there were a congregation within easy access-within practical and cultural distance of every citizen of a nation, the nation *could* be discipled, however the Lord defined "discipled" in His mind.

The first real test of whether the idea was gaining acceptance came when about 55 leaders of the Church in the Philippines traveled to the Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne in July 1974. During the ten days of sessions, each national delegation was given opportunities to meet in order to draft a statement concerning their evangelistic intentions. I was pleased when early in the exuberant Filipino discussion one of the leaders of the contingent made the statement that "Of course we all know that the evangelistic home Bible study method is the most effective in the Philippines." What I had accepted as a premise in 1970 had become a "fact" in 1974. Point number seven in their platform therefore became "Strengthen the ministry of 'Christ the Only Way Movement' in establishing Cores and LEGS."

I was even more gratified when, without my participation in the discussion, another plank in their platform became "Establish a local congregation in every barrio (barangay) in the country."

The second major test came a few months later in October, 1974, when Christ the Only Way co-sponsored (along with C-GRIP and the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches) an evangelism/church growth workshop with Drs. Donald McGavran and Vergil Gerber at a Roman Catholic retreat house in the hills outside Manila. This seminar was of the genre of the 1972 Venezuela experiment of Drs. Gerber and C. Peter Wagner. Over 60 of these seminars have now been held in almost 50 nations. They were born out of the ultimate realization that Evangelism in Depth movements in Latin America with their year-long all inclusive evangelistic activities actually resulted in little or no church growth-and sometimes in losses! The goal of this type seminar was to motivate pastors and denominational leaders to make faith projections of what the Lord wanted them to accomplish in the next five years in terms of new converts added to their memberships and new congregations established. The premise was that if the urgency for church growth came from within, they would find the methods best suited to their situation for the adding of disciples to their existing and new congregations. (A book that will chronicle these 60 seminars is now in process by this writer.)

In the Philippines, the 75 assembled delegates spent three days examining the biblical basis for such growth, discussing the reasons-or excuses-for slow growth, being taught basic church growth concepts and analyzing their own growth patterns for the previous ten years. They were then ready to pray and think about the goals the Lord would want them to reach in the next five years.

In an electrifying session, delegates reported what the Lord seemed to be saying to them. When the projections were tabulated it was found that 17 denominational groups represented who had averaged 38 percent growth in the previous five years were believing God for 138 percent growth in the next five. Numerically, that would mean adding 115,787 new members to their 1974 membership of 80,338. They expected to reach this goal largely by planting 3,050 new congregations. In addition, representatives from 25 local congregations that had been growing at a combined 60 percent set a goal of 168 percent growth. (The projection for one denomination was omitted since it seemed overly large and unrealistic and would distort the remaining 17.) These congregations expected to add 9,702 new members and plant almost three times as many new churches as they already had, adding 72 to their current 25.

As vice-chairman of the workshop committee (under the chairmanship of Faustino Ruivivar) it became my happy privilege to lead the final session on "Where Do We Go From Here?" I took as my theme the need for "possessing the land," for working directly at the goal of one congregation for each of the 50,000 barangays by the year 2000. My fears that the idea might be thought preposterous proved unfounded when every delegate, when the opportunity was given, instantly stood to pledge himself to the completion of this task!

As a result of these two gatherings on evangelism and church growth, a quite significant number of the church leaders and missionaries of the Philippines had committed themselves to this daring goal. At this time there were perhaps five to seven thousand evangelical congregations in the country. That left over 40,000 to go in just 25 years. Just how seriously the Evangelicals of the nation would take this commitment would be found out in the years immediately following.

### **Southern Baptists Point Toward 3,000 Churches**

*For 60 Filipino leaders at Lausanne to declare publicly their belief that every follower of Christ and every evangelical structure should be mobilized to "Establish a local congregation in every barrio in the country" was a marvelous step in the right direction. For another 75 leaders to make specific five-year projections for numbers of new converts and new churches was a bold leap of faith. Unless, however, local churches, regional associations of churches and-perhaps most importantly-whole denominations instituted actual growth programs, all the declarations and commitments would amount to mere fanning the air.*

*We turn, therefore, to an analysis of what has actually happened since the historic conference of 1974. Have Filipino Church leaders taken their commitments seriously? Have plans been developed and implemented? Is the Church of the Philippines making significant progress towards the planting of a congregation in every barangay, toward the discipling of a nation?*

*To find answers, Bob Waymire, my associate in planning and research at O.C Ministries, did a one-week preliminary survey in the Philippines in March of 1978 and returned for a full month of research in February of 1979. Waymire interviewed leaders in 23 selected denominations. In the*

*process, he rediscovered the truism that "hard facts are hard to come by." The statistician for the Methodist Church, for example, estimated total membership at 100,000 in 1968. In the subsequent nine years he estimated membership increases of 3,000, 1,000, 1,000, 13,000, 12,000, 5,000, 10,000, 5,000 and 15,000 for a total of 165,000 in 1977. The treasurer, however, who saw monthly financial reports from churches, felt it was much more accurate to start with a base of 66,000 in 1974 and add about 1,000 every year to get a membership of 69,000 in 1977—a discrepancy of almost 100,000! Since the giving of church members is a fairly reliable indicator of how many genuine members there are, his figure is probably the more accurate. In any case, the denomination obviously has no systematic method of keeping accurate records of conversions, baptisms, transfers in and deaths, reversions and transfers out. It does not really know how big the Methodists are nor how fast they are growing. This situation is extreme and tends to be more prevalent in the older denominations, but some of the younger churches have problems in this area as well. With even the best of systems, a rapidly growing denomination of some size has a difficult time of gathering accurate, up-to-date information.*

*Nonetheless, Waymire checked and crosschecked statistics and followed up with a seemingly endless flow of correspondence. The end result was a folder of reliable information from 12 denominations. The stories of these 12 Churches are representative of the kind of growth that is going on in some groups and the growth that is possible in many others. They also illustrate the principles of what makes good growth possible, not to mention the degree of commitment, prayer and organizational strain and effort necessary.*

*We singled out four denominations to devote a full chapter to each. Briefer summaries of the remaining eight will be presented in one single chapter. This will be followed by a chapter summarizing the significance of the growth of these denominations and the common factors that resulted in growth.*

*We turn first of all to the current growth program of the Southern Baptists, which began in 1972. The report of Dr. Leslie Hill, which follows, is jammed with church growth insights. It shows how a denomination that appeared to be entering a period of slower growth instead began growing at an even faster pace.*

Southern Baptist mission effort began among the Chinese in the Philippines in 1950 through our missionaries who were forced out of China. They came only to "wait until they could return." Mission activity with Filipinos began at their request with an evangelistic crusade in Dagupan City (North of Manila) in August 1951. From that tenuous beginning, the denomination had grown to more than 180 churches and over 15,600 members by the end of 1972 when our current growth program began.

We acknowledge the Holy Spirit's leadership and affirm that to the degree that missionaries and Filipino Christians submitted to the will of God this growth represents spiritual accomplishment. We also acknowledge various circumstances that in the providence of God contributed to this early growth.

One circumstance was the openness of Filipinos to the Gospel combined with the evangelistic and church-planting character of the Southern Baptists. Our emphasis on local and nation-wide crusades, for example, had a decided effect on our growth. We not only baptized large numbers of people following crusades in 1963, 1968 and 1970, but also increased the number of churches started at those times. Each crusade year saw the number of church starts more than double that of the previous year. The Mission assisted in these crusades by bringing evangelists from the States and by financing the use of mass media for publicity. Some have felt the value of the crusade as an evangelistic tool is on the wane. The Mindanao Convention of Baptist Churches, however, has just completed such a crusade with the assistance of the Gene Williams Evangelistic Association. Preliminary information indicates that more than 7,000 made professions of faith. Experience gives us reason to believe that 2,500 to 3,500 of these people will be baptized and become members of Baptist churches.

Another factor in our growth was the relatively large resources in terms of personnel and financial support we were able to pour into the country. This strength can be seen in such varied institutions as our seminary, Bible school, hospital, publications, student centers, college, radio and TV facilities and so on. These were not always focused on discipling the nation, but we see an example of how these could contribute to our growth when the president of our Baguio City seminary, Dr. Grover Tyner, evaluated his own ministry in part on the basis of the number of churches he personally had helped to start. Further examples include the Mati Baptist Hospital, which through its influence made possible the beginning of 30 churches and the

Southern Baptist College in Mlang, North Cotobato, which is now surrounded by 70 churches. The Mission's stated attempt to maintain a certain ratio of our large number of missionaries as field evangelists further underscored our concern for church growth.

A fifth factor in our growth especially during the first two decades was the use of Mission subsidy. With it we assisted churches in the supporting of their pastors, in the purchase of land and in assistance in the construction of church buildings. Leonard Tuggy writes that "subsidy helped Southern Baptists 'catch up' after a late arrival, gave them a psychological advantage of church buildings and immediately equipped and filled their educational needs."\*

A final circumstance of our early growth was that we did not confine our church planting to Luzon, where we started, but moved into the very responsive island of Mindanao. By 1972 we had nearly twice the number of church members in Mindanao that we did in Luzon.

In almost any other situation Southern Baptist missionaries would have been quite pleased with these circumstances that made it possible for a new field to grow to more than 180 churches with over 15,600 members in just 20 years. The missionaries of the Philippine Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) nonetheless had an uneasy feeling that we were not growing as fast as we should. In order to better understand our actual situation and be able to make realistic growth plans for the future, we therefore commissioned Dr. Ebbie Smith (at that time a Southern Baptist missionary in Indonesia) and Robert Skivington (a Conservative Baptist missionary who has now completed his doctorate in church growth) to survey our field. Their research revealed that while growth was continuing the percentage of people being won to Christ had begun to decrease and a plateau in growth seemed sure to result. The survey report noted that an average of only 11 new churches had been planted per year from 1966 to 1970 and that "without the additions by transfer, our record of growth would be depressing."\*\* (Subsequent research, however, seems to indicate that transfer growth was actually no more than ten to 15 percent.)

Alarmed by this data, the Southern Baptist mission made a number of far-reaching decisions. The primary one from which all others would follow was the setting of a target for total churches and total membership by the end of the 1972-1982 decade. Together we believed it would honor the Lord to set and work toward a goal of 3,000 churches and 100,000 members by the

end of 1982.

The Mission realized that to reach these goals that would require about seven-fold growth in just ten years would necessitate major policy shifts. The Mission therefore streamlined its organization so that missionaries would be freed from as much organizational activity as possible, thus enabling them to devote more time to evangelism and church planting. It further freed missionaries for pioneering work by setting a policy that missionaries could not pastor local congregations. The Mission emphasized its new priorities by renaming its Field Evangelists as "Church Planters." Regular meetings of both missionaries and Filipinos were scheduled to study and promote church growth. The Mission requested its theological education institutions to add church growth studies to their curricula. Other decisions emphasized the use of evangelistic home Bible studies and multiplication of house churches that would have "full freedom to act as churches." The new policy emphasized the appointment of missionaries for church planting among tribal groups. To provide pastors for the increased number of churches, it instituted a system of theological education by extension. Believing that funding could not possibly keep pace with the growth projected, the Mission ended all direct church subsidy and in its place established a loan fund for land and buildings. It expressed its desire to work jointly with the church associations and conventions on special projects such as Sunday school development and evangelistic outreach.

Since Baptist ideas of autonomy give independence to the Mission *as well as* the churches, associations and conventions, the Philippine Baptist Mission recognized that our extensive growth plans hinged on the voluntary cooperation of our Filipino churches. We therefore planned island-wide meetings on both Luzon and Mindanao to share the understandings we had come to with our Filipino leaders. Similar meetings were continued in later years with the result that more extensive mission-church communication came to characterize our work.

An example of the happy results of this deepened cooperation can be seen in the nation-wide crusade of 1976. The crusade came as a result of joint planning of Church and Mission and resulted in more than 50 percent of all converts actually being baptized and joining the church. This is our highest ratio ever in the Philippines. And, for the first time, the crusade was carried on without the assistance of evangelists from the States. Missionaries and Filipino pastors did all the preaching.

Another example is the Sunday school emphasis throughout Mindanao in 1977. It was a Filipino, Mindanao Convention President Romeo Faldas, who saw the need to follow up the evangelistic crusade with this project. The Mission assisted by allowing Dr. Paul Jolmson to give his primary time to this Church effort. About 500 pastors and Sunday school leaders and teachers received training with the result that Sunday school attendance on Mindanao almost doubled!

That Filipino leadership had caught the vision for growth is further seen in their stressing an "Each One Win One" emphasis one year and a church planting emphasis of "Each One Begin One" the following year.

Meanwhile, the Mission began taking seriously the new priorities of the 1972 report. It asked all Church Planters (formerly called "Evangelists") to study the areas and set church-planting goals for them. It surveyed new areas in Luzon and Mindanao for future pioneer efforts. It also requested new Church Planter missionaries from the home board.

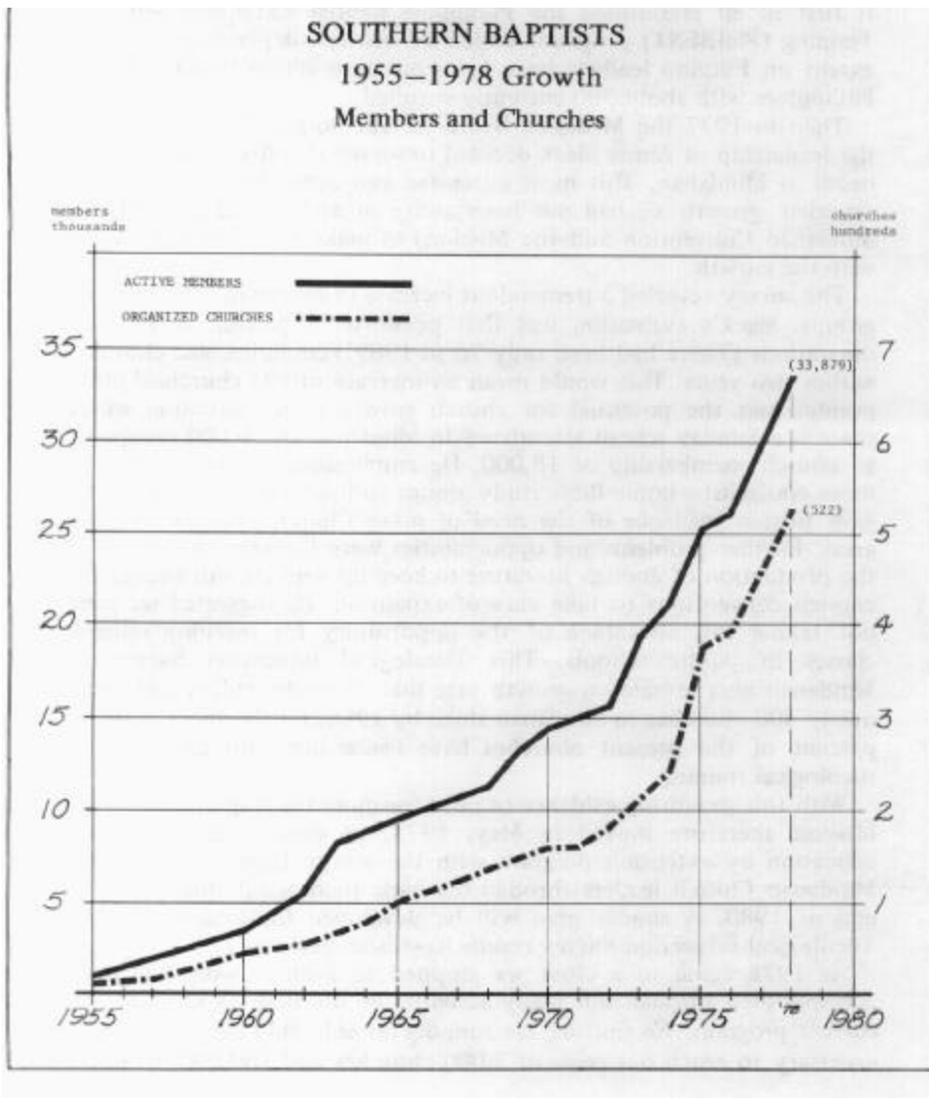
The results have been gratifying. The provinces of Bataan and Zambales on Luzon, for instance, could not be called responsive when compared with Mindanao. The Lord used missionary Charles Chilton, however, to plant 16 churches in just five years in this more difficult area. He emphasized his role as a Bible--not religion teacher. From the first he placed responsibility on the people to build their group and to become fellow workers for Christ. "Affirm again and again your confidence in local leadership," he writes. "Don't do what is theirs to do."

Charles Brock has also seen good results from his efforts to plant churches in La Union Province. He speaks of the need to be flexible in methods while building on three basic principles: 1) Find responsive people. 2) Keep the Bible central. 3) Remember that only the Holy Spirit gives fruit. One of his most fruitful methods has been the use of the GOOD NEWS booklet\* which encourages the learner to search the Scriptures for himself. Brock's experience is that people are ready to commit themselves to Christ after five or six evangelistic home Bible study sessions with this booklet. He stresses the need to expect God to call out a leader from among the group of converts. "My methods are intentionally simple," he writes, "so that the new church can reproduce without outside leadership or finances. As a general principle, I do not use or do anything which that group cannot reproduce."

Other effective missionary Church Planters are Jack Branuon who has been the catalyst for starting eight to ten new churches in Metro Manila in

the last six years, and Boe Stanley in the Surigao-Agusau area of Mindanao. Stanley and his leadership group of four pastors and four layleaders have a vision of 100 churches in their area by the end of 1980. To reach this goal they have challenged themselves to the beginning of a new church every six months. The Mlang Church in North Cotabato has sent a missionary to help them with their activities that include a daily radio program in the local dialect, the distribution of thousands of Bible correspondence courses and annual evangelistic

**Graph III**



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

## **SOUTHERN BAPTISTS 1955 - 1978 Growth Members and Churches**

crusades through 1980.

Besides the actual planting of new churches by missionaries, the Mission is taking heavy responsibility in the training of the many Filipino pastors that are needed to fill the expanding number of pulpits. It first of all established the Philippine Baptist Extension Seminary Training (PhilBEST) program. PhilBEST centers, depending to a large extent on Filipino leaders, have been put into action throughout the Philippines with about 300 currently enrolled.

Then in 1977 the Mission's Board of Theological Education under the leadership of James Slack decided to survey theological educational needs in Mindanao. This most extensive and complete of our surveys revealed growth we had not been aware of and forced us (both the Mindanao Convention and the Mission) to make plans for keeping up with the growth.

The survey revealed a tremendous increase in evangelistic Bible study groups. Slack's evaluation was that possibly 25 percent of the 779 outstations (There had been only 76 in 1969!) could become churches within two years. This would mean an increase of 195 churches! Slack pointed out the potential for church growth in the situation where there is a Sunday school attendance in Mindanao of 30,000 compared to church membership of 18,000. He emphasized the need for even more evangelistic home Bible study groups and outstations. His research gave further evidence of the need of more Church Planters in tribal areas. Further problems and opportunities were foreseen in relation to the production of enough literature to keep up with growth and having enough conventions to take care of expansion. He suggested we were not taking full advantage of the opportunity for teaching religion classes in public schools. This Theological Education Survey of Mindanao also revealed a growth rate that, if continued, would mean nearly 700 churches in Mindanao alone by 1980. Furthermore, only 50 percent of the present churches have leadership with any kind of theological training.

With this mounting evidence of need for more training programs, the Mission therefore moved in May, 1978, to double its theological education by extension program with the aim of leading at least 300 Mindanao Church leaders through ten basic theological studies by the end of 1980. A similar

plan will be developed for Luzon when its Theological Education Survey results have been evaluated.

As 1978 came to a close we stopped to look at what had been accomplished through our many activities of the first six years of our current program. We find we are running considerably behind the pace necessary to reach our goals of 3,000 churches and 100,000 members by the end of 1982. We have reached 21.6 percent of our goals in 60 percent of the designated time. At the same time, there is ample evidence that the Mission's rededication to church growth goals in 1972 has had a decided effect. What in 1972 appeared to be an approaching plateau in growth instead became a period of more rapid growth. In the six-year period since then our decadal growth rate has jumped to 261 percent from the 1962-1972 rate of 191 percent. Our corresponding church planting growth rate has taken an even greater jump from 245 percent to 474 percent. Membership has grown from 15,669 to 33,879 and churches have increased from 183 to 522.

The possibility of even greater growth in the last four years of our ten year program is encouraging. Many of the programs we have initiated have yet to reach their greatest potential. Our many new churches will continue to add converts to their rolls. Our 1,200 evangelistic home Bible study groups provide a tremendous growing edge.

Perhaps most importantly, we are committed to growth. The Mission Executive Committee, composed of Bob Nash, Paul Johnson and Dean Dickens, in its 1978 report continued to stress the priority for church growth. They wrote, "We consider the ultimate success of winning and discipling as being the starting of new units (churches) wherein the new convert can find continual care."

Their report moves to a stirring conclusion. "We must catch the immediate vision of what God is presently doing in these islands," it says, "and move quickly to participate with Him in it... We see that God has already answered the prayers for evangelistic awakening in this country. The time is now to accept the answer to those prayers and put our hands to the task of harvesting the crops. It would be sad indeed if we should continue to pray for God's opportunity only to hear Him say to us, 'I gave it. Five years ago I gave it, but nobody took it. Nobody really believed that the dream could come true in his lifetime!'"

## **Conservative Baptist “Operation 200”**

*By the time of the landmark Church Growth Workshop in 1974, the Conservative Baptists in the Philippines were already two years into a ten-year program to increase their churches from 31 to 200 and membership from 1,657 to 10,000. Rev. David Yount's presentation of this program at the workshop resulted in lively discussion and provided a carefully constructed model for others to follow. Though the Conservative Baptists were a relatively new and small denomination in the Philippines, their ambitious program challenged others to step out with the same kind of bold faith. In this chapter, Dr. Leonard Tuggy, now Asia Overseas Secretary for the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society-tells the story of "Operation 200." As a pioneer in the area of developing a program that is designed to meet specific membership and church planting goals, the Conservative Baptists have learned many valuable lessons which they here pass on to the rest of us.*

Operation 200 began in the study of a graph in 1970, but the story of Conservative Baptist growth in the Philippines actually began in a series of prayer meetings in the early 1950's. Four Baptist laymen Esteban Salcedo, Castro Quimba, Jose' Galuego and Felonito Sacapafio were soon joined by Conservative Baptist missionary William Simons, who had recently arrived from Communist China, to pray for the neglected Laguna Province in the heart of the Tagalog region surrounding Manila. With teams of Bible school students and other volunteer workers, Simons extended the gospel meetings already begun by these laymen in Santa Maria to a number of other towns surrounding Laguna de Bay Lake.

From a handful of some 30 baptized believers at the end of 1955, the fledgling movement spurred to about 190 meeting in five newly established churches by 1958. This healthy growth in a region of the Philippines less responsive than some was accompanied by the arrival of missionary reinforcements. When at this time the momentum of growth began to sputter, remedial steps were taken. Sensing the need for an urban center for the movement, the mission in October 1958, approved the starting of a church in the Greater Manila area. It also agreed to branch out from Laguna Province and start a church in Lucena City, capital of Quezon Province.

Thus following a "modified center approach" (starting in the regional

centers and then moving out to the surrounding towns and barangays), Conservative Baptists began to multiply churches in the three areas of Greater Manila, Laguna and Quezon. Under this plan, churches steadily increased and membership grew from 30 in 1955 to about 300 in 1960, 636 in 1965 and 1,534 in 1970. After growing ten fold in the first five years on the small base of 30 in 1955, it was encouraging to see membership more than double in each of the next two five-year periods.

Two significant developments in the 1960's laid the foundation for continued expansion. One was the beginning of the Conservative Baptist Joint Work Program which brought Filipino church association leadership into the planning and decision-making process. This program helped forestall some potentially serious church/mission relationship problems and also set the stage for the vital Filipino/American teamwork, which now characterizes Conservative Baptist church planting ministries.

The other was the influence of the church growth movement on Conservative Baptists and our commitment to the C-GRIP study.

After we completed this research on many churches in the Philippines, I looked again at our own record of growth. Although the growth rate seemed fairly good, in 1970 we were still a very small group of 21 local churches and 1,500 members. We seemed able to start new congregations only with great difficulty, though our research had shown the Philippines to be quite responsive to the Gospel. I came to two conclusions: 1) we were smaller than we thought (we needed to see ourselves in comparison to the larger groups), *but* 2) we could grow more than we thought (we were not reaching the potential harvest around us).

With these convictions in mind, I plotted our church growth in the Philippines on logarithmic graph paper, which reveals rate of growth rather than absolute numerical growth. I noticed that since 1967 we had been growing at about 20 percent a year. Projecting this growth line until it crossed the 10,000 member mark brought me to the year 1981, just over a decade away. Since the average evangelical church in many countries, including the Philippines, numbers about 50 members, I concluded that to have 10,000 members we would need about 200 local churches. Would it be possible for us to continue at this rapid rate of growth for the next ten years, I wondered?

I presented my statistics and projections at a joint Filipino-American (Association-Mission) meeting in Tagaytay City in March 1972.

Missionaries and nationals alike seemed to catch the vision of 10,000 church members and 200 churches by 1981. "Why don't we launch an Operation 200!" someone in the group said. The idea caught on. By setting our sights on these goals and making our plans accordingly, perhaps we *could* continue our 20 percent annual growth rate-even though the actual number of churches to be planted and new converts to be baptized would dramatically increase each year (see graph).

Operation 200-which quickly became known as "O-200"-was officially launched at a large rally in July of 1972. Much enthusiasm was generated for the program through such features as a special theme song, a poem and even a stylized Tagalog debate (*balagtasan*). Realizing that enthusiasm without a plan would lead to great disappointment and frustration, however, Rev. Rogello Baldemor, then Association President, formed a special planning committee which developed a careful blueprint for reaching O-200 goals.

This plan had several important features. First it broke down the over-all goal of 10,000 members and 200 churches to year-by-year, district-by-district goals. This would enable us to measure our progress and pinpoint problem areas at the end of each year. The plan also spelled out a church planting strategy based on Don Benson's book HOW TO START A DAUGHTER CHURCH, which was written specifically for O-200. This laid great stress on the multiplication of evangelistic Bible study groups in the home and the use of COWM materials. A realistic financial program that would provide the needed support base for the intensive evangelistic program was also included in the plan.

To get a whole denomination moving--even a relatively small one like ours- is no simple task. The church rally in July 1972 got us rolling, and we could see momentum developing at the annual conference in December that year. We were able to encourage the churches by reporting 1,903 members and 32 local churches. These were a little below our respective goals of 2,000 and 40, but the truth is we had spent most of the previous six months in planning. Furthermore, most of the membership growth apparently had come through conversions, as we baptized a record 374 persons that year.

The movement would gather further momentum through 1973, but there were also roadblocks to be cleared away. We began to see symptoms of what C. Peter Wagner calls the "church development syndrome." This refers to the natural desire to build up and strengthen what we already have to the exclusion of evangelism and church planting. The situation developed when

Ricardo Jumawan was elected treasurer for the Conservative Baptist Association in the Philippines (CBAP) in 1973. A very successful businessman and professor of Business Administration who has also had Bible school training, Jumawan was greatly challenged by O-200. But with his business head, he saw a problem. To put up a single church building would cost \$30,000, to build 200 would cost \$6,000,000! With enough tiny, struggling congregations already in existence, wouldn't it be better to build up the ones we already had, he asked. After all, building up 20 local churches to a membership of 500 each would still enable us to reach the goal of 10,000 members.

This sensitive problem was handled with great care. For Professor Jumawan was right in his emphasis on building up existing churches. But CBAP also concluded that it was right to continue the multiplication of new churches as well. For it is when churches are aggressively evangelizing their neighborhoods and planting new congregations that they grow strong. As an individual Christian rejoices and grows spiritually when he leads another person to Christ, so a church experiences a surge of enthusiasm and spiritual power when it is used by God to bring into being another congregation. Church planting and church development in reality reinforce each other rather than being mutually exclusive.

With this hurdle cleared, we moved on to face another challenge. Both Filipinos and missionaries saw that O-200 was simply too large to be handled by our existing "joint committee" structure. The church association therefore requested the mission to assign missionary David Yount to be O-200 coordinator. Professor Jumawan further developed the financial plan to enlist individual O-200 supporters giving missionary offerings through their local churches. This provided a separate budget for O-200, which would not be touched for other projects.

O-200 took another step forward in October 1973, when an experienced Filipino radio evangelist and gospel singer, Paul Mortiz, joined as staff evangelist. Challenged by the opportunity to tie his evangelistic ministry more closely to measurable church growth, Mortiz saw God move in exciting ways in fruitful campaigns held in several responsive areas. He remained on staff for almost two years before moving on to another ministry.

How did O-200 look after its first full year of operation? The 1973 year-end report gave new encouragement, even though achievement again proved

less than vision. Our O-200 goals for 1973 were 48 churches with 2,400 members. The actual count was 2,215 members in 36 congregations (plus 16 preaching points). Again we were encouragingly close to our goals, but perhaps needed an extra spark to get us going. Professor Jumawan, who had questioned the multiplication of small churches, would now provide the spark, as he was elected to head the denomination as president for 1974. He sensed that the young denomination needed strong leadership and a heightened sense of identity in order to grow. Soon after taking reins of leadership, therefore, Jumawan (with the CBAP executive committee) issued a very detailed and challenging "CB agenda of work for 1974." The agenda stated the year's objectives, outlined programs of activity in both church planting and church development, spelled out "biblical patterns of giving to achieve financial sufficiency" and concluded with a plan for an outstanding annual conference which would climax this high profile year.

The carefully thought-out plans soon became actions. A live-in layman's pastoral training seminar was held May 20-24 and attended by 35 lay leaders and pastors. Its objective was to upgrade the skill and knowledge of laymen who were doing the work of pastors in local churches. On June 12, 1,200 Conservative Baptists demonstrated strength and unity at a church rally and fellowship meeting held at the scenic Villa Sylvia Resort in Nagcarlan, Laguna. A spiritual retreat for pastors and missionaries was held in August.

For ten days in November 1974, Philippine Conservative Baptists hosted the first Asia Leadership conference, attended by missionary and national leaders from seven Asian countries. A special rally held at the University of the Philippines auditorium in Quezon City with over 2,000 attending climaxed the conference. The rally featured the first appearance of the C. B. Choral Society-a 300 voice choir representing many churches-which also performed John Peterson's "Night of Miracles" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on December 22, kicking off the 12th annual church association conference. A 200-page yearbook specially prepared for this conference contained the pictures of each CBAP congregation along with many articles regarding the various ministries of the young denomination.

The many activities under the dynamic leadership of Jumawan in 1974 paid off. For the first time since the program began we were able to exceed our target of 20 percent growth for one year by two percentage points as a record 607 baptisms brought our membership to 2,703. Though we were seriously lagging in our church planting goal-due in part to our inability to

provide capable and recognized leadership for our churches-we were pleased with our progress in the primary task of winning men and women to faith in Jesus Christ.

After the fast pace of 1974, the next two years were a letdown. Membership growth slowed to 12.1 and 12.8 percent respectively for 1975 and 1976. Some of the slowdown was merely statistical as some churches cleaned their rolls. Furthermore, at around 12 percent we were growing at a rate four times faster than the general population and in fact we had doubled our membership in the first five years of the program. Nonetheless it was disappointing to fall short of our goals.

Fortunately, from the beginning the Lord had led us to realize that to reach our goals we would have to expand into new areas of the Philippines. A northward thrust began back in 1974 when our Capitol City Baptist Church sent evangelist Vic Andaya, a former professional tennis player, to Nueva Ecija Province. Following up on contacts of a church family from that area, Andaya saw 84 baptized the first year-a record number for a new church among Conservative Baptists. Missionary Dave Billings was sent to follow up in this promising area with the result that by 1978 they had pushed out into the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Isabela. By 1978, a significant proportion of new converts and members were coming from this area.

As CBAP followed through on this northward thrust, missionary Robert Skivington was in the States preparing for the opening of Mindanao for the Conservative Baptists. He used his doctoral studies\* at the Fuller Seminary School of World Mission to carefully think through and develop a comprehensive plan for beginning a church planting ministry in a new area. In July 1976, the Skivington family returned to the Philippines and moved directly to Davao City. Though plagued with the problems of a new language, unsettled conditions and poor health, he saw a nucleus of new believers quickly formed in Davao City and outreaches into nearby tribal villages begun. By 1978 Skivington had been joined by another missionary couple, by four mission-supported Filipino evangelists and by six volunteer workers who together began to multiply churches in Manobo villages. At year's beginning, missionaries set a goal of 200 baptisms for 1978. By mid-year, 195 were already recorded, so the goal was doubled-and reached!

Besides expansion into these new areas, Conservative Baptists got out of the doldrums of 1975 and 1976 through another organizational change. It was decided that to really get moving again the church association needed

not only a president but also a full-time executive director to devote his energies exclusively to evangelism and church development. In July 1976, the Church therefore called the youthful and energetic Oscar Baldemor to serve simultaneously as CBAP Executive Director and O-200 Director. He immediately plunged himself into an intensive schedule of visiting every CBAP local church to rally behind the O-200 program.

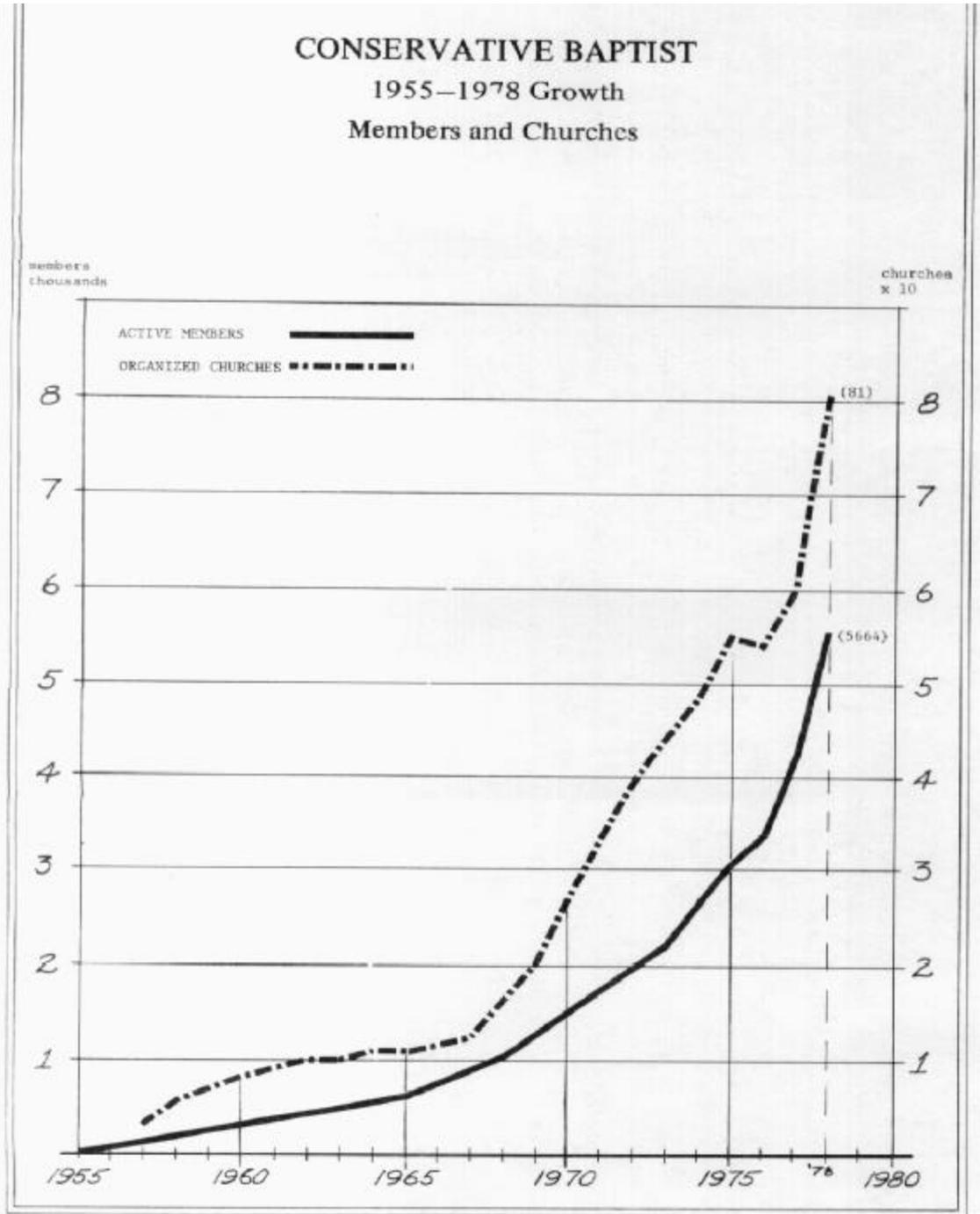
Added to his dynamic leadership was the return of Ricardo Jumawan as CBAP President at the end of 1976. After serving the denomination so effectively in the banner year of 1974, Jumawan had declined the office for business reasons the next two years. Now he returned to the Philippines from his business position in the States to be elected president and team up with Baldemor in restructuring and revitalizing O-200. Among other things, Jumawan and Baldemor launched a very effective fund raising program for the O-200 program. Each local church chose a representative to collect O-200 offerings, which were then sent to headquarters each month. The representatives served under area coordinators who met regularly with Baldemor and Jumawan. Funding for O-200 increased so dramatically through this program-\$9,245 for 1977-that seven evangelists could be supported for the expanding work in the North, in Mindanao and in other new communities.

As this is being written, seven years of the O-200 program have passed. We have had our struggles, our ups and downs. By God's grace we have been able to refocus on the goals each time we seemed to be floundering. Moving into 1979 we were on an upswing with 23 percent growth in 1977 and 37 percent in 1978 after the slowdown in '75 and '76. In these seven years our total membership has more than tripled, our number of churches more than doubled. We've seen our number of evangelistic home Bible study groups increase from 121 in 1971 to 427 in 1978, ensuring our ability to plant even more new churches in the days ahead. Annual baptisms in the same period have gone up from 283 to 1,228. We are still lagging well behind our church planting goal, though this was set with an average of 50 members per church in mind. We are actually averaging almost 80. If we continue a rate of growth anywhere near the last two, we should be able to exceed our membership for 1981, however.

We are profoundly grateful to God for this growth we have experienced, especially the thousands who have come to personal faith in Christ. We are also thankful for lessons learned. Here are some:

1. Goal setting is absolutely essential for effective strategy planning.
  2. Goal setting is best done in the light of past performance. The goals should be both challenging and attainable.
  3. Long-range over-all goals are most meaningful when they are broken down to year-by-year, area-by-area goals.
  4. Goal setting must be followed immediately by formulating a practical plan by which the goals can be reached.
  5. Goal ownership by the churches as well as by the mission is essential to motivate everyone to work toward reaching the goals.
  6. A movement adopting a challenging church multiplication strategy should anticipate the appearance of the “church development syndrome”. Concrete steps should be taken to help the existing churches, but the original thrust should not be subverted.
  7. New strategies often necessitate new structures. Existing organizational structures may be too bulky or too inflexible to accommodate the new program.
  8. Dedicated, hardworking, goal-oriented leaders are essential for any successful church growth program. People, not plans, produce the results.
- Point number eight should be emphasized, for in the last analysis the ultimate answer for church growth is not an Operation 200-type program. Rather, the answer lies in Spirit-gifted, God-motivated people who in William Carey’s words, “Expect great things for God”. They see programs such as O-200 as tools and not ends in themselves. Their overriding motivation is not to build up their own reputation or name, but to glorify God. May this continue to be the motivation of all associated with Operation 200 and other similar programs in these exciting days for the Church in the Philippines.

Graph IV



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

Solid line = active members

Dotted line = organized churches

## **CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST 1955-1978 Growth**

## **C&MA "Target 400"**

The Conservative Baptists are joined by two other denominations in the Philippines that about doubled their memberships in the four-year period of 1975 to 1979. This amounts to an annual growth rate of 20 percent and a decadal rate of 662 percent. One of them is the Nazarenes, a denomination about the same size and also working in Luzon, though primarily among Ilocanos rather than Tagalogs. We'll take a closer look at them in chapter 12. The other is the Christian and Missionary Alliance, about ten times the size of the Baptists and working in Mindanao-and the subject of this chapter. The remarkable growth of these co-champs is exceeded only by the March of Faith, which is in a special category as an indigenous Church started by a charismatic Filipino leader. We'll come to their dramatic story in the next chapter. In the meantime, let's dwell a minute on the significance of the average 20 percent annual growth of these three.

First of all, it is remarkable growth compared with that of other denominations in the Philippines whose annual rates run from a mere biological increase of less than three percent a year to five or ten percent.

Secondly, it is remarkable in comparison with growth in the rest of the world. Churches in the most resistant areas of the world grow at less than one percent a year while those in the most responsive rarely get as high as 20 percent per annum.

Thirdly, this growth rate demonstrates that, at least under their particular circumstances, doubling the size of whole denominations in four years in the Philippines is possible. If some fishermen are getting a good catch, it proves that others under the same or similar circumstances can get a similar catch.

Fourthly, this remarkable growth demonstrates that the target of 50,000 churches by the end of the century is within reach, yes, could easily be surpassed. For if 10,000 Evangelical churches\* multiplied at this rate for ten years, we would have 60,000 churches by 1988, 12 years early. Furthermore, our 850,000\* Evangelicals as of 1978 would become 30 million by 1998 and would comprise more than 37 percent of the medium assumption of 80 million total population by that time.

This glorious outlook must be tempered by a thousand other realities that relate to whether or not those denominations can continue to grow at this rate for the next 20 years and whether 50 or 100 other denominations can catch up to their speed. Nonetheless, we make the point that 20 percent

annual growth is quite significant and if this is what is possible in the Philippines, it is what ought to be aimed for.

The C&MA growth of the past four years was achieved under some circumstances similar to and different from those of the Conservative Baptists. Similarities include their conservative Evangelical position and interest in reaching the lost, their development of a program towards a specific goal and their national church independence backed by a strong cooperating missionary force.

Their differences are in history, size and degree of responsiveness among the people of their primary regions. Their history spans 76 years compared to 20 for the CB's-and includes long periods of slow growth. Thus the question arises: can a denomination overcome three quarters of a century of bureaucratic buildup and contentment with slower growth to match strides with a younger, less encumbered group?

Their size also makes it harder to grow at the same pace as the Conservative Baptists and Nazarenes. All experience points to the fact that rates of growth are harder and harder to maintain as the size of the base increases. To grow by 20 percent, a 40-congregation denomination has to plant eight new churches in a year. In the Philippines, two or three sharp, highly motivated men can do-and have done-that. A denomination with 600 churches on the other hand has to plant 120 new congregations. This involves the much more complicated process of motivating and training many leaders to do the work.

These two considerations would make it look as if the C&MA were therefore accomplishing a much more difficult task by growing at the same rate as the younger, smaller Baptist and Nazarene denominations. It does, until one considers the third factor, the responsiveness of the people. While all but a handful of the peoples in the Philippines are quite responsive to the Gospel, it is also true that the Animists and Christianos of Mindanao are much more gospel-ready than those in other regions. There are a variety of reasons for this, but it is primarily *demonstrated* by the observation that those denominations with work all over the nation invariably grow much more rapidly-sometimes twice as fast-in Mindanao. Even in a most responsive area, however, growth is never automatic. The C&MA have learned this several times in the past 76 years as we saw in chapter five. The early seventies witnessed a growing concern for evangelism and church planting which included heavy participation in many COWM activities. It

wasn't until the 1974 Evangelism and Church Growth Workshop, however, that this enthusiasm was translated into a plan of action that would bring about some truly remarkable growth.

As the workshop under Vergil Gerber's leadership approached its climax, the handful of C&MA pastors and missionaries attending gathered to prayerfully consider their faith projection for growth for the next five years. If the Lord were really in control of their denomination, how many converts would He want to add? How many new C&MA churches would He want planted? The conclusion was that a goal of adding 400 new churches to their current 500 and adding 40,000 members to their 26,830 by the end of 1979 would be reachable if they could truly mobilize their denomination.

Determined to do just that, these delegates returned to Mindanao and began consulting with the denomination's 12 District Superintendents and a cross section of pastors. They were encouraged to pray and plan and make their own faith projections. When they did, the totals for all 12 Districts came very close to the original goals set at the Workshop. With this confirmation from the Lord, C&MA Church and Mission in 1975 officially established TARGET 400 '79.

In many ways Target 400 was similar to the Conservative Baptists O-200. It was sponsored by a joint committee of Mission and Church that appointed a missionary, Roger Hughs, and pastor, Gerry Manalo, as executive secretaries of the program. Later, District Superintendents and other key people were added to the Committee. Each local church established its specific goal in relation to the national goal and formed working committees for coordination of seminars, prayer, finance, and others.

Pastors, lay pastors, lay preachers, lay leaders and ordinary church members were motivated and mobilized through seminars, short-term institutes, summer schools, Theological Education by Extension, training manuals, how-to-do-it materials, tapes, films, brochures and even such reminders as stenciled T-shirts, bookmarks and calendars. Of special note in bringing unity and enthusiasm to the program was THE TARGET, a quarterly publication edited by Gerry Manalo. This excellent newspaper kept a steady stream of statistics, stories of growing churches, editorials on principles of growth, prayer reminders and news notes pouring out to the whole constituency.

Another element vital to the success of TARGET 400 was the work of

the Bureau of Census and Statistics of the Christian And Missionary Alliance Churches Of the Philippines (CAMACOP) under the leadership of Romy Bangayan. It was charged with gathering, interpreting and reporting statistical data so that problem areas could be pinpointed and appropriate changes made. Charts and graphs were distributed and a huge board was kept up to date at headquarters. The Bureau found its task to be a difficult one in a fast growing denomination of its size. It was necessary for them first of all to train local churches to be accurate in their record keeping, an activity done haphazardly before TARGET 400. Still, they found they could never get reports from more than 85 percent of their churches. Their over-all statistics are therefore adjusted upward to take these 15 percent into account.

As with the Baptists, financial support for the project was the joint responsibility of Church and Mission. Local churches were encouraged to make a faith pledge every year and take offerings on special occasions. Other income was derived from the sale of literature and from gifts and grants in aid from other agencies. The Mission added a substantial sum to the project each year.

Another common factor in the Baptist and CAMACOP programs was the significant influence of the church growth movement. Ping Villegas, Mel Castillo and Joe Arthur all received doctoral degrees at the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary and gave strategic input. Castillo, for example, returned from Fuller to establish and head the Alliance Graduate School of Mission and Theology (AGS). With its curricular emphasis on church growth and mission, AGS has made a considerable impact on CAMACOP churches through its students and through its many church growth seminars and workshops.

Undergirding every aspect of TARGET 400 was a strong emphasis on prayer. Every church was encouraged by Mrs. Sandra Hughs, national TARGET 400 Prayer Coordinator, to organize prayer cells for sustained prayer support.

The cumulative effect of this entire TARGET 400 infrastructure was the development of a *climate for growth* in every facet of the C&MA work in the Philippines. The normal resistance to change had been overcome. Pastors who at first rebelled and referred to the program as "*Forget 400*" changed their minds. Seemingly insurmountable problems had been faced and overcome by the TARGET 400 executive committee. The focus of every agency became the meeting of TARGET 400 goals. A sleeping giant had

been aroused and rallied to the cry of reaching more and more responsive Filipinos for the Savior.

The Conservative Baptists had put their primary emphasis on reaching a membership goal of 10,000. Setting a goal of 200 for the total number of churches had been a secondary step based on the assumption of an average 50 members per church. The C&MA program, however, was especially concerned about planting churches. (As an aside, it is interesting to note that the Baptists in 1978 were reaching their membership goals but not their church planting goals, and the C&MA their church planting goals but not their membership.) In a paper prepared with this chapter in mind. Met Castillo wrote that the C&MA had in recent years been consistently interested and involved in generalized evangelism. It had become apparent, however, that while they were benefiting some from this evangelism, so were other denominations and even the cults! Their emphasis on church planting, then, was an effort to conserve the fruit of evangelism.

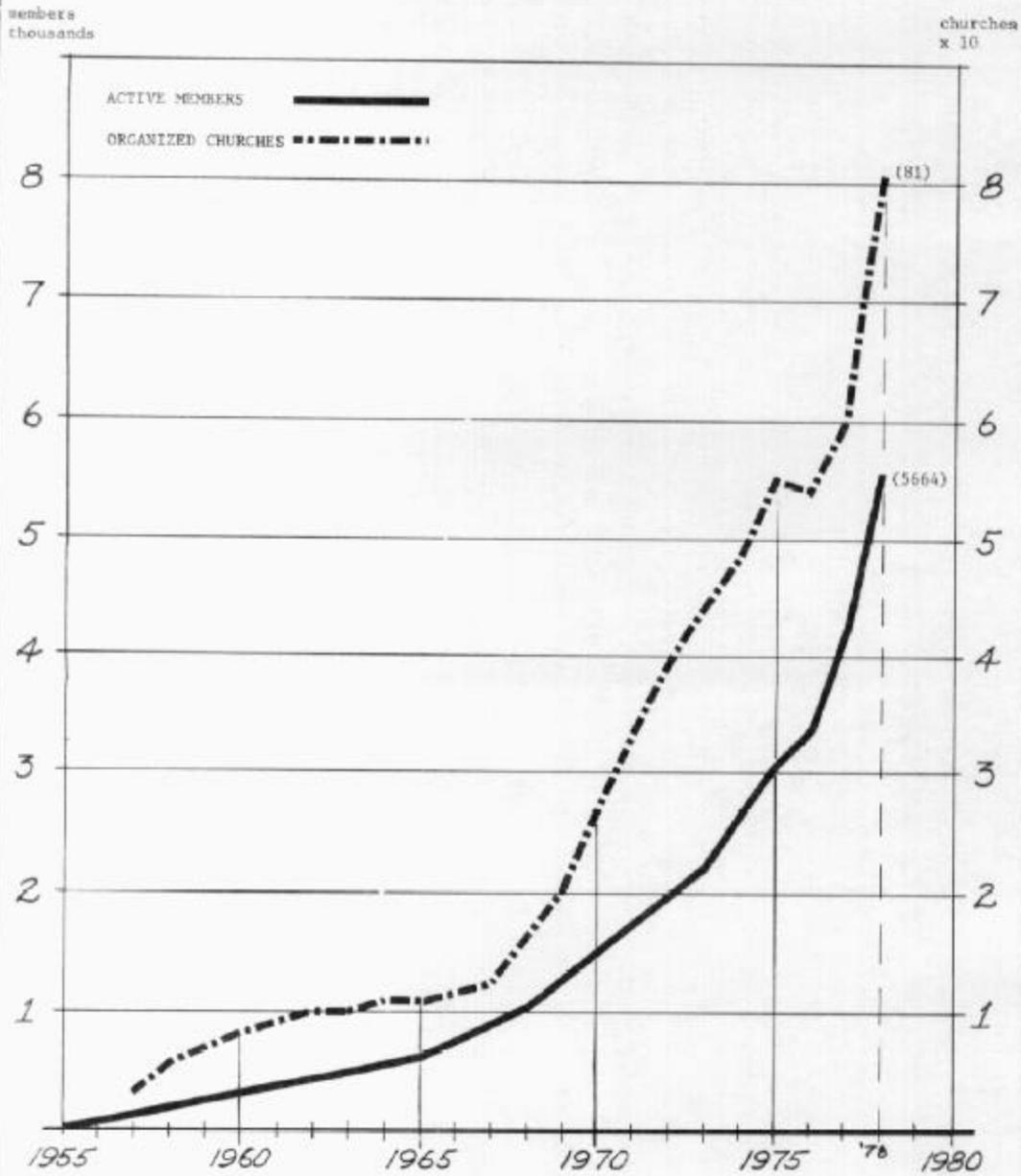
Everybody is now in on the church planting program. The Joint Church Planting Committee (JCPC) that mothered TARGET 400 is a separate entity and is still planting churches. As this is being written, JCPC has just approved church-planting projects in Iloilo and Bacolod Cities in the Visayas, The Department of Missions of the CAMACOP, furthermore, in addition to its work overseas has doubled its church planting efforts within the Philippines. It has spearheaded the opening of churches in the Visayas and now has also planted churches in Dagupan City and Bangued in northern Luzon, areas far from the home base of the C&MA heartland of Mindanao. Even the student work of CAMACOP-the Philippine Student Alliance Lay Ministries (PSALM)-has resulted in the planting of a number of churches. Founded by Joe Arthur and now under the leadership of Ping Villagas, this aggressive evangelistic organization has seen thousands of college students come to Christ and has its ultimate goal in the planting of churches.

## Graph V

# CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST

## 1955-1978 Growth

### Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

Solid line = active members

Dotted line = Organized churches

## **CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE**

This church planting emphasis of the various C&MA agencies in the Philippines is effective and helps create a climate for church planting. The bulk of the churches planted in the 1974 to 1978 period under discussion, however, come from the starting of daughter churches, from local congregations reproducing themselves. This reproduction so normal in all of nature, is finally becoming normal for the C&MA and other denominations in the Philippines. When enough Churches become "normal" the nation will be disciplined in hardly any time at all.

Evangelistic methods used in this church-planting activity include visitation and personal witnessing, public rallies and crusades, films and filmstrips, literature and radio and TV. But the activity that has been most effective in bridging the gap between church and community and church and family, that has funneled converts into existing churches and that has provided "silos" (new churches) for storing the harvest has been the Evangelistic Home Bible Study (EHBS) method promoted by the Christ the Only Way Movement. "It is the one method that brings growth," says missionary Roger Hughs, one of the executive secretaries of TARGET 400. This opinion has spread throughout C&MA ranks. For example, when the Rev. Moises Cuaresma of the Luzon-Palawan District was asked how his district was going to increase its churches from 20 to 34 in 1978, he responded by saying, "We will endeavor to double our EHBS effort this year."

Actually, the other evangelistic methods of TARGET 400 are not ends in themselves but are a means to get Evangelistic Home Bible Study groups started. There are many examples. The visitation program of 44 adults and young people in Mambaling near Cebu City, for instance, resulted in 36 homes being opened for Bible studies. In another situation, several "LEGS" were started with a total of 25 families attending after the showing of an evangelistic film in a public plaza. Many of the 1,220 evangelistic Bible study groups recorded at the end of 1978 came from these evangelistic rallies and crusades.

Of course, not all LEGS turn into churches, but the case of Brother Ortega in Zamboanga is typical. After coming to know the Lord in a Bible study group, he started a new one of his own. In time, about 20 members of his own family accepted the Lord and became the nucleus of a church now with 50 members. He has since started another group on the army base where he works.

The TARGET 400 committee has not left to chance the proliferation of such Bible study groups that often turn into churches. They promote and use Met Castillo's book, PLANT CHURCHES THROUGH GROUP BIBLE STUDY, and have made teaching on the subject a vital part of the Basic Leadership Seminars, the Evangelism I Seminars and the Evangelism II Seminars that have flooded the island.

TARGET 400 has not worked perfectly. There is still a great need to further mobilize the laity for teaching, evangelism, church planting and pastoring new churches. Many pastors need to be taught that their primary task is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry" instead of doing it all themselves. There is a shortage of media material in the dialects, especially films. Pastors need training in inductive Bible study and the preaching of expository sermons to deepen the understanding and commitment of thousands of new believers. There is need for more church planting teams.

TARGET 400 nonetheless has stirred this venerable denomination to new life and growth. Their record of 329 new churches and 19,278 new believers in the first four years of a five-year program is remarkable. As we are going to press, Roger Hughs in Mindanao reports that it now looks as if the C&MA will reach both goals of 400 new churches and 40,000 new members by the end of 1979. Furthermore, TARGET 400 leaders are not resting on their laurels. In February, 1979, well before the end of the five-year program, they voted to set a new goal for the next four-year period ending in 1983. With an emphasis on new converts this time, they have determined by faith to reach a total membership of 100,000. C&MA Mission and Church are taking seriously the discipling of a nation.

### **March of Faith**

If asked to single out the Filipino working most dynamically and successfully at the goal of discipling the nation by planting a church in every

barangay, we would have to name Rev. Rudy Trigo of March of Faith in Bohol. The challenge consumes him. Each day by way of a 15 minute radio broadcast he drives this point home to his many workers. In his frequent travels he constantly exhorts each of his pastors to work at planting a church in each of the 20 or so barangays of his poblacion. His 50 Bible school students are reminded over and over that "The Great Commission is the responsibility of every Christian" and that "We can establish churches in all the barangays if *all* Christians and churches work at it."

That God has blessed the energy and charisma that Trigo has single-mindedly devoted to this goal is apparent. He began the ministry with a radio broadcast from Cebu City and one congregation in Tagbilaran in 1970. He held his first crusade in 1971 and began Faith Bible Seminary in 1973. When I first visited Trigo in 1974, his student body had grown to more than 50, his congregations to 60 and his total church membership to more than 5,000. In talking with Trigo again in 1979 we learned that the previous year he held 11 evangelistic crusades in Negros Oriental with the result that 50 more churches were planted. Added to the four new congregations in Bohol and eight in Mindanao that year, his total came to about 220 churches by the end of 1978 with around 13,000 members. In addition, students and local church laymen were ministering to another 7,000 or so in more than 1,000 evangelistic home Bible study groups.

That his statistics are given in round numbers should not fool the reader. Our research and reports indicate that the people and churches are there. The movement has simply grown so rapidly that it is difficult to keep up with. If anything, the statistics are conservative. "Whenever we sit down to evaluate the stacks of reports that have come in," Trigo says, "we inevitably find we have underestimated growth."

How does one account for such growth? There are many complex, interwoven factors, but we will try to capture the essence of the March of Faith in the following six points.

*First* is Rudy Trigo's charisma. It is obvious that he has had a large receptacle filled with the "... grace (that) was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Eph. 4:7). He is a prophet with a "fire in his bones," and apostle who is "...striving with all the energy which (God) mightily inspires within (him)" to warn and teach every man (Col. 1:29). As with other gifted leaders, Trigo has the eloquence, warmth and compassion that draw people to him and to the Savior.

Trigo is the kind of pioneer who can't easily be bottled up in an organization structure not his own. He came to know the Lord out of a Roman Catholic background at the age of ten through the ministry of the Assemblies Of God. He grew up in their churches, attended their Bible school in Cebu and ministered in their organization. He owes much to this Pentecostal heritage, but he was a young man seeing visions of his own. He therefore left the Assemblies in 1970 to begin March of Faith. The result is an extension of the kingdom in the Philippines that otherwise would not have come about. We all gain from it.

*Second* is Trigo's comprehension of the harvest. In 1970, Bohol did not seem very responsive to the Gospel. The Assemblies, Foursquare, General Baptists and a few others working there had been only minimally successful. The UCCP had planted but ten congregations-though they were quite large-in 70 years.

This did not discourage Trigo. He went about his work as if a great harvest were there, and found that it was. "Many times people tell me of areas where people are resistant to the Gospel, but when we go there, we find them very open," Trigo told Bob Waymire. "If we had enough people trained in follow-up so that converts would be brought into Bible study groups and into new churches," he said, "I would hold crusades everywhere, for I have not yet seen unresponsive people in the Philippines."

Trigo even has an optimistic view of reaching Muslims in Mindanao. Many attended his crusade in Cotobato City in 1977 where crowds reached about 10,000 per day according to police estimates. Trigo says he was able to talk freely with them and saw a number accept the Lord. "The problem is more cultural and economic than theological," says Trigo. "The time will come when churches composed of converted Muslims will be planted."

Some segments of society and some cultural minorities, of course, *are* less responsive than others. But by expecting a harvest and by doing those things most likely to result in a large harvest, Trigo gets greater results than those with a pessimistic view. What's true almost everywhere is especially true in the Philippines: The church that *wills* to grow, and commits its resources to growth, will grow.

*Third*, Trigo's unswerving commitment to church multiplication-specifically, a church for every barangay-keeps him from getting bogged down in the "church development" syndrome or in otherwise good ministries that don't actually produce converts and churches. After planting 50

churches on Negros in 1978, for instance, Trigo might have been tempted to slow down and consolidate. Instead, he turned his attention back to Bohol where he determines to see a church in every barangay in the next few years. With 11 crusades planned, Trigo set a goal of planting twice as many new congregations during 1979 as he did the previous year. After Bohol and Negros are completely churchied, Trigo's target is Mindanao and then the rest of the nation.

When the day comes that Trigo can show us a list of the eight or nine hundred barangays of Bohol with a check mark after each indicating that a March of Faith-or other thoroughly evangelical-congregation has been planted, it will signal a great victory for the Philippine Church and the Church Universal. It will provide a sterling example of what should be attempted-and accomplished-in other provinces and nations and among other castes and peoples around the world. It's a job that March of Faith cannot complete by itself. But if every church worked *as if* the completion of the task were entirely its responsibility-as Trigo does-the discipling of the Philippines would not be far off.

*Fourth* is a cluster of social action and evangelistic ministries that have made Trigo well known and well accepted in his region. The radio program begun in 1970 quickly became one of the most listened to in the area. When he began his evangelistic crusades shortly thereafter, he was already known to large numbers. A Bible correspondence course and literature ministry became part of his seed sowing and follow-up and strengthened ties with his many listeners.

On the radio (and later on TV) and in his literature, Trigo was able to communicate his genuine concern and love for people. This was greatly enhanced, however, when he began a number of projects that demonstrated his concern in very practical ways. For instance, Trigo noticed that many farmers on Bohol had no work animals with which to plow their fields. He bought a female carabao and gave it to a farmer. When the carabao produced a calf, Trigo became the owner and in time gave this young carabao to another farmer. There are now 24 such work animals in the possession of farmers on Bohol. They were given without obligation, but it is not surprising that many of these formerly Catholic farmers have become March of Faith church members-or that his fame has spread throughout the area. Trigo has also started an orphanage and a family-to-family assistance program.

Another ministry that combines evangelism with practical concern involves his fleet of 15 pump boats. These have been used to take the Gospel to the 70 islands that surround Bohol with the result that many churches have been planted. The boats can carry four passengers, but usually only one or two make a given trip. The rest of the space is used to ferry sacks of rice and other supplies to these isolated islanders.

*Fifth* is Trigo's training of pastors and church planters. From among the converts of his early radio ministry, Trigo in 1973 enrolled 23 young people in the first class of Faith Bible Seminary. Tuitions for many were paid in sacks of rice or in \$10-a-month contributions that came as a result of his trip to the U.S. that year. (Tuition fees continue to cover only about half the costs of the school.) Students began by clearing the hillside donated by a relative of Trigo's and then by helping construct their classrooms and dormitories made partly out of native materials. When I visited this rustic campus in 1974 it was still without electricity. One Coleman kerosene lamp provided their only light source. Students went to bed and dressed in the morning in the dark. It was my privilege to buy the lamp that would double their lighting capacity! (I also used the opportunity to challenge Trigo and his students to work towards the goal of a church in every barangay on Bohol. He seems to have accepted this challenge as he said he would.)

Students found such conditions not much different from their rural homes, however, and they seemed to thrive under Trigo's rigorous program. Fired with his enthusiasm-and the joy of their conversions-they arose before dawn for Bible study and chapel, attended classes and worked the school's vegetable and animal farm during the day and studied and attended another chapel service in the evening. Weekends brought no respite. They lasted three days and were spent witnessing, singing, evangelizing, leading worship and starting evangelistic Bible study groups. Some students walked or traveled by bus or jeepney, but some took to the growing fleet of 15 horsepower pumpboats to begin reaching the 70 islands surrounding Bohol.

Rather than discouraging potential students, the almost frantic pace seems to attract them. The student body reached a peak in 1975 when 110 young people jammed the makeshift facilities beyond reason. "I tell young people we don't have room, but they come anyway," Trigo told me in 1974. Overcrowding was partially solved when Trigo sent one whole class into full-time ministry for a school year before it returned to complete its course. More recently, Trigo has limited the school to about 50 students until a

larger facility is ready. (He is constructing a new campus piece by piece as funds come in at another site on the island.)

Some will surmise that the three-year academic program under these circumstances will not turn out fully qualified pastors. Perhaps not. At least not "fully qualified" to run sophisticated middle-class city churches. But they are highly qualified in basic training in the Word, in ministering to the real needs of rural folks, in making disciples through evangelism and training in discipleship, and in multiplying barangay churches.

On the one hand, Trigo's training program avoids so isolating, so over-qualifying and so lifting the financial expectations of students that they are unwilling to return to the poblacions and barangays. On the other hand, his school produces pastors and church planters of a kind and at a rate to make saturation church planting a possibility in the Philippines.

Trigo continues training and challenging his 200 graduates who are now in the ministry through personal visits (three to four churches most Sundays), through his daily 15 minute radio program and through week-long seminars held in connection with all his evangelistic crusades. He thus combines academic preparation, apprenticeship and post-graduate follow-through. His system is producing rapid multiplication of solid churches in rural areas.

*Sixth* is an evangelistic package much like an on-going version of Luis Palau's Plan Rosario and Plan Uruguay crusades. There is no intentional modeling, as Trigo has been unaware of them. His crusades are held more frequently and on a smaller scale, but they include many of the same ingredients and have the same goal in mind: to "fold" converts and plant new churches.

The way is paved for Trigo's crusades by the daily radio and weekly TV programs and by the fame of his social action projects. Campaign sites are carefully selected after research has revealed the religious, economic, political, social and cultural nature of a community. His researchers-frequently faculty and students from the Bible school, but also pastors and other workers-find out where the people are, what languages they speak, and what response there has been to the radio broadcasts.

As the time for a week-long campaign approaches, Trigo's workers saturate the poblacion and barangays with promotional material. Hand bills are distributed to each house and are posted everywhere in typical Philippine style. The crusade meetings themselves include lively singing and music and

Trigo's eloquent but warm and compassionate preaching. Trigo understands the thinking and needs of barangay people and speaks directly to them. The Gospel is clearly presented in terms that are easily understood. Trigo preaches that Christ can meet *all* needs. These include health needs so conspicuous in the rural areas where modern medicine is too expensive or unavailable. Trigo prays for the sick and converts testify to the healing of their bodies.

At the end of the crusade, converts are baptized on confession of faith. Baptisms frequently number as many as 200 to 400. A united crusade in Surigao with several evangelical churches cooperating resulted in 600 baptisms with the converts being followed up by participating denominations. His largest single baptismal service was on the island of Siquijor after a number of crusades in late 1975 and early 1976. With the aid of 12 pastors brought in from various churches, Trigo in one four-hour period baptized about 2,000 in the waters of the Mindanao Sea. This could be the largest single evangelical baptismal service in the history of the Philippines.

To ensure "fruit that remains," Trigo has involved a pastor or strong worker in the coordination of the crusade. During the crusade he is introduced as the man that has felt the call of God to remain in the area and help get churches started. This worker will stay for months or sometimes years. His prime duty is to see that baptized converts are organized into home Bible study groups where they will be nurtured in the Word and trained for leadership and where evangelism will continue. When a group has at least ten baptized members meeting regularly for worship and Bible study, has elected or appointed officers, is serving communion and has a pastor, it can be considered a church. Some of the pastors for the new congregations will be graduates of the Bible school and some will be laymen who are trained on the spot after their conversion. Trigo is planning to improve the training for these lay pastors with a strong TEE program. This will upgrade the Bible teaching on the local level and will make rapid expansion more possible than if the movement were dependent on Bible school grads alone.

These fledgling churches usually start in homes, but soon move out to borrowed or rented buildings. Trigo feels strongly, however, that as soon as possible congregations must have their own buildings. "In the Roman Catholic tradition, people identify with a building," says Trigo. "People

know you are not just a passing fad when you put up a solid house of worship. You can do ten times more with a building than you can without," he says.

It is this final product—a growing, witnessing church supporting its own pastor and meeting in its own building—to which each of the above six factors points. It is an integrated strategy with every part carefully selected and monitored to lead most directly to a multiplication of churches. A pivotal point of all these ministries is the evangelistic Bible study group in the home. All his ministries are focused on starting such groups, and it is from these cells that the new congregations emerge.

That Trigo has been so wonderfully productive in making disciples "from the world" by the thousands and planting churches by the hundreds in eight short years, does not, of course, mean that he has been without problems. Because of his intense desire to build on a really solid foundation, he is drawn to all those administrative tasks that involve problem solving. There is the constant battle to raise funds for his share of the new church buildings (he provides the roof as money is available), funds for his radio and TV ministry and funds for Bible school construction. Listeners send in a few pesos in most of the 15 letters he receives daily and Trigo has been able to raise some money in Europe and the U.S.

Trigo is also under constant pressure to train leaders for the new churches being planted for the various projects and ministries and for the school. A third problem that weighs him down is the follow-up of converts from the radio ministry. With letters pouring in every day from many parts of the Visayas and northern Mindanao and with converts migrating to new areas, it is difficult to give each one the care and attention needed.

Despite these problems, March of Faith on the whole is a beautiful illustration of how a gifted national can be used of God to spark a movement that seems to break free of the tentacles that hold back growth in more conventional structures. To the extent Trigo is able to keep the good balance between evangelism and nurture he now has, the movement should be able to continue its rapid expansion to the salvation of tens of thousands of spiritually hungry Filipinos. It's the kind of movement that makes the discipling of the Philippines by planting congregations in every barangay a little more possible than previously imagined.

## **Eight More Denominations**

The denominations studied in the previous four chapters illustrate at least two major points. One, there is responsiveness-though varied-in all major sections of the country. The Conservative Baptists were growing primarily among the southern Tagalogs and more recently among Ilocanos and Mindanao tribes. C&MA was growing in the very responsive Mindanao area. Southern Baptists were growing all over the country. The denomination with the most dynamic growth-the March of Faith-was ministering in what had long been considered the most resistant area, the central Visayas.

Two, whether the denomination was older and possibly moribund (C&MA) or young and led by a charismatic national worker (March of Faith), or whether it was small (Conservative Baptist) or wealthy in personnel and financing (Southern Baptist), it was possible to develop and implement a major plan for growth. No matter what the circumstances or problems, almost anything could be overcome if there was *the will to grow*.

Illuminating chapters could also be written on the eight other denominations about which we were able to get complete information. But we have to confine ourselves to thumbnail sketches in this chapter. (In all, we talked with leaders from 23 of the 75 or 100 denominations in the country. Endless research could be carried out among the 368 religious bodies registered with the government!) When the 1964 to 1974 period is compared with the 1974 to 1978 period, the eight denominations we shall write about together more than doubled their decadal growth rate for new members (from 65 percent to 134 percent) and quadrupled their church planting rate (from 22 percent to 92 percent). The patterns of growth range all the way from the Assemblies whose growth rates in new members *decreased* from 278 percent to 81 percent to the IEMELIF who went from a *negative* 42 percent to a positive 210 percent.

Of the eight Churches, two are conciliar (Convention Baptist and IEMELIF), three are Pentecostal. Some have worked primarily in one of the three major sections of the country and some have scattered throughout the islands. Membership growth rates range from 81 percent per decade to 696 percent (see graph). Three of the Churches are small with less than 6,000 members, four have between 25,000 and 50,000 communicants and the Adventists are in a class by themselves with almost 200,000. Most of the

denominations participated to one degree or another in the Christ the Only Way Movement, some to the extent of providing full time District Coordinators.

Now let's take a look-in random order-at the growth of these eight denominations.

### FREE METHODISTS

A new era of growth started for the Free Methodists in 1971 when Rev. Constancio Managbanag attended a church growth workshop sponsored by the Christ the Only Way movement (and attended by all COWM District Coordinators) in Manila in 1971. Church growth men such as Donald McGavran, Ebbie Smith, Malcom Bradshaw, Leonard Tuggy and I led the sessions. SEEING THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES (Tuggy and Toliver) was hot off the press and available at the workshop. In one session, I gave a summary report on NEW TESTAMENT FIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES that would soon be published.

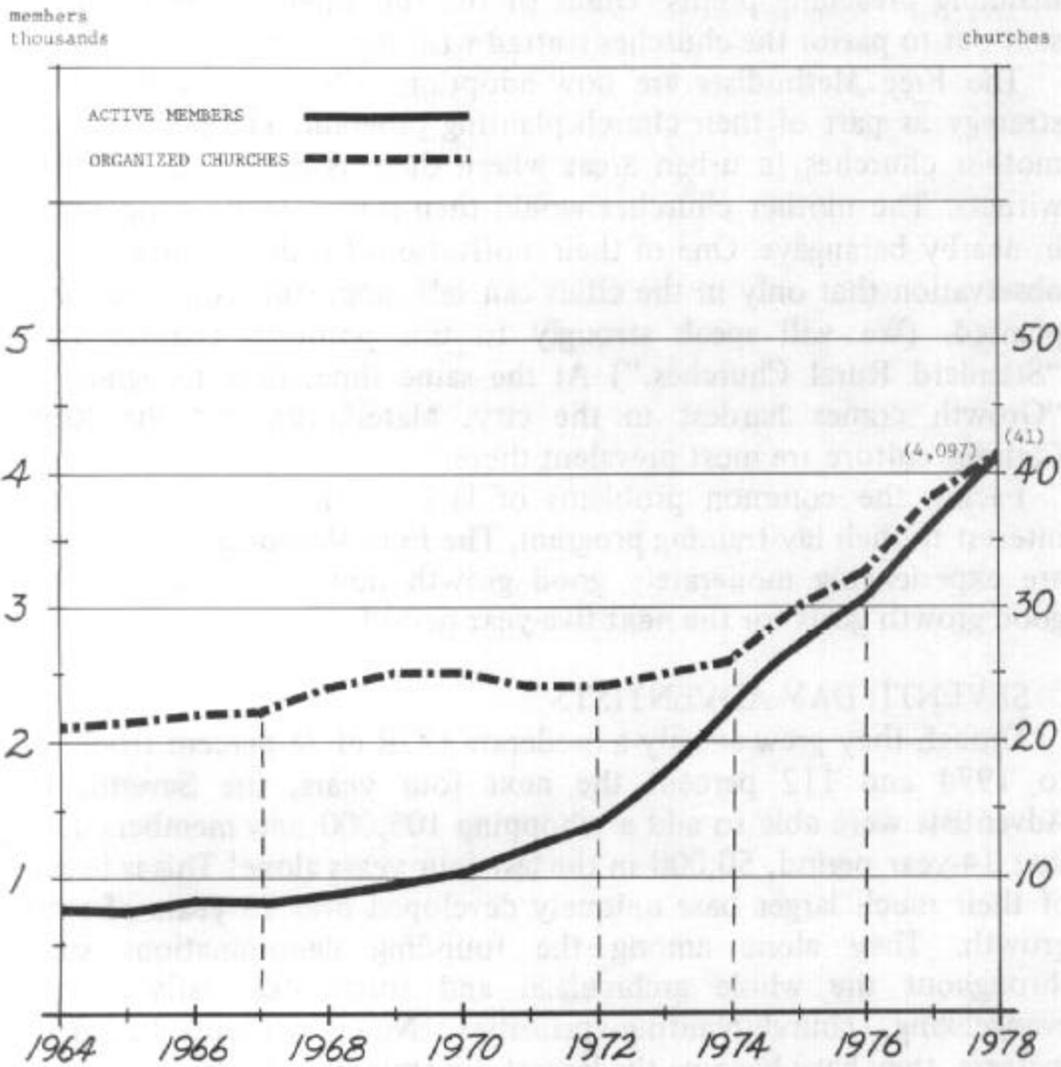
Managbanag, who had been working as a District Coordinator for COWM, returned to Mindanao with a fire in his bones. As Coordinator and later as District Superintendent for the Free Methodists (1972), he began holding seminars focusing on lay training and mobilization, LEGS, and principles of growth he picked up at the workshop. Managbanag was applauded at the 1974 Workshop when he gave a report of the results in terms of the number of LEGS started among the Free Methodists alone. Rev. Felix Canete took over as COWM District

Graph VI

# FREE METHODISTS

## 1964–1978 Growth

### Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds  
Solid line = active members  
Dotted line = organized churches

## FREE METHODISTS

Coordinator from 1972 through 1974 and continued the seminars throughout the Free Methodist and other churches in his area with the result that by 1978 there were 300 such Lay Evangelistic Bible Study groups-an average of seven per congregation!

This church growth emphasis and multiplication of LEGS skyrocketed their decadal rate of growth from 23.8 percent to 212 for church planting and increased their already good communicant decadal growth rate (DGR) from 199 to 212 percent.

Some emphases of the Free Methodists included making the family their prime target for evangelism, a beginning church planting ministry among Manobo tribes, public evangelistic rallies and a radio ministry. Their Bible school includes a two-year course that leads to a "layman's license." These trained laymen play a large role in developing LEGS and manning preaching points. Grads of the full Bible course usually are sent out to pastor the churches started with these methods.

The Free Methodists are now adopting a "key city and satellite" strategy as part of their church planting program. The plan is to start mother churches in urban areas where there is no strong evangelical witness. The mother churches would then start satellite congregations in nearby barangays. One of their motivations for this approach is their observation that only in the cities can self-supporting congregations be planted. (We will speak strongly to this point in chapter 15 on "Standard Rural Churches.") At the same time, they recognize that "Growth comes hardest in the city. Materialism and the Roman Catholic culture are most prevalent there."

Facing the common problems of lack of finances and too little interest in their lay-training program, The Free Methodists nonetheless are experiencing moderately good growth now and have established good growth goals for the next five-year period.

## SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

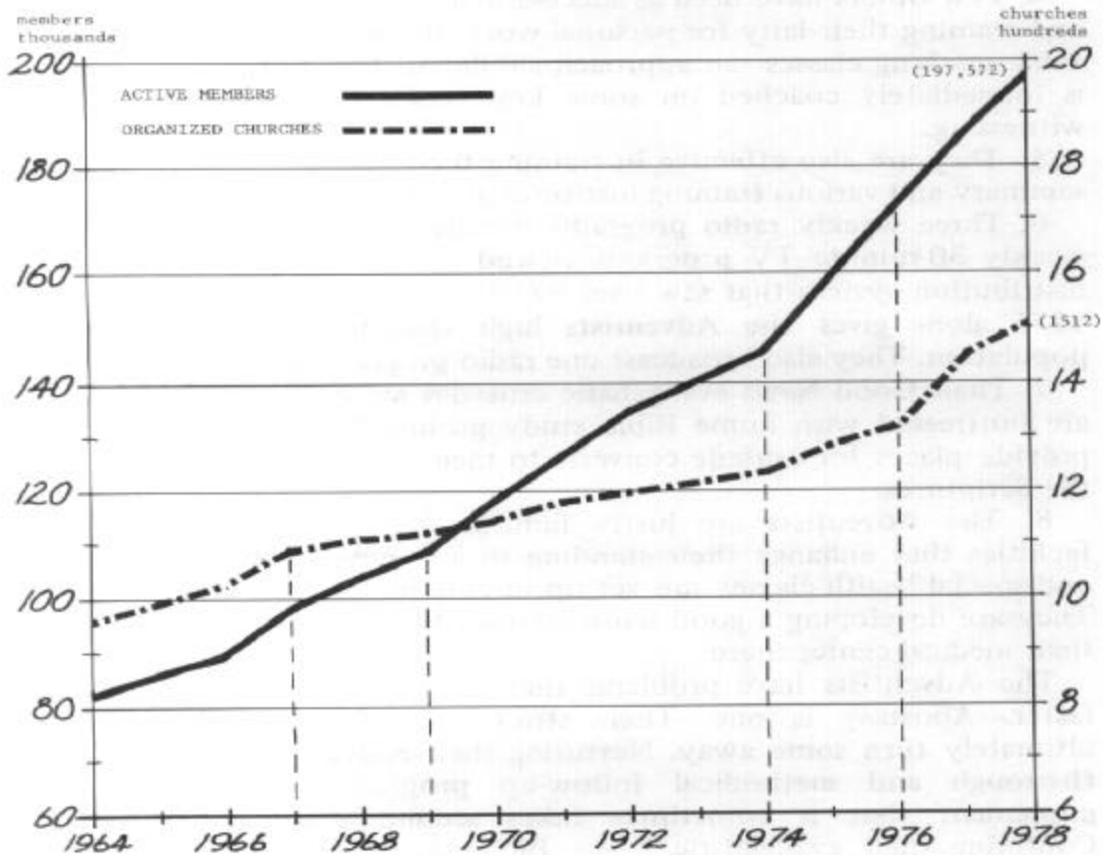
Though they grew at only a moderate DGR of 78 percent from 1964 to 1974 and 112 percent the next four years, the Seventh Day Adventists were able to add a whopping 105,000 new members during that 14-year period, 50,000 in the last four years alone! This is because of their much larger base uniquely developed over 73 years of steady growth. They alone among the founding denominations spread throughout the whole archipelago and stuck steadfastly to their evangelizing, church-planting priorities. Now, without benefit of mergers, they have become the largest denomination in the country and add more new members each year than many denominations have gained in their whole history in the Philippines.

### Graph VII

## SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

1964–1978 Growth

### Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

Solid line = active members

Dotted line = organized churches

## SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

A conversation with Jim Zachary, their 1979 Good News Campaign

coordinator for Manila, brought to light a number of factors that figure strategically in that growth:

1. They are organized for evangelism and growth on a nationwide basis. Their goals and plans are backed by money, manpower, materials and organizational machinery.

2. Sabbath school and public schools are key strengths in the SDA system. They have developed materials for this priority emphasis on the training of youth.

3. Generally, finances are not a problem. Their stewardship training begins at conversion and results in average per capita giving to the church exceeding ten percent of incomes-far above the national average of one or two percent.

4. Few others have been as successful as the Adventists in mobilizing and training their laity for personal work, house-to-house visitation and Bible marking classes-an approach similar to LEGS. Each new convert is immediately coached on some key verses and sent out to begin witnessing.

5. They are also effective in training their leaders in two colleges, a seminary and various training institutes and workshops.

6. Three weekly radio programs broadcast all over the islands, two weekly 30-minute TV programs viewed in the 11 largest cities and a distribution system that saw over \$750,000 worth of literature sold in 1976 alone gives the Adventists high visibility among the general population. They also broadcast one radio program in Chinese.

7. Their Good News evangelistic crusades are quite successful. They are buttressed with home Bible study groups that saturate a city and provide places for crusade converts to meet other Christians and learn the Scriptures.

8. The Adventists are justly famous for their excellent medical facilities that enhance their standing in a community. Medical clinics and special health classes are set up in connection with every crusade. They are developing a good work among Muslims in Mindanao through their medical center there.

The Adventists have problems that keep them from growing even faster. Apostasy is one. Their strict rules for diet and conduct ultimately turn some away. Nurturing their converts is another. Their thorough and methodical follow-up program is so difficult to implement that it sometimes takes second place to evangelism. Confining their evangelistic home Bible study groups to periods of crusades is a serious drawback. With their 200,000

members scattered throughout the islands, they could develop a vast continuing network of such groups that would bring many more to the Savior. Finally the Adventists are beginning to show signs of a church development syndrome. Their ratio of members per church has climbed from 86 to one in 1964 to 130 to one in 1978. Since the denomination is meticulous in record keeping, we cannot conclude that the individual church rolls are crowded with dead wood. Rather, the indication is that they are not planting new congregations fast enough. With tens of thousands of barangays still without churches in the country, multiplying congregations should take highest priority. Furthermore, it is evident in the Philippines that small, young churches grow more rapidly than larger, older churches. Increasing church planting will therefore doubly increase over-all membership.

### CONVENTION OF PHILIPPINE BAPTIST CHURCHES (CPBC)

The Convention Baptists are particularly significant, as they were a denomination caught up in the ecumenical drift away from solid efforts in evangelism. All this has recently been turned around. Their "New Program Thrust" is one of the best organized of any of the current denominational church planting efforts in the Philippines. In the four-year period under study in this chapter they increased their membership gains three fold and their church planting efforts 13 fold over the 1964-1974 decade. In their fiscal year 1977-1978 alone they planted 90 new churches, which is 28 more than they had planted in the whole *decade* prior to that year!

The Convention Baptist over-all goal is the highest of any denomination and calls for each circuit of six churches to plant a new congregation *every four months*. This amounts to a 50 percent increase in churches each year. They are also aiming at an average of 30 baptisms per year per church. These goals may seem idealistic, but when talking with denominational General Secretary Edwin Lopez, one gets the impression they wanted to make God-sized steps of faith that would require the power of the Holy Spirit.

To back up their faith, however, the Convention Baptists increased their giving to New Program Thrust from 39,000 pesos to 203,000 pesos in one year. The Mission also increased its subsidy from 80,000 to 90,000 pesos. They are planning on a 1.5 million budget per year when the program is functioning in full force in 1980.

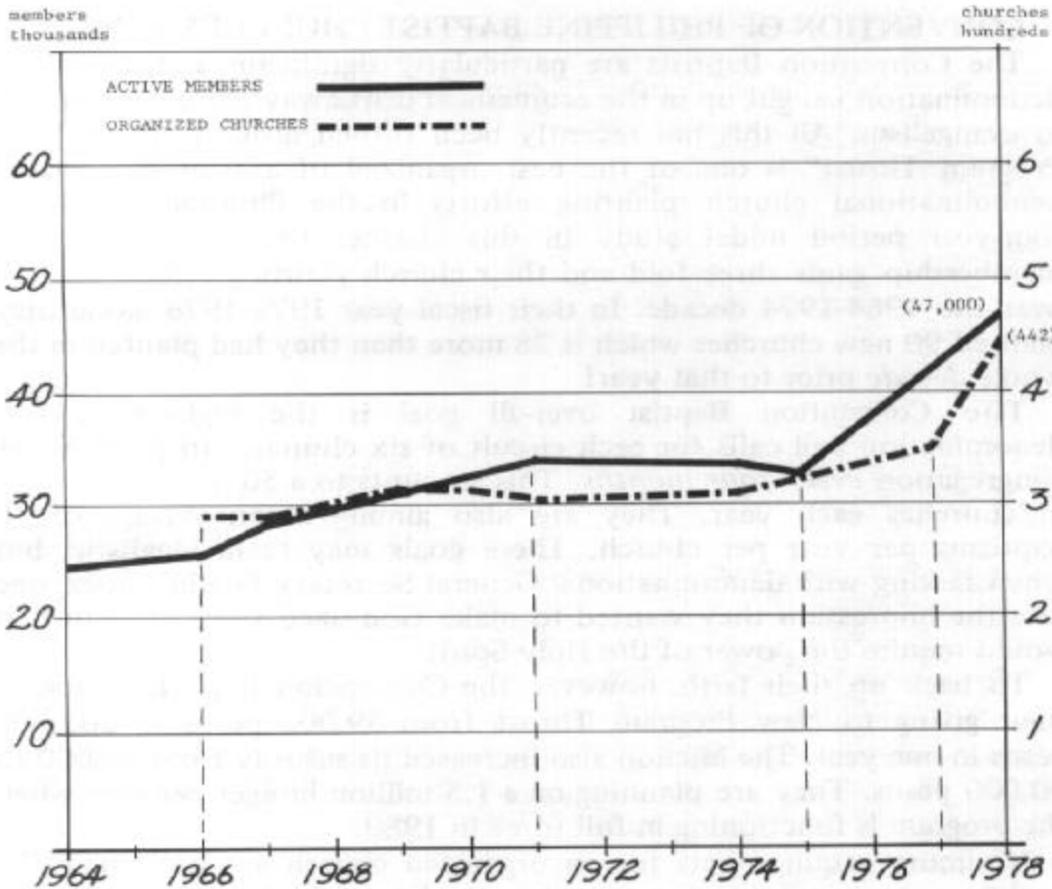
Minimum requirements for an organized church are not small. To qualify, a new congregation must have at least 25 adult (over 12 years of age) baptized members meeting regularly with a commissioned leader, a slate of officers, a functioning Sunday school and an effective stewardship program. (Their plan was to increase this minimum

Graph VIII

# CONVENTION BAPTIST

## 1964-1978 Growth

### Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds  
 Solid line = active members  
 Dotted line = organized churches

CONVENTION BAPTIST 1964-1978 Growth

requirement to 50 members supporting a full-time minister in 1979. By 1980 they planned to implement a "Pastors' Salary Standardization Scheme" that would place salaries at 500 pesos a month.) Churches usually have their own buildings as well. Lopez reports that all 90 churches planted in 1978 had their buildings up and paid for by the end of the year. Since most of these are rural churches, construction is primarily of nipa palm and bamboo.

This rural emphasis, by the way, is significant. With over 65 percent of the population still living in the countryside, massive church planting among rural people is critical-and rewarding. The Convention Baptists have been successful in getting their Bible school grads (approximately 40 in 1978) to pastor in the barangays. To provide the remainder of the pastors needed for their extensive church planting program, the Baptists initiated a Lay Leadership Training Program in June of 1979.

### ASSEMBLY OF GOD

The Assemblies have oodles of potential in the overripe harvest fields of the Philippines. Their emphasis on the demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit is basic. Their expressive style of worship is readily, eagerly accepted by most Filipinos. They have good Christian education and literature programs. Their evangelists are effective. They have a fair growing edge of some 1,200 evangelistic home Bible study groups, about two for every organized church.

Yet they are the only denomination we studied that did not see their rate of growth increase dramatically between 1974 and 1978. In fact, they plummeted from a 278 percent to 81 percent DGR for new members and 74 percent to 29 percent DGR for new churches.

We all empathize with the 1973 split and subsequent court case they suffered. This absorbed much of their denominational energy and probably kept the evangelistic programs they did organize from getting any more than mediocre results. After their General Superintendent Eliseo Sadorra attended the 1974 Workshop, the denomination did set an "Each One Win One" goal for 1975. It resulted, however, in only an average of one in four winning one over the *next four* years. The 1976 "Year of Evangelism" also saw some good things happen with 19 new churches resulting from 27 crusades. Their church-growth-trained missionary John Burnett, however, expressed his discouragement in our interview in 1978 over the lack of follow through in

getting crusade converts into churches.

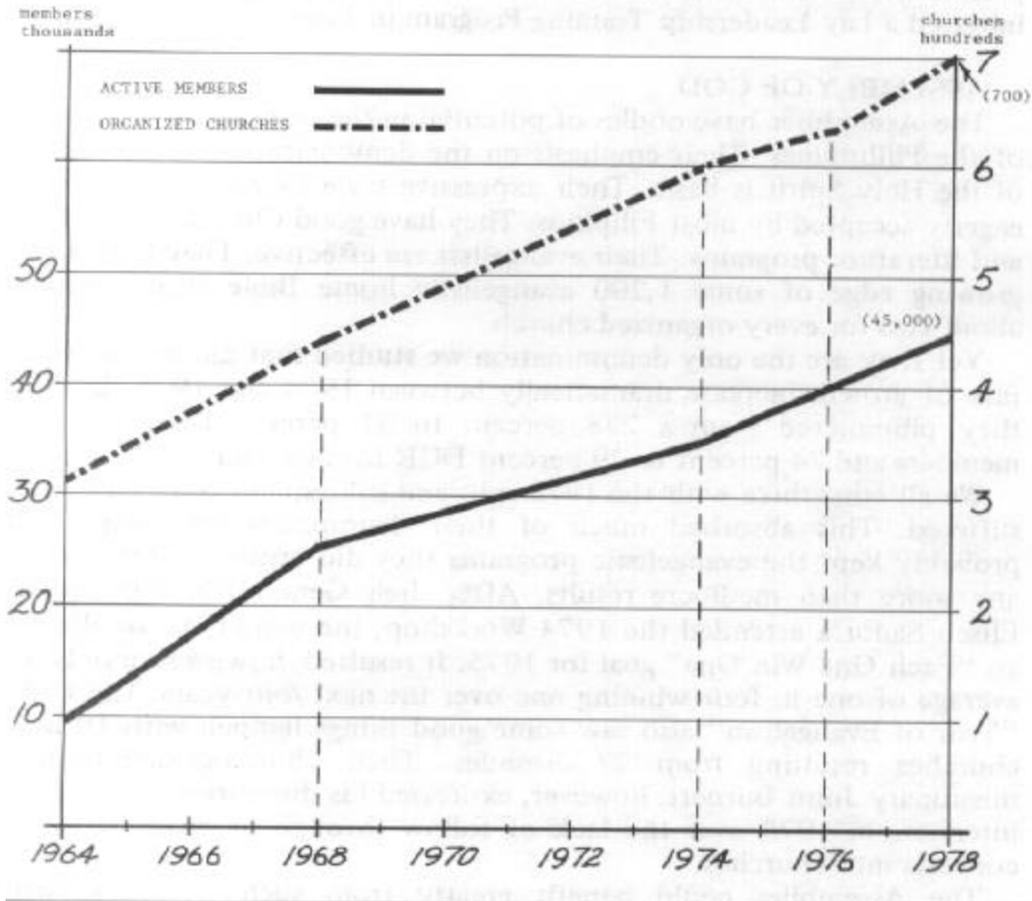
The Assemblies could benefit greatly from such church growth principles as accurate record keeping, establishing measurable goals (some have objected to this on theological grounds) and good plans to

Graph IX

# ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

1964-1978 Growth

Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

Solid line = active members

Dotted line = organized churches

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD 1964-1978 Growth Members and Churches

meet those goals, better allocation of resources for evangelism and church planting and periodic evaluation of progress. Current General Superintendent Eli Javier recognizes these needs and has prepared a five-year work plan, "The Priorities of the 80's." With the reconciliation of the factions of the 1973 split and with this healthy attitude of the new Superintendent, it is likely the Assemblies will recover the dramatic growth of their early years.

## IEMELIF

The Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas is the only other conciliar group (besides the Convention Baptists) which has been able to reverse the downward spiral in growth rates. Their problem, however, was much more difficult than the Baptists', for their rate of membership growth had not only plateaued but had started down hill. When Filipino Nicolas Zamora left the United Methodists in 1909 to form the IEMELIF, he took 3,000 members with him. By 1930, just 21 years later, this membership had grown more than eight fold to 25,000. At that point, it stopped dead in its tracks. Both the 1957 and 1962 WORLD CHRISTIAN HANDBOOKS list them still at 25,000 and the 1968 listing shows them at 20,000. Their official denominational statistics for 1974 show them at a membership of 17,615 in 79 organized churches. Furthermore, their membership-to-church ratio of 223 to one indicates that their rolls were probably padded with dead wood. Clearly, here was a denomination approaching terminal illness.

Was it too late? One of their well-to-do businessmen and leading lay pastors, George Castro, thought not. As a friend of the Rev. Nene Ramientos of COWM, George was enlisted among the prime movers of the 1970 All Philippines Congress on Evangelism and was also among the Filipino contingent to the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 1974. His newly-found zeal for evangelism began to catch fire with this moribund denomination, and after the 1974 Church Growth Workshop IEMELIF asked the aid of Philippine Crusades in training their churches in LEGS and daughter church planting.

Things went well for the first two years as their growth soared to a 19 percent average annual rate. This was up in the range of the fastest growing denominations in the country in those years. It was a remarkable advance for a denomination that had not even kept up with a biological growth rate for many years.

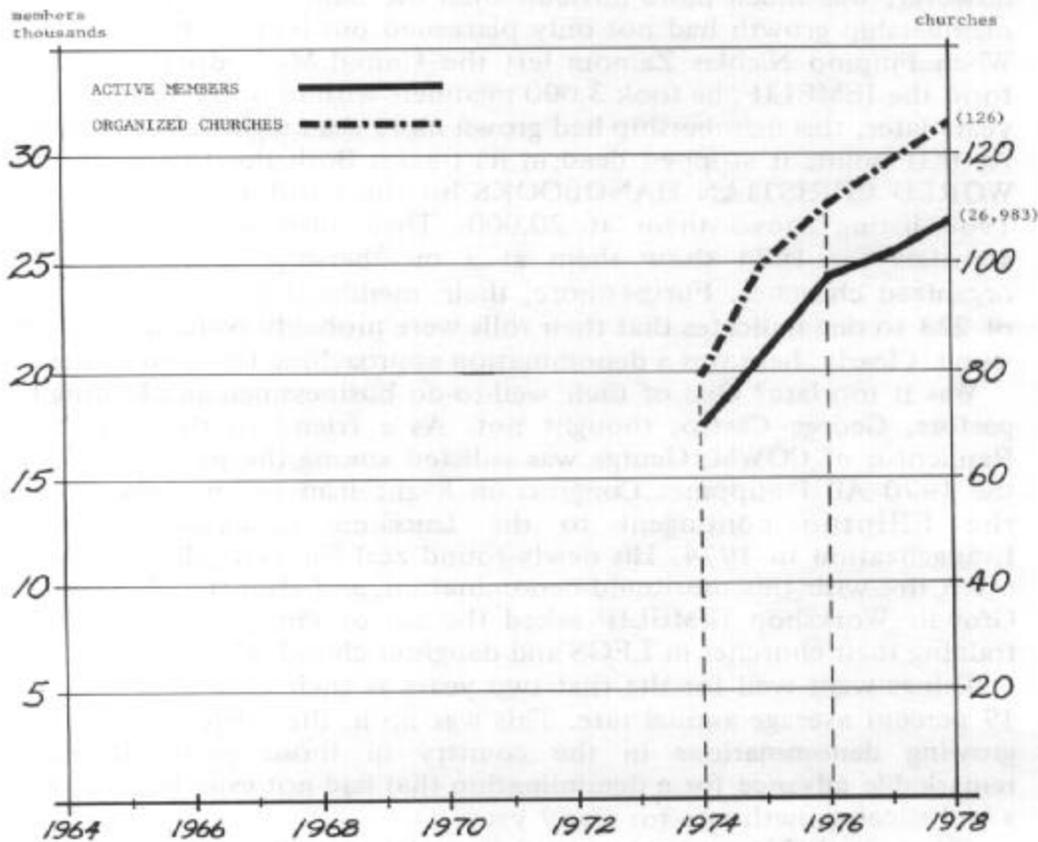
This remarkable recovery was followed by a slight relapse as their annual rate slipped to 5.5 percent the last two years of our study. At least a couple of major problems can be pinpointed to account for this slippage. For one, their goals had a built-in discouragement factor.

Graph X

**IGLESIAS METODISTAS en las ISLAS FILIPINAS**

**1964–1978 Growth**

**Members and Churches**



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds

Solid line = active members

Dotted line = organized churches

## IGLESIAS METODISTAS en las ISLAS FILIPINAS 1964-1978 Growth

Their membership increases were targeted at increasing rates of 10 percent, 23 percent, 33 percent, 41 percent and 50 percent for the years 1975 to 1980. It would have been difficult enough to sustain a constant high rate of growth let alone increase the rate every year to a top, unheard of-for that size denomination-rate of 50 percent growth for one year. When the chances of reaching the goal seem remote, it is natural for discouragement to set in and even less effort results. Goals set impossibly high can be counter-productive.

Their second problem was less under their control. For a variety of reasons, this second two-year period saw a number of changes in leadership, which kept interrupting continuity.

Whether or not IEMELIF has recovered full health in this outreach program remains to be seen. Still, Deputy Executive Director Ruben Trinidad and his denomination deserve credit for what has been accomplished. In the 1974-1978 period it added 47 new congregations and almost 10,000 members to its previously declining denomination. If this healthy 200 plus percent DGR can be maintained for the rest of the century, IEMELIF will be a dramatic demonstration to their fellow conciliar churches that it is possible to recapture a healthy program of evangelism and church planting. In so doing, a tremendous service will be performed for similar churches in the Philippines and around the world.

## FOURSQUARE

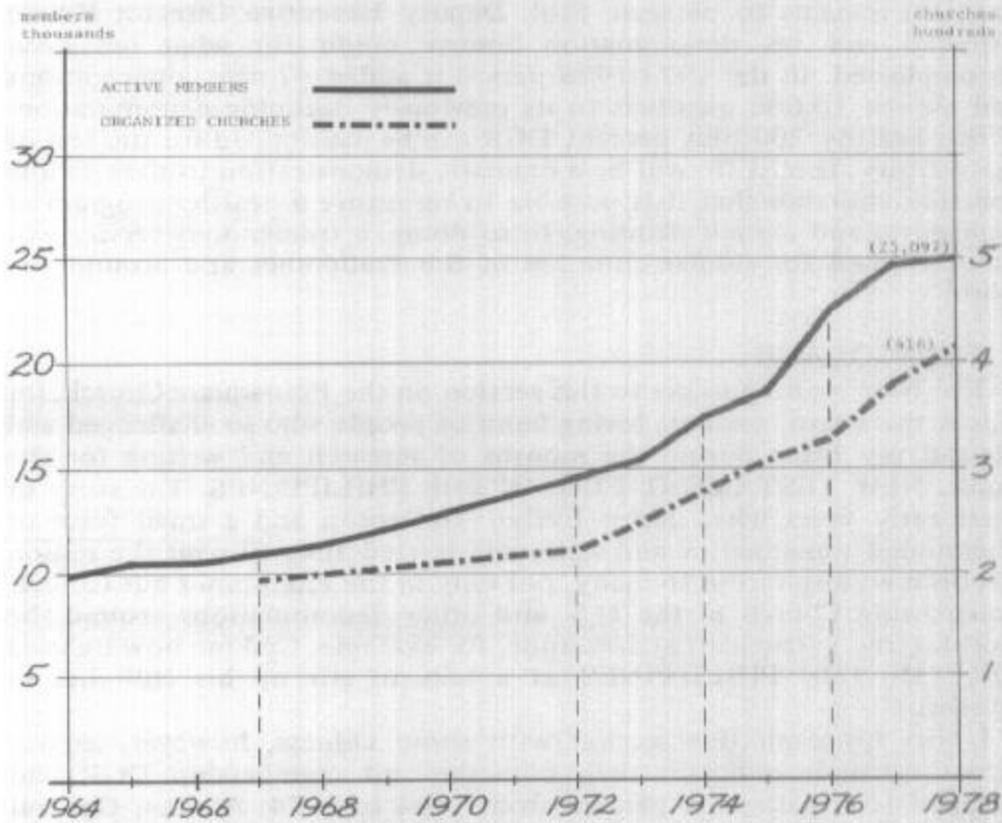
I've been waiting to get to this section on the Foursquare Church, for this is the warm, zealous, loving band of people who so challenged and blessed my heart during the months of research and writing for the book, NEW TESTAMENT FIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES. The story of their early years when Sister Evelyn Thompson and a small force of like-minded missionaries and nationals started fires all over the nation has been an inspiration to many, not only in the Philippines but to their non-growing Church in the U.S. and other denominations around the world. (One participant at Lausanne, for example, told me how he used FIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES

as a text to stir up his churches in Sweden.)

I also approach this section with some sadness, however, as our recent research indicates their communicant membership DGR had dropped to a paltry 25 percent from 1964 to 1974. As their General Superintendent, Ernesto Lagasca, told us in February 1979, "We failed to listen to the advice in the final chapter of your book." That is, they *decreased* their already small foreign missionary force, they got caught in the church development syndrome, they failed to pioneer effectively

Graph XI

**FOURSQUARE**  
1964–1978 Growth  
Members and Churches



Members in thousands, churches in hundreds  
 Solid line = active members  
 Dotted line = organized churches

**FOURSQUARE 1964-1978 Growth Members and Churches**

new regions of the Philippines, they didn't increase the average number of outstations per church, they failed to correct the overly heavy reliance on pastors doing the evangelism and church planting, they discontinued setting

annual church-planting goals for the denomination as they had under the dynamic leadership of Donald McGregor in earlier years and they didn't sufficiently improve their giving program. Furthermore, there were very uneven emphases on growth in their six different districts. Mindanao not only had the best growth, but also worked hardest at it with well-defined and organized programs. The Luzon growth almost petered out. There was no effective, centralized program to keep the whole denomination sufficiently motivated and mobilized for growth.

After their heavy participation in Christ the Only Way and upon returning from the Evangelism/Church Growth Workshop of 1974, the denomination determined to reverse its trend of slow growth. It has *not yet* returned to the spectacular growth rates of its early years, but it has jumped to moderate rates of 154 percent and 171 percent DGR's respectively for new members and new churches. This has been through their "Exploit 80/800" program, a plan that would increase their number of churches from 386 to 800 by 1980. That the Foursquares are failing short of this goal is due in part to their failure to evaluate effectively, refine and work their plans with the same intensity as the Conservative Baptists and C&MA, for instance. With Veronico Suan, their District Superintendent who has led so effectively in Mindanao, taking over as leader of the denomination, I look for an even greater resurgence the Foursquare people in the days ahead. They certainly have the heritage and evangelical dynamic to do so.

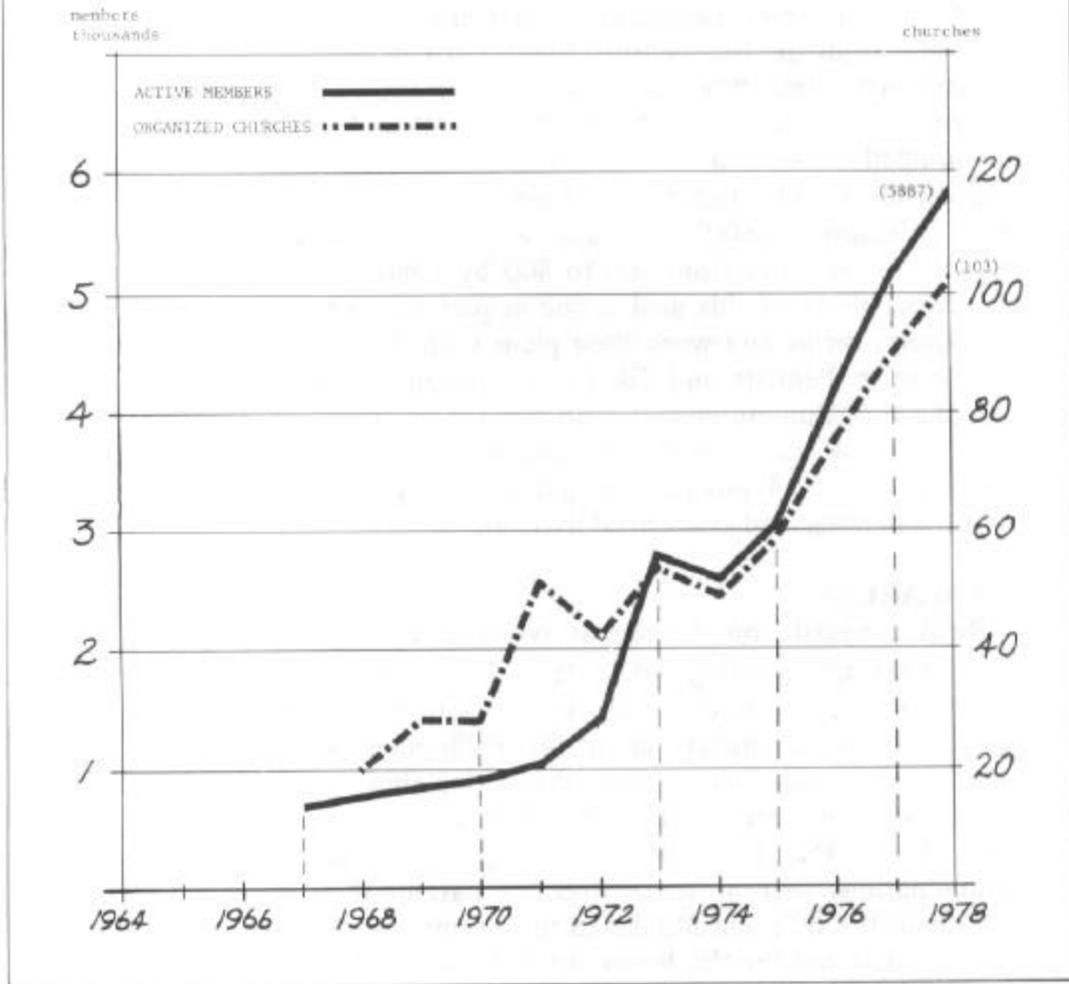
## NAZARENE

Relying heavily on the use of evangelistic Bible study groups and with an average annual growth rate of 23 percent (693 percent DGR), the Nazarenes are second only to the March of Faith as the fastest growing of all denominations in the Philippines. They also seem the least satisfied with their growth; they think they can do much better!

The Nazarenes are another Church that entered the Philippines just after World War II (1946), and began on Luzon. Unlike other denominations with work all over the nation-they expanded to the Visayas in the 60's and Mindanao in the mid-70's-the Nazarenes have grown fastest not on Mindanao but in the western Visayas. Along with the March of Faith they therefore illustrate the point that the Visayas are perhaps not as relatively unresponsive as they seem, but merely less worked.

## Graph XII

**NAZARENES**  
**1964-1978 Growth**  
**Members and Churches**



**NAZARENES**

Members in thousands, churches in hundreds  
 Solid line = active members  
 Dotted line = organized churches

Nazarenes Growth 1964 - 1978

To get a line on how Nazarenes intend to improve their already excellent growth pattern, one merely has to listen to Missions Director Arthur Evans who came on the scene in mid-1978:

"Where we have slow growth and are not reaching our potential," he says, "lack of planning is our greatest problem. Dr. Peter Wagner sized up the whole denomination accurately when he said, 'You've got a lot to be proud of but there's one thing you've missed: the needed emphasis on internal goals and plans.' We're taking Wagner seriously and already we've had Dr. James Slack of the Southern Baptists share with our missionaries in the Philippines on 'How to do Research and Compile Statistics' and 'How to Develop a Program for the Training of Nationals.'

"This year we are going to have a brainstorming and planning session," continues Evans, "with our District Superintendents, laymen, pastors, missionaries and some selected resource people. The topics assigned are Church Growth, Mass Evangelism, Church Planting, Methodology, Church Development, Evangelistic Home Bible Studies, Summer Ministries and Promotion. We want to revive our dormant TEE program and develop more seminars and workshops. We're never going to see a church in every barangay if we aren't more effective in training our laymen and women. Our financial strategy needs overhauling. We don't want to cut off U.S. subsidy without first equipping the national Church with ideas and tools for raising their own funds. The money is here for all the churches and ministries to be self-supporting. Our missionary church growth specialist, Ron Beech, is going one by one to all our pastors to help them with planning, record keeping, fund raising, goal setting and development and implementation of strategy. We praise the Lord for those who are coming to know Him through our efforts, but we can do much more."

They can and probably will. And as the Nazarenes press on towards 15 and 20 and 50 thousand members, it will be more and more difficult to keep up their pace setting 23 percent annual growth. They need all the extra effort they are now planning on.

## WESLEYANS

Though they are running behind their goals set at the 1974 Workshop, the Wesleyans still have increased their average annual growth rate by 50 percent over the previous decade. For this the Wesleyans-and the rest of us-should rejoice and praise the Lord. The reaching of a specific target is not so

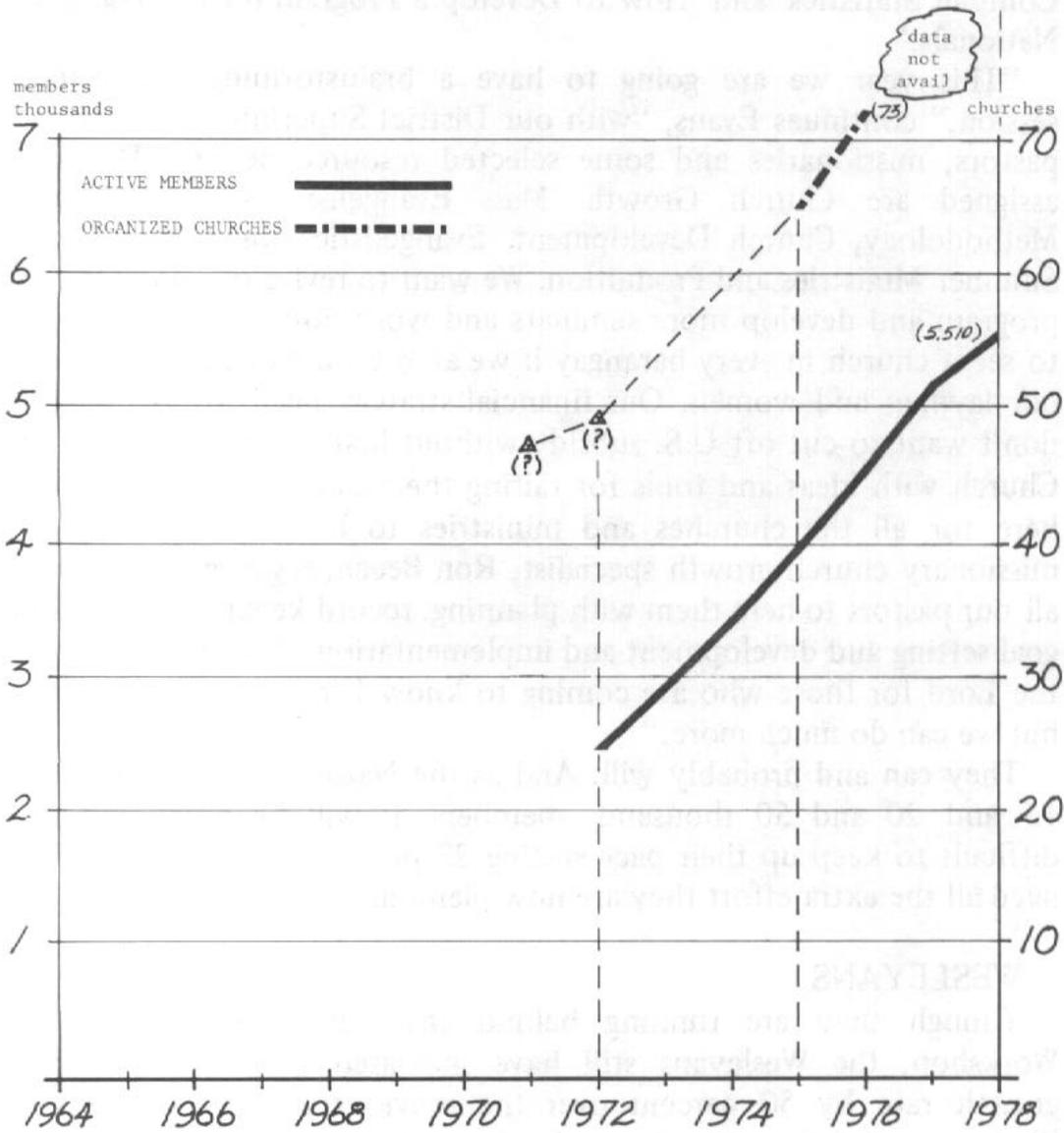
much the Holy Grail as is the increase resulting from the extra effort and planning that goes into working towards a specific goal. Goal setting is just one tool in helping

### Graph XIII

# WESLEYANS

## 1964–1978 Growth

### Members and Churches



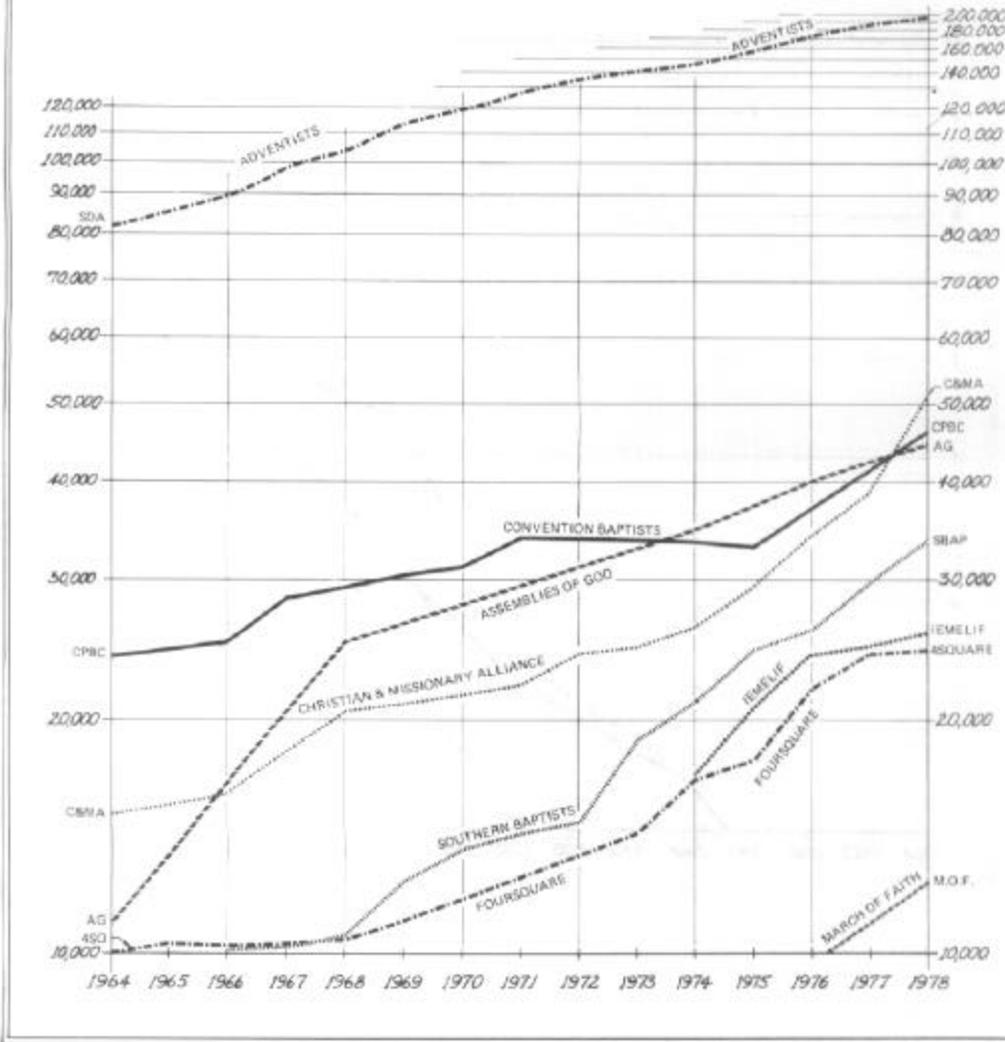
Members in thousands  
 Solid line = active members

Dotted line = organized churches

## WESLEYANS 1964-1978 Growth Members and Churches

Graph XIV

EIGHT DENOMINATIONS  
SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH  
1964-1978 Growth  
COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

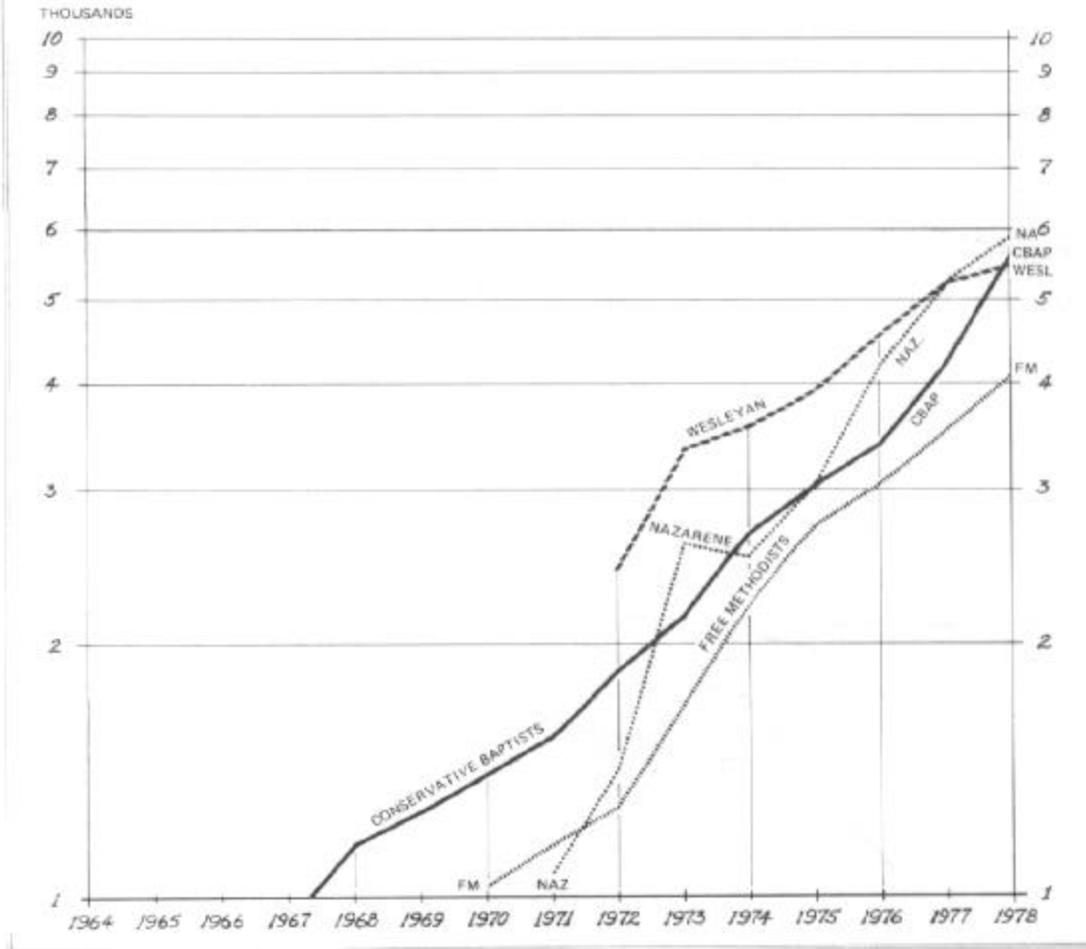


***EIGHT DENOMINATIONS  
SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH***

***1964- 1978 Growth  
COMMUNICANT MEMBERS***

Graph XV

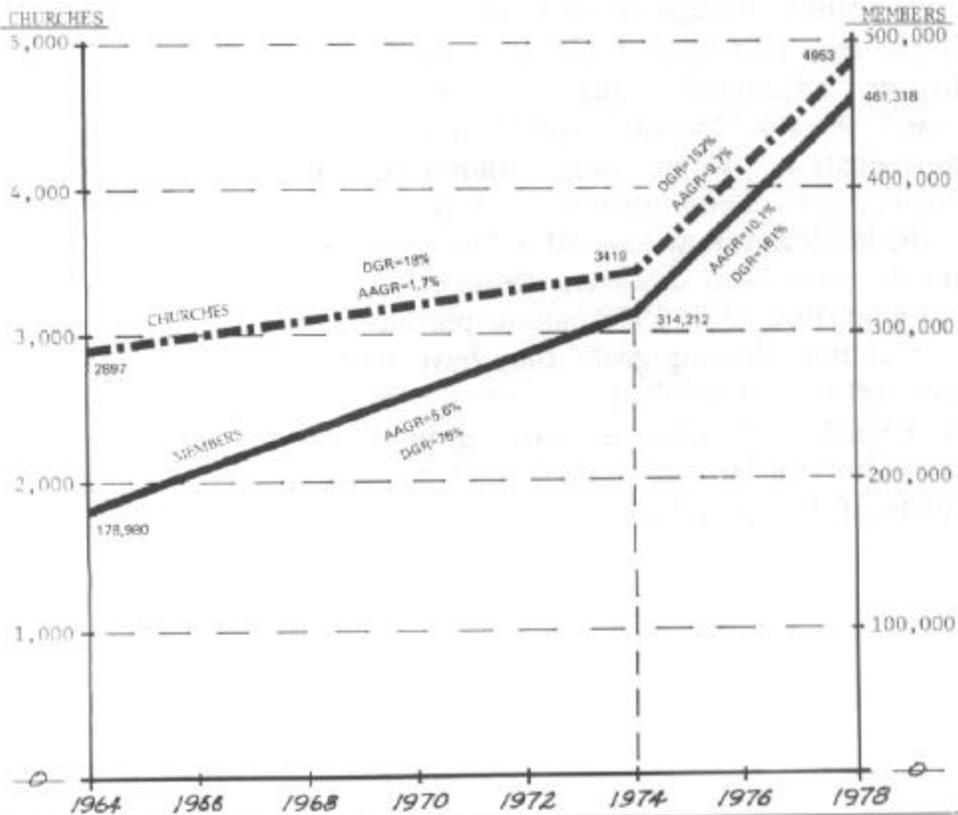
FOUR DENOMINATIONS  
SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH  
1964-1978  
COMMUNICANT MEMBERS



FOUR DENOMINATIONS  
SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH  
1964-1978  
COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

## Graph XVI

## COMPOSITE GRAPH OF GROWTH 12 DENOMINATIONS 1964-1978 Members and Churches



- |                    |                 |                |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| So. Baptist        | C&MA            | Foursquare     |
| Conserv. Baptist   | Adventist       | Nazarene       |
| Convention Baptist | Assembly of God | Wesleyan       |
| March of Faith     | IEMELIF         | Free Methodist |

us obediently bring in as many sheaves as the Lord would have us.  
 Nonetheless, the Wesleyans believe that their goal of 20 percent annual

growth is reasonable. They should have reached it in the past and are now making plans to reach it in the future. The fact that they exceeded their financial goal by 80 percent in 1978 (their income grew by 36 percent instead of the targeted 20 percent) encourages them to believe their goals for winning men and women to Christ can also be reached.

Two methods that have been working well for the Wesleyans are revival meetings in existing churches and evangelistic home Bible study groups. Their revival meetings are usually conducted by one of their two full-time evangelists and last from one to two weeks.

The evangelistic Bible study groups average about three per church, a fairly healthy, though not outstanding, ratio. Wesleyan missionary Paul Turner feels that home Bible study groups are especially effective since they can be slanted to the real needs of real people. "In most rural areas," he says, "people respond to 'presence' before they respond to 'proclamation.' Home Bible studies starting with *fellowship* and progressing to *commitment* are very effective."

The Wesleyans now have 80 ordained ministers for their 90 organized and 44 provisional churches. Realizing that their three Bible schools that graduated 13 in 1978 cannot produce pastors fast enough to meet their church planting goals, they have started WES-TEE and plan to have 100 or 150 enrolled in 15 centers by the end 1980. They also see a need for a full-time church growth man on the denominational level who can lead in planning and implementation of plans for the growth of the denomination.

## **Management By Objective**

Many lessons relating to the growth or non-growth of churches have so far been pointed out in the recounting of denominational histories, the Christ the Only Way Movement and the various denominational programs of evangelism and growth. We trust the reader has taken careful note of these and made application to his or her own situation.

One scarlet thread woven throughout the narrative, however, deserves special attention. It relates to Dr. McGavran's oft repeated statement that the church that *wills* to grow, will *grow*. When the increase of disciples and multiplication of congregations is purposely planned for-and plans are implemented-growth results. When good missionaries and good pastors

work at vague objectives such as "training leaders of the church" or simply "doing the Lord's work," however, energies are dissipated. Aiming at nothing specific, nothing specific is accomplished.

It will readily be conceded that goal setting can be a carnal activity. Management by objective to borrow a popular management concept of the corporate world can be misused and abused. Growth goals relating to finances, evangelistic teams, converts, new churches and even the discipling of a nation can be motivated by pride, a spirit of competition or worldly triumphalism. When not prompted by the Spirit they can be set fancifully high or sinfully low. Goal setting can be an activity of the flesh.

It can also be an intensely spiritual activity. It can be done with much prayer and seeking of God's will. It can be an expression of deep faith that God in His power can use His children to accomplish much more than experience would indicate. It can be an honest attempt to obey more effectively our Lord's command, to be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only.

That most of the goal setting and subsequent growth programs described in the preceding chapters would fit in the latter category and were truly of the Spirit is evidenced by the much good that was accomplished spiritually, organizationally, strategically and practically. Let us briefly summarize these results:

1. Much good was accomplished *spiritually*. In recognition of the continual need of God's power and guidance, thousands of prayer cells were formed. In addition to intercession for the success of the various programs, there was evidently much prayer for brothers and sisters in Christ as well as friends, relatives and neighbors still outside of Christ. Fellowship deepened, body life was experienced and faith was strengthened as prayers were answered.

Thousands of Christians also began discovering and using their spiritual gifts of evangelism, teaching, pastoring, organizing, helping, giving and so on. The Body was strengthened as each member was exercised. A deeper commitment to the Lord was widespread. It was epitomized by Conservative Baptist Jumawan's giving up of his lucrative business venture in the U.S. to head Operation 200. Several denominations also saw significant-in some cases incredible-increases in giving.

Many "obstacles" to growth were recognized as mere excuses that were confessed. There were other confessions of sin and restoration of broken

relationships as eyes were lifted from immediate circumstances to lofty goals. In fact, a growing sense was felt of the unity of the Body of Christ in the country as a whole. And certainly there was a sense of joy and blessing as God's people obediently responded to the Lord of the harvest in sending out more laborers.

2. The setting of goals and development of programs to meet those goals also produced much benefit *organizationally*. Commitment to major objectives forced a reevaluation of structures and the use of human, time and financial resources. Poor management practices were brought to light and eliminated. Mission/Church relationships were looked at in terms of how to get the job done rather than in terms of personalities, pride and prejudices. New structures were developed that related directly to reaping the harvest. In some cases, the use of foreign subsidy was clarified.

3. There were great advances *strategically*. With specific evangelistic and church planting goals to be reached, churches and denominations were forced to be quite selective in the choice of methods and procedures. Otherwise "good" activities that would not directly lead to the multiplication of new disciples and congregations were often discarded for activities that would.

This led to a greater emphasis on-and proliferation of-evangelistic Bible study groups. This efficient method for making disciples and planting churches seems indefinitely reproducible in the Philippines. For every Bible study group started, a large number of new contacts are made. It is like being in the midst of a forest. When the ten trees immediately visible are cut down, 20 more appear. There is a constantly expanding harvesting edge.

Goal setting led to a reevaluation and restructuring of training programs. New courses and departments were added to Bible schools and seminaries. Nationals and missionaries were sent overseas for further training. Lay training programs were developed. Seminars and workshops multiplied and conferences and special programs increased. Magazines and instruction manuals proliferated. All these activities were geared to motivating and training church members for the harvest.

Further indigenization was encouraged. Missionaries were taken out of administrative roles and sent out to do pioneer church planting work. Filipino leadership was uncovered and developed. The gospel message presented by laymen and -women to their friends and neighbors automatically took on more relevant and understandable forms. Church

buildings put up by new congregations tended towards a more Filipino look of nipa palm and bamboo rather than bricks and tin.

The keeping of accurate records and careful research was begun. This in turn made annual evaluation possible. When growth wasn't the goal, internal problems weren't seen as obstacles to growth. When growth became the measurable goal, problems were dealt with and corrected. Receptivity of the Filipino people always brought *some* growth, but it also masked inefficiency. Accurate record keeping brought the real situation to light and forced changes. Decisions about programs and activities were no longer subjective. They could be evaluated in terms of the growth or non-growth that resulted. Research and statistics corrected theory as it uncovered the facts. It led to seeing the need for pioneer church planting in the very most responsive areas. It corrected misconceptions such as the belief that denominations can grow just as fast by increasing the size of older churches as by planting many new churches, or that it was just as efficient to scatter congregations over a wide area as to develop a cluster of churches in each area so they could be served by one senior pastor. In the process, a good number of statisticians and researchers were discovered and put to work.

4. Finally, the activity of setting goals and developing programs to meet those goals worked practically. The 12 denominations we studied produced 67,778 more new disciples and 1,300 more new churches in four years than they would have had they continued growing at the rate of the previous decade. Conservative Evangelicals as a whole in this same period have increased their slice of the total population 100 percent by growing from one to two percent of the Philippine community. Men and women, children and youth, have been brought to new life in Christ and formed into new congregations at a greater rate than ever. The Kingdom has been extended, spiritual captives have been set at liberty, the peace of God rules in more hearts. The command of the Lord has been obeyed and He has brought in the harvest.

Not all the positive results of goal setting and the developing of programs mentioned in the above four categories were experienced by everyone. But each result was experienced by some and some results by most. The total effect is that a growth mentality has been developed all over the country. *The discipling of the peoples of the Philippines* now seems possible for perhaps the first time. Great segments of the Church have found they can grow faster than previously dreamed and are determined to

continue growing. Furthermore, they now have the experience and structure to make continued, sound growth possible.

With only two percent of the country disciplined, much ground remains to be covered. But that the Church of the Philippines has demonstrated to itself and to the Churches of many countries a way to systematically bring their peoples to Christ is clear. Now is the time for Churches and Missions in other lands to catch the vision, for men and women to believe that God wants their countries disciplined and for them to move boldly ahead with specific programs with that goal in mind.

### **Discipling Each Piece Of The Mosaic**

*As the vision of discipling the nation of the Philippines-and other nations-spreads outwards to more and more denominations, it must also go deeper. It will be discovered, for example, that it will not be enough to extend the church only among the kind of Filipinos that are already being reached. In this chapter, therefore, Dr. McGavran writes about "Discipling Each piece of the Mosaic."*

*Furthermore, the majority of the 50,000 barangay churches that are needed for the discipling of the nation must be planted in the rural areas where the masses of people still live. Dr. McGavran covers this topic in the next chapter where he writes about "Creating Standard Rural Churches."*

*Finally, the discipling of the nation must be seen as the collective responsibility of every evangelical structure in the nation. My Chapter Sixteen on "The 1980 Team" therefore attempts to show how the Body of Christ can work together towards reaching the goal of 50,000 churches by the end of the century.*

Through the long centuries before Christ these islands were gradually settled by hundreds of bands of Malayan tribesmen, arriving across the open sea in dugout canoes. In the absence of written records, we can only guess at the many ways in which island after island came to be homeland to this or that group of tribes or clans. Feuds and wars between families, clans and tribes (each defending a valley or coastal plain or retreating to some mountain fastness) guaranteed that every major island was itself a mosaic of peoples and tongues. Even today in Mindanao seven Mangyan tribes occupy the mountains, while the lowlands belong to at least six Muslim tribes and to

many varieties of Cebuano, Ilocano and Tagalog speaking Christianos.

The Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century created a nation-state out of the welter of peoples in the archipelago. In that state the smaller pieces of the mosaic gradually came to think of themselves as parts of larger unities. People speaking ancestral dialects gradually came to speak the trade language (dominant dialect) of that region. Thus arose the main Philippine languages such as Tagalog, Ilocano, Cebuano, Samarifio, and the like. The Muslims of Mindanao consider themselves quite different from the Christianos. The difference is more linguistic and ethnic than religious. One cluster of tribes became superficially Muslim while others became nominally Christian.

In addition to the hundreds of ethnic and linguistic groupings which settlement of these many islands and centuries of tribal warfare inevitably produced, today we see many other groupings. Men form communities according to occupations. This is a factory town, that a fishing village. We are rice farmers. They are taxi drivers. People of one level of education and income draw a sharp line between themselves and those of other levels. Landowners do not as a rule intermarry with tenants. University professors do not associate with dock laborers. Middle class people in the poblacions have much larger incomes than lower class people in the barangays. Each group would say of the other, "they are not our kind of people."

To the casual visitor from America all residents of the Philippines are one kind of people-Filipinos; but the sociologist at the University in Manila knows the reality. The nation is made up of many peoples, many segments of society, all gathered under one flag, in one great republic. All are heading toward a common national culture and language; but that goal is still far distant.

If in the twentieth century we are to disciple this whole nation, we *must disciple hundreds of pieces of the vast mosaic*, from the Isnegs of the Apayao mountains in the far north to the fisher folk on the Sarangani Islands south of Mindanao.

As the rush to the cities gathers speed and millions become urbanites, as English and the major languages taught in the magnificent school system blot out tribal dialects, as radio and television form the national mind in the remotest barangay and the metropolis alike, and as democracy and dictatorships of the left and right battle for political control, some pieces of the mosaic merge with others. The pieces get fewer, but the classless

society-Karl Marx' attractive illusion-will not result. Even after a single national culture emerges, distinct groupings will remain. Human beings form themselves into communities. Man is man only as he is part of society. His society dictates his language and his customs. And groups-pieces of the mosaic-are congenitally prone to like themselves. They enjoy their own kind of people. They delight in noting, and exaggerating, differences between themselves and "those other people."

Some of this is sheer pride-and is alas a permanent characteristic of Adam's fallen race. Some, however, is blameless and is caused by climatic conditions, technological advance or availability of land. As men work together, live together and have of necessity to grow and eat the kinds of food locally available and wear the kinds of clothes the climate requires, they form multitudinous different societies. If fields can be terraced, one kind of community results. If they cannot, another. Fishing villages are different from those that earn their living in the forests or the mines. Communities which have cars see themselves as superior to those which do not. Those who live in Baguio dress more warmly than those who live in Zamboanga.

I need not labor the point. In these beautiful islands live hundreds-maybe thousands-of separate economic, education, ethnic, linguistic and occupational groups. *Each ought to be disciplined.* The whole nation will be disciplined only when all-or at least most-of the pieces have become consciously, biblically Christian. In addition to this, as the vision of discipling the whole seizes the imagination of Christians, the discipling of every part will be immeasurably aided.

The task so defined becomes both more difficult and easier.

More difficult because it is not merely "to evangelize Filipinos," but rather to devise and implement many kinds of evangelism each fitted to a special population.

The task is not merely to train pastors, but to train pastors *who effectively communicate the Gospel to particular units of society, multiply congregations of those kinds of people and nurture and shepherd them.* Church growth means not only multiplying our kind of congregations, but helping newly evangelized segments of society to form congregations which are distinctively *theirs*.

The task is easier because we can take it up piece by piece. Once we master the ideal of becoming all things to all men, of respecting Isneg

culture just as much as university culture-and changing the latter as much as the former-we shall multiply more churches. Once we train leaders, without alienating them from their proletarian, or tribal, or agricultural, or intellectual societies, they will fit their piece of the mosaic better and bring many more sheaves into the Master's barn.

We must not damage the cause by overstating the case. The mosaic is there-make no mistake; but *the edges of most pieces are blurred. Many pieces are melting into each other*, thus affecting all three forms of discipling, D 1, D 2 and D 3.

The white hot convictions of the Christian Faith, insisting that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek and that all are equal before the Great White Throne, create in most segments of society a revolutionary belief that each Christian congregation *ought to love other communities and ought to see all as one in Christ Jesus our Lord*. Then, too, both Democracy and the Rationalism, the unruly children of Christian Faith by worldly mothers, feed the revolution of rising expectations and invent all kinds of egalitarian mechanisms, such as equal education opportunity for all, and equal pay for equal work. Heated by these electric concepts, the edges of many segments of society melt and merge. Society becomes fluid and upward mobility occurs throughout the nation. The son of a peasant becomes president of the republic. A village teacher is elected to high office. The son of an immigrant to Mindanao becomes senator or manufacturer. College youth marry those of whom their parents do not approve. In short, the edges of the pieces of this mosaic blur. New unities appear and offer unique opportunity to the evangelizing church. Congregations can be multiplied in each new unity.

As a denomination (a Branch of the Universal Church) sets out to disciple the whole nation, it plants ten congregations in this piece of the mosaic, twenty in that, and two in some other. As a result, now suddenly these thirty-two congregations think of themselves as a new unity-Nazarenes, it may be, or Baptists or United Church. Youth from all pieces of the mosaic go to the same Youth Conference and work, sing and play together. Pastors-to-be train for years at the same theological training school. Inter-marriage occasionally occurs. Particularly in towns and cities, among the educated, new unities play a larger and larger part.

Church growth theory advises denominations and congregations to respect both the older and the newer unities. a) In many cases, congregations will grow better and faster if men and women can become Christian in their

own piece of the mosaic without crossing linguistic, economic and ethnic lines. b) In some cases, congregations will prosper by evangelizing in the new, mixed urban population and multiplying congregations in it.

All dialect congregations illustrate the wisdom of doing a). Ilongo speaking Baptists migrating to Mindanao do not like to join United Church congregations that sprinkle infants *and speak Cebuano or Tagalog*. They rush to join Ilongo speaking congregations that practice believers' baptism. MULTIPLYING CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES showed very clearly that in evangelizing barangay populations, churches and pastors suited to that level of society were essential. Pastors trained in English to minister to middle class congregations in towns and cities are gravely handicapped in pastoring churches in the many pieces of the mosaic living in the coconut groves, rice fields, mountain slopes and forests of these lush islands. For one thing, such pastors expect remuneration at a much higher level than peasant Christians can afford. For another, they are resolved to give their children educational opportunities possible only to urbanites.

This is obviously true of the tribal populations of Mindanao and interior Luzon. For example, in Eastern Mindanao as the 75,000 Bilaans are evangelized, congregations will multiply better and faster if Bilaans can become biblical Christians without any consciousness of "leaving our people." The nation is disciplined more thoroughly and effectively if Bilaans become Christians in people movement fashion while remaining thoroughly Bilaan, worshipping in Bilaan congregations, in the Bilaan tongue, being led by Bilaan pastors and being proud of being Bilaans. The same is true of the 100,000 Manobos, the 38,000 Mandayas, and at least seven other Cultural Communities. It is particularly true of the Muslim tribes. Similar illustrations could easily be given from all parts of the Philippines rural and urban. Respecting the separate pieces and evangelizing them in ways which effectively multiply churches in them is without doubt one effective way of evangelizing-one secret of being good stewards of God's grace.

All English speaking congregations, however, illustrate the wisdom of doing b), that is, of respecting the new unities. For example, in cities and towns where mixed populations arise, the educated who are fluent enough in English to enjoy worshipping in it form a new large unity. *The educated of all pieces of the mosaic form one new people* with similar incomes, ideas, interests and residential neighborhoods. When this new large unity appears, it is folly to disregard it and try to form congregations in each of its old

pieces.

Nevertheless, English speaking Filipinos and Americans ought to recognize that in many cases urban society exists more as a stew than a mosaic. The fish is still fish and the rice is still rice. The new unity has not yet fully appeared. Those who worship in English speak Ilocano or Tagalog at home! Tagalog churches will multiply faster in Manila than English speaking congregations-as the Iglesia ni Cristo effectively demonstrates.

*Discipling each piece of the mosaic must be intensely pragmatic.* When evangelizing each linguistic and economic unit *does in fact* multiply congregations in it, then evangelize within each unit. When evangelizing a new large unity-such as English speaking Filipinos or some factory community-*does in fact* multiply congregations in it, then conclude that God has called you to *that* task.

Always keep the goal in mind-that every piece of the mosaic be so evangelized that in it soundly Christian congregations multiply, led by sons and daughters of that piece. That is the royal road in the evangelization of the whole nation.

## **Creating Standard Rural Churches**

Discipling the whole of the Philippines requires churching 50,000 or more barangays in this great nation which will number 88 million souls in the year 2000.

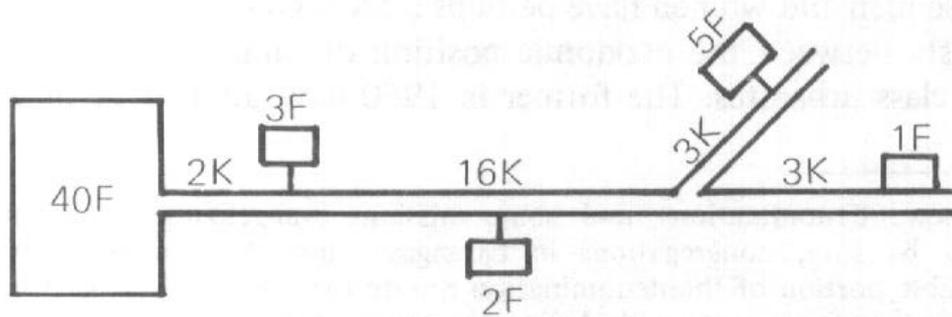
Curiously, however, at present the rural barangays (or barrios) have relatively few churches in them. Most churches are located in the towns and cities. Everyone agrees that the barrios are receptive, but churches do not usually develop there. Even when large numbers of rural people have become Christians, the church is usually at the town-though some large barrio groups do worship locally and some have built "chapels." Most Evangelical denominations are poblacion centered.\* They are oriented toward the educated classes, not toward the barangays, most of whose men and women have perhaps a sixth grade education. A great gap exists between the economic position of rural people and that of middle class urbanites. The former in 1980 have an average income of 2,500 pesos a year, the latter of 6,000.

The poblacion pattern has this strength, that it ties scattered little bands of

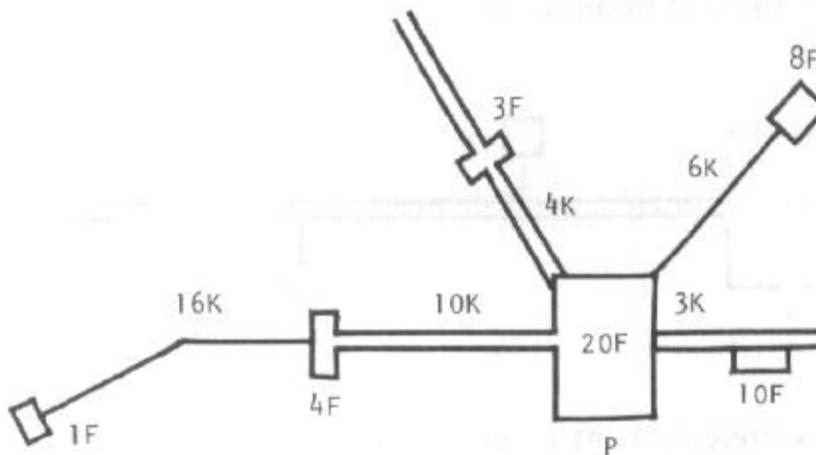
rural Christians into one unit with a core of middle class members who live in the poblacions. The pattern has this weakness, that the little groups are content to be a subordinate part of the big show and do not grow. Even if they grow, they follow the Roman Catholic pattern and do not think of themselves as full churches. Their pastors could not possibly be real pastors. They are merely "village workers," or "catechists," and un-ordained of course! Barangay groups remain ill fed outliers of the real church at the poblacion. This is a vestige of the Spanish era when all administration, enlightenment and civilized life was at the poblacion and "out there" were little settlements of "natives." In those days the total population was less than five million. The barrio people were illiterate. Today, with a population of 44 million and tomorrow with a population of 88 million, many barangays have 50 or 100 homes. Today their educational level is at least sixth grade. Today radios are everywhere. Today there is no excuse for confining real churches to the towns. *Today there should be standard rural churches in fifty thousand barangays.*

The following drawings indicate various groupings of Christians, which arise as individuals, and families become Evangelical Christians in the barangays surrounding the administrative center of the township. One can distinguish five patterns, or classes. The poblacion is the big square. The barangays are the small squares. f = families. k = kilometers. The church is built and the pastor resides, of course, at the poblacion.

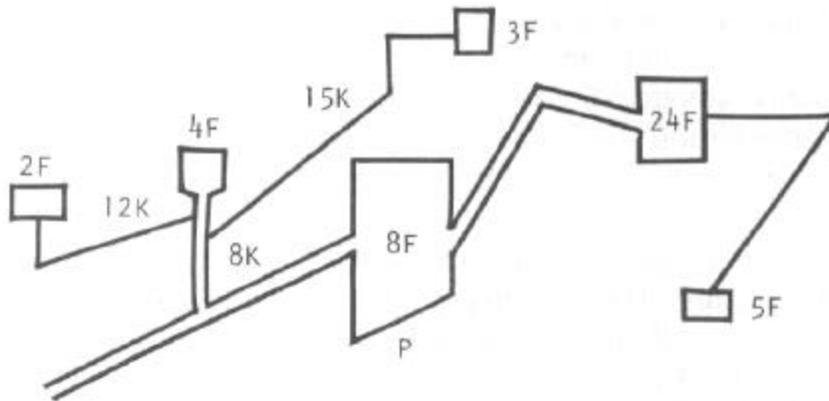
Class I. Members are concentrated at the poblacion.



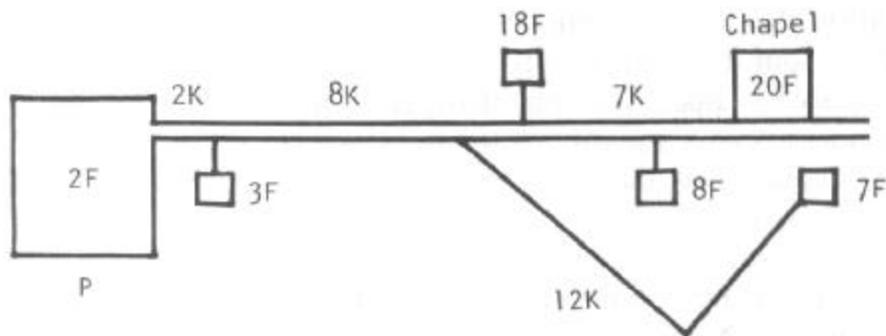
Class II. A large minority of members live at the poblacion, while the rest reside in its barangays one to ten kilometers away.



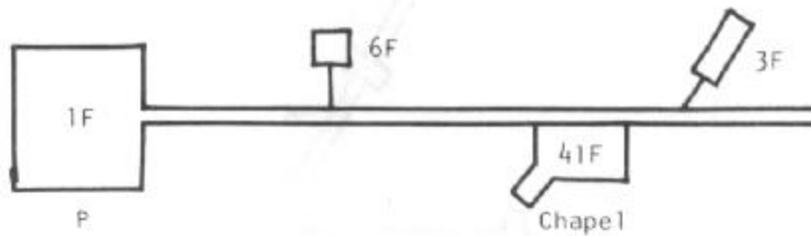
Class III. A small minority of members live at the poblacion. The rest live out in the barangays.



Class IV. Most of the members live in a cluster of barangays but the church building is nevertheless at the poblacion, and a few families also live there. Often there is a chapel at some barangay where live 15 to 20 families.



Class V. Most families live in one barangay and build themselves a chapel, but the *church* is still at the poblacion, where the pastor and one other family of Evangelicals live.



These scattered groups of rural Christians are a large part of every denomination. Tying them together around a center, usually at a poblacion, is held to be the only feasible system of shepherding them. They seem to get enough spiritual care to enable them to continue, but not to grow into full churches. The land is full of small static barangay outliers. Training unpaid leaders for these enables something to be done for them at very small financial outlay.

Since many congregations have outliers, I hazard a guess that the average congregation has four outliers. If a barangay with a single family only were counted as an outlier, the number of outliers would be more.

Static thinking regards these outliers as fixed and not very rewarding parts of the picture. They are made up of good people, of whom a few come to the town church, particularly on communion Sundays. They often have more baptisms than the town groups despite the small degree of shepherding; but they contribute little money. It is hard to help them become mature, vigorous congregations.

Dynamic thinking, however, considers these thousands of outliers not as problems but as seed churches that should grow and multiply. Each lies in the midst of huge opportunity—a large literate unchurched population. In typical barangays, 12 evangelical families face 120 of the world, or four face 50, or 16 face 200. The barangays have in many places proved open to the Gospel. This chapter proposes the development of standard churches so that there will be strong congregations across the whole nation. This is what the discipling of a whole nation means.

Would it work? Well, it has worked. And it has worked in many places

under many circumstances. Many Class IV and V churches have their own church and parsonage and employ a deaconess or worker. A few employ an ordained pastor. Many are on the edge of full churchhood. By determined effort they can be lifted to full churchhood.

What is full churchhood? It means, first, that the church becomes the barangay at worship. The people there are closely related. They are dependent on each other. All have about the same level of education and income. They wear the same kinds of hats and live in the same kinds of houses. This *rural community at worship where it lives* is what the strong barangay church can be. Second, it means a church building and parsonage, at first of light materials, but as soon as possible of concrete, wood and galvanized iron. Third, it means strong laymen trained at institutes, and kept trained. Fourth, it means a full-time resident, trained pastor, married to some fine barangay girl. He will himself be a man of the common people, happy to live and work among them *and be recompensed at their standard*.

Let us call this a Standard Rural Church. It will have a minimum of 25 families (75 members), employ a full-time pastor at a minimum of 150-50 (150 pesos and 50 kilos of grain), have a church building and parsonage which fit the other buildings in the barangay and carry on a full program. It may start on the minimum mentioned but will strive for membership of 50 families and try to pay its pastor 200-75.

Rising to standard rural churchhood is an achievement. Popular mentality still leans heavily on the poblacion tradition. Not all outliers can rise; but the difference in the stability and vitality of outliers when compared with town churches abundantly justifies all effort. Many denominations already have some full churches in the barangays and many outliers that are almost full churches. To lift them to that level would not be difficult.

As long as we cannot get full-time pastors in the barangays, sole dependence on unpaid lay leaders is necessary, but as soon as possible many outliers should be lifted to full churchhood. The question is not "Is a paid pastor good for rural Churches?" but rather "Is a paid pastor, who unquestionably would be good for them, possible?" It *is* frequently possible if projected *on a village scale*. An illuminating instance comes from Southeast Leyte where a young seminary graduate, Mr. Ibarossa, was called to a small church. Under his leadership it organized itself into four groups, each with six families in it. Each family undertook to give the pastor a measure of grain and a peso once a month and each group of families

guaranteed arrangement for its week. Actually, the church has given much more than this guaranteed minimum. Many new converts have been won. They understand that Christians support their pastor on this regular basis.

Whenever an outlier is lifted to be a Standard Rural Church, the members benefit. Church and Sunday school attendance increases, sitio prayer meetings begin, lay evangelism in nearby sitios and barangays blossom, catechumens are regularly instructed and confirmation or baptismal classes are held. The flock gets more food. It reproduces more.

Let us now return to the thousands of outliers. Among these some, we are told, cannot be lifted. "They are too small. They don't want a pastoral worker. The opposition is too fierce. The few families concerned have been walled off. They have grown cold." All this is no doubt true of some. *But, some can certainly be lifted.* Maybe they are halfway up to the 25 family level. Maybe they are above the 25 family level already. *They want a pastor and will pay for one.* They are in a ripe area. They have prestige in the barangay and are married into the best families. They have a goodly number of devout, intelligent Christians. (Some wonderful people live in the barangays. Some of our best have come from there!)

How many outliers are liftable in any one year? There is no one correct answer. Outliers become liftable suddenly. When the Baptists and the Alliance threw in evangelistic teams they found more were liftable than before. Among the thousands of "barangay groups" hundreds can be lifted to full churchhood every year. Supervisory ministers, missionaries and area evangelists and, above all, pastors of poblacion congregations should constantly ask themselves, "Among these outliers which can be lifted this year? .... Lift every liftable outlier" might well become a common slogan. As each denomination brings to bear its many resources, many barangay groups will become liftable. *The churching of the pieces is the only way in which the churching of the nation can be achieved.*

Standard Rural Churches will break the vicious circle that now exists. Outliers can't grow because they don't get enough spiritual nurture, they cannot get enough spiritual nurture because they don't pay enough to secure adequate pastoring and they do not pay enough because they cannot get enough spiritual nurture. What we are proposing is a judicious mixture of highly trained *unpaid* lay leaders-as many as we can get plus adequate full-time *paid* rural pastors for every outlier. This will provide spiritual nurture.

Five questions arise as we face the opportunity to multiply Standard

Rural Churches, or more.

First, *can we create "25-family" rural churches each year?* The answer is a resounding "yes." a) In some places we already have the members, the building, and the financial ability-all that we need is to persuade the outlier to become a church-to persuade the 15-year old boy to put on long pants! b) There are unquestionably enough favorable outliers. c) Add to these the occasional barangay where conversion brings in a big new cluster of families. d) The name-Standard Rural Church-can be made most attractive. "Would not you like yours to be a *Standard Rural Church?*" d) It will not, of course, happen itself; but if prayed for, and planned for, and worked for, it should be quite possible.

Second, *will these Standard Churches support a worker at 150-50?* There is no question but that they *can*. The old excuses ("We are poor people-can't give anything-never have and never will-don't need a pastoral worker anyhow-would prefer to walk six kilometers to the poblacion-like to pay the bus driver 50 centavos to attend the poblacion church but can't give 25 centavos per member per week to our own pastor.") will certainly have to be overcome. If the Standard Rural Churches send their sons for training, and pay part of the cost, they are more likely to pay them when they come back as pastors and the pastors are more likely to live there happily. New Standard Churches, particularly if converted under preaching which stresses giving, will sometimes pay pastors better than old "mission day" outliers. The economic base will play a large part. An outlier of landless laborers will be harder to lift than one made up of men owning one to ten hectares. Finally, self support is intimately tied to expansion. A hundred Christians can pay more money than 20. As these churches grow, their ability to give increases.

Third, *will Standard Rural Churches continue to grow?* a) The concept of frozen outliers "which, of course, grow very little" must be replaced with that of Standard Churches "which, of course, will grow normally." b) Standard Churches of 25 families are in danger. They *must be helped to grow to safety* i. e., to 50 families or more. Growth through multiplied evangelism, Protestant certainty, abundant high-conversion-potential tracts, regular worship and Christian education is the first task of the Standard Church. c) Growth requires effort. There will be few easy victories. There will be some defeats. But with the attention of the Churches on growth, increased resources for growth should be possible. Indeed, where a real

foothold is gained in the countryside, small people movements are in view. When they come, we must be prepared to expand and nurture them.

Fourth, *can several Standard Rural Churches be united in one cooperative parish*, with a key minister at the center? This is easily possible and may be advantageous. The cooperative parish which puts an experienced minister in charge of a cluster of rural congregations will fit the policy of some denominations, but not of others. Many cooperative parishes will be back off the main roads and would benefit from a strong man in the area to serve them. Administration of such a parish would be good training for larger responsibilities. Rural pastors of unusual ability might be used in such places.

Fifth, *can good rural pastors be produced, and will they work on 150-50 rising to 200-75?* Not only can good men be produced, *but* if the church is to grow in the rural field they must be. I, therefore, proceed to describe such men and the system of training that would produce them.

(In passing, let me say that I speak of "men" and use the pronoun "he" merely to avoid the awkward "he and she" or "him and her." Fine work has been done by paid deaconesses acting as pastors of many small congregations. They have been greatly used of God in many rural situations. If the theology of the denomination permitted it, they could be ordained. Women have fully as much ability as men.)

1. *Rural pastors will have to be rural men.* It is difficult for town and city dwellers to view things from the rural standpoint and to be content with country life. The leaders of most denominations at present are overwhelmingly urban men and are happy to spend their lives in the city. They talk English constantly. Few dirty their hands with farm work. Theological training schools are in metropolitan centers. It is doubtful if such men can become pastors of genuinely rural churches and fit the rural world in which most of the people of these islands live.

Rural workers would be recruited from rural families. They would be young men actually at work on farms. They would be recruited to be rural workers. They would be told that this is not a way out of the rural barangay. Instead it means dedication to live and die in them. Recruits would normally be young married men and the caliber of the wife would be taken into account. Candidates would be trained to be rural pastors. Their courses of instruction would have a rural bias. Their experience would be in a rural setting. Ideally these rural seminaries would be on 20 hectare plots where

students would grow their own food. They would tend coffee trees and raise chickens as part of their training. They would go there only when sent by some rural church and on graduation would be assigned to a barangay, not a poblacion. If we are creating a barangay pattern, the first thing *not* to do is train candidates in a poblacion and to assign graduates to serve churches in urban centers.

It will help our thinking at this point if we classify communities in three categories. a) Cities-all urban centers of 50,000 and above. Most prominent leaders (nationals and missionaries) live in such centers. b) Towns-seats of government where, in the actual residential area, live from 500 to 50,000 people. Because of government, schools, and businesses, these towns have many educated people in them. c) Barangays and sitios-where most people earn their living by cultivation or fishing. Standard Rural Churches arise in category c).

In a) and b) (cities and towns) we expect church multiplication to take place. All the men whom the city seminaries can graduate will be required there. They are already in short supply. As city men graduate they should go to town and city congregations.

*Churches should multiply in barangays also*-the fishing village, the settlement up the mountains two hours from a road, the seventy families six hard hours walk from the coast, the big sitio where most of the people are fourth grade graduates. Indeed, churches *must* multiply in barangays if the whole nation is to find Christ. As rural churches increase, *full-time rural pastors are needed*. These must be barangay or mountain men, married to women to whom the interior is not banishment from civilization. Pastors should speak the dialect of the mountains, the rice fields, the coconut groves or the fishing villages. They will regard their fellow farmers and laborers with natural affection. Many will be their own relatives.

Our proposal should not raise the sterile old debate about high or low training. Both trainings are high-but one is for one kind of people and the other is for another. The church of Jesus Christ needs both kinds of shepherds for both kinds of churches. It needs them in large numbers. It needs them now.

2. They would be *good* rural pastors. Around the world the experience in most large younger Churches is that *good* rural pastors can be obtained. They are essential to care for thousands of rural congregations. Without them multitudes of rural churches can be neither created nor cared for. But

rural pastors must be *good*. They must be well trained.

Candidates would be chosen from among the most able young men working in the barangay churches as spirit-filled Christian youth. Men of 25 to 30 would ordinarily be selected, and only those who had personality, intelligence, and grace. It would be the aim to select the kind of man who had he had opportunity-could have graduated from college. During residence in Bible School, those who did not live up to expectations would be dropped. We are talking about capable rural pastors.

3. The Rural Seminary. This is often called the Bible school or the theological training school. It is an essential part of any plan to disciple a whole nation. We use the terms rural seminary, Bible school, and theological training school interchangeably.

The rural Seminary addresses itself primarily to the vast field of the barangays and sitios, fishing villages and mountain hamlets. It does not intend to produce a low type of town pastor but rather a *high type of rural pastor*. Its buildings and students would bear constantly in mind the chief reason for its existence. It produces rural pastors. It specializes in lifting ill fed outliers to be Standard Rural Churches and multiplying both full churches and outliers in every island.

Its medium of instruction would be one of the island languages. Each seminary would have one school in each major language area. Teaching in "dialect" would pay this additional dividend, that the temptation to pick up a text book from America, hand it out to the students, and use it as the main basis of instruction would be considerably less. Rural seminaries would give instruction fitted to Philippine life and needs. The wives of rural workers-whom they often will have married before being chosen-will profit by special instruction.

The Bible school would have qualified professors. Teachers with great knowledge of the Bible and the Church, and wide experience in the rural field are the men needed. At the head of each school should be an outstanding leader of the rural Church. We hope that many ministers who have multiplied rural congregations will feel a call to this fruitful field.

Before being assigned to the faculties of such seminaries, missionary professors would be given 18 months to become fluent in the language, six months apprenticeship in a cluster of growing rural congregations and expected to do and to publish a study of its patterns of growth and the factors which affected its growth pro and con.

The Bible school buildings should be typical rural buildings in rural settings, the classrooms modern and well equipped and the chapel of a pattern that *Standard Rural Churches can duplicate*-beautiful, and fitted to the needs of rural people. All buildings should take full advantage of the marvelous outdoor weather of these lovely islands anticipations of Paradise.

The theological training school is not an agricultural school, but the rural pastor needs agricultural bias. He needs to know how, by local effort and cooperation, to improve what the peasants already have and how to obtain further help from government agencies. Agricultural bias will take land and equipment. It will require one specialist along these lines and a mind set in every member of the faculty.

The curriculum should be adequate. The rural pastor will be leading a *congregation* in the worship of God and the study of the Bible. He will be producing Protestant certainty. He will give his people the sword of the Spirit. Instruction in the Bible, Christian living, worship, religious education, church history and homiletics are indicated. At the same time he is going to lead a church which is a far cry from the student congregation of The University of the Philippines or a large and wealthy metropolitan church. Students will be taught to lead churches composed of *peasant farmers and laborers* of fourth to seventh grade education, though a few will have studied in high school. The curriculum to meet these needs will have to be carefully constructed.

The course should be of two years, increasing to three as soon as the pressure permits. In the beginning to provide pastors for multiplying rural churches, especially able students, after a single year's study, might be assigned to some rural church for a year or two, after which they would return to the seminary for a second year.

Where should these schools be? Rural seminaries, theological training schools or Bible schools, to produce pastors for Standard Rural Churches, should soon be built in suitably rural surroundings in the four major language areas. Existing seminaries and theological training schools, which make no distinction between training men for urban and rural pastorates, are located in large towns or cities and divorce men from the rural areas rather than feeding them into the barangay congregations. Possibly some urban training institutions could be switched to the specialized task of producing finely equipped men for the thousands of barangay congregations which should soon dot the land; but it would be much better if theological

education for rural pastors could be done in rural surroundings by professors who themselves were thoroughly committed to multiplying churches among the 50,000 barangays and who believed that such a program was the highest calling.

4. Ordination. We recommend that rural pastors be ordained men. This poses a problem that must be frankly faced. The concept of a pastor as a highly educated man, able to speak and minister effectively in congregations composed of the middle and upper classes, has a firm grip on most missionaries and most America-returned national leaders. Roman Catholic priests are highly educated men. "All ordained men must be highly educated. All must receive the same kind of education. All are by rights members of the governing body of the denomination. We will not tolerate ordained men who are thoroughly rurally oriented, paid in part in kind, and feel themselves to be part of the masses." Such thinking has till now held the center of the stage in many denominations.

We believe it is erroneous. To reach the two great classes of society in the Philippines (and other lands, too) two kinds of ordained men are needed. Both must be ordained, because both are shepherds of souls. Different standards of remuneration must be laid down because the two kinds of congregations can pay at different rates. A congregation where the average income is 800 pesos a year cannot pay its pastor at the rate of 3,000 pesos. This is especially true if the congregation is small.

For the more highly paid city pastors who now govern the denominations to rule that barangay men must not be ordained (unless they complete an expensive course intended to prepare men for urban churches and then choose to go to pastorates paying 150 pesos and 50 kilos a month, rather than to urban pastorates paying 500 pesos a month) is unchristian. Furthermore, it will block the churching of the 50,000 barangays.

When the Roman Catholic Church was the only Church in these islands and controlled the government, it could enforce the ruling that the only priest for 10,000 people would reside at the poblacion. Everyone must go there to have his infants baptized. Only at the poblacion church was the mass heard. Only there was salvation available. People had to come to the church. But that control cannot be exercised today. Even yesterday it was a bad system. It left the rural populations densely ignorant. Till late in the 19th century all priests were Spaniards. Filipinos were not ordained to the priesthood. None ever became a bishop. The ordained men were in a sense colonial

administrators.

We propose that, in opposition to all this, rural pastors whom God calls to serve in barangays on salaries paid by peasant congregations be considered a proper part of the ordained ministry. The proposal will require sizeable readjustments. Unless they are carried out, all talk about placing a church in every barangay is just talk. The role of an unordained rural worker, catechist and village preacher will not be a sufficiently appealing calling to enlist thousands of the ablest and most devoted men in the countryside.

5. Qualifications for Rural Pastors. Should the candidates be grade school or high school graduates? The former have these advantages: they would more happily accept a permanent status as barangay pastors. They might also fit into the rural situation better. They would have had six or eight years' experience working in the fields or forests before training. Since they would not be assigned to churches at poblacions they would not use their church incomes as a means to study in high school and then college and then seminary. On the other hand, high school graduates would have more prestige and be more generally useful. Whether high school or grade school graduates are taken, they should be top flight men.

6. Objections. The following objections to the rural pastor have been raised and need answers. a) That these "lesser trained men" will "work up," using their incomes as pastors for extended periods of study. Instead of full-time rural pastors, we would get men who looked full-time but who were giving their churches as little and their studies as much time as possible. Answer: This is a real difficulty. Such "working up" can easily happen. It is less likely when candidates for training are chosen from young married men (married in their communities to country girls), are trained in the Philippine language instead of English, are assigned only to barangay churches, not poblacion churches, and are respected as ordained leaders. Yet all of these together are not a complete answer. Possibly it is not wise to prevent all "working up." Some men might properly become city pastors.

b) If ordained men who work for lower salaries are available, will not churches that should have urban pastors call these cheaper men? Answer: Since these men will have been trained in Ilocano, Tagalog, Cebuano or other languages and served in barangay churches exclusively, city churches are not likely to call them. Congregations where half the members are high school and college graduates will call graduates of city seminaries. They will be satisfied with them only.

c) Since a two-year course, able professors and good buildings are in prospect, why not take college graduates and turn them into rural pastors? The barangays should get the ablest men in the land. The answer to this question lies partly in the income gap between college graduates and peasant Christians. With rare exceptions the pastor who has gone to college and graduated from a city seminary will not spend a lifetime in the barangays. He will not be satisfied with a salary pitched on the rural level. His wife will be even less satisfied. The answer lies partly in the fact that for many years into the future city seminaries, which train city pastors cannot supply the crying need of the town and city churches.

d) Does training paid pastors for the barangays do away with the unpaid lay workers? No indeed. More volunteer lay workers will be needed than ever before-*because a Standard Rural Church puts ten to 20 lay leaders to work where an outlier stimulates two or three.* Furthermore, every Standard Rural Church will develop outliers, and the poblacion churches will develop more outliers, so that together with the creation of a barangay level of pastors will go *intensification* of the training of unpaid lay leadership.

As we set our hand to the discipling of the whole nation, we must look beyond the poblacion congregations and multiply strong churches in as many of the 50,000 barangays as possible,

### **The 1980 Team**

Nothing in the history of missions quite matches what is now happening in the Philippines. For the first time, a significant portion of the evangelical leadership of a nation is committed to the task of discipling a whole nation by so covering it with a grid of churches that there will be a congregation within easy access of every citizen. We have no precedent for this proliferation of denominational five- and ten-year programs bent on mobilizing memberships for the reaching of very large and quite specific church-planting and new-membership goals. There has never been such a systematic attempt by such a variety of denominations and missionary agencies to work at the measurable goal that could lead to the discipling of *panta ta ethne* of a country.

There has been a brilliant beginning. Jericho and Ai have been captured, Gibeon has surrendered and the five kings have fled. Still, there is much land that remains to be tread upon and claimed for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we must look to The 1980 Team that must commit itself to the completion of the task.

A significant event in March 1979 laid the foundation for the building of this 1980 Team. For at that time the Philippine Leadership Conference on Evangelism (PHILCOE) held on the campus of Febias College of the Bible brought together evangelical leaders to further consider various ways by which the evangelization of the nation could be speeded up. A spirit of warmth and unity pervaded the 163 participants and observers representing 73 different denominations, churches and para-church organizations. In an editorial after the conference, EVANGELICAL THRUST editor Faustino Ruivivar wrote: \*

It was most gratifying to see the evident willingness of most of the participants and observers to cooperate with others in all areas of evangelism. There was even a note of repentance on the part of some over a "separatist" attitude of the past.

There was no call for "unity" or ecumenism-just simple recognition that those who preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (in its authentic New Testament form) are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pentecostals will continue to be Pentecostal, and Baptists will be as Baptist as ever-but because of PHILCOE there has been a baptism of love among the brethren. This was very evident during the touching observance of the Lord's Supper at the closing of the conference.

Also because of PHILCOE we can expect more and better cooperation among Evangelicals in the propagation of the Gospel.

The spirit of PHILCOE, graciously provided by God the *Holy Spirit*, is precisely what is needed for the Church of the Philippines to move forward to the completion of the discipling of the nation. The Body of Christ must see itself as one body, must work together in unity and love towards its magnificent and common goal.

At the same time, PHILCOE was quite right in recognizing the diversity of the team. Each denomination and para-church organization functions most efficiently by doing what it best knows how to do. Exuberant Pentecostals will reach one kind of Filipino, Wesleyan Methodists another. Youth organizations will win university students to Christ that perhaps no church could reach. Furthermore, no ecumenical structure can compete with

denominations in their ability to mobilize and train and raise funds for continuous, effective evangelism and church planting.

True unity will come not with everyone working at *unity* but with everyone working towards a common *goal*. As the whole Body of Christ in the Philippines more and more commits itself to the task of planting an evangelical congregation in every barangay of the nation, it will drop all that remains of a competitive spirit and rejoice at every advance of the Gospel into each new area.

The various movements, missions, denominations and para-church organizations will function as a team, each contributing its expertise, experience, heritage and sense of calling towards the common goal. There will be times when all will set aside their own activities to cooperate in city-wide or nation-wide proclamation and incorporation, but the normal pattern will be for each denomination to work parallel to the others in obedience to the Commission.

The 1980 Team that must work side by side to disciple the nation is composed of many members. These can be grouped into various categories, 11 of which we identify in this chapter. This is the team that must press on until every person in the Philippines has had a genuine opportunity to understand the Gospel and see it lived out by someone of his own kind, with whom he identifies, so that he can make a real choice for or against Jesus Christ.

*Conservative Evangelical Church Planters* have recently been and will continue to be the superstars of this team. It is they who have expressed the greatest concern for the discipling of the nation and from amongst them have come most of the significant church planting programs. If eight denominations we have studied in this category\* continue to grow at the pace of the 1974-1978 years, they alone will reach a total of 64,333 congregations with 3,791,829 members by the year 2000. (The Adventists would add another 4,865 congregations and 1,036,203 members.) By themselves, these eight Churches could see a church in every barangay.

There is no guarantee, of course, that they can keep up this pace-though some will undoubtedly exceed it. Still, these eight represent only a fraction of the conservative evangelical denominations. If all such denominations would average just 10 percent annual growth-less than what has proven possible-the goal of 50,000 congregations would be greatly exceeded. These groups should also aim *at least at 10 percent* average annual membership

growth and work towards a goal of five to ten evangelistic Bible study groups per congregation. Furthermore, they must constantly adjust to circumstances, reevaluate, re-plan and reassign resources. The potential

\* Southern Baptists, C&MA, Assemblies of God, Conservative Baptists, Foursquare, Nazarene, Wesleyan and Free Methodist for 50,000 congregations or more among the conservative evangelical church planters is clearly there.

*The Conciliar Churches* are honored members of this team. They have a sparkling past record of effective church planting, and pockets of evangelistic concern spot most of their denominations. Furthermore, the IEMELIF developed a program that resulted in at least a one year spurt of growth and the Convention Baptists seem to have recovered full evangelistic health. If the latter continues to grow at its 1974-1978 pace, it will ultimately contribute 3,110 new churches to the end-of-the-century goal.

Of special note in the UCCP is the ministry of Nene Ramientos. After brilliantly serving as head of COWM, he returned to his own Faith Bible Church of the UCCP denomination to practice what he had preached. Since then the congregation has grown, has added full-time staff, has added a Tagalog congregation which meets in the mother church facilities, has planted an Ilocano church in the North, has helped start a Chinese church in Manila and has folded over 50 youthful converts of the 1977 Billy Graham Crusade. Ramientos himself serves on the church growth committees of both the Greater Manila Conference and the National Planning Committee of the UCCP. From these positions he hopes to restore evangelism and church planting as prime concerns of the United Church. He estimates that 90 percent of the UCCP rank and file want solid Bible teaching and evangelistic outreach. As he had committed his life and energy to Christ the Only Way, so now has he committed himself to awakening this sleeping giant.

*Indigenous Denominations* will have an increasing role in the discipling of the nation. The Independent Catholic Church, the Iglesia ni Cristo and the IEMELIF all demonstrate the ability of Filipino leaders to start and spread their own movements. The deeply evangelical March of Faith could exceed the successes of these indigenous denominations in this generation.

Indigenous Churches are cropping up all over the nation. After serving as a COWM coordinator, Ben Gaitano planted 80 churches in less than four years in eastern Mindanao. In northern Luzon, Rev. C.R. Cortez has seen his

Philippine Native Crusade plant about 250 churches in 17 years amongst tribal peoples in the Sierra Madre Mountains. Another former COWM coordinator, Ernesto Ungcho, began a church planting ministry with evangelist Greg Tingson about 95 kilometers south of Bacolod in the west Visayas. In three years their nondenominational Good Shepherd Church has grown to 500 members in one central and nine daughter congregations. The Rev. Evangelista Siadora reports the venerable Philippine Missionary Fellowship will soon have 100 Filipino home missionaries discipling in rural and tribal areas. By mid-1979 it had 110 full churches and daughter churches and scores of evangelistic Bible study groups in the process of becoming new congregations.

One great advantage of new Churches such as March of Faith, One Way and Good Shepherd is that their names sound neither foreign nor distinctly Protestant. With the many other obvious advantages of movements that spring up from native soil, other denominations should encourage and pray for indigenous denominations. In some cases they should loan workers and grant funds to them. Young Filipino leaders should dream big dreams and plan great plans. God can use them in a marvelous way in reaching their people for Jesus Christ.

*Foreign Mission Societies* should not take the resurgence of indigenous activity as an excuse for pulling back their own forces. Forty million Filipinos await the experience of the new birth. There is more than enough work for all. When the harvest is ripe, even the children, women and grandparents help cut and bundle the rice stalks. The time will come when both government and Church will not be as open and the harvest not as plentiful. Let us work while it is day. Night comes-all too soon.

But let's use our resources for the *harvest* not for the administration of hundreds of good activities that are the responsibility of the Church. Southern Baptists set a good example by freeing a good percent of their missionaries for pioneer church planting efforts. Conservative Baptists saw a spurt of excellent growth when they sent missionary Bob Skivington to open a very responsive area in Mindanao. The Foursquare Church *could* have seen perhaps hundreds of churches planted in other regions had they sent missionaries of the passion and conviction of those who pioneered Mindanao and Romblon.

Reaching the goal of 50,000 churches in the Philippines will fire the imagination of Churches and Missions in scores of nations. Evangelism and

church planting resources poured into the Philippines at this time will pay dividends all over the world. For missions, now is the time not to withdraw but to pour in reinforcements.

*Local Churches*, regardless of affiliation or degree of independence, must see themselves as the backbone of The 1980 Team that will disciple the nation. Denominational programs get nowhere without the enthusiastic involvement of each local congregation. Evangelism and pre-evangelism by Christian mass media, youth specialists, children's workers, Bible correspondence courses, public crusades and the like is incomplete until inquirers and converts are folded by local workers into existing or new churches. Indigenous denominations founded by dynamic young Filipinos find their growth stunted with the aging or passing of their leaders *unless the vision is caught and perpetuated by each cell of believers*. Furthermore, it is at the local church level that there is the best information on what barangays and homogeneous units of society within a radius of ten kilometers are still unchurched. Only at the local church level can there be understanding of how best to approach an unchurched community; only local believers day in and day out can demonstrate the power and joy of the Gospel.

Every local church do the following in the 1980s:

1. Carry out annual research that will reveal what barangays within ten kilometers are still unchurched.

2. Set and work toward annual goals for evangelistic Bible study groups. A good standard is one group for every ten youth and adult members.

3. Set and work toward annual or five-year goals for planting new churches. A minimum is one new church every five years, but most congregational goals should be higher.

4. Set and work toward annual financial goals for missionary church planting. Each local church should be involved in its own or its denominational program of church planting beyond a ten kilometer radius and among other cultural groups in the nation.

5. Challenge and send its own young people out as missionary church planters.

If even half the local evangelical churches followed these simple and achievable guidelines, the nation could easily be completely churched by the end of the century.

*Para-church organizations* have two vital roles to play in the discipling of the Philippines and the reaching of 50,000 congregations in just 20 years.

The first deals with radio programming, magazines, literature sales and distribution, seminars and related ministries aimed at the edification of the Church. *Along with* teaching more Bible content, how to be filled with the Spirit, how to manage the local church, how to grow in fellowship and body life and the like, there must be intensified challenge and training on what the Bible has to say about winning the lost, how to have home Bible study groups, how to multiply daughter churches, how to treat the rural populations fairly, how to witness to friends and neighbors and so on. Christian radio programming and literature should be filled with testimonials and statistics of growth. As Christians continually hear what the Holy Spirit is doing through others, they will be challenged and motivated to go out and do likewise. Para-church organizations with their ability to get their message out across geographical boundaries and denominational lines can do much to create and intensify a growth mentality and train the Church in those activities that will most directly result in disciples being made.

The second deals with their direct evangelistic activities. These must be so structured and related to local churches that converts will most likely become parts of new and existing fellowships of believers. Dr. Joe Arthur of the C&MA, first in Mindanao and then in Cebu, demonstrated through his PSALM ministry that even youth and campus evangelism can result in new churches planted and new members gained. When all evangelistic agencies begin evaluating themselves *not* in terms of how many decisions are made but in terms of how many new disciples are enrolled in existing churches and how many new churches are planted with new converts, *then* they will truly be working *along-side* the local church in the discipling of a nation.

*Philippine Crusades* is in a special category of para-church organization, for it does not limit itself to one specific task such as radio work or campus evangelism but rather serves the whole Body of Christ in a country in whatever way is needed to help it disciple the nation. Dr. Met Castillo spoke of this special role in his 1978 report to C&MA headquarters in New Jersey:

O.C. Ministries (parent organization of Philippine Crusades) has a great role to play in evangelization of the Philippines, and would be the one to organize regional/national Church Growth workshops in 1979 or 1980. This is needed because many denominations set five- or six-year goals after the '74 workshop and they will be finishing their programs and will need to have an objective evaluation. O.C., being

transdenominational, is the only one who can do it. The COWM was the first stage in this Church Growth generation and set up the first model for us to go by.

By publishing this book and holding three regional seminars in November 1980, Philippine Crusades is partly filling this role. Furthermore, it has organized and funded a separate resident team for the responsive Mindanao area, which will hold dozens of grassroots seminars over the next few years. As personnel becomes available, similar resident teams will be established in the Visayas and Ilocano regions.

In the last fifth of this century Philippine Crusades could also greatly assist the discipling of the nation and the reaching of the goal of 50,000 barangay churches through extensive research and dissemination of results. It should keep tabs on which peoples and homogeneous units are being saturated with churches and which are being neglected. To proliferate congregations in some units of society to the neglect of others will not result in the discipling of a whole nation regardless of the total number of churches planted.

*Bible schools, seminaries and other training institutions* are a key part of the 1980 Team. They must make church growth a central part of their curricula and practice. Not only should students learn all about evangelism and church planting in the classroom, but they should be *required* to plant new churches during their three or four years of study.

Furthermore, training institutions must find ways to equip newly converted, mature laymen to pastor congregations. Even should the 100 Bible schools in the Philippines double their present strident bodies, they still could not produce enough pastors to lead 50,000 congregations, most of which will be in rural areas. The theological education by extension (TEE) movement has the potential of filling this gap *provided* it is geared to producing pastors for new churches and avoids merely taking current pastors out of evangelistic work to spend more time in the study and to "work up" into urban pastorates.

*The Renewal Movement within the Roman Catholic Church* is of great significance and cannot be ignored in The 1980 Team. We spent several hours in Manila talking with Malcom Bradshaw and some of his researchers concerning this movement. Bradshaw, a church growth student and writer who has been personally involved and closely watching it for more than five

years, concludes that there is much genuine conversion among the new little groups springing up in many parts of the Philippines. Indeed, the Bible study program of some of these is much more in depth than any I am familiar with in Protestant circles. It leads first to an experience of the new birth and then to a deep knowledge of basic Bible themes.

Furthermore, the movement seems to be growing rapidly. His researchers studied one group in Cebu, for example, that started with just nine people in 1977 and exploded to about 10,000 in just two years! Bradshaw feels that an estimate of 100,000 Roman Catholics participating in the movement through the end of 1978 would not be far off the mark.

Not all Evangelicals would agree with the premise that these converted Catholics could best reach their kind by remaining in the Church and "converting" some of the forms of worship of the Church. "How can I stay in the Catholic Church and not denounce its practices?" argues one former defender of the Daughters of Mary and Sons of St. Paul.

Still, to the extent that the movement leads to genuine conversion of masses of Roman Catholics and forms them into congregations of baptized believers functioning as New Testament churches, to that extent the Roman Catholic Renewal Movement can be considered as part of The 1980 Team to disciple the nation.

*The Chinese Church* has been an effective evangelistic force among its own people and also a vital part of almost every major cooperative evangelistic effort in the whole of the Philippines as well. The Chinese will continue to play a vital role in the discipling of the nation.

To do so, Chinese Christians first of all must aim at a ten-fold increase in their number of churches so their 60 in 1979 becomes 600 by the year 2000. This would provide a church for every 1,500 or so of their number. Reaching their own ethnic units can be done best by them and is their responsibility.

Secondly, the Chinese Church should increase its already good giving for missions among the various peoples of the Philippines. The resources of the Chinese Christians are considerable and their responsibility before the Lord is commensurate.

Rev. Wesley Shao's United Evangelical Church in Manila provides a prime example of what can be done on both fronts. The mother church has not only planted 12 daughter congregations (six completely self supporting and seven with full-time pastors) but has also supported many Filipino missionaries by giving one third of each Sunday's offerings to missions.

*Tribal workers* are in the best position to see whole peoples (nations) disciplined in a relatively brief span of time. Since most tribes are small, tightly-knit units, it is possible for the Gospel to sweep through an entire group in a period of a few years-or even a few months-once people begin to respond. Reports abound of such people movements around the world, and some Christward movements of this nature are now in process in the Philippine highlands. If the whole nation of the Philippines is to be disciplined, the 75 or so tribal pieces of the mosaic totaling millions of souls must be as thoroughly church-ed as the lowland peoples. Tribal workers should therefore pray their prayers, set their goals, plan and implement their plans to see that congregations are *multiplied in each* tribal group.

Church planting among the tribes has its own unique set of circumstances. Tribal authority structure and migratory life style (in some cases) call for different strategies than church planting in the cities. To disciple the Muslim tribes will require even greater perseverance in finding and pursuing the right approach. The missions and denominations doing tribal evangelism know best the culture in each particular tribe. We encourage these stalwart missionaries-national and foreign-to persist in finding the approach that will most directly lead to the multiplication of congregations in each tribal group.

These 11 members of The 1980 Team have an historic opportunity. For the first time ever the various members of the Body of Christ in a good-sized, modern nation are in a favorable position to work together towards the systematic discipling of their nation. The process has been well begun, the people for the most part are incredibly responsive and other circumstances are most favorable. Moving forward with the discipling of the whole nation of the Philippines will provide a model for Church and mission of many other lands. It will be a brilliant demonstration of a national Church taking the Great Commission seriously. It will bring honor and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

May The 1980 Team be driven, unified and empowered by God the Holy Spirit for this glorious task.

### **Make All Nations My Disciples**

The Philippine dream which this book has described, of discipling a

whole nation and developing a biblical congregation in every village and every urban neighborhood, may be dreamed in many other nations. The day is fast approaching when discipling whole nations will be generally regarded as the truthful account of what God has done and the responsible planning of what God wants us to do.

Christians who march under the Great Commission are confident that the discipling of whole nations is God's will, and that before the whole can be counted as Christian, most of its parts must accept Christ. If the whole social fabric is to become Christian-structures as well as persons-massive discipling must occur.

Churches should keep steadily in mind the great liberation of soul and body, society and productivity, which will result when at least a third of a nation-state is discipled and in it many ethnic units have become substantially Christian. Discipling a nation has enormous social implications. Making it thoroughly Christian is the best way to break the chains off its wrists, bring it out of the prison house and transform it into what God intends for it to be. The best service anyone can render to any nation is to spread the Gospel through it and multiply in it thousands of congregations of the Redeemed. Illuminated by the Word and impelled by the Holy Spirit, such churches will revolutionize values, organizations, relationships, rights and obligations. A more humane, just, merciful, and reverent way of life will come into existence. Discipling (D 1 and D 2) goes forward together with perfecting (D 3) to the glory of God and enormous benefit of men.

This volume has set forth the steps that should be taken to disciple the great nation of the Philippines. We now propose that in many other countries the discipling of the whole nation be accepted by Churches and Missions as today's goal, by God's grace to be achieved during the next few decades.

Other whole countries in which this goal is eminently possible are: Korea, the two huge islands of New Guinea and Kalimantan, Uganda, Zaire, Namibia, Central African Republic, Kenya, Zambia, Liberia, Ghana, Angola, Ivory Coast, West Cameroons, Madagascar, Rhodesia, Malawi, Ethiopia and Tanzania excluding Zanzibar. Conferences of denominations and missions should be convened in all these lands to plan in a responsible way to complete the reaping of these ripe fields.

Regions which can become and are becoming substantially Christian are: North Burma, North West Thailand, South Sudan, Southern Chad, East Cameroons, Southern and Central Nigeria, West Sierra Leone, the Maya,

Quechua and Aymara halves of Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, the Hill States of North East India and some others.

A kindred but distinct task is the discipling of nations and regions that once were substantially Christian and now have entered a so-called post-Christian era. In these many citizens count themselves in some vague way as Christians but in reality are Marxists, Humanists, Secularists, Hedonists, or in a word, Christo-pagans. Less than one in ten really believes in Christ, worships God regularly and accepts the Bible as final authority. These regions also must be *discipled* or perhaps *discipled again-D 1*. The Philippines represents both types of nations-those turning from non-Christian Faith for the first time and those finding Christ personally after being born into a nominally Christian community.

All should lay to rest the contention that nominally Christian nations and regions cannot be discipled. For example, it might be argued that since the Philippines turned from Animism to Roman Catholic faith between 1500 and 1650, it was discipled long ago. Yet, the deplorable marginality of Island Christianity, the fact that in the Philippines Catholic priests themselves often say that not more than ten percent are real Catholics and the lack of living congregations in most of the 50,000 villages indicate that the nation has yet to be discipled.

The same position should be taken toward a "Protestant Nation" like Jamaica. In it, *14 out of 15* of the adults of the masses between the ages of 18 and 48 are actively *out* of any church. They follow "the Jamaican way of marriage" living out of wedlock with a succession of mates. They claim "to belong to the community" of this or that denomination, but are very marginal Christians. In Jamaica a strong Catholic mission, concluding that the nation was still undiscipled, began evangelizing the masses after World War II. We say, God bless that mission. We have grave difficulty with some important Roman Catholic doctrines and observe that (despite the fact that officially Catholics only *revere* the saints and the Virgin Mary) many Catholics *worship* them rather than the Risen and Reigning Lord. Nevertheless, having seen the deplorable spiritual condition of the masses in Jamaica, we welcome evangelism by any Branch of the Church that subscribes to the three ancient creeds and believes in Jesus Christ and the infallible Word of God written.

In short, if some nation has become very nominally Protestant or Catholic, we hold that it is yet to be discipled-D 1. The discipling of its citizens in the D 3 sense is still far away.

Should any of our fellow Christians declare, "We shall have nothing to do with any D 1 discipling. The only Christians we seek to bring to birth are those who graduate from Christ's School *with honors*," we would wish our comrades God's blessing. At the same time we would observe that, in the Early Church as described in the New Testament, the Lord and His apostles did *not* build around the Church a six-foot wall and admit only those spiritual athletes who could jump over it. Even the apostles, after years with our Lord, thought He was going to drive the Romans into the sea. And Paul writes much of "babes in Christ," and declares that they are *not* saved by their own "righteous work." The brute fact is that disciplined persons (D 3) come chiefly from disciplined *ethne* (D 1 and D 2). This was certainly true in the New Testament Church.

D 3 discipling (which THE BRIDGES OF GOD called "perfecting" and which includes the conversion and sanctification of the individuals of each new generation) is certainly one of the permanent tasks of the Church. It must, however, *never be substituted for D 1 and D 2 discipling of panta ta ethne*.

In case the D 1 discipling of some ethnos, district, cluster of villages, or nations has been sketchily achieved-and this is common-it must be done again and this time more thoroughly.

The standard will probably change. The degree of intentional meaningful Christianity able to be achieved must be taken into account. When there was no printed Bible in the current language, one degree of discipleship was possible for the illiterate masses. Now that literacy is nearly universal and the Bible is available in almost every tongue, God requires another degree.

The re-discipling and further discipling that must be done is sometimes attempted by the first denomination to arrive in that land-Roman Catholic or Protestant. Sometimes that first denomination (let us call it Branch One of the Universal Church) suffers so greatly from arteriosclerosis that God sends in Branches Two, Three and Four of the Church Universal. It is fascinating to watch the complex process by which some Branch of the Church evangelizes and disciples (D 1) a nation. This nation then settles down to a deplorably low state of Christianity. After some decades or centuries some renewed Branch of the Church comes in and multiplies its congregations across the land. At first it is vigorously opposed by the original Branch, which hurls charges of sheep stealing against the "invader." Gradually the greater measure of divine life which the Holy Spirit through the incoming Branch infuses into its congregations, their greater joy, peace, and

righteousness and their greater measure of abundant life, stimulates Branch One to believe that by being more obedient to the Bible, and more yielded to the Holy Spirit, its congregations too may achieve that greater degree of blessedness.

Often the best thing which can happen to Branch One, indeed the only thing which will rouse it from its lethargic and corrupted condition, is for Branch Two, Three and Four to convert a substantial number of the existing nominal Christians to a more biblical Christianity.

One sees the process going on all over the world. Pentecostals arrive and convert sections of Roman Catholic and Protestant lands and thus breathe the breath of life into them. Renewal movements flourish in the older denominations. Roman Catholics "invade" Protestant lands. Note mounting Roman Catholic numbers among the American Blacks, Anglicans in England and many other populations.

The Ecumenical Movement, seeing all this, cries "foul." Yet the fact remains that, when any Branch of the Church establishes a monopoly, it tends to become ossified, form prevails over life, evils spread through the Body-drink, a famine of the Word of God, humanism, skepticism or other disease. The streams of living water that should flow from all Christians dry to a trickle. Services are held, ceremonies are performed, robes multiply and grow ever more colorful and transformed lives full of the Holy Spirit are less often seen. The medieval Church, or the modern Church in France, Sweden, or California, are good examples of this process.

At this point, God, we believe, sends in renewed obedient, Bible believing, spirit-filled Branches of the Church to disciple that nation again (D 1 and D 2) and to emphasize that D 1 must be accompanied by and followed by D 3 discipling, i.e., perfecting. Then the original Branch of the Church wakes, copies the good activities of Branch Two (renaming them, of course; it seldom admits to copying) and begins to appropriate the riches which God has prepared for all those who love Him.

The Church in some nations (such as Greece today and Latin America between 1600 and 1880) is or was so strong that it can keep other Branches of the Church out. When this occurs, the ossified Church usually continues ossified. The cold Church continues cold.

It is fascinating to watch the interplay of these spiritual forces in thousands of regions in the world. The motives are seldom entirely spiritual. Seldom does either Branch One or Branch Two act solely from a desire that Christ be honored. Political motives, self aggrandizement, various

advantages to this or that organization, economic or nationalistic considerations, all play a part. Yet the process ought not, therefore, to be denounced. Mixed motives are part of the human lot this side of heaven.

True ecumenicity welcomes all Christian activity, even when it rebukes one Church and praises another. Pentecostal Churches have been a tremendous blessing to the Church of Jesus Christ, though up till quite recently they were roundly excoriated by almost all branches of the Church. True ecumenicity would have welcomed them and not waited until "charismatic movements" (against major opposition) broke out and flourished in the older Branches.

What does all this have to do with *the discipling of many whole nations*? We see three main meanings. *First*, since the Church has in large or small measure been established in almost every nation on earth, there will continue to be this interplay of various Branches of the Church Universal. One Association of Branches (The Pentecostal it may be, or Anglican, Baptist or Roman Catholic) will try to win converts and multiply congregations from among the nominal (*and therefore winnable*) members of another Association. All Catholic Missions in Protestant territory and all Protestant Missions in Catholic territory fall under this head. Instead of bewailing and denouncing such action, let us accept it as normal procedure. If it results in all becoming more biblical and spiritual, God will be pleased.

*Second*, as all Branches press forward to the discipling of whole nations (D 1 and D 2) instead of resenting and resisting such action, Churches and Missions should welcome it. It should result in every Church and every Mission turning each of its congregations into a household of God, full of Bible-obeying, Christ-honoring, spirit-filled men and women, and multiplying congregations among the many unchurched. That is the best defense against and the best response to a vigorous Branch of the Church, which through D 1, D 2 and D 3, is creating new units of shalom in some moribund Branch of the Church, some unreached population.

*Third*, the discipling of each whole nation should be the constant goal of all Christians in it. The goal is never merely to reform some existing denomination. It is never merely for Cursillo Catholics, let us say, to enroll all ordinary Catholics in their ranks. The goal is to bring the whole nation and all its parts to conscious discipleship. It is to see every knee bow and every tongue confess Christ in the strict biblical sense.

In short, we hold that in the late twentieth century there is urgent need and great opportunity for much D 1 discipling of whole *ethne*, castes,

districts, villages, towns, cities and nations. Some of these hold themselves to be non-Christians. Some hold themselves to be Christians in a nationalistic or cultural sense. *Both should be disciplined.*

The discipling of each nation is a unique task. Each presents a different combination of circumstances-different economic potential, different language, different social structure, different sense of need and different receptivity to the Gospel. God prepares various segments of the mosaic to accept Christ. The fullness of time comes in different decades or different centuries. The way in which the discipling of the whole nation of the Philippines has proceeded and will proceed is different from the way in which Kenya is being and will be brought to "the obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26). Consequently in Liberia, let us say, some of what this volume has advocated will be largely and some only slightly applicable.

Let us take the creation of tens of thousands of Standard Rural Churches-the churching of 50,000 barangays. This is largely applicable to lands where multitudinous villages are a permanent part of the picture. For example, in Korea churches are much more numerous in the cities than in the myriad villages that dot the shoe-string valleys. In the fishing villages of the east coast, congregations are rare. If the whole nation of Korea is to be disciplined, tens of thousands of strong rural congregations, led by rural-minded men married to the fine village women who like to live in villages, are essential. Presbyterian Hugh Linton in the early seventies was putting a congregation within walking distance of every man, woman and child in the province of Soon Chun. He was finding it very difficult to induce adequately trained Korean pastors to leave Seoul for permanent service in the remote valleys. They wanted urban amenities for themselves and first-class educational opportunities for their children. If Asia and Africa are to be adequately churchied, hundreds of thousands of strong rural congregations must be founded. These must not be ill-fed appendages to town churches. They must be vigorous, biblical congregations. Chapter 15 on Standard Rural Churches is largely applicable to Korea and other nations of the developing world.

At the same time, the rush to the cities is an irreversible tide in all nations. Consequently the discipling of the cities is urgent. We thoroughly agree with what Roger Greenway writes in *DISCIPLING THE CITY*: \*

The church's evangelistic task... demands that every ward, apartment house and neighborhood have a church faithful to God's Word established in it (p. 104).

Large wards and neighborhoods should have several such churches. Everything we have written in THE DISCIPLING OF A NATION about churching the Philippines is immediately applicable to urban areas of other lands. If the whole nation is to be disciplined, both the countrysides and the cities must be adequately churched.

One way of mission, which this volume has steadily advocated and which is applicable to all nations, is that of setting challenging church growth goals. Reverently and intelligently setting goals is a method that God has abundantly blessed to the growth of His Kingdom. During the seventies, it has played an influential part in the recapturing of the forward movement by Churches and missions in the Philippines. Stalled denominations of a hundred congregations set goals to double that number. One of 30 set a goal of 200; one of 500 set a goal of 900. Indeed, James Montgomery's great vision of placing a vigorous Bible believing congregation in every barangay in the nation (50,000 congregations!!) is a fine example of goal setting.

Goal setting ought to become a regular part of the life style of all congregations and denominations that march under the Great Commission. It honors God and helps Christians do His will.

But some conditions in the Philippines are vastly different from those in Bangladesh, Ivory Coast or the secular masses of France or Canada. For example, most people in these beautiful islands believe that the Bible is God's Word (but have never read it), that God is our Father but confuse Him with Joseph of Nazareth. They pray to saints much more often than to the Lord. This semi-Christian mind-set contrasts sharply with the non-Christian mind-set of the 3,000 castes in India, the seventy million Muslims in Java and the billion men and women in mainland China. There, strategies and methods useful in the Philippines should not be used. There, methods that suit those lands are required. Where conditions are different, missions and Churches, as they press forward discipling the nation, need to hold the long-range goal steadily in mind while adopting suitable local strategies in presenting the Gospel and multiplying churches.

Use of exact terms, such as "discipling a whole nation," enables us to see that some nations have now arrived at a stage where for the entire nation to become Christian is a present possibility, but some have not. For example, it would be foolish to declare that we intend to disciple the whole nation of Afghanistan in the next 20 years. In Afghanistan such discipling is, to be sure, the unalterable long-range goal. We are commanded to preach the

Gospel to the whole creation not merely to the receptive parts of it. Some day that nation will become receptive. It will send messengers to Christians saying, "Come over and help us." But that is not its mind-set today. Today the task in Afghanistan is seed sowing evangelism, Christian presence and kindly service.

Seeing each nation as it really is *and devising an evangelistic approach that will please God in that nation at that stage* is urgently needed. Much of the confusion and bickering in missions today is caused by ardent souls advocating for the whole world a course of action which ought to be carried on in their small part of the globe. Developing nations and guilt-stricken Europeans declare that mission is justice, not evangelism. Young denominations with an abundance of well-trained national leaders carelessly shout for a moratorium on all missionaries, forgetting that *only missionaries (whether brown, black, white or red) can reach three billion of earth's population*. Near neighbor evangelism can reach only those of like culture with ourselves.

Our proposal then "to disciple whole nations" is not immediately applicable to all nations: but it *is immediately applicable to many*. When slightly modified to include regions which are parts of some nations, *it is applicable to a great many*. Furthermore, all work should be done with the *goal* in mind of discipling whole nations. Our methods should always be those that will *most directly* lead to the discipling of nations, whether we can expect to complete the task in ten years or 200. We trust that in all those regions and nations where discipling the whole is clearly possible, our proposal becomes a rallying point. We pray that the vision will spur all missionary-minded Christians on to bold, courageous action. Where according to God's unswerving purpose a people becomes reachable, Christians should devote life and treasure to discipling it. When a field ripens we are commanded to pray God to send enough reapers into it. All talk of "the end of the mission era" is tragically mistaken. *We stand today at midday in missions*. Much has been done; but by far the greater part remains. Let us disciple whole nations while it is yet day. The night comes.

## **Appendix**

TABLE I

	PHILIPPINES COMMUNICANT MEMBERS				1974-1978		
	1964	1974	AAGR* %	DGR** %	1978	AAGR* %	DGR** %
1. Southern Baptist	8,410	21,003	9.6	150	33,879	12.7	230
2. Conservative Baptist	627	2,703	15.7	331	5,664	20.3	536
3. Christian/Miss. Alliance	16,000	26,830	5.3	68	51,629	17.8	414
4. March of Faith	-	5,000	-	-	13,000	27.0	990
sub total	25,037	55,536	8.3%	122%	104,172	17.0%	382%
5. Seventh Day Adventist	82,217	146,173	5.9	78	197,572	7.8	112
6. Convention Baptist	24,500	34,205	3.4	40	47,000	8.3	121
7. Assembly of God	9,382	35,500	14.2	278	45,000	6.1	81
8. IEMELIF	25,000	17,163	-3.6	-42	26,983	12.0	210
9. Foursquare	9,800	17,274	3.2	25	25,097	9.8	154
10. Nazarene	500	2,571	17.8	414	5,887	23.0	693
11. Wesleyan	1,800	3,956	8.2	120	6,038	11.1	188
12. Free Methodist	744	2,228	11.6	199	4,097	16.4	212
Total 5-12	153,943	254,520	5.2%	65%	357,674	8.9%	134%
Total 1-4	25,037	55,536			104,172		
Grand Total	178,980	310,056	5.6%	73%	461,846	10.5%	171%

† Average Annual Growth Rate

\* Decadal Growth Rate

TABLE II

	PHILIPPINES ORGANIZED CHURCHES				1974-1978		
	1964	1974	AAGR*	DGR**	1978	AAGR*	DGR**
			%	%		%	%
1. Southern Baptist	80	242	11.7	203	522	21.2	583
2. Conservative Baptist	11	49	16.1	345	81	13.4	251
3. Christian/Miss. Alliance	693	500	-3.3	-39	830	13.5	255
4. March of Faith	-	60	-	-	200	35.1	1928
sub total	784	851	.8%	8.5%	1,633	17.7%	410%
5. Seventh Day Adventist	960	1,223	2.5	27.4	1,512	5.4	70
6. Convention Baptist	280	310	1.0	10.7	442	9.3	143
7. Assembly of God	312	542	5.7	74	600	2.6	29
8. IEMELIF	280	79	-13.5	-254	126	12.4	221
9. Foursquare	190	279	3.9	47	416	10.5	171
10. Nazarene	15	47	12.1	213	103	21.7	611
11. Wesleyan	35	65	6.4	86	95	10.0	158
12. Free Methodist	21	26	2.2	24	41	12.1	212
Total 5-12	2,113	2,571	2.0%	22%	3,335	6.7%	92%
Total 1-4	784	851			1,633		
Grand Total	2,897	3,422	1.7%	18%	4,968	9.8%	154%

\* Average Annual Growth Rate