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THE BASIC ISSUES IN AN EVALUATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION	
A. Subject Stated.....	viii
B. Problem Stated.....	ix
C. Sources for the Study.....	x
D. Procedure for the Study.....	xi
E. Abbreviations.....	xii
I. AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE I.M.C.....	1
A. Introduction.....	2
B. Factors Giving Rise to the I.M.C.....	2
C. Creation and Development of the I.M.C.....	5
1. Creation of the I.M.C.....	5
2. Expansion of the I.M.C.....	7
3. Crisis in the I.M.C.....	8
4. Revision of the I.M.C.....	10
5. Integration of the I.M.C.....	12
D. Factors which caused the I.M.C. to change..	13
E. Conclusion.....	15
II. AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF THE I.M.C. BY ITS MEMBERSHIP.....	16
A. Introduction.....	17
B. Strengths of the I.M.C. in the light of its accomplishments.....	18
1. A Setting for Consultation on Missionary Problems.....	18
2. A Forum for Theological Debate in Missions.....	21
3. An Opportunity for International Fellowship.....	23
4. A Stabilizing Influence on the Growing National Churches.....	26
5. A Functioning Agency to Assist in World Missionary Needs.....	28
a. Orphaned Missionaries.....	28
b. Union Institutions.....	29
c. International Review of Missions...	30

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6. A Forerunner to the Cooperative.....	31
International Church	
7. Summary.....	33
C. Weaknesses of the I.M.C. in the light of its failures.....	34
1. The Overemphasis on Institutions.....	34
2. The Domination of the West.....	38
3. The Implementation of Programs.....	39
4. The Over Dependence upon Individuals...	42
5. The Dependence upon the National Church	43
6. Summary.....	47
D. Conclusion.....	47
III. AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF THE I.M.C FROM CONTEMP- PORARY AGENCIES.....	49
A. Introduction.....	50
B. The Evangelical Foreign Missionary Association.....	51
1. Rise of the N.A.E.....	51
2. Rise of the E.F.M.A.....	53
3. The I.M.C. and Compromise.....	55
4. Area of Conflict Between the Evangelic- al and the I.M.C.....	57
C. The Interdenominational Foreign Missionary Association.....	59
1. Rise of the I.F.M.A.....	59
2. The Relationship of the I.F.M.A and the I.M.C.....	60
D. The Associated Missions of the Internation- al Council of Christian Churches.....	61
1. Rise of the A.M.I.C.C.C.....	62
2. The Relationship of the A.M.I.C.C.C. and the I.M.C.....	63
E. Summary and Conclusion.....	65
IV. THE EMERGING ISSUES FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE I.M.C.....	68
A. Introduction.....	70
B. Historical Issues.....	70
1. Need for the Council.....	70
2. Changes in the Council.....	71
3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Council	73
C. Theological Issues.....	74
1. Cooperation and Compromise.....	74
2. The Nature of the Church.....	76

INTRODUCTION

Issues in an Evaluation of the International

Missionary Council

Introduction

A. The Subject Stated.

The commission of Jesus Christ to his disciples to evangelize the world with the 'gospel' is the heart of Christian missions. When individuals today become disciples of Christ they also are confronted with the same commission of communicating the 'good News' to the ends of the earth. The first missionary, the apostle Paul, went forth in response to the call of Christ and although he had difficulties, his world was not nearly so complex as the twentieth century. Today due to the complexity of our world and the diversity of the Protestant movement there are a great many difficult decisions that the modern missionary candidate must make.

Members of major denominations considering missionary service are confronted with the ecumenical missionary movement as expressed under the direction of the World Council of Churches. Before an individual can appreciate and support the cooperative movement in missions he must understand the development of the

ecumenical movement. This thesis will attempt to help in an evaluation of ecumenical missions by presenting the basic issues in an evaluation of the International Missionary Council. This Council has given birth to the present ecumenical movement and as a result of last years meeting in New Dehli is now functioning within the structure of the World Council of Churches.

This thesis will not attempt to evaluate the Council but will present the basic issues for evaluation which grow out of the Council's development since the great Edinburgh missionary conference in 1910. The ecumenical missionary endeavor has not been supported by the whole of Protestantism, for conservative groups are critical of the Council's philosophy and program; therefore this thesis will contain evaluative material from these groups, but the author will not attempt any evaluation.

B. The Problem Stated.

The problem related to this subject concerns the missionary candidate as he decides whether or not to become involved in ecumenical missionary cooperation. Since the I. M. C. is directly responsible for the present ecumenical missionary situation the issues necessary to evaluate the Council will assist the missionary candidate in solving the problem of ecumenical cooperation for himself. The following questions point up the nature

of the problem. How has the recent activity of the I.M.C. effected the world missionary situation? Is the mission of the church being fulfilled through ecumenical missionary endeavor? Why are conservative groups not in sympathy with the ecumenical missionary movement? What was the historic purpose of the I.M.C. and how has the integration of the Council with the W.C.C. effected that purpose? This thesis will provide material that will help the missionary candidate answer these questions and solve the major question of cooperation with the ecumenical missions.

The personal problem confronting the author of this thesis is whether or not the ecumenical movement that has grown out of the I.M.C. is truly the will of God as he desires to see the commission of Christ fulfilled today. In order to answer the above questions and clearly to understand the current world mission movement the historical developments of the present situation must be known. The thesis will assist the individual in understanding the I.M.C. and give material which will help solve the problem of cooperating with ecumenical missions.

C. The Sources for the Study.

The sources that will be used in this study are primarily books and reports that deal directly with the historic meetings of the I.M.C. The minutes of every

meeting of the Council have been considered and data relating to each meeting was included in the research. The one major historical source was the book, Ecumenical Foundations, by Richey Hogg, which the writer found to be comprehensive and extremely helpful. Selected articles and pamphlets that resulted from the Council meetings have also been consulted.

In order to determine the reasons behind the lack of conservative cooperation with the I.M.C. letters were sent to the various leaders of the conservative groups. (Appendix number two) The replies and some general material from books have been used to discover the conservative position. The reports of the most recent Council meetings and a personal interview with a missionary leader have been used to discover how the Council's membership evaluates the current situation in missions.

In organizing the paper and in finding much original data Dr. Herbert Jackson, the director of the Missionary Research Library at Union Seminary in New York, has been consulted. All major sources needed for this study that are included in the Bibliography are available through the Research Library at Union Seminary in New York City.

D. Procedure for the Study.

The procedure used to determine the issues in an evaluation of the I.M.C. will begin with an historical

sketch of the Council. This sketch will briefly deal with various aspects of the Council's development during the years such as: the creation, expansion, crisis, revision and integration of the Council. The Chapter will provide a general historical framework of the Council. Chapter two will suggest evaluative material of the Council from its own membership, which will include both the strengths and weaknesses of the Council. Chapter three will present material from the conservative view point concerning the Council, since many of these groups are not in sympathy with the Council's activities.

The fourth chapter will draw from the first three chapters the emerging issues in any evaluation of the Council. These issues will be those believed to be the most significant. A brief conclusion will follow chapter four in which the writer will state his impressions of the Council. Except for a brief statement in chapter four the writer will attempt to present the material objectively.

E. Abbreviations.

In the writing of this thesis the following abbreviations will be used:

International Missionary Council	-	I.M.C.
World Council of Churches	-	W.C.C.
International Review of Missions	-	I.R.M.

American Council of Churches - A.C.C.
National Association of Evangelicals - N.A.E.
Evangelical Foreign Missionary Association - E.F.M.A.
Interdenominational Foreign Missionary
Association - I.F.M.A.
Associated Missions of the International Council of
Christian Churches - A.M.I.C.C.C.

CHAPTER I

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL

MISSIONARY COUNCIL

Chapter I

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE I.M.C.

A. Introduction.

Chapter one will provide the historical framework in which to understand the International Missionary Council. It will trace the factors leading up to the Council's creation and present briefly the actual rise and development of the Council. The chapter will also point up various factors which have helped to change the Council during the years. This historical sketch will show the Council as a whole; the following chapters will then present various parts of the Council.

B. Factors Giving Rise to the I.M.C.

The official beginning of the ecumenical movement has been set as 1910, yet the roots of the movement stretch back over a hundred years before that date.¹ The conference that met at Edinburgh did not begin in a vacuum, for as Hogg states, there were at least four streams of cooperation during the 19th century that flowed

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1. Hogg, William Richey, Ecumenical Foundations, New York Harpers and Brothers, 1952, p.15.

together at the Edinburgh meeting.¹ These four streams of cooperation demonstrate the major factors that promoted the creation of the I.M.C.

The first stream of cooperation was a series of conferences convened by missionaries in the lands where they served, to explore immediate problems of theory, practice and organization.² The purpose of these meetings is reflected in the following quotation:

Inevitably as missionaries moved into India, China, Japan and countries of Africa and Latin America, they encountered problems requiring joint consultation. Nearly always this meant sharing helpful information and providing mutual counsel. In a few cases it meant alleviating friction that arose when one society encroached on territory or appealed to converts of another.³

The second stream is comprised of a series of conferences held in England and the United States beginning in New York in 1854 and culminating in New York in 1900.⁴ These Anglo-American conferences were the counterparts of the meetings which were being carried on by the missionaries on the fields. Alexander Duff has summarized the purpose of these meetings when he said; "it was not intended to form a new missionary organization, but one of the assemblies' objects would be a free interchange of information among the existing missionary organizations."⁵

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1. Ibid., p.16.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 16-17.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Ibid., p. 35.

The third stream of cooperation that gave rise to the I.M.C. was the development at home base of continuing consultative groups directly concerned with problems of missionary administration and policy. These home base operations were at first simple in organization, for they were informal times of meeting and discussion of problems and techniques. Many groups met informally all over Europe and in so meeting gave rise to the Edinburgh meeting of 1910.

The last and most important stream leading to the 1910 conference was the growth of the Student Movement.¹ The student movement had a strong beginning when the Young Men's Christian Association began in England. The group grew in size and frequently held conferences. In the 1880's the Inter-Seminary Missionary Alliance was established and Seminary students were awakened to the necessity of missionary activity. These meetings not only quickened missionary concern among theological students, but it also prompted leadership for the whole student movement. Under the leadership of John R. Mott these movements gradually were brought together as the World Student Christian Federation. The purpose of this group was to unite Christian youth around the world into a common missionary federation.

At the meeting in Edinburgh these four streams

1. Ibid., p.81.

of cooperation were represented. They had developed independently of each other, but in 1910 converged into the I.M.C. and became associated with the whole trend toward ecumenicity. The meeting in 1910 must be seen as a time of drawing together of separate threads in order to create one strong united body.

C. Creation and Development of the I.M.C.

1. Creation of the I.M.C.

The conference at Edinburgh, as indicated above, must be seen as a consultative gathering as it drew together the four streams of cooperative movement. The primary purpose at Edinburgh was to study the missionary problems of the day in order that necessary programs could be adopted to fulfill the great commission.¹

The main work of the meeting consisted in the representatives of the societies and boards surveying their resources and sharpening their tools for the conquest of the non-Christian world in this generation.² The delegates at Edinburgh were gathered out of a common concern for missions and studied various topics such as; non-Christian religions, the church on the mission

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1. Gairdner, W.H.T., Echoes from Edinburgh, 1910 London, Fleming Revell, 1910, prefatory note.
2. Skoglund, John E., To the Whole Creation, Valley Forge. The Judson Press, 1962, p.26.

field, education, preparation of missionaries, and cooperation with promotion in unity.¹ These topics and the general spiritual nature of the gathering gave those present an optimistic feeling concerning the future of missions.²

Edinburgh had many practical results. The conference had demonstrated Christian unity and the possibility of increasing cooperation between missionary agencies. It had promoted and stimulated missionary giving and helped promote cooperation between denominations. The most significant result of Edinburgh was the creation of a continuation committee that was to meet frequently during the coming years and to call another meeting when it felt the Christian world was ready. Under the leadership of the great statesmen, John R. Mott, this committee functioned with amazing efficiency.

In 1921 at Mohonk, New York, a meeting was called as a result of the continuation committee's activity, with the purpose of organizing a Council. It was in this meeting that the actual I.M.C. came into existence. In order to encourage international cooperation the constitution of the Council deliberately stated that there would be no theological basis for membership. It was established on the principle of spiritual fellowship growing out of a desire to cooperate in the cause of Christian missions.³

1. Gairdner, op.cit., p. 19.

2. Skoglund, op.cit., p. 27.

3. Minutes of the I.M.C., Lake Mohonk, New York, 1921.

Edinburgh started the movement by establishing a committee, and Mohonk established the Council by drawing up the original constitution. The Preamble to the constitution and the original list of functions of the Council can be found in Appendix number one.

2. Expansion of the I.M.C.

After the actual creation of the Council it grew rapidly as representatives from the non-western churches became involved in the Council's structure. At the second World Missionary Conference at Jerusalem there was a spirit of enthusiasm present due to the involvement of non-western delegates from the younger churches. At Edinburgh there had been no official representatives sent by the churches on the mission fields, but at Jerusalem more than one-fifth of the delegates came from churches which had been established through missionary activity.¹

The emphasis at Jerusalem was upon a restatement of the Christian message which gave rise to evangelistic efforts on many mission fields, but as time passed the economic decline of the west limited available funds and the spirit of Jerusalem was destroyed. In spite of the darkness of the world in the thirties the Council continued to expand its scope of activities. The Council started Christian literature campaigns in Africa, stimu-

1. Skoglund, op. cit., p. 22.

lated rural missions, encouraged evangelism of the Jews, and utilized social and economic research as a foundation for planning among younger churches. When the Council met in Madras in 1938 the world outlook was dark under the pressure of war,¹ yet the meeting of the Council reflected real growth. One sign of growth can be seen in the fact that half of the delegates were now from the younger churches. The national church leaders were becoming more deeply involved in the Council's work. The discussions at Madras centered in defining the Christian Church and younger churches were recognized as as much a part of the church as were older churches. This prompted a more independent spirit in the younger church leaders. The Council had grown rapidly from 1921 to 1938 and in spite of the economic depression it knew continuous expansion.

3. Crisis in the I.M.C.

The I.M.C. has grown during years when there was severe crisis in the world. The first crisis faced was the First World War, for it prevented the continuation committee created at Edinburgh from meeting frequently for the purpose of organizing the Council. The war delayed the creation of the Council and could have destroyed it. The economic depression of the thirties limited

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1. The World Mission of the Church, findings and recommendations of the I.M.C. at Madras 1938., New York, I.M.C. 1938, P. 6.

funds for missions and thus prevented the Council's ability to function consistently. The Second World War started immediately after the Madras meeting and as a result prevented the implementation of the Madras suggestions concerning evangelism, building the church, approaching non-Christian religions, and the training of missionaries. The war also prevented the leadership of the Council from meeting and therefore cut communications between the older and younger churches. More recently the atomic age and the cold war struggle between the East and the West has provided an air of tension in which the Council was forced to work. These above tensions in the world cut short the effectiveness of the Council at times, yet in spite of them the Council became very well established.

The Council has also experienced internal crisis over a theological issue. In 1921 the Council was confronted with a group of fundamentalistic Christians whose belief in the verbal inspiration of scripture and infallibility of the Bible made them challenge the basis for fellowship of the Council.¹ Hogg has described the crisis as divisive, sectarian, and exclusive.² It led some groups, like the China Inland Mission, to withdraw from common ventures; and it caused others to refrain

1. Hogg, op. cit., p.216.

2. Ibid, p.216.

from cooperating at all. The critical issue in this crisis was whether or not doctrinal uniformity was essential for fellowship and cooperation. The original constitution of the Council had attempted to avoid this crisis by excluding a doctrinal statement, but it still became an issue and is still one today as will be seen in chapter three. The Continuation Committee in 1923 affirmed its implicit theological base and took a stand against those who demanded a full definition of faith as the basis for cooperation. This crisis caused some groups to leave the Council and for a period hurt the development of the movement.

The internal crisis the Council faced in 1922 and the continuous external crisis in the world reflect some of the difficulties the Council faced as it grew from an informal conference in 1910 to part of the W.C.C. in 1961.

4. Revision of the I.M.C.

The second World War had divided the Christian world, so at Whitby in 1947 when the Council met again, the primary function of the Council was to re-establish the old ties from before the war. The Council at Whitby began a process of evaluation of the missionary scene in the light of the difficulties growing out of the war. The conference at Whitby evaluated the current missionary world and created an optimistic program of expectant

evangelism and partnership in obedience. This program aimed to revolutionize the missionary world and when it failed a process of re-evaluation and revision within the Council took place.

At the Willingen conference in 1952 the topic discussed was the missionary obligation of the church, which had also been the subject of the W.C.C. in 1948. The Willingen meeting contributed studies on the theological basis of missions; for much rethinking in missions was taking place. This rethinking was held in a spirit of despair which had never been felt at Whitby or at any other Council meeting.¹

The fact that the Council became a forum for theological debate was a radical shift from the original purpose of the Council. The Willingen conference provided a stimulant for thought, but it did not clearly set forth a program of action. Both the Willingen meeting and the Ghana Assembly of 1958 provided challenging addresses but the concreteness of the suggestions of Madras and Jerusalem was missing. The more recent Council meetings in terms of procedure and purpose were revised after the war and the original objectives of the Council were not accomplished. Chapter four will state the fact that the changes in the Council became a significant issue for an evaluation.

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1. Jackson, Herbert, Some Old Patterns For New In Missions, New York, Occasional Bulletin, Missionary Research Library, 1961, December, p.1.

5. Integration of the I.M.C.

One of the questions which was first raised at Willingen when the leaders of the I.M.C. were saddened by the failures of Whitby was whether or not the I.M.C. should continue as a separate organization or integrate with the W.C.C. During the Willingen meeting and again at the Ghana Assembly this question was constantly raised. Many felt that the two Councils overlapped so frequently that they would both be helped by integration. The matter was debated at Ghana and a commission was established to consider the possibility of merger in the near future. The practical aspects of this merger were worked out between the Ghana meeting and the New Delhi meeting of 1961. The first order of business at New Delhi was to vote on the question of integration; when integration was accepted by the membership of the Council a worship service for integration was held. All the ecumenical leaders hailed the union, but some groups such as the Congo Council of Churches opposed it and withdrew from the Council. The integration was practically a unanimous decision. The I.M.C. as a separate organization had lost its unique function to the Christian community and therefore became an integral part of the W.C.C.

D. Factors which caused the I.M.C. to change.

The worlds of 1910 and of 1960 were extremely different in terms of the world situation, the needs of the church and the needs of the missionary world. In 1910 the mission boards functioned as independent entities, and there was little cooperation between missionary minded people. In 1910 there was a crying need for a united front to solve mutual problems and discuss missionary techniques. The creation of the Continuation Committee and the establishment of the I.M.C. helped meet this need for mutual assistance. The early Council was motivated by the urgency of the Christian task and proceeded to work for the evangelism of the world through cooperation. The more recent Council has functioned as a forum for theological debate, and the urgency of Edinburgh and Jerusalem has not been present. This change in spirit and purpose of the Council is generally admitted by ecumenical leaders.¹ The following paragraphs will state some of the factors which led to this change in the Council.

One factor has been the rise of nationalism and the gradual de-emphasis of the western missionary. As a result of the activity of the I.M.C. a spirit of independence was cultivated within the national churches

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1. Jackson, Herbert, Director of Missionary Research Library, Union Seminary, New York, December 1962, personal interview.

within mission countries, so that the nationals became more responsible for their own evangelism and church work. The rise of the national church along with the trend toward political independence in the 1950's has changed the practical functioning of the I.M.C. As a result of the current nationalistic spirit in politics and church life the needs of the world and the mission field today are vastly different from the world of 1910. If the needs of 1910 no longer exist as they did, then the structure created to meet those needs must be adjusted to solve the newer, more complex problems of 1961. Nationalism in the church and in the politics of mission lands has produced needs which have caused the policies of the I.M.C. to change.

Other factors which were briefly mentioned under the heading of crisis on page eight of this thesis concern the entire changing world. The economic depression of the thirties and the war of the forties with the use of atomic power radically changed the optimism of the early twenties when the Council began. As the world changed needs of people and countries changed. China is an illustration of how communism can influence an entire land, that once was a key missionary center. New strategy was needed to meet problems of a new age, this meant that the old I.M.C. had to change.

One last factor was the change in personnel within the Council. Men like Mott and Oldham are not easy to duplicate. It was the efforts of these men which had kept the Council moving. When these men retired a natural change took place as new leaders were appointed. This factor and others mentioned above show why the Council was forced to change from the old to the new.

E. Conclusion.

This chapter has presented an historical sketch of the I.M.C. as a whole. It has presented the factors which gave rise to the I.M.C. in the nineteenth century, presented briefly the creation and development of the Council and has shown some of the factors which changed the Council in recent years. The Council must be seen as the work of dedicated men of God. The entire movement was established upon the Christian foundation of love and spiritual harmony. The Council began in 1921 and only last year became the missionary arm of the W.C.C. This historical sketch has been presented to give a background for the Council and to point up some of the possible issues in evaluating the I.M.C. as will be seen in chapter four. The whole question of historical change will be dealt with in chapter four as a major issue in evaluating the Council.

CHAPTER II

AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONARY COUNCIL BY ITS MEMBERSHIP

CHAPTER II
AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONARY COUNCIL BY ITS MEMBERSHIP

A. Introduction

In chapter one the brief history of the International Missionary Council was presented to give a historic framework in which to interpret and understand the Council. In order to help determine the basic issues in evaluating the International Missionary Council this chapter will deal with both the strengths and weaknesses of the Council as seen by individuals in sympathy with the ecumenical missionary movement. The strengths of the Council will be seen in the light of what the Council has accomplished during the fifty years of its existence, and the weaknesses will be presented in the light of the failures of the Council which have been recognized by many leaders concerned for ecumenical missions.

In order to make an honest evaluation of the Council both the strengths and weaknesses must be seen; then the evaluator must weigh the material in his mind to determine whether or not the strengths outweigh the weaknesses. This chapter will only include evaluative material which comes from individuals who are in sympathy with the Council. Chapter three has been

reserved for the consideration of groups not directly a part of the ecumenical missionary concern.

B. Strengths of the I.M.C. in the light of it's accomplishments.

It is impossible to list everything that has been accomplished by the I.M.C. during its existence of fifty years, but the following pages will present accomplishments that this writer believes to be most significant in order to help determine the basic issues in evaluating the Council. This list is not exhaustive and has most likely overlooked specific accomplishments of the Council, but it will give the overall achievements of the Council.

1. A Setting for Consultation on Missionary Problems.

One of the original functions of the I.M.C. when it was established in 1921 was to provide an atmosphere for consultation between individual missionaries and missionary boards on varying mission fields. This function is clearly set forth in the constitution of the organization. The constitution states that one purpose of the Council was:

To stimulate thinking and investigation on missionary questions, to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in all countries and to make results available for all missionary societies and missions. 1

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1. Minutes of the I.M.C. Lake Mohonk, New York, 1921,p.36.

This was one of the original purposes of the Council and in all its major meetings this was the desired end toward which the meetings moved.

The I.M.C. brought together missionaries and national leaders that had common problems to be solved. One particular concern which made this function of consultation important was the question of comity. R. Pierce Beaver in a recent volume on the history of comity has shown how the Edinburgh Conference was able to deal with this particular concern. Beaver indicates that with the first conference at Edinburgh "the discussion of comity in international missionary conferences came to an end."¹ Now attention was focused on positive and effective means, systems, and institutions of cooperation and on movements towards organic union among the young churches.² The Council provided a setting for the discussion of comity and other related difficulties.

At the meetings of the I.M.C. a procedure developed which permitted the free exchange of ideas concerning problems which included: evangelism, language barriers, national leadership and medical missions. Hogg has stated that one of the main purposes of the Council was to quicken the whole church to its world wide evangelistic responsibilities.³ In an atmosphere of free discussion this

1. Beaver, R. Pierce, Ecumenical Beginnings in Protestant World Missions, New York, Nelsons, 1962, p.78.

2. Ibid., p.78.

3. Hogg, op. cit., p.370.

purpose was carried out. At the meetings of the Council small committees would wrestle with particular problems and bring conclusions and suggestions to the entire body of delegates. These reports can be found in the documents growing out of each major Council meeting.

To illustrate the practical nature of the consultative exchange between groups one typical report from a Committee of the Willingen Conference will be considered. The problem faced by this Committee was to obtain information on a clear definition of the missionary vocation and to discover the best program for training missionaries.¹ This Committee discussed this particular concern thoroughly and in their report presented a forthright statement concerning it.² Their report included material which justified the need for missionaries in the light of the mission of the church today. They affirmed their faith in God's use of the church and proceeded to present in practical terms what the mission field needed to implement the purpose of God for the church.³ The Committee then indicated a detailed series of suggestions to all mission boards as to what they felt to be essential in the training of the missionary.⁴ This one report is illustrative of the consultative nature of the I.M.C.

1. Goodall, Norman, Missions Under the Cross, New York Friendship Press, 1952, p.208.
2. Ibid., p.208.
3. Ibid., p.208.
4. Ibid., p.212.

From the beginning of the I.M.C. the major meetings have provided missionaries a setting to raise questions concerning evangelistic method, learning a foreign language, the use of institutions for medical and educational purposes, and the development of the national churches. The meetings were a time of constructive sharing on mutual problems; this then is one of the Council's major accomplishments.

2. A Forum for Theological Debate in Missions.

One of the cardinal principles in the creation of the I.M.C. was the removal of ecclesiastical or theological debate from the Council meetings. The Preamble of the Constitution directly states that "no decision shall be sought from the Council, and no statement shall be issued by it on any matter involving an ecclesiastical or doctrinal question."¹ Recently Erik Nielson has restated this original objective of the Council leadership when he said "it was however, made clear from the beginning that questions pertaining to doctrinal and ecclesiastical differences between churches were to be outside the orbit of the I.M.C."² Although it was the desire of the originators of the Council to keep matters of faith and doctrine out of the debate it became an impossible task. As the Council grew and the problems in the world of secularism and communism became more complex

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1. Mohonk Minutes, op. cit., p.35.

2. Orchard, Ronald K., ed. The Ghana Assembly, New York Friendship, 1957, 204.

it became clear that the underlying motivations for missions had to be clearly stated. Nielson reflects the opinion of many when he states a significant question, "It is a very real question whether the I.M.C. can escape critical study of underlying concepts."¹ As a result of a deep sense of need the Council at Whitby and particularly at Willingen discussed and debated the theological foundations of missions. This debate was also being carried on in the World Council of Churches and the debate in the I.M.C. only contributed to the growing concern on this topic.

The Willingen report is prefaced by the following statement which reflects the desire to discuss the theological framework of missions:

It was at this point that what began as a process of study introduced by the I.M.C. Research Secretary broadened out into a wider process in which an attempt was made to pursue concurrently the work of theological inquiry and the task of policy re-examination. 2

This statement indicates that Willingen was attempting to contribute to the theological inquiry that had been started in the W.C.C. The leadership of the Council felt in the light of the world situation that this was extremely necessary. Norman Goodall has indicated the detailed purpose of Willingen in relation to developing a theology of missions in the following words:

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1. Ibid., p.204.
2. Goodall, op. cit., p.12.

What the I.M.C. attempted, within the severe limits of its central resources, was to foster wider interests in this enquiry, to formulate some of the issues at stake in it, and to secure the collaboration of those whose experience and equipment enabled them to make a contribution of special value to it. 1

It can be stated in the light of the most recent meetings of the I.M.C. at Whitby, Willingen and Ghana that the Council permitted debate of and inquiry into the theology of missions. The reports and speeches growing out of these meetings provide a wealth of information which contributes strongly to an understanding of the theology of missions. Skoglund in a recent book has stated his view of the Willingen conference and why he felt it was successful; "while the Willingen results were not conclusive, Willingen did move the Christian cause forward in an understanding of a theology for missions."²

The I.M.C. though not originally intended as a forum for debating theological problems, has provided recently a forum where debate and study were carried on. The leaders of the Council believe this to be a significant accomplishment of the I.M.C.

3. An Opportunity for International Fellowship.

From the very beginning the I.M.C. has provided an atmosphere of deep Christian fellowship and it has

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1. Ibid., p.204.
2. Skoglund, John E., To the Whole Creation, Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1962, p.26.

been considered by Hogg as one of the major achievements of the Council.¹ The extent of the fellowship reached every corner of the world. It was originally a Council of western missionaries that met together to solve problems and to have fellowship which grows naturally out of mutual respect. As the Council grew this aspect of fellowship grew also, for with each meeting a greater number of different racial groups were represented. The Council provided a place where different racial and cultural groups could come together in an atmosphere of warm friendship, to share individual convictions and ideas. This spirit of fellowship and unity of spirit were part of every great Council meeting.

The atmosphere of fellowship and cordiality can be illustrated in the devotional and spiritual nature of the Council meetings. The meetings were always held in the awareness of the presence of God, and spiritual enrichment was a part of the function of every Council meeting. M.A.C. Warren states in an article for the International Review of Missions that the I.M.C. "brought Christians of many races and cultures and ecclesiastical traditions physically, mentally and spiritually together."² This gathering together of peoples into one location fostered mutual recognition of races and of

1. Hogg, op. cit., p.368.

2. Warren, M.A.C., "The Missionary Obligation of the Church in the Present Historical Situation." International Review of Missions, vol.39, 1950, p.393.

cultures in different countries. As a result the wall which existed in the early twentieth century between the western and eastern Christian churches was broken down.

The achievement of fellowship is one of the major highlights of the Whitby Conference. Latourette and Hogg in reporting on the Whitby Conference have been deeply impressed with the significance of the fellowship at Whitby. Nine years had elapsed since the Madras meeting, now Whitby brought together Christian friends who had been separated during the second World War. The following paragraph from a report on Whitby illustrates the nature of the fellowship.

At the close of another one of these services there were prayers in many languages coming freely from the hearts of those there made one...the prayers that came from the depths of Christian hearts were in German, in Suto, in Spanish, in Tamil, and in Danish. No one could translate them all, but in that united company of the Spirit in which they were uttered, all were understood...The living bond, the reality of the fellowship in Christ, was never more real. This was a unity which no man could create and which no man could sunder.¹

The I.M.C. fostered a united Christian spirit between peoples and therefore helped give a universal meaning to the body of Christ. Every race and culture was seen as part of the Christian family as a result of the close ties of fellowship growing out of the meetings of the I.M.C.

Hogg closes his discussion on the significance of

1. Latourette, K.S., Hogg, W.R., Tomorrow is Here, New York, Friendship Press, 1948, p.71-72.

the world wide fellowship which the I.M.C. fostered, by stating the fact that the entire movement of the Council from Edinburgh to New Delhi was cultivated in the spirit of prayer and worship. Every session of every conference grew out of the sense of God's work through the Council. "Confronting tasks of almost incompassable magnitude, those who came together in prayer were forced again and again to confess their dependence upon God and their essential unity in discipleship."¹ It was this oneness of the Christian world community which gave, as Hogg puts it; "meaning to all else that the I.M.C. did."² The spirit of fellowship was therefore a major accomplishment of the I.M.C.

4. A Stablizing Influence on the Growing National Church.

At the Edinburgh meeting (1910) only a few national leaders were present, but by 1928 at the Jerusalem meeting of the Council almost a quarter of the delegates were nationals and by the Madras meeting in 1938 half of the delegates came from the national churches. The I.M.C. is directly responsible for the recognizing and the advancement of the national churches as part of the household of faith. Warren has gone as far as to say that the I.M.C. fostered the idea of the universal church of Christ by giving the national a place in the Christian

1. Hogg, op. cit., p.370.

2. Ibid., p. 370.

community.¹ Within the framework of the I.M.C. nationals were given responsible positions and were treated as equals with the western delegates.

The recognition helped advance the cause of the younger churches for although these churches were numerically weak they were granted the privilege of service within the I.M.C. which showed them their responsibility as a part of the world Christian community. The Council also aided the younger churches by providing their leadership with ecumencial training, and it also helped create and sponsor the development of National Councils of Churches within various nations and it kept the younger churches independent by making them responsible to a great degree for their own work.²

The Whitby conference illustrates the basic nature of the relationship which the I.M.C. attempted to foster between the older and younger churches. At Whitby the concept of partnership in obedience was discussed and the younger and older churches were seen as having equal responsibility in the missionary task. The areas of partnership were entitled: growth, personnel, finance, policy and administration.³ Each of these areas was controlled by the cooperative work of both the older and younger churches. Neither group had the right to feel

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1. Warren, op. cit., p.394.
2. Hogg, op. cit., p.371.
3. Witness of a Revolutionary Church, Statements Issued by the I.M.C. after the Whitby Conference 1947, New York, I.M.C. 1947. p.23-34.

superior or indispensable in accomplishing the missionary task.

The I.M.C. helped give the national churches within mission countries a sense of pride and self-confidence and without the help of the I.M.C. the growth of the national churches would have been greatly impaired. This must be seen as a major accomplishment of the Council.

5. A Functioning Agency to Assist in World Missionary Needs.

It would be impossible to list the specific ways that the I.M.C. has responded to the needs of the missionary world, but the following three illustrations will show the reader how the Council responded to selected specific needs with clarity and directness.

a. Orphaned Missionaries.

Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 had repercussions which were felt around the world, and which hurt the work of German missions. In the tropical island of Sumatra twenty-five German missionaries were suddenly cut off from all communications with their homeland, and were left without support from home, isolated in an area which could hardly afford to maintain them. Immediately upon hearing of this difficulty the I.M.C. went into action and through the New York and London offices was able to grant emergency money. As the war progressed

the same problem spread to other countries and before long hundreds of missionaries were isolated from their homelands. The I.M.C. was faced with the problem of maintaining the missionary work of these missionaries as well as caring for their personal needs. The national leaders in each of these countries were able to care for the missionary work and through a program of fund raising the Council was able to care for the needs of the orphaned missionaries.

The way the Council solved this problem of orphaned missionaries through raising funds is considered a major achievement; for the budget for the war needs was over two million dollars a year. Major denominations and individuals contributed and in an amazing way the funds were obtained. The cause for orphaned missions was so successful that the following bold statement was made: "as far as it is known, as a result of the Fund not a single Protestant missionary anywhere in the world has had to leave his post during the war because of lack of funds."¹ The response to such an emergency was truly a remarkable achievement of the I.M.C. and demonstrated clearly its ability to function as a practical arm of the Christian church.

b. Union Institutions.

The creation of union institutions has been one
1. Latourette and Hogg, op. cit., p.54.

of the results of the creation of national churches within countries, among the younger churches. In these institutions many denominations cooperate in the educational improvement of national workers. Through the support of the I.M.C. many schools on the high school, college and seminary level have developed. These institutions meet a definite need within the life of the national church and without the I.M.C. the educational life of the younger churches would have been extremely limited. The younger churches have been directly aided by the I.M.C. for leaders within the national churches have been trained in union colleges and seminaries. This response of the I.M.C. to meet the educational needs of people around the world is a definite accomplishment.

c. International Review of Missions.

The International Review of Missions has grown into one of the most practical accomplishments of the I.M.C. One of the functions listed in the original constitution at Mohonk in 1921 was: "to be responsible for the publication of the I.R.M. and such other publications as in the judgement of the Council may contribute to the study of missionary questions."¹ This practical function of the Council has been consistently carried out.

This publication has an international appeal

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1. Mohonk Minutes, op. cit., p.36.

as its title indicates for the articles are relevant not only to the western church but also to the eastern church. The journal functions as a general review of the mission scene; for each issue gives the current news in missions. The articles are historical, controversial and devotional. Each issue provides the reader with a series of current book reviews of missionary interest. The entire series of the I.R.M. provides a wealth of material on the nature of missions and missionary policy and practice. The volumes of the I.R.M. are impressive for their scholarship and relevancy of the material. The continuous publication of this review has given the Christian public reliable information on missionary activity. The publication must be considered as a remarkable achievement of the I.M.C. Year after year the journal has served as a forum for the most scholarly and advanced thinking in the missionary enterprise.¹

The above examples of the orphaned missionaries, union institutions and the I.R.M. have been presented to show the way the I.M.C. has responded to the needs of the Christian missionary world.

6. A Forerunner to the Cooperative International Church.

Warren has made this comment which summarizes the way the I.M.C. has affected the W.C.C. He states; "the I.M.C. has in fact made possible a W.C.C."²

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1. Hogg, op. cit., p.372.
2. Warren, op. cit., p.395.

He feels as do most ecumenical leaders that the I.M.C. is the direct cause of the W.C.C. The ecumenical leaders believe that this particular fact is one of the major accomplishments of the I.M.C. Hogg says: "there is adequate historical justification for suggesting that without the I.M.C. there could have been no W.C.C. as it was known in 1948."¹

One of the commissions at the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 was entitled: 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity.' As a result of the discussion of this subject a commission was established to discuss the faith and order of the Christian Church which lie at the heart of the problem of unity. This commission had difficulty functioning during the war and it was not until 1927 when the first World Conference of Faith and Order was convened at Lausanne that the trend toward unity began. At this meeting an international organization was established which was to grow into the W.C.C. in 1948 at Amsterdam.

During the period from 1910 through 1940 the I.M.C. supported the growth of the W.C.C. It also helped to cultivate its leadership. Men like Mott, Oldham, Paton, Brent and Temple were impressed by the nature of cooperation at Edinburgh and desired to see greater unity. The I.M.C. helped establish, as has been indicated above, national councils of churches in mis-
l. Hogg, op. cit.,
p.374.

sion nations and also cultivated a spirit of fellowship and cooperation which grew naturally into the W.C.C. The I.M.C. was able to break down many of the cultural barriers which would have hindered a universal council of churches. The I.M.C. had by fostering responsible leadership in younger churches opened the way to ecumenical cooperation. Since the actual creation of the W.C.C. the I.M.C. has worked closely with its missionary arm, and last year the parent organization, the I.M.C. was absorbed into the framework of the W.C.C. The creation of the W.C.C. must be seen therefore as a direct result of the I.M.C.

7. Summary.

The purpose of this section of chapter two has been to show the positive accomplishments of the I.M.C. from within its own structure. The I.M.C. has provided: a setting for consultation on missionary problems, a forum for theological discussion on missions, an opportunity for international fellowship, a stabilizing influence on the growing national churches, a functioning agency to meet world missionary needs and a forerunner to the universal church. This list has not been presented as exhaustive, but it is suggestive of why the leaders of the I.M.C. have felt the Council's work successful. These accomplishments must be considered in determining the basic issues in an evaluation of the I.M.C.

C. Weaknesses of the I.M.C. in the light
of its failures.

To determine the issues in making an evaluation of the I.M.C. its accomplishments must be viewed in relation to its weaknesses, for although the Council has much to commend it many of the ecumenical leaders have recognized areas of extreme weakness. The Council has accomplished a great deal, but it has also failed in certain areas. It is the purpose of this section of the chapter to present some of the weaknesses of the Council in the light of its failures. As was indicated in the above section this list will be only suggestive; it would be impossible to list every specific failure or weakness of the Council.

1. The Over Emphasis on Institutions.

Originally the sole aim of the early Protestant missionaries was evangelism. They purposed to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and confront men and women with their need of accepting Christ as Lord and Savior. Their method after conversion was to give the converts the Bible in the vernacular, teach them to read, and use medicine to heal their minor infirmities. As the missionary endeavor expanded it became obvious that the missionary endeavor had to expand horizons, for the converts had physical and educational needs that also had to be met along with the spiritual. "The functions which schools,

hospitals and philanthropic agencies sought to carry out were never questioned by the missionary societies which had created them."¹ The institutions that were created were to be functional in reaching men for Christ and they never were to become an end in themselves.

As the I.M.C. developed it recommended the use of institutions as a means of furthering the Christian message. The Council was not directly responsible for the institutions yet it failed to perceive adequately the gradual change toward institutional missions. The institutions were becoming ends in themselves rather than means to the end of winning people for Christ.²

At Madras the Council recognized:

the far reaching influence and usefulness of Christian institutions as a part of the witness of the church, and called for their close integration into the Christian program as a whole, and warned against the tendency to absorb an undue proportion of available resources and to become self centered.³

At the Whitby conference the Council repeated this call to maintain a close connection between the institutions and the life of the church, stressing the desire to keep the life of the institutions Christian.⁴ Gradually the Council failed to accomplish its intended purpose in institutions for its suggestions were not followed.

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1. Beaver, Pierce, Toward a More Effective Ministry Through Missionary Institutions, New York, N.C.C. 1953, p.6.
 2. Jackson, op. cit., personal interview.
 3. Beaver, op. cit., p.6.
 4. Ibid. p.7.

Institutions of high quality demanded an investment of considerable money. The work of hospitals, the administration of orphanages, and the maintaining of educational standards required specially trained personnel and special equipment. In order to implement the function of institutions so much money was required in the process that the institutions became an end in themselves.¹ As a result of their size the institutions were often placed under independent or semi-independent boards of trustees which led to their separation from the church. The I.M.C. during this period of change was unable to stop the trend for it happened gradually.

At Willingen the Council began to look at itself and was very unhappy about what it saw. The situation in China was growing darker and the institutions, such as; schools hospitals, rural service centers, and orphanages, which many believed would continue to be instruments of Christian service even after serious pressure had been exerted by the government on the church, failed. As the Willingen Conference studied the institutions it made the following statement:

The missionary enterprise is in great measure a colossal system of inter-church aid, with relatively little pioneer evangelistic advance on either geographic, cultural, or economic frontiers. The delegates saw also that at present the missionary enterprise was relatively immobile. 3

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1. Ibid., p.7.
2. Ibid., p.7.
3. Ibid., p.8.

The reasons for this was because the missionary institutions had taken so much money and man power, that they had absorbed a very large part of the available missionary funds. The mission of the church had become lost in a maze of hospitals, orphanages and schools. The prevailing view concerning institutions was that "functional work was in itself a witness."¹ As long as mission boards carried on this institutional work they believed they were fulfilling the Christian witness.

Beaver in his booklet on missionary institutions shows clearly that many problems have existed in all types of institutions. The first major problem in educational institutions is maintaining a well qualified staff. The Christian community within the national church could not supply the leadership required by the colleges, and missionary recruits from the west are few for this type of work. Non-Christians were then used to teach, which raises the question of whether or not an institution can be considered Christian without Christian leadership in its teaching staff. A second problem in educational missions was that of finances. As government supported the colleges more non-Christians paid fees and attended these colleges, and this cut the proportion of Christian to non-Christian students and changed the atmosphere of the institutions. As a result

1. Ibid., p.6.

Beaver states that "conversion in the college still continues to be negligible in number."¹ Every type of institution suffered from the same problem as Wilder has pointed out in a recent article concerning medical missions in India. He has said that the lack of properly trained Christian medical personnel is presently changing the institutions in India. When a hospital is staffed by non-Christians it is obvious that the institution can not expect to carry on its primary Christian mission.²

Willigen has summarized the problem:

"The problem of institutions is fundamentally a spiritual one. Technical and organizational matters cannot be treated as unimportant, but the level of spiritual life in an institution matters even more. To make institutions more effective is thus a question of making Christian the service of its staff, the personal relations of its members, and the cooperate worship and witness of its day-to-day life." ³

The failure of the Council in its handling of institutions can be clearly seen by Beaver's fresh insights into the problem. This must be recognized as a valid weakness of the Councils program.

2. The Domination of the West.

It is the feeling of Erik Nielson in his discussion of the Role of the I.M.C. that: "the I.M.C. in its thinking and work, in its whole atmosphere, is char-

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1. Ibid., p.18.
2. Wilder E.W., "Patterns of Christian Work in Changing India" I.R.M. vol 48, 1959, p.190-197.
3. Beaver, Institutions, op. cit., p.38.

acterized by a western mission-board perspective."¹
He does not mean this to be a direct criticism, but he does feel that it has hampered the development and successfulness of the Council. Since the originators of the Council were mostly from the western nations it is easy to see how this western domination would arise. This is reflected in the fact that all the chairmen of the Council were from the western nations.

The nature of western domination can be seen in the approach the west took toward missionary institutions. Beaver reports that the Willingen Conference discussed the patterns of missionary activity and discovered that "institutions were built on western patterns and supported by western funds."² As a result the younger churches and national councils were unable to share substantially in the work of the institutions because of the expense. Because of the power and money in the western world and since the two major offices of the I.M.C. were in New York and London the west dominated continually. This was considered unfortunate yet it must also be considered as a weakness of the Council.

3. The Implementation of Programs.

During the years following the Whitby and Willingen

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1. Orchard, Ronald K., The Ghana Assembly, ed., New York, I.M.C., Friendship Press, 1958, p.204.
2. Ibid., p.204.

Conferences of the I.M.C. many leaders began to evaluate the programs of the Council in the light of the mission of God. As one observed the practices of the Council in achieving their stated goals serious questions were raised. One of the greatest statesmen of Protestantism,¹ Walter Freytag, said while speaking to the Ghana Assembly in 1958, "the question is whether our present patterns of carrying out our (the missionary) task and the conception behind such patterns are the right expression of the obedience God wants from us today."²

At the Whitby meeting of the I.M.C. a spirit of fellowship and harmony was created due to the re-union of friends after the long war. In an atmosphere of common concern the delegates viewed the world and plans were put forward to re-establish the missionary objective of the church. The two programs begun were that of expectant evangelism and that of partnership in obedience. The delegates left the meeting with an air of enthusiasm, but within a few years the spirit of the missionary movement was again at a new low which is reflected in the way many individuals approached Willingen with despair.³ The impressive suggestions had not been implemented.

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1. Occasional Bulletin, Missionary Research Library Union Seminary, New York, vol.XII, No. 10, 1961, .p2.
2. Orchard, op. cit., p.139.
3. Warren, M.A.C., Missions Under The Cross, ed., Goodall, Norman, New York, Friendship Press, 1952, p.40.

This problem of how to implement excellent programs has been a critical weakness of the Council. Stephen Neill writing in 1960 reflects this weakness when he says: "It is a matter of deep regret that Whitby and its reports have never been taken seriously in the Christian world....it is time churches went back and picked up the threads that have been dropped."¹ Twelve years after the Whitby meeting Neill recognized the value of the findings of the Council, but he had witnessed a lack of response to the findings. Hogg states that this problem of implementation was always a major obstacle to the Councils when he writes: "among the major obstacles confronting the I.M.C., 'the great one,' according to Mott, was the failure to take the step between recognizing, understanding, and knowing a duty and doing it."² Failure to do what they realized needed to be done was a weakness of the Council.

This problem was not only true after the Whitby conference but also after the Willingen meeting. The committee on New Forms of Missions made the following statement at Ghana which reflects the same problem with implementation: "despite Willingen's clear statement of its new insights and concerns, few new forms of missions have yet arisen from that stimulus."³ Willingen as well

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1. Neill, Stephen, Brothers of the Faith, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1960, p.133.
2. Hogg, op. cit., .367.
3. Orchard, op. cit., p.154.

as Whitby had stated a theological basis for missions centering in the cross of Christ, yet this theological basis and their practical suggestions were not carried out. The suggestions that were stated were excellent, yet the Council was unable to implement them.

The inability to implement programs and to speak constructively on missionary matters developed discouragement among the missionary leaders concerning the future of missionary work. Hendrick Kraemer reflected this general mood when he wrote: "It is discouraging that a world wide ecumenical collaboration on this the crux of the Church's reason for existing has after more than twelve years (after Whitby) not yet succeeded in speaking with clear and stirring voice."¹

The failure to implement programs was a definite weakness of the Council and must be considered in a careful evaluation.

4. Over Dependence upon Individuals.

When the history of the I.M.C. is viewed it becomes apparent that great personalities have always had a major part in the organization and leadership of the Council. Without the individual efforts of Mott and Oldham the Council would never have moved off the ground. These men dedicated their lives to the Missionary Council for they were sold not only on reaching men for Christ,

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1. Occasional Bulletin, op. cit., p.2.

but they also believed that the Council could help achieve this end. Other leaders who were influential in the Council's development were Paton, Warnshuis, and Gibson who to a large extent along with Mott and Oldham formed the history of the I.M.C.¹ Men like William Temple and Kraemer also has a significant place in the Council's growth in more recent years. No one would doubt or question the leadership of these individuals, but Erik Nielson in a report at the Ghana assembly writes; "everything then hinges upon the person concerned and neither Oldhams or Kraemers are too easily mass-produced."² Since the work of the Council was personality centered these men were extremely difficult to replace after they had retired. Any movement that receives its leadership from a few outstanding individuals has an inherent weakness and problems develop in attempting to replace the leaders. Nielson appreciates the work of these great Christian men but implies that their domination made it difficult for the Council to function as forcefully as it did in the days of Mott and Oldham. The fact that the Council has always been personality centered is a recognized weakness.

5. The Dependence upon the National Churches.

One of the accomplishments of the I.M.C. as

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1. Orchard, op. cit., p. 205.
2. Ibid., p.204.

stated in the preceding section of this chapter was the recognition and advancement of the younger churches. However as time passed this very accomplishment proved to be a direct handicap to the mission of the church. Dr. Herbert Jackson, the director of the Missionary Research Library at Union Seminary in New York has stated that he firmly believes that the strong younger church has limited the amount of missionary activity in many lands.¹ At the present time mission boards are forced to work only within the structure of the Council of Churches within certain lands and even though the mission board may see a certain need they can not operate independently of the local churches. This problem has developed out of the stress laid on giving the younger churches complete responsibility for their own work. Many national councils of churches are working effectively to communicate the Christian message, however many have lost the capacity to communicate the Christian truth. The delegates from the younger churches recognized this fact in their report at the Willingen meeting when they said; "we know that in some places we have lost the Gospel, we have to that extent lost the initiative."² A strong national church is necessary but if the national church is not accomplishing the Christian mission re-evaluation of policies is in order.

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1. Jackson, op. cit., personal interview.
2. Goodall, op. cit., p.233.

The delegates continued their report by saying; "we hesitate to pass judgement, but we feel that the younger churches require foreign missionaries who go forth to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and not those who sit at administration desks."¹ This frank recognition of need for help points up a weakness of the I.M.C. when it gave the nationals full responsibility for the mission work in their own lands.

Walter Freytag in an address to the Ghana Assembly also recognizes how missionary work and incentive is often lost through giving too much responsibility to the national church. He says; "another limitation is put on us by the existence and the growing self-responsibility of younger churches. That again means fewer and fewer missionaries."² This problem is intensified for the missionary because often his incentive is lost through a lack of incentive in the younger churches. Freytag reports the following example of the lost incentive of missionaries working under the local national churches:

The loss of direction is largely found among western missionaries who are serving in or under younger churches. Because the initiative can not be their own, there is a wide spread feeling of frustration. In an Asian country I found more missionaries who expressed in confidence this frustration than those who had found their way. ³

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1. Ibid., p.234.
2. Orchard, op. cit., p.140.
3. Ibid., p.142.

The weakness which has developed in the I.M.C. as a result of this problem is that of supporting and encouraging independent action on the part of younger churches, before they were ready for it. The I.M.C. is not completely responsible for this problem but through encouraging the younger churches to accept responsibility it limited the ability of western missionaries to function freely.

Jackson is so concerned about this particular problem that in his inaugural address as an Adjunct Professor of the Senior Faculty of Union Theological Seminary he made a suggestion which would mean a radical change in present missionary policy. Jackson says; "I would propose the restoration of an aggressive independence of the foreign mission activity, breaking the current pattern which holds that missionaries must be completely subservient to the younger churches."¹ His convictions grow out of the fact that when the younger churches are left alone he believes "a retraction in the missionary witness (is produced) that is worse than tragic, and at a time when there are still areas that have not heard the Gospel."² It would be completely unfair to suggest that the I.M.C. is completely responsible for this problem, yet it has contributed to

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1. Occasional Bulletin, op. cit., p.4.
2. Ibid., p.4.

it by encouraging a stronger and more independent church.

This weakness is a deep concern to many leaders of the ecumenical missionary movement, for the whole mission of the church is at stake. When the mission of the church is limited and rendered ineffective it is time for re-evaluation and the establishment of new policies. This weakness must be considered in an evaluation of the I.M.C.

6. Summary.

The weaknesses of the Council do not stop with these five specific problems, for many more could be added to this list. However the overemphasis on institutions, the domination of the west, the implementation of programs, the overdependence upon individuals and the dependence upon the national churches do summarize the major weakness in the Council as seen by individuals who cooperate with the ecumenical movement.

D. Conclusion.

The above evaluative material has been presented to give a two sided picture of the way the leaders of the I.M.C. have viewed the Council. The accomplishments of the Council have been presented and so have its weaknesses. The reader must keep this material in mind as he makes any value judgements concerning the Council.

He must ask himself how valuable are the accomplishments and how significant are the weaknesses? Only as this is carefully done can a true evaluation be achieved.

This evaluative material came from individuals who are in sympathy with the ecumenical missionary movement, while the following chapter will present evaluative material from sources outside the ecumenical circle.

CHAPTER III

AN EVALUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY

COUNCIL FROM CONTEMPORARY AGENCIES

Chapter III

AN EVALUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL FROM CONTEMPORARY AGENCIES

A. Introduction

In 1956 only 42% of all North American Missionaries were affiliated with the National Council of Churches in America and with the I.M.C. through their denominations. This points up the striking fact that 57.5% of all North American missionaries were functioning outside the framework of ecumenical cooperation.¹ This figure is entirely too large to be taken for granted or ignored by those who want to evaluate honestly the I.M.C. Chapter three will present the basic philosophies of these groups that make up the 57.5% with the purpose of highlighting the differences and the reasons for their lack of cooperation with the I.M.C.

Three groups make up the majority of the 57.5%. The missionary arm of the National Association of Evangelicals which is entitled the Evangelical Foreign Mission-

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1. Lindell, Harold, An Appraisal of Agencies not Cooperating with the I.M.C., Grouping, I.R.M. vol. 47, 1958, p.302.

ary Association will be presented first. Its history and philosophy will be stated to demonstrate the differences between this group and the I.M.C. Next the position of the Interdenominational Foreign Missionary Association and the American Council of Christian Churches will be indicated. These three groups are very similar, so in order not to be repetitious the philosophy of the N.A.E. will be stated in more detail than the other positions for in general it represents them. These groups do not make up the entire 57.5% but they are representative of the position held by this large percentage of missionaries.

B. The Evangelical Foreign Missionary Association.

The E.F.M.A. is the missionary arm of the National Association of Evangelicals. It was created in 1945 three years after the N.A.E. had been established. In order to understand properly the position of the E.F.M.A. this section of chapter three will give the historical development of the N.A.E.

1 Rise of the N.A.E.

In 1905 when the Federal Council of Churches was established there was much debate, for the organization took no strong doctrinal basis. During the development of the Federal Council liberal elements became

dominant. An Evangelical historian has quoted the liberal leader, Harry Emerson Fosdick, as saying in 1926 that, "the liberals are gaining, and if not stopped now, will soon be in control."¹ Gradually the Federal Council lost its appeal to the evangelical in as much as the liberals were dominating the Council.

During the late twenties, Dr. J. Elwin Wright, formed a new movement in New England, which united evangelicals of that area into a fellowship with common spiritual objectives.² This fellowship, free of liberal influence, held conferences for the member churches. The Fellowship sponsored radio programs, encouraged Christian schools and became the strong arm of evangelical action. By 1939 groups of evangelicals in the nation were impressed by the functioning of the New England Fellowship and questionnaires were spread concerning the possibility of establishing a national association. In 1942 a meeting in St. Louis of representatives from 176 Protestant communions assembled to create what became known as the N.A.E. for United Action. It was a thoroughly evangelical group brought together to work in furthering the Christian cause. The association purposed to work in the following fields; evangelism, government relations, national and local use of radio, public rela-

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1. Murch, James Deforest, Cooperation without Compromise, Grand Rapids, Erdmans, 1956, p.41.
2. Ibid., p.51.

tions, preservation of separation of church and state, Christian Education, and the guarantee of freedom for home and foreign missionary endeavor.

The N.A.E. developed because of the liberal domination of the Federal Council of Churches. The next paragraphs will show the development of the E.F.M.A. from the N.A.E.

2. Rise of the E.F.M.A.

The N.A.E. first established a Foreign Missions Committee and for years fellowship meetings between evangelical mission executives were held during the annual meeting of the N.A.E. The N.A.E. set up an office in Washington, D.C. to represent the foreign mission agencies of its member denominations in relation to the department of the government. A more permanent and effective organization appeared to be required, however, and an autonomous association was proposed.¹ Thirty four out of sixty boards invited sent representatives to the meeting in 1945 and as a result the convention of the N.A.E. voted to create a new agency.

The name of the organization was the E.F.M.A. and it established its own constitution. Their membership in 1951 was thirty-five boards, but that figure has grown since then. Membership in this association is primarily along doctrinal lines. The following

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1. Beaver R. Pierce, *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, New York, N.C.C.C., 1952, p.23.

doctrinal statement adopted by the N.A.E. and accepted by the E.F.M.A. must be complied with by all who desire membership in this group.

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. 1

This statement of faith is also accepted by the I.F.M.A. and the A.M.I.C.C.C. that will be presented later on in this chapter. If a group could not adhere to this statement of faith it could not become a part of the Association. This question of doctrinal agreement is the focal point in the evaluation of the I.M.C. from the evangelical point of view. The group can not associate with any organization which disagrees with its doctrinal interpretation. The group strongly believes that to accept a statement of faith lacking the above beliefs is to compromise ones' faith.

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1. Murch, op. cit., p.65-66.

3. The I.M.C. and Compromise.

The question of compromise has been the wedge which has separated the E.F.M.A. from involvement in the I.M.C. Originally the I.M.C. was accepted by the evangelical because, in the words of Clyde Taylor, the secretary of the N.A.E.:

This International Missionary Council was established largely as a non-theological organizationit was set up as a means of promoting cooperation among the missionary agencies and churches across the world. It was organized and composed of national councils in the various countries where this activity went on. Our evangelical agencies, for the most part cooperated.¹

As long as cooperation was on a non-theological level the evangelical was able to cooperate, but when theology was brought in difficulty developed. Taylor states that the evangelical agencies cooperated with the I.M.C. "except in cases where there was so much theological liberalism that they did not feel free to do so or where some of the national councils on the mission field got into theological activities."²

James D. Murch in a small pamphlet presenting the evangelical position presents the view that evangelicals were strongly in favor of Mott and his strong missionary vision. Murch characterizes the beginnings of the Council by saying: "with almost Pentecostal fervor Edinburgh called for 'the evangelism of the world in this

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1. Taylor, Dr. Clyde, A personal letter to the author of this thesis, General Secretary of the N.A.E. January 1963, p.1. (see appendix four for a copy of letter)
2. Ibid., p.1.

generation' through the preaching and teaching of the gospel, saving lost souls and building the church of Christ."¹ This emphasis of the first meeting at Edinburgh was well received by all evangelicals but as time passed this emphasis changed and in New Delhi, in an atmosphere of theological compromise, (the I.M.C.) called for a united 'Christian mission bearing witness to a profound search for living truth.'²

The evangelicals agreed with the I.M.C. in its early days, but beginning with the Jerusalem Council in 1928 questions were raised. Murch says: "at Jerusalem the first significant compromises were made. Non-Christian religions were recognized as collaborators in a common battle against evil in the world."³ The printing of the book in 1932 called *ReThinking Missions* reflected the trend of compromise, and after the war the evangelical had lost faith in the Council. The evangelicals were strongly against the findings at Willingen because

While using a cloak of Biblical words it (the I.M.C.) (1) disowned an authoritative Bible, (2) made mission-theory God-centered rather than Christ-centered, (3) saw the Cross as the fulfillment of God's missionary will and the creation of immovable realities in the course of world history, (4) saw the Church as God's instrument in mission and accepted the establishment of God's kingdom... a redeemed society and the mission of the Church. 4

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1. Murch, James DeForest, *The World Council of Churches*, Wheaton, N.A.E., 1961, p.17.
 2. Ibid., p.17.
 3. Ibid., p.18.
 4. Ibid., p.18.

The E.F.M.A. was not willing to accept the findings at Willingen for they did not agree with the theological position of the churches in the I.M.C. The members of the E.F.M.A. agreed with the spirit and purpose of the early I.M.C. but its recent ventures into theological inquiry have not been accepted.

4. Area of conflict between Evangelicals and the I.M.C.

There are two major areas of conflict that have arisen between the evangelical and the ecumenical movement. The first of these lies in the fact that the I.M.C. was made the tool or instrument of ecumenically minded Protestants to try and accomplish two things:¹ 1) to set up area or regional conferences that would carry out the W.C.C. ideals. "Now in making use of the I.M.C. the more liberal leaders and the leaders from older denominations did so knowing that evangelicals within their membership were out of sympathy with this."² Taylor and his group feel that the I.M.C. was mis-used and therefore its leaders purposely promoted schism and division with the denominations.²) The I.M.C. was also used to promote united churches, such as the United Church of South India, the Church of North India, and that of the Philippines.

The same leadership (liberal) was back of this move. They did this knowing full well that there had to be inherent in such movements theological compromise and giving up of convictions of the various

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1. Taylor, op. cit., letter, p.1.
2. Ibid., p. 1.

bodies that to them were very precious. ¹

The Council leadership called the issues in theological compromise non-essentials but the E.F.M.A. strongly affirmed that these truths as indicated in their doctrinal statement are indispensable to true fellowship.

A second difficulty came when it was proposed at Willingen that the I.M.C. be brought into the structure of the W.C.C. The Leaders of the I.M.C. were made aware that this would create a schism within Protestant ranks in many areas, but thus proceeded to work for it anyway. The E.F.M.A. felt that to unite the I.M.C. with the W.C.C. would be a departure by the Council from its' original stand of never becoming a theological body. It felt the W.C.C. to be a theological entity as a result of its statement of faith; and to join it was to deny the original purpose of the I.M.C. "This meant that evangelicals who do not sympathize with the stand or the constituency, etc., of the W.C.C. have no choice but to withdraw from the organizations that are thus related."² Taylor summarizes the feelings of the E.F.M.A. in relation to the I.M.C. in the following words: "the main problem was not with the old I.M.C. It was with that leadership that wanted to either misuse the I.M.C. for ecumenical purposes or insisted on taking the I.M.C. into the W.C.C."³

1. Ibid., p. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 2.

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C. The Interdenominational Foreign Missionary Association.

The I.F.M.A. agrees basically in theory and doctrine with the E.F.M.A. The following material will indicate the historical development of the I.F.M.A. and state briefly its relationship to the I.M.C.

1. Rise of the I.F.M.A.

The I.F.M.A. of North America is a fellowship of missions without denominational affiliation, founded in 1917 for the purpose of strengthening the cause of the so-called 'faith missions.' Only four missionary groups were represented at the first meeting, but in 1960 the number belonging to the organization had grown to forty-two.¹ Out of the first meeting:

grew a unanimous desire to form an association under whose auspices mission leaders could get together from time to time for prayer and consultation and for the mutual exchange of ideas and information pertinent to the problems peculiar to faith missions. ²

Some of the groups involved were the China Inland Mission, African Inland Mission, Central American Mission and the South African Mission. These groups were independent of all denominations and trusted God for their support.

The organization grew rapidly until in 1956 its membership represented twenty-five percent of all

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1. Missions Annual-1960, New York, I.F.M.A. 1960, p.48-49.
 2. Kane, J. Herbert, Faith Mighty Faith, New York, I.F.M.A., 1956, p.8.

Protestant missionaries in foreign service. As was true with the E.F.M.A. the I.F.M.A. established a standard for membership which included a close adherence to a doctrinal statement. The statement of faith is worded somewhat differently from the statement of the E.F.M.A. but in spirit and purpose it is the same. No group can become involved in the work of the I.F.M.A. without signing their statement of doctrine. For this reason the I.F.M.A. has not become involved in the ecumenical missionary endeavor.

2. The Relationship between the I.F.M.A. and the I.M.C.

The I.F.M.A. has never been openly critical of the I.M.C., but an historical incident referred to in chapter one under the crisis section, shows how the two groups developed independently of each other. That particular section mentioned a critical issue in the development of the I.M.C. over the desire of some fundamental groups to require a full statement of faith as the basis of membership in the I.M.C. When their recommendations were not accepted many of the groups stopped functioning within the framework of the I.M.C. One such group was the China Inland Mission which was one of the charter members of the I.F.M.A. Since the president of the I.F.M.A. at the time was also the director of the China Inland Mission his desire for doctrinal uniformity kept the I.F.M.A. from becoming involved with the I.M.C. x

Vernon Mortenson, the president of the official board of the I.F.M.A. said in a letter "it (the I.F.M.A.) has tended to go its own way, separate from the I.M.C. This is largely because of the conviction that true fellowship in spiritual service must have a theological basis."¹ The I.F.M.A. has been very separatistic over the years which has caused Lindsell to say "that the faith boards incline toward the practice of exclusivism rather than inclusivism."² As a result they never were involved in the workings of the I.M.C.

The I.M.F.A. has a great deal in common with the E.F.M.A. yet they function separately as organizations. Both groups agree concerning the integration of the I.M.C. with the W.C.C. for the leaders of the I.M.F.A. uses the literature of the N.A.E. in order to illustrate their position on this matter. The groups function separately due to their contrasting origins and natures, yet they are one in their general position against compromising doctrine for the sake of ecumenical cooperation.

D. The Associated Mission of the International Council of Christian Churches.

The section will state briefly the origin and

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1. Mortenson, Vernon, Personal letter to the author of this thesis, New Jersey, I.F.M.A., January 1963, p.2. (See appendix three for a copy of the letter.)
2. Lindsell, op. cit., p.304.

philosophy of the Associated Mission of the International Council of Christian Churches which is somewhat similar to the movements already presented in this chapter, but which is also radically different. An attempt was made by the author of this thesis to correspond with the American originator of this Council, Dr. Carl O. McIntire, concerning the relationship of I.M.C. and the I.C.C.C., but no reply was received, therefore the author has used secondary sources to set forth the position of this group.

1. Rise of the I.C.C.C.

The Association of Missions developed around the work of Dr. Carl O. McIntire of the Bible Presbyterian Church. McIntire received his theological training at Princeton Seminary beginning in 1927. He was greatly influenced by J. Gresham Machen, and when Machen withdrew from Princeton to form the Westminster Seminary McIntire went with him. After his ordination McIntire became active in the struggle against a more enlightened view in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The fundamentalistic movement within the denomination spearheaded by Machen and McIntire lead to the establishment of the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The denomination in 1934 took a stand against the schism that had developed and ordered that this

independent group stop functioning. Machen's group defied the Presbyterian Church and as a result McIntire was put of trial. He was unfrocked by the Presbyterian Church and started his own denomination called the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which later split over minor doctrinal matters.

McIntire established the American Council of Christian Churches and became the first president. This Council was made up of a strict fundamentalistic group that followed McIntires policies completely. The American Council gradually saw the need to expand internationally due to the creation of the W.C.C. so the International Council of Churches was created. The missionary agency of this organization is called the Associated Mission of the I.C.C.C.

The doctrinal views of the A.C.C. are similar to those of the N.A.E. and the I.F.M.A. yet when it comes to cooperation they differ greatly. The rise of the A.M.I.C.C.C. is therefore due primarily to the work of one man, Dr. Carl O. McIntire, who has a reputation of bitterly opposing any group that will not join his particular movement.

2. Relationship of the A.M.I.C.C.C. to the I.M.C.

The missionary movement that is related to the A.C.C. has bitterly opposed any form of cooperation. The movement is very critical of the N.C.C. and the

W.C.C. for they believe that to associate with groups containing a liberal element is to compromise faith and disobey God. The movement is openly critical of ecumenical cooperation for it believes that the movement is dominated by communists. The critical nature of the A.C.C. even touches the other evangelical agencies that are mentioned above. The A.C.C. attacks the N.A.E. because it is compromising with apostasy by not including the phrase 'inerrant Bible' in its doctrinal statement and thus leaving the door opened for neo-orthodox theologians.¹ The position taken by the A.C.C. in relation to the I.M.C. and the ecumenical movement can be illustrated by its attitude toward the conservative agencies mentioned above. The following resolution was part of a 1949 A.C.C. statement:

The American Council of the Christian deplors the fact that such movements as the National Association of Evangelicals, Youth for Christ, and Youth for Christ International, International Child Evangelism Fellowship, and similar groups, along with a certain section of the Bible institutes, evangelical Christian colleges and seminaries, etc., which have refused to take a clear-cut stand on scriptural separation from modernism and all other forms of religious liberalism.....continue to enjoy the confidence and support of a segment of Bible-believing Christians and churches. 2

There is absolutely no toleration of views

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1. Roy, Ralph Lord, Apostles of Discord, Boston, Beacon Press, 1953, p.224.
2. Ibid., p.225.

contrary to their own. This attitude prevails toward groups close to them doctrinally, but an even greater antagonism exists toward such groups as the I.M.C., the N.C.C. and the W.C.C. The issue for the A.C.C. group is Biblical separation; unless one separates himself from people who differ with his interpretation he is compromising truth and could never stand for it. The I.M.C. from the point of view of both the A.C.C. and the A.M.I. C.C.C. is an instrument of apostasy and unworthy of cooperation.

E. Summary and Conclusion.

The N.A.E. and the E.F.M.A. have been shown in the above material to have grown out of the liberal fundamentalistic controversy. Evangelicals were very dissatisfied with the N.C.C. and in order to have a public voice began the N.A.E. The N.A.E. recognize the need for a missionary agency so a department of missions was established as the E.F.M.A. The relationship of evangelicals to the I.M.C. before the creation of the N.A.E. had been somewhat strained, but tolerable from the evangelical position. The recent activities of the I.M.C. have caused it to be distrusted by evangelical leaders.

The I.F.M.A. is a group of fundamentalistic Christian missionary organizations, united on a doctrinal basis, for the purpose of mutual fellowship and help in

solving common problems. The I.F.M.A. demands doctrinal uniformity and therefore has always refrained from cooperating with the I.M.C.

The A.M.I.C.C.C. has been shown as a very separatistic group that has grown out of the ministry of McIntire. The group demands strict doctrinal agreement and has separated itself from the I.F.M.A., the N.A.E. as well as the I.M.C.

The preceding material has indicated these three evangelical views of the I.M.C. which are related in principle but contrast due to the origin of the movements. The position of the A.C.C. is one of complete isolation and open criticism of the I.M.C. due to a strict doctrine of Biblical separation. The I.F.M.A. has a more mild view of the I.M.C., yet from its very beginning has functioned separately due to a belief that true fellowship must have doctrinal uniformity. The E.F.M.A. has viewed the early developments of the I.M.C. as a constructive instrument of missionary promotion, but in recent days has been dissatisfied with it as a result of a more liberal influence within its membership.

The three groups agree in believing that fellowship and cooperation demand uniformity, for to de-emphasize doctrinal unity is to break down the spirit of

fellowship. Since these three groups represent a major portion of the missionary personnel their evaluation of the I.M.C. must be weighed by the missionary candidate in making an honest evaluation of the Council. The theological issue growing out of the philosophy of these groups will be set forth in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE EMERGING ISSUES FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

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A. Introduction.

The previous material has been presented in order to point up the issues in an evaluation of the I.M.C. Chapter one dealt with the historic framework of the Council, chapter two dealt with evaluative material presented by the Council's membership and chapter three dealt with evaluative material from groups outside the framework of the Council. This chapter will indicate issues to be faced for the evaluation of the I.M.C. which emerge from the first three chapters.

In this study 'issues for evaluation' are used as proposed criteria for an evaluation of the I.M.C. All possible issues can not be included in this chapter due to the scope of the thesis, so only the most significant issues will be stated. The issues have been placed within three categories; historical, theological and practical. The issues will be stated briefly and questions will be raised to point up the nature of each issue.

B. Historical Issues.

Growing out of the history of the I.M.C. are several issues which are necessary for an evaluation. The issues concern the need for a Council, the changes in the Council and the strengths and weaknesses of the Council. These issues will be stated briefly in the following paragraphs.

1. Need for the Council.

A basic issue for the evaluation of the I.M.C. grows out of considering whether or not there was a valid need for the Council's creation. The purpose at Edinburgh, besides bringing together various groups, was to study the great missionary problems of that day in order to make the missionary endeavor successful. Mott wanted to evangelize the world in a generation, and the conference met to plan strategy that would solve basic problems and accomplish that end. In evaluating the Council, the evangelistic need of the world, and the Council's ability to meet that need must be considered. Did the world need the Christian message? Did the missionaries have problems meeting the needs of the world? Would a Council help solve problems and assist in accomplishing the goal of evangelism? Did the Council that was created really meet the need for evangelism?

These questions must be considered when evaluating the early years of the Council. The Council grew out of the need for evangelism and the need for cooperation. In evaluating the Council these needs must be judged for their validity. Was the Council the best way to meet the missionary needs of that day? Did the Council accomplish its intended purpose?

2. Changes in the Council.

A significant issue in evaluating the Council concerns the changes within the Council during the years of its development. One of the problems conservative leaders have with the Council is its change in recent years. Originally the Council functioned, as indicated above, in order to solve problems in missions which would permit more evangelism in the world. The early Council leaders saw the Council as a means of promoting evangelism. The more recent Council meetings and the most recent Council leaders have not been as concerned with evangelism. The more recent Council has studied a theology for missions, attempted to understand non-Christian religions and discussed the meaning of the universal church, but has not been as concerned with evangelism as were Mott and the early leaders.

In an evaluation this change must be recognized and the reasons for the change considered. Did such a change take place? Were the leaders of the Council

in recent years disinterested in evangelism?

The reasons for the change must also be part of an evaluation. Change in itself is not wrong if the reasons for the change are valid. Each person must evaluate the reasons before criticizing the changes that took place. Some of the possible reasons for change are: 1) The economic depression of the thirties and the international social problems which this created. 2) The rise of the nationalistic spirit within the governments of other nations and the effect this spirit had on the national churches. As the national churches grew they assumed responsibility for their own work; in 1910 there was no national organized councils of churches in mission lands and the missionary work depended entirely on the western churches. 3) The rise of philosophies with well worked out systems such as Communism and Nazism. In order to meet the challenge of these philosophies revisions were made. The gospel was refined to meet more specialized needs. 4) The Second World War changed the optimism of the twenties concerning evangelism. 5) The growth of an international ecumenical church made the function of the I.M.C. considerably different. These reasons contributed to changes in the Council and must be part of an evaluation which considers the issue of change. Were the changes really necessary? Should the at-

titudes toward the world in 1910 and the world of 1960 be the same? Is change in itself wrong? Do the reasons for change justify the reforms that were made? Has evangelism of the world been discarded or refined during the last ten years of the Council's existence?

3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Council.

The question of strengths and weaknesses is relative, for what one person considers to be a strength may be for another person a weakness. Never-the-less when considering the I.M.C. from an historical view point the issues concerning its strength and weakness over the years must be included in an evaluation. The material in chapter two of this thesis has stated both the accomplishments and the failures of the Council as judged by its own membership. This material must be carefully studied for its true significance. The following questions point up the issue involved: How significant are these accomplishments? Are these assets accepted by groups outside the ecumenical framework? If not, why not? What are the weaknesses of the Council? How significant are they? Do the weaknesses, mistakes or failures of the Council invalidate its accomplishments?

C. Theological Issues.

Differences in theological interpretation have caused reformation and conflict within the Christian community since the church began. In the development of the I.M.C. theological interpretation has been an issue causing tension. The following paragraphs will state two theological issues, one concerning the basis of cooperation and the other concerning the nature of the church; both should be considered in an evaluation of the I.M.C.

1. Cooperation and Compromise.

In 1922 a group of conservative Christians felt that a doctrinal statement must be included in the organizing principles of the I.M.C. This position was voted down at the time because the Council's leaders wanted to avoid doctrinal debate and controversy. Groups such as the I.F.M.A. could not cooperate with the I.M.C. because to do so would mean a compromise of basic convictions. The I.F.M.A. could not cooperate with men who held a different theological interpretation from their own. This philosophy prevails today in most conservative groups, especially in the I.C.C. Under the conviction that scripture teaches separation from all who are not doctrinally sound, the I.C.C. separates itself from liberal groups such as the I.M.C. and even many conservative groups.

Theological differences with the membership of the I.M.C. led to the creation of the missionary arm of the N.A.E. which is the Evangelical Foreign Missionary Association. This group has a strong doctrinal basis also, and demands adherence to its statement of faith for membership. The group is not willing to cooperate with individuals who differ with it theologically and therefore gradually over the last decade it has separated itself from the I.M.C. because of its liberal influence. At first the N.A.E. cooperated where they were able, but the liberal influence drove them away. The members of the E.F.M.A. believe that separation is a Biblical principle and that doctrinal agreement is a necessity.

The issue growing out of the conservative position is whether they are correct in demanding doctrinal uniformity. Was the I.M.C. wrong in omitting doctrine from its basis for fellowship? Would it have been able to accomplish its purpose if doctrinal uniformity had been demanded? Does the scripture demand doctrinal agreement for fellowship? Is doctrinal separation a truly Biblical concept? Could the conservative Christian work within the framework of the I.M.C. without sacrificing convictions? Is the I.M.C. completely liberal? Is the ecumenical movement completely liberal? Can Christian doctrine be limited to only one explicit verbal state-

ment of doctrine? How does interpretation of doctrine and scripture effect a doctrinal statement? How do doctrinal uniformity and freedom of the spirit work together?

The conservative position wants doctrinal agreement where as the leadership of the I.M.C. has never sought for agreement and in fact has purposely avoided any attempt to agree doctrinally. The I.M.C. has been created to permit difference of opinion, and has purposely avoided doctrinal problem where ever it was possible. The conservative position rejects this attitude of the I.M.C. on Biblical grounds. The issue concerns cooperation and what one believes is essential for cooperation. The I.M.C. has minimized doctrinal uniformity and the conservative groups have felt it necessary. This issue must be faced before the missionary candidate can work within the framework of ecumenical or conservative missions.

2. The Nature of the Church.

The theological issue concerning cooperation mentioned above gives rise to still another theological issue concerning the nature of the church. The I.M.C. has stressed over the years the universality of the church and has clearly recognized churches in mission lands as part of the Church of Christ. The I.M.C. has supported

the movement toward the ecumenical church, although opposed by the conservative groups. The Council freely accepts all Christian denominations as part of the body of Christ and has attempted to encourage free cooperation and unity between groups. The Council's membership believe that the church belongs to Christ and ultimately only he knows who is a member. The Council has accepted all groups that confess Christ, as Savior, as part of the church, without giving them a doctrinal test.

The conservative groups however are not so inclined for their concept of the church concerns the spiritual body of Christ. These groups might recognize individuals in denominations as part of the body of Christ, but they would be unwilling to generalize on this and accept an entire denomination as representing the church. They do not, as a whole, accept the more liberal group as being a working part of the body of Christ. The most reliable sign of true faith and of valid church membership is a public consenting to orthodox creedal statements which have become the basis for membership in conservative agencies of missions. Only in this way can heresy be avoided.

Due to the conservative attitude toward the church they were disappointed when the I.M.C. became involved in the W.C.C. for this made the I.M.C., which was a non-theological body, part of a group that had a very

general concept of the body of Christ. At the heart of the conservative disappointment is the issue concerning the true nature of the church. In evaluating the I.M.C. one's concept of the nature of the church and membership in that church is clearly a significant issue. For if one accepts a more general concept of the church, and accepts diversity in doctrinal interpretation as part of the churches external nature he will be more in sympathy with the I.M.C. and ecumenical missions. On the other hand if one takes the conservative view of the church based only on a certain interpretation of doctrine the I.M.C. and ecumenical missions will be judged critically. This issue of the nature of the church therefore is very serious.

D. Practical Issues.

Another area of issues, concerns the policies of the Council. The following practical issues concern evangelism, institutionalism, and integration of the Council into the World Council of Churches. These are issues which have caused conservative criticism of the Council. Other practical issues concerning the general organization of the Council, the financing of the program, the red tape of administration, the

implementation of programs and the western domination of the Council could be included; but due to the limits of this thesis they have not been discussed in this chapter. They should be kept in mind however when a detailed evaluation of the Council is made.

1. Limitation of Evangelistic Missions.

Has the I.M.C. been responsible for limiting evangelistic work by de-emphasizing the missionary vision of Mott? Many of the Councils members and groups outside the Council would answer this question with the affirmative. By encouraging the independent activity of the national churches the Council has limited the ability of the western missionaries in their endeavor to evangelize nations. This criticism comes from within and without the Council and is a definite issue in an evaluation. To what degree has evangelism been limited? Must evangelism only be done by western missionaries? Has the I.M.C. admitted this as a weakness? Has an attempt been made to change this problem? Is the I.M.C. as a part of the W.C.C. better able to assist in the program of evangelism? As this issue is considered these questions should be answered.

2. Institutionalization of Missions.

Closely related to the issue of limiting evangelistic work is the secularization of institutional missions. Money has been poured into education and

medical missions, which are now, due to government support and lack of personnel no longer primarily Christian institutions. The purpose of institutions historically has been as a means to the end of reaching men spiritually with the Christian message. In many areas this purpose has shifted so that very little concern is taken to reach students or patients for Christ. If this is true, and in many cases it is frankly admitted by ecumenical leaders, then this becomes a crucial issue in an evaluation of the I.M.C. for the Council helped foster this trend. What is the purpose of institutions? Is that purpose being violated? What are the reasons for the changes in institutional missions? Was the I.M.C. directly responsible for the change? These questions help point up the issue of institutions, and should be answered as the Council is evaluated.

3. Integration into the W.C.C.

The introduction of the I.M.C. into the W.C.C. is a very practical issue which has caused the very conservative groups loose faith in the I.M.C. This integration grew out of the belief that the Council had served its intended purpose. There was a great deal of overlapping between the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. so in order to economize and function more efficiently the integration took place. As was mentioned above many groups were against this integration for the W.C.C. was

a church organization. In evaluating the I.M.C. the whole question of integration is an issue which should be thoroughly studied. It should be presented as a separate topic for there are valid reasons for and against the integration. Did the I.M.C. lose its real value as an independent agency? Has integration voided the historical accomplishments of the Council? Why was integration opposed? Can the missionary candidate cooperate with the W.C.C. and still not sacrifice his Christian convictions? The fact of this integration must be clearly seen as a significant issue in evaluating the Council.

E. Summary and Conclusion.

This chapter has stated the issues which emerge from the study of the Council in the first three chapters of this thesis. The issues have fallen into three basic categories; historical, theological and practical. The historical issues concern the need for a Council, the changing character of the Council and the strengths and weaknesses of the Council. The theological issues deal with the basis for cooperation and the nature of the church. The practical issues concern the limiting of evangelism, the institutionalization of missions and the integration of the I.M.C. into the W.C.C. Each of these three cata-

gories must be considered separately and then collectively as the I.M.C. is evaluated. None of the issues can be omitted if an adequate evaluation is to take place.

These issues are inadequate in some respects, but they do cover the most significant aspects of the Council which should be considered by the missionary candidate. In evaluating the Council the most comprehensive issue concerns God's place in creating and using the Council. What has been God's place in the development of the I.M.C.? The answer to this question is truly a very significant issue for the evaluation of the I.M.C.

SUMMARY
AND

CONCLUSION

Summary and Conclusion

A. The Problem Restated.

One of the problems facing the missionary candidate as he faces missionary service in the world is whether or not to cooperate with the ecumenical missions, or to cooperate with faith missions. Since the I.M.C. is partially responsible for the present missionary situation, this study of the basic issues raised for an evaluation of the I.M.C., has been presented to help the candidate understand the development of the present ecumenical missionary movement. As a candidate understands the I.M.C. and what is necessary for an evaluation of it, he will be aided in solving the problem of whether or not to cooperate within the framework of ecumenical missions.

B. The Procedure Summarized.

The ecumenical missionary situation today is the direct result of the growth and development of the I.M.C. The Council had its roots back in the 19th century and through the ambitious work of men like Mott and Oldham it has grown continuously in the 20th century. The material in this thesis has indicated some of the de-

tails of the development of the Council, has presented evaluative material from within the Council's membership, and evaluative material from contemporary groups that refuse to cooperate with the Council. This material has been presented in order to determine the basic issues that are necessary for an evaluation of the I.M.C. These issues are summarized in chapter four of the thesis in three categories; historical, theological and practical. The thesis has not attempted to make a value judgement concerning the success or failure of the Council but has presented material which should help the reader to make such an evaluation. The thesis has raised the issues for an evaluation of the I.M.C. It has not attempted to indicate an actual evaluation of the Council.

C. Conclusion

As a result of this study the writer has come to the following general conclusions concerning the issues that have been raised. 1) All the issues must be studied before a judgement is made. It would be improper to consider only a theological issue and base one's judgement entirely upon it. All the issues historical, theological and practical must be considered before a judgement can be formed. 2) Second-hand sources should not be the only basis for judging the Council. The individual

evaluating the Council should take time to read the Council's minutes and reports first hand rather than only accepting the opinions of church leaders. 3) As one evaluates the Council he must consider the alternatives to working within the ecumenical missionary movement. The candidate may not be satisfied with all he finds in the ecumenical movement, but he must determine where he can be most satisfied. It must be recognized that no group is perfect, all groups will have faults, therefore the ecumenical missions and the conservative missions must be seen both as partially inadequate. The question is which is most adequate for accomplishing God's will in the world. 4) Ecumenical missions can only be understood when the development of the I.M.C. is clearly seen. The ecumenical movement must be understood in the context of its historical setting.

The I.M.C. has existed for fifty years, and as it is evaluated the whole question of spiritual origin must be considered. Was the Council an instrument used by God to further the cause of missions? Has God been at work in the past and most recent Council? Has there always been a spiritual motivation in the Council? As the material growing out of each Council meeting is read the answer to these questions, will depend on the evaluator's interpretation of the facts. Each person must interpret the motivation of the leaders of the I.M.C.,

and make his decision for or against cooperation with the ecumenical movement, as he is led by the Spirit of God.

D. Impression of the Author.

The author's previous knowledge of the I.M.C. was colored by a very conservative approach to the ecumenical movement. Therefore the Council was approached skeptically, due to the author's background. As a result of the study the author was impressed by the following aspects of the I.M.C.

1. The spiritual objectives of its leaders, including those of the last ten years, who are considered liberals by many groups.
2. The thoroughness of discussion on a wide variety of topics pertinent to missions.
3. The freedom of disagreement.
4. The preceptive ability of the Council's membership to recognize and see mistakes. They have seen weaknesses in the Council, admitted them, and have tried to do something about them.
5. The strengths of the Council were seen for the first time from a non-bias perspective.

The author gained a much greater understanding of the meaning of missions as a result of the study.

As a missionary candidate the study of the I.M.C. has given the author of this thesis new insights into the nature of ecumenical missions and the nature of faith missions. The author believes that all candidates for missions must consider the issues for an evaluation of the I.M.C. before he judges either ecumenical or faith missions. The author understands and appreciates the I.M.C. in a much greater way as a result of studying first hand the basic issues necessary in evaluating it.

The author hopes that a future researcher will carry on further study in applying the data gathered in a detailed analysis of the I.M.C. in order to make a careful and needed evaluation of the movement.

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From, Dr. Vernon Mortenson, Pres. of Board, of The
Interdenominational Foreign Missionary
Association, Jan. 18, 1963.

APPENDIX ONE

1. THE PREAMBLE TO THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION
OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL.

2. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY
COUNCIL AS STATED IN THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION.

Appendix one

The preamble to the original constitution of the International Missionary Council.

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

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

The functions of the International Missionary Council as stated in the original constitution.

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation on missionary questions, to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in all countries, and to make the results available for all missionary societies and missions.

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

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX TWO

SAMPLE OF LETTER SENT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Rev. J. Percy, General Secretary, I.F.M.A.
2. Dr. Clyde Taylor, General Secretary, N.A.E.
3. Dr. Carl O. McIntire, Originator, A.C.C.

Appendix two

Sample letter.

Rev. J.O.Percy
General Secretary
Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association
308 W. 105th Street
New York 25, N.Y.

Dear Rev. Percy,

I am a Senior at the Biblical Seminary in New York and am writing a thesis on the subject: 'The Basic Issues in an Evaluation of the International Missionary Council'. In the second chapter of the thesis I am including a section dealing with criticisms of the Council from contemporary agencies.

My purpose for writing is to request the reasons why the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association has taken a critical view of the International Missionary Council. I would also appreciate a list of sources which explain the philosophy and the character of the Interdenominational Foreign Missionary Association as it differs from the International Missionary Council. If materials are available I would appreciate receiving them.

Thank you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Orrin T. Hardgrove.

APPENDIX THREE

COPY OF LETTER RECEIVED FROM THE
PRESIDENT OF THE OFFICAL BOARD OF
THE INTERDENOMINATIONAL FOREIGN
MISSION ASSOCIATION

Appendix Three

Copy of a letter received from the president of the Official Board of the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association.

January 18, 1963

Dear Mr. Hardgrove:

Your letter of January 9 asks for an explanation of the philosophy and character of the I.F.M.A. It may be a bit difficult to answer satisfactorily within the limits of one letter, but I shall try to be of some help.

The I.F.M.A. was organized in 1917 as a fellowship of missions which are not denominationally related. These missions are also known as faith missions. The fellowship is based not only on common interests, but also on similarity of doctrinal interpretation. All of these missions are conservative-evangelical in their theological orientation.

The I.F.M.A. missions believe uniformly that the Lord has made very clear that it is His will that the gospel be preached to every creature and to the uttermost part, and their concern is to be obedient to that command. They believe also that the establishing of the church of Jesus Christ is to be the goal of its work, and therefore their ministry is directed toward the objective of raising up indigenous churches which, in turn, can be channels for the Spirit of God to use in evangelization of the nations.

You mention that the I.F.M.A. has taken a critical view of the I.M.C. since its creation. I do not know whether your reference is to the creation of the I.F.M.A. or to the I.M.C., but it is my impression that I.F.M.A. has not been particularly vocal in its criticism. It has tended to go its own way, separate from the I.M.C. This is largely because of the conviction that true fellowship in spiritual service must have a theological basis.

Appendix three continued:

There has been universal disappointment in I.F.M.A. missions that the I.M.C. has gone into the World Council of Churches. A Booklet published by the National Association of Evangelicals deals with that question, and I believe that the reasons set forth by that organization for its attitude toward the I.M.C. are similar to those which characterize the attitude of I.F.M.A. missions.

I trust that this information will be of some help to you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Vernon Mortenson,
President.

P. S. I am arranging to send the booklet by separate cover.

V.M.

APPENDIX FOUR

COPY OF LETTER RECEIVED FROM THE
SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS

Appendix Four

Copy of a letter received from the secretary of the National Association of Evangelicals.

January 9, 1963

Dear Mr. Hardgrove:

I have talked your letter over with my associate here in the area of foreign missions and I think we could summarize it in this way. In the first place, the I.M.C. is now history. It has been absorbed into the W.C.C. and this, of course completely changes the picture. So may I summarize the past in this way.

1) This I.M.C. was established largely as a non-theological organization. In other words, it didn't have a statement of faith or creed but was set up as a means of promoting cooperation among missionary agencies and churches across the world. It was organized and composed of national councils in the various countries where this activity went on. Our evangelical agencies, for the most part, cooperated with these except in cases where there was so much theological liberalism that they did not feel free to do so or where some of the national councils on the mission field got into theological activities. This happened in India and almost blew up the National Christian Council of India.

2) However, in recent years two main problems and areas of conflict have arisen between evangelicals, that is conservative Christians, and the ecumenical movement. The first is that the I.M.C. was made the tool or instrument of ecumenically minded Protestants to try to accomplish two things: 1) to set up area or regional conferences that would carry out the World Council ideals even as the I.M.C. was the main tool used to establish the W.C.C. Now in making use of the I.M.C. the more liberal leaders and leaders from the older denominations did so knowing that the evangelicals within their membership were out of sympathy with this. Hence, they with full knowledge began to promote a schism or a division. 2) to promote

Appendix four continued:

united churches, such as the United Church of South India and the Church of North India, of the Philippines, etc. The same leadership was back of this move. They did this knowing full well that there had to be inherent in such movements theological compromise and the giving up of convictions of the various bodies that to them were very precious. And even though these may be called non-essentials, etc. it was felt that there could be cooperation and fellowship without this type of theological compromise. This also may be laid at the door of leadership within the I.M.C.

3) The next big area of difficulty came when it was proposed, I believe first up in Canada at the meeting of the I.M.C. there (and if I remember correctly, the original proponent was Dr. Mackay, then president of Princeton Theological Seminary) that the best way to bring a missionary emphasis and a missions emphasis into the W.C.C. was to have a merger of the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. immediately. The I.M.C. leaders were made aware that this would be the creating of a schism within the Protestant ranks in many areas. It also meant that they would be departing from their original stand and so they would be come a devisive movement by taking the I.M.C., a non-theological body into the W.C.C. which to all intents and purposes is a theological entity in that it has a brief statement of faith. There was considerable resistance to this although this was not fully evidenced by voting in Ghana. Now of course, it is history. The I.M.C. has been absorbed. It has become a committee of the W.C.C. This meant that evangelicals who do not sympathize with the stand or constituency, etc. of the W.C.C. have no choice but to withdraw from organizations that are thus related.

So actually, however, the main problem was not with the old I.M.C. It was with that leadership that wanted to either misuse the I.M.C. for ecumenical purposes or insisted on taking the I.M.C. into the W.C.C.

Now in years gone by this has been written up in numerous articles but we are under pressure here at the office and we do not have time to take this research up at the present time and dig these articles for you.

Cordially yours in Christ,

Clyde W. Taylor