

1978

Ministerial Formation 1 - 10, January 1978 - April 1980

World Council Of Churches

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MINISTERIAL
FORMATION

January 1978 - April 1980

ministerial formation

1

PROGRAMME ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

JANUARY, 1978

This first edition is rather long because of the accumulation of important news and articles that we believe you will want to read and keep in your files. The list of contents will help you to refer back to these materials readily. We shall try to maintain a balance of reports, critical articles on the various aspects of ministerial formation, news of significant developments, and resources in the field from the different regions of the world. Our purpose is to form a network of partners in theological education for the renewal of the ministry of the people of God for mission. We sense that a movement in this direction is already underway; we want to participate in the changes that are taking place; we invite you to make this information service a useful vehicle for you and other colleagues involved in and concerned about ministerial formation.

ARTICLES AND REPORTS

1. "Programme on Theological Education: An On-Going Concern of the Churches --Now an integral Part of the W.C.C." p. 3

This article explains the nature and focus and programme of the P.T.E. to our friends and partners around the world. It has been adapted and published as a leaflet, which may be ordered in quantity without charge from the P.T.E. office in Geneva.

2. "Proposal: A Network of Partners in Ministerial Formation" p. 6

This is a general invitation to people engaged in and/or concerned about theological education and ministry to establish links formally and informally with colleagues in other places. Readers are invited, after this brief introduction, to turn to the last page, write down their suggestions, and send them back to the P.T.E.--the sooner the better.

3. "Two Major Extension Programmes in India" p. 7

There are now about 300 theological education by extension programmes with 30,000 to 40,000 students in some 75 countries around the globe. We present here a brief description of two major extension programmes in India with the request that readers send us addresses, news, and reports of other extension programmes in their areas.

World Council of Churches, P.O. Box 66, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland



The purpose of this service is to encourage sharing and cooperation among all who are working for the renewal of the churches through programmes of ministerial formation. Articles do not necessarily represent the views of the P.T.E. They may be reproduced without permission unless otherwise indicated. Letters, news, articles, and reports are requested. Exchange of publications and contributions of U.S. \$5.00 per subscription are welcomed.



4. "Commission on Non-Traditional Study; Association of Theological Schools of South East Asia" p. 9

This report has been published on completion of the commission's first three years of work, April 1974 to March 1977. The process described is probably the most serious attempt of theological schools anywhere to deal positively and creatively with the accreditation of alternative forms of theological education.

5. "Will Inflation Change Our Image of the Church?" by James W. Gunn p. 15

James Gunn is Executive of the Professional Church Leadership Division of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. In this paper he points out that the dominant U.S. model of self-sufficient congregations with expensive buildings and full-time resident ministers who have graduated from a three-year seminary course is no longer viable for a growing proportion of the churches in the U.S.A.

6. "Theological Education in a New Caribbean; Recommendations of the Trinidad Consultation" p. 20

Nineteen directors of theological institutions and programmes in the Caribbean area met at Mount St. Benedict, Trinidad, October 18-20, 1976 "to encourage a contextual approach to theology so that it can truly emerge out of the Caribbean experience." The recommendations presented here were "accepted in principle" at the consultation.

NEWS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN MINISTERIAL FORMATION

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PROGRAMME ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

An On-Going Concern of the Churches
Now an Integral Part of the W.C.C.

From 1958 to 1977 the Theological Education Fund played a strategic role in the strengthening and renewal of theological education in the Third World. It has now been superseded by the Programme on Theological Education, a new sub-unit of the World Council of Churches created to carry on and broaden these concerns on all six continents. What are its plans and prospects for the future?

A NEW START

Many months of study, evaluation and prayer led to the creation in July 1977 of the Programme on Theological Education by the Central Committee of the W.C.C. in order to take a fresh step forward in supporting the churches . . .

- *in their central concern for the preparation of leaders,*
- *in fostering a new ecumenical vision of theological education,*
- *in sharing experiences and resources for training in ministry,*
- *in developing better patterns and tools for theological education,*
- *in enabling the people of God to witness more effectively today and tomorrow in a world of vast needs and complex crises.*

The underlying conviction of the Central Committee and of the new P.T.E. is that "theological education is vital for the life and mission of the church".

BUILDING ON 20 YEARS OF FRUITFUL SERVICE

The P.T.E. inherits many lessons and insights from the Theological Education Fund's 20 years of involvement in the Third World. This period has been characterized by a progressive search . . .

- *for quality, which combines intellectual rigour, spiritual maturity and commitment to service,*
- *for authenticity, which requires critical encounter with each socio-cultural context in the design, content and purpose of theological education,*
- *for creativity, which leads to new approaches and deepens the churches' understanding of an obedience in mission.*

This search is as important in Europe and North America as it is in the Third World. And the different regions have much to learn from and with each other. The P.T.E. is called to encourage and facilitate mutual growth.

THE CENTRAL CONCERN: MINISTERIAL FORMATION

In setting out a new plan of action the P.T.E. will focus its attention on ministerial formation. The central concern of theological education is, of course, ministry in the broadest biblical sense. Ministry involves all the

people of God, and theological institutions are effective insofar as they enable the churches' leaders--ordained and unordained, men and women--to equip others for discipleship and witness. The P.T.E. will relate with church bodies, institutions, experiments and pioneering individuals who are engaged in and concerned with "*enabling the enablers*".

ON SIX CONTINENTS

Major problems, important trends, and exciting experiments are developing in different parts of the world, and the P.T.E. will attempt to keep theological educators and church leaders informed of these developments through *consultations, publications and a modest documentation service*. Fundamental issues relating theological education, ministry, the church and its mission are being raised and debated and the P.T.E. will be a channel and a participant in those debates.

At first glance it seems impossible for a small entity like the P.T.E. to relate meaningfully with theological education "on six continents". But there is already a strong partnership among institutions and associations of theological schools in the Third World, and new links are being forged with other regions of the world. The goal is to establish a fellowship and a *network of partners* in this common task for the benefit of all.

In order to give full attention to the *specific concerns and issues of theological education in each area*, relationships are being strengthened at the national and regional levels. Inter-regional contacts and exchange programmes are being planned to ensure the widest benefit from new advances while safeguarding the fundamental integrity of contextual adaptations.

ECUMENICAL SHARING OF RESOURCES

Historic circumstances demand that the P.T.E. maintain as one of its commitments the support, financial and otherwise, of selected projects in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific in the following areas of priority concern:

- *Centres of theological creativity where original and contextual reflection and writing are taking place.*
- *Associations and regional bodies of theological education, of which there are now about 25 in the Third World.*
- *The continuing search for new patterns of theological learning and ministerial formation more relevant to the socio-cultural conditions and more responsive to the demands of mission and ministry.*
- *The training of theological educators.*
- *Intra- and inter-regional exchange of students and teachers.*

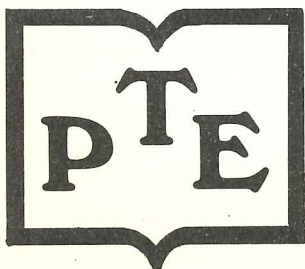
This sharing of resources is a part of the larger scheme of ecumenical participation in the common task of theological education around the world.

A CHALLENGE

There are many signs of crisis and promise in theological education worldwide today:

- *Traditional seminaries are being compelled to develop more flexible programmes to enable many more people to engage in theological studies and in ministry--lay people and ordinands, people of different levels of schooling, representatives of ethnic minorities as well as dominant groups.*
- *Theological schools are increasingly concerned about basic pedagogical reform. Engagement in ministry and mission, long treated as an adjunct or a department of the curriculum, is now being regarded as an integral dimension of all theological learning.*
- *Decentralized and non-formal training models are multiplying in order to meet the needs of local community leaders and to enable the churches to expand their outreach.*
- *The question of economic viability is becoming ever more urgent not only in the Third World but also in the more affluent countries.*
- *The implications for theological education of ideological issues and of dialogue with other living faiths are being debated.*
- *Elitist and professionalist tendencies in theological education and ministry are being questioned by churches and learning institutions.*
- *Varying degrees of tension between "church" and "school" sharpen the debate about how theological education can best respond to the needs of mission.*
- *Science and technology pose new questions to faith which theological education can not ignore.*
- *Theological schools are being called to overcome the captivity of narrow confessionalism and of provincial outlook in order to see their task in light of the ecumenical demands and global needs of our time.*

These and other currents provide the ingredients for an unprecedented movement of renewal and change of great potential for the life and mission of the church. The P.T.E. can do little on its own to meet the possibilities and respond to the opportunities of this historic situation. The liberation of theological education from any bonds that hinder the fulfilment of its original calling is a challenge which the churches and their institutions must meet individually and in partnership. The P.T.E. is one instrument created by the World Council of Churches to help the churches meet that challenge.



PROPOSAL: A NETWORK OF PARTNERS IN MINISTERIAL FORMATION

Important things are happening in theological education and ministry in many places around the world. These changes could have enormous impact on the life of the churches. The Programme on Theological Education is looking for ways in which many more people can become partners and share their common concerns and diverse experiences in this strategic dimension of our calling as the People of God.

Our basic approach will be to find, bring together and build up a network of people who are committed to the renewal of theological education and the ministry. We do not presume that the P.T.E. should be the initiator or the hub of this network, but rather that each partner should be an initiator and a hub for those within his or her reach. This network will have many different mailing lists. The more than 25 associations of seminaries around the world provide one, but only one, immediate dimension of this network.

The P.T.E. plans to make this matter one of its priorities. The staff in Geneva will make its own contribution through a modest information, documentation, and publication service. During 1978 we shall publish at least four editions of this newsletter on an experimental basis with news, reports, articles, and notes about resources in the field of theological education and the ministry. This newsletter will have, at least at the beginning, a very small (less than 500), selective circulation in order to feed into rather than duplicate or by-pass other publications, i.e. to contribute to and to strengthen the work of our partners. We shall gradually build up, with the help of the readers of this bulletin, our lists of strategically placed theological educators, church leaders, innovators, editors of related publications, and grassroots practitioners of ministry.

The P.T.E. already has a growing collection of materials, and we hope to make certain documents available to others. Some we shall order in quantity from other sources; others we shall reproduce; and many we shall simply report on and indicate where to obtain them. Again, we do not intend to maintain a large circulation but rather to place selected documents in the hands of those people and organizations who may want to reproduce them and pass them on to their constituencies.

Readers are earnestly invited to send in their comments and suggestions, names and addresses, news items and other materials, for which a questionnaire is provided on the final page of this newsletter. Through the coming months we need to learn what are the significant developments--problems as well as new advances and crucial issues--in theological education in the different regions. What happens in one place may not be directly applicable in another, but much insight and encouragement can be gained through this network of partners in ministerial formation--as the material in this first newsletter should suggest.

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TWO MAJOR EXTENSION PROGRAMS IN INDIA

T.A.F.T.E.E.: THE ASSOCIATION FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION

This pioneering extension programme was initiated by representatives of conservative Protestant missions and churches in 1971 in order to make full, university level theological studies available to laymen, clergy, and church workers on a non-residential basis. It began with 81 students in 4 centers; by 1976 there were 381 students in 34 centers. Although the programme is still not fully accredited, a T.A.F.T.E.E. student was ordained by the Church of North India in 1977.

The T.A.F.T.E.E. programme is directed by a small staff at its headquarters in Bangalore, which provides administrative services, programmed study materials, examinations, and overall orientation for the centers, which are scattered widely over the country, primarily in the major cities. These centers are directed by local voluntary tutors, some of whom are members of theological faculties.

The T.A.F.T.E.E. curriculum has been laid out in 30 courses, each with its programmed text. The students work through assignments at home, then take a quiz and discuss the major issues and concepts with their tutors at the weekly seminars in the centers. This rather mechanical approach has been questioned, and other methods and materials are being introduced. Another early criticism was that T.A.F.T.E.E. was limited to university level students who could use English. Materials are now being prepared in the major Indian languages, and some of the T.A.F.T.E.E. students are now teaching lower level students.

For further information, sample materials, or the T.A.F.T.E.E. bulletin, write to Rev. Vinaya K. Moses, P.O. Box 520, Bangalore 560005, India.

T.Y.P.T.E.: B.D. LEVEL EXTENSION PROGRAMME IN SOUTH INDIA

Four major seminaries are working together in the development of guided extension studies leading to the B.D. degree for church leaders scattered over a wide region of South India. The programme, which was launched in 1975 as the Teach Yourself Programme of Theological Education, had a total of 475 students last year as follows:

- Andhra Christian Theological College at Secunderabad	174
- Kerala United Theological Seminary at Trivandrum	16
- Tamilnadu Theological Seminary at Madurai	191
- United Theological College at Bangalore.	76

The Senate of Serampore College, which provides accreditation for all the university level theological programmes in India under its government charter, has operated an external B.D. programme for many years, but in the past the students had to work entirely on their own in preparation for their examinations. The purpose of T.Y.P.T.E. is to provide an extension structure within which external B.D. candidates can meet together regularly

as peer groups and under the oversight of local tutors. Study centers are located at or near the four sponsoring seminaries, at other theological schools, and in other places. The students utilize specially prepared study guides, standard texts, and regional or institutional libraries, attend center meetings periodically, and once a year go to a seminary for an extended group tutorial.

The T.Y.P.T.E. programme is still flexible. New materials are being prepared in or translated into the major languages of the region. New directions in the content and design of the curriculum are being considered as the programme moves from a strictly academic to a more life-related orientation. More staff and library resources are being sought. More theological colleges may join the programme officially as it grows. Greater support from the churches is being solicited.

Further information about this high-level extension programme may be obtained from the Secretary, Rev. Lennart Persson, United Theological College, 17 Miller's Road, Bangalore 560046, South India.

SOUTH AFRICA'S FEDERAL SEMINARY PROJECTS NEW CAMPUS

Church leaders all over the world were shocked when the government of South Africa expropriated the property of Federal Theological Seminary at Alice at the end of 1974. Since March 1975 the Seminary, which is interdenominational (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational) and interracial, has been forced to move at considerable cost and great inconvenience from one temporary setting to another. At present, the student body of 90 (reduced of necessity from 120) is crowded (3 or 4 to a room) into the rented premises of Edendale Lay Ecumenical Center near Pietermaritzburg.

After more than two years of strenuous negotiations the Seminary's governing council has obtained clearance for a lease on an ideal site near the present location; plans for a new plant have been approved; and construction should begin in April of this year. The total cost is estimated at \$ 3,600,000 U.S., of which approximately \$ 2,400,000 is in hand from the expropriated property. An appeal is going out to raise the additional \$ 1,200,000 in order to launch the new construction on schedule and avoid further moves and inflation.

Concerned persons may write for further information to:

*Rev. T.S.N. Gqubule, President
Federal Theological Seminary
Private Bag X 505
Plessislaer 4500, Natal
South Africa*

COMMISSION ON NON-TRADITIONAL STUDY

Association of Theological Schools of South East Asia

I. INTRODUCTION

A. History. At its April 1974 triennial meeting the Association of Theological Schools of South East Asia (A.T.S.S.E.A.) faced a unique problem. One of its seminaries (Concordia, Hong Kong) had undergone such major changes in structure that, strictly speaking, accreditation would have to be withdrawn. At the same time, the Association was aware that that was not the fault of the seminary but, if anything, the fault of the Association. Specifically, the accreditation standards were based on certain now much questioned assumptions. One of these assumptions was that all seminaries are, "of course", for full-time residential students.

Concordia's change to exclusively part-time students self-employed in other professions was a creative response to a local need. If the Association merely withdrew Concordia's accreditation, the Association would find itself in direct conflict with its past pronouncements encouraging pioneering, adaptation, and contextualization.

At the same time, in matters of accreditation, the Association did not want to act too hastily. Concordia's president, Dr. Manfred Berndt, was therefore requested, as a first step, to prepare a study on *The Accreditation of Non-Traditional Programs of Study: Recommendations to A.T.S.S.E.A.* This 60-page paper (available from the Commission) was presented at the April 1974 meeting of A.T.S.S.E.A. The result was that the Association set up a Commission on Non-Traditional Study for the years 1974-77. Though many aspects of the assignment remain unfinished, the following report constitutes the final statement which concludes the assignment given to this Commission over this triennium. It will include recommendations for the next triennium and beyond.

B. The Scope and Assignment of the Commission. The full text of the A.T.S.S.E.A. resolution is as follows:

VOTED

1. To establish a Commission on Non-Traditional Study, with the duties as follows:
 - a. To survey non-traditional programs of study now being undertaken by A.T.S.S.E.A. member schools;
 - b. To recommend guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of such programs, leading to possible provisional accreditation of some of them by the Accrediting Commission;
 - c. To explore the meaning of "excellence in theological education" in non-tradition programs, with special reference to the "Critical Asian Principle";
 - d. To recommend to the Association ways in which it may be of assistance to schools using non-traditional programs of study.

2. *To appoint Dr. Manfred Berndt (Chairman), Dr. Philip Shen, and Dr. Andrew Hsiao to this Commission with the understanding that the Chairman, in consultation with the Association's Executive Director, may invite qualified persons to serve as additional members, and*
3. *To request the Executive Director to facilitate research for such findings as the Commission may require.*

C. Membership on the Commission. Efforts were made to include people representing various concerns--clergy as well as laity, men as well as women, mainline denomination leaders as well as those of other theological emphases. It was also made clear that the members were not representing their organizations as such, but themselves as individuals.

II. THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission had six plenary meetings. Between meetings the work was done by these four subcommittees: on Accreditation Guidelines, on Excellence in Ministry, on Survey, and on Seminars and Workshops. What follows is a brief description of their work.

A. Accreditation Guidelines. The guidelines of F.R.A.C.H.E. (Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions on Higher Education) with respect to non-traditional forms of education were studied. There was correspondence and a meeting with Dr. Marvin Taylor of the A.T.S. in the U.S.A. who himself was on sabbatical leave to study this very problem as it relates to the accreditation of theological institutions. In general, this subject of accreditation guidelines is still the most nebulous and difficult when it comes to non-formal approaches. Even agencies which have experimented with accredited non-traditional programmes over some time already are still struggling with concepts of measurement of learning, supervision, quality control, and equivalence. Some of these instruments of quality control require a sophistication usually not found in A.T.S.S.E.A. seminaries. The recommendations finally made (III) are intended as simple, modest first steps designed to make sure that general academic standards are adhered to.

B. Excellence in Theological Education and Ministry. Somehow, every major discussion, particularly at plenary meetings, returned to this question: "What do we mean by excellence"? Our difficulty in arriving at a consensus in answering that question is probably not so much a failure on our part as it is the facing of the inescapable fact that in many-faceted Christendom we probably have to allow for different definitions of what constitutes excellence, each determined largely by a different context. The one danger then, however, is that since "everyone is presumed to be right", efforts at examining, correcting, and improving our understanding of excellence may be abandoned as unnecessary. Yet such self-examination must be both constant and rigorous. Some of the recommendations (III B) are designed to insure that that is done.

C. Survey. Two questionnaires were sent throughout South East Asia to ascertain the extent to which non-traditional forms of theological education were allowed, even if on a small scale. The first questionnaire was sent to 85 denominational centres in South East Asia listed in the

Directory of the Christian Conference of Asia. Of these, 47, or over half, replied. The second questionnaire was sent to the 30 seminaries of A.T.S. S.E.A., and 21, or 70 % of them, replied.

Most of the 45 responding Asian churches indicated that they allowed for alternate routes for persons to become ministers, without full attendance at seminary for several years. For 21 of them, this "alternate route" was a comprehensive test and interview, for 24 it meant attendance at a few carefully selected seminary courses, and for 20 it meant some other route (T.E.E., or correspondence, or diocesan clergy exam, etc.--some checked more than one). A surprising discovery was that churches which were of the more "liturgical" tradition, and therefore popularly conceived of as more rigid, seemed considerably more open to non-formal approaches than churches of the more "free" tradition; one would have expected the inverse.

The second survey of seminaries also revealed a surprising degree of adaptability to non-formal approaches. These are some of the findings:

- 13 allowed for transfer of credit (3 up to 3/4ths; 3 almost total);
- 2 allowed students to be excused from attending most of the seminary programme if they passed a comprehensive test or tests;
- 4 granted credit for individual courses by testing;
- 4 allowed academic credit for past field work experiences beyond the field work already required;
- 14 used tutorials for academic credits;
- 6 used programmed instruction;
- 5 used cassette courses;
- 10 gave academic credit for occasional short-term programmes requiring residence on campus;
- 4 used correspondence courses;
- 1 used videotapes;
- 1 used talk-back telephone instruction for tutorials;
- 8 granted credit for past work in church agencies;
- 7 granted credit for certain volunteer work in community agencies;
- 3 granted credit for a noted work in one of the areas of the fine arts (novel, drama, musical composition, etc.);
- 8 granted credit for partial theological study abroad;
- 6 utilized formal courses of instruction conducted by business, industry, government, or church agencies;
- 4 used sensitivity or encounter groups;
- 7 gave credit for classes at other theological schools;
- 3 gave credit for a systematic study-survey overseas.

The above reflect the responses of churches and seminaries to unique problems in their context. The open question is how much more this would be done if churches and seminaries alike knew that both accrediting agencies and subsidizing boards did not attach a stigma to such approaches as de-meaning academic quality.

The detailed data on the survey is available in a separate 20-page study.

D. Workshops. Three were held (Hong Kong, Philippines, and Thailand) and three additional ones are in the process of preparation (Taiwan, Singapore,) and Indonesia).

The workshop in Hong Kong held by Dr. L.K. Ding lasted one full afternoon and included 67 participants, representing 13 denominations and 7 theological institutions. Of the participants 14 were laymen, 15 seminary students, 19 seminary professors, and 19 pastors. Half of the time included group discussions. The consensus was that seminaries need to adjust to the reality of present needs of churches, of new methods of learning, and of new forms of ministry.

The workshop in the Philippines, organized by Dr. José Gamboa, was held at Union Theological Seminary. It lasted four days and included 35 participants representing 7 churches and 5 seminaries operating 61 extension centres with 388 students. Half of the time was devoted to the formulation of recommendations. One significant recommendation is that of having two follow-up workshops, one for supervisors only, and one for students and their teachers.

E. Communications, bibliography, etc. More than 200 inquiries of various sorts have been received over the last three years, most of them requesting copies of Dr. Berndt's paper on accreditation of non-traditional programmes, or for the survey. The contacts thus pursued also led the Commission to discover some extremely relevant studies. One of these, for example, is Drs. Barbara and Marcel Goldschmid's *Peer Teaching in Higher Education: A Review* (Chaire de Pédagogie et Didactique, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale, Avenue Fraisse 12, CH-1006 Lausanne, Suisse; it is available also in English). On the other end of the same "non-formal" spectrum are books dealing with the concept of independent study and contracting.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION

A. As to Survey. The Commission recommends:

1. That the findings of the survey be disseminated among A.T.S.S.E.A. seminaries and other interested educational agencies.
2. That the findings be used as a resource in regional workshops to acquaint participants with the types and frequency of non-traditional models which already exist in Asia.
3. That a follow-up survey be conducted after three years (1979) among the same seminaries, to ascertain what changes, if any, have occurred during the interim period.

B. As to Excellence in Theological Education and Ministry, the Commission recommends:

4. That the Association adopt the principle of responsible pluralism in the definition of "excellence". By this we mean that each constituency has the right, and in fact the solemn obligation (a) to define for its seminary what it understands "excellence" and "balance" to mean, and then (b) to hold that seminary accountable, through rigid criteria of evaluation, to see to it that those objectives of "excellence" and "balance" are being achieved.

5. That nonetheless, the Association intends to assist the seminaries and their constituencies as they try to define excellence and then set out to achieve it. This assistance will come in many forms: (a) through studies to help the seminaries see how other seminaries and constituencies, striving to be faithful to the biblical call to ministry (text) in their respective societies (context) have arrived at a concept of excellence which might differ from the one of the seminary in question; (b) by challenging the seminary and its constituency (particularly at the time of the visit of the Accreditation Team) to defend their understanding of excellence and, in cases where the seminary or its constituency have given insufficient thought to defining that objective of excellence, being rigid and demanding that this be done first before accreditation is seriously considered; and (c) by reserving the right, in cases too deviant from biblical or essential Christian norms, to decline accreditation on the grounds that a stated definition of excellence is plainly unacceptable.
 6. That, having said the above, the Association does not hesitate outlining, in broad strokes, how it sees the major categories of excellence and their priorities. Specifically, the first category refers to the minister as a person and includes qualities of spirituality such as love of people, service without regard for acclaim, personal integrity, Christian example, enthusiasm, diligence, confidence, humility, honesty, imagination, initiative, resourcefulness, and courage. The second category refers to the professional skills, such as effective counseling, teaching, preaching, leading, visiting, managing, and most important, training and enabling of the laity. The third category refers to his foundation of knowledge, as evidenced not in theological profundities but in his ability to communicate clearly, to use basic tools, to follow sound methodologies, to grasp his own culture and ethos, and to relate with his professional peers and contemporaries. Furthermore, the above is said with full awareness that excellence includes the development of individual and peculiar talents, so that the ministry can also be seen as blossoming in its beautiful variety.
 7. That, finally, in any understanding of excellence, we be alert to the call of the future at a time when the rate of change itself is accelerating and sensitive to the fact that we are therefore training seminary students not for the past, or even the present, but for the time one or two decades hence when we would hope these "seminary products" would bloom in their ministry.
- C. As to accreditation guidelines, the Commission recommends:
8. That each institution seeking accreditation bear the responsibility of designing the criteria of measurement and evaluation by which it wants the Accreditation Team to evaluate the extent to which its own objective of excellence has been achieved.
 9. That the present list of standards and notations be used as aids to both the institution seeking accreditation and the accreditation team in such an evaluation process.

10. That, particularly in non-formal programmes which are more difficult to monitor and evaluate, the administration of A.T.S.S.E.A. be authorized, as a normal procedure, to appoint an external evaluator who will be in that seminary for several weeks and who will do extensive preparatory work to help the accreditation team in its task of evaluation.
11. That both the external evaluator and the accrediting team reserve the right to ask for the complete documentation of work done in any academic contract, independent study, or non-formal programme, as well as the right to interview the student(s) and the professor(s) separately.
12. That, as an alternate approach, seminaries following non-formal approaches consider the option that their students may take the A.T.S.S.E.A. external B.D. (M.Div.) examination, provided the latter is not merely a test of knowledge content. (See no. 13 below.)
13. That, in general, the Association is willing to consider de-emphasizing the "seminary training process" as opposed to "product testing" only if the instruments of such product testing are comprehensive, objective, and convincing. Even here, however, the Association is aware of the limitation of such testing, since it may easily slip into an emphasis on the third category of excellence (knowledge) to the neglect of the first and the second (personality and skills). The Association is concerned that non-formal approaches could lead to a pattern of individualized graduates isolated from the communal spiritual experiences of caring, sharing, and bearing others' burdens. In that respect close attention will continue to be paid to the *process* which, as we see it, cannot omit intensive communal and spiritual experiences.

D. As to general future direction, the Commission recommends:

14. That a similar Commission be established for the 1977-1980 triennium, this time based in the Philippines, to pursue the concerns of the present Commission, specifically: (a) updating the survey; (b) improving the criteria for measurement and evaluation in the process of accreditation; (c) further sensitizing members in the search, definition, and attainment of excellence; (d) disseminating of bibliographic data on the subject, and (e) conducting various types of regional workshops.
15. That faculties be encouraged to assist their teachers in updating their skills so as to be confident and effective in the use of non-formal approaches.
16. That counsel be made available to A.T.S.S.E.A. seminaries desiring assistance in designing or improving non-formal approaches such as contracting, independent study, and peer learning.

(The full report and other documents mentioned here may be requested from Dr. José Gamboa, P.O. Box 841, Manila 2800, Philippines.)

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WILL INFLATION CHANGE OUR IMAGE OF THE CHURCH?

James W. Gunn

Whatever future historians may say about the character and accomplishments of mainline Protestant denominations in the U.S. and Canada during the last quarter of the twentieth century there can be little doubt that they will point to the impact of the economic situation upon our image of the "typical" congregation.

For the vast majority of us "church" means Sunday morning worship in a church building presided over by a seminary-trained, full-time minister who lives in the community in a church-owned parsonage (or on a church provided manse allowance) all of which is supported financially by a budget raised annually by pledges and loose offerings from its (at least) 100 member families. Even if our personal experience of "church" has been something quite different, or even if we acknowledge that for a large minority of church members this experience of "church" has never been their experience, we are generally oblivious to this contradicting data when it comes to visualizing the really "authentic" congregation in our various denominations.

Given the prevalence in our collective memories and histories of preachers with saddlebags, Sunday school extension workers, home missionaries, chapel outposts, three-point preaching fields, lay preachers, congregationally selected and ordained parsons, settlement houses, and the camp meeting, it is difficult to understand how our typical image of the authentic church could have become so normative in such a short period of time. My guess is that the primary reason for its general acceptance is that it represents the triumph of the same success mentality in our society that indiscriminately endorses the goal of "two cars in every garage" for a society that includes innercity high rise apartment dwellers (and which, incidentally, also tacitly assumes that "a chicken in every pot" will be automatically achieved en route!). The "typical" church image has functioned as a shorthand way for us to point to commonly shared goals for much of our activities in every kind of local congregation, judicatory, or national church agency without having to do the tedious work of drawing distinctions, delineating differences, and keeping in full view the rich diversity that usually resists simple, single model solutions. We *know*, of course, that our concept of the typical church is not relevant in every situation, but as a heuristic device for mobilizing energies, sorting out priorities, and allocating resources it is without equal.

Can there be any question about the pervasiveness of this normative image in the church? All of our practical wisdom about church financing and stewardship education presupposes this model. Our goals, policies and strategies for evangelism and new church development assume the universality of this model. We develop our Christian education curricula and resources with this model in mind and then offer adaptations for the atypical settings when they resist what we have designed. It goes without saying that everything we do in theological education presupposes the normative character

of this model even though our seminaries would lose most of their field work settings (and related student income) if the model were effectively normative. Our understanding of careers in the ministry is thoroughly dependent upon this image. The training we offer unordained professional workers is informed by a somewhat enlarged version of this model (larger membership, multiple staff, larger budget). What little specific training we make available to laity in relation to the roles they can play in the church presupposes this image of the authentic congregation. Even church government in most of our denominations, by practice if not by polity, pretty well assumes the normative character of this image in the assignment of governance roles.

While the lower judicatories of our denominations are keenly aware that this typical church image is not universal as they work closely with their small membership, pastorless congregations the image is none-the-less the norm for a majority of their goals, programmes and services and those of the higher judicatories and agencies that support them. But perhaps the strangest phenomenon of all is the way in which small membership, pastorless congregations have accepted for themselves the normative character of the "typical" church image for their goals for the future and for their own evaluation of their present realities and possibilities.

The hegemony of our image of the typical church is due to its self-evident validity and practical utility not only within denominational systems but also within the ecumenical movement. The image is a simple statement of the goal and character of the religious enterprise in North America with which everyone can agree even if we disagree on theology and church order. It functions as our commonly held *practical* theology and enables us to quickly understand, appreciate and trust what our sister denominations are ultimately about on the North American scene. Just as the professional model of ministry has drawn theologically disparate seminaries together in a common accrediting agency so our typical church image enables us to work together trustingly in practical ecumenical endeavors.

Because of its self-evident validity and practical utility within denominations and across denominational lines it would be foolish to imagine that this image of the typical congregation will suddenly cease to be normative for our goal setting, strategizing and evaluation in the church's life. The image has already successfully resisted contrary data since at least the end of the Western frontier. It is my contention, however, that the economic realities of our inflation-prone society are now impacting this image with such severity that we can no longer avoid the difficult work of developing and legitimating alternative models of the church in the gathered and scattered expressions of its life.

As I draft these observations it has just been announced that in the U.S. the annual rate of inflation is currently 9.6 %, up considerably from the 7.5 % figure that we have been using the last few years. In very simple terms this means that every ten to eleven years the purchasing power of our dollar is cut in half (or that the cost of everything we purchase doubles). In a very preliminary way let us look at how the reality of "double-digit" inflation impacts the more obvious dimensions of our typical church image.

CHURCH PROPERTY

Since before the days of the cathedral the church building has been the symbol of the church's presence in the community. It is also both the symbol and the functional reality of the church's gathered, celebrative life. As a symbol it is unmatched. In fact we find it almost impossible to imagine any other way to symbolize the church's presence and its gathered life.

Even before the energy crisis and the leap in energy prices the church building was just about the most underused piece of real estate on the landscape. Keeping it heated in winter so the pipes wouldn't freeze and the pastor's office would be useable (or air conditioned in summer) was already a disproportionate burden on many small and medium membership churches. Churches that once made their facilities available without charge to community groups were already forced to begin charging for heat, lights and custodial services. With the increase in energy costs and with continued inflation more and more churches each year are as a matter of course reducing programme budgets and increasing utility budgets as their primary strategy for keeping a balanced budget.

Similarly, the cost of maintaining a church-owned parsonage has risen with the same economic realities. Recent surveys indicate that the trend toward housing allowances for pastors has begun to reverse back toward church-owned and maintained parsonages as pastors have discovered that their equity gains are more than offset by maintenance and upkeep costs and interest rates. This means that some congregations are having to move back into a more expensive method of providing housing for their pastor.

Furthermore, a climate has developed in the last decade that encourages congregations to carry their fair share of the cost of the community services ordinarily supported by taxes. Volunteer gifts to the local tax office are now in the budgets of some congregations thus increasing further the cost of maintaining and insuring the church's buildings.

FULL-TIME RESIDENT MINISTER

Every congregation wants its own full-time resident minister. One would almost suspect that in some way this symbolized to the congregation God's undivided attention. In any event a full-time resident minister is clearly perceived as the mark of a really authentic, "first-class" congregation.

Over the past decade the denominations have given serious attention to upgrading clergy compensation and support, and with noticeable success. Minimum salaries, increased pension and medical benefits, continuing education time and funds, better vacation benefits, cost of living raises and other perquisites have become policy and reality in some significant way for most ministers.

Yet during this decade of serious work on clergy support clergy compensation has not kept pace with inflation, much less with the rising expectations of clergy. The 1973 Clergy Support Study found that clergy compensation was experiencing only a 5 % annual increase. The study further found that during this period the number of working spouses had more than doubled

from 22 % in 1963 to 45 % in 1973. By now it is probably more than 50 %. Also during the same period the number of clergy moonlighting in a secular occupation had risen from 15 % to 22 %. It is safe to assume that the trend continues upward. In a recent survey of clergy spouses inadequate income was cited as one important source of tension in clergy marriages.

The bitter irony is that all of our work on upgrading clergy compensation coupled with 9.6 % inflation means that already underpaid clergy are none-the-less being priced out of the market in a steadily mounting number of "marginal" and "not so marginal" congregations. In the same way many congregations that used to support two staff positions can now support only one.

We can focus our efforts on establishing new congregations in more "promising" (read that "affluent") neighborhoods, new membership "drives" (note the imagery is drawn from the cattle industry of the old West) through new evangelism techniques, we can close "non-viable" congregations and create more yoked parishes, and we can put a moratorium on recruitment for professional ministry but none of this is likely to halt the steady erosion of the number of supported ministry spaces due to annual inflation.

SEMINARY EDUCATION

Immediately related to the erosion of supported ministry spaces and adequate salaries is the cost of seminary education. One recent estimate is that it requires \$ 25,000 to cover the costs of a M.Div. degree. Seminaries are having to annually hike the minimum enrollment figure on which the books can be balanced. Even without inflation seminaries are under constant pressure to expand programmes, add new evaluative processes, and meet the resourcing expectations of surrounding judicatories. The clergy supply/demand situation coupled with our professional model of ministry ought to imply tighter screening and gate-keeping, but a majority of seminaries would be courting financial disaster if they considered seriously an intentional reduction of their student bodies.

Given the present rate of inflation it seems clear that seminaries will be obliged to have more and more students who in turn will be paying more and more for their education and competing more strenuously with each other for fewer and fewer openings which pay relatively less and less. Only major interventions can change this scenario.

THE ATYPICAL MINORITY

The most serious liability of the hegemony of our typical church image is that it leaves an already large percentage of church members feeling that their experience of "church" is somehow second class and, with the realities of inflation, it will exclude an increasingly larger percentage each year.

We used to be comfortable in setting 250 members as the minimum for a "viable" congregation. Today we wonder if 400 is realistic. But regardless of where we set that figure this year or in any subsequent year inflation will move a fairly predictable number of congregations (and their members) from the "viable" to the "non-viable" column. Our model of the typical church puts us in the unavoidably embarrassing and untenable position of referring to a large segment of the Christian fellowship as

"non-viable", and many of our fellow Christians in this atypical minority in turn accept this description for themselves. It is our model that is no longer viable, not congregations and their members.

What it boils down to is that our longstanding, dominant image of how people should be connected within the context of a caring love for each other and for all of God's world is breaking down under the impact of the economic realities of our society. We have been aware of its conceptual limitations for some time but have continued an almost exclusive expenditure of our time and energies to make it normative in every situation at great cost to the personal experience of "church" and the self esteem of most church members in both the typical majority and atypical minority. It is my contention that the pressures of inflation provide us now with a new kind of frontier on which to develop more useful and appropriate images of how we may be authentically the church.

If we do not break the hegemony of our typical church image it is reasonable to assume that the institutional church will increasingly be only for affluent Christians gathering in ever larger congregations and increasingly preoccupied with the survival of their heated (airconditioned) pew. It will mean that the professional ministry agencies of the denominations will be serving a shrinking clientele with their support, growth and relocation services and that professional ministry will of necessity require increasing institutional survival skills.

As a beginning I am wondering what we might do together in this ecumenical arena to develop a substantive analysis of the impact of inflation upon our familiar model of congregation and ministry in order to develop new options for how we institutionalize and symbolize Christian community. I suspect each of us has already begun some creative analysis and reflection in this area. I hope we can find a process that enables us to work together on our vision of a church that has learned to travel lighter if not light.

T.E.F. BECOMES P.T.E.

The Theological Education Fund Committee held its last meeting in conjunction with the first meeting of the Programme on Theological Education Commission in Bromley July 6-12, 1977. Catholicos Karekin II of the Armenian Orthodox Church in Lebanon presided over the T.E.F. meetings during the first three days as chairman of the T.E.F. Committee, and Dr. Thomas Campbell of Union Theological Seminary (Minneapolis) in the U.S.A. presided over the P.T.E. Commission meetings during the last three days. Dr. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the W.C.C. preached at the joint service of dedication on July 8. Dr. Shoki Coe gave his final report as the Director of the T.E.F. staff; he will continue to serve as a special consultant to the P.T.E. (12 Chyngton Rd., Seaford, Sussex, U.K.) Rev. Aharon Sapsezian, who had been one of the four Associate Directors of the T.E.F. for the past seven years, was welcomed as the new Director of the P.T.E., and he was joined by Dr. Ross Kinsler, the new Assistant Director. In August the process of closing the T.E.F. office in Bromley and opening the P.T.E. office in Geneva began.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN A NEW CARIBBEAN

Recommendations of the Trinidad Consultation

The 42-page report of this consultation may be requested from the new Coordinator for Theological Education of the Caribbean Council of Churches, Rev. Clifford Payne, P.O. Box 876, Port of Spain, Trinidad. The major papers deal with the style and methodology of theological education, a strategy of collaboration among theological schools, and the devotional life in theological education.

1. That theological studies be regarded as part of education for development, and so to initiate a course in "Development Studies and Liberation" involving study of Caribbean governments, economy, theology of work, oppression, change and continuity, with the drawing up of a basic bibliography and appointment of tutors.
2. That the Caribbean Journal of Theology be published with a more united effort of the various territories and language groups through an editorial board.
3. That an ecumenical centre of resources--bibliographical, etc.-- be created for every need.
4. That a student-exchange programme be organised, enabling theological students to spend one term in a seminary in another territory.
5. That a permanent on-going programme of education for theological faculty be organized through yearly workshops and seminars in different territories.
6. That élitism and alienation of the student from his environment in his study be avoided by the initiating of a de-schooling process through a year's employment in a secular occupation prior to ordination.
7. That education for development be promoted for the Church through seminars involving heads of churches and in collaboration with Councils of Churches, including biblical study and political awareness.
8. That the Action for Renewal of the Church programme of the Caribbean Council of Churches be called upon to assist in devising means of implementing these proposals.
9. That a small Advisory Committee be set up to act with ARC to assist in co-ordinating ideas, keeping in mind the French-speaking territories, which were not present at the Consultation. This Advisory Committee would be a preparation for a recommended *Association of Theological Colleges*.

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NEWS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN MINISTERIAL FORMATION

ARGENTINA

The Protestant Institute of Higher Theological Studies (ISEDET) initiated a doctoral programme in 1977 with the matriculation of three students. This programme, the only one of its kind in Latin America, will allow advanced Latin American students to pursue their career without uprooting themselves from their culture and at considerably lower cost than studies in North America or Europe. Director of Graduate Studies at ISEDET is Dr. José Míguez Bonino, one of the six presidents of the W.C.C. and a member of the P.T.E. Commission.

BRAZIL

The Association of Evangelical Theological Schools (ASTE) plans to initiate this year a new kind of periodical called "Alternativas." Neither a book nor a magazine, it will be a quarterly kit of varied tools for alternative forms of theological education. The contents will include experimental self-instruction materials, critiques of current programmes, liturgical forms, music, art, articles, etc. The General Secretary of ASTE is Rev. Jaci Maraschin, Rua Rego Freitas, 530 F-13, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

CANADA

The United Church of Canada will hold a consultation on "Theological Education in the 80's" May 15-19, 1978 at London, Ontario. The 120 participants will include the heads of all theological colleges related to the U.C.C., all their full-time theological educators, theological students, church officials, laity, and clergy. The objectives of this unprecedented event will be "To alert us to major changes (social, economic, technological) in the Canadian environment; to identify the major issues both conceptual and methodological which need to be addressed in theological education; to wrestle with the direction in which we should move; and to determine steps which can be taken now for the sake of the future." Planning is being coordinated by Dr. Peter Gordon, Deputy Secretary of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, 85 St. Clair Avenue E, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M8.

GERMANY

Professor Jurgen Moltmann made an extended visit to Latin America in September-October of 1977 in order to carry forward the current dialogue between German theology of hope and cross and Latin American theology of liberation. Major stops included Recife Baptist Seminary, the Methodist Faculty near São Paulo and the Lutheran Faculty of Theology at São Leopoldo in Brazil, the Protestant Institute of Higher Theological Studies in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Theological Community in Mexico City, and St. Andrew's Theological College in Trinidad. Although exchange and debate has been going on for some time through articles and correspondence, this was Dr. Moltmann's first opportunity to meet with Latin American theologians in their own context.

GHANA

90 Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox theologians met December 17-24, 1977 in Accra to discuss "The Christian Commitment in Africa Today: Concerns of Emerging African Christian Theologies". Although some participants came from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, the Pacific, and the black community of the U.S., this was a Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians. They decided to form an Ecumenical Association of African Theologians, which will be headed by Jesuit Priest Engelbert Mveng of Cameroun and which will promote a more global theological approach to the African situation by means of social analysis, biblical reflection, and active commitment to "be with the peoples in their endeavors to build a better society". A first meeting of Third World theologians was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in August 1976, and similar conferences are being promoted in other regions of the Third World.

GUYANA

The Caribbean Conference of Churches has been called upon to become more involved in theological education at both lay and clerical levels. A resolution of the Second General Assembly held in Georgetown, Guyana, in November 1977 urged that the C.C.C. enter into dialogue with the theological colleges in the region with a view to creating in the area a major center of research and documentation with a special library (perhaps at the United Theological College of the West Indies in Jamaica) concentrating on histories of the churches and religious movements in the region, Black Theology, Liberation Theology, studies of the folk religions of the region, Third World religions in general, anything written on religious movements in the region, collections of indigenous religious music and ritual on tapes, records and films.

KOREA

The Fourth Assembly of the North East Asia Association of Theological Schools was held in Seoul in August, 1977 on the theme, "Theological Education in the 1980's." The Director of NEAATS is: Dr. Yong Ok Kim, Methodist Theological Seminary, Box 45, West Gate Post Office, Seoul, Korea; the Co-Director is Dr. Kawashima, Japan Biblical Seminary, 3-4-16 Shimo-Ochiai, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 161, Japan; and the Editor of the NEAATS journal, *North East Asia Journal of Theology*, is Dr. Yoshinobu Kumazawa, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, 10-30 Osawa, 3-chome, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181, Japan.

LEBANON

The Armenian Orthodox Church is developing an extension programme called "People's Theological Education--For Life Abundant". Based at the Antelias Theological Seminary in Lebanon and utilizing its teaching personnel, the programme will be coordinated by Fr. Grun Babian and supervised by Catholicos Karekin II. Potential students include Sunday school and Armenian community school teachers, youth from the spiritual life movements, and parish priests who seek further training. Classes will be offered two nights per week, and courses are planned for a period of two years. Central study themes are: basic tenets of the Christian faith in the context of the

Middle East; reassessment of religious values of the Armenian Christian heritage; social implications of the Christian faith; non-Armenian and non-Christian religious traditions.

PHILIPPINES

Three major associations of theological schools in Asia (North East Asia Association of Theological Schools, Association of Theological Schools of South East Asia, and Board of Theological Education in India) held their first joint Consultation on Theological Education for Christian Ministry in Asia in Manila in March, 1977. The Three sub-themes were: "Man and the Holy," "Man in Society and History," and "Man and Nature." The purpose of this consultation was to search for an Asian framework for doing theology and theological education. The report may be requested from the organizing secretary of the consultation, and Executive Secretary of A.T.S.S.E.A., Dr. Emerito Nacpil, P.O. Box 841, Manila, Philippines.

SAMOA

The Pacific Conference of Churches and the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS) are the joint sponsors of a consultation to be held in Samoa during January 11-18, 1978. The Consultation will review what is being done locally and regionally to educate leaders for various forms of Christian ministry, seek to identify needs and the resources available to meet them, and work out future directions and structures for supporting the work of local schools and developing regional cooperation. A particular concern will be to examine the role of the Pacific Theological College (Suva, Fiji Islands) in the light of changes taking place in the Pacific today. This will be the first major consultation on theological education in the region since the Suva consultation in 1961. The planners expect a sizeable participation of church leaders, laity, women, and youth.

SWITZERLAND

A small exploratory colloquium of Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic theological educators was held in Geneva December 15-16 with the double objective of gaining an overall picture of the present theological education realities in Europe (West and East) and setting initial guidelines for the P.T.E.'s involvement. The speakers were Professor Savas Agourides from the Faculty of Theology of the University of Athens, Professor Gunter Krusche from the German Democratic Republic, Father Dirk van Damme from the Department of Theology of the University of Friburg and Professor André Dumas from the Protestant Faculty of Theology in Paris. During this colloquium the participants, who included 10 Orthodox church leaders and theological educators, made recommendations for a major consultation on theological education in the Orthodox Churches to be held July 4-7, 1978 in Basel in conjunction with the next meeting of the P.T.E. Commission.

TANZANIA

The Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, meeting in Tanzania June 27-28, 1977, referred to the T.E.F. study on the financial viability of theological education in the Third World and proposed that a similar study be carried out in Europe and North America. "Whereas

the dependency question in theological education in Asia, Africa and Latin America is so closely interrelated with theological education and its patterns and practices in Europe and North America . . . the issue cannot be dealt with in only the Asian, African, and Latin American countries but needs to be seen in the context of Western structures and practices and their influence on institutions and practices in Asia, Africa and Latin America." The T.E.F. booklet, *Viability in Context*, may now be ordered from William Carey Library, 1705 N. Sierra Bonita Avenue, Pasadena, California 91104, U.S.A.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Church of England Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry has since 1972 been considering alternative patterns of ordination training, and in 1977 the House of Bishops took decisive steps toward the restructuring of theological education throughout the country. The residential requirement has already been waived, and the bishops have been instructed to mobilize all the training resources in their dioceses, including the theological colleges, around 12 regional institutes. These regional institutes will in time offer residential and non-residential programmes that "will cover not only ordination training for the stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry, but will also assist post-ordination and in-service training of the clergy, pre-theological education, and laity training" on an ecumenical basis. In order to make these programmes accessible throughout the regions each regional institute will operate a number of sub-centers. These developments gain urgency as the cost of residential training increases; the Church of England is expected to spend in 1978 three times as much as it spent in 1973--for fewer students. On the other hand non-residential training has gained credibility in recent years through the experiences of the North West Ordination Course, the Southwark Ordination Course, et al. The P.T.E. will report on these changes in greater detail in the coming months.

U.S.A.

Auburn Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian foundation which has been closely associated with Union Theological Seminary in New York for many years, held a public "Dialogue on Alternatives in Theological Education" on October 27, 1977 in conjunction with its regular board meeting. Ross Kinsler spoke on theological education by extension; Barbara Wheeler gave a critique of theological education in the U.S.; and John Fletcher told the story of the Inter-Met experience in Washington D.C. About 70 people participated in the discussion, several of whom are involved in non-traditional programmes at New York Theological Seminary, Hartford Seminary Foundation, and Andover Newton Theological Seminary. The Auburn board is planning to invest most of its resources in alternatives especially directed toward the renewal of ministry in local congregations, and the staff of Auburn is developing a network of people with similar concerns in North America. Interested persons should write to Ms. Virginia Clifford, Auburn Theological Seminary, 3041 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10027, U.S.A.

U.S.S.R.

The Russian Orthodox Church has for many years utilized correspondence courses for the training of clergy. The extra-mural department of the Theological Academy of Moskow at Zagorsk offers both ordinary and high-

level theological formation for students all over the country. These study programmes correspond generally to the programmes offered at the seminary and carry the same credit for qualification as Candidate, Master, or Doctor of Theology. Extra-mural students are invited to Zagorsk twice a year to attend lectures, present papers, and write examinations. No time limit is placed on the completion of these programmes, and at present over 800 students are enrolled. The Rector of the Moscow Academy is Archbishop Vladimir.

ZAIRE

In September, 1977 two monks of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt were sent to Zaire at the request of the Kimbanguist Church to teach in the Kimbanguist Theological College in Kinshasa. This is probably the first ecumenical sharing of personnel of this kind in Africa. The Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu is the largest of the 5000 or more "African Independant Churches". The school in Kinshasa, founded in 1970, now has over 80 students in residence working toward a diploma, licence, or degree in theology. The Dean and Principal is Dr. Marie-Louise Martin, Ecole Supérieure de Théologie Kimbanguiste, B.P. 4485, Kinshasa II, République du Zaïre.

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A CHALLENGE TO THEOLOGICAL EDUCATORS

The following quotation is presented as a challenge to all of us who are involved in or concerned about theological education. It raises basic questions which we would do well to consider individually, in groups of professors and/or students, or at consultations on theological education.

The principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done--men who are creative, inventive, discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered.

Jean Piaget

Are we reaching these two fundamental goals in our programmes of ministerial formation--or have we even defined our objectives in these terms? How can these goals be achieved--or at least be more closely approximated? What immediate and long term changes are needed in order to move in this direction?

SUPPORT THROUGH P.T.E.
TO PROJECTS FROM ECONOMICALLY POORER COUNTRIES

At its first meeting in July 1977 the P.T.E. Commission adopted the following criteria concerning requests for support, financial and otherwise, from theological education programmes in the Third World.

The P.T.E. office is authorized to seek designated funds according to the policies of the W.C.C. for promoting creativity in theological education and also for other programmes in Third World countries. The areas of concern where P.T.E. resources could be helpfully used are listed on page 4 of this newsletter.

In carrying out this service, the P.T.E. should normally:

- a. *consider only those projects formulated by theological institutions (or their sponsoring churches) and not by individuals;*
- b. *not use its resources for recurring or on-going expenditure items or for capital investment;*
- c. *consider those projects that indicate a substantial degree of local financial contribution, the overall governing criterion being that P.T.E. should both avoid creating forms of dependence and actually cooperate with theological education programmes in achieving greater self-reliance.*

Projects needing P.T.E. support may be submitted to the P.T.E. office, but they should where possible be endorsed by associations of seminaries or regional bodies. Clarity and conciseness in describing the project and its financial aspects are very helpful. A brief background explanation on the sponsoring institution is equally desirable.

Decisions on projects submitted to the P.T.E. will normally be made by the P.T.E. Commission (or a body authorized by the Commission) in July every year, and submissions should not come later than 4 months before the Commission meetings. Projects involving support over a period of years (such as those related to faculty development) may require a longer period of processing, negotiation, and decision.

CIRCULATION AND SUPPORT OF MINISTERIAL FORMATION

The Programme on Theological Education has initiated this newsletter as a service to the churches and will be happy to add additional addresses as requested. In order to obtain reduced postal rates, however, we must achieve a sizeable number of paid subscribers. Many interested persons and institutions in Third World countries have difficulty making foreign payments or have extremely limited budgets. Therefore we are asking some of our partners to make additional contributions toward subscriptions. A quick response to this request will be especially appreciated.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Partners in Ministerial Formation

We warmly invite our friends and colleagues to help us at this formative stage of P.T.E.'s existence in response to the following questions.

1. Are you yourself interested in receiving this newsletter and additional documents in the field of theological education and ministry? _____
Are you willing to be one of our partners in a growing network of persons committed to the renewal of theological education around the world? _____ Will you send us news, reports, and articles related to ministerial formation from time to time? _____
2. Please give us the names and addresses of persons in your area who should receive this newsletter, i.e. persons who would be keenly interested in this kind of material and who would not normally receive it through some other channel. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)
3. What particular experiments, problems, issues, and advances in theological education in your area should be studied, reported, and shared with others through P.T.E.'s publication and information service?
4. Please add any additional comments or suggestions you may have about the contents and format of this newsletter, the possibility of additional P.T.E. publications, or the work of the P.T.E. in general.
5. Your name and address: (Please print or type.)

This questionnaire should be returned as soon as possible to the Programme on Theological Education, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.