

GOD FIRST - GO FORWARD:
THE IMPACT OF THE SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL MISSION/AFRICA
EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP ON THE AFRICA EVANGELICAL
CHURCH, 1962 - 1994

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SUMMARY

This study examines archival materials, pertinent literary sources, and fifteen interviews (listed in the **PREFACE**) in order to understand the impact on the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC) by its founding body, the South Africa General Mission/Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF). It also explores the possible contributions that both the Mission and the Church could make to their continued growth as they move together into the 21st century.

CHAPTER 1 places the AEF within the historical context of the past two hundred years and clearly identifies it as an interdenominational faith mission.

AEF's history is developed in **CHAPTER 2** and the Mission is measured against Klaus Fiedler's "historical typology" of the Protestant missionary movement. While primarily typical when compared to other missions of the same type in the same period, the Mission falls below average in other areas.

Since the years being discussed fall within the apartheid era, **CHAPTER 3** portrays the political positioning of AEF missionaries. The biblical bases and pragmatic stances for such positioning are considered before the chapter ends with a general biblical evaluation of AEF's position.

Having discussed the Mission at length, **CHAPTER 4** moves into the circumstances surrounding the beginnings and eventual autonomy of the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC). Its ministry relationships with the Mission, as well as its established constitution, are studied before the chapter concludes with a comparison of the AEF and AEC. Since they are more similar than dissimilar, the AEF's influence on the AEC is unmistakably clear.

The political events which heavily impacted the context in which both the AEF and AEC ministered are briefly presented in **CHAPTER 5**. Four different documents, which record the theological reflections of evangelicals in terms of the apartheid's injustices, are mentioned along with the lack of both AEF and AEC response to them.

Following the outlining of changes in political stance, **CHAPTER 6** delves into possible contributions which both the Mission and the Church could make, separately and jointly, to move more proactively toward relevant change in South Africa. Neither wish to dwell on the past.

Both intend to keep "God First" and always to "Go Forward."

Key Terms:

Africa Evangelical Church, Africa Evangelical Fellowship, Church autonomy, Church/mission relationships, Evangelical ecumenism, Faith missions, Interdenominational missions, mission/church partnership, missions and politics, South Africa General Mission

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1962-1994**

PREFACE

The purpose of this study is not only to examine the past impact on the Africa Evangelical Church by its founding body, the South Africa General Mission (SAGM), which later became known as the Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF), but also in light of the past to understand what the AEC would like to see the Mission contribute now to its continued growth in light of the recent changes it has faced.

The Mission was established in 1889 in Cape Town to work among the European settlers coming into the country. In due time, however, the mission work expanded as far north as Tanzania in the east and Gabon in the west. With such expansion, the Mission's ministries inevitably developed among the Black groups resident in many of the countries in southern Africa, so much so, in fact, that ministries among the white groups essentially fell away.

Although the indigenous churches established by the SAGM/AEF throughout the southern African countries were generally "known as the 'African Evangelical Church,' except in the Portuguese provinces Angola and Mocambique" [Gerdener 1958:42], the present research focuses primarily on the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC) in the Republic of South Africa. The AEC is the outcome of the SAGM/AEF's early ministries and, following some tense years, the AEC was granted its autonomy from the Mission in 1962. Although it remains one of the smaller denominations within South Africa, it has 226 churches with an estimated 55,700 adherents

[Froise 1996:60]. The majority of the churches are located in the provinces of Gauteng and Mpumalanga (formerly the Eastern Transvaal), KwaZulu-Natal, and Eastern Cape (formerly the Transkei).

On 1 October 1998, the AEF merged with SIM (Society for International Ministries, formerly Sudan Interior Mission), giving another dynamic to the AEF's impact on the AEC. Considering both the changes within South Africa and within the Mission which the 1990s brought, this research aims not only to explore the Mission's impact on the shaping of the AEC but also to explore options for continuing ministry with the AEC.

The researcher was born in Zimbabwe to missionary parents serving with the AEF, and lived the first sixteen years of his life in the northwestern province of Zambia where his father served as the Principal of the Chizela Bible Institute. Following his relocation to the United States of America and several years of education, the writer returned to Africa as a missionary to serve under the AEF in Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa. While primarily working with the Evangelical Church in South Africa (ECSA -- the Indian branch of the AEF work), the researcher had a continuing contact with the AEC, particularly while lecturing at the Union Bible Institute (near Pietermaritzburg) and at the Johannesburg Bible Institute (then in Roodepoort, now closed). Being familiar with South Africa and the AEF, and being associated with the AEC but not a member of it, gives the writer the opportunity to be a participant observer while attempting to be as objective as is humanly possible.

The research involved a trip, made by permission of the AEF International Director, to visit the Mission's archives in the AEF's International Office previously located in Newbury, England. It became clear to the researcher that record keeping has not necessarily been a priority within the

Mission. Personnel have not been specifically set aside through the years for the task and missionaries in the field have more to occupy their time than collating material for the archives. Files containing correspondence, photographs, Mission/Church documents, reports, and minutes were organized in boxes according to year or country. Fortunately, at the time of the archival research, a qualified librarian was in the process of arranging the files into some semblance of order. Unfortunately, however, shortly after the researcher's visit to the AEF International Office in England, the entire archival collection was shipped to Charlotte, North Carolina, USA by ocean freighter. En route, the container in which the archives were shipped was severely damaged, allowing salt water to slosh through the archives throughout the voyage, irretrievably damaging the majority of the archival records.

A study of pertinent literary sources has been undertaken, which have included important standard works on early mission history in South Africa as well as the current status of Christianity in the country. Magazine articles, Mission reports and records, and other sources dealing with the general missionary movement in Africa and worldwide were also consulted.

Additionally, two trips were made to South Africa and Swaziland for the purpose of complementing the study with relevant interviews with both AEC and AEF leaders. With the exception of three or four of the interviewees, each one interviewed was either influential in the AEC's initial and formative years, or influential on policies in force today, or both. All interviews were audio recorded on cassettes or microcassettes and subsequently transcribed. Long-distance telephone calls, e-mails, or faxes have been required when personal interviews were not possible or when follow-up information was needed. The names of those interviewed are listed below, though credit for comments will not always be given in the body of the thesis due either to the

sensitive issues being dealt with or to the requests of the interviewees themselves not to be identified with certain comments. However, each interviewee was specifically selected because of his or her important association, either past or present, with the AEC and/or AEF. Many of the interviewees have had, or continue to have, essential leadership roles within the organizations. Each was able to offer a unique perspective on the issues being discussed.

Of particular interest to the researcher, was the time spent with Rev Lloyd Magewu, for it was Mr Magewu who specifically coached the researcher in the study of Zulu and corrected his Zulu sermons before delivery during his second year as a missionary in 1972. Mr Magewu was appointed the AEC's deputy president at the time the Church gained its autonomy from the Mission in 1962, the same year in which he was ordained. It had been only eight years since his personal conversion to Christ. In 1978, he became the acting president due to the then-president's ill health and was eventually elected as president in 1980, a post to which he was repeatedly re-elected and held until his rather unexpected death from kidney failure in October 1999 -- just a few months after the interview.

Precis

The structure, ethos, and theological convictions of the Africa Evangelical Church have been profoundly influenced by those of its parent body, the South Africa General Mission/Africa Evangelical Fellowship. Both organizations have weathered various internal and external storms through the years but both strongly continue. Both have a strong commitment to the authority of Scripture and evangelism as commanded in the 'great commission' passage of Matthew 28. Both have maintained an 'apolitical' stance but have begun to recognize areas in which their teaching has been clothed in cultural and historical robes and have therefore been less than biblical.

Through the years, the AEC has been more eager to have a closer working relationship with the Mission than the AEF has been to give it, and though faults have existed on both sides, each is determined to keep GOD FIRST and to always GO FORWARD.

The Interviewees (in alphabetical order by surname)

Mrs Phuthumile Bhengu

(Interviewed 26 January 1999 in Roodepoort, South Africa)

First heard of SAGM/AEF while attending the Evangelical Teachers Training College in Vryheid.

In 1955 attended Johannesburg Bible Institute.

In 1970 started the AEC Dobsonville church with husband, Rev Siphon Bhengu.

Ministered with her husband until his death in March 1989.

Rev Faki Bodibe

(Interviewed 3 February 1999 in Roodepoort, South Africa)

Converted to Christ through Youth Alive ministry.

Began associating with Mofolo AEC church in 1971-1972.

Became leader of Mofolo AEC church youth group, then chairperson of the church.

In 1981 joined Youth Alive as an administrator, while studying with Unisa's Graduate School of Business.

Eventually completed a Unisa BTh.

Pastor of Mofolo AEC church from 1994 to time of interview.

Rev Dr Ronald Genheimer

(Interviewed by telephone 19 November 1999 between Tahlequah, Oklahoma and Vancouver, Washington, USA)

Born in Durban to AEF missionary parents.

An SAGM/AEF missionary from 1953-1998.

Treasurer for the Natal-Transvaal committee of the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC).

In 1960 became educational advisor to the International Council of the AEF.

AEF Field Director off and on for eleven years between 1969-1988.

As Field Director, was automatically a member of the AEC board.

AEF International Director 1989-1994, based in England at International Office.

Three more years as an AEF missionary in Pietermaritzburg, 1996-1998.

Retired in USA at time of interview.

Rev Cornelius Gumede

(Interviewed 21 May 1999 in Mbabane, Swaziland)

Became an AEC member in 1947.

Employed by SAGM as a school teacher in 1952 while continuing in church work.

In 1958 went to Johannesburg Bible Institute and graduated in 1961.
 Ordained in 1962 and pastored the Mofolo AEC church in Johannesburg.
 Returned to Swaziland schools and was headmaster of Mbabane SAGM school until 1971.
 In 1972 appointed as Swaziland National Coordinator for New Life For All.
 In 1975 started working with Campus Crusade.
 Served as the Chairman of the Swaziland AEC and secretary of the AEC Executive.
 Elected as Vice President of AEC, a post still held at time of interview.

Rev Lloyd Magewu

(Interviewed 19 May 1999 in East London, South Africa)

Converted to Christ in 1954.
 Graduated from Johannesburg Bible Institute in 1960.
 Ordained in 1962 and appointed deputy president of newly-autonomous Africa Evangelical Church (AEC).
 Worked as a pastor and high school principal in Swaziland while continuing on AEC Board.
 In 1978 appointed AEC acting president.
 Earned two masters degrees, one in USA and one in Wales.
 In 1980 appointed AEC president, a post which he held until his death in October 1999, just five months after the interview.

Mr Wilson Magubane

(Interviewed 28 and 30 January 1999 in Harmelia, Germiston, South Africa)

Graduated from Johannesburg Bible Institute in 1982.
 AEC pastor in Daveyton, Benoni since then and at time of interview.

Rev Knox Mavimbela Mbuwako

(Interviewed 27 January 1999 in Roodepoort, South Africa)

Pastored in Bloemfontain with Assemblies of God 1983-84.
 Affiliated with AEC since 1985.
 Worked with Rev Siphso Bhengu until Bhengu's death in 1987.
 Elected deputy secretary of AEC in 1994.
 Vice chairman of Natal-Transvaal AEC for three years.
 Chairman of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal AEC from 1996, the post held at time of interview and which he has been elected to hold until July 2001. Therefore, also a current member of the AEC Board.

Rev Ceasar Molebatsi

(Interviewed 25 May 1999 in Rosebank, Johannesburg, South Africa)

Converted to Christ through Youth Alive ministries.
 Helped establish the AEC church in Dobsonville with Rev Siphso Bhengu in 1970.
 Attended and graduated from Northeastern Bible College in New Jersey, USA.
 Returned to Dobsonville AEC and Youth Alive ministries.

Attended and graduated from Wheaton Graduate School, Illinois, USA.

Started Mofolo AEC church.

Not supported by AEC, so left and established Ebenezer Evangelical Church.

(Note: Mr Molebatsi and Ebenezer group, up to the present, have never officially resigned from the AEC, but AEC does not fellowship with them.)

Became a teaching elder among group of Ebenezer congregations.

Involved in the writing of both the Kairos (1985) and Evangelical Witness (1986) documents.

Wants to establish an Evangelical alliance in the Dobonsville-Meadowlands area.

Very highly respected host of talk show on South African national television.

Rev Richard Morgan

(Interviewed 8 February 1999 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa)

Joined AEF in 1962.

Ministered at Mseleni in South Africa with AEC until 1972.

Transferred to teach Scripture in Soweto, interacting with AEC pastors, until the uprising in June 1976.

Moved to Pietermaritzburg as AEF assistant field director, and for a time, field director.

Moved to Richard's Bay and worked with AEC, Esikhoweni, until 1985.

Ministered in Swaziland for a year before going to Mozambique for 11 years.

Back to Pietermaritzburg to work at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (where he was working at time of interview).

Currently retired in USA.

Miss Elizabeth Nkambule

(Interviewed 8 February 1999 in Hilton, South Africa)

Completed her schooling at Mbuluzi, Swaziland.

Completed Bible school training at a Union Bible Institute extension school for the training of women, in Mhlosheni, Swaziland.

In 1969 started to work for Christian Radio Fellowship in Swaziland (Mbabane and Manzini).

In 1987 moved to Transkei for full-time Sunday School work.

In 1996 joined staff of Union Bible Institute with oversight of women students, the position she was holding at time of interview.

Mr Thembinkosi Ntongana

(Interviewed 9 February 1999 in Hilton, South Africa)

A young man from the Eastern Cape (formerly Transkei), whose father has recently retired after many years an AEC pastor, thus he grew up in AEC churches.

Converted to Christ as a youth.

Been involved in youth work regionally throughout Transkei since 1982.

At time of interview was a third-year student at Union Bible Institute, expecting to graduate November 1999.

Mrs Busisiwe Pefile

(Interviewed 5 February 1999 in Leondale, South Africa)

Converted to Christ in 1977 through Campus Crusade for Christ ministry.

Discipled by AEC member and was in AEC until 1995 when she left for doctrinal reasons.

Rev Hugh Wetmore

(Interviewed 9 February 1999 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa)

Got married and joined AEF in 1961.

Sent to Nkanga Mission in Pondoland (at time of Poqo, the PAC's armed wing which was terrorizing the neighborhood, killing whites in isolated trading posts).

In 1964 transferred to Union Bible Institute in Sweetwaters, just outside Pietermaritzburg. Taught at UBI until 1983 (19 years).

In 1977 appointed as part-time General Secretary with the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa while serving on UBI staff.

In 1983 was seconded by AEF to full-time work with EFSA.

In 1990 the secondment ended, and went full-time with EFSA.

Resigned from EFSA (now TEASA -- The Evangelical Association of South Africa) just prior to the interview.

Rev Albert Xaba

(Interviewed 9 February 1999 in Hilton, South Africa)

Joined AEC when it was still known as the South Africa General Mission Church.

Trained at the Union Bible Institute, from which he graduated in 1961.

While a student at UBI, was elected vice secretary of the AEC Natal-Transvaal district.

In 1962 became boarding master at SAGM boys' school in Swaziland and served in the Swaziland AEC regional executive committee.

In 1963 became pastor at AEC church in Port Shepstone, Natal and continued as the vice secretary of the AEC Natal-Transvaal district as well as serving on the Transkei AEC regional executive committee.

Moved to Umzinto to pastor for another three-and-a-half years.

Moved to Union Bible Institute to join the teaching staff, but also continued on the AEC Natal-Transvaal executive committee.

In 1980 was elected secretary for the AEC and general secretary of the church board, both capacities still being held at time of interview. Currently principal of Union Bible Institute.

Earned an MA degree from Columbia Biblical Seminary in South Carolina, USA.

Rev Aiken Zondo

(Interviewed 10 February 1999 in Durban, South Africa)

Converted to Christ in 1960 in an AEC church in Port Shepstone.

In 1962 attended Union Bible Institute, and graduated in 1964.

During 1965 helped with a KwaMashu Bible school.

Then served as a chaplain in a Free Methodist Hospital in Transkei for three-and-a-half years, 1966-69.

In 1969 returned to KwaMashu to pastor an AEC church, the ministry in which he was still occupied at time of interview.

Served on the Executive of the Natal-Transvaal region for eight years.

His 20-year-old son was executed by the South African government in 1986 for his role in a bombing which took place in Amanzimtoti.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION -- THE AFRICA EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1.1 The last two hundred years of mission history

Klaus Fiedler has divided the last two hundred years of mission history into the “era of classical missions” and “the era of interdenominational faith missions” [1994:9].

1.1.1 The era of classical missions

The era of classical missions begins in 1792 with the challenge to a group of ministers by a young man named William Carey who wrote an analysis entitled “An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.” As a result of Carey’s writing, directly or indirectly, a number of small mission agencies began to appear on both sides of the Atlantic to provide the “means” for thrusting missionary personnel toward the “heathen,” which Carey contended were not impossible to convert. This Era, which stretches to 1910, is sometimes referred to as the Coastlands Era due to the fact that ‘by and large most missionary work was being carried out on the coast or in a few big cities’ [Olson 1998:139]. Missions during this era were denominational in the sense that all missionaries were ordained and salaried by the particular denominations to which they belonged. Additionally, “...most classical missions have an ecumenical tendency ...” [Fiedler 1994:20].

1.1.2 The era of interdenominational faith missions

The second era, or the era of interdenominational faith missions, began in 1865 and

started with an emphasis of penetration into inland and otherwise inaccessible regions as indicated by the names of mission agencies founded during this era: China Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, Africa Inland Mission, Heart of Africa Mission, Unevangelized Fields Mission, Regions Beyond Missionary Union [Winter 1992, in Perspectives: B 39]. James Hudson Taylor played a key role in the start of the second era with the founding of the China Inland Mission.

Following the two world wars and the collapse of colonialism, missions strategy began to change. Relationships with the national churches were adjusted as missionary personnel shifted. During the second half of this era, while the numbers of career missionaries have decreased from the West, the numbers of short-termers and non-Westerners have increased. Furthermore, a new emphasis has been placed on allocating missionaries among the groups considered “bypassed” such as the unreached (those without a reproducing church of 100 or more members), inaccessible (those in limited access countries), or hidden people groups (those not yet contacted with the Gospel in any way).

Both Cameron Townsend and Donald McGavran have been considered central figures in the latter part of the second era. While Townsend wrestled with the seriousness of the linguistic barriers causing the tribal peoples of the world to be overlooked, McGavran “discovered a more nearly universal category he labeled ‘homogeneous units,’ which today are more often called ‘people groups’” [Lewis, 1994:5-10].

The interdenominational faith missions are characterized by their “concept of direct

and individual responsibility to God” as well as “the concept of ‘faith support’” [Fiedler 1994:25], which states that each individual missionary will be dependent upon God alone for his financial support. Some “faith” missionaries have taken the position that no human being will ever be told about financial needs. Such needs will be expressed to God alone through prayer and any provision will be an answer to the missionary’s faith. Others have taken the position that financial needs will be expressed both to God and people with the result that, in answer to prayer and faith, God will motivate certain individuals and churches to contribute to the missionary’s need.

1.2 Missions in South Africa

Missionary work and the sending of new missionary recruits are not new for South Africa. “Except for societies which were actually called into being for specific areas, like the China Inland Mission, the Egypt General Mission or the Central Asian Mission, there must be very few Churches or societies anywhere in the world which have not entered the South African field. Only one or two...have withdrawn...” [Gerdener 1958:23]. In fact, by 1911, J Du Plessis had written,

...we require in South Africa no more missionary societies. A further multiplication of agencies would be nothing short of a calamity. Many areas in South Africa are suffering from a grievous congestion of missionary establishments, and any increase of these, by societies not yet at work in the sub-continent, is to be strongly deprecated [Du Plessis 1911:406].

When the Dutch East India Company established a settlement at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 to provide supplies for passing traders, the Company also provided ministers of religion to care for the spiritual needs of its employees. In the years that followed,

German and French Huguenot settlers were added to the Dutch settlements, and this mix, in turn, led to the Afrikaans-speaking communities and the Dutch Reformed churches which became prominent in South Africa. “In Cape Colony proper...the earliest (missionary) society was Moravian...” [Du Plessis 1911:257] and, although their work was for many years confined to two stations and authorized only within certain groups, they eventually began to expand their work.

One of the organizations which has been heavily involved in missionary activities within South Africa has been the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). After the Synod of 1857 provided an impetus for foreign missionary service, “Two men...arrived at the Cape in 1861, and with their arrival the foreign mission work...(was) considered as fairly launched” [Du Plessis 1911:285]. By 1877 the Mission Institute had been established in Wellington for the purpose of training missionary recruits for both home and foreign fields. Vigorous missionary efforts resulted from the capable leadership of Dr Andrew Murray and a revival among the DRC churches in the Cape. Although the training school was the original idea of Andrew Murray, “...in 1903 it was taken over by the Synod, and...(became) an officially recognised institution” [Du Plessis 1911:292]. The studies for such trainees included “specialized study of missionary science and Bantu languages” [Gerdener 1958:31] as well as theological studies. In addition to the Mission Institute, missionaries have also received training at theological seminaries in Stellenbosch and Pretoria. While the Stofberg Memorial School in the Orange Free State was established to train Bantu ministers and evangelists, other training provisions were also made in Natal and the Transkei. Through the years, the DRC has had various councils to oversee its

missionary endeavors and have concentrated on “local mission work as their first duty” [Gerdener 1958:32]. However, mission work was carried into other African countries as well, pushing as far north as Nigeria and Kenya. While some new fields were entered, the period between 1900 and 1950 was primarily one of consolidation.

“The closing decade of the eighteenth century saw a revival of missionary interest among Protestant churches in Europe and America, with the result that many agencies entered South Africa with the aim of spreading the gospel among the indigenous peoples there” [Roy 2000:897]. The London Missionary Society (under which well-known individuals such as Moffat and Livingston came to Africa) commenced its work in South Africa in 1799, and though it had a weak start, after it completed its pioneering stage, it made great progress. “[T]he London Society was the first...to grant autonomy to its various stations, and make them self-supporting and self-directing congregations” [Du Plessis 1911:258].

During the century of British rule, prior to the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, denominational groups such as the Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Baptists were established in the country. The Methodist Church of South Africa obtained its start at the Cape in 1806 [Gerdener 1958:62] and has been involved in social, educational, evangelistic and medical ministries among both African and Indian people. Eventually, both the German and British Baptists teamed up to establish the Baptist Union of South Africa.

Mission organizations like the LMS, the DRC, the Methodists, and the SABMS (South African Baptist Missionary Society) draw the majority of their financial support and

personnel from within South Africa itself.

The main ministries of mission organizations in South Africa such as the Sudan United Mission, the Africa Inland Mission, the Oriental Missionary Society, the Dorothea Mission, and the Salvation Army have been medical missions, schools, evangelistic services, indigenous church formation (with the exception of the Dorothea Mission), church leadership training, and literature production and distribution.

The Wesleyans came to South Africa in 1814 and grew fairly rapidly and by the middle of the century, other mission agencies were working in South Africa as well. When the Boers moved north to escape the British rule, they favored the Berlin, Rhenish, and Hermannsburg missionary societies. With the Rhenish Mission working in the Cape and the Berlin Missionary Society in the Orange Free State and Natal, Lutheranism was established in the country. Meanwhile, the Basutos were being reached by the Paris Mission, and Natal and Zululand were occupied by the American Board.

These, as well as other organizations, were involved in evangelization, although “There was no...organized attempt on the part of the combined societies to capture the strongholds of the enemy” [Du Plessis 1911:260]. “Plainly, there were great diversities of gifts among the various bodies at work in the South African mission field, but they were animated, nevertheless, by one and the same Spirit” [Du Plessis 1911:261].

South African Christians developed a missionary vision which included not only evangelizing their own country but also other countries beyond their borders. According to the *South African Christian Handbook 1996/7*, while there are currently “729 missionaries working in the country...” there are also “1186 missionaries out of South

Africa” [Froise 1996:35]. Another report states that “At present there are about six hundred South African missionaries (mostly Protestant) serving in over fifty foreign countries through more than twenty-five mission agencies. More than half of these are working in other African countries; the remainder serve in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East” [Roy 2000:898].

1.3 Mission links to colonialism

Mission history will demonstrate “that most missionaries supported colonialism even as they fought against its abuses” [Pierson 2000a:210] and it has often been assumed, correctly and/or incorrectly, that mission endeavors were also political and economic endeavors. For example,

...the conception of the missionary enterprise as a crusade against idolatry contained the seeds of attitudes and responses which can legitimately be construed as imperialistic...In the late Victorian period especially, excessive emphasis on the darkness and degradation of idolatrous peoples could lead some missionaries into statements which teetered on the brink of racialism. Most widespread and most significant of all was the assumption that the baneful influence of idolatry extended to all aspects of a people’s culture and society [Stanley 1990:64-65].

In what J Du Plessis calls “a dark chapter in the history of colonial politics” [1911:263],

Civilisation (so-called) in most cases preceded evangelisation, and in such cases the influences brought to bear upon the natives were chiefly evil, we might almost say *wholly* evil...If there is one thing which the study of missions to the heathen teaches more surely than another, it is this, that civilisation *minus* Christianity, far from being an unmixed blessing to native races, is an unmitigated curse [Du Plessis 1911:262].

While colonialists, perhaps particularly the British, believed and acted upon the conviction that since the native tribes did not have either the intention or the ability to develop their areas, it was the right of the superior nations to take such regions to higher heights of

civilisation [Du Plessis 1911:264-265], “the greater number of (evangelical) Protestant (British and American) missionaries have been concerned more than anything else with the business of saving souls: their relationship to political forces has been to them a matter of subordinate importance” [Stanley 1990:67].

Nevertheless, “The work done by the Moravian missionaries never failed to commend itself both to the Government and to the colonists...” [Du Plessis 1911:257] and “...[T]he Wesleyans never made a distinction between their colonial and their mission work, but in giving statistics have always grouped both together” [Du Plessis 1911:258].

The London Mission began a promising work among the Bushman in 1814 but “...it must be considered as exceedingly unfortunate that the Colonial Government saw fit to recall the missionaries, and to direct them to labour within the colonial boundary” [Du Plessis 1911:270]. Not until 1910 did the first two ordained African men move north of the Orange River.

1.4 SAGM/AEF founded in South Africa

1.4.1 The Mission’s founding

It was during the early years of the second era, the era of interdenominational faith missions, that the SAGM was founded. It “owes its inception chiefly to a lady worker, Mrs Osborne, who had devoted herself to work among the soldiers in South Africa” [Du Plessis 1911:395]. While on a visit to England, she met a young evangelist by the name of W Spencer Walton, whom she subsequently invited to South Africa for evangelistic work. Mr Walton accepted the invitation and, following his initial visit to South Africa, returned to England to establish a

solid base for his work in Africa. Following his second entry into South Africa, and with the help of co-founders Martha Osborn-Howe and Dr Andrew Murray, the Cape General Mission was launched in 1889.

1.4.2 The Mission's names

The Mission, as already stated, was established in South Africa under the original name Cape General Mission. Following its thrust to the north and east of Cape Town, "In 1894 the Cape General Mission was reconstituted as the South Africa General Mission, through its amalgamation with the South-east Africa Evangelistic Mission, under Mrs. Osborne (-Howe) and her husband Mr. Howe" [Du Plessis 1911:396]. As the mission work continued to expand into other areas, it eventually began to cross South Africa's borders into neighbouring countries. Du Plessis recorded that by 1910, "though one of the youngest mission agencies in South Africa...(the SAGM had) made by comparison the most rapid progress of any" [1911:396]. By 1936, the Mission had established work in Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Angola, and Mozambique.

In 1962, therefore, it was proposed that the name of the Mission be changed.

The geographical range has involved the Mission in the historical movement of widely differing cultures and peoples with intensely national governments. With one government *South Africa* is an asset, with another it is anathema. For the Mission to have a unified administration in Johannesburg is acceptable in the south; it is likely to be openly repudiated in the north. Not only is the name called in question but the nature of the organisation....The words *General Mission* have sometimes been interpreted as meaning that the Mission has secular and political objectives as well as religious, especially in Portuguese settings. In our interpretation it means still *to all races* [SAGM 1963b:39].

A subsequent issue of the *S.A. Pioneer* magazine reported that

After discussion, it was finally decided that the name shall be SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL MISSION--AFRICA EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP. Each Council, and each area in Africa where the Mission operates, can emphasise that part of the twofold name which is most suited to its conditions and circumstances. The second half of the name will, no doubt, be used in most parts of Africa, and will associate the Mission in a closer way with the African Evangelical Church which now stands in its own right over what was, and still is, the "S.A.G.M. field [SAGM 1963c:65].

In the years that followed the name change, the Mission continued to expand by establishing work in Mauritius (1969), Namibia and Reunion (1970), Botswana (1973), Gabon (1986), Madagascar (1987), and finally Tanzania (1989).

1.4.3 The Mission's distinctives

The AEF (formerly SAGM) "is an evangelical, interdenominational, and international Mission..." [Gerdener 1958:42] with sending councils in Canada, the USA, England, South Africa and Australia. The AEF is

Independent, because not tied to any one denomination; international because its workers are drawn from different countries; interdenominational, because the loyalty of workers is first to Christ, His Word, and His cause. The A.E.F. counts itself as a faith mission because it does not have support of any one particular religious denomination, and its workers trust in God, Who supplies their needs in response to their trust in His providential goodness and Who works through His faithful and obedient children in the sending countries [Huntingford [s a]:4].

The fact that the Mission started out as an interdenominational, or nondenominational organization, caused J Du Plessis to state it as one of the Mission's "two fundamental difficulties" along with "the scanty supply of thoroughly trained missionaries" [Du Plessis 1911:397].

Nevertheless, with all discounting, the work of the South Africa General Mission in South Africa has been richly owned of God. The Mission was commenced and has been sustained in faith and prayer. The influence of its revered president, Andrew Murray, had made itself widely and beneficently felt. Many of its workers -- both men and women -- have set a high standard of courage and devotion, and in the 2500 converts that have been granted them we see the rich reward of their labour of love and patience of hope [Du Plessis 1911:398].

Based on the characteristics which Fiedler gives, the SAGM/AEF is a post-classical, faith mission [1994:14,25-27,81]. It was also a mission which “had the strongest connection to the holiness movement” [Fiedler 1994:218] and, as was typical of such missions, concentrated on “a double calling: to evangelize among (non-European) non-Christians and to spread the holiness message among the (European) Christians there” [Fiedler 1994:52-53]. The SAGM/AEF has been characterized by evangelical piety from its very beginning. While still under the name Cape General Mission, the Mission “organized a number of ‘Holiness Conventions’” [Du Plessis 1919:384] to address the issues of consecration and total surrender. Andrew Murray was often the keynote speaker at these conventions, which were held in Johannesburg, Durban, and Wellington. Eventually these conventions became “known as the *South African Keswick*” [Du Plessis 1919:385].

In addition, the concepts of direct and individual responsibility to God and ‘faith support’ (i.e., “...supported by the freewill offerings of the Lord’s people...it is contrary to the principles of the Mission to appeal for money” [Gerdener 1958:42]) characterized the SAGM/AEF.

Premillennialism has been a further distinguishing feature of the SAGM, more particularly of the American personnel entering its ranks. Such an eschatology stressed the imminent return of Christ and, therefore, an urgency to proclaim the gospel to those who had not yet heard it.

As with other similar missions, the AEF places importance on the Scriptures and emphasizes evangelization and individual conversion. The AEF also allows for overlap and cooperation with other like-minded mission groups and is a member of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association (IFMA). The ministry strategies of the AEF, therefore, have been primarily evangelistic for the purpose of planting churches in each country that would eventually “take over more and more responsibility and control” [Gerdener 1958:42]. Like other evangelical mission agencies, the AEF has always held to the separation of humankind from God due to their sin, the provision of salvation by faith in Christ alone, and the full authority of Scripture in matters dealing with faith and practice. Discipling believers toward spiritual maturity and providing leadership training for the strengthening of the indigenous church have consistently been prioritized in each Field up to the present day. Within South Africa alone, the Mission has either developed or cooperated in training schools such as the Union Bible Institute (formerly the Dumisa Bible School) just outside of Pietermaritzburg, the Johannesburg Bible Institute (officially closed in 1985), the Durban Bible College in Merebank, the Christian Training College in Renishaw (a night school training program for the Indian members of the Evangelical Church in South Africa --

ECSA), and the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa in Pietermaritzburg.

The AEF put an emphasis on producing and distributing sound evangelical literature and appointed a committee to oversee and facilitate the distribution of tracts, magazines, and Sunday School materials [Huntingford [s a]:28-29].

“In 1914 permission was sought from the government to erect a small hospital” [Huntingford [s a]:44], which was established at Mseleni in Zululand. Through the years as the medical demands of the area increased so did the need for additional wards and medical staff. In 1953 a two-seater Piper Cub was brought in to enhance the outreach of the hospital and the first doctor arrived in 1959.

In March of 1970 the full financial responsibility for the hospital was taken over by the Department of Health of the South African government which, however, gave full assurance that there would be no curtailment of the spiritual activities of the missionaries on the staff.

In the middle of 1970 the hospital, like the schools before it, became a totally government institution, but with the permission for A.E.F. to continue to provide such staff as cannot easily be recruited from among nationals. ...this means recruiting doctors and specialists such as physiotherapists, mechanics, builders, electricians, etc [Huntingford [s a]:46].

1.4.4 The Mission’s distance from colonialism

As has already been noted, Dr. Andrew Murray was the first president of the Mission. A prominent and influential church leader who became “the spiritual father of many Christians in South Africa, both Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking, both Black and White” [Saayman 1993:95], he “claimed neutrality in political matters and wanted all energy to be directed at evangelisation” [Saayman 1993:92]. It should not be surprising, therefore, to observe that through the

following generations this was the continuing emphasis of the Mission. The majority of the Mission's members have been American and "If there is one doctrine characteristic of American Christianity as a whole...it must be that of the separation of church and state...American missions have tended to think of themselves as nonpolitical..." [Walls 1996:232], though "often naive in thinking they were nonpolitical" [Pierson 2000a:209]. Additionally, with many of the SAGM/AEF missionaries holding to a premillennialist eschatology, they "usually argue[d] that though they 'are in the world,...they are not of the world.' Striving to keep themselves uncontaminated from the world, they tend to regard political affairs as ephemeral, trivial, and dangerously distracting from the real duties of the Christian.... While there are exceptions, for the vast majority of premillennialists, politics cannot be given high priority" [Mills 1997:338].

Early in the Mission's history, its attitude toward relationship with political authorities was expressed in various ways. In the revised Handbook of Rules, the Mission stated,

Missionaries from overseas are guests of the Government and People and should avoid at all times, and in every circumstance, criticism of Government officials and their policies. Their mission is not political but spiritual, they have been commissioned as 'ambassadors of Christ' to reconcile people with God. The correct attitude is to show proper respect to all rulers -- whether European or African -- and to pray 'for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority.' (1 Tim. 2:2) [SAGM 1953:15].

Under the heading "APARTHIED," the Mission commented that "It is the duty of all missionaries of the S.A.G.M. working in the Union of South Africa to respect and obey the law of the land, seeking grace from God not to deny by conduct or

attitude the essential oneness of believers in Christ" [SAGM 1953:11].

By 1968 the Mission's policy on its relationship with the government was divided into two parts. There are only slight variations between the following statement and the one just given above. The initial wording in the first sentence was changed, as was the order of the designations "European" and "African." The second part concerning *Politics* was added.

Government Authorities

It is highly desirable that missionaries avoid at all times, and in all circumstances criticism of the Government authorities and their policies. Their mission is spiritual, not political, since they have been commissioned as "ambassadors for Christ" to reconcile people to God. The correct attitude is to show proper respect to all rulers, whether African or European, and to "pray for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority." 1 Tim. 2:2.

Politics

All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, from showing partiality to any Party, and from giving their time to promote such. Being appointed to the Lord's work, they shall not waste the Lord's time and money in engaging in political activities. Their commission and responsibility is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church [AEF/SAGM 1968:44-45].

While both paragraphs continued to appear in subsequent years, the 1976 issue of *Fellowship Organisation and Administration (FOA)* deleted the first sentence of the second paragraph under *Politics*. By 1982 the *Politics* section was deleted altogether.

The 1988 issue of *FOA* again showed changes. The *Government Authorities* paragraph had been deleted and the following paragraphs under *Politics* and *Intelligence Activities* inserted:

Politics

All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, from showing partiality to any Party, and from giving their time to promote such. Their commission and responsibility is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church.

Intelligence Activities

It is the policy of the Fellowship that its personnel shall not allow themselves to be involved in intelligence gathering for any foreign government agency, since such activities are incompatible with the nature and purpose of the missionary task. Further, it is the policy of the Fellowship that its personnel shall so conduct themselves as not to give offence to the host government [AEF 1988:29].

In 1996, following the collapse of apartheid and the installation of the Mandela government, the Mission replaced the 1988 *Fellowship Organisation and Administration* with the *Fellowship Manual*. It included the following paragraphs:

Relationships to Government Authorities

The Biblical injunction is to respect, honour and submit to legitimate secular authorities (Romans 13:1-7). We are to pray that they will exercise their authority for the good of all their subjects (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Missionaries are called to be “light” and “salt” in the world, and are encouraged to be constructive in their relationships and teaching of the Word of God, emphasising righteousness and justice (Matthew 5:13-16; 28:19,20; 1 Peter 2:12,15). In the same way, they are to teach God’s holiness, and thus His condemnation of all forms of exploitation, oppression, violence and injustice (James 2:3; 5:1-6).

In faithfulness to God and their consciences, they will not necessarily approve of every policy of the secular authorities, and may feel the need on occasion to make their position clear (Matthew 22:15-21; Acts 5:28-29), but only with prior approval of their Field Committee and the Church Executive Committee concerned. In so doing, they shall conduct themselves so as not to give unnecessary offence to their host governments (Romans 12:17,18).

Politics

Except for exercising their own personal voting rights, all Missionaries shall refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, and from

showing partiality to any political party, or from giving their time to promote such. Their commission and responsibility is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church.

Intelligence Activities

Missionaries shall not be involved in any intelligence gathering activities for any government or organisation, since such activities are incompatible with the nature and purpose of the missionary task [AEF 1996:40-41].

It should be noted that the Mission's officially-stated position of "not be[ing] involved in any intelligence gathering activities for any government or organisation" [AEF 1996:41] was, and continues to be, an extraordinary and unusual position in light of the fact that

...modern missionaries have been involved in many projects in the developing world that have political implications, including the encouragement of democracy, the operation of schools and hospitals, and the introduction of social reforms. Further, compelling evidence suggests that American missionaries have influenced the foreign policy of the United States in the Near East and China; more ominously, some have charged that the Central Intelligence Agency has used missionaries in its covert operations [Patterson 2000:765].

Ever since the days of John Philip it was considered quite acceptable that mission stations and personnel in South Africa serve as "intelligence gatherers" for the authorities. A LMS missionary in the 1820s, John Philip worked "... in a context of violence between settlers and native peoples, [and] became an advocate of the Xhosas ...[leading to] a reform giving them legal status" [Pierson 2000a:209-210]. Up to today, many conservative American missions are thought to be agents of their government's Central Intelligence Agency. Therefore, it must be considered to the AEF's credit that it not only maintained such a sensible policy but expressed it officially, thus avoiding potential and calamitous hostility against it throughout

independent Africa.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF A.E.F. IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

The AEF is

....independent, because it's not tied to any one denomination; international because its workers are drawn from different continents and countries...(to)...work in many different countries; interdenominational because the loyalty of the workers is first to Christ, His Word, and His cause,...and a faith mission because it does not have support of any one particular religious denomination, and its workers trust in God who supplies their needs in response to their trust in His providential goodness and who works through His faithful and obedient children in the sending countries [Huntingford [s a]:4].

2.2 The Mission's motto, "God First -- Go Forward"

"God First -- Go Forward" has been a long-time motto depicting both the intended theological basis and the practical thrust of the Mission and its ministries.

2.2.1 "God First"

The Africa Evangelical Fellowship was launched as the Cape General Mission in Cape Town, South Africa, during 1889 by co-founders Martha Osborn-Howe, Spencer Walton, and Dr. Andrew Murray, all of whom had been involved extensively in evangelistic ministries both within and outside South Africa. Their thrust in ministry was strongly impacted by the emphasis on holiness of life, evangelistic fervor, and missionary zeal which characterized the Keswick Conventions of England. In fact, "The convention was not only the means of physically bringing the three founders of the Africa Evangelical Fellowship together at various points in their lives, but each gave credit to it for its spiritual

benefits to them” [Kallam 1978:48].

The Keswick Movement was pietistic in orientation which caused those involved to be conservative in theology and removed from all that was considered liberal and secular. To be associated with the liberal and secular was to be associated with the concerns of this world. Political and social issues were to be avoided as unspiritual pursuits [Zondo 1999]. To focus on the spread of the Gospel to the heathen, however, was to be associated with the spiritual.

AEF’s attitude toward governing authorities bears out the pietistic influences of its founders. The Mission’s policy statements declare in no uncertain terms that the AEF’s “mission is not political but spiritual, they (i.e., the missionaries) have been commissioned as ‘ambassadors of Christ’ to reconcile people with God” [SAGM [s a]:18]. Furthermore, “Being appointed to the Lord’s work, they shall not waste the Lord’s time and money in engaging in political activities” [AEF/SAGM 1968:45].

It would not be surprising to discover that, with the international and interdenominational flavor of the Mission, there are varying opinions, doctrinal persuasions, and conflicting interpretations within its ranks. This was certainly true in the early days of the Mission. Two of the earliest missionaries, Dudley Kidd and Frank Huskisson, were known for maintaining a “Strong emphasis on Holiness and Full Salvation...By Full Salvation they meant that Jesus Christ not only saved man from the guilt of sin, but He also delivered him from inbred sin. This salvation also guaranteed physical healing for those who exercised true faith”

[Kallam 1978:152]. In fact, Huskisson “is singled out as a particular problem. He held what was described as an extreme view of holiness and sanctification. His attitude toward other ministers was described as un-Christlike” [Kallam 1978:168] and detrimental to the ministry of others.

While there are those who would see “The abdication of the political dimension of mission...(as) a very dangerous option to take for...(it) means that Christians write off *this* world” [Saayman 1993:51], there are others who believe that “Sometimes even the best churches lose their first love and get caught up in political activism” [Collins 1995:347]. Apparently, even Lenin concluded that the best way to neutralize the impact of the church was to get it involved in politics [Colson 1992:237].

It should be stated here that a

typical pietistic emphasis he (i.e., Andrew Murray) lay was that on evangelisation as the main task of mission. Indeed, for him mission *was* evangelisation, especially understood as ‘the evangelisation of the world in this generation’ (as the Edinburgh conference was to articulate it in 1910), inspired by the love of Christ for lost souls....He was so totally engrossed in mission as personal evangelisation that he did not even refer to the so-called ‘ancillary services’ (schools, hospitals, etc.) in *The key to the mission problem* [Saayman 1993:48].

With Andrew Murray as AEF’s president, it is no wonder that this same attitude characterized the entire AEF. The words “God First” were clearly designed to remind and to keep ever before the missionary staff that their primary goal was to “...fulfill our Lord’s command to ‘preach the gospel to every creature’ and to promote Scriptural holiness among the believers by teaching them all things which

He commanded” [SAGM [s a]:2].

2.2.2 “Go Forward”

As a result of the obviously successful ministries and evangelistic campaigns in which each of the Mission founders was involved, a growing vision of a non-denominational mission to promote evangelistic work in South Africa was impressed on their minds. On the establishment of the Mission in 1889, Spencer Walton became the director of the work and Dr. Murray served as the Mission’s first president on the Cape Town Council until his death in 1917. Because of the Mission’s desire to be a non-denominational ally of all churches, it was generally reported that the Mission was a new sect. Over time, however, people began to recognize that this was not the case, and the AEF became established as an interdenominational and international mission agency. Being a “voluntarist model of mission” [Botha and Saayman 1992:107-109], that is, being free to “identify the task to be done; find appropriate means of carrying it out; unite and organize a group of like-minded people for the purpose” [Walls 1996:229], it established sending councils in the USA, Canada, England, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa. Thus its workers “are drawn from many different countries, church backgrounds, and denominations” [Huntingford [s a]:3].

The ministry of the AEF began among the European soldiers and sailors in Cape Town and eventually spread to ministries among the railway workers. Quite naturally, subsequent ministries developed in English and Dutch churches throughout the colony, which continued to increase, demanding more and more of

the missionaries' time.

This ministry to the European churches of South Africa was an important feature of the early years of the Mission. (Dudley) Kidd, (Frank) Huskisson, (Walter) Searle, and William Hill, in addition to (Spencer) Walton, were often involved in ministry to white congregations in South Africa. These men were among the active participants in the South African Keswick Convention, which was held annually at Wellington under the leadership of Andrew Murray [Kallam 1978:90].

But typical of mission agencies founded during the Second Era, and in keeping with the second half of their motto, the AEF was characterized with a passion to press toward the interior of Africa opening ever new stations and territories northward. Work commenced in Natal (1890) under the name South East Africa Evangelistic Mission, and as soon as the missionaries “developed fields with no previous Christian influence, it was faced with the need of a church fellowship for its converts” [Kallam 1978:216]. It was in Natal where the first Zulu church came into being in Durban (1891).

2.3 AEF's name change and further expansion

Eventually, in England on January 1st, 1894, both mission groups amalgamated under the name South Africa General Mission. The ministry of the SAGM expanded further, moving into the Transvaal. Eventually, the Mission started work beyond the South African borders, crossing into Swaziland in 1891.

With the continuing missionary zeal among the missionaries, however, it was not entirely surprising when the 1897 issue of the *South African Pioneer* announced

....those who know the real aims of the Mission will not be astonished that the Cape Town work is to be given up, because our object has ever been to evangelize the country, not to build up a number of strong centers. We must push on to the

regions beyond as never before [Huntingford [s a]:24].

In 1897, therefore, the Mission moved its headquarters from Cape Town to Johannesburg, and the ministry of evangelism and church work continued to expand in Swaziland, Natal, and Zululand. Zimbabwe was entered in 1897, then Malawi (1900), Zambia (1910), Angola (1914), and Mozambique (1936).

Due to the Mission's expansion beyond the borders of the Republic of South Africa, it was proposed in 1962 that the name of the Mission be changed.

The geographical range has involved the Mission in the historical movement of widely differing cultures and peoples with intensely national governments. With one government *South Africa* is an asset, with another it is anathema. For the Mission to have a unified administration in Johannesburg is acceptable in the south; it is likely to be openly repudiated in the north. Not only is the name called in question but the nature of the organisation....The words *General Mission* have sometimes been interpreted as meaning that the Mission has secular and political objectives as well as religious, especially in Portuguese settings. In our interpretation it means still *to all races* [SAGM 1963b:39].

A subsequent issue of the *S.A. Pioneer* magazine reported that

After discussion, it was finally decided that the name shall be SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL MISSION--AFRICA EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP. Each Council, and each area in Africa where the Mission operates, can emphasise that part of the twofold name which is most suited to its conditions and circumstances. The second half of the name will, no doubt, be used in most parts of Africa, and will associate the Mission in a closer way with the African Evangelical Church which now stands in its own right over what was, and still is, the "S.A.G.M. field" [SAGM 1963c:65].

In the years that followed the name change, the Mission continued to expand by establishing work in Mauritius (1969), Namibia and Reunion (1970), Botswana (1973), Gabon (1986), Madagascar (1987), and finally Tanzania (1989).

2.4 Ministries of the AEF

As the work developed in subsequent years, certain departments were

....recognized as essential to the effective carrying out of the work entrusted to the Mission:

- Evangelization and Bible Training
- Education -- academic and industrial
- Medical and Welfare
- General Work

Each department is an integral part of the work of the station, which should operate as a unit [SAGM [s a]:12].

According to the same document, “The object of the Mission is to fulfill our Lord’s command to ‘preach the gospel to every creature’ and to promote Scriptural holiness among the believers by teaching them all things which He commanded” [SAGM [s a]:2]. In South Africa, the Johannesburg Bible Institute was established in 1954 even though some thought it might jeopardize the ministry of the Union Bible Institute in Natal. The Africa Christian Literature Advance (ACLA) was instituted in 1957 to coordinate and facilitate the distribution of books, tracts, magazines, and Sunday School materials. A ministry among the urban African youth was begun in 1960 under the name Youth Alive. During 1961 and 1962 a broadcasting ministry known as Christian Radio Fellowship (CRF) was added. Due to the increasing influx of miners on the Reef, Christian Ministry to Miners (CMM) was officially established in 1962. Initially it began in Klerksdorp but spread out to other centers along the Reef. By 1964, the Johannesburg Correspondence Bible Studies (JCBS) department was under way for the primary purpose of serving the African and Asian churches with which the Mission was associated. In the mid-1970s a building was erected in Roodepoort to house the CRF, ACLA, and JCBS ministries and was referred to simply as the ComCen (Communication Center). A small printing press

was installed to take care of in-house printing needs. The Johannesburg Bible Institute was also accommodated for a few years at the ComCen after it lost its site to the construction of the western highway bypass around Johannesburg. Although JBI was officially closed in 1985, the radio, literature, and Bible correspondence work continues at the ComCen in Roodepoort.

Today in South Africa the AEF is involved in Muslim and Chinese evangelism, church planting, church development work, church leadership training, radio and literature ministries, medical work, Bible correspondence courses, and ministry to miners.

2.5 “Measuring” the AEF

Measuring the Mission by referring to Fiedler’s “...historical typology of the Protestant missionary movement” [Fiedler 1994:18] as a basis, the SAGM/AEF could be considered primarily *average* or *typical* when compared with other missions of the same type in the same period, as demonstrated by the following eight characteristics.

2.5.1 Interdenominational in character

The most important characteristic of faith missions, according to Fiedler [1994:11], is their interdenominational character. This characteristic is generally first found among the founders, and then their successors. For example, “Spencer Walton, who founded the Cape General Mission (SAGM/AEF), was an Anglican strongly influenced by the Brethren....After some time, he returned to the Anglican church....” [Fiedler 1994:175]. From its very outset, the SAGM/AEF fully intended to be a non-denominational servant and ally to all churches. Such an approach caused many to conclude that the Mission was a new sect. Eventually,

however, the Mission's true intentions were fully recognized and accepted. As the mission work expanded, and more and more personnel were added, it became clear that denominations such as Anglican, Grace Brethren, Mennonite, Conservative Baptist, General Association of Regular Baptists, Presbyterian, Nazarene, Dutch Reformed, Independent Bible, Union of South African Baptist, and others were represented among its members.

2.5.2 Origins in revival

“Nearly all [faith] missions trace their origin back to a revival” [Fiedler 1994:13] found during the second half of the 19th century. Out of such revivals spiritual movements arose to influence faith missions. The SAGM/AEF was no exception, as both the holiness movement and the prophetic movement impacted it.

2.5.2.1 The holiness movement

“Among early British missions, the Cape General Mission/South Africa General Mission had the strongest connection to the holiness movement” [Fiedler 1994:218]. A stated purpose of the Mission is “to glorify God” through several activities, one of them being “by instructing believers in Scriptural holiness and obedience to the Word of God” [AEF 1996:9]. Additionally, the Mission's doctrinal statement reflects the influence of the holiness movement by stating in its Basis of Faith that “All members of the Fellowship...shall subscribe fully and unreservedly to the following Basis of Faith:....Holiness of heart and life and the full provision for this in Christ Jesus...” [AEF 1996:9-10]. To clinch the connection between

the Mission and the holiness movement further, “‘Scriptural holiness’ is also the defined aim of the Keswick conferences” [Fiedler 1994:230]. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the thrust in ministry of the Mission’s founders was strongly impacted by the emphasis on holiness of life, evangelistic fervor, and missionary zeal which characterized the Keswick Conventions of England, conventions which “each of the three founders of the Africa Evangelical Fellowship...gave credit...for its [personal] spiritual benefits...” [Kallam 1978:48].

2.5.2.2 The prophetic movement

The prophetic movement also impacted the faith mission movement [Fiedler 1994:272-291]. Since “One problematic effect of faith missions’ eschatology was that the expectation of Christ’s imminent return left little room for an explicit ecclesiology” [Fiedler 1994:278], and since the SAGM/AEF was one of the faith missions which had both premillennialists and postmillennialists among its members, it is little wonder that the Mission’s concept of ecclesiology (and consequently the Africa Evangelical Church’s concept), was somewhat muddled. “The conviction that it was possible to evangelize the world before Christ’s return, or even to speed it, [a premillennialist view] was a major reason why faith missions [including the AEF] gave top priority to the unreached areas of the world” [Fiedler 1994:277-278]. However, a problem among the SAGM/AEF personnel has been that missionaries arrived on the field

with specialized training in such areas as evangelism or youth work but had very little understanding of the characteristics which constitute the church itself. An article in *The South African Pioneer* [SAGM 1963a:40] reported that “there was, and is, a great weakness in all interdenominational faith missions -- they were great evangelistic agencies raised up by God, but they have had little understanding of the doctrine of the Church.” Consequently, “The Church does not understand the Great Commission which has been given to it” [Gumede 1999] and the average member in the AEC is not able to explain his personal understanding of the church [Magubane 1999a].

2.5.3 Organization and authority

With regards to inside organization and human authority, the SAGM/AEF has been organized as a mission society. As such, it has been controlled and led by its own members without responsibility to other church, denominational, or governing authorities other than those required for registration or tax purposes within any given country of operation.

2.5.4 Geographically aimed

The SAGM/AEF was initially aimed at the Cape Province of South Africa as portrayed by its original name Cape General Mission. The later expanded aim of the Mission in southern Africa in general, including Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and southwards, was reflected by the name South Africa General Mission. Eventually as the Mission expanded further northwards, and more and

more countries gained their independence from colonial rulers, the name was again changed to Africa Evangelical Fellowship to more accurately indicate its scope.

2.5.5 Finances for the Mission and its members

Finances for the Mission and its members, similar to other faith missions, have been on the basis of 'faith support' gifts from churches and individuals.

2.5.6 The importance of evangelism

Being evangelical in nature, the SAGM/AEF missionaries have stressed the importance of evangelism among the unreached, personal conversion, and the central role of the Scriptures in all matters dealing with faith and practice. On the whole, the SAGM/AEF missionaries have had no problem identifying with national and continental associations of evangelicals whose pursuits and goals were the same. Additionally, like other faith missions, they held to "the comity of Missions'...[which] was the mutual courtesy that kept missions from encroaching on one another's territory and, theoretically, it prevented 'sheep stealing'" [S.A. Pioneer July-Aug 1963:39]. Thus the missionaries rarely were willing to work in areas already reached by other like-minded missions.

2.5.7 Internationalization

Like other faith missions, the SAGM/AEF became internationalized by virtue of the fact that the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa provided both its missionary personnel and its support bases.

A special role in this 'Commonwealth stage' of international faith mission expansion was played by the South Africa General Mission...In spite of being founded in Capetown and the South African Andrew Murray being

its president, the SAGM was not strictly a South African mission, but a field-directed British mission, expanded by sending branches in other English-speaking countries, of which South Africa was only one [Fiedler 1994:131].

2.5.8 Women as missionaries in the SAGM/AEF

The SAGM/AEF, like other faith missions,

followed Hudson Taylor insofar as they always counted women, single or married, as missionaries in their own right. This meant that, in principle, women were to receive the same training as men. Married or engaged couples could not be accepted as a couple; each of them had to pass the process of being accepted into the mission individually [Fiedler 1994:293].

While women were not considered or ordained as pastors or elders, they were often involved as pioneers or evangelists in areas where no men missionaries were available. As individuals were converted to Christ and the work became established, missionary men were invariably sent in to take up the leadership and to administer the sacraments. With the exception of Ruth Wyatt who served as the leader of the Swaziland field for a number of years in the 1980s, rarely in the SAGM/AEF history have women been put forward as possible candidates for ministry or field directors, even when men were not present.

As can be expected, the Africa Evangelical Church (AEF's daughter body) has been impacted by this attitude. Even though the AEC allows women to attend Bible schools (such as at Union Bible Institute in Sweetwaters, Natal), the Church rarely promises them any official church ministry position, much less assign one.

When these ladies complete this course in UBI, [and they come] back home...what is their title, because they have learned the same subjects?...And where are they going to function, because not even a single one of my churches has ever recommended these ladies to function freely in

the organization?...What is the title...? Because in the mentality of the leaders, *Umfundisi* is a man. *Umfundisi* is a man [Magubane 1999b].

Fiedler is right in his assessment that this trend is probably more an indication of missionary subculture than African culture [Fiedler 1994:305].

2.5.9 Little or no formal training for missionaries

With regards to the matter of formal training for missionaries, in the opinion of the writer, the Mission fell *below average* when compared to other faith missions.

Fiedler points out that faith missions drew personnel from all strata of society, the majority of which were from the lower echelons with little or no formal training [1994:135-138]. This was certainly true of the SAGM/AEF, as borne out by J Du Plessis, who pointed out that one of the Mission's "fundamental difficulties" was its "scanty supply of thoroughly trained missionaries" [1911:397]. This has been exacerbated by the fact that even though, generally speaking, "Today, faith missions require considerable training, usually several years of Bible school that may be in addition to specialized training" [Fiedler 1994:137], the SAGM/AEF did not, and thus fell woefully short of that standard. Even the most recently-published policy stated the only formal training required is that "Missionaries shall have a minimum of one year (or equivalent) of Bible training at a recognised Bible College acceptable to the Fellowship." To aggravate the training shortfall further, the policy adds "In the case of mature and experienced candidates, the Sending Council may recommend to the Personnel Coordinator that the requirement for formal training be waived" [AEF 1996:35]. In recent years, even

though the *Fellowship Manual* does not list formal study as a legitimate reason for extending furlough [1996:38], nor does it make any concerted effort to encourage missionaries to consider advanced training. Occasionally, however, the Mission has allowed personnel to apply for an extended furlough for the purposes of further training.

In the researcher's view, the SAGM/AEF attitude was similar to that found in other mission agencies which have expressed that advanced education is not "inherently beneficial for missionary practitioners" [Brumbelow 2000:415] and even contributes to missionary attrition [Severn 2000:20-21]. A great lack of both willing and suitable leadership within the Mission's membership was one of the contributing factors which led the AEF to merge with SIM International in 1998. In fact, the former AEF International Director [Kopp 1998:6-7] wrote that the AEF's plan to merge with SIM International was a benefit in that it would "...provide the leadership and administrative support required to sustain the mission...[and allow AEF] access to superior resources (strategic leadership, leadership training, support of personnel, publicity, promotion, financial administration, crisis management, etc.) required to sustain, support and expand the various ministries and operations of the mission."

As Rev C Molebatsi expressed it, "In the last century only the best, the best theologians, the best medical people went into the mission field. [By contrast, however, now]...Bible colleges will take a young man with an engineering degree...and in one year, off to the mission. They come here and they are

theologically not ready to deal with the issues of enculturation....I mean, how many missionaries have [progressed]...to the level of PhD?" [Molebatsi 1999]. While there remains a place for the less-educated missionary, "In a world which is growing ever-more educated (though not necessarily ever-more enlightened), both in the 'sending' and in the 'receiving' countries" [Fiedler 1994:396], mission agencies, which have not traditionally encouraged advanced training, must change their policies.

2.5.10 SAGM/AEF's policy on "intelligence gathering"

It is the writer's conviction that the SAGM/AEF was well *above average* in the matter of faith mission policies related to "intelligence activities" [AEF 1988:29].

In a day when mission stations were used for intelligence gathering for colonial authorities, when missionaries called for colonial protection in exchange for intelligence matters, the SAGM/AEF not only adopted a policy related to intelligence activities, but also was unique and bold enough to put the policy into print making its position very public (see chapter one).

CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL POSITIONING OF A.E.F. MISSIONARIES

3.1 Political positioning of expatriate missionaries

The AEF strictly forbade its missionaries from involvement in any kind of party politics. It stated that its mission was spiritual rather than political [AEF 1979:34] and, therefore, its personnel were to distance themselves from political issues. Those who were South African citizens were allowed, and expected, to take their normal voting responsibilities in their own homeland. All missionaries, however, were to refrain from any type of active involvement in politics which would place the Mission's presence in the country in jeopardy.

Of course, being in South Africa, the South African Council of Churches didn't agree with that at all...[O]ne of the big things with AEF, or SAGM as it was in the early years, was that we are not SACC. We had no calling to enter politics. In fact, we will deliberately avoid any entry at all into anything which even smacks of politics. They [the Mission] was very clear on that. They didn't make us sign any specific statement. As far as I know, they never really made any statement to the government that way...However, every missionary, by agreeing to FOA, agreed to that particular statement [Genheimer 1999].

While missionaries may have agreed in principle to abide by the Mission's position, nevertheless,

missionaries were so downed by that little article in FOA that we were not allowed to even touch on the issues of politics, which to me actually clashed with the discipling mandate, because the discipling mandate says you've got to talk about economics...[A]ll the things that Luke has to say about economics is quite amazing -- about money, about the poor, about positions -- all these things are a part of discipling...Principles need to be taught to the church so that they can handle these things. In doing so, you don't overtly, as a missionary, take sides, but you teach them the principles that will enable them to take sides [Wetmore 1999].

African leaders in the AEC had the perception that the missionaries always tried to avoid being involved in the politics of the country for fear of being denied visas to work in the country. While some perhaps did not agree with the missionaries' position, most perceived that "the missionaries were trying to comply with the government of the day, which was difficult for them, and maybe not so difficult with some of them, depending on where they came from" [Gumede 1999].

Others saw the missionaries' lack of involvement as a negative choice, particularly when the political tensions peaked in June 1976 with the Soweto uprisings.

Although at the time this unrest was attributed mainly to the hostility of black scholars, teachers, and parents to the use of Afrikaans as a teaching medium, as well as to the political impotence and economic backwardness of the urban black, the Cillie Commission which investigated the riots and which published its finding in 1980, came to the conclusion that it was police unpreparedness resulting in inability to control the riots in time, that was to blame. Violence spread throughout the country...and although by the end of 1979 the worst of the dust had settled, it was eighteen months before conditions in South Africa returned to normal, by which time more than six hundred people had lost their lives [Brits 1991:120].

Missionaries withdrew from the churches where they were working during this period for the sake of safety yet they never "sent a letter of identification to brothers and sisters to say, 'We are aware of this tragedy you are going through. We don't feel safe, but we are with you in spirit.' Something like that. Nothing was said -- they just pulled off and disappeared" [Bodibe 1999a]. That in itself was considered a very strong political statement quite apart from any specific policy which may have been on paper. In church business meetings, it was even asked by various church delegates whether the missionaries were still with the Church since they had heard nothing.

3.1.1 Biblical support

Between the years 1962 (when the Mission granted autonomy to the Africa Evangelical Church) and 1994 (when the Mandela government took power), the biblical support given by the Mission for its political stance appeared in the various copies of the *FOG (Field Organisation and Government)* or *FOA (Field Organisation and Administration)*. The most common statement declared “The correct attitude is to show proper respect to all rulers -- whether European or African -- and to pray ‘for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority.’ (1 Tim. 2:2)” [SAGM [s a]:18]. The Timothy reference was the only passage specifically given for the Mission’s support of its position throughout that thirty-two year period. However, the Mission documents also alluded to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 in stating that the task of its personnel was “not political but spiritual” since they had “been commissioned as ‘ambassadors of Christ’ to reconcile people with God” [SAGM [s a]:18].

Only after the Mandela government came to power, and the Mission had changed its political position statements, were passages other than 1 Timothy 2:1-2 then cited for support. These included Matthew 5:13-16 (believers being “salt of the earth” and “light of the world”), Matthew 22:15-21 (rendering both to earthly governments and to God what is rightfully due), Matthew 28:19-20 (commanding believers to disciple the nations), 1 Peter 2:12, 15 (believers silencing accusers by their good behaviour), James 2:3 (showing partiality), James 5:1-6 (judgement coming for rich oppressors), Acts 5:28-29 (obeying God rather than men), and

Romans 12:17-18 (living peaceably with all men).

3.1.2 Pragmatic stances

Various practical reasons were given, or at least generally understood and accepted, as to why the AEF missionaries were not to involve themselves in politics.

3.1.2.1 AEF's primary responsibility

It was believed that the AEF's primary responsibility was to spread the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ, and to give every person the opportunity to individually and personally respond to the claims of Christ on his or her life. To be involved in politics, therefore, was to jeopardise the Mission's standing with the host government and perhaps either to limit or terminate the Mission's ministry and freedom to preach the gospel. In fact, according to Rev Lloyd Magewu, the AEC president from 1978 until his death in 1999, "it was very clear that they (speaking of the Mission) knew that some day things would change" and the Mission was not eager to see the Church "just vanish into thin air" [Magewu 1999]. As Botha and Saayman [1992:132] indicated, "One gets the impression that the only thing that mattered for some of these societies was the right to proclaim freely their message of salvation of the soul. As long as the authorities allowed that, they criticised the authorities as little as possible." Such was the case for the SAGM/AEF.

3.1.2.2 Problems if Mission took wrong side

Another pragmatic reason for non-involvement in politics was the belief that

problems could easily come up if a mission organization took sides and then found itself on the wrong side, the side which eventually was out of power...which could lead to expulsion from the country. The attitude of the Mission was, 'We are visitors in the country and we do not take sides. We do not take the side of those who are trying to overthrow the government. We do not take the side of the government for the purpose of propaganda -- communicating a support of the government. We instead take the side of the visitor who does not, should not, criticise his host.' A neutral position! [Morgan 1999].

3.1.2.3 Missionaries to South Africa automatically suspect

Due to the government's fear of anti-government activity being sponsored by the World Council of Churches, any foreign missionaries to South Africa were automatically suspect. Complete files were already in hand by the police departments of the areas into which new missionaries were allocated to work. A few months after the researcher moved with his family to Port Shepstone in 1973, a government security agent, who was also a member of the Mission-related Church in the area, informed him that even before they had moved to Port Shepstone the security agents had received a two-inch-thick dossier giving detailed information on the family. All movements of new missionaries were closely monitored for a period of two years. Even their sermons were routinely listened to for political content.

We were very vulnerable...[and] what we did find was that there were government security agents watching our every move. We

would recognize them because, being missionaries, we knew who the people were who would be in our congregations. You would see two strangers in one congregation one Sunday, and the next time you preached at another congregation ten miles away, there were the same two strangers. You soon began to realise that these guys were sent to listen to your sermons and find out if you were political [Wetmore 1999].

3.2 Political positioning of missionaries who were South African citizens

3.2.1 Biblical support

As would be expected, both the guidelines and their bases applied to all missionary personnel regardless of whether they were expatriates or South Africans.

Therefore, the biblical support stated for expatriate missionaries on pages two and three above applied to South Africans as well.

3.2.2 Alternative stances

3.2.2.1 South African missionaries allowed to vote

The Mission's stated policy was that

All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, from showing partiality to any Party, and from giving their time to promote such... [AEF 1988:29].

Without stating it explicitly for each country in which the Mission worked, it was generally understood that missionaries were allowed to vote if their citizenship and residency were in the country of their ministry. Naturally, this allowance applied to South African missionaries and, depending on the position each missionary took, they were open to judgements of all kinds, some not so favourable. The missionary could

have been perceived either to be a hero, a collaborator, or “leftish.” Even within the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa (established in the 1970s), there was a wing that said EFSA should not be involved in politics, while another wing said EFSA should be involved.

I felt that as a person who is part of the country, I should be freer than an expatriate missionary to be able to take a stand that might be construed as being siding with one party or another. And I do know that I could never sign in with apartheid. I had an in-built instinct against the apartheid thing from boyhood. So for me it was as a Christian that I took a stand. It was on a basis of justice and a basis of equality that made me anti-apartheid. I couldn't pretend to the AEF that I was neutral, so that became an internal dilemma, and I began to say, “Well, the Bible is more important than the FOA, and so if I slip a little on the FOA side, God help me, but I'll try to stick to the Bible.”

I was also aware of the fact that one day apartheid would come to an end and that the opposite government would be in power. I said, probably privately to other missionaries, “If we have been not standing for what we believe is right, and we've been tacitly, by our neutrality, supporting the status quo, when this status quo changes, we'll be out of favour with the new government. Won't that limit our ability to preach the gospel?” And that is part of my argument for saying that we shouldn't let the pragmatic considerations dominate our ministry. Rather, we should be faithful to the Word of God. If it cuts into political territory, well, let it! But we should be faithful to that, and then we stand or fall on that basis when a new government comes to power [Wetmore 1999].

3.2.2.2 Disassociation from the Mission

A third choice for South African missionaries would be disassociation from the Mission. In a letter to the South African Field Director concerning a South African missionary, the International Director clearly stated,

A South African citizen because of his Christian convictions may feel it necessary to speak out against his government. He has every right to do so and if he suffers for so doing he must obey Peter's instructions [presumed by this writer as a reference to 1 Pt 3:13-17]. If a South African member of A.E.F. felt the situation was of such a grave nature that he should take his stand against the unchristian laws of his country he should disassociate himself completely from A.E.F. as an International organization so that none of the blame comes back upon the Mission. He takes his position as a citizen not a missionary...For the privilege of being a witness for Christ in a foreign land, we have to agree to being apolitical. Some mission groups in Angola have felt such a position is wrong and have left the country completely as a result. Others like A.E.F. have taken the opposite position and have been able to have a good ministry and witness. Let each one be fully persuaded in his own conscience and be willing to take the consequences to the glory of God [Foster 1981].

To write, "For the privilege of being a witness for Christ in a foreign land, we have to agree to being apolitical" certainly demonstrates "the pietist or conservative evangelical" [Botha and Saayman 1992:138] background of AEF's theological framework.

3.3 General understanding of Church and Mission leaders regarding political positioning

The common understanding among both Church and Mission leaders was that those who are called into missionary or ministry vocations do not get involved in politics. Ministry and politics are considered mutually exclusive callings and, consequently, are not considered compatible.

An anecdote will serve to illustrate this point. In approximately 1960, a young South African man in Cape Town, aspiring to missionary service, was reading the newspaper. He noticed two articles almost side by side. The first one was about a white policeman

who murdered a black prisoner just by beating him too hard in the cells. The second was about a black man who murdered a white farmer, presumably in self-defence, who had been ill-treating him. The white policeman was sentenced to pay a seventy-five pound fine, which his family quickly paid and he was a free man. The black man, on the other hand, was condemned to death. Angered by the terrible injustice of the different verdicts, based solely on race, the aspiring young missionary composed a letter to the newspaper's editor. Before mailing it, however, he showed it to a veteran missionary whom he highly respected. The veteran was astonished and replied, "If you're called to be a missionary, and you're going to serve the Lord, then you can't get involved in this" [Wetmore 1999]. It was clearly expected that missionaries were to suppress their instincts of justice in light of the missionary calling as though they were mutually exclusive -- one a *lower* calling, the other a *higher* calling; one *temporal*, the other *spiritual*. The researcher agrees with Botha and Saayman [1992:128] that although admirable to be spiritually-minded, such an attitude on the part of the AEF was more likely an indication that their "social analysis...[was] superficial" leading to an attitude "of submission, tolerance and even uncritical praise of the authorities."

3.4 AEF's position in relation to other faith missions working in South Africa

A large group of interdenominational faith missions have ministered in South Africa and their interactions with governing authorities have been diverse indeed ranging "from a blind submission to a more prophetic, critical stance" [Botha and Saayman 1992:128]. Africa Enterprise, for example, maintained a decidedly-prophetic stance, even going to the point of meeting with parliamentarians in their homes to stress the value of every human

life and to affirm their position against oppression and exploitation in all its forms. By contrast, the Dorothea Mission, in submission to the governing authorities, chose to believe “that black people prefer[ed] to live on their own because their background and mentality differ[ed] widely from those of white people [Botha and Saayman 1992:131]. The AEF lay between these two extremes, though admittedly much closer to that of the Dorothea Mission, especially in its earlier years. However, as will be pointed out in chapter five, in the late 1980s the political stance of the Mission was revised. Moving away from an entirely apolitical stance which did not even speak about politics, the Mission adopted a position that not only allowed, but encouraged, the teaching of biblical principles applicable to the current South African situation.

....Missionaries are called to be “Light” and “Salt” in the world, and are encouraged to be constructive in their relationships and teaching of the Word of God, emphasising righteousness and justice (Matt. 5:13-16, 28:19,20, 1 Pet. 2:12,15). In the same way they are to teach God’s holiness, and thus His condemnation of all forms of exploitation, oppression, violence and injustice (James 2:3, 5:1-6). In faithfulness to God and their consciences, they will not necessarily approve of every policy of the secular authorities, and may need on occasion to make their position clear (Matt. 22:15-21; Acts 5:28,29), but only with the prior approval of Field mission leadership and Church executive committees. In doing so, they will conduct themselves so as not to give unnecessary offence to their host governments (Rom. 12:17,18)....[AEF International Council 1990:26].

The problem, of course, lay in the fact that since both the missionary and the national had been conditioned by the previous apolitical stances of both the AEF and the AEC, very little teaching and application of biblical truth was ever done.

3.5 A general biblical/theological evaluation of AEF’s position

As Professor Saayman [1993:11] pointed out, “The most common objection against getting mission involved in politics is that mission is or should be concerned about purely

spiritual matters, whereas politics has to do with secular, worldly matters.” It was clearly the general view of AEF missionaries that the political calling and the missionary calling were mutually exclusive -- one a lower calling, the other a higher calling; one secular, the other spiritual. Most certainly the AEF believed its primary responsibility was to obey the governing authorities, not to question, criticise, or challenge them. However, time and circumstances bear out the truth of the old adage that “hindsight is better than foresight,” and theological positions are frequently challenged in the process. The findings revealed in later years through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigating the apartheid era abuses, for instance, shocked most of the AEF missionaries. Many other AEF personnel, including the writer, can well identify with the admission of Rev Dr Ron Genheimer [1999].

I just want to say this, that I am probably far more sensitive now socially. I have found more of a social conscience than I had when I began as a missionary, and I think it has taken all of the experiences in South Africa to help in that. And of course basically the Lausanne [see Douglas 1975 and 1990] issues that came up, and their statements on it, have caused me to think through these things much more. When you first get to the field, you don't think through any of these issues. You want to go out and do a job for the Lord. But....I have been helped by walking through a lot of these things.

The western and secularized mindset compartmentalises each facet of life. Therefore, it is not difficult to believe, for example, that the spiritual and moral, or the social and political aspects of life are all independent and unrelated to each other, and none has any bearing on any other. When such a person comes to Christ, subsequent discipling often teaches that “worldly” matters now need to be set aside in the interest of “spiritual” matters; the “old” must be put off, the “new” must be put on. A dichotomy is then developed which

often keeps evangelicals from looking at life holistically. Without attempting to excuse away the faults of the missionaries, it is not surprising, then, when such outlooks are carried into missionary endeavours and accompanying, well-meaning, well-intentioned declarations amount merely to pious platitudes. While such attitudes are often quite subconscious, they “may indeed be sinful” [Saayman 1993:13]. To come face-to-face with difficult situations, therefore, is a necessary act of God’s goodness to produce growth both in theological convictions and correct living, and to produce great thanks to God for his mercy regarding sins committed in ignorance. Such mercy can, of course, only be expected if enlightened missionaries purposefully adjust their theological convictions and life patterns accordingly. Not all adjusted theological persuasions and life patterns, however, will be necessarily agreed upon by all missionaries and/or national church leaders.

By God’s grace, the Mission continues to move forward.

CHAPTER 4: HISTORY OF THE AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH

4.1 Founding of the AEC

While the previous chapters have sketched the historical background and founding of the Mission, the Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF), this chapter will now draw attention to the historical background and founding of the indigenous church established by the Mission, the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC). It will become clear to the reader that the AEC, and the positions which it has taken, have been profoundly influenced by the AEF. The African churches which make up the Africa Evangelical Church in South Africa are among those churches which were originated by faith missions before the turn of the twentieth century. By 1891, the SAGM had founded a group of twenty-five churches in Swaziland with 5000 members [Fiedler 1994:99]. “The first Zulu church came into being in 1891 in Gillespie Street, Durban....[E]arly in 1893, thirty six Zulu men had been baptized; one had been set aside for evangelistic work in Zululand and many had banded together for evangelistic work among their own people in and around Durban after the day’s work was over” [Huntingford [s a]:12]. By 1895 a Zulu believer by the name of Waka Ndlovu had established a work at Dumisa and prevailed upon Mr Fred Suter to join him. “Seventeen years later there were twelve out-stations, all through the work and witness of this one man and those whom he had led to the Lord....It is easy to see how very early on ‘national Christians’ became an integral part of the work, even to the establishing and continuing of new works” [Huntingford [s a]:55]. Work spread to the

north of Durban, along the coast as well as inland, being established in Vryheid, Maputa, St. Lucia, Umsunduze, Ntabamhlope, Makhowe, and Mseleni while the work in Durban continued to expand as well. Eventually, it was at Dumisa where the first annual meeting of believers associated with the SAGM/AEF met for worship and teaching. The growing Church needed trained leaders and so the Mission established a Bible Training ministry which evolved into the establishment of the Dumisa Bible School. Many of the early pastors and evangelists who were converted through the ministries of the Durban churches, and entered the ministry after the completion of their training at the Dumisa Bible School, were also subsequently supported by the Durban churches.

In 1939 there was a “change in location and status of the Dumisa Bible School. It was agreed, after discussion with other like-minded missions, that the Mission Bible School would better serve the evangelical community and cause if it became a ‘Union’ Bible School, i.e., the joint venture of a number of evangelical bodies” [Huntingford [s a]:60]. Since 1939, and up to the present day, the Union Bible Institute has been in operation at its location in Sweetwaters a few kilometers north of Pietermaritzburg.

In July of 1893, three missionaries arrived in the Transkei to begin work in Western Pondoland. The first station was established at Nkanga in December 1895. Within the next several years, more workers arrived, and more stations were established in both Western and Eastern Pondoland. “Gradually the work became centered around the two stations of Nkanga and Lutubeni” [Huntingford [s a]:49].

During the early years, work was also being started in the Johannesburg and Pretoria areas. From 1892 to 1897, when “Johannesburg became the headquarters of the Mission”

[Huntingford [s a]:26], more workers moved into the area to take up the challenge of the work among both Europeans and Africans. Apparently the work progressed slowly in the Transvaal until the 1940s and was mainly conducted among the Europeans. Eventually, by 1948, the Natal-Transvaal Conference expressed needs for a church site, a home for an evangelist, and more missionary personnel to accelerate the work since the time was considered to be “ripe for a definite forward movement” [Huntingford [s a]:27]. By the end of 1950, land had been obtained, a building had been constructed and dedicated, and evangelist Petros Magagula from Swaziland had been added to begin work among the Africans in the area.

During the 1950s various ministries were added, among them the Johannesburg Bible Institute (JBI), evangelism and Bible teaching in Soweto schools, and the African Christian Literature Advance (ACLA) -- including most notably the Roodepoort Mission Press (RMP) and the publication of the magazine known as *Our Africa*. An expatriate by the name of “Mr (later Dr) Donald Smith was appointed secretary of [a newly-established] Literature Committee” [Huntingford [s a]:29] and was involved from the start with the launching of *Our Africa*. Within just a few years, and in spite of the magazine’s popularity with the Church, the magazine was closed down on the instructions of the SAGM leadership because it was perceived to be touching political issues. Furthermore, the government was seeking the magazine’s managing editor, Salzwedel Ernest Motsoko Pheko,¹ who had fled the country and gone into exile. Mr Pheko said later,

¹ At this writing, Mr Pheko is currently the Vice-President of the PAC (Pan African Congress) of Azania, a significant black political party in South Africa

Many of my people had felt that I would serve no good purpose in jail in case I was convicted. They felt that outside the country I could write more and be more useful. Many other reasons had been given that I should leave the country. I had not accepted them. But when I realized that there had been a possible collaboration between the secret police and people I least suspected to be informers I decided to estreat my bail and leave the country [Daystar Reporter 1976:24].

In the perceptions of the Mission leaders, this gave *Our Africa*, and thus the Mission, a bad name which put it at risk.

Political awareness, particularly among urban Africans, was very high indeed. 'Our Africa' was an up-to-date, informative magazine and occasionally, it seemed to some, that the views expressed were on the verge of endangering the Mission's self-chosen and openly avowed non-political stance. So, reluctantly the magazine was phased out of operation [Huntingford [s a]:29].

The decision was seen by some as anti-African and not a helpful development for the Church. While some missionaries approved of its closure, others believed it to be a progressive magazine and would like to have seen it continue.

During the 1960s, Youth Alive was established to reach the youth among the urban Africans. Christian Radio Fellowship (CRF) was instituted to begin radio programming and broadcasting. Additionally, the Christian Ministry to Miners (CMM) was begun among the men who worked in the mines, and the Johannesburg Correspondence Bible Studies (JCBS) was launched. "These 'projects,' as they collectively came to be known, continued from the mid-1950's to serve particularly the African and Indian churches associated with the Mission" [Huntingford [s a]:31].

By the mid-1970s, the Mission erected a Communication Center (which became known simply as the ComCen) in Roodepoort to house ACLA, CRF, and JCBS. After the Mission sold the Roodepoort Mission Press, it also established a small in-house printing

press in the ComCen to meet its printing needs. Eventually, JBI was also accommodated in the ComCen because of the loss of its residential campus in the Bosmont area due to the construction of the western bypass highway system around the outskirts of Johannesburg. During the 1980s, a couple of the ministries were closed. CRF's programming and broadcasting work with Trans World Radio "came to a halt in 1982" [Huntingford [s a]:32]. Shortly afterwards, in 1984, the ministry of the Johannesburg Bible Institute was officially closed. Because the AEC (the church) could not accept the interdenominational character of the Youth Alive ministry, Youth Alive "finally became independent of both A.E.F. and the A.E.C." [Huntingford [s a]:32].

Meanwhile the church work in all areas continued to grow and expand.

4.2 Autonomy of the AEC

From its earliest years, the Mission had the aim of developing the African churches to function capably on their own. In 1911, for example, the SAGM stated that "The aim should be to train and develop the young Christians...so as to make the work at each of our stations as far as possible self-propagating" [Genheimer 1970:1]. Repeatedly, the Mission restated its intention to develop an indigenous church which would be the primary medium through which the work would expand. All its efforts were to be directed to this goal and all future missionaries were to be apprised of that goal. The Mission's plan was not to control the Church, but rather to cooperate with it and assist it towards a mature self-governing, self-supporting, and self-extending position.

Among the developments within the AEF's work during the 1940s and 1950s were the

Steps...consistently taken to assist the various Churches to take over more and

more responsibility and control. No particular name...[had] yet been adopted in all the regions, but in general the Church...[was] known as the 'African Evangelical Church', except in the Portuguese provinces Angola and Mocambique. It...[was] recommended that each area should choose its own name [Gerdener 1958:42].

Particularly during the 1950s, it became increasingly the conviction of the Mission that it would be the path of wisdom to hand over control of the Church to the African believers. Many countries across the African continent were obtaining independence from their colonial rulers. As a result of the nationalistic movements rising up for independence, it was considered that "too close contact with the representatives of the colonial power was enough to set the cry that all nationals so associated must be 'puppet stooges' in the pay of the 'oppressors,' and therefore traitors to the nationalist cause" [Huntingford [s a]:61]. Therefore, the churches needed to move away from Mission domination and control. In 1956, the "Field Council warn[ed] missionaries against the danger of extreme views either for or against the indigenous policy and urge[d] rather a spirit of co-operation, confidence, love and patience" [Genheimer 1970:1]. A year later, in 1957, it was stressed that the Mission and the Church were separate organizations, interdependent and complementary, but

In order for the independence of the churches to be achieved a number of matters had to be worked through and resolved.

First. A national church had to agree to become independent and autonomous, and it was no means certain, even with the then existing political climate that such a view would prevail. Second. A constitution for the church had to be agreed upon, so that the independent body might be registered with the appropriate government. Third. That constitution had to embody the kind of organizational structures that would be both Biblical and also, insofar as was possible, compatible with the national communities' own social structures. Those considerations all took time to work through but, by the early 1960's in the Southern Field, that time was reached when...African churches were ready to stand on their own [Huntingford [s a]:61].

In a letter to the leaders of the Africa Evangelical Church, the Mission, then still known as the South Africa General Mission, proposed all authority in church matters be handed over to the Church, and that it become effective on the first of January 1962. The letter stated that the Mission fully intended to continue with the Church, helping with advice as needed.

Addressing the matter of cooperation, the letter stated

Even if it seems that we are separating, it is not so. With all its heart the Mission wishes to continue full cooperation with the Church; so that the fellowship that we have now may be preserved, and that we may help each other; that the lovely Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified. The Mission needs the help and fellowship of the Church, and the Church still needs the help and fellowship of the Mission [SAGM 1961].

Political unrest was increasing in the Republic of South Africa by this time and it was feared that the rising tensions between blacks and whites would affect the Church/Mission relationships. Many prayed regarding this concern and although the tensions did affect the Church/Mission relationships it was “not to the extent that irreparable divisions occurred” [Huntingford [s a]:61-62].

Problems rose on several fronts. Issues related to funds created many misunderstandings and difficulties, particularly because the majority of the funds came from overseas and were already designated for specific personnel or projects. Since no African church leaders were ever positioned in mission administrative offices as assistants or apprentices, none were given the opportunity to learn the structures within which the Mission operated either overseas or in South Africa. The vast majority of church leaders, let alone the church members, had no idea that S.A.G.M. churches did not exist in the home countries of the missionaries.

A third difficulty surfaced with regards to the name of the Mission. With more and more of the African countries gaining their independence from colonial powers, and church groups subsequently gaining autonomy from their parent-missions, it soon became apparent that keeping the name “South Africa General Mission” for the ministries throughout the southern half of the African continent was neither feasible nor wise. Eventually, the Mission changed its name from the SAGM (South Africa General Mission) to the AEF (Africa Evangelical Fellowship). To add to the mounting tension was the fact that the South African government had applied the law of separate development, a law designed to keep the races and cultures separate from one another. To the credit of the African (now *Africa*) Evangelical Church, “...when the time came for independence and autonomy, the different groups resisted any suggestion and all temptation to become separate national churches. Instead, a Church Board was formed with a kind of presbyterian government. The head of the Church was to be the President, and the Board was to be composed of representatives from the three language groups” [Huntingford [s a]:72].

During meetings at Ntabamhlope, the “African Evangelical Church was granted its autonomy in July 1962 and the Field Director at that stage was Rev Wilfred Green” [Magewu 1999]. The AEC’s first officers were Rev E J Mfeka (President), Rev Lloyd T Magewu (Vice President), Mr P S B Mkhize (Secretary), Mr J Fatsha (Assistant Secretary), Mr P M Magwaza (Treasurer), Mr S E M Pheko (Publicity Secretary), and evangelists Mr S Mawasa, Mr E Ndodana, and Mr E Dlamini (Members).

Divisions and tensions existed among the church leaders as well as among the missionaries

regarding the granting of autonomy, and were divided in their opinions. On the one hand, some missionaries felt 'at home' with the original structure and believed the changes should be avoided, while various church members felt the autonomy should not be accepted. On the other hand, there were those among both the Mission and Church ranks who began to realize that things were changing and maintained the attitude which said, "This has become a difficult thing to handle [but] maybe the Church has grown to the point when it can have its [own] leaders" [Gumede 1999].

In his annual president's report to the 1996 AEC Church Conference, at Mankayane, Swaziland, the Reverend L T Magewu [1996:1] stated

In July 1962, AEC was granted its autonomy by Africa Evangelical Fellowship, formerly known as the Cape General Mission, later as the South Africa General Mission. Its first President was Revd EJ Mfeka. He had to steer the ship through the turbulent storms. The journey was stiff and steep. Unfounded fears, doubts, ignorance, and uncertainty loomed in the heart of our leaders and church members. God who never fails has proved His faithfulness in guiding, directing and controlling His AEC flock through thick and thin. The 34 years of our existence as a church, lead us in praising Him and say, '*Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise,*' Revelation 5:13.

In the ensuing years following the granting of autonomy, a number of different issues and debates arose concerning Church/Mission relationships. However, the Mission's intention was that

Missionaries shall adopt a firm attitude of whole-hearted co-operation with one another in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13, and 1 Peter 1:22. Self-will and incompatibility should be recognized as 'works of the flesh,' and all workers should strive diligently to overcome these fleshly works by constant vigilance and prayer fellowship, remembering that 'if we pray together we can work together.' Every endeavour should be made to establish and maintain right relationships with all Church leaders. Such relationships involve spiritual fellowship and social contacts, and these can best be attained by united prayer and Bible study, and by

mutual discussion of plans and problems. In a day when racial problems abound, missionaries have a valuable contribution to make toward their solution [AEF/SAGM 1968:45-46].

This statement remained intact for many years. The first change appeared in the 1979 issue of the FOA, which made a slight change in the first phrase (“Missionaries shall seek from the Lord a firm attitude of wholehearted co-operation...”) and deleted the final sentence [AEF 1979:34]. In the 1996 edition, the statement was divided into two parts as follows:

Fellow Missionaries

Missionaries shall seek from the Lord a firm attitude of whole hearted co-operation with one another in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13 and 1 Peter 1:22. Self-will and incompatibility are “works of the flesh,” and all Missionaries shall strive diligently to overcome these fleshly works by constant vigilance and prayer. The importance of praying together should constantly be borne in mind.

Church Leaders

Missionaries shall make every endeavour to establish and maintain right relationships with all Church Leaders. This should include spiritual fellowship in prayer and Bible study, mutual discussions of plans and problems, as well as opportunities for social contact [AEF 1996:41].

4.3 AEC-AEF partnership in ministry

Related to the issues of autonomy were those dealing with partnership between the Mission and the Church. The British Council of the AEF had issued a statement in which it expressed that

The B.C. have for many years considered that the integration of the Fellowship in the Church organisation in each country should be the aim. While there are problems in a single structure for Church and Fellowship, the mutual confidence, sharing and close co-operation, that should be part of integration, outweigh them.

Now, as in Zambia, we are under pressure to join together, whereas we should have listened to our African brethren who have been saying the same thing more gently through the years [AEF/BC 1973].

The idea of a cooperative agreement between the Mission and the Church was discussed. In 1984, John Freeman reported to the Southern Field Conference on matters related to Mission-Church cooperation and stated that “The AEC Board ha[d] proposed a special meeting to discuss matters of mutual concern” [Freeman 1984:2]. Following his report, the Southern Field Conference

...considered the apparent lack of progress in A.E.C.-A.E.F. partnership in ministry....[It then encouraged] the S.E.C. [i.e., the Southern Executive Committee of the Mission] and the Board to consider interalia the aspects of communication, participation and administration. By communication is meant understanding of one another’s culture to enable us to be partners together in ministry. By participation is meant the opportunity for missionaries to exercise their gifts in a way that is acceptable to the A.E.C. By administration is meant the improvement of organizational relationships that will facilitate the sharing of vision, planning and utilization of Mission personnel and resources.

Conference expresses its desire to work as closely as possible with the A.E.C. [AEF 1984:4-5].

Six years later, “A special committee...finished its work on drawing up a draft document defining the distinctives of the AEC...” which would help to “finalize the co-operation agreement with AEF -- Southern Field” [AEF International Council 1990:49]. Debates centered around whether or not there ought to be a partnership between, or a merger of, the two entities. In the minutes of the Southern Field Conference [AEF 1992:Minute 13/92] held in July, it was stated

Conference recognizes that the present AEF church policy (FOA 5:19) has the goal of integrating AEF with the church on each field working together as one, under national leadership using one name. This goal is complicated by the fact that there are two independent churches on the Southern Field with the AEC having three regions with three major languages. Achievement of this goal in RSA for geographical, cultural and historical reasons would take a long time. Even if these practical difficulties did not exist, Southern Field Conference fundamentally disagrees with the integration model. The present relationship of AEF to AEC/ECSA is purportedly a partnership. In reality the mission is sometimes

hindered from carrying out its God-given mandate, since approval of the churches is required before new projects/ministries can be initiated. Our vision is for a true partnership between adults which would allow for consultation between the mission and the churches by mutual consent.

The Conference then went on to request the Southern Executive Committee of the Southern Field to recommend to the International Council that the option be left open for the various Fields to determine whether they would pursue the partnership or the integration model.

In September 1994, it was stated by the Field Director that "The church is reaching out to the AEF for a closer relationship..." [International Board 1994]. Additionally, according to a Mission document in the Southern Field [Short Term Orientation Handbook [s a]], although a cooperative "agreement is being worked out with the AEC" similar to that which exists with the Evangelical Church in South Africa -- the Indian branch of AEF's work -- (see Appendix B), "Even to this day...[the AEF does]...not have a working agreement with the AEC" [Weiandt 1999]!

4.4 AEC Constitution (see Appendix A)

4.4.1 Recent revisions

The constitution recently went through minor revision, although there appears to have been very little communication among the churches about the changes.

Concerning Local Church Committees, for instance, the term for elected members was lengthened from two years to three [AEC Constitution 1994:7]. "We have developed these things [i.e., various committees] over the years. So that...in 1997...I said, 'Now we have got our structures complete.' We know now what is

happening...” [Magewu 1999].

Other changes have also been proposed, and a few are currently being weighed.

“For example, the AEC operated in four provinces according to the old dispensation. At present, we’ve got nine provinces but...[we] still belong to the old structures, which are very ineffective as far as the lives of the people are concerned that need to be transformed and regenerated in all provinces”

[Magubane 1999b]. Therefore, the AEC is now at work “separating and dividing at least one of the regions...[T]hen [there is] the change of giving more...[freedom] for the young people to be able to say where they come from, to set up their own strategies within the Church, and to openly discuss their frustrations and things like that. The same applies to all departments in the Church” [Xaba 1999].

4.4.2 Suggested revisions of the constitution by AEC personnel

4.4.2.1 Job descriptions

Other AEC leaders have expressed a need for the constitution to include statements regarding the specific job descriptions or expectations for Board Members. None currently exist.

4.4.2.2 Chairperson qualifications

Furthermore, some feel that positions, such as the Quarterly Chairperson, need to be opened to those with church leadership gifts and qualifications rather than merely to those who are ordained. Putting together the idea that only ordained men can be chairpersons of the Quarterlies with the concept that “A teacher, a mfundisi, an induna is always right”

[Magubane 1999a], not only limits the use of leadership gifting within the churches but also discourages what may actually be both a necessary and biblical correction of current leaders. *Umlomo ongathethi manga* (a chief, or king; literally, a mouth that speaks no wrong, a mouth that is always correct, a mouth whose word is final) is a concept that some believe encourages a slave mentality in terms of the black way of thinking and should be considered outdated and without common sense. In light of Hebrews 5:1-2 (“For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.”), it perhaps also should be considered not biblical, since no church leader is beyond weakness and, therefore, beyond a possibly-needed correction. However, due to the typical African understanding of leadership, which teaches that the words of seniors are not questioned [Zondo 1999], any well-meaning individual desiring to strengthen the church by evaluating the accepted norms against Scripture could be unfairly and unhelpfully labeled an *inkanyamba* (a tornado, a big storm, a trouble-maker; literally, a “fabulous large water snake associated with tornadoes” [Dent and Nyembezi 1969:432]), a term apparently applied quite regularly to a former, and since deceased, church leader who was not happy with the Mission and sought a greater partnership [Bodibe 1999a].

4.4.2.3 Ordination qualifications and procedures

Additionally, while the constitution lists qualifications expected of church leaders, and states that candidates for church work can be ordained either by the General Church Conference or, in some cases, by the Board, no specifics are given regarding standardized procedures or qualifications leading to ordination. There is, however, a practised procedure.

First, the main thing is that a person should clearly know that Christ Jesus is his personal saviour. That is step number one. Two, a person should have attended Bible school, a recognized Bible school, at least for three years. Of course, some study by correspondence. It must be a recognized Bible school. [Three], when the person comes back he must be under an elderly pastor for some time until, [four], that local church writes a letter stating that it would like so-and-so to be set aside for this work. That letter goes to the Quarterly Meeting and...if it approves it, [the letter] will go to the Regional Meeting. [Five], then as a Board, we interview that person...the main thing we will ask first is [regarding his] salvation and...[whether or not] he accepts the Bible as the Word of God and so on. Then, of course, we get into the family, whether the wife is saved and whether their relationship is good. [We ask], "Perhaps you are not getting a stipend, are you going to blame the church or are you going to blame your God?" All those things. Then, of course, education. We also encourage them, "We feel that they will be effective if they continue to study." We have said so. If he has matric, we will say, "Please start a degree. You will be more useful to the church if you can come to educated people who are at home, coming to people who are illiterate who are also at home" [Magewu 1999].

Occasionally, candidates will be turned back to the local church with the instructions, "Gentlemen, go and check this man. We are not happy" [Mavimbela 1999]. Once approved, arrangements are made for the candidate to be officially ordained. "All those who have been ordained

have also presumably been on probation before that for at least four years” [Bodibe 1999a].

4.4.2.4 Church leadership titles

“Because of ever-increasing contacts between various churches, the question as to the appropriate title for the leader of the church often comes up” [Fiedler 1994:327], and the AEC context is no exception. Some believe that a change in terminology of AEC officers needs to be studied [Magubane 1999a] since the title “bishop” is perceived to be more biblical than the title “president” which is perceived to be more western or political in concept and orientation. Denominations such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutherans, and some pentecostal Assemblies of God use leadership titles such as “bishop” and “archbishop”. While churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Tanzania have seen no particular difference between the role of bishop and the role of church president, the churches have opted for the title “bishop” because it appears in the Bible. An interesting situation occurred in Kenya.

The first faith mission church, the Kenyan Africa Inland Church created a bishop in 1973. The reason was the 1972 [government] law restricting the term ‘president’ to the head of state. The AIC gave its regions the choice between chairman, moderator and bishop. They opted for bishop, because this title was found in the Bible. Therefore, President Mulwa became Bishop Mulwa, though this did not change his functions [Fiedler 1994:328].

Certainly, there is a precedent within the SAGM/AEF circles. In Zambia,

for example, the Evangelical Church of Zambia (ECZ) uses the title “bishop” for its leader, although it uses congregational principles in its church work.

4.5 Political stance

The political stance of the AEC’s has been understandably similar to that of their founding body, the SAGM/AEF. In fact, according to a former AEF Field Director, they did not tackle

those issues [of government and politics] by saying, ‘Let’s sit down as a Board and tackle the issues that we’re facing today.’ They had too many internal administrative things to look at to get to the big things that way...[Furthermore,] in my understanding of the many, many business meetings I’ve been in with the AEC, by nature they don’t tackle a thorny problem, put it at the head of their agenda and say, ‘We won’t leave here until we’ve tackled that.’...They don’t tackle an issue head-on the way we would tend to in our churches in America, and then result in a split. They are more compromisers and negotiators [Genheimer 1999].

Therefore, the AEC’s positional statement regarding politics is similar to that of the AEF’s. “The AEC pastors did not discuss this openly...If they resented this policy, they simply kept it to themselves” [Morgan 1999]. Several reasons, perceived rather than specifically mentioned, existed for the position which the AEC took.

One was the influence of the policy of the AEF. Secondly, the political situation of the country at that time was so hard that there was fear in the hearts and minds of many people, even black South Africans, that if you do anything against the government -- say anything, criticise the government for any reason -- you are going to get thrown in [jail]. You are going to be dealt with very, very harshly. The third reason was the radicalism that was practised by those that opposed the government...Most of the criticism against the government was branded as communism. It was branded as anti-Christian. Of course, the government at that time was regarded as a Christian government. The country was a Christian country and if you opposed that government, you were opposing all that Christianity was. This was the concept. Unfortunately, most of the people that opposed the government...used non-Christian methods. And this, of course, made

the evangelical churches -- not only the African evangelical churches, but most evangelical churches -- stay away from it and rather accept the status quo as it was... We should also understand that the top leadership of the Church at the time was mainly older people who dared not say anything critical of the white man... whether he be in government, mission, or whatever... You respect the man, and if you respect the man, you don't criticize him... There is a saying in Zulu that you don't say anything to the king in his presence, but you can criticize him at his back. You criticize him in his presence, it's a sign of disrespect [Xaba 1999].

In "The Constitution of the Africa Evangelical Church," under "Clause III: Statement of Faith," point number "11. CIVIL GOVERNMENT:," the following statement appears:

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, and is for the good of human society; that magistrates, rulers and all in authority are to be prayed for, honoured and obeyed, except in things contrary to the clear teachings of the Word of God. 1 Timothy 2:2; Romans 13:17; Matthew 22:21 [AEC Constitution [s a]:3].

While there were some AEC pastors and church leaders who urged the Church to get involved in politics, and were critical of "missionaries who did not vocally take a position regarding criticism of the government for its inhumane apartheid practices" [Morgan 1999], others "could not believe that if you are a Christian you could be a politician as well" [Mavimbela 1999]. Primarily, this "division was between the urban and the rural aspects of the church" [Genheimer 1999], a division which created havoc in the church for many years.

In the original constitution of the Africa Evangelical Church, of the then *African* Evangelical Church, we had a clause that we don't say anything. We don't criticise the government for things that it does. There was not a development for that, there was just no criticism of the government. And any church leaders, pastors, who were found doing that, would be terminated by the Church [Xaba 1999].

"If there is going to be criticism [against the government] I would expect it to come from an urban, and especially from a Soweto background, rather than from an Mseleni

background” [Morgan 1999].

The majority of those who pushed for greater involvement in politics did not continue with the AEC, although “a couple of them came back into the Church later on” [Genheimer 1999]. Scandals and personal problems surrounding the politically-vocal leaders (e.g., one embezzling church funds, another with an internal marital problem which became external in the newspapers) only served to exacerbate the problem and forced people to conclude that political and spiritual matters did not belong together. In the midst of the turmoil, the church leadership attempted to accommodate all those who shared the same evangelical convictions, and sought to keep the church united on that basis. While there may have been ethnic, political, or trade union differences, the AEC leadership wanted to keep the Church united on the belief that in Jesus Christ they were one.

The general understanding through the years has been that fulltime pastors cannot also be registered politicians. An individual can be one or the other, but not both. In fact, within the AEC “we are not expected to have leaders in a political field from our denomination” [Bodibe 1999a]. A person who is involved politically will probably not be a fulltime church worker because either he will not have the time or because his interests will be divided. It is understood, also, that while pastors are not expected to deal with political trends in light of what Scriptures say, that they do not teach the church how to respond as Christians to trends or events taking place or to positions that the government has maintained, ordinary members may do so. The main duty of Christians is to pray for the government but not to use the church for political purposes or as a political platform, particularly in light of the apparent government belief that ministers of religion are

“dangerous” people because they have a following over which they have an influence.

Personally, if I would say my own opinion, I just feel that if I am in leadership for the Church, then it cannot be in political leadership. I can help my own party vote. I’ll vote, but not be registered as a politician...I am called to preach the gospel, so I am not opposing that, but I have my own life which I have chosen and I feel that I am doing the right thing...We need Christians who are politicians...we want men of God to be there, I must define that...otherwise it means that we will be leaving our country in the hands of people who do not know the Lord at all. [However], I often get letters...and you see that our young people would like the Church to be really involved in politics, but my fear is that...as soon as you get leaders involved in politics it is so easy to forget the flock of God, and it is so easy to divide the Church. If, for example, I am ANC and my people know that I am ANC, then PAC will not listen to me. UDM will not listen to me. That’s why I feel that the pastors should know what parties they belong to, but that should not be voiced out. I think it was the same with missionaries. When our missionaries came here, there were things which they didn’t like but they were compelled by the fact that if they started to criticize the government, they would be spoiling their chances of preaching the gospel. You can do something to close doors for you [Magewu 1999]!

Without a doubt, the apartheid era negatively impacted the AEC to the extent that anyone involved in politics was suspect and disliked, if not hated. Furthermore, no church leader really delved into political issues with a biblical perspective for the purpose of shedding light in the church on what politics meant, or what politics entailed, or where exactly to draw the line regarding the possible degrees of personal involvement in a way that would honour God. Therefore, the early AEC pastors had the idea “that to do God’s work successfully, you’ve got to stay away from politics -- forgetting that we are political animals” [Zondo 1999]! It is not surprising, then, that neither the AEC congregations nor their leadership paid much attention either to the Kairos Document or the Evangelical Witness in South Africa published by the Concerned Evangelicals.

4.6 Current structure

The AEC structure operates from the bottom up, i.e., the agendas and issues are generated primarily from the local church level. At the most foundational level the AEC exists as local churches. Elected delegates from each of the local churches meet together for business at the Quarterly or Circuit level approximately every three months. The chairpersons of the various Quarterlies, who are ordained men only, make up the Regional Executive Committee. Elected officers from the Executive Committee make up the Board.

Level 5	GENERAL CHURCH CONFERENCE	Final voice.
Level 4	A.E.C. EXECUTIVE BOARD (twelve members)	Three members each from Swaziland, Natal-Transvaal, and Transkei, plus the Chairperson from each Region -- making the Board a total of twelve members. Board's decisions go to Church Conference for confirmation. Committees of nine members -- three from each region (e.g., Youth, Men's, Women's, and Christian Education) advise the Executive Board on matters related to their concerns.
Level 3	REGIONAL EXECUTIVE (nine members)	Women's, Youth, and Christian Education Committees administer ministries and activities relative to their duties and advise the Regional Executive concerning them.
Level 2	QUARTERLY MTG. (or CIRCUIT MTG.)	The Chairperson must be ordained. Attended by delegates from each local church.
Level 1	LOCAL CHURCH (a seven-member committee from each local church)	Occasionally, other committees are elected as the need determines.

There is a general dissatisfaction on the part of some AEC members. There are those who believe that the AEC leadership is out-of-touch with today's generation and, unless some

specific moves are made to be on the cutting edge in terms of strategy, leading styles, thinking, and decision-making processes, the AEC will die a natural death. Primary issues are continually avoided as being too radical, and it is felt that leaders should be fearful no longer, but need to step forward in an assertive manner, expressing new vision and pushing forward to reach it. Possible changes in the AEC church structures, as described above under “Constitution,” must be considered.

4.7 Comparing the AEC (the Church) with the AEF (the Mission)

By now it will have become abundantly clear to the reader that the AEC and the AEF are more similar than dissimilar. The AEF’s influence upon the AEC is unmistakable.

Similar to the AEF, the AEC has held evangelism and church planting as a priority. Tent meetings are conducted in various locations and pastors often use their sermons to challenge their listeners to commit themselves to Christ. Additionally, thrusting out missionaries into cross-cultural situations is a growing interest and concern for the AEC as it considers sending personnel into neighbouring countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. Since the Mission required biblically-trained men for pastoral positions, so now the Church requires the same. A high regard for sound Bible teaching and discipleship continues, though it is not always found or easily accomplished [Zondo 1999] with the faster pace of life, particularly in the urban settings. Among Bible school graduates there is a growing realization “that our people need to be taught. It is no longer preaching only but there must be some teaching” [Magewu 1999]. Both the AEF and the AEC have realized that the Church needs to understand more clearly the meaning of taking a firm stand for the truth in the face of the freedom of religion and relaxed moral

standards and policies of the present government. It is encouraging that the Sunday School teachers are more active today [Nkambule 1999] than previously.

Most importantly, the AEC is similar to the AEF in terms of their understanding of, and response to, church/state relationships. Both groups have been reticent to tackle the tough issues related to politics, and how such issues affect them. While major issues were being debated by various church and theological bodies, both the AEF and the AEC generally kept their distance for fear of inviting trouble from the authorities. Such topics were discussed more in private conversations than in open, public meetings. It was considered neither respectful nor safe to do otherwise. Generally, “[W]e have been following exactly what our Mission has given us and we are proud of that and our Mission” [Magewu 1999].

Perhaps more *unlike* the AEF, the AEC has recognized that a new culture is coming into the Church. “The culture now is becoming the global culture. It’s no longer, ‘We Xhosas are doing things like this. We Zulus are doing things like this.’ We seem to come together now” [Ntongana 1999]. A new culture is emerging in the country [Magubane 1999a], thus there is a felt need for those who will understand the times and address them appropriately. Furthermore, the Church has been asking for a closer working relationship with the Mission which the Mission has apparently been slow to give.

CHAPTER 5: THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE AEF AND AEC HAVE MINISTERED

5.1 The ministry context for AEF and AEC

Between the years 1962 (when the AEC gained its autonomy from the AEF) and 1994 (when the Mandela government came to power), both mission organizations and churches existed in a context of political tension, events, and changes which heavily impacted them. At the time that the AEC gained its autonomy, Afrikaner nationalism and white supremacy was strong but

A new and greater challenge now awaited the Nationalist administration -- that of solving the racial problem. It was an immense problem, both complex and urgent...H.F. Verwoerd saw a solution to this problem in the philosophy of separate development (or apartheid). However, his successor, B.J. Vorster, came to the conclusion that this philosophy offered no final solution...[T]he broad concept of separate development was to remain, but greater flexibility would be needed in applying its policy [Brits 1991:97].

The policy changes brought divisions within the Afrikaner movement. New political parties came and went and there were some which “regarded complete social and political segregation as the only guarantee for white survival in South Africa” [Brits 1991:97].

During the administrations of Vorster and Botha “black Africa was at the forefront of an unprecedented protest campaign -- in all parts of the world -- against South Africa’s domestic policy” [Brits 1991:98]. The pressures against South Africa continued to increase with the changing status of neighbouring African states. Mozambique and Angola, for instance, gained their independence from Portugal. Zimbabwe (Rhodesia at the time) was in turmoil over the Ian Smith regime and the issues related to the

independence from South Africa of Namibia (known then as South West Africa) had not been settled.

During the mid-1970s, pressures within South Africa grew to fatal proportions as increasingly restless and impatient black leaders began to take action. Between the Soweto uprisings of 1976 and the end of 1979 “more than six hundred people had lost their lives” [Brits 1991:120]. As the unrest increased, so did the government’s legislated restrictions against various organizations and publications. Consequently, not only did the hostilities within South Africa increase but also those from countries throughout Africa and overseas. Between 1977 and 1983 Botha moved the country towards the acceptance of a newly restructured constitution, which opened the way for a tricameral parliament giving the Coloured and Asian minorities limited representation. The Black majority, however, continued to be excluded, which led to the predicted eruption of their resistance.

According to *Operation World* [1993:493], economic crises and political pressures

helped to trigger rapid changes in the ‘80s. The de Klerk government took bold steps to end apartheid and initiate serious negotiations towards setting up a fully democratic, multi-racial country. Most of the apartheid laws were repealed by July 1991...[Though] the battle for power and influence between the ANC, the Inkatha Freedom Movement, the Pan-African Congress and the government... contributed to an interminable cycle of intimidation and violence with a mounting death toll...The first multi-racial election...[was held] in 1994.

The first Black government, led by President Nelson Mandela, was swept into power irrevocably changing South Africa.

In the context of these overwhelming pressures and changes, the mission organizations and churches attempted to continue with their God-given ministries. While some personnel serving with the SAGM/AEF, including both missionaries and national church

leaders, had the impression that the Mission had entered into some kind of formal agreement with the South African government which prevented missionaries from addressing the political issues in the country [Molebatsi 1999], the Mission "...never really made any statement to the government that way,...[no] contract..." [Genheimer 1999]. No missionaries or church leaders were ever asked to sign statements regarding apolitical commitments. In fact, the Mission

sent around a questionnaire to all the church leaders and all the field leaders of all or our various fields. Then the Church leaders, both in speaking in IC [i.e., International Council] and in their responses to that questionnaire said, 'Be very, very careful what you do, and don't make a statement that will pit us as churches against the governments of our country.' You see, Kaunda was in charge at the time in Zambia and Banda was still in charge in Malawi. We ended up taking a document, which had been fairly strong in terms of saying, 'Yes, you obey the government' ...[and changing it to] 'but when the government is contradicting Scripture, you obey God rather than the government.' ...These people made us promise to insert that we would always consult with the local church before we ever made any political statements in any way [Genheimer 1999].

Christians in all organizations, denominations, and ethnic groups struggled with the various approaches being put forward on how to competently and biblically handle the issues. Many who saw the need for changes in the South African situation could only speak about it "behind the scenes...or in an underground-type of criticism, because the government was still very, very harsh against those that spoke against it" [Xaba 1999]. According to Rev H Wetmore [1999], "In general, the conservative evangelical wing of the church...moderately conservative,...followed the political trend instead of giving leadership to it...[Then] after liberation...lots of people suddenly change[d] their Christian convictions because the political scene changed."

A general fear throughout these troubled years was that South Africa would plunge into a

terrible civil war, with devastating consequences.

White South Africa's situation resembles that of Israel. If she rejects a 'federal' solution to her racial problem (and the present government has) and if Black South Africa rejects the Bantustan policy (and a large proportion does), the situation becomes polarised. If civil war should break out, White South Africans have nowhere to go. Four million people cannot all take to the sea or the air. But the aftermath of a desperate military struggle for survival could put back the cause of the gospel in South Africa for decades. We must pray and believe that God will overrule [Deane 1977].

5.2 Theological reflections concerning the context

5.2.1 The Kairos Document -- September 1985

"Amidst the brutalities and repression taking place nearly every day, a group of pastors and theologians in Soweto came together to reflect on the Christian ministry in such a situation. Through a process of discussion and consultation...a document...was issued on 25 September 1985 as the *Kairos Document*" [Saayman 1993:87-88]. The intention of the Kairos Document, written by a group of primarily black South African theologians, was to jolt the church in general from a neutral position to a pro-liberation position. The Document declared, "The time has come...It is the *kairos*, or moment of truth, not only for apartheid but also for the church and all other faiths and religions" [Logan 1988:7]. Willis H Logan [1988:vii] stated that "The Kairos Document is a *prophetic* theological statement that presents a direct challenge to all Christians inside and outside South Africa...It is a profound appeal for reflection and action [Logan's italics]." Expected themes, such as violence, suffering, law, justice, liberty and reconciliation, were addressed from the perspectives of what was called State Theology, Church Theology, and

Prophetic Theology. Apartheid was clearly labelled as a heresy and the whole basis and philosophy of it called an idol of the South African government. The Document called for a new effort by Christians everywhere to stand with South African Christians in scriptural reflection as they wrestled with the issues confronting them.

5.2.2 The SACEL Charter – February 1986

A Charter for Mobilising Evangelical Unity was produced by the South African Conference of Evangelical Leaders (SACEL). Sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa (EFSA),

...(SACEL) brought together some 150 evangelical leaders, many of them in senior offices of their 40 churches and 35 parachurch agencies. The conference took place at Hekpoort, [former] Transvaal, from the 28th October to the 2nd of November 1985...[The conference was convened] with the purpose of ascertaining and expressing the mind of South Africa's evangelicals in a Charter for Mobilising Evangelical Unity. This charter would define some evangelical perspectives and chart a course for evangelical action in South Africa at this time [SACEL 1986:1].

After giving EFSA's "Statement of Faith," the Charter enumerated the evangelical perspectives in five chapters dealing with "The Fellowship of the Gospel" [SACEL 1986:3], "The Defence and Confirmation of the Gospel" [SACEL 1986:7], "The Advance of the Gospel" [SACEL 1986:8], "The Behaviour of the Gospel" [SACEL 1986:11], and, finally, "An Evangelical Response To The Situation In South Africa At This Time" [SACEL 1986:13].

Since the delegates to the conference represented various ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and personality types the task was a daunting one indeed. "Many Blacks

came to SACEL out of the daily turbulence of township unrest. They rightly expressed their concern that Whites, coming from their tranquil suburbs, did not share their anguish and sense of urgency about the situation in their common country" [SACEL 1986:1]. The ties of unity among the conference delegates was seriously strained by the tensions which these contrasts produced.

In spite of the tensions, SACEL produced a working document approved by at least 75% which reflected "a consensus of evangelical conviction regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ in South Africa" [SACEL 1986:1]. For example, though there were recognised differences in the cross-cultural relationships, they were one in Christ. Although doctrinal differences existed, all had the Gospel as their basis for dialogue. It was agreed that though all believed in the inspiration of Scripture, there was a tremendous lack in solid teaching regarding spiritual gifts, service, biblical answers to societal needs, prayer, evangelism, discipleship, and cross-cultural missions. Issues related to ethical decision-making and family life had been ignored. Furthermore, all evangelicals were encouraged "to talk together in the areas of polarisation" [SACEL 1986:16].

5.2.3. The EWISA document -- July 1986

The EWISA (i.e., the Evangelical Witness in South Africa) document came out shortly after the Kairos Document and, according to the belief of many, came into existence because many evangelicals did not feel comfortable in aligning themselves with the Kairos Document and with the members of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), allegedly the primary signatories and, therefore, a

non-evangelical source. Ceasar Molebatsi [1999], however, stated

No, no. What happened is, at the height of the violence in South Africa in the eighties, we used to meet every single morning with about eight or nine evangelical pastors. We used to meet at the Orlando Baptist Church for prayer...So this one day...they were having the prayer meeting at Orlando Baptist Church and while they were still praying there, the army invaded the school right next to the Church, threw teargas canisters, and the kids were running, you know. A lot of kids got hurt. One of the people at the meeting was Frank Chikane...An hour later the young people regrouped and they went to the main road and anything that represented the white companies or government, they stoned and burned. When the young people caught a guy that was driving a bakery truck, they asked him to get out of the truck. And this guy was begging them, 'If you touch this van, I am going to lose my job and what is going to happen then?' And they were saying, 'Listen, please take out your pass, we want to burn this,' and they began to take the bread out of the van and give it to people as they were passing by, and they were going to burn the truck. One of the women rushed in[to the Church] and said, 'Bafundisi, please come and help, the children are going to kill someone.' So when these guys rushed out they found, no, actually the kids were not going to kill this guy, but they were going to burn the truck. So Frank Chikane stopped and said, 'Folks, on what grounds do we talk to these young people? When they were being fired upon by the police we were praying!' That is how the Evangelical Witness in South Africa came about. So we set up a series of meetings...and we went from church to church, gathered a few believers and talked to them, saying, 'Folks, we need to speak out. We cannot expect young people to listen to us.' That is how the Evangelical Witness arrived. That is the history...During that time we then collated all the papers that had been presented to the various churches and they formed the Evangelical Witness.

The purpose of the EWISA document was to help evangelicals grapple with how to align their lives, their faith, and their ministries with the violence that rocked the country. Because of what was happening in the country, and because the evangelical churches were generally supporting the status quo by not being an active voice of conscience to the government, a group of theologians gathered to discuss the situation. "Having realized that there was something wrong with the

practice and theology of evangelicals in this country we felt God's calling to us to rectify this situation for the sake of the gospel of the Lord" [EWISA 1986:2]. Rather than critiquing the theology of the Kairos Document, the "concerned evangelicals" decided it would be more profitable to critique their own theology and practice. Believing that their theology was unduly "influenced by American and European missionaries with political, social and class interests which were contrary or even hostile to both the spiritual and social needs" [EWISA 1986:2] of the country's people, the theologians were predominantly African. Very few White or Asian leaders participated. The resultant document was circulated to evangelicals not only within South Africa, but to those abroad as well, in hopes that they would re-examine their beliefs and practice.

5.2.4 The Rustenburg Declaration -- November 1990

In November 1990 the National Conference of Churches in South Africa met in Rustenburg. Although two hundred thirty representatives of ninety-seven denominations and forty organisations met (including some overseas guests), and although not all agreed to the same solutions to the pressing issues and concerns, all were in one accord that apartheid was a sin that should be unequivocally rejected. The document envisioned a new society which would likely call for suffering to bring it into existence.

The Declaration confessed that "Some of us ignored apartheid's evil, spiritualising the Gospel by preaching the sufficiency of individual salvation without social transformation. We adopted an allegedly neutral stance which in fact resulted in

complicity with apartheid. We were often silent when our sisters and brothers were suffering persecution” [Rustenburg Declaration 1990:paragraph 2.5.2].

Ideologies were thought to have been more influential among Christians than the Gospel of Christ, causing a great failure in correct teaching and resulting in the breakdown of self-esteem. Issues facing women and youth were ignored.

Consequently, restitution and a commitment to action were called for on the part of all South Africans, but particularly the Church, in an effort to set right the wrongs being done. This would mean considerable changes in matters related to such issues as land ownership, education, employment, health services, and women’s rights. A new resolve to fulfil the Great Commission in bringing people to a personal faith in Christ was also recognized.

5.3 The AEF and AEC responses to the more prominent Kairos and EWISA documents

In the years immediately following the publications of the Kairos and EWISA documents, apparently neither the AEF nor the AEC made any official attempt to interact with or respond to them. In fact, it appears that the majority of the members in the AEC had not even heard of either, much less read or discussed them, which perhaps speaks to the isolation of many AEC churches. “Kairos? You mean the Cairo from Egypt?” was the response of one aspiring church leader in training when he was asked by the writer about the Kairos Document. The AEC president at the time, Rev Lloyd T Magewu, had never seen the Kairos document and had heard little about it [Magewu 1999]. “I don’t know of any time when the organizations themselves discussed the documents...I know the AEC never discussed it as a church. Some individuals in the Church embrace and like the

[Kairos] document. Others criticize it” [Xaba 1999].

Some people within the AEC were aware of the documents but did not know of any official AEC response to them [Bhengu 1999]. While some were aware of the Kairos Document, many had never heard of the EWISA document, or vice versa, though more knew of the EWISA document. Individual AEC church leaders had heard of both documents, but not all had read them [Xaba 1999]. Others had not even seen them. “And you know who was between us and the Evangelical Church? It was mostly missionaries. I used to go sometimes to a church and the people would have been told, ‘You can’t listen to those people. They don’t believe in Jesus, don’t believe in the Holy Spirit’” [Molebatsi 1999]. However, “Hugh Wetmore tried his best to get involved...The Lord helped him to let us see the other side of the fence and to see for ourselves what was wrong and what was right. Other than that, I only heard about [those documents] in the [Rustenburg] meetings” [Zondo 1999].

Nevertheless, even as the documents were being discussed in such meetings, it was the understanding of the majority of AEC members that such topics were not to be discussed, that “you are supposed to touch not, handle not, hear not” [Zondo 1999]. “It probably would not be their [i.e., AEC’s] nature to ever sit down and say, ‘Let’s tackle head-on the issues raised by the Evangelical Witness and the Kairos Documents.’ I doubt it. In those days the AEC never really made position statements on politics...They had too many internal administrative things to look at to get to the big things that way” [Genheimer 1999]. Others had the response “that ‘It is a political and social gospel. We are not called to preach that, we are called to change and save souls.’ You will see that as much as there

have been people within the AEC who signed the [Kairos] document, they did not sign as AEC, but as individuals. AEC distanced itself from that” [Bodibe 1999a].

On the other hand, the AEF Field Director at the time the documents were published studied both carefully. It was known that the EWISA document

was basically put out by EFSA [Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa]-type people, and Hugh Wetmore was leading that. Overall, with regard to that, they confessed their sins publicly, they stated their oppositions to apartheid and the government policy. They even, I think, excused the violence of the guerillas, saying that it was a response to the violence of the government...In a sense, I guess, they didn't want evangelicals to be ruled out when, as they knew, there had to be a post-apartheid government coming. I think EWISA was an attempt by evangelicals to say, 'We do recognize we have not done well. We do recognize the evils that have come. Maybe we didn't before, but we do now.' But they stop short, of course, of moving to any of the things the Kairos Document actually said, and they basically stopped there. They said, 'We confess that we have been this way. We recognize the reasons for the struggle, and when the struggle is over, and when post-apartheid comes into being, remember that we as evangelicals have stood with this document.' I think that's what they were trying to say [Genheimer 1999].

In spite of the fact that the AEF and the AEC spent little time with the Kairos and EWISA documents, they understood and appreciated the concerns being expressed by them and believed them to be legitimate though perhaps radical in places.

5.4 The interpretation of Romans 13:1-7

Romans 13:1-7 states,

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For

because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour (New King James Version).

The Romans 13 passage has often been used to silence the critics of various governments and, like many other passages, has been used as a proof text to support opinions of one kind or another.

5.4.1 South African Christian interpretations

The Dutch Reformed Church, which had been a strong supporter of the Nationalist Party, found it easy to believe that since God had put the government in power, it was the responsibility of all South Africans to submit to it.

...the conservative Afrikaner Christian's interpretation of Romans 13 emphasised the legitimacy of their government because it had been appointed by God (v.1). It alone had power to wield the sword (v.4), and "rebels" could not be tolerated (v.2). Later it became more obvious that the government was also God's servant (v.4), and so should reform those laws that were not for the welfare of all the people. The church should obey the government (unless a law contradicted the Word of God) and speak God's Word to the government [Wetmore 2001].

From its position of authority and rulership it was easy for the Afrikaner government to demand submission.

However, from the position of the oppressed the Kairos theologians emphasised the fact that governments were put into place as "God's minister to you for good" (NKJV). Therefore, if any ruler or government was not doing good, submission to them was not required. "Many authors have drawn attention," they said, "to the fact that in the rest of the Bible God does not demand obedience to oppressive rulers" [Logan 1988:10].

5.4.2 AEF interpretations

Opinion in AEF ranks expressed the belief that the Kairos document had stated that evangelicals generally had completely ‘missed the boat’ in the sense that they had accepted the status quo. However, according to Rev Dr Ronald Genheimer [1999] who became AEF’s International Director shortly after the publication of the Kairos document,

They [that is, the Kairos theologians] have fully misunderstood Romans 13. The cultural hermeneutics of Romans 13 is a treatise against antinomianism [the view that Christians are released from the obligation of observing the moral law]. It cannot be applied in any way, shape, or form to today in South Africa. And that is their hermeneutic of Romans 13. I think they were totally against any possibility of reform. They had given up the government and simply were willing to call it the Devil. And they said, ‘You cannot reform the Devil. You can’t reform this government. There’s no sense to negotiate with it.’ That’s the way I read the Kairos document....It acknowledged that violence was a tool....used by God. And that was the aspect of the Kairos document that I struggled with -- its total rejection of any negotiation with the present government. I honestly don’t believe that we would ever have had the results that we have had today in South Africa if Mandela had gone with what my interpretation was of the Kairos document. I don’t think he went that far.

The AEF, probably like most evangelicals, concentrated on verse one which speaks of the responsibility of the governed, rather than on verse four which speaks of the responsibility of the governor. AEF’s position was basically to obey the rulers over you. “From a socially accepted, pragmatic, and scriptural standpoint, we have no business criticizing the government” [Morgan 1999]. Yet

Paul speaks both of the ‘ought’ of the governed and the ‘ought’ of the governor. Evangelicals tend to have looked at the ought of the governed, that is, to submit. But he speaks in the same passage of the ought of the governor. The governor is God’s servant to do you good, which is a very important point for any government. And the other thing is that the

government must punish only wrong-doers. If you do right, you shouldn't be punished. Whereas under apartheid, and under most of the governments of the world...the government is punishing the innocent....You've got in Romans 13 a twin-thing that has to be held together. God's expectations of the citizen are matched by God's expectations of the government. So if the government is not the kind of government God wants it to be, then the submission by the citizens is not an obligatory obedience, but a willingness to do what God wants them to do and submit to the consequences under an unjust government [Wetmore 1999].

5.4.3 AEC interpretations

Since the relationship between the AEF and the AEC has been very much a modelling one, there is evidence that the AEC took the same approach. The AEC learned a lot from what the AEF modelled as well as taught, but the modelling often has a deeper, subconscious, more permanent influence. The approach taken by the AEC has been that "to submit to the government is good as long as the government is not taking us away from the cross. I think there we cannot compromise. It means we have to pray for the government but we cannot compromise that world Christian stand....[W]e have been following exactly what our Mission has given us and we are proud of that and our Mission" [Magewu 1999]. This idea appears under the Statement of Faith in the AEC's Constitution, which reads

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, and is for the good of human society; that magistrates, rulers and all in authority are to be prayed for, honoured and obeyed, except in things contrary to the clear teachings of the Word of God. 1 Timothy 2:2; Romans 13:17; Matthew 22:21 [AEC Constitution [s a]].

In the AEC's opinion, praying for and submitting to the government is not the same as agreeing with all of its policies or laws. "Submission does not mean we

don't question things" [Bodibe 1999a]. Issues related to pornography, homosexuality, and abortion, for instance, will not be viewed by the Church as they are viewed by the government. "We cannot take everything from the government" [Mavimbela 1999]. If the government is clearly doing something wrong, "...I don't think that advocates a Christian demonstrating against the government...I see the prophets of the Old Testament...[and] the apostles...[going] to the government leaders and to the kings and...[saying], 'You are wrong here. Thus says the Lord.'" [Xaba 1999]. Discernment is seen by the AEC as an integral part of the process of submitting to any governing authority. "No matter who he is, if he is playing his own guitar, I'm not going to just dance at the sound. I'm going to listen for the kind of music...because I'm not going to submit to anybody" [Zondo 1999].

However, if the government is governing correctly and justly, and if the authorities are fulfilling their role clearly, the matter of submitting will become an unconscious activity. Submission "has nothing to do with an oppressive way of doing things. I don't buy that" [Magubane 1999a].

A new challenge has appeared in South Africa for the Christian community. Since the previous government was considered to be a government with a Christian bias with morally strong and conservative standards, Christians were perhaps "comfortable" and "protected." However, with a secular state granting greater freedom of religion and lower moral standards and laws, which have "been promoted even in parliament" [Ntongana 1999], more than ever "Christians should

really stand for what they believe” [Bhengu 1999].

5.5 The application of Scripture to the issues facing South Africa

The AEF, and subsequently the AEC, was part of the general evangelical blindness regarding the relevance of Scripture to the issues facing South Africa. A great deal of this, the author believes, is due to the fact that no teaching was undertaken in the churches or Bible schools, either by the nationals or by the expatriates, concerning the teaching of the Bible on issues facing the country.

We never in our Bible school ever taught our students what to do when someone comes and says, ‘Here is the injustice I am facing.’I don’t think we ever sat down and said, ‘If you are facing an unjust government situation, how do you handle it? Let’s go through the Scripture and see if we can’t find it.’ I don’t think we ever did that.... We said, ‘We’ll just tell them how to believe and be saved and grow and be disciples, and we’ll just shut our mouths on all the rest of it.’ And I think we did a disservice [Genheimer 1999].

Issues that were particularly political in orientation (either implicitly or explicitly) were avoided.

Up to today, we don’t have what you call very many learned pastors. We’ve got simple people like ourselves who were able to carry on where the missionaries left off.... Even the word ‘politic,’ no one has gone into it and found out, ‘What does it mean? How far can I run away from it? Am I not involved politically this way or the other?’ No one really had a way of bringing that light [Zondo 1999].

Politically-related issues would “not have been a subject of preaching...[nor] would they have been dealt with officially in a conference where the delegates vote on it.... There are certain church subjects that we deal with in a church context. And there are other subjects, especially government policy, which we don’t talk about in a church context” [Morgan 1999] because it was believed that to address politically-related issues would bring trouble. For instance, someone might be punished by the government for what was

said, or it would take too much focus and time away from evangelism to deal with such matters. More importantly, it was not considered spiritual to deal with political issues.

Besides, did not the Bible say something about obeying those in authority over you?

Therefore, no one had the right or business to criticise.

The issues facing South Africa were issues of justice, and the Bible has so much to say about justice. But I, as a typical evangelical, and probably a typical SAGMer, AEFer, didn't know that the Bible said much about justice at all, partly because the Authorized Version uses the word judgement instead of justice. And when you speak of judgement, you think of an eschatological thing. But when you read in the newer versions, the word justice is used correctly in the translations. You'll find that justice is a bigger theme than salvation from sin, in terms of frequency of mention. And one of the things that I have done is to bring a seminar called 'God's Perspective on Society.' . . . this seminar proposes that God will bless any nation which has four characteristics: kindness, justice, righteousness, and humility. And in researching the seminar, I did a study of the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation of the teaching on these four themes and found that the whole Bible is saturated. I have got pages upon pages upon pages of just references, no explanation, just one-line summaries of what the reference says. And these refer to those four themes. The Bible is absolutely saturated with this teaching. Now I didn't know that; for most of my life I didn't know that. When you wake up and find out something's been in the Bible all the time, you wonder which Bible you've been reading, because it's there [Wetmore 1999].

5.6 Changed political stance of AEF and AEC

During the late 1980s the statement regarding AEF's political stance underwent some revision. Proposals for the changes went from the Southern Field (i.e., South Africa and Swaziland) to the International Council (based in Reading, England), and were based on the question, "What do you do when the government is in actual opposition to God?" A small committee, including the Field Director, was appointed to investigate and study the issues involved. A questionnaire was sent to Church leaders and field leaders in all the countries in which the Mission worked. Additionally, the Field Director, Rev Ron

Genheimer at that time [1990:46], wrote,

I.C. requested me to prepare a statement ‘that as a Fellowship we oppose all forms of violence, oppression, and injustice as enjoined by Scripture.’ The mandate given was for me to ‘study the subject fully and prepare a statement that will clearly explain our position, while not identifying us with Liberation Theology.’....

After consultation with the Personnel Coordinator, it was felt that the study should include the basic subject ‘Evangelism and Social Responsibility’ as background material from which we could derive a more condensed statement for submission to I.C.

Based on the received responses to the questionnaire, comments of the AEC delegates to the International Council, and Rev R Genheimer’s study, AEF’s Seventh General Meeting of its I.C. [1990:26] proposed a change in the Mission’s political stance. In the writer’s opinion, it is noteworthy that the process to initiate the official change was requested long before anyone dreamed of Nelson Mandela coming to power, nor was it called for in light of any “new” South Africa appearing on the near horizon.

Rev. Ron Genheimer presented his report which had been circulated before International Council, and is appended as appendix A.

101. After a full discussion International Council agreed to change FOA as follows:

102. i) Delete the whole statement in 5:37
[5:37 Politics.

All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, from showing partiality to any Party, and from giving their time to promote such. Their commission and responsibility is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church [Africa Evangelical Fellowship, FOA, 1988].]

103. ii) Delete the sentence in 5:38, “Further, it is the policy of the Fellowship that its personnel shall so conduct themselves as not to give offence to the host government.”

104. iii) Replace the present FOA 7:2:1 with the following new statement.

“The Biblical injunction is to respect, honour, and submit to legitimate secular authorities (Rom. 13:1-7). We are to pray that

they will exercise their authority righteously for the good of all their subjects (1 Tim. 2:1,2). Missionaries are called to be “Light” and “Salt” in the world, and are encouraged to be constructive in their relationships and teaching of the Word of God, emphasising righteousness and justice (Matt. 5:13-16, 28:19,20, 1 Pet. 2:12,15). In the same way they are to teach God’s holiness, and thus His condemnation of all forms of exploitation, oppression, violence and injustice (James 2:3, 5:1-6). In faithfulness to God and their consciences, they will not necessarily approve of every policy of the secular authorities, and may need on occasion to make their position clear (Matt. 22:15-21; Acts 5:28,29), but only with the prior approval of Field mission leadership and Church executive committees. In doing so, they will conduct themselves so as not to give unnecessary offence to their host governments (Rom. 12:17,18).

“All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field, from showing partiality to any party, and from giving their time to promote such. Their commission is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church.”

The reader is encouraged to look again at chapters one and three to review the political policy changes in more detail. However, in the writer’s opinion, the primary significance in the changes comes in the fact that the Mission has recognized that true discipleship involves the application of Scripture to ALL aspects of life. The African’s holistic way of looking at life is more accurate than the westerner’s way of considering life in separate and often unrelated compartments. To be able to reverse the past ‘disservice’ of not applying the principles of the Word of God accurately to all aspects of life is indeed a positive step forward. Much personal, family, and national confusion and pain could have been avoided had the reversal happened sooner.

The AEC also has changed more particularly in recent years, and perhaps not so much in printed policy as in practice. “The move from the apartheid era into the democratic era

has opened the minds and the mouths of the people so that they speak out their feelings. There is no longer the regard that if you speak against a person then you are disrespectful. There is an understanding that it is possible to criticize a person not because you are criticizing the person himself or herself but rather you criticize what he or she says or does" [Xaba 1999]. While such an openness within the AEC began with the younger generation in the late 1960s, it has been growing ever since.

5.7 Changes in ministry direction and concerns

Have the central concerns for the ministries of the AEF and AEC changed in recent years?

Essentially, not noticeably. While the overall general goals for conversions, baptisms, discipleship, fellowship, and Bible teaching continue to be held in high regard, some concerns have been expressed. Due to the greater exposure to other cultures because of the greater openness within South Africa, the church is coming into contact more and more with globalization and its affects. These influences and subsequent changes are more noticeable in the urban rather than the rural situations. The pace of life is faster and more cluttered and many church leaders cannot find the time to do adequate discipling or pre-baptism catechism classes as they once could.

One concern is related to the trends coming into the churches through the preaching and music tapes and videos from North America. Worship has been streamlined. While as a general rule, young people are willing to take a stand for what they believe, yet in some cases churches have compromised because they are not willing to stand on their own.

"...[T]he church should stand for the truth no matter what it costs" [Nkambule 1999] but because of the past conditioning by the government, many are still fearful about speaking

to issues that need to be addressed or corrected, particularly if leaders are involved.

“Evangelicals have always had the problem of fear” [Zondo 1999], especially a fear of being wrongfully judged by others for correctly or incorrectly perceived motivations in ministry.

I get the impression that....there is a tendency towards a ‘hip, hip, hooray’ Christianity....I am concerned that the [Church] leadership is going to try to offer the people what they want rather than offer what they really need. I believe we need to deepen our Church in terms of discipleship. We need to deepen the Church in terms of prayer. I don’t think there is a lot of prayer going on in the churches....I find a lot of Zululand pastors saying, ‘We’ve got a lot of young people, very excited young people, but how we wish we could bring them down to some Bible study, to some understanding of the cost of discipleship.’....[I’m also concerned that] the guy who is “amened” the most is not the guy with the thoughtful presentation but the guy who can whip up the amens and enthusiasm by jumping around in circles [Genheimer 1999].

Others have expressed that various leaders are “realizing that our people need to be taught. It is no longer preaching only, but there must be some teaching” [Magewu 1999]. For instance, some areas are specifically requesting systematic teaching concerning the ministries of the Holy Spirit since much confusion exists regarding that topic. An existing emphasis on the quantity, on the numbers of believers, must shift back again to the quality of believers [Magubane 1999a]. Baptisms, while still encouraged and sought, are generally only taking place where resident pastors can be found. Other areas have to wait for a visiting pastor. Other ministry emphases have continued to grow. In some areas, for example, Sunday School teaching has increased and become more consistent. In addition, the AEC has formed a church-planting team which has undertaken some work in the North West Province. Hopefully the goal will be to make it as indigenous as possible, including the training of local leadership. There has also been a strengthening missions

thrust in terms of broadening their vision not only of outreach into new areas but also of financially supporting such ventures from their own circles. "We'll start in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and from there, all over the world" [Mavimbela 1999]. Already a missionary couple from Swaziland has been sent into Botswana. The researcher agrees with the former AEC president, Rev L T Magewu [1999], that similar ministries would increase if the AEC would appoint a full-time, fully-supported president who would have the time to organize, encourage, and administrate the details.

CHAPTER 6: POSSIBLE AEF/SIM² AND AEC CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RELEVANT CHANGE, REFLECTION, AND TRAINING IN SOUTH AFRICA

6.1 Moving into the 21st century

The previous chapters have made no endeavour to gloss over the fact that both Mission and Church leaders are imperfect. Both groups have recognized weaknesses and shortcomings. Further, it has been demonstrated that the SAGM/AEF and the AEC are more similar than dissimilar in terms of ministry goals and values, and both intend to keep “God First” and always to “Go Forward.”

Now that both have entered the next century, and work together in a ‘new South Africa,’ ministry strategies need either to be introduced or strengthened to propel the Mission and the Church in certain new directions.

This can only be done effectively, however, after taking into consideration the worldwide debate concerning mission/church relationships³. The debate, as would be expected, is approached from different angles and perspectives determined by ecclesiastical associations, theological persuasions, stages of church life and development, and whether or not the proponent(s) represents the mission or the church.

² On 1 October 1998 the Africa Evangelical Fellowship merged with SIM (Society for International Ministries), which now includes, besides the AEF, the Andes Evangelical Mission, the International Christian Fellowship, and the Sudan Interior Mission.

³ Obviously this debate warrants a thesis on its own, therefore, the writer is not going to attempt an extensive analysis and reflection here. Rather, the goal is much more limited -- to sketch the debate in very broad outline so that the conclusions on the relationships between the AEF/SIM and AEC can be situated in the context more clearly. For an overview of the debate, see Saayman 2000.

Following the second World War, as more and more countries gained their independence from colonial powers, so too, young churches began to receive more autonomy from their parent mission organizations. While some gained it too early perhaps and others gained it rather late, all faced new tensions in their mission/church relationships. Eventually, the tensions built to the extent that a moratorium was called on missions, largely by “those Third World churches affiliated with the World Council of Churches; in Roman Catholic and conservative-evangelical churches, moratorium does not appear to be so much of an issue” [Bosch 1978:283]. When first used, ‘moratorium’ meant that Western missionary involvement should be deferred for a limited time of five years but John Gatu later “changed that to ‘Missionaries should be withdrawn. Period.’ [Bosch 1978:287].

After appeals in 1971 from John Gatu of Kenya and Emerito Nacpil of the Philippines, a heated debate developed over the need for “mission,”.... This occurred both in print and especially at international conferences in Bangkok (1973), Lusaka (1974), Lausanne (1974), and Nairobi (1975). Calls were issued by some for a transfer of ‘the massive expenditure on expatriate personnel in the church in Africa [for example] to programme activities manned by Africans themselves’ [Smith 2000:659].

During the 1900s particularly, a great deal of thought and discussion has gone into the ideas originally proposed by “Henry Venn (1796-1873)...and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880)....[who] wrote about the necessity of planting ‘three-self’ churches--churches that would be self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating (Venn used the term ‘self-extending’)” [Terry 2000:483]. Missions and churches have wrestled with how the three-self formula should be practically worked out, as well as what conditions would need to be in place for missions to move from the parent stage to the partner stage. A great amount of lip service has been paid to the idea of “partnership” between missions and their

daughter churches, but it has been quite a different matter to effectively undertake. As the old saying goes, “When all is said and done, more has been said than done!” -- particularly when such divergent ideas exist of what “partnership” really entails.

The two essential issues around which the debate revolves at present are mutuality and interdependence. David Bosch [1978:288] refers to what he terms the “Constantinian dispensation” due to which mission agencies remain in their parental roles, finding it difficult to release hold on control and power--especially because they provide the larger portion of the finances, personnel, and skills needed for the developing church. The challenge, as the Bangkok conference expressed it, is “to relate to one another in a way which does not dehumanize” [Bosch 1978:291].

For true mutuality to take place between the AEF and the AEC, there has to be a genuine give-and-take from both sides. The Church needs to be heard and taken seriously by the Mission, and the Mission will need to take considerable initiative to see that it happens. In the writer’s opinion, both the AEF and the AEC (but particularly the AEF!) will need to bear in mind the two most common models used in approaching partnership, consciously moving from the ‘business’ model to the ‘family’ model.

The business model views people as stockholders, while the family model sees them as members. Control in the business model is maintained with money, but in the family it is relationships that keep control. In the business model the emphasis is on activities, while the family model values fellowship. Contributions are seen as competitive in the business approach, but they are complementary in the family model. No contribution is devalued even though recognized as distinct. Both models will pursue accountability. However, the business model is one-sided, whereas the family model seeks a mutual accountability [Brynjolfson 2000:482].

David Bosch adds that “Genuine reciprocity can only develop where the two respective

partners do *not* receive the same as they have given [Bosch's italics]. In other words: does reciprocity not presuppose complementarity?" [Bosch 1978:293]

Healthy, personal, and sincere (not merely expedient) relationships are required for successful partnerships. However, various hindrances exist which deter such partnerships and these have been enumerated as "diverging agendas, insufficient emphasis on relationships, and the indiscriminate usage of old sponsorship methods...[which can be combatted by moving from the 'sponsorship' model to the 'partnership' model as seen in the following chart] [Brynjolfson 2000:483]:

SPONSORSHIP	PARTNERSHIP
Money	Gifts
Control	Communion
Donation	Participation
Hierarchy	Equality
Imposed vision	Shared vision
Short term	Enduring
One-sided	Mutual
I -- You	We
Domination	Cooperation
Dependence	Interdependence
Parent -- Child	Peers
Suspicion	Trust
Unhappiness	Joy

According to Dr Robert L Ramseyer [1988:93], both those who send missionaries and those who receive them have scars of suspicion and distrust due to the underlying

question, “Do we really believe that we are, or can be, partners?” This results from a deep “consciousness of inequality” [Ramseyer 1988:94] which keeps both mission and church groups from seeing objectively how God has gifted each. The goal would be to move toward “an emphasis that rings true to passages such as Philippians 1:3-6” [Brynjolfson 2000:483], which reads:

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phlp 1:3-6, NKJV).

It is with the hope that the AEF/SIM and the AEC will move proactively, positively, and with Holy Spirit-led determination from the sponsorship model to the partnership model that the possible contributions are suggested below. Since this thesis deals very specifically with the relationship between the SAGM/AEF and the AEC, the suggested contributions and recommendations apply specifically to those two entities, yet perhaps they can also prove helpful or relevant to other mission agencies and younger churches in similar circumstances.

6.2 Possible contributions of the AEF/SIM

6.2.1 Sensitizing recruits and appointees

6.2.1.1 To other cultures

First of all, missionary recruits and appointees need to be sensitized to other people, particularly because “...too many of our evangelical mission agencies continue to operate along lines more appropriate to a bygone age of colonialism than the modern age of revolution and nation

building” [Scott 1980:231]. Issues will be prioritized differently from one culture to another. As David J Bosch [1991:297] has said, “the gospel always comes to people in cultural robes. There is no such thing as a ‘pure’ gospel, isolated from culture.” While westernized cultures may value independence and individuality, other cultures value interdependence and collective thinking. Challenges or problems, strengths or weaknesses, successes or failures, victories or defeats, vision and goals or lack of them, can only be considered “ours” in ministry if approached with a sensitivity to the local culture.

I have seen it happen....but that’s why I would honestly caution our missionaries....sometimes a missionary would divide and, you know, go their own way because vision is different. But who suffers? It is the church. Therefore, a person must be clear with his vision....[T]hen you must help those people to know that you have the vision. Then you must learn how to fit it in to make it apply in the church because you will be the missionary today, and then you go back. The church must continue [Gumede 1999].

When missionaries first arrive in a new culture, they need to study the culture of the people for themselves. “Some of the young missionaries have been destroyed by the old missionaries. They say, ‘Africans are like this or that.’ Try to make a discovery yourself” [Magewu 1999], otherwise there is great potential for misunderstandings that destroy ministry opportunities. “All missionaries are always very fast and Africans in our culture are always very deliberate. But this is where sometimes there is a misunderstanding” [Magewu 1999]. It is important

to remember "...when you go to Africans...you need to understand that when you tell them something, they want to take their time to think it through. It [does not mean]...they don't want it. But because you want it today, you conclude that they don't want it" [Gumede 1999].

Africans, generally, need time to mull over a matter before coming to a settled conclusion, but when the matter is settled, the missionary will know that the church leaders have taken ownership of the idea and will have their support. The wise missionary today is the one who has an idea but sells it to the people in such a way that they own it and they take it and it becomes their own. In such a case, the missionary functions as a facilitator to help the church move forward.

Additionally, new missionaries need to know the important fact that Africa is changing. "It is not the yesterday Africa!" [Gumede 1999].

Those recruiting and training new personnel need to be aware of such changes and address them accordingly. For instance, missionary staff going to South Africa must know how the framework of the past -- the colonial era, the apartheid era, western political influence -- has shaped the concepts, understanding, and self-esteem of the people with whom they will be working. They need to remember that "black people have been dehumanised and oppressed for more than 300 years. South Africa is indeed a wounded nation" [Maluleke 1997:324]. It will be important therefore to know how to approach the church in light of such issues.

Missionaries going to South Africa in particular need to be aware of the fact that South Africa is like no other country on the African continent and is “....always cited in Africa as the exception par excellence....For expatriates, city life in South Africa is almost like that of Europe or the United States....But because of years of apartheid and international isolation, many of the changes in the West since the 1960s bypassed South Africa” [Richmond & Gestrin 1998:204]. In fact, the 17 September 1995 issue of the *New York Times* reported that South Africa “remains for now much like 1950s America, for better or worse” [quoted in Richmond & Gestrin 1998:204], even though the country has experienced tremendous political upheaval and change. Missionaries going to South Africa in the past often faced a unique, and sometimes more stressful, situation in that they came from one culture (i.e., their own), lived and schooled their children in a second culture (i.e., the South African ‘European’ culture, expected and demanded by the Group Areas Act which kept the races separate for housing and education), and ministered in a third culture (i.e., African or Asian). For instance, shortly after the writer moved into a different home with his family, an Afrikaans neighbour called over from his back door in a negative and sarcastic tone, “What did I ever do to deserve an American living next to me?” On occasion, school classmates and friends of the writer’s children would ostracize and demean them for being friendly with the children of the

Asian or African church members or pastors with whom the writer worked. While the unique strains of such a situation will hopefully be diminishing over the coming years due to the country's changed policies, new missionary recruits going to South Africa need to be aware of the potential difficulties they will face because of such a history.

Regardless of the situation or culture into which a missionary moves for ministry, advanced cross-cultural preparation must be provided which will help the new recruit understand the history, language, religious and ethical systems, and other factors which affect the target group's sense of self-identity [Fisher 1998:37-53].

6.2.1.2 To their own attitudes and spiritual growth

Missionary personnel need to make every effort to mix with the people, to get to know them, and to develop a humble attitude which views the other person as more important than oneself (Phlp 2:3-4). "I can just say, 'Identify!' Identify with the people you are preaching to and [spending time] with. It is very, very important that you are working together in the field. It is very, very important that I have become a participant in the work of the missionary" [Ntongana 1999]. Knowing that the missionary comes with considerably more education, generally speaking, church members and leaders want to glean not only spiritual but practical information from the missionary. Everyday issues such as the ability to support yourself and organize personal finances are

extremely helpful. This will require a willingness to be open and vulnerable in a way that a practical Christian life can be modelled. In the past, some young missionaries have not been careful in their interactions with national church leaders. Consequently, they have been shut out from church circles because they have come in as experts and have shown no respect for the leaders of the people. Although they have much to offer, they are not able to minister because they have not understood that those to whom they go may not share their theological jargon, but they have a wealth of experience from which they can learn.

We are sitting down and we are talking and you are helping me with some things. And then you begin to call me a disciple. Maybe you are right, but I think you need to understand my experience. I am of the opinion that you might have more education, and you might have something to offer that could help me, but you need to understand that I am your senior. I know more changes than you do in the lifetime that I have lived. We can sit down and learn things together from the Word of God. You might have something that I don't know. But then to go around and say that "Rev Gumede is my disciple," you just blow it right there! [Gumede 1999].

It is essential that all missionary personnel, but especially "Potential leaders should have teachable, unselfish spirits willing to be accountable to authority" [Genheimer 1996:98]. As Prof J N J Kritzing [1992:321] points out, "Likewise those going to teach should be open enough to learn from their 'pupils'. Christian witnesses, who have often been accused of insensitivity and arrogance, should realise that genuine mission leads to a new understanding of the Christian gospel itself."

Additionally, the missionary's own personal spiritual growth should not be ignored. "Spiritual development is foundational" [Scott 1980:227]. This should perhaps go without saying, yet missionaries often forget that their primary, or original, call is to Christ and that their secondary, or special, calling is to fulfill their central purpose in life, not the other way around [Guinness 1998:44-54]. As anybody in ministry will know, it is a frequent danger for any well-meaning minister to be so engrossed in the demanding tasks and projects at hand that a continuing and personal spiritual growth is often forfeited. "If I understand my Bible right, when we come to the end, it won't be what you have done by way of strategies, what you have offered to the people. It will be how you have been before the eyes of the Lord" [Gumede 1999]. Role modelling is highly instructive and personal example is a powerful tool for discipleship. National church leaders and members are more encouraged and challenged by the missionary's open and obvious spiritual growth than by his preoccupation with the work, especially if it is to the extent that they say of the missionary, "This person has very little time for Bible study, very little time for prayer, and very little time for personal evangelism." In mission work it is very easy to emphasise the "doing" over the "being" when the urgency of the task continues to demand time and energy. When the practical part of missionary life ceases to correspond with the spiritual part of missionary life, it is not surprising

when the response from the national church becomes, “Away with the missionaries” [Gumede 1999], reflective of the call for moratorium during the mid-1900s. Conversely, when the missionary is open about the Lord’s work in his or her life, and the church people see it, they are willing to forgive the blunders of the missionary and work together.

6.2.2 Encouraging listening skills and open communication

Good listening skills are required of all missionaries. “Culturally, [open] communication is important” [Gumede 1999]. Transparency is vital, and communication with the churches needs to take place regularly regarding matters of mutual interest in order to build a healthy and trusting relationship between the Mission and the Church.

For example, the role of the field director should be clarified. What exactly are the responsibilities of the position? What areas make up the ‘field’ he directs?

Another matter to discuss openly is the use and location of the Communication Centre (or simply ‘ComCen,’ presently located in Roodepoort). Is its location strategic for the churches it is purported to serve? What are the possibilities of the AEC using office space in the ComCen? “When missionaries disappear, then what? What is the future of the ComCentre?” [Magubane 1999a].

While a lot of the emphasis these days is to reach the unreached, it should not be to the exclusion of the needs of the existing churches. Encouragement and teaching are still needed. As much as reaching into new areas is important, if that’s all the Mission does, it contributes to a crippled witness in the existing

church. “I think that if AEF or SIM would want to do that [i.e., to strengthen the existing church as much as wanting to start something new], it would need to find God’s people and be the one agent that seeks to break down the walls of division” [Bodibe 1999a].

With regards to the overall ministries of the Church and the Mission, there must be channels for feedback between the two so that necessary questions can be asked and answered. This will help both to remain on the cutting edge rather than staying in a rut or becoming stagnant.

6.2.3 Teaching sound ecclesiology

New missionaries arriving in South Africa need to come with a sound understanding of the purposes and functions of the body of Christ, and how they can best fit in. Correct attitude is essential. Missionaries must bear in mind that they are guests in the country and are there to help the Church succeed and be well established. Therefore, the missionary must be trained

....to come in and fit in as a part of the church. Don’t come in as an expert, but come in as a part of it. Then you will be able to work with it. When it comes down to it, missionaries come in with very good ideas but then they can’t do it outside the church. They must come into the church. Then when he comes into the church, he comes in as an expert....I am talking about goal ownership of the church. Say you’ve got something that is good. Take it to the church. Let the church own it, run with it [Gumede 1999].

Regardless of what “specialty” the missionary has been trained for, it must always be fully understood within the context of what characterizes the church.

Sound ecclesiology is not just taught by systematic teaching but by role modelling.

In the past, because the needs were so many and so demanding and workers so few, missionary personnel often fell into the 'superintendent' role becoming basically itinerant in their roles as pastors and church workers. Thus

he goes from church to church administering the church communion, baptizing the people....but the thing is that it continues today....Their teaching suffers....It is not good you know, just running and having evangelism campaigns here and there. You will not build a church that way....False teachers have built their ministries using the converts of the mission who have had very little ground work in knowing what is really the base of the Bible. They've got very little knowledge. They know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. They have been saved, that they understand. Then they have been baptized, but then shallow teaching....Not only the Africa Evangelical Church but the churches at large. I went with the pastors inside Swaziland and outside Swaziland and this is where they feel they are weak. They need to be trained. [Gumede 1999].

6.2.4 Studying the critical issues

Missionaries need not only to keep themselves alert to the conscious and subconscious tendencies to develop a complicity to racism, various forms of injustice, and loss of human rights -- perhaps more in the interests of self-preservation than anything else -- but they also need to have a clear and firm view of Scripture's teaching on such critical issues. "That many Third World churches are uninvolved in the hurly-burly of life indicates that many Western missionary societies are agents of churches in Europe and North America that understand discipleship and disciple making in less than fully biblical terms" [Scott 1980:227]. Most, if not all, AEF missionaries originate from theologically conservative backgrounds and training. The tendency, therefore, has been to emphasise the *spiritual* concerns of the churches over, and even to the exclusion of, any *social* or

political concerns. If they were to consider the socio-political concerns at all, it was more likely to be thought the interest of the liberal rather than the conservative theologian. It was thought to be something that concerned the *ecumenical* rather than the *evangelical* missionary. Embarrassingly, this only serves to prove Professor Bosch's [1991:519] statement true that "Throughout most of the church's history its empirical state has been deplorable. This was already true of Jesus' first circle of disciples and has not really changed since. We may have been fairly good at orthodoxy, at 'faith', but we have been poor in respect of orthopraxis, of love." As stated previously, the AEF's policies stated that "Their mission is spiritual, not political, since they have been commissioned as 'ambassadors of Christ' to reconcile people to God" [AEF 1982:34], and "All missionaries shall, except for exercising voting rights, refrain from taking an active part in politics on the Field....Their commission and responsibility is to preach the Gospel and to build up the Church" [AEF 1988:29].

Furthermore, having come from the more wealthy westernized countries, the theological and ministry training they received rarely included wrestling with the issues faced by countries such as South Africa. The "...interpretation of the Bible in the West focuses on problems of loneliness and meaninglessness....because these are problems experienced by people of Western industrial societies. They are not commonly the problems of an African villager or a Latin American slumdweller. Their problems are problems of injustice" [Scott 1980:240]. Usually it was only after missionaries arrived in South Africa that they come face-to-face with such

issues, and by the time they began to notice the issues, they had already been ‘conditioned’ by the political system or “destroyed by the old[er] missionaries” [Magewu 1999]. This fact is offered as a reason for AEF missionary insensitivity, not as an excuse for it. Rev R Genheimer [1999] said, “I just want to say this, that I am probably far more sensitive now socially. I have found more of a social conscience than I had when I began as a missionary, and I think it has taken all of the experiences in South Africa to help in that....When you first get to the field, you don’t think through any of these issues. You [just] want to go out and do a job for the Lord.” Yet

A fresh reading of Scripture will reinforce our convictions that God is intensely concerned about the welfare of the poor; that he sides consistently with the poor against their oppressors; that the pervasive injustice of the ‘the world’ toward the poor is rooted not only in the individual but also in institutions and systems, the present world order; that the Kingdom of God, the new world order, is designed especially with the poor in view; that the grace of God is manifest in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ who, though himself rich, became poor; and that the gospel is meant to be preached particularly to the poor. These convictions will lead inevitably to a new *commitment* [author’s italics] to the poor in the context of a fresh act of dedication to the Lord and his Kingdom. ‘I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship’ (Romans 12:1). A commitment of this kind is primarily a matter of the mind and will: ‘Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect’ (Romans 12:2). This world would soon be a different place if we Christians were to make clear-cut commitments of non-conformity to our societies insofar as they are unjust and oppressive and, by the same token, commit ourselves unreservedly to the service of the poor. The earth’s disinherited would see the signs as well as hear the news of God’s love and the hope of this Kingdom [Scott 1980:242-243].

The Rustenburg Declaration [1990:4.1.2] states that

After decades of oppression, the removal of discriminatory laws will have to be accompanied by affirmative acts of restitution in the field of health care, psychological healing, education, housing, employment, economic infrastructure, and especially land ownership. For many years, greed has led to the taking of land from the poor and weak. Both church and state must address the issue of restoring land to dispossessed people.

A seminar offered by the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa (EFSA) proposes that God will bless any nation which has four characteristics:

KINDNESS, JUSTICE and RIGHTEOUSNESS in HUMILITY (not boasting)...Jeremiah spoke to the national leaders of his day -- to the politicians, who were boasting about their wisdom, military might and strong economy. 600 years later the Lord Jesus spoke to the national leaders of his day -- to the religious leaders, who were boasting about their religious orthodoxy and practice. He said:

Woe to you ... hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices (a religious duty), but you have neglected the more important matters of the law: **JUSTICE, MERCY and FAITHFULNESS**. You should have practised the latter without neglecting the former.

The message is the same: God wants ALL leaders, all people, to prioritise **KINDNESS (Mercy), JUSTICE and RIGHTEOUSNESS (Faithfulness/integrity)**. These principles are more important than political wisdom, strong security forces, a rich economy or religious exercises [Wetmore [s a]:4].

Christians cannot afford to simply follow the trend in order to be politically correct (and thus support the status quo), which seemed to be the tendency of most evangelical groups in South Africa. "That's why they got together at Rustenburg....and said, 'We're sorry. We were quiet, and we apologize. We contributed rather than helping to solve things.' [Genheimer 1999]. Evangelicals need to be active and creative in their research, teaching, and implementation of approaches that work, rather than be passive bystanders. Their longtime *reactive* disposition must be exchanged for a *proactive* one! Biblical perspectives need to

be studied with respect to justice, money, the poor, positions, and job reservations being convinced that “all these things are a part of discipling” [Wetmore⁴ 1999].

Missionaries and/or mission agencies need to develop innovative policies to proactively address the issues. In the past, the AEF was content to allow other groups to deal with those issues.

I’m sure the South African Council of Churches had that as its primary agenda. And of course at Fort Hare, that’s what they were dealing with, and at Fed[eral] Sem[inary] I’m sure that’s what they dealt with. They put those on their agenda.... Well, we wanted the dichotomy, you see, and we said, “No, that’s for them. We’ll just tell them how to believe and be saved and grow and be disciples, and we’ll just shut our mouths on all the rest of it.” And I think we did a disservice [Genheimer 1999].

According to Waldron Scott [1980:224], “We simply cannot afford to develop a profile of a disciple which does not understand that ‘continuing in the Word’ and ‘applying the Word’ also apply to the great issues of our time.” A strong and clear understanding of the theological bases for being involved with the critical issues then needs to translate into practice. Christians need to be involved in socio-political issues by studying and knowing, practising, and “teaching the principles of justice revealed in Scripture” [EFSA [s a]:7].

6.2.5 Teaching the critical issues

While all missionaries must be exposed to the critical issues before they depart for their fields of service, particular missionaries, who have the interest and ability, should undertake extensive, in-depth studies on such issues pertinent to the

⁴ A suggested and recommended resource for teaching biblically-driven principles for being involved in helping the poor, doing development work, etc., is Rev Hugh Wetmore, P O Box 22333, 3208 Mayor’s Walk, South Africa.

countries and circumstances in which they serve, and teach the principles they have discovered to both missionary and national staff. A sound theological basis needs to be established for involvement in development work, helping the poor, defining sound economical principles, offering employment and career development, educational concerns, and in addressing matters related to abortion, homosexuality, the death penalty, and family issues.

Principles need to be taught to the Church [people] so that they can handle these things. In doing so, you don't overtly as a missionary take sides but you teach them the principles that will enable them to take sides....And obviously the missionary will be laying down principles that will have tremendous economic and political consequences. The missionary must be aware of that. And if the missionary is expelled from the country because of that, he can say before God, 'Well, I wasn't teaching them Renamo versus Frelimo. I was teaching them principles of the Scriptures as part of discipling. And I've been kicked out because I'm a Christian not because I'm a politician' [Wetmore 1999].

6.2.6 Understanding leadership

Missionaries going to the field need to understand the concept of servant-leadership. While many depart their homeland for the field considering themselves leaders, they also need to know what it means to serve. "Values are more important than image, and character is more vital than personality. Leaders are servants and not lords" [Genheimer 1996:102]. Any attitudes of superiority will need to be recognized and addressed.

Since going to the mission field means living among and working with different cultures, training regarding the management of diversity, leadership qualities, leadership styles of the various national and expatriate church leaders, leadership

strategies, and being able to identify and encourage potential leaders without condescension or paternalism would be appropriate. Exposure to “material on counselling and pastoral care, [and] subjects such as interpersonal relations and conflict resolution” [Genheimer 1996:101], would also be helpful.

Being immersed in the context to which they will be ministering is essential, as well as to understand the demographics of the various locations in which they will find themselves. Issues related to crafting a vision for ministry need to be approached in light of the different cultures into which the missionary will travel. A “vision that is crafted in a suburban church in America will never fit” [Molebatsi 1999] in South Africa. Scriptures do not call South Africans to conduct ministries and worship in the same manner as the North Americans any more than the Gentiles were compelled to live like Jews (Gl 2:11-21). There is a cry for open communication about, and transparent modelling of, the various leadership styles, which also need to be examined and evaluated in light of leadership principles given in sacred Scripture.

6.2.7 Developing stronger partnership

It is imperative that a strong sense of partnership be pursued between the national and the expatriate -- a sense in which there is a *mutual* pulling together, a learning from each other, rather than a competitiveness that gives the idea of either superiority or inferiority on the part of either side. “We need to come together and work hand in hand as friends. Not to say, ‘You do this for me,’ but teach me how to do it so that we can work together hand in hand....We need each other when we

work for the Lord. Regardless of colour, we need each other” [Nkambule 1999]. The attitude that the apostle Paul had towards Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25 when he referred to him as “my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier” says “we are inextricably intertwined....It means I eat out of your plate and you eat out of my plate.” [Molebatsi 1999]. Such a perspective teaches that the missionary and the national are indeed in the *same* family, that they work *with* each other *as equals*, and they are *committed to fighting honourably alongside* each other maintaining a *local accountability* toward each other. “The ideal relationship is one in which the national church and the foreign mission work together in a loving, trusting, and interdependent relationship, each fulfilling complementary functions, neither dominating the other” [Plueddemann 1999:158].

The reader will recall from chapter four [4.3] that even though the Church has been the one consistently reaching out to the Mission for closer ties, the Mission has been the one which has consistently hesitated. Even up until today no working agreement exists between the AEC and the AEF, as it does with the Evangelical Church in South Africa (ECSA), the Indian branch of AEF’s work (Appendix B). Added to this is the fact that the Mission never made use of capable African apprentices or deputies in the past within AEF circles to learn the procedures and policies governing the work. “For many years, to me, the Mission should have claimed the role of doing things behind the curtain, where someone who, shall I say, was blacker could do it and give him all the know-how of the thing” [Zondo 1999]. Sadly, however, “Today, they [i.e., the missionaries] have just vanished

into thin air. We are grappling with this situation, and we don't know how to get those pieces together....Everybody is gone now and the Church has to restructure itself' [Magubane 1999a].

In the process a vacuum was created by something that should have been the foundation. When we were left -- the missionaries were gone -- how much training did we have administratively? There are a few of us who are administratively adept, but we are still feeling that we don't really know. There's too much to do....We [are] overwhelmed by the needs, openings, and the like [Gumede 1999].

On the other hand,

The AEC has been obviously meeting regularly, organizationally, at various levels all the way to the top. I do not recall situations in which the organization at any level said, 'We have somebody that we would like for you to train.'....And in defence of the Church, it would have been nice if they'd said that, but maybe that's not their position....Maybe that was our position and our responsibility because we were supposed to be helping the Church to maturity. The Church was not supposed to be helping us become mature [Morgan 1999].

Combined with the above-mentioned factors is the fact that now the AEF has merged with SIM. There is still no agreement, probably even further distancing, and still no Africans either in South African regional offices or the American international office. Yet the greater the "....African involvement there is in the Mission, the better it will be. From the standpoint of understanding the African point of view, we won't make so many obvious mistakes as we would inevitably make without African input. [Additionally,] in regard to public perception of us as members of the new South Africa, as opposed to apartheid or White" [Morgan 1999], the Mission would benefit greatly by capable African involvement.

Why can't we say, 'Alright, we do have the Mission headquarters [in the

USA] but because we are working with the people in Africa, let us have a post or a position where we will have a capable African who understands the cross-cultural [differences].’ You might say, ‘Well, I have worked in Africa or I was born in Africa,’ and so on. But, brother, you will never be like brother Gumede speaking to you now, because culturally there are some things that you cannot claim....[things which are] interred into my bones. Why don’t you have some people like that within your ministry headquarters?....I am just thinking that something like that would be very helpful to the Mission [Gumede 1999].

There is a feeling within AEC circles that Americans work in subtle ways to operate a system primarily for their own benefit. This was reinforced by the fact that the AEF merged with the SIM in October 1998 (see footnote at the beginning of this chapter) with an international office located in the USA far beyond the reaches of the national church. Notices appeared in Mission publications that SIM’s work had been greatly expanded and the impression among AEC members was that SIM’s constituents were suitably impressed with the Mission’s ‘progress’ but nobody really knew what was happening within the AEC churches. It was perceived by some Church leaders that the Mission had presented successes in the work as magnificent strides in its own strategies and a gratifying fulfilment of its own goals without any reference to the efforts of the AEC.

There are possible reasons, however, as to why individual AEC pastors believe the Mission has worked for its own benefit. In the natural progression of things, first of all, the Mission had founded the AEC and had begun to work with it. Church policies began to change throughout post-colonial Africa as the relationships between the founding mission agencies and their daughter churches moved from those of parent-to-child to those of adult-to-adult. In countries like Zambia and

Malawi, the AEF integrated with their churches, and it was assumed the same would happen in South Africa.

They eventually felt that there was going to be an international council, which was basically a total fusion of AEF and its national churches, so they would be policy-making people along with us in the Mission. But there came to be a time in which AEF recognized that there is a basic...identity which we must maintain. We can never fuse....They thought, you see, the logical next step was we will merge, we will combine, we will fuse. And suddenly AEF took a step back and said, 'That's not the logical conclusion. The logical conclusion is that we will maintain our identity as a Mission.' And that was all changed in 1993. And some people were unhappy with it. Now, as a result of that, I think, they saw us then move away towards an SIM thing [Genheimer 1999].

Secondly, communication breakdown occurred among the AEC churches. While the denomination's leadership was well aware of the coming merger, and were involved in the merger talks, apparently not enough information filtered down to other church leaders. Consequently, it was believed that the Mission had failed the Church.

I get the AEF newsletter and knew when the discussions between SIM and AEF were beginning. Then comes the Field Director to the Church conference to say, 'The Mission is talking to SIM. We are still at discussion stage. We will let you know.' A year goes past. The next conference, the thing is done. 'We finished the business with SIM. Now we are no longer called AEF, we are now called Society for International Ministries. We can now pull our resources together and we will get things done more effectively now that we are a bigger, stronger family with SIM.' And we were to say 'Amen!' to that [Bodibe 1999a].

While some, perhaps, are still struggling with the merger, "My feeling of the SIM men I have met and know in this whole thing is that they are as church-conscience, as church-oriented as we would ever have been....In fact, personally I see AEC only gaining from this and not losing" [Genheimer 1999].

A suggested resolution to the communication breakdown could be inferred from a quote in “the Report of Commission I of the World Missionary Conference” by J Du Plessis [1911:404-405] when he writes,

In the almost unanimous judgment of our missionary correspondents the number of European missionaries in the field would be adequate for the work, if only they were properly distributed, *and were properly seconded by efficient native workers* [italics mine].

Although it could be argued that Du Plessis was addressing an entirely different issue, the principle nevertheless applies that a wise and careful development of the African church by foreign missionaries would necessitate a close partnership calling for capable African church leadership in essential Mission offices or departments. For instance, a printer could have been trained long ago to handle the Mission press.

In thinking of developing a closer partnership, however, some important cautions need to be kept in mind.

We must point out...that an unfortunate spirit of expatriate missionary imperialism often infuses alliances and partnerships between Western entities and their Two-Thirds World counterparts. When the outsider brings finances and other resources to the table, it is too easy for the one who pays the piper to call the tune. In other words, the outsider drives the program....Without a spirit of *mutual submission and interdependency* [italics mine], collaboration will die.

At this exciting stage of history, Western mission agencies no longer can consider themselves to be in the ‘driver’s seat.’ In fact, quite the opposite is true....[as] the infant has become an adult and is demanding a ‘Paul-Barnabas’ relationship rather than a ‘Paul-Timothy’ relationship based on one being subordinate to the other.

Today those who come from the outside must come alongside their counterparts with a desire to facilitate and enable all that those onsite are trying to accomplish, to see what ‘value’ can be added from their presence. They must be sensitive, in other words, both to what God is already doing

there and to the capabilities God has raised up in that place. The West is in a wonderful position to provide leadership development and specialized skills. But these must be offered with no strings attached and *an authentic affirmation that we are equal partners* [italics mine] with no desire to control or influence [Engel and Dyrness 2000:96-97].

It is in this spirit of cooperation and unity across the 'dividing walls' that the power of the gospel can be clearly seen. As long as the Mission is controlled by any fear of failure, change, differences, or hard work, the power of the gospel in breaking down such divisions will not be demonstrated as clearly or as persuasively as it could be. Undoubtedly, courage is needed. Courage does not imply the absence of fear but rather the management of the fear. God gives us stewardship of the ministry, not ownership of it, and as long as the Mission continues to cling to its own 'ground,' it will be paralysed into inaction or, perhaps worse, negative action. It is significant that "the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Ac 11:26, NKJV), a church which was distinctly multi-cultural in both its membership and leadership.

From its inception as an autonomous Church body, the AEC refused to organize itself according to the "separate development" policies of the government and established a board with representatives from the three major language groups [Huntingford [s a]:72]. Surely, the Mission could make the same effort by moving assertively and positively forward to complete a mutually agreed upon working agreement that would include capable Church personnel as mutually equal partners and interdependent co-labourers in SIM departments. Granted, the effort necessary for such a change will require adjustment calling for an equal give-and-

take from both sides. While neither the Church nor the Mission is perfect, both have much to offer the other. While both have much to teach, both have much to learn. After all, as noted previously, the AEF/SIM General Director himself believes that “The ideal relationship is one in which the national church and the foreign mission work together in a loving, trusting, and interdependent relationship, each fulfilling complementary functions, neither dominating the other” [Plueddemann 1999:158].

The importance of this was restated again recently at the Iguassu Missiological Consultation convened by the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission in Brazil in October 1999. “The church in Africa needs to work shoulder to shoulder with the church in North America, in Europe, in Asia, and in other parts of the world. No single one of us -- regardless of how skilled, gifted, experienced, or rich we may be -- can finish the task of world evangelization alone....The size of the task before us demands cooperation” [Adeyemo 2000:268].

6.2.8 Facilitating confession and reconciliation

Fifteen years ago, while commenting on his government’s legislation which kept the various racial groups isolated from one another, Rev M Rajuili [in Kopp 1986:82] stated

The strange thing is that we evangelicals have conveniently accepted to stay in those linguistic, ethnic, racial, and social pigeonholes. We have developed stereotypes, which make any meaningful fellowship difficult, if not impossible.

Occasionally, we wander out of our boxes, attend special mixed conferences and camps where everyone tries his best to be polite. We then roundly congratulate ourselves that we are ‘one in the Spirit.’ It should be

a matter of deep concern that we are making little progress toward finding one another under normal circumstances in our homes or local churches.

In the years since the changes in government, however, the situation is no better.

It would be reasonable, therefore, to conclude that steps toward reconciliation should now take place between various mission and church groups. While some have done just that, others have not. Neither the Mission nor the Church has ever called a meeting for the sole purpose of discussing the past and looking at the options regarding the matter of reconciliation. “I think the reason is they [i.e., AEF] don’t see the need to do that” [Bodibe 1999a].

Missionaries should perhaps face up to the fact that they could have behaved differently. In many cases missionaries were brainwashed by the apartheid thinking, perhaps more subconsciously than consciously, and that is the kind of thing that needs to be confessed. Naturally, any public, corporate apology needs to be accompanied by a life that matches it. However, there are varying opinions as to how that should be done, or whether it should be done at all.

The rural African has more appreciation for the missionary than the urban African. And the urban African, and this is an extreme generalization, *tends* [italics mine] to be more aware, especially politically aware, better educated, and more critical with more questions. It is out of that kind of orientation that I would expect, if there is one to come, a feeling of ‘we deserve an apology’ than from the rural side [Morgan 1999].

Rev C Gumede [1999] responded, “Should there be confession? No. Rather, I would leave it.” Some of the missionaries, he said, who should perhaps make public confession cannot do so since “they are with the Lord already and I don’t think they can come back!” Rev Gumede prefers to say to the church people,

“Forgive and forget. Those people were bound by their policy.” Another stated, “Let’s bury the hatchet. Open a new package. I’ll never go on and on blaming the Mission. It is a waste of time. What are we doing *now* [italics mine]?” [Magubane 1999a]. A third leader expressed, “I think the Church would rather we not go back, because if we go back to say ‘I did wrong,’ [we’ll ask] ‘What is it that you did wrong?’ [Rather, when]...it comes up, then [we can say], ‘We are sorry that it happened. Let’s find the solution.’ I think looking back can be very, very hurtful and can be time consuming for no good reason” [Xaba 1999]. Rev Hugh Wetmore [1999] believed that “if the reality of the past is sufficiently clear and convicting to the leadership in the Mission, then to do it is OK.” For one, at least, the need for reconciliation would be a positive sign. “If there were mistakes that the Mission did, I’m thankful for that, because it shows they were doing something. And the mistakes the Church did, I am thankful for that, because if we don’t do anything, we don’t make mistakes, and we have got to grow....We must just take the spade and shovel and cement....just build and go on” [Zondo 1999]. Reconciliation for one pastor was a personal process that began years ago. “The moment I accepted Christ, he showed me that they are the people who have oppressed, but I have to forgive them...I have to pray for them, I have to love them, though their deeds are wrong” [Mavimbela 1999].

To make a public, corporate apology may or may not be valuable for reconciliation. Since “there is in the African mindset a corporate identity that would involve the present people with the past generation” [Wetmore 1999], it is

readily understood that a person who himself may not have been around during the difficult days and would not have been involved in the prejudicial systems, nevertheless, by association could be considered as having been involved simply by default. The path of wisdom, therefore, would require any apology to be handled with genuineness, care, very prayerfully, and with the right motivation.

As Dr T S Maluleke [1997b:329] has pointed out, “media hype and immense international interest” are not sufficient grounds for bringing genuine reconciliation. In fact, with all the media coverage of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) proceedings in the country, the churches have generally been skeptical, apathetic, and silent when it comes to the matter of reconciliation. While there are various explanations for such responses [Maluleke 1997b:332-334], there is a wide acceptance that healing and unity are needed. However, not only do national, church, and personal agendas and motivations affect the giving of confessions but they also affect the hearing of them. For instance, Rev Hugh Wetmore [1999], then the general secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa, reported that “At Rustenburg, the big 1990 church conference, the largest ecumenical gathering in the country, I felt I should do this [i.e., give a public and corporate confession] on behalf of the evangelical movement. So I did it and it seemed like nobody noticed it....I was a little disappointed that I had a measure of courage to take a stand like this and nobody noticed it.” However, at the same conference, “no event captured the spirit of the conference like the confession of Willie Jonker -- confessing his sin and that of his

Afrikaner nation for apartheid -- as well as Bishop Tutu's positive response to it" [Maluleke 1997a:72]. While various documents and conferences called on all Christians to wake up from their lethargy and stand against the apartheid heresy, it was primarily the Afrikaans churches which were held responsible for the apartheid policies, and thus their confessions were heard more clearly and facilitated a deeper healing. If done correctly, the way ahead would be strengthened for healthy relationships within and between the church denominations. Naturally, such an apology would require a matching lifestyle, which will be a particular challenge in the midst of the current economic quandaries.

A natural and expected outcome of any needed reconciliation between the Mission and the Church would be that the AEF would also pursue a reconciliation with the group of churches belonging to the denomination known as the Ebenezer Evangelical Church (EEC), and then encourage and motivate the AEC to do the same. The Ebenezer churches, at one time, were part and parcel of the AEC but were ostracized by the AEC for their different theological, political, and church governance views. Though initial attempts were made by the EEC leadership to reconcile, up to the present day it has never occurred even though the Ebenezer churches have never officially resigned from the AEC. For such a reconciliation to happen, it will take AEF and/or AEC leadership to approach EEC and say, "Bazalwane, there's a wound that has never been healed. Come on. Let us tend to that now" [speaker unidentified due to confidentiality]. Such a move can only mean higher levels of ministry effectiveness for each group.

6.2.9 Pioneering new and creative approaches to economics

Whereas politics was the key issue previously, economics seems to be the essential debate now. Both fall into racial categories, and the missionaries would do well to creatively pioneer new approaches in this area. “Unemployment is a major problem in the country. What is the Church doing about it?” [Wetmore 1999].

For instance,

Training is the key for a lot of people who are untrained and have had difficulty with education. If we as a Mission can contribute to training, and that can take a variety of forms, not simply enlarging the library at UBI, or making UBI bigger and better...but there are other types of training that will help the individual break out of the poverty cycle. Break the poverty cycle by training people in small business. By small business I don't mean setting up a miniature General Motors to produce cars, but taking those used tires from General Motors cars and knowing how to cut them into strips and putting a strap across so that sandals can be made and sold. The typical cycle, for instance, is “I don't have much money, so I can't send my kids to school. I can't pay for school fees. And because my kids grow up uneducated, they do not get good jobs. They do not have money to send their kids to school.” Somehow there must be some way to break through that, and if people can be trained in small business, that would be one way of helping people who are in need to get out of that cycle. Secondly, it should contribute to church finance as these people have a larger and larger income, a more disposable income. So AEF might consider...training people to train others in the Third World. That's one thing we could do here which I think we haven't done at all. Training is so important in South Africa [Morgan 1999].

Rev Albert Xaba [1999] agrees. “So many people that are unemployed in some of our Church situations could be trained in skills like agriculture or raising chickens on a small scale. That's one of the areas that missionaries with [such] skills could help a lot and still have a spiritual ministry in the area.” Care certainly has to be taken that specific structures are not established which “makes the missionary an

employer and the Indian or African Christian an employee...[thus destroying] awareness of the fact that they are, first and foremost, sisters and brothers to each other” [Bosch 1991:295]. AEF/SIM needs to be careful how they will now work with the churches economically, avoiding the extreme whereby the Mission simply gives financial handouts to the Church on the one hand, and avoiding the extreme on the other hand where the economic disparity between the missionary living in Durban and the pastor living in Kwa Mashu is so great that the observer will conclude, “If that’s Christianity, I don’t want it. It is suspicious.”

“Because of the huge inequalities of power between the Western colonising powers and their African colonies, a donor/recipient mentality took root” and Professor Saayman [1996:60] suggests that a radical change in thinking and practice needs to take place. “Western Christians have to become able to confess their complicity in the massive inequalities which characterise our world today, admit their own weakness, spiritual poverty and need of support from African Christians; and African Christians have to refuse to be seen as perpetual beggars and have to accept their own responsibility in the search for an adequate missionary ecclesiology.” For true interdependence and mutuality to take place there has to be a resource-sharing on behalf of both the Mission and the Church. The AEC does not lack resources, but it simply is not giving, sharing, and using them. While it is clear that some purposeful teaching must be done on this issue, it is also clear that “the line of progression from church to mission to church has mostly been regarded as a straight line” [Saayman 1996:62] by the Mission instead

of like a boomerang which “can be thrown in various ways, but the secret is to get it to return always to its point of launch” [Saayman 1996:63]. The ‘senders’ as well as the ‘receivers’ need to be changed, and that can only happen if the *missio Dei* is considered a two-way communication and interaction between each.

Very few churches seem to be doing anything about this in light of the country’s unemployment rate. One example, however, is a church in Pietermaritzburg known as Oak Fellowship. It started a worship service positively linked to a carwash franchise, which the church started, so that it could offer employment.

“When people involved in prostitution get saved, what do they do? They have no job. The only way they can have a roof over their heads is to sell their bodies. So you can’t tell them, ‘Stop prostitution!’ without giving them some alternative to earn a living” [Wetmore 1999]. This kind of practical approach has a tremendous influence in the community.

6.2.10 Encouraging missions endeavours

Missions is another topic which has rarely been addressed but so important to the life and purpose of the church. An African Bible School student commented that “missionaries never left the burden with us to become missionaries” [Ntongana 1999]. A South African Asian pastor said to the author, “I do not know where we would be today if it were not for people like you, but there is one thing you never taught us. You never taught us to be missionaries. You are missionaries, but you never taught us to be missionaries” [Peter 1985-1986]. Even though the pastor was overlooking the fact that missions conferences had been started in the Asian

churches in the mid-1970s, these are nevertheless serious indictments that need to be corrected.

By and large, the African church has failed to grasp the mission vision and burden of Western missionaries. This is our greatest puzzle, and it is the greatest indictment of mission work in Africa. How could a missionary not transfer his vision and burden of mission to Africans? And how could Africans not catch the vision and burden of mission from the missionary who brought them the gospel of Christ? The most serious weakness of the African church lies in this area. This aspect needs to be re-introduced to the African church today [Turaki 2000:278].

An AEC pastor emphasized that the Mission and the Church “must work jointly in venture so as to produce churches that are sending-out churches” [Magubane 1999a]. SIM’s General Director concurs.

The Gospel will be preached in all the world with much more power and credibility if it can be preached by Bolivians together with Australians and Nigerians. It is difficult for a Muslim to say that Christianity is a Western religion when he is hearing the Gospel from a team made up of missionaries from Japan, Canada, and Ethiopia. An ideal is for Christians from any country to be able to share the Gospel together in any other country [Plueddemann 1999:160].

Large churches and huge numbers must not be the goal, but as the churches get large they must split and move to other areas, always expanding to establish the church throughout the South African provinces. In each and every church, the ‘great commission’ to disciple the nations (Mt 28:18-20) must be taught from the very beginning so that the vision to reach beyond their own borders with the gospel is constantly before them. It is of particular significance that even God the Father said to God the Son that his vision would be too small if he were to think in terms of reaching only his own people.

And now the LORD says, who formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel is gathered to Him (for I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and My God shall be My strength), Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' (Is 49:5-6, NKJV).

6.3 Possible contributions of the AEC

There are a few general matters which the AEC would do well to address. The reader is referred back to the end of chapter four. Issues such as job descriptions for the Board members, chairperson qualifications, and ordination qualifications and procedures are worth the extra time to clarify and record in official files to help strengthen the overall ministry goals of the Church. Specifically in the matter of ordination, according to Klaus Fiedler [1994:330-336], generally it has been granted late in churches associated with the faith mission movement. This has been due to a number of factors, among them the avoidance of competition or perceived levels or stratifications in ministry. The AEC would do well to evaluate whether or not their delay in ordaining fully trained leaders is based on solid principles or on feelings of distrust, threat, or competition.

From the end of chapter five the writer recommends that the AEC move toward appointing a full-time, fully-supported President or Bishop. The number of churches, districts, and provinces represented by the AEC warrant such an appointment and make the financing of such an appointment possible. Clearly, the individual under such appointment without other responsibilities would be considerably more effective in the position. In the final analysis, the churches would have the increased benefit of having enhanced pastoral care and oversight for the workers, as well as increased communication

among the church districts.

A few other matters, which follow, bear more detailed comment.

6.3.1 Decolonizing the mind

“The racism and economic exploitation which were an integral part of the process of colonialism...resulted in a very destructive self-image being imposed on Black people. This self-image has resulted in an impotent passivity in the face of misery and oppression. It also makes it impossible for Black South Africans to regard themselves as *subjects* of their own history and not merely as *objects* [Saayman 1993:101, author’s italics].

The Rustenburg Declaration [1990:2.7] addressed the issue further.

Those of us who are the victims of apartheid acknowledge our own contribution to the failure of the Church. While colonialism and oppression have damaged our self-esteem and eroded the fibres of “ubuntu” (humanness) which held our communities together, we acknowledge that many of us have responded with timidity and fear, failing to challenge our oppression. Instead we have acquiesced in it and accepted an inferior status. Some of us have become willing instruments of the repressive state machinery. Others have reacted to oppression with a desire for revenge. Many of us who have achieved privilege have exploited others. An indifference to suffering has crept into our communities, often leading to ostracism of those who have stood courageously for justice and truth. Some of us have failed to be instruments of peace in a situation of growing intolerance of ideological differences. Others of us have also neglected our calling to contribute to the theological renewal of the Church.

Years of being conditioned with a low self-esteem will not change overnight and will take time and effort to reverse. “Some years back, before 1994, we were just boys in our land. The men were the Whites...But we have to change our attitude” [Mavimbela 1999]. There is a basic ‘slave-mentality’ which has to be rooted out

[Magubane 1999a], both personally and in the Church, if a healthy growth and mindset are to take root. People, particularly leaders, should be fearful no longer, but need to step forward in an assertive manner, expressing new visions, and pushing forward to reach renewed goals.

Teaching is required on self-image, self-identity, life skills, and discovering one's potentials or abilities. The AEC needs to come to grips with the understanding that the biblical way of teaching has nothing to do with ethnicity, or colour, or political persuasion. Incorrect perspectives need to be confessed and there must be a return to biblical understandings. However, the outcomes need to be looked at as long term issues rather than a short term issues.

6.3.2 Resisting the spirit of polarization among the churches

In May 2000, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA) sponsored the Mission Africa conference in Grand Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa. "In his opening address, [Tokunboh] Adeyemo [general secretary of AEA], listed several obstacles facing the churches today: carnality, jealousy, rivalry, strife, pride, conflicting viewpoints on basics, and discrimination between tribes, social strata, and gender" [Fuller 2000:7].

Unfortunately, the AEC is not exempt and noticeable discriminations exist among the churches. These are due to several factors. Ethnic prejudices are one cause. Occasionally, for example, Church members have complained that they "are dominated by the Zulus and the Swazis" [Magewu 1999].

Geographical prejudices also lead to misunderstandings as the needs, perspectives,

orientation, and values differ between the provinces as well as between the urban and rural churches. "The provinces never run parallel. There's always friction" [Magubane 1999b]. The 'ragged rural mentality which gives blind allegiance to missionaries,' as opposed to the 'maverick urban mentality, which has nothing to do with missionaries' are considered two general categorizations of AEC pastors. Over the past years, however, the leaders have attempted "to accommodate everybody whose evangelical stand is correct and even though they may disagree - - and some may be for the ANC and some may be for Inkhata, that's OK -- in Jesus Christ we are one, and we must not let either the ethnic or the political or the trade union issues divide us. The aim of the board was not to let those things divide" [Genheimer 1999]. Clear testimony was given that "resisting that polarization would be people the size of Magewu, Xaba, Prince Ntambo. They're just such big people. It's impossible for me to think of them rejecting a particular group because 'you are not like me.' But there are a lot of other people in the AEC besides those few" [Morgan 1999].

For instance, there have been academic prejudices and biases in terms of where AEC pastors receive their training. On the one hand some have claimed that "godly" pastors are trained at the Union Bible Institute (UBI) but "politically and socially conscious" pastors are trained elsewhere, such as the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa (ESSA). On the other hand, however, it also has been claimed that schools like ESSA produce the "intellectually quick urban" pastor while UBI produces the "intellectually slow rural" pastor.

In addition, political party prejudices exist. "Political party apartheid" exists in many of the black areas, creating territorial divides (e.g., this area is ANC, that area is IFP, and over there is UDM, etc.).

There needs to be taught a new biblical understanding of the idea of "agreeing to disagree," otherwise churches will multiply more by division than by evangelism, a fact already not only true of South Africa as a whole, but also true of the AEC. As Richard Elphick [in Elphick and Davenport 1997:7] writes, "[F]ission and competition between churches accelerated Christianization in the nineteenth century; this might be even more true in the twentieth. By the 1990s few places in the world, apart from the United States, matched South Africa in the proliferation of Christian denominations and sects -- evidence that Christianity has apparently adapted to a striking variety of cultures and social classes, a reason for its dramatic advance." Issues of tolerance versus intolerance need to be addressed and discussed, particularly as they apply to the Church as a whole.

6.3.3 Developing intergenerational understanding

"There is a gap between the old and the young" [Magewu 1999] and, therefore, both the younger and older generations must be taught biblical perspectives on relating to each other, learning to listen to and understand the viewpoints, values, and concerns of each group. "I'm afraid, because these young people will throw us away" [Mavimbela 1999]. Many changes are taking place in South Africa and the older generations may be very confused by it, puzzled by it, even angered by it, whereas the younger generation will be adapting to it all thus widening the gap

further between the generations. In a culture where the attitude of the older generation toward the younger generation is, “You are a child, I cannot listen to you, I cannot be told by a child” and where the attitude of the younger generation is becoming less respectful of the older generation, hearing, understanding, and ministering to the disappointments, hurts, and perspectives of everyone will begin to build necessary bridges of trust between the age groups.

6.3.4 Studying the critical issues

Like the Mission, the AEC also needs to make a concerted effort to study the critical issues of the day in light of biblical truth and standards. “Submission does not mean we don’t question things such as those. But in our Church conferences we have stayed clear of them. I don’t remember, even through the deep crises of the 1980s, when the Church dealt with those issues. We steered clear and away from them until today” [Bodibe 1999a]. Of the Evangelical Church in South Africa, the Indian branch of the AEF’s work, the author wrote that

It would be healthy if the church leadership maintained an awareness of contemporary ethical and political problems. The majority of them are unaware of these things, particularly as they relate to the church people. Most believers within the ECSA believe that to be politically involved in any way is to be unspiritual and this prejudice keeps the church from effectively dealing with questions which are raised about such things [Kopp 1988:50].

The same thing can be said for the AEC. For the Church to successfully be the ‘salt and light’ expected by Scripture, it will be necessary for church leaders to delve into the essential issues and formulate sound statements and guidelines for the AEC, and find skilful people to articulate them to the congregations.

6.4 Possible *mutual* contributions of the AEF and AEC

There is a very real sense in which a meaningful partnership will be able to clearly display the power of the Gospel. Whereas in the past, there have been clear lines of demarcation between the 'White' and the 'Black,' there is no excuse for such demarcation lines to continue. "The object of leadership is to work with your people. You don't say, 'Do this.' You say, 'Let us do this.'" [Mavimbela 1999]. Genuine partnership does not mean one taking over the other. Nor does it mean the Mission coming in with an attitude of superiority or the Church coming in with an attitude of inferiority. The idea is to struggle together to broaden the narrow horizons and to strengthen the vision or perspectives which may be too short or low. "It's not as easy as I say, but I think that can be a true, good witness to God's kingdom and the world....We need to strive for Kingdom principles together, and that would mean acknowledging [each other] as God's agents....and find a way to have a common witness" [Bodibe 1999a]. To cross the lines takes courage after believing and living a certain way for so long. It also takes faith, expecting God to accomplish bigger and better things through the body of believers as they work and minister together.

6.4.1 Engaging the new culture

The time is approaching when "...there will be no Zulu man and Sotho man. We will be just African" [Magubane 1999b]. Both the Mission and Church need to keep a constant "watch [on] the culture of the people" [Magewu 1999] resisting

the laager⁵ mentality that dulls the senses and destroys vision [Molebatsi 1999]. Churches need to understand the context in which they exist, and like the Old Testament sons of Issachar (1 Chr 12:32), understand their times and know what to do. “The culture now [in South Africa] is becoming the global culture....On TV you see people from England....from America, others from Australia, and China....They become a part of your life and you behave like what you have been watching. There’s no [specific] time when we can say, ‘Now is the time we changed our teachings.’ It just [happens] slowly” [Ntongana 1999]. Mission and Church leaders need to work together to overcome their shallow theological traditions or narrow perspectives of the church and move assertively ahead to maturity. For instance, the term ‘indigenous church’ could be thought more in terms of ‘South African’ as opposed to ‘American’ rather than ‘Indian’ as opposed to ‘African’ or even ‘Zulu’ as opposed to ‘Xhosa.’ The deeply ingrained habits which keep the groups separate and still distrusting of each other need to be overcome, and it will require ‘give and take’ from all sides.

6.4.2 Confronting the new cults/religions

With the new freedom of religion in South Africa, many new cults have come forward and present a challenge to the churches. The churches need to be aware of what the cults teach and how to biblically answer them. Christians need to stand up for what they believe. The aim, of course, would be that the evangelical

⁵ A laager was a circle of wagons lashed together by the Afrikaner *voortrekkers* (pioneers) to form a defense against attackers [Thompson 1995:71,90].

wing of the church would become stronger rather than merely developing an interfaith system. Because of the influence of human rights and the new tolerance of religion, there is a strong emphasis on interfaith. The issue of whether Jesus is the only Savior of the world, which has been a world missiological issue for a long time, is now very much a South African issue as well. “So it’s time for us [i.e., evangelicals] now to really shine. And not say we are different by word, but really live it so that the credibility of Christianity could be seen beyond any shadow of doubt....The answer for the world is in the church, and the church is sitting!” [Zondo 1999].

6.4.3 Moving beyond the “problems”

Rather than dwelling on the negatives of the past, it’s imperative that together the national and expatriate Church workers establish a let’s-go-and-build-together attitude for the good of the Church as a whole, recognizing that they are here to positively benefit the growth of the body of Christ.

Neither the Mission nor the Church will gain anything by repeatedly laying the blame at each other’s door for either past or present situations. Each needs to take its own responsibility now and move on. Dwelling on the difficulties or misunderstandings of the past will only give bitterness an opportunity to spring up and cause trouble (Heb 12:15). Now is the time to turn over a new leaf, begin a new chapter, start a new heritage! “If you never move on from your problem, people are going to remember you for the problem and not for the things you could have done....[There is] the example of Judas and Peter. Peter did exactly

what Judas did, three times. But Peter managed to move on. Judas couldn't. So what will we remember Judas for? Betraying Christ. What do you remember Peter for? For his pentecostal sermon" [Molebatsi 1999].

6.4.4 Encouraging and participating in evangelical ecumenism

Related to the previous two recommendations, is the matter of cooperation with other churches. The Mission's stated policy has been as follows:

6.21.10 Other Christians and Christian Organizations

Every Missionary shall exercise Christian love towards every other member of the Body of Christ. Fellowship and co-operation are encouraged with those who hold beliefs that are in agreement with the Fellowship's Basis of Faith, but there shall be no co-operation in spiritual ministries with those who are not in agreement with such. The Fellowship rejects the extreme separatism which withholds fellowship and co-operation on the basis of "secondary association." [AEF Fellowship Manual 1996:42].

The limits of cooperation stated above were no doubt related to the fear that relating to other organizations, churches, and agencies which were not doctrinally similar would lead to the loss of the Mission's commitment to mission and evangelism. When the International Missionary Council

became a part of the WCC [World Council of Churches] in 1961 some hoped it would place mission at the heart of the Council. Others feared the move would result in a decline in mission. The latter proved to be right as a combination of theological liberalism, which seemed to doubt the importance of evangelism and maintained a primary focus on social issues, led to a great decrease in missionary activity by most conciliar churches in Europe and North America. Thus the WCC has not succeeded in fulfilling the goal of its early proponents, unity so that the world might believe [Pierson 2000b:302].

The AEC's position is more nebulous. It's most recent constitution

[1994:CLAUSE IV: ADMINISTRATION, C.6.b] states that its regional offices

will function as liaisons between their “regions and the following bodies: the Church Board, the Africa Evangelical Fellowship Field Headquarters, Government bodies, local authorities and *any agencies within their respective regions* [italics mine]; as well as between each region and the other two regions of the Africa Evangelical Church.”

By virtue of the facts that both the AEF and the AEC had little or no involvement in the events surrounding the drafting of the Kairos Document, the SACEL Charter, the EWISA Document, and the Rustenberg Declaration (see chapter five), and have had little involvement with the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa (EFSA), it is clear that cooperative efforts with other churches are a low priority. Even after the above-mentioned documents were drafted, neither the AEF nor the AEC officially studied or interacted with them. In fact, many of their members were, and still are, unaware of them. Excluding national or international cooperation, there has been little evidence of cooperation at the local church level, particularly as it applies to its interaction with the Ebenezer Evangelical Churches (see under 6.2.8 above), which were developed as an offshoot of the AEC. To narrow it down further still, even within and among the AEC churches themselves, there is not the interaction and cooperation that there could be due to the internal ethnic, geographical, academic, and political party prejudices which exist (see under 6.3.2 above).

All of this points to a serious deficiency which needs to be addressed as the AEF and the AEC move into the 21st century.

The diversity of the world we are sent to reach will require the diversity of our cultural backgrounds and expertise. When in unity of purpose and for the glory of God we marshal together our various diverse gifts, we not only demonstrate the oneness of the body of Christ, thus enhancing the credibility of the gospel, but as the Lord said, the world shall see and believe that Jesus is the Messiah [Adeyemo 2000:269].

6.4.5 Addressing current social and political needs

“Mission is a multifaceted ministry, in respect of witness, service, justice, healing, reconciliation, liberation, peace, evangelism, fellowship, church planting, contextualization, and much more....Our mission has to be multidimensional in order to be credible and faithful to its origins and character” [Bosch 1991:512]. Church leaders, both national and expatriate, will be asked hard questions from time to time about current social and political issues. Now “is the time to begin to systematically build...a theology...of the state -- not a time to shy away from it because of some mistaken belief that we have less to worry about in relation to the present state” [Maluleke 1997a:83]. Hibernating from difficult issues, or hiding behind quick answers will not equip the next generation of Christians to meet the growing demands and tensions of the new socio-political scene enveloping South Africa. Differing opinions on how to proceed are undoubtedly affected by the contemporary debate on the merits or dangers of ecumenical theology, black theology, and conservative evangelical theology. Typically for the AEF, and thus the AEC,

the gospel has nothing to do with socio-political issues, it is acontextual, ‘spiritual’ and a private matter. This unbiblical understanding of Christian faith derives in large measure from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment with its strong individualism and its separation of reality into the material

and spiritual spheres in the interests of scientific progress [de Gruchy in Villa-Vicencio and de Gruchy 1985:95-96].

Yet as Professor Saayman [1993:51] points out, when it comes to political positioning, “a supposed neutrality is impossible.” In fact, to take no position is indeed to take a position and, more specifically, to “write off *this world*” [Saayman 1993:51, author’s italics] which in the long run means either denying or avoiding an important dimension of responsible discipleship. It is important, therefore, to maintain both a biblical faithfulness and a contextual relevance in approaching the current needs. While the AEF and AEC have been guilty of spiritualising the gospel to the extent that it is regarded as having no socio-political significance, there are some changes taking place. For example,

....missionaries are very frightened to say anything about the new government....I have been to African conferences these days and heard some of their leaders stand up and speak about the way they believe the government is moving in the wrong direction with regards to education, moving in the wrong direction in terms of abortion and homosexuality and death penalty and so on. I think this is the time when we need to allow the Church to face the government. We failed to face the government in our day. And I’m surprised, pleasantly surprised, by the fact that some of them are beginning to stand up now and face their own government on some of these issues [Genheimer 1999].

It is believed that if the Church stands up against issues it cannot agree with, that if the AEC attends conferences on such issues which are organized by various government departments or officials, “Then one day that government will say, ‘Someone can advise us. It is the AEC, because they’ve got a vision!’” [Magubane 1999a].

Sound theological bases must be established from which the AEF and the AEC will

operate. The policies then need to be translated into practice. Actual goals need to be specified and the whole Church needs to work through the issues theologically.

However, such a shift towards understanding and addressing the issues more overtly should never mean an abandonment of the personal salvation message of the gospel.

6.4.6 Embracing a fuller understanding of discipleship (beyond mere evangelism)

At the Mission Africa 2000 conference conducted in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, May 12-16, 2000, Chadian Rene Daidanso ma Djongwe, associate general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa, stated that a major problem for African church leaders is nominalism and "pinpointed the biggest problem as lack of discipleship." General secretary Tokunboh Adeyemo added, "We -- nationals and expatriates -- persuade non-Christians to become Christians, we baptize them, we give them Christian names. But we have not taught them to be disciples. Out of 100 pastors, I doubt that five teach their members to be true disciples of Jesus" [Fuller 2000:7].

Both national and expatriate Church leaders and workers must keep in mind that evangelism embraces not only church planting but discipling, and

the agenda for discipling is as wide as the teachings of Jesus or, can we say, as wide as the Bible. Whereas most of our evangelical discipling has been in the area of how to avoid temptation, how to grow in the Christian life through prayer and Bible reading, fellowship in the church, and occasionally the tithing aspect will be drummed in if the minister is particularly hard up. But apart from that you don't have a broad discipling curricula, and I believe that missionaries and pastors at every level, every

department, every church, needs to have a broad curricula for discipling that will embrace the issues of health, economics, justice, money, and missions as well. Lots of discipling in our churches doesn't touch on missions and missions is a very important category in the discipling syllabus [Wetmore 1999].

Discipleship must change the attitude which sees structures in society, politics, and economics as non-spiritual and structures in the church and Christian family as spiritual. All aspects of life are to be influenced by the discipling process, and, by and large, this is what the Mission failed to do. "When a person becomes a missionary, he gets a vision and he runs with it...the field is so white and ready for harvest and most of the time...the missionary runs with the vision...But he doesn't have time for teaching, training, giving the good foundation of the faith...I would say it was not a premeditated thing not to give the basics. They were overwhelmed by the need" [Gumede 1999]. While missionaries seem to have had the time to establish medical clinics and educational facilities, such as technical schools and high schools, they did not take the time for the necessary grounding of believers in the Word or to prepare them for leadership.

While there is a continuing need for training in the basics -- for example, how to do evangelism and how to teach -- what is needed is

more than that, to train people to live the Word. The concept of Matthew 28:20, 'teaching them to do what I have commanded.' I think that's where we start. And in doing that, of course, [you have to ask] 'What is it that the Lord taught or instructed or commanded?' [He taught] how to live with my neighbour. 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' And I think in South Africa that goes a long way because of who my neighbour is. My neighbour is the Hindu, the White, the Black, the Coloured. Everybody is my neighbour...What is my attitude toward them? That's the training we need in South Africa today, and then training people in how to

liberate themselves from things like poverty and unemployment, or whatever continues to help them [Xaba 1999].

A broader discipling curriculum needs to be developed at every level within the Church keeping in mind the development of the *whole* person, not attempting to compartmentalize the spiritual from the practical or the social as a westerner would but embracing essential issues such as health, justice, the biblical concept of what a church is supposed to be, marriage and family responsibilities, poverty, employment, principles of giving, and so on.

To do this effectively, the target audiences have to be known well.

Although our people live among everybody else, we live in our Christian pockets. Whereas to be effective, we've got to get in among the people that we are sent to reach, and to reach them at their need. I was really impressed with what [Dr] Jim Pleuddemann [SIM General Director] said in December [1998] at the conference of the Evangelical Fellowship. He said we take the Bible and we say to the people that this is what the Bible says, so live up to this. Instead of going to the people and finding out what their problems are, and then bringing them to the Bible to show them how the Bible addresses the pertinent and the relevant problems. We tend to scratch them where they don't really itch. To improve our ministry, we would do well really getting to people, looking to their problems, meeting them, meeting their felt needs and then coming up with answers from the Word of God, answers to their problems....I think that increases our effectiveness in reaching out [Xaba 1999].

Personnel in both the AEF and the AEC would increase their effectiveness by getting among the people, knowing them, understanding them, then bringing the Word of God and applying it to their needs. The Mission and the Church can also have a unique and powerful ministry coming alongside and encouraging those who are still struggling with deep emotional pain due to the loss of family members during the years of political turmoil. Furthermore, it is essential that this be

modelled by both the AEF and the AEC leadership because “New Christian role models will have to be found, especially in the White, but also in the Black community” in order to correct the “slanted picture of Christianity in South Africa” [Saayman 1993:99].

6.4.7 Strengthening leadership training for both missionary and national

Training institutions have a tremendous influence and need to be considered carefully. Pastors and Church leaders who sense the direction of God on their lives either for urban or rural ministries need to be able to obtain training in programs that will give them the necessary tools for the appropriate contexts in which they will minister. While all pastors and church leaders need solid biblical and theological foundations, a “rural ministry track” and an “urban ministry track” could give specific training for urban or rural ministry contexts that would cover appropriate areas of social, political, and economic concerns, styles of leadership, and cultural peculiarities. In fact, a course on cross-cultural communication would prove helpful. “I don’t treat a person from Gauteng the way I treat a person from Natal. Even if they are black, they are from different cultures” [Zondo 1999]. Since “faith missions did not include any definite ecclesiology” [Fiedler 1994:323] when they planted their churches, it is necessary now that “a conscious ecclesiology which takes seriously the young churches’ identities, the missions’ doctrinal traditions, and the social and political context in which the churches exist” [Fiedler 1994:401] be clearly and fully understood by national pastors and church leaders in training. They need to understand, “What is the church? What

should be done in the church? Not [only] theoretically but in a more practical way” [Gumede 1999].

The whole matter of women in training needs to be looked at carefully. It is interesting to note that “In their first decades, faith missions challenged society in general, and the churches in particular, by their tremendous willingness to give women positions of responsibility and leadership...[Yet although] the missions (and faith missions prominent among them) were -- though perhaps unconsciously -- in the vanguard of the first feminist movement, today they tend more to make up the struggling rear” [Fiedler 1994:395], and this is no more evident than in the attitudes surrounding the training and use of women. While being encouraged to attend Bible Schools, they are rarely given positions in the Church or recognized in any way. “Not even a single one of my churches has ever recommended these ladies to function freely in the organization. And yet they keep pumping them into UBI. That is burying people alive” [Magubane 1999b].

Theological training schools are, more and more, becoming affiliated with theological faculties of the country’s major universities. This gives both the schools and their graduates greater credibility as uniform standards are applied to the diploma and BTh training programs. For example, the Union Bible Institute has become affiliated with the University of Zululand and the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa has become affiliated with the University of Natal.

The curricula of colleges, particularly evangelical colleges, tends to be very traditional and must adapt to the needs of the people.

Programme relevance. The curriculum as a whole and the syllabus for each individual course subject should show that the institution has not merely borrowed these from elsewhere, nor simply allowed them to develop on an ad hoc basis, but that the institution has carefully planned the curriculum and each syllabus to meet its own particular objectives, for the specific Christian community it is serving, for the specific vocation for which the students are being prepared, and for the specific cultural context in which the students will minister. Selection of textbooks should also show sensitivity to contextual relevance [ACTEA 1992:4b].

“We should be aiming at a curricula that embraces the personal and social teachings of the Scriptures so that the whole is conveyed to the students”

[Wetmore 1999]. Colleges need to be answering the questions which the churches and their memberships are asking, rather than giving answers for issues or problems not needed by anyone. Church leaders and members need to be equipped and prepared to handle current issues and the potential dilemmas arising from them. For example, the whole issue of AIDS is rarely, if ever, addressed. It can no longer be sidestepped.

In talking with some of the students these last three years at UBI [Union Bible Institute], I’ve taught a few of the grad students, and they say, ‘We’re out there in the churches today and....UBI doesn’t deal with the issues that we really face in the churches today. And we wish it did.’ So UBI has just had a time of calling in all the church leaders and asking, ‘How can we better prepare our students to face the real issues out there better?’ [Genheimer 1999].

This has been a determination of the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa based in Pietermaritzburg. While often being misunderstood and even criticized because of it, the Seminary seems to have nevertheless succeeded in developing credibility perhaps not accomplished by other similar training institutions.

Ethical issues need to be addressed. These issues, when taught in a Bible School,

need to be taught in the biblical context and also in relation to the spiritual ministry to people in terms of the forgiveness of sins and the salvation in Christ.

Once graduates have completed their training, before going directly into pastoring a church themselves, options need to be set in place for internships. “Study under and submit to someone who can protect them and guide them as they build their confidence in the ministry. I was not afforded this opportunity. I was just thrust into the ministry, and learned, and was frustrated almost to the point of resigning many times when it went tough” [Bodibe 1999a]. A mentoring program set up with seasoned and highly respected pastors who could work with them in terms of their long-term ministry and personal goals would be beneficial. Issues related to personal faith, assurance of the ‘call’ to ministry, family life, and providing for the family can be handled. In any case, all schools that are accredited with the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA), are required to have guided practical experience for their students.

Guided practical experience. Institutions are required for their BTh programme, and encouraged for their DipTh programme, to incorporate into the requirements for graduation arrangements for guided practical experience in the specific vocations in which the individual students are being prepared. This may, for example, take the form of an internship programme [ACTEA 1992:4f].

Churches, too, need to be re-educated. If they issue an invitation to a pastoral candidate, they need first of all to assess their ability to give a fair and just salary. Churches should not be expecting their pastors to ‘live by faith’ while they ‘live by regular wages.’

The curricula of colleges need to provide for meaningful modelling by way of practical experience in applying the truths being studied. Pastors and their churches need to serve in a holistic way -- offering practical and meaningful alternatives to previous lifestyles, giving people hope, and through it all helping them come to Christ. It means getting involved in more than just a social and economic uplifting, not pursuing the uplifting as an end in itself, but using it as a tool to bring people to salvation in Christ.

While the AEF is already involved in this way,

....we really ought to have sponsored pastor's conferences....[to which we bring] a Bible teacher, an experienced churchman from Nigeria or Ghana or Ethiopia or somewhere else [and]....not only study the Word together, but handle the kinds of issues that [we've] been talking about, where we are not preparing our pastors properly to meet the real world in which we live. Wow, we could do them a service, providing something like that for them. That's what I would encourage [Genheimer 1999].

Furthermore, vision, insights, strategies and biblical principles should be purposefully provided by experienced personnel for individuals such as church planters, in order to prevent meaningless approaches and haphazard outcomes. New systems or tactics can be investigated and attempted to reach the most productive result.

Additionally, in the process of his own research, the writer met African Church leaders who would like to pursue advanced degrees and doctoral level research in church- and/or theologically-related matters. It seems that for both the AEF/SIM and the AEC to arrange bursaries for potential national and missionary candidates to study at both the masters and doctoral degree levels, it would pay rich dividends

to both the Mission and the Church. Not only would it strengthen and enrich the AEF and the AEC, but in the long run the church at large will benefit as well.

Such bursaries could be granted on a 'contract' basis which would stipulate that the recipient be required to give a certain number of years to the Mission or Church following the completion of the degree before becoming available for any other ministry opportunities.

While much of the above has been written specifically in reference to the training of national pastors and leaders, the AEF/SIM should not overlook the continuing education and training of its missionary personnel, particularly when "The Fellowship is facing a dearth of mature and experienced leadership potential for its present fields, and for the new areas into which God has called it" [Genheimer 1996:94].

6.5 Possible areas for further research

There are other issues that would be well-worth investigating which have come to the attention of the writer. For instance, AEF/SIM is a large enough Mission with fields on all the major continents that it could undertake a valuable study exploring the pros and cons related to multi-cultural missionary teams serving in different cultures.

Secondly, there is a marked gap in values, goals, and general understanding of life between the older and younger African generations. Studies need to be undertaken that will uncover ways to close the gap and thus strengthen the Church by harnessing the perspectives and insights of each.

Additionally, with the political changes and increased exposure to the west that have come

to South Africa, there has also come a change in family structure. The African practices of courtship and marriage accepted in the past have been deeply challenged by the ‘new’ customs and ideas brought in by non-South African media and culture. There is a confusion as to which customs are simply ‘cultural’ and which ones, if any, are ‘right’ or ‘biblical.’

Furthermore, with the ever increasing unemployment rate in South Africa, a way to significantly help the Church would be to research career development issues taking into consideration the relationships between natural, God-given abilities, the current job market, and sensible career placement so that long-lasting and productive employment can be obtained.

6.6 Forgetting what lies behind, we press forward!

“For African churches today, it is no longer a question of how to get rid of missionaries, but how to get enough of them....The most urgent issue for the church in Africa south of the Sahara in general (and for the great faith mission churches in particular) is how to cope with the tremendous numerical growth which they have experienced since the 1960s and which they are still experiencing today” [Fiedler 1994:89].

Nevertheless, for the ‘moving forward’ to be successful, general thinking patterns regarding self and others need to be ‘reformatted.’ According to Rev Knox Mavimbela [1999], two major sins have covered South Africa -- the pride of the Whites and the hate of the Blacks. Yet, both must “come to a point where we forget colour, forget the past. I think the past holds us so much that we don’t move forward” [Magewu 1999]. The time has come “to look at where we are now [and to consider] how much of the past practices

we are still allowing to inform our decision making....Please pray with us that God [will] raise people who will do as He says” [Bodibe 1999b]. It is time to “travel carefully so as to leave something for the next generation” [Magubane 1999a]. When all has been said and done, all the AEF and the AEC ever wanted was to see a strong church in South Africa, and to hear the Lord say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!” (Mt 25:23, New Living Translation). “We are not responsible, as individuals, for the success of the Kingdom. But we are responsible, as individuals, to work with the King” [Scott 1980:239]. May the Lord find the AEF and the AEC faithful until the Lord returns!

APPENDIX A
THE CONSTITUTION
of the
AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH

CLAUSE I: NAME

The Church shall be known as the AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH, and shall be controlled by the bona fide members of the Church.

CLAUSE II: AIMS AND OBJECTS

1. To proclaim the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ as the only way whereby man can be reconciled to God, with a view to establishing congregations of believers.
2. To engage in such agencies and programmes as may be necessary to help further the ministry of the Africa Evangelical Church.
3. To train called Church members as Pastors, Evangelists, Writers, Bible Teachers, Radio Preachers, and others, so that the Africa Evangelical Church can be given a more effective Christian Leadership.
4. To produce Christian literature (tracts, books, magazines, etc.) suitable to the readership of today.
5. To cooperate with other Christian groups and promote such cooperation among those that preach free salvation through Jesus Christ, and whose beliefs and aims are compatible with those of the Africa Evangelical Church.
6. To evangelize and make disciples in Africa and the world.
7. To invite persons who can give the required technical assistance to the Africa Evangelical Church.
8. To enrol newly saved persons for Church membership, providing encouragement and a system of analysis for each local church that will contribute to a healthy growth rate.
9. To propagate the Church of Jesus Christ spiritually and physically - i.e. both as an

organism and as an organization.

10. To give services of advice and arbitration in cases of difference and dispute with the consent of the parties concerned.

11. To act as Trustee for any Africa Evangelical Church accepted church or Association whether established or to be established.

12. To invest any funds of the Africa Evangelical Church in such a manner as may be prescribed by the by-laws.

13. To encourage the prayer life of the Church.

14. To teach and defend the faith once delivered and to discourage false doctrine by the propagation of the Word of God as set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and as set forth in the Statement of Faith of the Africa Evangelical Church.

CLAUSE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Old and New Testament Scriptures as originally written, were given by verbal and plenary inspiration of God, and are supreme and final authority in Christian faith and practice.

II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:19-21; Heb. 1:1-2

2. THE TRINITY OF GOD

We believe there is only one living and true God, Who exists eternally in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Deut. 6:4-5; Gen. 1:26; I John 5:7; II Cor. 13:14

3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was begotten of the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary, that He might come into the world to save man from sin by His death upon the cross, making atonement through His shed blood.

Joh. 1:1, 2, 14; Luk. 1:28-34; Joh. 1:29; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18; Heb. 9:12, 14, 22.

4. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the grave and ascended into Heaven where He lives to make intercession for us, and is the One and only Mediator between God and man, and that He shall come again to receive unto Himself all who have been cleansed from sin by personal faith in His shed blood.

Matt. 28; Acts 1:10-11; I Tim. 2:5, 6; I Joh. 2:1, 2

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit Who is the Third Person of the Trinity. He is the One Who convicts man of sin, regenerates those that believe in Jesus Christ, baptizing them into the Body of Christ at their conversion. He seals, indwells, sanctifies and fills believers, producing in them the fruit of the Spirit, and giving them power for service. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers as He wills. No gift is given to a believer as an indispensable sign of the fullness of the Spirit.

Joh. 16:7-11; 3:5-7; 1Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; Joh. 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; II Cor. 3:18; Acts 4:8, 31; Eph. 5:18; Joh. 15:5; Gal. 5:22-23; Acts 1:8; I Cor. 12:4-11; Eph 4:11,12; I Cor. 12:28-30.

6. SATAN

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is the perpetrator and sustainer of evil, who with all of his servants, will suffer eternal death in the lake of fire.

Matt.4:1-3; II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:1-15.

7. MAN

We believe that man was created by God and in His image. He rebelled in Adam, and is therefore a sinner by nature, which is expressed in sinful thoughts and deeds, and is of himself not able to please God. Unless He is saved by the grace of God he stands condemned. The believer will be raised in a spiritual body to live in eternal fellowship with God, while the unbeliever will be raised to eternal punishment.

Gen. 1:27-31; Rom. 5:12; Ps. 51:5; Is. 64:6; Jer. 17:9; Mark 17: 21-23; Rom. 3:10-18; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 8:7-8; Joh. 3:18; Heb. 9:27-28; I Cor. 15:12, 44; Rom. 5:18; Heb. 9:11-12; I Thes. 4:13-17; Joh. 5:29; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:15.

8. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

We believe that the Church universally consists of all those, and only those, who have been redeemed by personal faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ without any reference to their denominational affiliation.

Joh. 14:1-3; 1Cor. 12:12-13; Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:22,23; 2:22; 5:2.

9. CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe in the return of Christ to receive the Church, His Bride, unto Himself; and that the Church possesses all prerogatives of self-government, having only One Head, Jesus Christ our Lord, and is free from interference from any super imposed authority.

I Thes. 4:16-17; Titus 2:12-15; I Joh. 3:2.

10. ORDINANCES

We believe that the only ordinances of the Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper as taught in the Word of God, and that one is not eligible for Church membership unless he accepts and believes in practising these ordinances.

Matt. 3:16-17; 26:26-30; Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3,4; I Cor. 11:23-32.

11. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, and is for the good of human society; that magistrates, rulers and all in authority are to be prayed for, honoured and obeyed, except in things contrary to the clear teachings of the Word of God.

Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:17; I Tim. 2:2.

12. ETERNAL BLESSEDNESS AND PUNISHMENT

We believe in the eternal blessedness of believers in God's eternal kingdom and the eternal punishment of nonbelievers with Satan and his angels in complete separation from God.

Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:42-48; Joh. 3:16, 36; Rev. 21:8.

13. THE GREAT COMMISSION

We believe that commission to preach the gospel to every creature is directed to every believer in Jesus Christ.

Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.

14. SECOND ADVENT

We believe in the triumphant second advent of Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom on earth.

Rev. 20:1-3; 11-15.

CLAUSE IV: ADMINISTRATION**A. BODIES****1. CHURCH CONFERENCE**

The aforesaid Church shall hold the Annual General Conference to provide fellowship and discuss matters related to its ministry and activities.

2. CHURCH BOARD

The Africa Evangelical Church shall be administered by a nine member Board elected by the General Church Conference by secret ballot.

a) CHURCH WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The Women's Section of the General Church Conference shall elect a nine member committee which will advise the Church Board on matters affecting Church Women. These shall be elected by secret ballot.

b) CHURCH YOUTH COMMITTEE

A nine member committee shall be elected by secret ballot by the Young People's Section of the General Church Conference. This committee shall advise the Church Board on matters that have to do with the Church Youth.

3. CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

The Africa Evangelical Church shall hold an Annual Church Workers' Conference to discuss spiritual matters, church policy matters and to provide Biblical teaching.

4. REGIONAL CHURCH CONFERENCES

The Africa Evangelical Church shall hold an Annual Church Conference in each of its regions to discuss matters relating to its ministry and activities.

5. REGIONAL OFFICES

Each region shall have an office that shall be administered by the Regional Executive Committee.

6. THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Each region shall have a Church Executive Committee elected by the Regional Church Conference to administer the affairs of the Church in the Region.

a) WOMEN'S COMMITTEES

The Africa Evangelical Church, in each Region, shall elect a Women's Committee to conduct Church Women's activities and to advise the Church Executive Committee in the Region on Church Women's matters.

b) CHURCH YOUTH COMMITTEES

The Africa Evangelical Church, in each Region shall elect a Youth Committee to conduct Church Youth activities and to advise the Church Executive Committee in the Region on Youth affairs.

c) CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Each Region of Africa Evangelical Church shall elect a Christian Education Committee to administer the following and advise the Executive Committee on them; Sunday School Work, Extension Bible School, Secular School and any other Christian Educational activities.

All the above Committees shall be elected by secret ballot.

7. QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The Africa Evangelical Church shall hold Circuit Quarterly Meetings to discuss matters relating to Circuit ministry and activity.

8. THE LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEE

Each local church shall have a committee responsible to organize the total ministry of the local church.

B. THE STRUCTURE OF THE VARIOUS BODIES

1. THE GENERAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

The General Conference shall comprise of Church members, elected Women's delegates, elected Youth delegates, two elected Men delegates from each local church, and church Workers.

2. THE CHURCH BOARD

a) Composition:

The Church Board shall comprise of:

- i. The President
- ii. The Vice President
- iii. The Secretary
- iv. The Vice Secretary
- v. The Treasurer
- vi. The Publicity Secretary
- vii. Three other members

b) Election Procedure

Each Region, during the Annual Regional Conference, shall nominate three names. These nine nominees shall become Board members if approved by the General Church Conference. From these the General Church Conference shall elect officers of the Church Board.

c) Term of Office

The election of the Board shall be staggered so that the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected every five years; the Vice President, the Vice Secretary and the Publicity Secretary shall be elected every four years, and the other three members shall be elected every three years.

3. CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

The Church Workers' Conference shall be attended by all recognized Church Workers.

4. REGIONAL CHURCH CONFERENCES

The Regional Church Conferences shall be attended by church members, members of the Women's Committee, elected Women's delegates, members of the Youth Committee, elected Youth delegates, members of the Regional Executive Committee, elected Men delegates and all recognised Church Workers in the region.

5. REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

a) The Regional Church Executive Committees shall be made up of the following

people, serving for three year term of office:

- i. The Chairman
- ii. The Vice Chairman
- iii. The Secretary
- iv. The Vice Secretary
- v. The Treasurer
- vi. Four members

b) Other Regional Committees may be elected according to the need. They shall comprise of no more than nine (9) members each, serving for a three year term.

c) The Quorum for each nine member committee shall be six (6) members at any one meeting.

6. QUARTERLY MEETINGS

These shall be attended by delegates of each local church, elected to represent the Women, the Youth and Men, by church members and by all recognized Church Workers within the circuit.

7. LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEES

a) Each local church shall elect a seven member committee from its membership comprising of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Secretary, the Vice Secretary, the Treasurer and two other members all of whom shall serve for a period of three years.

b) Other committees shall be elected as determined by the need.

c) The Quorum shall be five duly elected members.

C. DUTIES OF THE BODIES MENTIONED ABOVE:

1. THE GENERAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

a) It shall elect the Church Board, the Women's and Youth Committees to work together with the Board.

b) It shall ordain ministers of the Church.

c) It shall receive reports from the Church Board, the Regional Executive Committees, the Women's and Youth Committees.

d) It shall discuss and make decisions on matters sent to it by the Church Board, the Regional Church Conferences, or any of the appropriate Committees.

2. THE CHURCH BOARD:

a) The Africa Evangelical Church Board shall administer the work of the Church as a whole.

b) It shall publicize the activities of the Church.

c) It shall be responsible for the finances of the Church collected by and/or sent to it for its use and/or distribution.

d) The Board shall sue or be sued on behalf of the Africa Evangelical Church.

e) The Board shall organize and coordinate the Annual General Church Conference.

f) It shall evaluate the work of the whole Church.

g) It shall receive reports, problems and questions on and about the ministry of the Africa Evangelical Church as a whole, discuss and solve them.

h) It shall see to it that the decisions of the General Church Conference are effectively implemented.

3. THE CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

a) It shall provide an opportunity for Church Workers to discuss matters that might need their attention by themselves.

b) It shall provide times of spiritual refreshment suited for church workers.

c) It shall provide an opportunity for the workers to discuss matters of Church policy.

4. REGIONAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

a) These shall receive reports from their respective Regional Executive Committees, Women's and Youth Committees, Church Workers, and any of their other committees.

b) They shall discuss and resolve matters referred to them by Quarterly Meetings

within the regions.

- c) They shall refer all intricate matters to the Board and the General Church Conference for finalization.
- d) They shall accept candidates for ordination for the ministry and recommend the suitable ones to the Board and General Church Conference for ordination.

5. REGIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

- a) These Committees shall receive reports and problems about the work, in writing, from all the Quarterly Meetings within their respective regions.
- b) They shall discuss and resolve matters referred to them by their respective Regional Church Conferences.
- c) They shall make investigations and evaluations as well as conduct interviews on behalf of the regional Church Conferences on matters passed on to the Regional Church Conferences by the Quarterly Meetings.
- d) They shall be responsible for the allocation of workers within their regions, seeing to their well-being and encouraging them in their work.
- e) They shall evaluate the whole work of the Church in their Regions.
- f) They shall refer all intricate matters to the Board for finalization.
- g) They shall make decisions on behalf of the Regional Church Conferences in between these conferences.
- h) They shall see to it that decisions of the General Church Conference as well as those of the Regional Church Conferences are effectively implemented in the regions.

6. REGIONAL OFFICES

- a) These shall administer the affairs of the regions.
- b) They shall act as a go between the regions and the following bodies:

The Church Board, the Africa Evangelical Fellowship Field Headquarters, Government bodies, local authorities and any agencies within their respective regions; as well as between each region and the other two regions of the Africa

Evangelical Church.

- c) They shall keep records and inventory within the regions.
- d) They shall act as resource centres for the regions.
- e) They shall receive and keep reports - each from its own region - and report to the Board for and on behalf of the regions.
- f) The Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee shall have the power of attorney to sign legal documents on behalf of the Regional Executive Committee.

7. QUARTERLY MEETINGS

- a) The Circuit Quarterly Meetings shall attend to Circuit Church matters and to such matters as shall be presented to it by local churches within that circuit.
- b) They shall see to the needs of the Circuits and make recommendations to the Regional Church Conferences through the Executive Committee.

8. LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEES

- a) These shall administer the local churches.
- b) They shall see to the needs of the local churches.
- c) They shall report local church matters to the Quarterly Meetings.
- d) They shall present candidates found suitable for ordination to the board through the Quarterly Meetings and the Regional Church Conference Executive Committees.
- e) They shall see to it that decisions of the General Church Conference, the Regional Church Conferences, the Quarterly Meetings and the Local Church Meetings are effectively implemented.

CLAUSE V: QUALIFICATION OF CHURCH LEADERS

1. The first book of Timothy shall be used by the Africa Evangelical Church as the Scriptural measurement in appointing church leaders. It is therefore strongly advisable for all Church leaders to study it and be familiar with its content.

2. All going into full time church work shall also be expected to measure up to the

standards set forth in the aforesaid book besides their call into ministry.

3. According to the first book of Timothy, a church leader may be disqualified by the uncommendable character of his wife (I Tim. 3:11).
4. A church leader found short of this standard later on, after engagement by the church, shall be subject to demotion.
5. Women are commanded by the Word of God to be silent, not to be slanderers, to be sober, faithful in all things (I Tim. 3:11).
6. The wives of church leaders shall be expected to be exemplary in this regard.
7. It shall be desirable for pastors to have a minimum education of Standard Eight (Junior Certificate); and for Board members to have a minimum of Matriculation (Standard Ten).
8. They shall be persons of spiritual maturity with a passion for souls, and who subscribe unreservedly to the Statement of Faith as contained in this Constitution.
9. It shall be persons who have had Bible training at a recognized Bible Institute or School, or who satisfy the Church Conference either by having completed an approved Bible Correspondence Course, or by their own experiential knowledge of God's Word.
10. It shall be persons who do not practice tribalism or racialism, "For God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34; James 3:2-9).

CLAUSE VI: ORDINATION

Candidates for ministerial work of the Africa Evangelical Church shall be ordained at the General Church Conference. These shall serve the Lord where they are called and according to their gifts within the church ministry or in other Christian work approved by the Church.

The Board shall, if necessary, ordain candidates for the ministry when the Church Conference is not in session.

CLAUSE VII: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the local church is for regenerated believers who subscribe fully to the foregoing Statement of Faith, who live daily lives which conform to their profession of faith, and who promise to obey the regulations of the Africa Evangelical Church, to engage in its activities and to support it by prayer and offering. Converts who show evidence of repentance toward God will be instructed in Christian doctrine and prepared for baptism and Church membership.

CLAUSE VIII: BAPTISM

Believers' baptism is an act of obedience which symbolizes the sinner's death to sin and his resurrection to newness of life in Christ Jesus. Only those who have truly repented, showing signs of spiritual growth, and who are willing to be baptised, shall, after a period of instruction by a competent leader, be eligible for baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19; Rom 6:1-5).

CLAUSE IX: HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion shall be partaken of by baptized believers who have been approved and received into full membership. Believing visitors who normally do partake of Holy Communion in their respective churches shall be invited to participate in Holy Communion in the Africa Evangelical Church local churches.

CLAUSE X: DISCIPLINE

All matters of church discipline shall be dealt with by the local church as directed by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-20 and by other relevant Scriptures. Church discipline shall be as follows, according to the nature of the offense:

1. Reproof by the church.
2. Temporary discipline debarring from the Communion table and other privileges attached to church membership.
3. Suspension from office in the church.
4. Ex-communication from the church.

All cases that cannot be settled by the local bodies shall be investigated by the Church Board for settlement. The Church Board shall be the final disciplinary authority and also the final court of appeal for the accused.

CLAUSE XI: FINANCE

1. The work of the Africa Evangelical Church shall be supported by the tithes, donations, and offerings of the Lord's people in accordance with Scripture.
2. All monies obtained in the name of the Church shall be banked in the Church's Banking Account within ninety six (96) hours.
3. Cheques drawn on the Africa Evangelical Church shall be signed by no less than two

persons duly authorized:

In the case of the Church Board, by the General Church Conference;
 In the case of a Regional Executive Committee, by the Regional Church Conference;
 In the case of a local Church Committee, by the local Church Meeting.

AUDIT: The books of the Africa Evangelical Church shall be kept in a recognized Accounting System because they shall be subject to audit.

CLAUSE XII: PROPERTY

All property, movable or immovable, purchased or obtained in the name of the Africa Evangelical Church shall remain the property of the Church. All property of the said Church, movable or immovable, nothing whatsoever excepted, shall be vested in Trustees elected by members of the Church. On behalf of the said Church the said Trustees may take over, purchase, take on lease or otherwise acquire, hold, develop, manage, let, sell, exchange, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of real and personal property or any tenure and of any interest, and to accept (with or without condition) and hold gifts, devices and bequests of any such property or interest (including subscriptions and donations of cash and donations of cash and investments). For any of the purchases of the said Church the said Trustees may borrow money with or without security, and secure the same mortgage, charge, debentures or debentures stock, or other security, charge on all or any of the property of the Church, and they may give any guarantee or undertaking, on behalf of the said Church.

The said Trustees shall, jointly or severally, be absolved from the furnishing of any security, of whatsoever nature, for the due and proper performance of their duties, and/or the proper and faithful administration of the Church's property, either to the Master of the Supreme Court/High Court, or any competent person, official or authority, who are hereby directed to dispense with any such security.

CLAUSE XIII: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees shall consist of five (5) members in each Region.
2. It shall be elected by secret ballot at each Regional Church Conference.
3. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible to the Regional Church Executive Committees of the Africa Evangelical Church in each Region.
4. They shall hold the Church Property entrusted to them on behalf of the Regional Church Conference.

CLAUSE XIV: REGULATIONS

The Africa Evangelical Church shall have a handbook of rules which every member shall be expected to obey.

CLAUSE XV: PRIVILEGES

All Church Workers, employed by the Church, shall be provided with parsonages. Travelling expenses on the ministry of the Church shall be covered by the Church.

CLAUSE XVI: PENSION SCHEME

There shall be a pension scheme for all full time Church Workers upon attaining retirement age of sixty five (65) years, as laid down in the handbook of rules.

CLAUSE XVII: LEGAL ADVISOR

The Africa Evangelical Church shall have a Legal Advisor for each region.

CLAUSE XVIII: AMENDMENTS

This constitution shall be amended if necessary. This shall be done by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the General Church Conference Delegates at the ordinary Annual General Church Conference of the Africa Evangelical Church, notice having been given in writing to all churches at least two months before the Annual General Church Conference.

APPENDIX B

DRAFT COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE

EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

AND AFRICA EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP

[Kopp 1988:110-117]

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Africa Evangelical Fellowship was first organized in 1889 as an evangelical, interdenominational faith mission.
- 1.2 The objectives/goals of the Fellowship are--
 - (1) "To fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ in every area where the Lord may lead the Fellowship, by preaching the Gospel to every creature and by instructing believers in Scriptural holiness and obedience to the Word of God;
 - (2) "To establish and assist to maturity a fellowship of local churches on each Field."
- 1.3 It has pleased God to show fruit from the Fellowship's work amongst Indian people which started in Durban in 1896 and has continued to grow until the present, by the conversion of many people and their forming themselves into local church groups.
- 1.4 Many of these local churches, having grown in maturity, have organized themselves into a church fellowship, known as the Evangelical Church in South Africa, whose aims and objects are stated in its constitution.
- 1.5 The AEF and the ECSA with common consent and humble dependance upon Almighty God do now propose the following basis of cooperation in Christian unity, in accordance with the principles of Scripture, in order to complement each other in the tasks for which the Lord has brought them into being.

2. BASIC AGREEMENT

- 2.1 The ECSA and the AEF, while working together in closest Christian unity, do recognize each other as fully autonomous organizations,
 - (1) each governing itself and its work within the framework of its own constitution;
 - (2) each being responsible for the acceptance (or dismissal), conduct and financial support of its own workers;

(3) each being responsible under God for the fulfilment of the aims and objectives as stated in the respective constitutions, and as may be more specifically defined from time to time in terms of local and contemporary strategies.

2.2 The ECSA and the AEF agree to maintain this cooperation

(1) for as long as their objectives as stated in their present constitutions are pursued;

(2) for as long as both organisations continue to hold to the doctrinal beliefs as set forth in their present constitutions and Christian standards of conduct in accordance with the Word of God are maintained;

(3) until, under the leading of God, it may be considered wise by either or both organisations to make some other arrangement.

3. ECSA POSITION STATEMENTS

3.1 Statement of Faith. Refer Constitution

3.2 The Church. Refer Constitution

3.3 Missionary Mandate. Refer Constitution

3.4 Glossolalia. Refer Constitution

3.5 Eschatology. Refer Constitution

3.6 Baptism. Refer Constitution

4. AEF POSITION STATEMENTS

4.1 Basis of Faith. Refer FOA

4.2 The Church. Refer FOA

4.3 The Missionary Mandate. Refer FOA

4.4 Glossolalia. Refer FOA

4.5 Eschatology. Refer FOA

4.6 Baptism. AEF recognizes and respects the differences among evangelicals regarding baptism and does not make any one particular position a test or condition of acceptance for missionary service or membership of any Fellowship staff or body.

NOTE: As full members of ECSA, AEF workers will conform to the ECSA policies and practices, accepting the responsibilities and privileges such membership entails.

5. ECSA AND AEF PERSONNEL

- 5.1 All AEF executive officers shall be elected by AEF personnel according to procedures established by AEF.
- 5.2 AEF workers are “missionary personnel” who have been recruited by an AEF Sending Council and appointed to cross-cultural service with the ECSA.
- 5.3 A husband and wife shall each be considered as workers, each acknowledging and maintaining his/her own personal call to missionary service. A married woman is expected to bear some responsibility in the work, bearing in mind her family responsibilities and qualifications.
- 5.4 The ECSA Executive shall prepare estimates for AEF workers.
- 5.5. The AEF shall be responsible for the housing and financial needs of AEF workers.
- 5.6 The ECSA and AEF shall share responsibility for orientation of new AEF workers. The AEF Field Director shall emphasize AEF matters and general orientation to the country, and the ECSA President shall emphasize cultural and church orientations.
- 5.7 An AEF worker shall be accepted by the ECSA as a full member on presentation to an ECSA local church of a letter of recommendation from their sending church. This shall be done as soon as possible after the arrival of an AEF worker at his/her place of allocation. It is understood that membership in an ECSA local church does not entail relinquishing membership in the sending church of the AEF worker.
- 5.8. As a full member of the local church an AEF worker shall be eligible to vote and hold office, and be subject to discipline the same way as any other church member. And AEF worker may hold office only if this is consistent with the development of the local church.
- 5.9 An AEF worker shall be active in the local church where he/she is a member, assisting the local church in achieving its goals. The general principle is to work in fellowship with the leadership of the local church.
- 5.10 The local church shall seek to utilize the gifts of an AEF worker in building up the members and training leaders in the local church, and encourage him/her in any approved ministry he/she may have outside the local church.

5.11

- (1) Allocation and reallocation of an AEF worker shall be by the AEF Field Committee and ECSA Executive Committee in consultation as a joint responsibility.
- (2) For ease of administration, the AEF Field Director and the ECSA President shall appoint a Joint Sub-committee of their respective executives to recommend allocations and reallocations to their Executive Committees. All recommendations of the Joint Sub-committee shall be subject to ratification by the Executive Committees of the AEF and the ECSA, who shall make the final decision.
- (3) This Sub-committee shall be responsible to consult fully with the AEF worker and representatives of the local church and quarterly concerned, before making its recommendation. It shall take into consideration the special qualifications of the worker as well as the overall needs of the work.
- (4) An AEF worker shall be responsible to the ECSA Executive through the quarterly meeting under which he/she works.

5.12 Should either an AEF worker, the AEF, or the ECSA wish to terminate an allocation, three month's notice in writing shall be submitted to the AEF Field Executive Committee and the ECSA Executive Committee.

5.13 It is recognized that in his/her service and AEF worker may also minister to other groups which are not part of ECSA. An AEF worker may engage in non-ECSA ministries with the approval of the local church or quarterly and the Joint Sub-committee.

5.14 An AEF worker desiring to take further studies while on the field must have the approval of the Joint Sub-committee.

5.15 It is recognized that unanimity in the making of decisions on every level is the biblical ideal. An AEF worker shall strive, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, toward this end. In the case of an official ECSA meeting where there is a divided vote, an AEF worker shall abide by the decision of the meeting.

5.16 An AEF worker shall have the right to appeal against a decision, using the normal channels of communication. Copies of such appeal shall be sent to the ECSA President and the AEF Field Director.

5.17 Should it become necessary, the ECSA Executive Committee shall have the right to suspend any AEF worker. In the event of suspension, the President of ECSA shall submit a full written report to the AEF Field Director and the ECSA Executive Committee.

5.18 An AEF worker shall normally retire at the end of the term of service in which

he/she becomes 65 years of age. The Joint Sub-committee shall review annually the list of AEF workers 64 years of age and over, and shall recommend to the AEF Field Executive Committee either continued service, a semi-retired status, or full retirement.

- 5.19 An AEF worker shall continue to be associated with the AEF and serve in accordance with the appropriate edition of Fellowship Organization and Administration (FOA) and also the further extension of the provisions of FOA to meet the requirements of this agreement and its implementation.

6. ECSA AND AEF ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 The AEF Field Headquarters is an administrative office responsible to the AEF Field Executive Committee in regard to the supply of AEF workers, and to maintain the relationship of workers, and to maintain the relationship of the AEF workers with their Sending Councils. It is also responsible to assist in maintaining the relationship of the AEF workers with the ECSA.
- 6.2 The AEF Field Executive Committee is elected by AEF workers (including those serving outside ECSA) according to the procedures established by AEF. Two ECSA members (the President or his nominee together with one other member appointed by the ECSA Executive.
- 6.3 The AEF Field Headquarters shall be responsible for handling all AEF funds and directing designated funds accordingly.
- 6.4 The ECSA Executive Committee shall be responsible to ensure that all funds channelled to it through AEF offices are used for the purposes intended.
- 6.5 Personal support, personal gifts, and equipment funds for each AEF worker shall be handled between an AEF worker and his/her Sending Council.
- 6.6 All operational and work monies are official AEF funds. The removal or disposal of equipment purchased with such funds shall be done in consultation with the Joint Executive Committee.

7. SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE CO-OPERATION

- 7.1 AEF workers as pastors of ECSA churches.
- (1) The emphasis shall be on gifted national leadership from the inception of any work.
 - (2) Multiple eldership as a scriptural pattern of local leadership shall be encouraged.
 - (3) The function of an AEF worker shall be to contribute to the development of the ECSA according to his/her gifts. In normal circumstances an AEF worker shall

not spend more than one term (4 years) in one allocation. Allocation will be reviewed prior to departure for furlough according to the procedure outlined in 5.11(3).

7.2 Financial Assistance.

- (1) AEF financial assistance can only be as the Lord provides and should never stifle growth or responsibility.
- (2) In order to encourage initiative, AEF gifts shall be in proportion to church giving.
- (3) Excepting for special compassionate gifts which may be given from time to time, AEF assistance shall be restricted to capital expenditure.

7.3 Counsel and Communication.

- (1) Counsel and communication should be freely offered and welcomed at all levels-- personal, local church, quarterly, executive.
- (2) In every circumstance appropriate courtesies should be respected, and every effort made to preserve relationships and maintain whole-hearted cooperation.
- (3) Every AEF worker shall inform the ECSA President and Field Director of vacation dates and addresses. An annual vacation is considered essential. The vacation shall be as specified in FOA. The dates of all vacations must be approved by the local church and quarterly.

8. AMENDMENTS

This document may be amended or added to by the same procedure as the ECSA constitution in consultation with AEF and the terms of FOA.

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