

rooted in the culture of the land. All these are problems which we must face and overcome if there is to be church growth in Asia. But the future prospects are bright.

While writing this report, I received a news release from the OMS International Inc. in Greenwood, Indiana, USA. It is dated June 1, 1974. I was so thrilled that I want to share it all:

ONE MILLION KOREANS RECEIVE WITNESS.

"Approximately 1,000,000 people were reached with a direct soul-winning witness on Good Friday, April 12. The preparation began months in advance. Each of the 200,000 members, believers, and youth of the OMS-founded churches across Korea shared in the prayer preparation. Each selected five individuals as his personal prayer target. For these he prayed daily until he witnessed to them on Good Friday. In the 750 local OMS churches, where 4:30 or 5:00 a.m. prayer meetings have been held for years, intercession focused on this intensive soul-winning campaign.

"For further preparation, each local church was supplied with a special manual on soul winning, flip-charts to use in soul-winning classes, and instruction on how to use the specially prepared six-page tract, "Invitation to Abundant Life." Bible Literature International furnished 200,000 Heart of Pak tracts. At least 465,000 OMS tracts were used. New York Bible Society International and Pocket Testament League sent a total of 300,000 Gospels of John for the campaign.

"Good Friday became 'one great day of witness,' with more than 965,000 pieces of literature used in an outreach to approximately one million prayer-prepared individuals. Reports continue to come in, but already total 16,068 adults and 11,100 children who professed to accept Christ as Savior. These were all introduced to the local church congregations on Easter Sunday. Christian workers wept for joy. One pastor said he had waited 20 years to see this day. Some churches made the whole month of April a time of witness. Many individuals plan to continue witnessing to five new persons each day. Other denominations have said they would like to join in a similar witness next year. This can only be the beginning." Praise the Lord for what is happening.

Conclusion:

Politically and outwardly, the temper of the times in Asia may not look very favorable for evangelism. Socially and culturally, the peoples of Asia may be all tangled up in ancient knots or mixed up with modern distractions. But millions are in sincere search for inner peace which only the Prince of Peace can provide. Therefore pray that the Lord's message will spread rapidly and triumph wherever it goes, winning converts everywhere in Asia.

2,000 years ago "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord." As we near A.D. 2000 we must unite in prayer and close our ranks so that the tribals in the mountains, the dwellers in the remotest islands, the Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists, students, youth, children and all others; yes, all Asia may hear his voice, follow Jesus Christ and worship the only true and living God.

WESTERN EUROPE IN THE SEVENTIES:

Jan van Capelleveen

The two most significant developments on the religious scene of Western Europe are the almost total collapse of institutional church leadership and a completely new interest in the Bible. This has been described with the words: The church is out and the Bible is in.

The church is out, institutionally speaking. The tremendous interest in church unity, evident in the sixties, has petered out. Instead a polarization, a disunity is noticeable in almost every church — liberal or conservative. A result is that people show little interest in what the church is doing and hardly any interest in official proclamations and synodical decisions. Big city churches almost all over Western Europe had to reduce the number of pastors for financial reasons, often by more than fifty per cent.

Yet, the Bible seems to be in. Just last night I received the annual report of the United Bible Societies. For the first time European countries show a remarkable growth in Bible distribution, and countries like Austria, Western Germany, the Netherlands and Norway claim record sales. New too is the fact that the Bible Societies have added a new phrase to their vocabulary: Missionary Bible translation and Bible distribution. It has been discovered that the Bible translations used by the churches, and usually made for use by the churches are incomprehensible for people outside. Since special translations for them were made, like *Good News for Modern Man* and similar translations in German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and French, people outside the church have rediscovered the Bible. The Netherlands Bible Society recently held an opinion poll on possession and the use of the Bible. It has now become evident that lately many people outside the church have started to read the Bible.

But the Bible Societies of Europe want to reach more groups which have heretofore been forgotten. In their working plan for Europe they plan Bible distribution through special selections for migrant workers. They are beginning to reach the people who have lost the art of reading with Listeners' Bibles, Bibles on cassettes. The Bible Societies not only want to publish the Bible as a book but want to translate it into the other media of radio, television, cassettes, cartoons, posters and slide presentations. For years the Bible Societies were the handmaiden of the church. Now they want to serve also as the messenger boys of the world.

Another important development in Western Europe must have our attention. The Dutch poll gave a lot of older Christians a jolt. It proved that the Bible is read least by people between 50 and 65 years of age. It also showed that their children between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five belong to the group of the best Bible readers. This news was published on the day the hippy underground paper, "Aloha," ceased existence. In the sixties it was the leading voice of the hippy movement. It died, however, because of lack of interest. A new and different generation has come upon the scene in the seventies. New movements

have taken over the limelight of publicity.

One of these new movements is the reborn Youth for Christ. In 1968 it discovered coffeebar evangelism by accident. Soon this organization owned at least a score of buildings in which coffeebars were held and where young people could find a home away from home. It was discovered that young people not only want to wear their own clothes and listen to their own music, but they also need their own youthful atmosphere. They want informality. They sit on the ground. They search for what the Dutch call "gezelligheid," a warm, cozy togetherness, which went out of the homes when the television came in. Now this movement reaches at least 2000 teenagers per day.

At the same time that Youth for Christ was born, a Navigator tried to reach students in the city of Delft. After one year he had gathered thirteen students; after two years, some forty. Now this has become the largest student Christian movement in the country and it is branching out to high school young people with brand new captain clubs.

About the same time a young Dutch fellow decided to do something about the hippies sleeping in the Amsterdam parks. He took a few of them into his home to help them break the drug bondage. Now some forty of these people live and work together in The Hague. On Sunday afternoons often three to 400 people attend the meetings. This work of the Jesus People has spread all over Holland into Germany and Belgium. The central theme of their theology is Jesus. They read the Bible as a guide for everyday life. They may show little interest in historical studies, but they want to practice what they preach. They are radicals, but not rebels. These movements hardly relate to the existing churches. They do not oppress them. They hardly criticize them. Often they speak warmly about them, like one speaks about his own grandmother who spends her last days in a room full of portraits of the past. It is wonderful to visit her for just a short time, it would be impossible to live with her. The churches themselves seem to be flabbergasted by this new revival among young people. They hardly criticize them; they look upon them as something exotic.

This is the situation at this moment. Will these movements and the churches be able to find one another? I'm afraid they are, for the moment, going around in different orbits. Perhaps they will meet in the future, when teenagers have outgrown their jeans and the churches change their high-button shoes for footwear which will give them a new readiness to announce the Good News of peace, as Paul says in the letter to the Ephesians.

THE EVANGEL IN LATIN AMERICA TODAY

Robinson Cavalcanti

Dr. Cavalcanti, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is Professor of Political Science for the Federal University, Recife, and Area Director for the University Biblical Alliance of Brazil (ABUB).

Evangelical Christianity in Latin America is divided into two distinct eras and is entering now its third phase. The first era was the heroic one of the pioneers living in an atmosphere of intolerance and persecution. Thanks to the Lord for all those who survived and transmitted the faith to the coming generations! The second era in most recent years, was the era of creation of the roots, which had a decisive influence in many parts of the world, being one of the relevant expansion periods of the church history. Thanks to the Lord for this era and these blessings! The third era, I think is starting the opportunities today.

I don't know whether in any other part of the world there are so many possibilities to propagate the Gospel. We are living in an atmosphere of great religious freedom. Reunions and divine services — as long as they do not interfere with the laws and morals — are admitted in any place, even in the square. We can use — sometimes even free of charge — press, radio, and television. The evangelicals are becoming respectable persons who are listened to, consulted, and who are getting, more and more, greater financial possibilities and more personnel. The place of the Bible is no more the stake, but the bookcase, the library and the bookshop. Xenophobia — a factor of perturbation for the missionaries — dying down. Nevertheless, the most relevant factor is that, from the slums to the universities, wherever there is a preacher and a message, there will be listeners.

All of it, however, is not a carpet of roses. There are still some foci of traditional Roman-Catholic resistance, even though hidden by a smile. The ecumenism has entailed a most dangerous notion of relativism ("now we are all brothers") which constitutes a difficult obstacle to the evangelization. The mysticism of Afro-American, spiritokardecist, syncretistical or Oriental origin attracts more and more people at present. To a smaller extent than in the past, Marxists and radicals represent an open provocation. The elite continues to be sensitive to the rationalistic philosophies of European origin. The urban individualism of a competitive society underlines the idea that "there is no time to waste with these kinds of things" and that "religion is something individual." Hedonism, practical materialism, and indifference characterize most of the members of a new-growing society. Finding the Gospel insufficiently rational, mystic, practical, or relevant, our new listeners say "no" or delay an option, while the adherents seem to be inferior compared with the previous decade.

If things do not go well, if despite all possibilities we do not obtain