

LAITY GROUP REPORT

J.H. Court

We start from a biblical view of the laity as the people of God with no distinction of status before God between ordained and lay people. Nonetheless, clergy and laity can fulfill different functions both in expressing community within the church and in witness to the world. Without being anti-clerical we emphasize that the laity must play a strategic part in effective evangelism.

Insofar as a distinction may be made, we see the pastor training the congregation to fulfill its responsibilities, more than the congregation supporting the pastor in evangelism.

It is important to train lay people to think and act evangelistically through home and family.

The training and skills of lay people must be harnessed at all levels to complement those of the pastor so that each is free to do that for which he is equipped.

The talents of women are all too often confined by convention and tradition; their personal worth must be respected and fostered. We remember that in most places women represent more than half of the evangelistic force.

Christian witness is not completed in faithful church attendance and preservation of existing organizational structures of the church. There must be an encouragement to become involved in the social structures of the community — in secular organizations and political bodies at all levels so that opportunities to create a specifically Christian life-style will be taken. Young people should be encouraged to explore their Christian calling in terms of involvement in the media, in politics, in the world of the arts and culture. A call to E-1 evangelism is no less a call than one to E-3 evangelism.

Lay people can challenge the *life-style* of the world by living in fellowship with one another, proclaiming God's love by both word and deed; a self-critical humility in relation to wealth, race, and personal morality are necessary prerequisites to chattering the Gospel.

The *thought-forms* of the world must also be challenged. The expertise of lay people can be harnessed to insure an informed witness in controversial areas of personal and social ethics. We reiterate the call of C.S. Lewis for more books by Christians as well as more Christian books. Ideally these should not only be distributed through Christian bookshops.

Three more detailed recommendations are made —

(i) That minority groups be reached through bi-lingual or bi-cultural Christians, e.g., the second generation migrant in such places as Britain or Australia who becomes a Christian. He should be encouraged to witness to the migrant group rather than withdraw from it.

(ii) That the ways in which lay people are witnessing effectively around the world be made known through literature for the purpose.

(iii) That regional conferences across denominations bring lay people together for training in evangelism.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Phil Butler

An unusually high number of Congress participants indicated an interest in the field of mass communications as it relates to evangelism. Over 300 participants took part in six days of strategy sessions and demonstrations. From these meetings came the following priorities.

First, we feel there is a need for a genuinely biblical, theological basis for our use of the mass communications media. Writing on the subject is needed as well as teaching in Christian schools and training centers throughout the world.

Then, there is a need for truly professional training and experience in Christian use of the media. Fewer than ten per cent of those attending the mass communications sessions here at the Congress had ever worked for five years outside the parochial field. Regional training centers must be established to provide this badly needed emphasis.

Christian use of all media is essential — secular as well as church-related. This will require our realization of the strategic role of Christians in commercial and state media. It necessitates our bringing these men and women into fellowship and planning for evangelism through all levels of media.

There must be a local-church centeredness to our use of the media. Coordinated integration of the media is a priority. And the local church must be seen as a part of that integrated plan — playing its unique and vital role in the total task of evangelism and discipleship.

We must encourage the proliferation of Christian publishing, broadcasting, and film production units throughout the world.

Cooperative communications entities must be developed in each country. These fellowships of communicators can provide encouragement and practical assistance for evangelism through the media.

Evangelicals must make an energetic effort to find what media are already available in their countries — many opportunities are often lost due to lack of awareness and action on our part.

An international communications resource center is needed which will provide for the exchange of information, ideas, and provide directories of people and materials available in the field.

The church must grasp *new media*. Satellites, computer networks, data transmission, and other remarkable media forms are already reshaping world commerce and political structures. They must be considered and used for evangelism.

Communications conferences are needed in each country as early as possible, allowing Christians to explore methods, share ideas, and provide focus for media, fellowship and strategy.

An international communications congress needs to be convened within two years. This congress would provide full display of current hardware; exhibition of Christian communications output from around the world — including the field of films, audio-visuals, literature, television, radio, and other media.

Finally, we feel a radical change is necessary in the church's view of mass communications media. There must be a totally new awareness of how completely the media presently dominate our lives, and their awesome potential for evangelism. Power, communication, and action are available if the church, under God's Spirit, takes hold of this remarkable field with vision and an aggressive spirit.

YOUTH REPORT

John Ray

This Congress has been and is going to continue to be an important event in the ongoing task of evangelization among that ever-increasing proportion of our world's population — those under 30. This is not a youth congress as shown by just one example: a national group from a country with more than half of its church membership under 30 has not included a single young person in its contingent. Even so, the importance of reaching youth must be emphasized. In an extraordinary way, the problems and situations of young people mean that we constitute a more uniquely homogenous group than almost any other. It is therefore urged that serious thought be given to a strategy for the evangelization of youth which focuses on how to reach the millions of those under 30 on every continent, especially Asia. If we who have gathered here do not take decisive action, there are others who most definitely will and indeed already are. We thank God for the various worldwide church and parachurch youth organizations, but the challenge of the evangelization of youth in this generation must be faced squarely by us and a more concerted effort made to reach them with the Gospel that deals with the whole man.

One consistent message has come through from young people at the Congress. More than ever before, young people must be given and indeed are ready to shoulder their full and responsible share in the continuing task of world evangelization. We want increasingly to be part of the many teams that God by his Spirit is raising up in various parts of the world. In country after country, he is uniting, preparing and equipping to make us more useful and useable members of his body. We young people say: Your experience and our enthusiasm consecrated to the service of the living God can achieve great things for him.

We have begun to discover each other as partners in our common task at this Congress. This has been partly through listening and listening and listening. But also by singing, sharing, and praying together. Many of us felt the lack of praising the Lord together but the Holy Spirit himself has allowed us in these last few days to experience something of the "beautiful community." We will return encouraged by and supportive of each other. Many have voiced the need for sound evangelical theology based unequivocally on Holy Scripture as vital to our evangelistic and disciple-making strategy. In the years ahead, I can see many of us going to each other's countries, especially in the Third World, as evangelists and disciple-makers with a renewed understanding of the Gospel in its fullest dimension because we have been here at Lausanne.