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From the Editor's Desk



Here is a strange combination!

Two vital frontiers are introduced in this issue. One is the simple, powerful idea of a global network of mission agencies. The other is the out-of-left-field idea that missions ought to found or foster university structures.

For one thing, if universities (41 already) are an important part of the mission scene (not many mission leaders believe this, of course), global collaboration is a highly relevant idea.

Further, if the university pattern is what has caught on and conceivably has more to offer in the long haul than seminaries or Bible institutes mission agencies need to talk about it.

But in any event both subjects are valid frontiers. They fit the definition IJFM has tentatively adopted as you can see on page 36, that is, distant and disputable, etc.

For me, personally, they are neither distant nor disputable.

I have lived with the concept here termed "The Third Call" for many years as it has drifted in and out of focus and has had near misses. It may at first seem that I am "against" meetings of church leaders, even when they meet to discuss missions.

That is not at all true. I just am a hold-out for the right and the duty and the rationale for specifically mission agency leaders getting together without a howl of protest from those many other marvelous Christian leaders who are not invited.

The structure of this issue is first to focus on the proposed global network (which is done magnificently by Patrick Johnstone's concluding plea).

1. We begin with the astounding Moody-Pierson "Appeal to Disciples Everywhere," which might have no other parallel in Christian history in terms of powerful and public announcement and assumed backing.

Yet it largely failed, I believe, because it was issued by the *wrong* people in the *wrong* context to the *wrong* types of Christian structures. It

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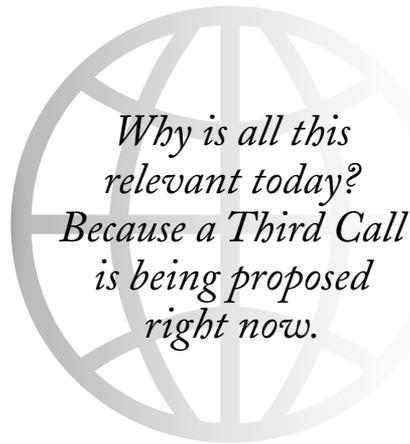
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appears here to make clear that a mission appeal, no matter how cogent and reasonable, may not succeed.

2. We jump to the Call that really did work, which engendered a global meeting strictly of mission leaders and a follow-through structure which for many years worked mightily to extend global missions—before it stumbled due to an unforeseen development.

3. Then, two articles I wrote just before the 1980 World Conference on Frontier Missions, describing in detail what actually happened when a Second Call went out and generated that global meeting and created a follow-through structure which unexpectedly turned out to be dead on arrival. The second of these two historical articles goes to great lengths to courteously distinguish different types of global meetings and to clarify (and justify) what was to happen and did happen in 1980.

Why is all of this relevant today? Because a Third Call is being proposed right now. The two previous



meetings, 1910 and 1980 need to be clearly understood for what they were and how they were convened if *The Third Call* is going to succeed, especially with a follow-through global network of mission agencies that will really work.

In pursuit of His frontiers,

Ralph D. Winter
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Editor

Editor's Note: As before, the articles in this issue are presented in the form they were received. They have not received extensive editorial effort.

This Year's Theme:
Missions at the Edge of the Edge



The IJFM is published in the name of the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions, a fellowship of younger leaders committed to the purposes of the twin consultations of Edinburgh 1980: *The World Consultation on Frontier Missions* and the *International Student Consultation on Frontier Missions*. As an expression of the ongoing concerns of Edinburgh 1980, the IJFM seeks to:

- ☞ promote intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders;
- ☞ cultivate an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology;
- ☞ highlight the need to maintain, renew, and create mission agencies as vehicles for frontier missions;
- ☞ encourage multidimensional and interdisciplinary studies;
- ☞ foster spiritual devotion as well as intellectual growth; and
- ☞ advocate "A Church for Every People."

Mission frontiers, like other frontiers, represent boundaries or barriers beyond which we must go yet beyond which we may not be able to see clearly and boundaries which may even be disputed or denied. Their study involves the discovery and evaluation of the unknown or even the reevaluation of the known. But unlike other frontiers, mission frontiers is a subject specifically concerned to explore and exposit areas and ideas and insights related to the glorification of God in all the nations (peoples) of the world, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.

Subscribers and other readers of the IJFM (due to ongoing promotion) come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Mission professors, field missionaries, young adult mission mobilizers, college librarians, mission executives, and mission researchers all look to the IJFM for the latest thinking in frontier missiology.