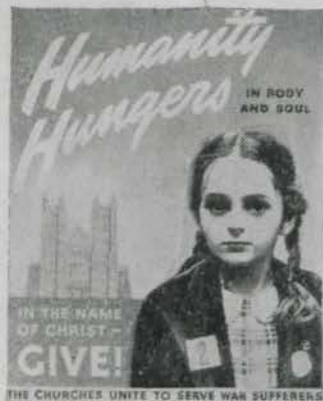


CHURCH COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS RELIEF AND
RECONSTRUCTION - B U R M A

Recd.
18 Apr - AM



CHURCH COMMITTEE on OVERSEAS RELIEF and RECONSTRUCTION

297 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, N. Y.
Phone: GRamercy 5-3475

April 17, 1944.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A. L. WARNSHUIS
FOREIGN COUNSELLOR

Miss M. Craig McGeachy
314 Dupont Circle Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss McGeachy,

I was very much interested in the statement which you presented to the American Council of Voluntary Agencies last week. The churches are not directly represented in that Council but are coordinating their work through this Committee which represents all the Protestant churches in the United States.

We are especially interested in giving assistance to the churches and Christian institutions that are in distress because of the war. We think these churches in the devastated countries will be most important agencies in the giving of relief and in the reconstruction of all social service. For this purpose the churches in Great Britain are launching an appeal for £1,000,000. The churches in the United States have not yet announced any goal for their appeal for funds, but it will doubtless be three times as much or more than what is given in Great Britain. You will recognize the importance of relating this work for the churches in Europe and Asia in the whole program of relief operations.

I want to call your attention especially to the enclosed draft proposal regarding relief in Burma. Of course, we have no means of knowing when relief operations in Burma may become possible but it is important to realize that we are already under great pressure in the development of these plans. The government of Burma exiled in India is asking the missionaries formerly in Burma and now also exiled in India, to give their services in organizing this relief work. They have raised questions that are somewhat difficult for us to answer and we are therefore discussing the proposal as outlined in the enclosed paper. With this brief note regarding the immediate urgency of this discussion, the paper will explain itself.

If you think it will be desirable, I shall be glad to come to Washington to discuss this proposal with you. You will note that this is only a preliminary draft and the whole plan is subject to modification wherever that may be necessary. At the same time the proposal as outlined represents ideas that seem important to us, if these missionaries are to render the service for which they are so well qualified.

In connection with the whole subject of the services to be rendered by the churches, I would also call your attention to another paper which I am enclosing and which was presented by Dr. R. E. Diffendorfer at our Committee meeting last Thursday.

Yours truly,

A. L. Warnshuis
A. L. Warnshuis

ALW:s

MISSIONARY COOPERATION IN
RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION IN BURMA.

In the light of the actions taken by the Atlantic City meeting of the UNRRA and of the plans adopted by the UNRRA for relief operations in the Balkan countries,

1. It is assumed that

a. The UNRRA will have general direction and control of relief operations in Burma as soon as the military authorities transfer this responsibility.

b. The Government of Burma will administer the relief operations in that country, at first obtaining supplies of food, medicines, clothing and shelter from the UNRRA insofar as such supplies are not obtainable in Burma, and as rapidly as possible taking over complete responsibility.

c. Both the UNRRA and the Government of Burma will welcome the assistance of competent foreign voluntary relief agencies.

2. The missionary societies have resources, especially personnel that can be made available for service in relief operations. These include doctors, nurses and general relief workers. They have lived in Burma for many years and are well acquainted with the people and are trusted by them, knowing their language and customs. Moreover, they would be able to recruit trained workers from among the Burmese people. It is possible that some experienced workers, both American and Indian, could be added from India, and other new recruits may be sent from America. The total number that might be available for this service will depend upon the conditions that will be found necessary to govern such employment, but the following figures may be some indication.

Two American churches have had missions in Burma, - (a) The American Baptists, (for 125 years), and (b) The Methodist Church (for 50 years). Three British societies will also be ready to share in this service, viz., (a) The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, (b) The Bible Churchman's Missionary Society, and (c) The Methodist Church in England. The relationships of these American and British societies will be readily coordinated through the Burma Christian Council, whose secretary, the Rev. George Appleton, is now temporarily in India. The total Christian community related to the Protestant churches in Burma numbers 500,000. The American Baptists now have 30 experienced missionaries, who are temporarily refugees in India, and 12 who are on furlough in America. The American Methodists have 6 experienced missionaries available for this work. All of these are waiting for the opportunity to return to Burma. The number of British missionaries will be added after enquiry in London and Calcutta.

3. The conditions of service tentatively proposed by these missions are as follows:

a. The UNRRA and the Government of Burma, when permitted by the military authorities, will organize and direct the participation of these missionary societies in relief work in Burma.

b. The missionary societies will pay the salaries of the workers and also provide for their personal equipment. The provision of travelling expenses to Burma will be subject to mutual agreement between the societies concerned and the governmental authority.

c. Relief supplies will be furnished by the governmental authorities.

d. The Burma Christian Council will serve as the central organizing agency for all the workers provided by the missionary societies.

e. These workers will have civilian status and will not be in any uniform.

f. As engaged in relief work organized by the UNRRA and the Government of Burma, these workers will be under the direction and control of the governmental authorities, and will strictly avoid any discrimination on religious or racial grounds. When local organization may be desirable, this will be representative of the whole community. (The missions in China have demonstrated their ability to organize and operate relief work in such ways).

g. Insofar as practicable, these relief workers will be sent to the districts where they have formerly lived and worked.

h. In addition to their relief work and without interfering with the primary responsibility of providing as much emergency relief as is practicable, the workers will organize work-relief projects, including the rebuilding of homes, school and hospital buildings, and agricultural projects, using for such purposes funds specially provided by the church and missionary agencies. This will be done with a view to the re-establishment of public morale and self-sustaining communities.

i. The term of service shall be one year, subject to earlier release or extension for a second year, both by mutual agreement. Upon being released from this service, the worker may remain in Burma without any provision by the governmental authorities for their return journey, or may return to America or England in accordance with special agreements about travelling expenses as provided for in paragraph 3 b. above.

FOOTNOTE: This proposal will be referred for approval to the India Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, and forwarded by them to the Burma Christian Council for their approval and for presentation to the Government of Burma. It will be forwarded by the International Missionary Council for approval of the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and to obtain the cooperation of the British Missionary societies concerned. The CCORR will serve to coordinate the plans and appeals for funds of the American missionary societies and to present the proposal to the UNRRA.

A. L. Warnshuis

April 4, 1944.

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A. L. Warnshuis

April 4, 1944.

New Leaven in Europe

Regarding the suggestion that American Churches make a contribution toward the restoration of the general church life of Europe, it is proposed that there be included in all the post-war funds of the Churches a sum for this purpose. These funds might be in addition to any amounts which might be provided by denominations for Churches in Europe with "the opposite numbers." The expenditure of the fund, when available, could be coordinated and in some cases be administered by the World Council of Churches. The proposal grows out of the desperate condition in which the churches of Europe find themselves because of the war.

New Hope for Europe

"The present crisis has evidently not yet reached its peak," wrote Dr. Karl Barth in Foreign Affairs for January, 1943. "The severest trials and tests of endurance for European Protestantism probably still lie ahead. And beyond the problems of war lie those of peace. 'The old world is dead!' A leading English statesman has just proclaimed. He is probably right. Europe undoubtedly has come to the end of an historic, political, economic and social era and confronts an unexampled re-beginning. Equally true is that its renewal must consist not in the destruction of Western culture, but in its unhindered efflorescence, rooted as it is in Christianity. The new life which is to follow the death of the old must be founded on this culture.

"Will the confused and war-weary nations muster the courage, the insight and the will power to do this? Will they be able to comprehend that the world, for all its frailty and imperfection, after all the horror which it has known, still has a hope of better things? And will they comprehend further that without this hope no authentic quest for those better things will ever be attempted? It will be the function of the Christian churches to proclaim this hope and to make it comprehensible."

One answer to Dr. Barth's challenge is that Christian churches of Europe can give hope and practical encouragement to a devastated continent only as they continue a

part of the World Christian Community and are not left to lie broken and isolated in discouraged, defeated, and utterly wasted states and communities.

A New Coherency

Total war in any land can only be achieved by breaking up all organizations which may be regarded as irrelevant. In this forced disintegration, the churches always suffer along with other social agencies. Wars, especially between peoples who own the name of our Lord, uproot the very pre-suppositions of the ecumenical movement in Christianity. The universal elements in Christianity are potent barriers to the triumphs of any "master race." In this, the war above all wars, ^{Leaders have} (the Churches of Europe ~~lost contact~~ have been torn from all their worldwide relationships.) If the churches all over the world now help to rebuild the Christian Movement in Europe, they will thereby aid in the achievement of a new coherency -- a basic sense of brotherhood, among peoples whose whole life has been badly shattered. £ 1 million

The Continuity of The Parish

While the connectional church life of Europe has disintegrated, the local parish organization, as Hiram Motherwell points out in The Peace We Fight For, will be one of the few continuing fellowships which offers contacts for rebuilding community life. To give such groups, of any and all denominations, such encouragement as will be possible from the outside, may mean the difference between a fresh and vigorous influence for righteousness and a deepening impotence.

No Alternative

Our concern for the future of the religious life of Europe becomes startling when one thinks of an alternative. Europe will have a vigorous Christian movement of a new type growing out of the sufferings, the resistance, and the courage of the surviving churches or it will be overshadowed by the enlightened secularism of modern revolutionary movements. There will be agnosticism and atheism on one side and social and economic

revolution without regard to spiritual satisfactions on the other. Any group of churches, when caught between such conflicts, can only become vital by having available all the strength of fellowship which the World Church can bring to it. To think of Europe cut off from the rest of the Protestant world is tragedy and yet that dilemma must be faced. This possibility also raises the question as to some future service to Russia and the possibility of cooperation with the vital religious forces of that great land. The World Council of the Churches will need also to study every and any avenue of approach to Russia.

The World Council of Churches

The churches in Europe will not recover quickly merely by a contribution of dollars or the presence of a few persons of good will. The hatreds and bitterness within Europe engendered by war need to be resolved and the churches need also to be restored to fellowship both within the borders of the several countries and with the universal Christian movement. One of the ways we can help them to do this is to have a strong ecumenical Christian center in the heart of Europe out of which, in the spirit of humility and real sacrifice and with no patronizing facets, the churches of the wider fellowship may give needed assistance. This is the reason it is proposed that the British and American Churches, indeed, churches from all over the world, provide adequate funds for reconstruction in the newly created Department of Relief and Reconstruction of the World Council of Churches.

A United Effort

No exclusively denominational approach to Europe's prostrate churches can render the needed assistance. Such a united effort will be a living support of that principle of freedom, so dear to every true Christian, to carry the Christian Message across frontiers and to establish once more Christianity's claim to universality. Furthermore, a united program will yield a more even spread of service than the exclusively denominational approach.

The service to displaced persons or refugees is going to be a large one. They will not be in denominational lumps to be cared for. Rather they will be outside of territory where most denominations will have any adequate service centers. Only a genuinely united program can deal with the needs in this field. And so, also, through united effort, the minority groups may be tied together in fellowship which will give to them and the whole cause added strength.

Support the Leaders

Surviving spiritual leaders, struggling toward victory over forces of destruction, need our support. It will be their efforts which will rebuild the life of the churches and re-orient uprooted and broken youth. They will be the ones who will bring courage to the faithful who may be threatened by waves of disillusionment and hopelessness. These leaders need our support to help them to demonstrate again the rights of men to conduct religious services according to the dictates of their own consciences.

An Unquenchable Spirit

The churches of Europe are the depository of much of the Christian tradition, especially of Protestantism. Some of the most precious contributions to American Christianity have their roots in Europe. Those traditions, surviving suppression and persecution and strengthened by resistance to "principalities and powers", may yet revivify the spiritual life of mankind. Working with Europe's Christian leaders will give this unquenchable spirit a chance.

The peoples of Europe, both in the Axis nations and in the occupied lands have through the centuries made rich contributions to Christian learning. Europe's people, freed from the yoke of oppression, through their very war experiences may produce for the world's life new and creative centers of Christian scholarship. Surviving European Christianity will have much to teach us and the whole world. They need to have

a chance to do this and that, right soon, if the powerful secular and anti-Christian forces are to be stemmed at their source.

Then, too, a reinforced World Council of Churches can be one of the channels through which these lessons can be made to the Churches throughout the world.

Revived Missions

The Protestant churches of Europe in pre-war days, were vigorous missionary agencies. In Asia, Africa and the Islands of the Sea, their devoted missionaries, scholars of the first rank, in long periods of service without furloughs, have made outstanding contributions to the understanding of peoples, their history, languages and customs, which have enriched the whole world-wide Christian movement. Scandinavian, German, Dutch and French missionaries, particularly, have left behind them large Christian communities, many of them now "Orphaned Missions" toward the support of which American Christians have given so generously. Restored Christian churches in Europe will again take up their missionary tasks and, in the meantime, their "Orphaned Missions" will be our special care. Furthermore, the minority churches in Europe can only survive in the matrix of a strong general Protestant movement.

The British Proposal

From England comes a recent word that the Committee on the British Reconstruction of Christian Institutions in Europe has appealed for £ 1,500,000 and has, in this connection, passed the following resolution:

"In the case of un-earmarked contributions, distribution should be made by the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of Churches, which should take into its consideration the following factors: (i) any preferences of the contributors; (ii) the needs of the European churches and Christian institutions, especially making sure that those without opposite numbers in Britain and America are not overlooked; (iii) the total receipts from all countries, so that any lack of proportion in the allocations may be corrected."

The New Department

The memoranda from Dr. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, after consultation with church leaders in Europe, have stated the problem adequately and have indicated the need and the spirit in which aid should be administered. Already a few American denominations are planning to make available persons for the Staff of the new Department of Reconstruction. At this writing the Department is expected to be partially autonomous with an entirely separate budget from that of the Council.

Prominent European church leaders are recommended as officers of the Department and the greatest care will be taken to give it the sort of continental complexion which will prevent the wounding of the pride of the suffering Churches by constructing in the heart of Europe a body too predominantly American or Anglo-Saxon.

A Survey of The Need

Given the cessation of hostilities and the opening of channels now closed, the first act of the new department will probably be to assemble a staff and proceed with the projected general survey of the needs of the continental churches and of the Christian institutions of all denominations other than the Roman Catholic. Although a considerable body of information is already assembled in the Geneva office of the Council, it will obviously be necessary to gather a great deal more in order to make sure that a balanced picture of the total strategy of reconstruction can be made.

Pending the assembling and study of such data, it will be difficult to say exactly how funds would be used. It is obvious, however, that any adequate survey to cover the fifteen nations most seriously affected will itself require considerable funds and an able staff of both Americans and Europeans. This, therefore, would constitute one of the objects for which funds are needed.

Possible Use of the Fund

There are at least seven other needs which the World Council has indicated, although no realistic estimates can be made at this time as to their relative importance.

(1) The reinforcement of pastoral and religious educational leadership through:

- a- salary aid to those hampered by poverty
- b- repatriation of properly qualified refugee pastors
- c- bringing from Sweden, England, Switzerland and elsewhere those who have been trained for leadership during this period.
- d- assistance in large evangelistic campaigns.

(2) The supplying of new pastoral leadership through:

- a- the reassembling of theological faculties
- b- the provision of suitable buildings
- c- the securing of equipment, including books, and
- d- scholarships for students

(3) The creation of an adequate supply of Christian literature in at least seven languages, which may entail the setting up of printing establishments in some areas.

(4) The reconstruction or new construction of Churches in areas where substitute buildings are not available or where other considerations make it seem necessary.

(5) The rehabilitation of Christian Youth organizations destroyed during the war. Conditions of youth in most of the European lands following the war will make this a particularly difficult but urgent requirement.

(6) Assist in Home Missions and Christian Social Work.

(7) Exchange Ecumenical Missions with defeated countries.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Private Agency

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 28, 1943

SUBJECT: Meeting to discuss plan of Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction for operation in the Far East.

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. A. L. Warnshuis, Dr. R. L. Howard, Mr. Jackson, and Miss Flexner.

COPIES TO: Mr. Jackson

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Dr. Warnshuis stated that they came down to discuss the possibility of our cooperation with them on getting some of the missionaries into Burma. Dr. Warnshuis discussed the plan which had been sent to Mr. Malin previously and he stated that the British Army were interested in taking with them into Burma Dr. Jury, President of Judsen College. They also recommended Dr. G. S. Seagrave and Lieutenant Cummings.

Dr. Howard gave us a list of the people who were available in Burma and India. However, Dr. Howard was asked to return the list to us with more detail about the individuals, their background and training.

Judsen College has been financed fifty per cent by the Baptists and fifty per cent by the Burmese Government over a long period of years. There are about twelve teachers in the College. Evidently, the largest group of christians in Burma are baptists, and this group therefore is very interested in being able to help on relief and rehabilitation, with mobile kitchens and mobile medical units etc.

Mr. Jackson explained our situation and said that at such time as we are in a position to discuss this matter more concretely, we should be glad to communicate with them. In the meantime the list of personnel will be sent to us.