

Ninth North American Coordination Committee Meeting
of the LCJE, Los Angeles, California, 23-25 March, 1992

International LCJE Report 1992

By Kai Kjaer-Hansen

1. Not one word about money

At this year's North American LCJE meeting I have decided not to say one word about money. I am not even going to use the technique which some organisations use: they never ask for money but, on the other hand, they never miss an opportunity to emphasize that they don't talk about money! If there are people present who have questions about the status of their dues and about LCJE's finances, please talk to me later.

2. Responses to LCJE Zeist 91

I think the Fourth LCJE International Conference in Zeist, 5-8 August 1991 became a good experience to most participants. We were not able to avoid a rather heated debate in connection with business meetings and elections - something I would not mind having been without. The fact that the conference became a meeting-place for leaders who, for various reasons, have problems with other leaders only confirms the necessity of a network like LCJE. Participation in a conference is not just listening to papers, it is also using the pauses - and using them for constructive purposes such as establishing new contacts or re-establishing broken contacts.

The responses that I have had have been very positive, and that applies to content/program and observance of the time schedule. One LCJE member's opinion of the conference was that nothing was said that was not already known. If he is right - and perhaps his statement should be modified a little - then this criticism will have to be included in the plans for the next LCJE conference. But this does not stop me from saying that there are things which have to be said in every conference, and not only because there are newcomers all the time but also because we old folks need to hear the old truths over and over.

The press coverage in Holland was satisfactory. The Message which was sent out from Zeist "Behold, I am doing a new thing" was translated into German and Danish and probably also into other languages, and a number of articles about Zeist 91 have been published in the magazines of various organisations all over the world. In the US The Message caused responses and reactions from different quarters, e.g. in *The Jewish Advocate*.

300 conference booklets were printed and only a few copies are left. One of the papers, namely by former President Murdo A. MacLeod, has been translated into Japanese. This is more than a curiosity, it is a sign that even in Japan there are believers who wish for Israel to be met with the gospel about Jesus.

And in passing: one way to make the name of LCJE known in wider circles is to quote from LCJE's publications when you write articles.

3. LCJE conference in Israel 1995

If everything goes according to plans, the next LCJE conference will be in Israel some time in 1995. Time and place have not yet been decided. It is no secret that some Israeli LCJE members would prefer such a conference not to be held in Israel. The question was put to the vote at the regional meeting for Israel in Zeist and a majority were in favour. Joseph Shulam, the newly elected coordinator for Israel, is whole-heartedly for this decision together with the two people he has asked to assist him, namely Bodil F. Skjoett and Ray Gannon. I have had the first meeting with the three of them with a view to the conference in 1995, so we have already started the planning.

4. The LCJE Chapters

Meetings and conferences are held regularly in the following chapters: North America, Israel, South Africa and Europe, but not in Australia/New Zealand and South America, although there was a meeting there last year. It will be exciting to see what comes out of the Israeli chapter's "Think tank on evangelism", which was described in the LCJE Bulletin no. 27. The next European meeting will be in Switzerland, 19-21 September 1992. John Ross, new coordinator for Europe, has made an exciting program with the theme: "Ethics and Jewish Evangelism".

5. Jewish Prayer Needs

Betty Baruch, coordinator for Australia/New Zealand, was asked in Zeist by LCJE's International Coordinating Committee to write and distribute a prayer letter to churches, organisations and individuals in Asia. She has been doing this for some time. Every second month she sends it out to more than 1000 addresses. I don't think that any of us in the ICC, when the decision was made, had imagined that so many people would want to receive Jewish Prayer Needs. Since I have promised not to mention money, I shall refrain from reflections on whether we can afford something like this - or whether we can afford not to do this. Personally I think that the fact that there are Asian Christians who want to become involved in prayer for Jews and our work in Jewish evangelism is *very* encouraging.

6. European "Willowbank"

The first decisions have been made concerning "European Theological Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People", i.e. a consultation like the one which was held in Willowbank, Bermuda, April 1989, and which resulted in "The Willowbank Declaration on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People". It is not that we in Europe think that we can make something that is better than this, but we think that we may be better heard if we have a consultation like this. The result of preliminary discussions and negotiations so far is that the consultation will be in the name of the Lausanne Consultation on World Evangelization. I have been asked to be responsible for the consultation, which we hope will take place in June 1994. Provided everything ...

7. Still room for new members

The membership is rather stable as to numbers: 23 agency members and approximately 150 individual members. But there is room for many more. They don't usually come automatically. We have tried to recruit new subscribers to the Bulletin, which is printed in approximately 700 copies. We have sent out letters and Bulletins to a number of institutions and libraries in Australia and South Africa. But apparently, that is not the way to do it. At any rate, we have not had any new subscribers in that way. Last year I mentioned the possibility that an organisation should pay so that a library or an institution could receive our Bulletin and/or Mishkan. A few - but not many - have used that idea. I don't know whether it is the idea or the people who are going to carry it out that's the trouble. But please consider it once more.

8. New International Directory on its way

The last edition of the International Directory came in 1988. It has appeared that it satisfied a need, and therefore the ICC has decided to publish a new one. It is Susan Perlman who is toiling with it. In the autumn of 1991 she sent out questionnaires to organisations and individual members of LCJE. Anyone who has tried this kind of work knows how difficult it is to get the required information. We expect the new Directory to be finished for publication within the next six months.

9. Cooperation about publications

Members of LCJE don't have to cooperate about everything, nor about the production of

publications. Each organisation has a need to publish its own books. But when several - perhaps most - organisations dare not publish theologically "heavy" books with themes related to Jewish evangelism, because they don't sell well enough, this should animate us to ask how we together can publish such books. The best thing is to have them published by a well-reputed publishing house. The worst thing is that they are not published at all. Therefore the second best thing must sometimes be chosen: that they are published in a modest number and as a co-production. There are several possible models which I shall not touch on here. Compared to those who are against Jewish evangelism and those who are for a dialogue attitude and who are spokesmen for a two-covenant theology, we are lagging far behind when it comes to having books which present our views on the bookshelves of the bookstores and the libraries.

10. LCJE seen from Denmark

LCJE's international address is in Denmark, which cannot be said to be the centre of Jewish evangelism worldwide. As international coordinator I have - for a few years - agreed to look after the administration, a job that I don't always perform with a Halleluja on my lips. But that's the way things are... I am glad that my wife, Kirsten, can meet some of you personally at this meeting. Sometimes I think she feels that my heart belongs more to Jews and LCJE than to her. But that's the way things are... I have good friends and assistants in Birger Petterson and Flemming Markussen whom those of you who were in Zeist met. Without their help I would not have been editor of the Bulletin - and probably not International Coordinator either. And then there is one more thing which North American LCJE members ought to know. Susan Perlman is doing an impressive LCJE job on top of her other activities - and she is the best imaginable support for a coordinator like me.

And finally, Ole Chr. M. Kvarme, our President, asked me to give to you his greetings. I am often on the line to him. Perhaps he will be with you at the 10th North American LCJE meeting next year. We may have an ICC meeting in connection with that.

I do not take it for granted that I am invited to attend your meetings, and therefore I want to conclude this by thanking you for your invitation to this meeting in Los Angeles.