

THE HARTFORD SEMINARY FOUNDATION

55 Elizabeth Street
HARTFORD 5, CONNECTICUT

C2-287

March 10, 1953

~~Dear Mr. Bardsley~~

With a small grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to The Hartford Seminary Foundation, this institution is planning to organize a Conference to be held May 28-31, 1953. This year the Conference will deal with Africa, South of the Sahara. Tentatively, the general theme has been worded "STATESMANSHIP IN AFRICA", with the sub-title: "A Present-Day Demand Upon the Christian Movement".

The Conference will gather a group of approximately forty scholars, mostly all of them from American universities, all interested in Africa through the fields of anthropology, linguistics, political science and religion. Half a day will be devoted to each of the following subjects:

1. The Language Question
2. Race Relations
3. Church-Government Relations
4. African Forms of Expression
5. Growth of Indigenous Leadership

Last year when I was helping Dr. Emory Ross, Secretary of the Africa Committee of the National Council, in the preparation of the North American Assembly on African Affairs, which was held at Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, June 16-25, 1952, we drafted a questionnaire which we sent to a large group of persons connected with the Mission enterprise. This questionnaire met a much better response than we had anticipated; the result being that a symposium of the replies was drafted, mimeographed and sent in advance to all the participants of the Assembly. A copy of the symposium was also sent to all those who had replied, as a token of our gratitude for their help.

For those who will take the trouble to answer the questionnaire and who will receive the symposium, this document will mean an exchange of ideas with colleagues from all parts of Africa. And for those who will attend the Conference, it will help to stir the addresses and the discussion toward the more practical issues. For, while it is not our intention that the conference should draft recommendations, it is our plan to keep away from the theoretical and to think in practical terms. Thus, your answers will give the speakers the illustrations they will need.

We cannot expect every one to answer ALL the questions. We would welcome the answering of all questions, but especially those about which you feel strongly. Another matter: Do you wish not to be quoted?

Your replies should reach us not later than the beginning of May, if they should be included in the symposium.

Sincerely yours,

James Cavin

James Cavin
Director of Preparation

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Should the program of the Missions and Churches be conducted through the tribal languages, the African trade languages, or the European language of the government?
Please explain.
2. In your opinion, do the missionaries demonstrate adequate ability to use the languages of your area (vernacular and European language of government)?
If not, to what do you ascribe the difficulty?
What would you recommend?
3. To what extent has racial integration been achieved in your church life, such as:
 - (a) complete equality of opportunity for African leadership to participate in church enterprises;
 - (b) integration in faculty business meetings of educational institutions;
 - (c) in faculty social functions;
 - (d) in the interchange of hospitality;
 - (e) in Christian fellowship without social distance?
4. In which fields (educational, medical, vocational training, literacy, agricultural, social) do you feel that Governmental, International or Philanthropic agencies are doing a good job?
Could the Churches and Missions relinquish these activities in order to concentrate on more distinctively Christian tasks?
5. In which fields can the Christian Churches and Missions make a distinctive contribution in the development of Africa, a contribution that is neither yet done or could not be done by any other agency?
6. In some matters, such as wages and qualifications of teachers, the Christian Church and Missions are unfortunately being forced to make advances by the pressure of government standards or by the demands of the Africans for more responsibilities and control.
What are the factors which tend in present-day situations to make Christianity reactionary, or at least appear to be so?
How can Christianity be a real progressive or dynamic force in Africa?
7. How can the Christian Church and Missions, in each different political setup, take a position, clear to both the Africans and the government and devoid of all ambiguity, which will be sympathetic toward the aspirations of the Africans toward political self-expression?
8. Has the Church or Missions, in your area, through their Christian Councils or otherwise, stated officially how they stand in present-day political issues, such as the statements adopted by the Christian Councils of the Gold Coast in August, 1949 and of Nigeria in 1951?
(These statements deal with the right to self-government, which is good government, racial and color discrimination, quality of character required of civil servants, the role of the Church in politics, duties of citizens, etc.)
9. To what extent do any of the following African cultural ways have a place in the life of the Church:
Music, art, dance forms, instruments, palaver customs, handclapping, choral responses between sections of the sermon, audience response of appreciation by a soft murmur, use of talking drums, naming ceremony, marriage ceremony, puberty rites or puberty organizational forms, Church organization paralleling the political or tribal structure?

10. Indicate any other customs which show the African influence upon Christian worship and conduct.

How can additional opportunities for the expressions of such forms be afforded?

Which discontinued? Why?

11. In your group, what is now the organic relation between Home Church, Mission, and African Church?

Toward which goal are you working:

- a) an African Church organically part of the Home Church? How closely?
- b) an independent African Church still retaining its denominational characteristics?
- c) an independent African Church free to choose its own expression of African Christianity?
- d) an independent Church which will eventually merge with other Churches of the territory and become part of a National Church, such as the Church of Christ in Congo?
- e) any other goal?

How much does such a goal determine the policies of the Mission?

Do you agree that the organization called Foreign Missions on the field must and will eventually disappear? How is this to be done?.....

When one by one all the missionaries have been replaced by a competent African staff? When missionaries, properties and funds are put under the direction of the African Church?..... Any other way?

12. List in order of priority the phases of missionary activity which should be emphasized during the next ten years.

How should this program be carried out?

13. What are the main difficulties in the process of devolution?

- a) lack of trained African ministry and lay leadership?
- b) lack of sense of responsibility on the part of the African?
- c) poverty of the Church?
- d) reluctance on the part of the missionary to trust the African, especially in financial matters?
- e) reluctance on the part of the missionary to relinquish his position of authority?
- f) gap between the standards of living of missionaries and that of the Africans?
- g) poor human relations?
- h) no clear understanding of Church-Mission relationship?
(i.e., - the function of Mission in regard to the African Church).
- i) any other?