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ABSTRACT

AN EXPERIENCE IN THE PARADOX OF INDIGENOUS CHURCH  
BUILDING: A HISTORY OF THE EASTERN MENNONITE  
MISSION IN TANGANYIKA, 1934-1961

By

George Ronald Anchak

In 1934 the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities opened its first foreign mission in Tanganyika near Lake Victoria. The board's stated goal was the establishment of an indigenous church according to the "three-self" principle--self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. This study analyzes EMBMC's experience in Tanganyika to learn if the board succeeded in its objective. More specifically, it required an examination of the strategy employed by the mission board, the Bishop Board and the mission to determine if policies and actions were consistent with stated goals. Since the Mennonites were westerners, it also seemed reasonable to question whether or not a foreign group could establish an indigenous church in Tanganyika without it being perceived by the Africans as a western institution. Another concern was to learn the effect of the mission experience upon the Lancaster church and its membership. Finally, it was equally important to see how the Mennonites, who believed in the separation of

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George Ronald Anchak

church and state, coped with African demands for quality education, better medical treatment and, after 1945, the struggle for political independence.

EMBMC's headquarters in Salunga, Pennsylvania, maintains its own archives, including the official minutes of EMBMC and the Bishop Board; the official correspondence between the home boards and the field, missionary letters, articles and news releases are found in the vertical files. While at Salunga, I also taped interviews with Orle Miller, architect of EMBMC's foreign mission policy, Paul Kraybill, Miller's successor as Overseas Secretary, Shemaya Magati, a second-generation leader of the Tanganyika Mennonite Church (TMC) and four missionaries--Elam Stauffer, Clyde Shenk, Mahlon Hess and Rhoda Wenger--who served in Tanganyika between 1934 and 1961. John Mosemann, one of the pioneer missionaries, was interviewed at Goshen College, Indiana. The diaries of Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer were valuable sources of information for the early days of settling into the mission.

EMBMC's decision to work according to the "three-self" principle delayed the development of an indigenous church in Tanganyika. Furthermore, the home board's paramount goal was the establishment of a Mennonite church, which the mission and bishop boards described as an indigenous church. The missionaries in the field





attempted to convince the home boards that the Mennonite faith could become indigenous in Tanganyika only if the new Christians accepted it as being relevant to their conversion.

Although Africanization was the cornerstone of an indigenous church, the native Christians were given little responsibility for administering the church until the East African Revival (1940's) opened the missionaries' eyes to their paternalism. While the revival was the true beginning of African spiritualism, a program known as "partners in obedience" provided indigenous involvement in the preparation of TMC between 1958 and 1961. Thereafter, the missionaries worked for TMC which now administered the church and its own programs.

The Tanganyika experience increased the spiritual life of the Lancaster Conference Mennonite Church membership because they became personally involved in evangelism through the mission. The experience also served as a prototype for further overseas work. Nonetheless, the skeletal force employed by EMBMC at home between 1934 and 1958 made it impossible for the board to move faster than it did in the development and progress of its Tanganyika mission. After 1945, however, it was no longer a question of whether or not to expand because events in Tanganyika did not allow the mission to be dilatory.

AN EXPERIENCE IN THE PARADOX OF INDIGENOUS CHURCH  
BUILDING: A HISTORY OF THE EASTERN MENNONITE  
MISSION IN TANGANYIKA, 1934-1961

By

George Ronald Anchak

A DISSERTATION

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Michigan State University  
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1975



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G. R. A.

April 1975

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## INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities,<sup>1</sup> incorporated in 1916, is the District Board of Lancaster Conference. The Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Elkhart, Indiana, is the General Board of the Mennonite Church in North America, and although the two boards cooperate in sharing information, finances, plans and activities, there is no formal relationship between the two. EMBMC is composed of members from Lancaster and Washington-Franklin conferences.<sup>2</sup>

In 1934 the Eastern Board established its first overseas mission in the northwestern part of Tanganyika near Lake Victoria. According to Paul N. Kraybill,

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<sup>1</sup>Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, hereafter cited as either the Eastern Board, mission board, or abbreviated EMBMC.

<sup>2</sup>Lancaster Conference is located in Lancaster and Lebanon counties in Pennsylvania, while Washington-Franklin Conference is located in Washington and Franklin counties in Pennsylvania and also the state of Maryland. Traditionally the Washington-Franklin Conference has been more conservative than the Lancaster Conference and, therefore, slower to engage in foreign mission activity. But in 1966, they appointed their first workers to Guatemala under the EMBMC umbrella. These workers are supported and sponsored, however, by the Washington-Franklin County Mission Board.

former overseas secretary of EMBMC, the mission adhered to the principles of self-supporting indigenous church building because of the financial strictures of the depression.<sup>3</sup> The undertaking was made at a time when other European and American Protestant mission societies were pursuing a policy of retrenchment. Although aware of the difficulty of such an undertaking during the depression, EMBMC was determined that its work would not be hindered by questions of financial assistance, and it mandated a self-supporting requirement for all new churches.<sup>4</sup>

The Eastern Board carefully studied the successful efforts of Protestant mission societies and concluded that their success was due to the employment of the

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<sup>3</sup>Paul N. Kraybill expects to write a paper in which he will argue that the mission adhered to the indigenous principle. Paul N. Kraybill, private interview, August 12, 1971.

<sup>4</sup>In the century prior to World War I, foreign mission societies in Europe and the United States attempted to establish Christian churches in other parts of the world as a particular expression of their world mission. The "three-self" method--self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing--was the most accepted means by which a religious experience could be revealed to non-Christians. After World War I, Christian missionaries were sent out to establish indigenous churches, but there was no agreement on just what they were, or how they were to be realized. The indigenous principle received its greatest acceptance in the 1930's, but its implementation varied with each individual or group.

indigenous principle. Furthermore, EMBMC was convinced that this principle was not only practical but also based on Scripture. Christ had commissioned the church to go forth and bring His Word to all people,<sup>5</sup> and when the Mennonites scrutinized the Bible they found they could attribute the missionary success of St. Paul and the Apostles to the indigenous concept.

It must be determined what EMBMC really meant by indigenous church building,<sup>6</sup> and if its understanding of the term was in agreement with the definition of indigenous building used in the 1930's when EMBMC launched its mission work in Tanganyika. In reality both the mission board and most of the missionaries in the field found it difficult to apply the indigenous principle to mission work. Policy was not, therefore, permitted to interfere with the mission's paramount goal: the establishment of the Tanganyika Mennonite Church. Where theory obstructed the real goal, it was simply ignored, even though the mission board continued to state officially that its

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<sup>5</sup>Mark 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The Mennonites used a wide variety of versions of the Bible. In the past, however, the King James version was the most prominent. Most of the Scripture memory work was done from the King James version from which the above quotation is taken. The ecumenical nature of the Lancaster Conference is discussed in Chapter Two.

<sup>6</sup>Throughout this paper the term "church building" is used to mean spiritual building, not architectural building.

work in Tanganyika was in accordance with the indigenous principle. This pretence was maintained from 1934 to 1958, at which time the indigenous principle was set aside for "partners in obedience."

There are other questions which also must be answered in this study. For example, could the Mennonites, who were westerners, introduce an indigenous church into Africa? If one accepts the premise that the Word<sup>7</sup> of God in the New Testament is universal, then it is possible to build in a foreign environment; the Gospel must, however, be interpreted within indigenous terms. Therefore, a Mennonite from the United States may bring the Word to Africa, but in order to elicit an indigenous response, the Gospel must be made relevant to the life of the hearer, in this case, the Tanganyikan. The Word of God becomes relevant only when the hearer can apply it, not because the bearer, the EMBMC-sponsored missionary, lives by it. If, however, the bearer of the Word is

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<sup>7</sup>Capitalization of certain words in this paper, such as "Word," is in keeping with the Confession of Faith adopted by the Mennonite Church. Other words capitalized deal with God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Bible. The Mennonites affirm, regarding the theological context of the capitalization of these terms, that they believe in the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God; that it is authentic in its character, authoritative in its counsels, inherent in the original writings, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice," Articles of Faith, Article I, adopted by the Mennonite General Conference at Garden City, Missouri, August 24-26, 1921.

hastily presumptuous, then instruction merely imposes a new set of barely understood conditions upon traditional law. The missionary should explain that he carries a Gospel which brings a new life, not necessarily a western life, and that the church is a fellowship of believers whose aim is the glorification of Jesus Christ, not the glorification of Mennonitism. To build Christ's church --not the Mennonite church--Christianity must be presented as a universal concept to nonwesterners.

Unfortunately, however, paternalism and attitudes of cultural superiority interfered with the success of mission work. Western missionaries, Mennonites included, were guilty of being too preoccupied with their own importance; they imagined that they had come to teach the less fortunate how to become Christians. The missionaries should have realized that they had come to share what they had learned about God, in particular, His Son, Jesus Christ; that they had come to learn, with the newly initiated Christians, more about the heavenly mission. By working more closely with the Christian novices, and by identifying completely with the new African church, accepting it as the center of Christian activity, the missionaries could have shared in the building of an indigenous church.

Oddly enough, the vindication of the indigenous principle occurred only during the so-called "period of

integration" (1958-1961). In 1947 the concept of "partnership in obedience" was coined throughout the missionary world.<sup>8</sup> Although this idea truly called for indigenous church building, EMBMC did not accept this view until 1958. Only then did its evangelical work become indigenous, with the mission taking a back seat in the development of the Tanganyika Mennonite Church. During the previous twenty-four years, the mission comprised a separate entity, a place where missionaries lived and worked and which, almost incidentally, included a local African church. The mission, unconsciously, had therefore maintained a separate identity from the Tanganyika church. For the most part, it was run by the Americans, with very little native involvement in positions of authority or leadership. When EMBMC finally accepted the concept of "partners in obedience," the mission lost its separate identity and was integrated

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<sup>8</sup> Concern for missionary expansion of the Christian church led to a meeting of the International Missionary Council at Whitby, Ontario, in July 1947. This conference was convened to reexamine fundamental missionary principles and policy. Present were 112 delegates from 40 countries. This body adopted a policy called "partners in obedience." The relationship between church, older or younger, was to be on the basis of partnership. There was to be cooperation in all decision-making, finance, personnel, policy and administration. Although the younger church learned from the older, the former also learned to act for itself, thus becoming an indigenous church. This topic is discussed fully in Chapter Six.



into the African church.<sup>9</sup> It was not until the Christianized Tanganyikan attained control of evangelistic, educational and medical work that he felt Christianity was really indigenous. In time the mission, or at least some of the missionaries, came to realize that it was not necessary to impose a westernized Christianity, and that it was possible to incorporate many elements of African culture into the establishment of an indigenous church in Tanganyika. However, direct EMBMC control seemed to bring with it westernized Christianity. "Partners in obedience" proved that Christianity was not a western institution or a western concept, and that the initiative to Christianize and evangelize must come from the new congregation.

This study will also show that the experience in Tanganyika conditioned Lancaster Conference in its later mission work. EMBMC realized that its missionaries must identify themselves as completely as possible with the new church-building scheme. The Christian agent must teach faithfully, but the responsibility for building a

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<sup>9</sup>African church, Tanganyika church, Tanganyika Mennonite Church or TMC is used in this paper to describe the institutional church established by the Mennonite missionaries. Until EMBMC, with the assistance of the missionaries in the field, decided the African was ready for leadership roles in this church, the missionaries controlled seats of authority in both the mission and the African church. It was not, therefore, an indigenous church.

church must rest solely with the Christian converts and not with the mother church. Initiative must come from the new congregation, and the church of Christ must be permitted to develop along lines perhaps unfamiliar to western Christians, and yet still within the purpose and intent of Jesus Christ. Roland Allen said, "We do not know what Christian civilization is. It is an ideal towards which Christians strive . . . the only Christian civilization which we can impart directly is . . . Western Civilization. But that is not Christian Civilization."<sup>10</sup> The priority and reality of a Christian church, universally accepted, took precedence over denominational structures, yet each group remained able to express its understanding of Christianity within denominational frameworks. The Gospel, however, only became relevant to African life and the church in Africa when it encompassed a truly African vision.

This study will show that missionary work in Tanganyika had a tremendous impact on the membership of Lancaster Conference itself. Many within the home

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<sup>10</sup> Roland Allen, The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1962), reprinted 1967, p. 84. Allen was a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and served in China in the late 19th, early 20th centuries. His study of the New Testament led him to criticize contemporary missionary methods.

congregations came to realize that Mennonitism should not eclipse the glory of God. Furthermore, mission work helped Mennonites to realize that Christian fellowship existed outside of denominationalism. Foreign activities brought Mennonites into close liaison with other Christian denominations, both at home and abroad. In addition, the claim has been made that missionary work increased the spiritual life of the home church.<sup>11</sup> Clearly, the purpose of the church was to reconcile the world to Christ by establishing Christian churches.

Lastly, this study will show that while the missionaries were somewhat aware of the events which commanded the attention of the world between 1934 and 1961, their principal interest was in the Kingdom of Heaven. Since the Mennonites believed in the separation of church and state, the missionaries attempted to instruct their converts to ignore secular matters.

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<sup>11</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, Joint Meeting of the Board Bishops and EMBMC, Salunga, Pennsylvania, November 11, 4, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. MC has gone on to establish mission fields in Ethiopia (1948), Honduras (1950), Luxembourg (1951), Somalia (1953), France (1955), Viet Nam (1957), British Honduras (1960), Kenya (1964), Hong Kong (1965), Guatemala (1968), ti (1968), Philippines (1971), and Swaziland (1971). 1971, 200 overseas missionaries were under appointment. EMBMC Home Ministries and Evangelism Information Annual (Salunga, Pa.: Office of Home Ministries and Evangelism, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, 1971), p. 3.

World War II was therefore viewed as little more than a nuisance. The war delayed sending missionaries to the field and postponed the furloughs of those in Africa; building materials and gasoline were in short supply; and Africans were encouraged to apply for conscientious objector status with the colonial government. Otherwise, the war commanded little of the missionaries' attention. The demand for Tanganyikan independence was the major external event which the missionaries could not ignore. The internal events which had to be considered were the African demands for quality education and better medical treatment.

The Anabaptist and Mennonite Views  
of the Mission of the Church

The Anabaptist View of the Mission of the Church

The term "Anabaptist" means "one who rebaptizes."

This name was ascribed to a group of radicals of the Protestant Left during the period of the Reformation. The name was misleading because these radicals were not in favor of rebaptism as the term suggests, but were really opposed to the infant baptism required by the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, baptism was not the paramount issue in the Anabaptist movement. Instead of classifying the movement in terms of baptismal rites, it would have been more proper to raise the basic issues,

namely theology and the organizational pattern of the new, reformed church. As far as the Anabaptists were concerned, Martin Luther had not reformed the church thoroughly, and the Anabaptists were calling for a change of the entire pattern. The Anabaptists believed that the New Testament clearly spelled out the essence of the true Christian church, specifically, a restoration of the church as it had existed during the first centuries of Christianity. Thus the Anabaptists wanted to resurrect the church of the Apostles and they were not in favor of the state-church system created by either Luther or Ulrich Zwingli. Baptism was only an obvious dividing line between the two systems.<sup>12</sup>

Historically, therefore, the term "Anabaptist" was incorrect, and the terms "Swiss Brethren" or "Mennonite" were more accurate. The Swiss Brethren movement<sup>13</sup> began in Zurich in 1522 as a lay reading group for the study of the Bible and some of its early leaders were Conrad Grebel (1498-1526), Felix Manz (1480-1527), and

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<sup>12</sup>Franklin Hamlin Littell, The Anabaptist View of the Church (2nd ed., revised and enlarged; Boston: Garrison Press, 1958), pp. xv, xvi.

<sup>13</sup>Later called Mennonites when Menno Simons assumed leadership of the movement in Holland in the 1530's. The term "brethren" is used throughout this paper to denote members who accept the statement of Christian doctrine, rules, and discipline of the Mennonite Church.

George Blaurock (1480-1529). On January 21, 1525, fifteen brethren met in the home of Felix Manz and the Swiss Brethren movement was born. From Switzerland, it spread into Holland and Germany; in Holland, Menno Simons brought all of the Anabaptists into one church. Persecution of the Anabaptists in Switzerland forced some to flee to southern Germany and Holland and continued even after the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and probably was due largely to the Anabaptist pacifistic position. When oppression did not cease, Mennonites emigrated to the American colonies, some finally settling in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1710.

The Anabaptists said that the "true church" adhered strictly to the dictates of the New Testament, which revealed the following: first, there is only believers' baptism, not infant baptism; second, the church community is separated from the secular community; third, there is no salaried or professional clergy; fourth, the "true church" is found in a communistic community; fifth, the Lord's Supper is to be treated as a memorial, and not as a sacrifice as in the mass; sixth, the Christian witness is not involved in anything political because Christian allegiance is to heaven. Secular governments therefore should be obeyed except when in conflict with the conscience, particularly in the matter of oath swearing. Matthew 5:34 declared, "Swear not at all;

neither by heaven; for it is God's throne," a directive further supported in James 5:12: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." In addition there is to be no bearing of arms. Seventh, the Anabaptists believed they anticipated a future when God would establish His people and His law throughout the world. Lastly, the Anabaptists were expected to go into the world and restore the New Testament proclamation of God's Great Commission.<sup>14</sup>

The New Testament, according to the Anabaptists, taught that the church was universal. Ephesians states: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the church became the vehicle through which God would redeem and reconcile all the world to Himself.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not

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<sup>14</sup>Littell, p. 83 ff.; see also the Mennonite Confession of Faith adopted by the Mennonite General Conference, August 22, 1963.

<sup>15</sup>Ephesians 1:22, 23; see also Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:7-13; 4:1-16 for the church universal concept.

imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.<sup>16</sup>

Once this reconciliation occurred, the world would become the Kingdom of God. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kindoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the church is the body of Christ, and if the mission of the church was to go into the world, then missionary work and church are one; in fact, it is not a church unless it is involved in mission work.<sup>18</sup>

J. D. Graber pointed out that the Christians of the early church believed they were a "sent" people; sent to accomplish God's plan, to carry on the task started by God's Son, Jesus Christ: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent

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<sup>16</sup>II Corinthians 5:18-20; see also Ephesians 1 and Romans 8 for God's plan to reconcile the world to himself.

<sup>17</sup>Revelation 11:15.

<sup>18</sup>J. D. Graber, The Church Apostolic (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1960), p. viii. Graber explained that the term "apostolic" was derived from the Greek "apostello," which means "to send." Therefore, the church cannot ignore missionary work, and each church must be a "sending" church.



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me, even so send I you."<sup>19</sup> In order to carry on the task begun by Jesus Christ, the Anabaptists believed that the Christian church had to be involved in missionary work, or the Great Commission, if it were to be true to divine intention. They believed that a missionary vision was necessary for admission to the "true church," and according to Littell, the "Anabaptists were among the first to make the Commission binding upon all members."<sup>20</sup> The Anabaptists believed, therefore, that they were commanded by Christ to preach the Gospel, and to preserve the Christian community of God. Furthermore, this obligation applied to all Christians at all times, and the promise to go where sent was part of the ceremony of admission to the "true church." The Great Commission applied to all to be evangelists in this "Church of Restitution."<sup>21</sup>

According to Anabaptist literature, the Great Commission was perceived by many Protestant Reformers as having ended with the Apostles, and was therefore no longer relevant. Using this line of thought, the Anabaptists concluded that the other Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century considered their mission

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<sup>19</sup>John 20:21.

<sup>20</sup>Littell, p. 112.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 111-113.

restricted to their immediate flock. In addition, the Protestant leaders of the Reformation era were accused of being too busy with domestic concerns to consider a world mission. The Anabaptists, on the other hand, conceived of the church as being obligated to accept restoration of the Great Commission concept and, according to Littell, two hundred years passed before Protestantism awakened to the missionary call, with only Roman Catholicism active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>22</sup>

#### Mennonite View of the Mission of the Church

In spite of the Anabaptist emphasis on the Great Commission concept, American Mennonites did not appear convinced about mission work until the 1860's, because they had heretofore viewed such activities as worldly. Although enduring much persecution and discrimination, Mennonites strongly opposed any kind of contact with outsiders, even in the name of Jesus Christ. They had no desire for, nor interest in, evangelism. Actually, mission work was perceived as another example of worldliness, and anything worldly was to be avoided.<sup>23</sup> The Mennonites in the United States remained largely a

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 114 ff.

<sup>23</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, ed., Called to Be Sent (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1964), pp. 5, 6.

separatist group even to the point of preserving their European language and customs. While other denominations developed overseas missionary activities, the Mennonites remained largely unaffected. It was not until 1899 that the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Elkhart, Indiana, undertook mission work in India. Lancaster Conference, however, preferred to engage in city and rural mission work in the United States, the typical pattern of most district boards of the Mennonite Church.<sup>24</sup>

Like its Anabaptist ancestor, the Mennonite Church turned to the Bible to establish the role of the church in Christianity, and, of course, accepted the Great Commission concept: "Go ye into the world, teach in His name to all men until His return."<sup>25</sup> John H. Mellinger, the father of missions in Lancaster Conference, attributed the shift to missionary activism to the introduction of preaching the Gospel in English.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 6. Kraybill lists the home missions of Lancaster Conference and when they were opened, pp. 216-223.

<sup>25</sup>ibid., pp. 23, 27-29. Orle O. Miller, "The Biblical Imperative," in

<sup>26</sup>Called to Be Sent, ed. by Paul N. Kraybill, p. 31. The preaching of the Gospel in English made it possible for more people to understand their Christian obligation. As the 19th century waned, fewer people were able to understand German. The use of English is viewed as a

Another contributory factor was the introduction of the Sunday School concept into Lancaster Conference in 1863. Such education stimulated those interested in mission work and provided a forum for the exchange of ideas with other like-minded people. By 1871 the Conference agreed to allow Sunday Schools in those districts where the congregations had voted unanimously for them and after 1871 Sunday Schools became a common institution throughout Lancaster Conference. It was not until 1894, however, that any formal attempt was made within the Conference to concern itself with the foreign mission field.

On September 15, 1894, in Paradise, Pennsylvania, twelve men assembled in the home of John H. Mellinger to discuss the need for the Conference to undertake mission work. Heretofore there had been only casual discussion between individuals about the need for missions. The Paradise meeting resulted in the formation of the Home Mission Advocates who were committed to organizing mission work for the Conference. At the next meeting of

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symptom rather than a cause of mission interest. Its use reflects a shift away from isolation toward absorption into American life. This new stance vis-a-vis church and the world allowed mission interest within Lancaster Conference to grow. The people in Lancaster Conference were made aware of current events through the local newspapers which were written in English. An especially important influence was the Herald of Truth, a Mennonite periodical published in Elkhart, Indiana, which awakened them to the call of evangelism.

Lancaster Conference, however, the Advocates were instructed to confine their activities to Sunday School work. Not to be sidetracked from their all-consuming desire to organize mission work, the Home Mission Advocates simply changed their organizational name to the Lancaster County Sunday School Mission, and continued to work to awaken the Mennonite constituency to its obligation in the mission field.

The final factor which played a role in awakening the missionary spirit within Lancaster Conference was the appearance of evangelist preachers who came in the 1890's from other conferences to speak to the Lancaster membership. Prior to this event, revival, which was encouraged by these evangelists, was considered to be a method employed by the so-called "worldly" churches, and therefore prohibited. But these evangelists, through their revivalist approach, preached repentance and the need for salvation, which resurrected within the Mennonites the Anabaptist concern for the mission field--the "Great Commission."<sup>27</sup> Thus Lancaster Conference of the Mennonite Church awakened to the essential missionary character of the Christian church. With the creation of a Sunday School Mission in 1895 the way was paved for Mennonites

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-34.

to spread the Gospel, not just within the United States, but to the whole world as well.

The Lancaster County Sunday School Mission group realized there was a need for a more formal organization devoted to the pursuit of mission work and on October 2, 1913, they petitioned the Bishop Board of Lancaster Conference to create a formal organization devoted to the pursuit of mission work. The result was the creation of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities in January 1914 and its responsibility was that of raising funds within the constituency for charitable and missionary purposes.<sup>28</sup>

A meeting to establish this new organization was held on January 26, 1914, at the East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In April 1914 a constitution and by-laws were adopted; on June 8th, the Eastern Board was formally organized and held its first official meeting on August 11, 1914, at the Vine Street

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<sup>28</sup>There was a lapse of time between the petition for formal organization and its creation because the Bishop Board wanted to have enough time to notify the members of Lancaster Conference, Bishop Board Minutes, Mellinger's Meetinghouse, October 2, 1913, Salunga Archives. EMBMC is subject to the authority of the Lancaster Conference of the Mennonite Church with whose sanction it is organized. Article I, Section 2, Constitution and By-Laws of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, revised, 1965.

Meetinghouse, Lancaster.<sup>29</sup> An EMBMC charter, which obligated the organization to foster and support missions and charities, to disseminate the Gospel, and to relieve the needy and suffering, was approved on November 7, 1916.

EMBMC inherited home missions from the Lancaster County Sunday School Mission and as a result of World War I the Bishop Board decided on December 11, 1917, that it was their duty to contribute to the relief of suffering due to the war in Europe.<sup>30</sup> Between 1894 and 1934, EMBMC was also engaged in city and rural mission work in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Florida. Funds were also solicited for relief work in India and for support of the Elkhart mission in India. From this very small beginning, Lancaster Conference and EMBMC became the only Mennonite district board in the United States to develop an extensive overseas program. This is due to a unique situation in that the Lancaster Conference membership is concentrated in one relatively small geographic area. This geographic closeness fostered the growth of a distinct Lancaster Mennonite character which resulted in the creation of a district organization that developed very effective machinery for the promotion of the

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<sup>29</sup>Ira D. Landis, "The Board Organizes," in Called to Be Sent, ed. by Paul N. Kraybill, pp. 47, 48.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 53, 54.



Conference's identity; the local Bishop Board also promoted this self-awareness. In spite of its conservative nature, Lancaster Conference was thus better prepared than its sister conferences for foreign involvement. Until the 1930's, however, Lancaster Conference was content to leave foreign mission work to the Elkhart Board since it was the General Board of the Mennonite Church in North America.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INDIGENOUS CHURCH BUILDING

In 1934 Lancaster Conference of the Mennonite Church in the United States decided to undertake a foreign mission. At this time, most Protestant mission boards in the United States and Europe subscribed to the concept of building indigenous churches throughout the nonwestern world. Mission boards did not challenge this concept, but what did evoke debate was the implementation of this principle. Every Protestant mission society claimed that its mission work was in accordance with the indigenous concept. Henry Venn (1796-1873), Secretary of the Church Mission Society in London, and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880), Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Boston, both had a profound influence on Protestant missionary organizations which generally subscribed to the principles of Venn and Anderson.

As secretary of the Church Mission Society in the mid-nineteenth century, Henry Venn had attempted to move away from paternalism because it hindered the

introduction of independent native churches. To this end, Venn developed a "three-self" theory, calling for churches which were self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. Venn considered that such churches would be independent of all foreign domination. Further, he believed that only an independent, indigenous organization would prevent foreign missionaries from becoming too involved in the development of infant churches. Then missionaries could pursue their primary responsibility--the introduction of the Gospel throughout the non-Christian world. If the infant church were self-governing, then mission societies could devote their attention to evangelism. Meanwhile, a young church was to be prepared for autonomy by the foreign missionaries. The latter would then turn the congregation over to a native pastor, at which point the young church ceased to be a missionary venture.<sup>1</sup>

Native pastors were allowed to assist missionaries in evangelism, but Venn feared that if the former engaged in too much evangelistic work they would become so identified with foreign missionaries that they would

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<sup>1</sup>Max Warren, ed., To Apply the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Henry Venn (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 62, 63. Henry Venn never systematized his principles in a book or even in a long article, and his small publications are not generally available today outside London.

lose effectiveness among their own people. They would be allowed to engage in evangelism only after the acquisition of much training and practical experience under careful guidance of foreign missionaries. Such stringent conditions represented Venn's method of ensuring that the native pastors realize that they were ordained in the native church and were not, therefore, members of the mission body. Since they were not members of the mission body, native pastors would have to be supported by local funding and, further, the mission board informed the new church that it was under no obligation to provide funds for the young church.<sup>2</sup>

According to Venn, the implementation of the "three-self" concept required the missionaries to establish schools and teach catechists about Jesus Christ. The mission society financed these schools. The next step in the construction of an independent native church called for the creation of a Church Council which included both native ministers and lay persons from the congregation. The Church Council was responsible for operating the church and creating a Native Church Fund, a necessity if the church were to become self-supporting. The third step was to turn the church over to native pastors after sufficient training by the foreign

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

missionaries.<sup>3</sup> Thus the "three-self" concept of indigenous building was to be applied in stages or steps rather than all at once. In any event, a church must first be self-supporting. When it was economically independent, it became self-governing, and, finally, self-propagating. Venn stated that

The end is not the multiplication of Missionary Stations over the whole land, but the establishment of a few well selected and strong stations, where the foundations of a native Church may be wisely laid; where a native agency may be trained to carry forward the work, independently of Missionary assistance.<sup>4</sup>

St. Paul, Venn said, believed that new churches should be self-supporting. Paul established Christian centers in a few important cities from which, he believed, Christian teachings could spread to the countryside and beyond. Thus, Venn believed his "three-self" concept employed apostolic methods to achieve an indigenous native church.

Protestant mission societies in the United States and Canada turned to Rufus Anderson, Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, for guidance. The Boston-based group was an interdenominational organization, although Anderson himself was a Congregationalist. Like Venn, with whom he

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 68-70.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

corresponded regularly, Anderson accepted the "three-self" concept for establishing indigenous churches and St. Paul's idea about self-sufficiency. Anderson stated: "The grand object is to plant and multiply self-reliant, efficient, churches, composed wholly of native converts, each church complete in itself, with pastors of the same race with the people."<sup>5</sup> He also cited St. Paul's mission work and from a study of it concluded

The missionary goes abroad . . . to be an ambassador for Christ. The missionary preaches the cross of Christ. His business is not with Christian believers, but with the unconverted. He is an evangelist, not a pastor or ruler . . . his function is to proclaim the gospel and plant its institutions. . . . The sole exception to this rule on pastoral service is at the time of the organization of the church, if then there is no competent national pastor available. But . . . as quickly as possible the missionary is expected to raise up indigenous leadership to take charge. . . . The missionary ought not be slow to permit the people to take initiative and responsibilities.<sup>6</sup>

Thus his great concern was to see that young churches were New Testament churches, and self-generating. Rufus Anderson, like Venn, left the decision of when the young church was ready for independence to the foreign missionaries, who were just as paternalistic as the mission theorists. Anderson, however, departed from the ideas of Venn when he advocated the use of young churches in

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<sup>5</sup>R. Pierce Beaver, ed., To Advance the Gospel (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 23.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 27, 28.

evangelism. Venn had left this to foreign missionaries. In other words, Anderson perceived a young church which was, from the outset, self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing, since he was not concerned with establishing a specific denominational church, nor was he interested in the new church's ability to support itself. In theory, therefore, a new church was created from the beginning and it was to be indigenous from the start.

Although the concept of indigenous church building became very popular among Protestant mission societies, not everyone agreed to the ordering of the "three-self" concept, nor did all agree that a church was indigenous simply because it was self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. For example, Roland Allen, a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, favored the indigenous concept, but he did not believe that the "three-self" idea had anything to do with an indigenous church. According to Allen,

by the study of St. Paul's missionary methods we shall find solution of most of our present difficulties. We are talking today of indigenous churches. St. Paul's churches were indigenous churches; I believe the secret of their foundation lay in his recognition of church as a local church (as opposed to our 'national churches') and in his profound belief and trust in the Holy Spirit indwelling in his converts and churches of which they were members, which enabled him to establish them at once with full authority.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Roland Allen, Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing

Thus Allen believed that Paul's work proved that a church was indigenous only if it were so from its inception. A church had to be indigenous immediately, not at some time in the future, and, equally important, its destiny was not to be determined by foreign missionaries. Allen further argued that Paul was concerned with establishing centers of Christian life in a few important places, and that the building of church organization was left to the new Christian converts. Thus the "three-self" principle had to be applied from the beginning, and all three parts at the same time.<sup>8</sup> Instead of building elaborate organizations calling for large finances and run by foreign missionaries, the church was to be built on faith alone.<sup>9</sup>

Roland Allen did not believe that western missions were effective instruments for creating indigenous

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Company, 1962), p. viii. After graduating from Oxford University, Allen went to Leeds Clergy Training School to prepare for the holy orders in the Anglican Church. Ordained in 1892, Dr. Allen was sent to the North China mission of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1895. Because of ill health, Allen returned to England in 1903 and served as vicar of Chalfont St. Peter in Buckinghamshire until 1907 at which time he resigned. He then spent most of his time writing and traveling, focusing on missions in Asia and Africa. Allen died June 9, 1949, in Kenya.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 5, 6, 7, 13.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 49 ff.



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churches because that which was natural to a given environment was not necessarily natural to a foreign missionary. According to Allen, St. Paul introduced a simple system of teaching the Gospel, two sacraments, a few main facts about the death and resurrection, and the Old Testament. Allen said that Paul laid down the general principles and left organizational matters to the converts. Therefore, the success of the young church depended on its internal growth and its ability to expand outward.

Gustav Warneck (1834-1910) put his stamp on German and Scandinavian overseas missions. Warneck was opposed to denominationalism and therefore believed that converts should only be taught basic creeds and simple, but distinctly Protestant, statements of faith. Instead of alienating the converts from their traditional way of life, Warneck called for assimilating indigenous culture into the Christian religion, starting with the use of the mother tongue in the native church. Warneck also believed in a three-stage development of a responsible independent church. The first step was to gather together the individual believers. Second, congregations were to be formed. Third, local congregations were to be united

under an episcopal head. The result was an indigenous church.<sup>10</sup>

The "three-self" method was not, however, the only concept used by missionologists to explain indigenous church building. For example, William A. Smalley argued that

It seems to have become axiomatic in much missionary thinking that a church which is self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating is by definition an 'indigenous church'. It further seems to follow in the thinking of many people that such an indigenous church (as so defined) is the goal of modern missions. This is a False Diagnosis. It seems to me that the critical criteria of self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating are not necessarily diagnostic of an indigenous movement. Although these three 'self' elements may be present in such a movement, they are essentially independent variables. The three 'selves' seem to have become catch phrases which can be stamped without any particular understanding on one church or another. Yet it is evident on an examination of the facts that they are not necessarily relevant at all.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), pp. 47-49.

<sup>11</sup>William A. Smalley, "Cultural Implications of an Indigenous Church," in Readings in Missionary Anthropology, ed. by William A. Smalley (New York: Practical Anthropology, Inc., 1967), p. 147. Reprinted from Practical Anthropology, V, 2 (1958), 51-65. William A. Smalley was a linguist and translation consultant with the American Bible Society in Chiangmai, Thailand. He received his Ph.D. in anthropological linguistics from Columbia University in 1956. Between 1950 and 1954 he was a missionary linguist in Laos and Viet Nam. Dr. Smalley authored books and articles in the field of linguistics and the application of linguistics and anthropology to mission problems. He was also an editor of Practical Anthropology magazine.

So far as Smalley was concerned, the "three-self" concept was not relevant in building an indigenous church. Furthermore, Smalley claimed that the "three-self" principle had either been misinterpreted or misapplied. Many definitions of indigenous church building emphatically stated that the church had to be self-supporting rather than rely upon money from foreign mission societies. Smalley argued that the source of finances was not important, but that who regulated the money was. If the young church could make the final decision as to how the finances were allocated, then it did not matter where the funds originated. Furthermore, Smalley did not believe that governance was important to the indigenous concept. In fact, if members of a new church accepted foreign-inspired governance as relevant to their own life-style, then the church was indigenous. Smalley conceded that the concept of self-propagation was an important element because it expressed the young church's desire to spread its knowledge and understanding of Christianity. The "three-self" principle, according to Dr. Smalley, projected European values into the idealization of the Christian church and therefore made it impossible to develop a truly indigenous church. Westernization, not indigenization, would take place.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 147-149.

Having rejected the "three-self" concept, Dr. Smalley suggested a method for building an indigenous church. The church must be a part of the traditional system and the presence of the Holy Spirit would change society by determining what that society's particular needs were. Once the needs were determined, the formal structure and operation of the church would be established. Smalley said that the New Testament presented the true picture of an indigenous church. "In the New Testament we do find the picture of the indigenous church. It is that of a church in which the Holy Spirit has worked for its transformation within the society."<sup>13</sup> The formal structure and operation were determined by the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the indigenous society, and not by any outsider. Furthermore, if the newly founded church were to be indigenous, it must be outside the mission. In conclusion, Smalley said,

Until we are willing for the church to have its different manifestations in different cultures as between the Jewish Christians and the various kinds of Greeks, rather than export the denominational patterns rooted in our history and often irrelevant to the rest of the world, we will not have indigenous churches whether they are 'self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating' or not. It is not until we are willing to let churches grow also that we have learned to trust the Holy Spirit with society. We are treating him as a small child with a new toy too complicated and dangerous for him to

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

handle. Our paternalism is not only a paternalism toward other peoples, it is also a paternalism towards God.<sup>14</sup>

In 1939 the Reverend A. Stuart McNairn delivered a speech in London in which he discussed the term "indigenous." He said that it was a

term which is . . . used in ways that find support neither in the English dictionary nor in the Scriptures. . . . we are always wanting to do something with them, to train them up in the way we think they should go, until some day they will be so trained and imbued with our ideas that they may be handed over, like a packet of merchandise, to self-government and self-support, and we can say, 'Now you have an indigenous Church.'<sup>15</sup>

The Reverend McNairn saw an indigenous church as one which grew out of the soil of the land, and out of the heart of the people. To produce an indigenous church, McNairn argued that we must be "content to preach the Gospel, leaving Christ to build His Church . . . and according to His pattern."<sup>16</sup>

Thus we see that although the concept of indigenous building was popular at the time the Mennonites of Lancaster Conference decided to embark on a mission in Africa, there was no agreement on what an indigenous church entailed, or, for that matter, how such a church

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>15</sup>Reverend A. Stuart McNairn, "The Indigenous Church," World Dominion, XVII (April 2, 1939), 295.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 302.

should be built. As far as Lancaster Conference was concerned, its stated mission policy was to work in foreign fields according to the indigenous principle, which meant to them the employment of the "three-self" concept, or at least their understanding of the idea. Even then, it was apparent that the Mennonites had only a very vague official policy, and that within their own ranks there was not complete agreement on what the term "indigenous" meant, simply because the mission board had not presented a precise program. Everyone involved with the mission, Bishop Board, EMBMC, and individual missionaries, felt he was working to establish an indigenous church. All agreed that the "three-self" principle was the correct way to build indigenously, but questions arose about implementation, or whether the three steps should be introduced from the beginning. Unfortunately, neither the Bishop Board nor EMBMC furnished satisfactory answers to these questions. By the time the two boards seriously considered answering these questions, EMBMC had decided to drop the "three-self" concept of indigenous church building and to replace it with the concept of "partners in obedience," or the integration of mission and church. Paradoxically, Lancaster Conference had accepted a concept without considering how it was to be implemented.

As late as 1946 a subcommittee had been created for the purpose of offering to the joint boards an

official expression of indigenous church building which would satisfy Lancaster Conference. EMBMC secretary Orie O. Miller put it succinctly when he said:

As Mission and Bishop Boards . . . there has never been any direct official expression as to the concept or how the Boards feel it should be implemented in the Mission's program in Tanganyika. In my own attendance at the Mission's 1945 conference at Bukiroba, it was the unanimous conviction of all of us there that it is time for the Home Boards to speak in reference to this concept.<sup>17</sup>

In the eyes of EMBMC, self-support was the paramount factor in the principle. Time and again, emphasis was placed on the fact that an indigenous church was one which was self-supporting, and the sooner the mission board could be released from any financial obligation, the better. Indeed, the financial argument was expressed by the President of EMBMC in his 1940 report to a joint meeting of the Bishop Board and EMBMC. President Garber stated that unless the native church could take care of itself financially, the mission would have to cut back on its financial support of this work.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Henry Garber, Isaac Garber, Clayton Keener, Noah K. Mack, and Clyde Shenk, September 18, 1946. Salunga Archives, Miller Correspondence File. These men comprised the membership of subcommittee appointed to render an interpretation of indigenous building which would become EMBMC's official interpretation.

<sup>18</sup>President Henry F. Garber's Annual Report to the Joint Boards, n.d., Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



Although the Eastern Board subscribed to the concept of self-government for establishing an indigenous church, the criterion for turning church government over to African leadership was based on African acceptance of, and ability to apply, Mennonite principles to the African church. The African church was not at liberty to establish a church organization which was totally different from that of the Mennonite Church. Obviously African leadership would one day take over the reins of the native church, but meanwhile these leaders were expected to cooperate with the foreign missionaries and to accept their direction in the establishment and development of the African church. Therefore, the institutions of the African church were largely determined by the missionaries, not by African leaders. EMBMC built what it considered to be an indigenous church, but it was an organization which conformed to Mennonite concepts, not African.

Finally, in 1949, the home boards agreed to the adoption of a Foreign Missions Polity to guide the Conference and EMBMC in the organization and administration of all EMBMC's foreign missions and churches. According to the polity, mission work was to be organized on a congregation basis with both the missionary and native brethren to be one in the brotherhood and fellowship of Jesus Christ. It was also stated that the development

of spiritual leadership was the joint concern of the whole brotherhood.<sup>19</sup> We must assume that this was as far as the home boards were prepared to go in explaining or defining indigenous building. The important thing was to establish a church in Tanganyika which was, theologically, developed along indigenous lines. EMBMC attempted to establish a church organization which it thought would work best in Tanganyika.

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<sup>19</sup>"Applying Indigenous Principles," Foreign Missions Polity, Lancaster Mennonite Conference, 1949, Part III, 6, 7. A polity is a statement of faith and practices.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE DECISION TO GO TO TANGANYIKA

#### Lancaster Conference as a "Sending" Church

One of the cardinal elements in the Mennonite concept of church<sup>1</sup> was the church as a final goal of all Christian work. Mennonites were not only concerned with saving individuals for Christ, but also with the reconstruction of the entire non-Christian world into a Christian community.<sup>2</sup> The church's central function, therefore, was to reconcile mankind to God, which meant that the church was not an end in itself, but a means

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<sup>1</sup>"Church" is primarily people, not buildings; it is participation in a common faith and common life. The church is to be found wherever Christ is. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20). H. Raymond Charles, president of EMBMC, said, "The church consists of those born-again ones who have been fused by the Holy Spirit to one living body . . . for the work of ministering to the world need." H. Raymond Charles, "New Frontiers in Evangelism," in Called to Be Sent, p. 98. It is these definitions of church which are used throughout this paper unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup>Harold S. Bender, "The Mennonite Concept of the Church and Its Reaction to Community Building," in Radi- cal Reformation Reader Concern No. 18 (Scottsdale, Pa.: Donald Reist, July 1971), pp. 33, 34. Concern is an independent pamphlet series dealing with questions of Christian renewal.

through which God carried on His mission in this world. The Christian community was needed since individual Christians needed each other in their search for the will of God. The church became the vehicle for understanding what God had done and what He was doing to establish His kingdom. The church, therefore, if it were to be true to divine intention, had to be involved in mission work. In order to participate in Christ it was also necessary to participate in mission, and the task of the church was to make disciples through evangelism.<sup>3</sup> Thus Mennonites accepted the Great Commission to go where sent and to preach the Gospel. The Lancaster Mennonite Church had become a "sending" church.

Each Christian was implored to become an ambassador for Christ and reconcile the world to Him: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."<sup>4</sup> Lancaster Conference accepted this Scriptural call, and Chester Wenger spoke for both the Conference and EMBMC when he said, "Thus we become His

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<sup>3</sup>Erland Waltner, Learning to Understand the Mission of the Church (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press; Scottdale: Herald Press, 1968), pp. 13-15, 29, 57-60.

<sup>4</sup>II Corinthians 5:20.

agents of redemption for His lost ones."<sup>5</sup> The church's work, according to Wenger, involved fellowship, service and the proclamation of the Gospel.<sup>6</sup> According to the Mennonites, Christian fellowship meant that people were bound together by Christ in love and worship--"Christ is all, and in all."<sup>7</sup>

Wenger said that service meant that

all Christians ought to be servants of the church. Our Mennonite brotherhood is experiencing the joy of Christian service. Through relief programs, voluntary service, hospitals, and Christian schools, countless members are engaged in ministrations of love.<sup>8</sup>

Mennonites were afforded an opportunity to carry forward the mission which Jesus Christ started. Furthermore, service in the name of Jesus was a sign of God's bestowal of grace upon His servants. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Chester L. Wenger, "The Church's Task," in Called to Be Sent, p. 68. Mr. Wenger is the head of the Department of Home Ministries and Evangelism of EMBMC, and has served as a missionary in Ethiopia.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Colossians 3:11.

<sup>8</sup>Wenger, "The Church's Task," p. 70.

<sup>9</sup>Matthew 25:40.

The third aspect of the church's work was the proclamation of the Gospel, or as Chester Wenger expressed it, "Nothing takes the place of publishing the good news of Jesus by word of mouth."<sup>10</sup> The Mennonites believed that God offered man eternal salvation if he accepted Jesus Christ and proclaimed the same to others. The vehicle for carrying the Word of God throughout the world was the church. The church was a witness, and in that way it became the church of Jesus Christ.

Lancaster Conference and EMBMC were determined to bring people to Jesus Christ and to see that they were reborn into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ by accepting Christ as their Lord. The Mennonites believed that God was calling them to become His disciples by identifying themselves completely with the Lord's work. The disciple "is ready to prove in daily living the meaning of His master's teaching. Christ's burden was to do the will of His Father. Ours is to do our Master's will."<sup>11</sup> To a Mennonite, discipleship meant working for the Lord as a missionary.

The missionary becomes an admissions officer who is inviting sinners to join a circle of friends who have already heard the secrets of eternal life and whose

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<sup>10</sup>Wenger, "The Church's Task," p. 70.

<sup>11</sup>John R. Mumaw, "The Disciple's Commission," in Called to Be Sent, p. 79. Mr. Mumaw was the President of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and former moderator of the Mennonite General Conference.

fellowship is conducive to learning. To become a disciple is to enter a learning relationship with Christ for a lifelong experience in the wisdom of God.<sup>12</sup>

True discipleship, therefore, called for committed people, an absolute sacrifice of one's self to the work of Jesus Christ. Nothing was permitted to interfere with the work of bringing people to Jesus Christ.

H. Raymond Charles, President of EMBMC, expressed the feeling of Lancaster Conference towards mission work, or as he preferred to call it, church extension. In honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of EMBMC (1964), Charles said that church extension "was a healthy expression of spiritual awakening . . ."<sup>13</sup> Charles, therefore, called for all church members to become involved in mission.

Without minimizing preaching and teaching, we must recognize the need for building bridges to people to whom we hope to communicate the Gospel. . . . Church extension must involve adults and it is through adults . . . that we extend the church in new communities.<sup>14</sup>

A. Grace Wenger summed up what it meant to those Mennonites who accepted mission as the role of the church.

When God builds His church, people become involved.  
. . . when God builds His church, people feel

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>H. Raymond Charles, "New Frontiers in Evangelism," in Called to Be Sent, p. 96.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

responsible to bring others to Christ. . . . When God builds His church, He breaks down racial and cultural barriers. . . . when God builds His church redemptive fellowship draws others to Christ. . . . when God builds His church, a spirit of unity prevails. . . . when God builds His church, He uses dedicated lay workers.<sup>15</sup>

Philosophically, Lancaster Conference and EMBMC had accepted the commission to become a "sending" church.

A serious issue in the 1920's was the disenchantment with the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities' (MBMC) operations in India. Most within Lancaster Conference believed that the General Board in Elkhart had become too modern and too worldly. Some of the teachers at Goshen College, Indiana, were accused of not conforming to the fundamentalist religious view of traditional Mennonitism. Those accused of religious modernism argued that they were really attempting to reflect their Anabaptist heritage because it called for a satisfactory blending of Biblicism and evangelism. This explanation did not quiet the fears of the more conservative membership in Lancaster Conference.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>A. Grace Wenger, "Mission--U.S.A.," in Called to Be Sent, pp. 106-113. Wenger was a missionary education writer for the Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

<sup>16</sup>Paul Erb, Orie O. Miller: The Story of a Man and an Era (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1969), pp. 72, 73, 82, 83.



An example of the "Goshenism" accusation was an attack made by the Virginia Conference at the Annual Board meeting of the General Conference on May 18-19, 1929. The Virginia Conference accused MBMC of (1) non-orthodoxy in church matters; (2) worshipping with other denominational missionaries in India; (3) placing too much emphasis on education rather than evangelism; (4) too much fraternization with non-Christian teachers in mission schools; (5) dressing in a manner not in keeping with Mennonite dress, in particular, the prohibition regarding neckties; and (6) not outlawing the wearing of mustaches by Indian Christians.<sup>17</sup> According to John Lapp, there was no real proof of any doctrinal deviation on the part of MBMC.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, because many in Lancaster Conference would not support MBMC's work in India, EMBMC was called upon to undertake its own foreign mission.<sup>19</sup>

Yet EMBMC was very slow to respond because all of its mission experiences were in city and rural areas of the eastern United States, and it was convinced that a mission in Africa should be undertaken by the General

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<sup>17</sup>John A. Lapp, The Mennonite Church in India, 1897-1962 (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1972), pp. 71, 73, 128.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 71, 73.

<sup>19</sup>Erb, pp. 187, 188.

Board, not EMBMC. The Bishop Board of Lancaster Conference, however, argued that such an endeavor would involve the people of Lancaster Conference in a more intimate fashion if the mission were directed by EMBMC rather than by the General Board which was geographically removed from Lancaster Conference.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the Bishop Board moved cautiously and decided not to consider any action until they had taken another look at MBMC's India mission. There was still strong feeling that if the differences between MBMC and Lancaster Conference were resolved, Lancaster could support the India mission.<sup>21</sup>

On August 26, 1928, Ernest E. Miller, a returned missionary from India and four representatives from the General Board, met with the Lancaster bishops and the Executive Committee of EMBMC to discuss the India problem. After this meeting, the bishops announced:

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid. Many within EMBMC have suggested that a donation made by Phebe Yoder stimulated the real interest in an African mission. In Kansas, in 1915, a twelve-year-old girl, Phebe Yoder, believed that the Lord had called her to serve Him in Africa. Miss Yoder later graduated from Goshen College and Seminary with both B.A. and Th.B. degrees, taught at Hesston College and then in New York City. She sent tithes to the General Board for the "Africa Mission," David W. Shenk, Mennonite Safari (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1974), pp. 19, 20. Phebe Yoder arrived in Tanganyika in 1937. David Shenk, the son of J. Clyde and Alta Shenk, was born in Tanganyika and is presently a missionary in Kenya.

<sup>21</sup>Bishop Board Minutes, October 3-5, 1928, Salunga Archives, Bishop Board Minutes, 1912-1962.

We have gone over the questions and answers carefully and found some answered satisfactorily, while others have not been answered to our satisfaction. A few have not been answered at all. Under these circumstances we desire to have time for further investigation.<sup>22</sup>

At a joint meeting in July 1930, the bishops and EMBMC once again discussed and tabled the opening of an African mission.<sup>23</sup> The bishops believed that they should wait in the event that the India mission would straighten itself out, permitting Lancaster Conference to support its program. Failing this, the General Board might still see fit to undertake an African mission.

On September 6, 1930, EMBMC called a special meeting to decide whether it should set up its own African mission, or whether it should support Elkhart in such an undertaking. The Eastern Board adopted a resolution which supported a church-wide effort in Africa that would be directed by the General Board.<sup>24</sup> The Bishop Board, however, was convinced that it needed a foreign mission to involve its church members in "witnessing." The bishops, therefore, put EMBMC on notice that it was

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., February 25, 1929.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1930, Twelfth Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Bishops and EMBMC, July 14, 1930, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Bishop Board Minutes, July 24, 1930, Salunga Archives.

<sup>24</sup>Special Meeting of EMBMC, East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, September 6, 1930, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

to set up an overseas mission.<sup>25</sup> Between January and June of 1932, further discussion on the subject of an African mission occurred, but no decision was reached. Then at a joint meeting in October 1932, the two boards decided that the Bishop Board should establish an examining committee which was to screen applicants for foreign work.<sup>26</sup>

On April 3, 1933, the Examining Committee announced that Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer and John and Ruth Mosemann had been selected for the work in Africa, an action endorsed the next day by the joint boards. In the meantime, John Mellinger, the President of EMBMC, appointed Elam Stauffer minister for Miner's Village near Cornwall and John Mosemann minister in Marietta. EMBMC further decided that the Mosemanns would enroll in an eight-month medical course in New York, while the Stauffers would take a short Bible course in July.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Bishop Board Minutes, Mellinger's Meeting House, October 3, 1930, Salunga Archives, Bishop Board Minutes, 1912-1962.

<sup>26</sup>Minutes of the Twenty-first Quarterly Meeting, East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, October 3, 1932, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>27</sup>Minutes of the Twenty-third Quarterly Meeting, Paradise Church, April 4, 1933, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, Mellinger's Meeting House, April 9, 1933, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

Why Tanganyika?

Since EMBMC had no personal experience in foreign mission, it relied heavily upon the leadership of Orie O. Miller, who had experience in foreign mission work through his involvement in the activities of the Mennonite Central Committee. Miller was therefore able to obtain information from World Dominion, London, regarding areas in Africa which needed missionaries.<sup>28</sup> Miller also contacted the Secretary of the United Presbyterian Mission Board in Philadelphia because he had suggested that EMBMC could cooperate in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The area which was offered to the Mennonites was adjacent to the Ethiopian border, and it was somewhat inaccessible. The Sudan Interior Mission made it clear that the Mennonites would not be welcome if they decided to work as an independent agency.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, missionary books dealing with Ethiopia were circulated among the members of the Executive Committee of EMBMC.

In the late fall of 1933, Orie Miller and Elam Stauffer met with Alexander McLeish of World Dominion in the Prince George Hotel in New York City. World Dominion had recently completed a mission survey of Tanganyika, and McLeish informed Miller and Stauffer that, in

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<sup>28</sup>World Dominion was a nondenominational organization which functioned as a mission service office.

<sup>29</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 27, 1971.

comparison to Ethiopia and the Sudan, Tanganyika was in great need of mission occupation.

On December 7, 1933, Orie Miller and Elam Stauffer sailed from New York to London, where they spent several days in McLeish's office interviewing his staff as well as talking with several mission representatives from several parts of the world. They then traveled to Berlin, where they discussed their search with Julius Richter, author of Tanganyika and Its Future (London: World Dominion Press, 1934). Richter encouraged Miller and Stauffer to select Tanganyika, but the two men wanted to visit the Sudan before making a decision.<sup>30</sup> On January 2, 1934, Miller and Stauffer visited Reed Shields, field director of the Presbyterian mission in northern Khartoum in order to see first-hand the site Shields had offered to the Mennonites just west of the Ethiopian border.<sup>31</sup>

The next stop for Miller and Stauffer was Tanganyika. They arrived in Dar es Salaam on January 17. After checking into the Palace Hotel, they called upon P. E. Mitchell, Secretary of Native Affairs, and a Mr. Isherwood of the Department of Education. Stauffer

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.; Diary, Elam Stauffer, January 2, 1934, to January 24, 1934; Ada M. Zimmerman, Africa Calls (Scottsdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1936), p. 109.

<sup>31</sup>Diary, Elam Stauffer, January 2, 1934, to January 24, 1934.

personally considered the two officials helpful and interested in having the Mennonites open a mission in Tanganyika. By this time Stauffer felt that God had called them to Tanganyika.<sup>32</sup>

The following day, the eighteenth, Miller and Stauffer called upon Mr. Bryse, Belgian representative for the Congo, who was either not anxious to cooperate with an American Protestant mission board, or else so poorly informed that he could not assist.<sup>33</sup> On the nineteenth Orrie Miller spoke to German missionaries, some of whom were in Dar to attend a missions conference. Miller was now convinced that EMBMC had been called to Tanganyika. Therefore, he sent a telegram to EMBMC and requested that the John Mosemanns and Elizabeth Stauffer come to Dar.<sup>34</sup>

On January 23, Miller and Stauffer were invited to the organizational meeting of the Tanganyika Missions Council convened in Dar es Salaam. Approximately twenty people from nine mission boards were present. Thus the EMBMC deputies were able to obtain a very accurate picture of the mission scene in Tanganyika. After the conference, the prospectors returned to Mr. Mitchell's

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Orrie O. Miller, private interview, August 12, 1971.

office and told him of their decision to open a mission in Tanganyika. Mitchell, also the acting governor, recommended the area of Musoma. According to Stauffer, "Mitchell walked to the map on the wall and pointed to the Musoma area, a neglected part of Tanganyika. With the recommendation of the Tanganyika Mission Council and Mitchell, we decided on Musoma district."<sup>35</sup>

#### Selection of the First Station

The African Inland Mission (AIM) was an invaluable source of information and assistance to the Mennonites. On January 28, 1934, Miller and Stauffer traveled by train to Shinyanga in order to meet with William

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<sup>35</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 27, 1971. After World War I, the British made the town of Musoma the government center for Musoma District. The district was divided into North Mara and South Mara by Mara Bay. The only direct connection between the two was by a ferry from the town of Musoma. In 1934, the population of the district was estimated at 255,000 Africans, 944 Indians, and 208 Europeans. No less than five languages were needed to reach the African population, although Swahili was the lingua franca. There were several gold mines in the district, and African cash crops included cotton, corn, peanuts, rice, ghee, cattle, hides, and sisal. In the town of Musoma lived 50 Europeans, 350 Indians, and approximately 2130 Africans. The town consisted of a government office building, post office, a small government hospital, a dock with a customs shed, a government school, a small hotel, an airport, a few small rope factories, several stores which catered to Europeans, and a number of Indian shops. The town had no paved streets or sidewalks, and all roads were dirt. Merle W. Eshleman, Africa Answers (Scottsdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1951), pp. 44-46, 86.



Maynard, the director of AIM, and Mrs. Maynard who was a medical doctor. Although AIM had six stations in the Musoma area, they welcomed the Mennonites because the area was quite large. Miller and Stauffer attended their first religious service in Africa in spite of the fact that they did not understand one word. In the afternoon, the two prospectors visited several of AIM's institutions, an orphanage, a leprosarium, and a hospital. William Maynard gave the two men letters of introduction to Emil Sywulka, an AIM missionary in Mwanza. Sywulka had been in the country since 1905, and when he recommended that the Mennonites open their first station near the Kenya border, they accepted his advice.<sup>36</sup>

On the second of February, Stauffer went to see the district commissioner in Mwanza. To Elam's surprise this official was very interested in seeing a mission station opened, and he encouraged Stauffer to select a site before the rainy season began.

Accompanied by Sywulka, Elam Stauffer set out in search of a suitable site for a mission station. After eight hard days of investigation, they decided on a site in Shirati. Chief Notika consented to a mission in his area, and he took Sywulka and Stauffer to the top of Katura Hill and offered that site to the Mennonites.

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<sup>36</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, July 21, 1971.

Stauffer was not pleased with the offer because the hill was approximately two miles from Lake Victoria and fresh water, and there were no villages nearby. Sywulka, however, was convinced that those who were interested would move near the station, and after some vacillation Stauffer concluded that the chief's choice was the best site for a mission.

On the sixteenth, Stauffer staked off a plot on the hill which was sixty rods by sixty rods, approximately twenty-two acres. He and Sywulka then returned to Musoma, where Stauffer filed a "Right of Occupancy" for the site.<sup>37</sup> The application was then forwarded to Tarime for consideration.<sup>38</sup> No mission group could occupy a site until it had received a "Right of Occupancy." The government made certain that a request for land alienation did not infringe on any native rights and that the people in the area did not object to a mission in their midst. Meanwhile, Stauffer's wife, the John Mosemanns, and Orie Miller arrived in Dar es Salaam.

The basic organization for the mission in Tanganyika was decided at a meeting in Dar in April 1934. All

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<sup>37</sup>Since there was no official form, the "Right of Occupancy" was handwritten and in triplicate. There was no application fee.

<sup>38</sup>Diary, Elam Stauffer, February 6-19, 1934; Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 27, 1971.

appointed men and women were to be included in the mission. Organizationally there would be a secretary, who conducted all official correspondence with EMBMC, and served as the chairman of the mission. A treasurer would submit financial reports to EMBMC and would disburse money authorized by the mission. The group also decided to set up a central mission school and "bush" schools. The central school would provide the equivalent of a third-grade education, while "bush" schools were defined as

evangelist points, purposed for widening the Mission's contact with native communities, and in nature and program similar to those of other missions in Central Africa. These schools were to be organized on an indigenous basis and meet Government [British] standards if these did not interfere with religious purpose of Mission.<sup>39</sup>

With regard to the matter of comity with other missions, all at the meeting agreed that the Shirati mission should maintain friendly relations with neighboring mission organizations. It was also decided that medical work would be limited to dispensary treatment as EMBMC considered sending a qualified medical doctor. The group believed that religious success in Africa could be

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<sup>39</sup>Minutes of the Meeting of the African Missionaries with O. O. Miller at Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika, April 3-5, 1934, Salunga Archives; According to Orie Miller's biographer, Miller wrote the constitution and gave it to the Stauffers and Mosemanns. Erb, Orie Miller, pp. 191, 192.

enhanced by a medical-missionary. They also agreed that once the British government approved the Shirati site, prospecting for a second site would be started as soon as possible thereafter. The group agreed to keep the home constituency informed about the mission by having each missionary write biweekly and alternately to the Gospel Herald and the Missionary Messenger respectively. It was decided that one missionary should write a series of short, general-interest articles for the Christian Monitor.<sup>40</sup>

In April, the pioneers rented three small rooms in Mwanza, where they remained five weeks waiting for the "Right of Occupancy." During the waiting period, the pioneers studied Dholuo and Swahili, attended AIM services and learned local customs. The Mosemanns also had the opportunity to visit Mr. and Dr. Maynard at Busia, where the AIM operated a hospital. Since their school training had not included obstetrics, the Mosemanns were grateful for the opportunity to gain experience in Busia. Meanwhile, Emil Sywulka showed the two Menno-nite men how to make brick forms which would be used in the construction of dwellings in Shirati. The "Right of Occupancy" finally arrived on May 14, 1934.<sup>41</sup> It was

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Diary, Elizabeth Stauffer, April 25, 30, May 14, 1934; Mosemanns, Africa Circle Letter, No. 1 (April 20, 1934), Salunga Archives; Ada M. Zimmerman, Africa Calls, pp. 111, 113-115.

good for ninety-nine years; rent on the ten-acre plot was the equivalent of \$2.50 per year. The government did not explain why it saw fit to reduce the size of the plot to ten acres.

### Early Contacts with the Natives

Every missionary who went to the Tanganyika field wrote to friends and relatives in the United States about the difficulty of communication. John Mosemann put it this way:

We still find ourselves tremendously handicapped in dealing with the people. The women and children know little or no Swahili, and so Ruth and I are working on the vernacular--Dholuo. We learn words and try to use them, but sometimes are met with a blank look telling us either of our failure or of inaccuracies in our books. We take our share of the blame in failing to reproduce properly, but also feel keenly the inadequacy of available language helps. Elam and Elizabeth are working in Swahili. Ask the Father daily for abundant language mercies to usward, that we be keen in receptive, retentive and speaking ability.<sup>42</sup>

According to Elam Stauffer, most Mennonites learned Swahili first and then later they learned a tribal language.

Bishop Chambers of the Anglican Mission said to me in Dar es Salaam . . . before you get up there [Shirati], memorize the Lord's Prayer in Swahili because nobody is going to believe you are a missionary if you don't know even that much Swahili. . . . from that first Sunday . . . we had a Sunday service in which I read from the Prodigal Son in

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<sup>42</sup>John Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 4 (September 22, 1934), Salunga Archives.

Swahili and added a few I could and sang. . . . because my language was so limited, and because John and Ruth Mosemann were studying Luo and had barely begun, we had to do something to make the service not too short, so we sang more, and we sang Come to Jesus in three different languages: Swahili, Luo, and then we began to teach them to sing it in English . . .<sup>43</sup>

The introduction of Christianity led to a considerable amount of misunderstanding between the Menonites and the natives. Stauffer attributed the problem to the missionary's inability to relate Christianity to African cultures. Stauffer stated that

the biggest spiritual problem we had . . . was . . . to show that religion and personal relationship to Jesus Christ are two different things. The African in his concept was adopting a western religion, which meant you learn what to say, what to learn, what to profess, how to behave, and you become a Christian, which is the white man's religion. But a personal relationship to Jesus Christ as being the source of life in what was hopefully the center of our ministry and message, somehow was difficult to get across. I would say that we never did get that across. . . . I have stated many times publicly the most embarrassing question that was asked to me was which is the true religion? You all come with the same Bible, you all teach from the same Bible that yours is the true church, and yet you are so different. Now which of you is speaking the truth? . . . I found no answer to that embarrassing question. You couldn't tell the African about your church history. . . . None of that was convincing. So that this whole picture of confusion of Protestant, Catholic, Moslem religions . . . I think perhaps was the basis of our church problems . . .<sup>44</sup>

Between 1934 and 1961, "Menonitism" became a serious issue between the missionaries and the Lancaster

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<sup>43</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 27, 1971.

<sup>44</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

church. Too many church leaders within Lancaster Conference stubbornly demanded that the discipline and teachings of Lancaster Conference be applied to the Tanganyika church. EMBMC, therefore, sent missionaries to Tanganyika who were expected to present a distinct Mennonite witness. Some of the missionaries, however, considered this to be a violation of the "three-self" principle. For example, Elam Stauffer said:

We were not going out to establish Mennonite churches or little miniature Lancaster Conferences. . . . We were going with the Bible and going to work out with the Africans what kind of church the Lord would establish in Africa.<sup>45</sup>

No matter what the missionary personally believed, he was not in a position to ignore his employers. In such matters, the missionary had to convince the home church that he was loyal and obedient, or risk dismissal.

Several missionaries argued that the indigenous principle meant that a new church was free to make its own decisions regarding how its membership was going to express its Christian faith. Yet Africans who wanted to become Christians were forced to reject their own lifestyles. Unfortunately, Elam Stauffer said that there was little of value in the African culture which could be applied to the new Christian culture. Only after years in the field did Stauffer come to realize that the

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<sup>45</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.

missionary only had the right to share and cooperate with the African so that together they could discover the local expression of the Gospel.<sup>46</sup>

A former Mennonite missionary in Tanganyika, Mahlon Hess, also expressed this lack of awareness on the part of the missionaries.

We were not transplanting little Lancaster Conferences in Tanganyika, but we were less discerning about the western moulds in which we existed . . . this was more inadvertent than purposeful. . . . Missionaries caused maladjustments; sometimes due to our blindness, sometimes due to our misguided zeal. . . . We were not requiring our followers to become replicas of Lancaster Conference, and this really blinded us to larger issues of westernization. It is true our denominationalism got in the way of the Lord's work . . .<sup>47</sup>

Shemaya Magati, principal of the secondary school in Shirati, and one of the younger, educated leaders in the drive for an independent church in Tanganyika, reacted to the effects of westernization upon African culture.

One of the most important things which African people don't like, especially today, was on this line [Africa: the "Dark Continent"]. . . . whether missionaries or colonial officials . . . almost no one said truth . . . of how Africa and Africans were by this time. . . . talking to several of the missionaries and colonial officials sometime before 1958, one or two told me that they had to say so because of their people back home because of the money. They wanted money to work over there, therefore, they must have something to say to the people who were giving money . . . then they could get money. . . . even some of the Mennonite missionaries wrote several books, and I have those books, which

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<sup>46</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 21, 1971.

<sup>47</sup>Mahlon Hess, private interview, August 23, 1971.



mentioned all the things you [Anchak] have said, even with pictures . . . and that is one thing which is making every people today in Africa not to believe in Christianity. . . . They said African culture, African ideas, African souls, African dance . . . were heathen, pagan and so on, therefore, they were not needed. And to make a person subhuman, you must tell him such a thing, and then once he believes that he's not . . .<sup>48</sup> a person who can make real decisions . . .

Merle Eshleman's book, Africa Answers, was an example of what Shemaya Magati referred to. Eshleman described a life in which Africans were content to exist within the same conditions as their ancestors, and in which Africans made little progress except for putting iron on the end of their hoes. Eshleman considered that such material stagnation might be caused by the tropical climate or, more importantly, by the "curse of Cain." Eshleman concluded that the "Dark Continent" needed Christianity.<sup>49</sup> It was the "Dark Continent" because it had not embraced Christianity, but his religious zeal caused him to use inappropriate terminology, which could only be received and understood by his readers as a derogation. No amount of good intentions could undo the psychological damage which resulted from well-meaning missionaries who applied the "white man's burden" to their work.

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<sup>48</sup>Shemaya Magati, private interview, August 3, 1971.

<sup>49</sup>Merl W. Eshleman, Africa Answers (Scottsdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1951), pp. 40, 41.

Elam Stauffer said that the "curse of Cain" was generally and vaguely accepted in the field,<sup>50</sup> but Orie Miller commented that the curse was not widely accepted within the Mennonite Church.<sup>51</sup> It would appear that Eshleman and some of the other Mennonite missionaries allowed their religious fervor to overpower their reason or religious training.

It is no wonder that the Mennonite missionaries were opposed to the incorporation of most of the traditional cultural elements into the African Church's environment. For example, the Luo pried out their six lower front teeth, while the Jita and Zanaki filed their teeth, and the Kuria stretched and pierced their ear lobes. Elam Stauffer explained why the mission opposed these practices. "There was a stand against this kind of mutilation of the body because the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and we felt that it was un-Christian to do that . . ."<sup>52</sup>

The question of prayer veiling and women's hair length was discussed. In public assemblies, or prayer meetings, the women were to wear a head covering which

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<sup>50</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, July 21, 1971.

<sup>51</sup>Orie O. Miller, private interview, August 12, 1971.

<sup>52</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 10, 1971.

would fulfill the requirement in I Corinthians 11. African women were not, however, required to wear their hair as long as American females because of the problem of manageability. Yet many in Lancaster Conference questioned allowing short hair, but the conference finally acceded to nature. Although no laws were written down by the Tanganyika church regarding the use of jewelry, tobacco and native beer, the ministers preached against their use. Offenders were talked to in private, but they were neither punished nor disciplined.

Another difficulty arose when the missionary tried to reach the older people with the Gospel. The missionaries' problem was discerning whether an individual sincerely wanted to become a Christian, or whether he wanted to use the mission for material gain. Elam Stauffer explained the dilemma.

I think we added something to the problem innocently enough because in the first years . . . we demanded that people who were not too old or otherwise incapable, had to be able to read the New Testament before they could be baptized. . . . You've got to be able to read God's letter in order to be able to know what he is saying to you. . . . this must have given added weight to the concept that when you can read you can be a Christian. . . . added to that, of course, was that we were pretty ignorant of . . . all the beliefs of the Africans. The old man was deeply immersed in the culture of the land . . . we know very little about it, and so perhaps our presentation to the older people was very inadequate. . . . The old man . . . knew that he couldn't come into the church unless he would live with only one [wife]. . . .<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 3, 1971.

The most difficult deterrent to winning converts to Christianity was the question of polygamy. Again, Elam Stauffer explained the problem.

My spiritual father in Africa, Emil Sywulka, once made the statement that 95 percent of the problems in Africa had to do with marriage problems. . . . it isn't a simple thing for a man to simply put away his wives and children. . . . Eventually the Tanganyika Mennonite Church made a proviso that a woman who accepted the Lord, and by her life and testimony gave evidence of a genuine Christian experience, could be baptized and received into the Church. . . . But the church never accepted a man to be baptized and received into fellowship as long as he had more than one wife. We did accept him into catechism class, but not for baptism. . . . When a man died, the woman was not free to marry whom she would, as the Scriptures say, because the marriage dowry bound her to his people. . . . We never found a satisfactory solution to that one . . .<sup>54</sup>

Because the Mennonites were so ignorant of African cultures, formal training in anthropology would have been most helpful. Elam Stauffer agreed and said, "What a pity that we as missionaries, the first missionaries, weren't exposed to some of this, it would have done so much for us. . . . perhaps some missionaries got to read on their own."<sup>55</sup> For the most part, missionaries did not consider the viability or stability of the African community important enough to be preserved; they were too absorbed in their own work. Furthermore, they knew that the Gospel was bound to make changes, and that disruption of the indigenous culture was inevitable.

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<sup>54</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

<sup>55</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 27, 1971.

## CHAPTER THREE

### EVENTS ON THE FIELD, 1934-1939

#### Educational Work

Since the missionaries spent the first few months on Katura Hill building homes and a temporary church, full-scale mission work was delayed. Furthermore, the missionaries did not want to undertake these labors until they had acquired a considerable degree of language competency. With the hiring of a compound overseer in May 1934, the missionaries had time to devote to language study, education, and religious activity.

Following through with the discussions at the Dar meeting in April 1934, the missionaries planned to operate central station and bush or outschools. Government standards were to be followed as long as they did not interfere with the major purpose of the mission which was evangelization; education was to serve as a vehicle to widen contacts with the native communities.<sup>1</sup> The mission did not, however, intend to initiate any

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of the meeting of the African missionaries with O. O. Miller at Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika, April 3-5, 1934, Salunga Archives. Hereafter cited as the Dar meeting.

educational program until the missionaries were more competent in the native languages. In his first official report as the secretary of the mission, Elam Stauffer informed EMBMC that the mission had to start a readers or catechism class sooner than expected because several natives wanted to learn to read. Fortunately, catechism books in Swahili were available from the AIM press.<sup>2</sup>

School officially opened on October 1, 1934. John Mosemann and Elam Stauffer were the teachers, and their native translators were Zedekea and Makori. Forty-four students, ranging in age from five to twenty-five years, answered the first bell. Most of the students were men and boys because education was not considered to be necessary for the female. Stauffer explained classroom procedures and the subjects taught to the EMBMC.

The Bible lesson and memory work are done in Luo because the children do not know Swahili. After this devotional period John and I alternate our classes for the purpose of helping to do more efficient work as well as to care for the language problem. The reading and writing are in Luo . . . John is teaching those while I try to care for Arithmetic and singing in the Swahili language. There is very little use for Arith. in the vernacular [Luo] . . . while do, re, me [sic], fa, sol, etc. must be English and can be learned from Swahili teacher. Thus while John teaches half of them reading, I teach the other half Arith. and at the end of that class we exchange classes and continue our teaching . . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>May Report to EMBMC, June 30, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File. Also, July Report to John Mellinger, President, EMBMC, August 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

<sup>3</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 11 (September 26, 1935), Salunga Archives; September Report to EMBMC, October 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

The two classroom assistants, Zedekea and Makori, along with two other natives were in a separate advanced class which was taught by Elam. The students in the advanced class were being prepared to assume teaching roles in the outschools. Since the cardinal objective of all education was evangelization, the advanced students received the main part of their training in the Bible. In this way, evangelical outreach would be accomplished by indigenous teachers. In addition to Bible training, the curriculum included mathematics, and later, health, geography, and history. The level of this training was comparable to the fourth or fifth grade.<sup>4</sup>

School operated from 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. The beginning students paid the equivalent of ten cents American per month, while the advanced students were charged fifty cents per month. The money was used to purchase blackboards, crayons, slates, pencils, and books. Anyone who did not have the tuition, and most of the students did not, either brought food which the missionaries bought, or worked on the station until the tuition money was earned. In this way, no one was turned away, but everyone paid for what he received.<sup>5</sup> Although

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<sup>4</sup>October Report to EMBMC, November 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

<sup>5</sup>September Report to EMBMC, October 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

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Africans were anxious to attend school, they balked at paying tuition because they felt that school should be free.<sup>6</sup>

In his November report, Elam presented a progress report on education for EMBMC.

There is little done at the house before 10:00 a.m. when school dismisses . . . At present school is 5 days every week from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. and will continue so until the end of this month. . . . Our school work plan is to carry it on as do other schools i.e. to have school three months and rest one month all through the year, except possible [sic] the class for the more advanced ones who we hope to get ready for teachers as fast as possible and from which will possible [sic] come our first outschool leaders. This class will probably be kept in session continually . . .<sup>7</sup>

It did not take the missionaries long to realize that there was a great need for a qualified teacher to take charge of the station school. As a result, a request was made to EMBMC to send a teacher in the spring of 1936. Through the Africa Circle Letter, the home constituency was kept informed of the Shirati school's progress, were introduced to several of the students, and made aware of the need for an experienced teacher. John and Ruth Mosemann wrote: "Come, Come, Come! Send us a teacher! . . . We particularly desire that all our

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<sup>6</sup>November Report to Henry Garber, December 5, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

believers learn how to read, so that they may be able to read the Word for themselves."<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the mission received numerous petitions for outlying areas to establish bush schools there. To train the necessary teachers, the mission opened the Bukiroba Teachers' Training School on October 14, 1936. The six students were taught Bible Doctrine, Old Testament History, grammar, Tanganyika History, writing, and current events by John and Catharine Leatherman, who arrived in Tanganyika in May 1936. John taught three advanced classes in the morning and Catharine taught two, followed in the afternoon by regular classes for beginning students. The advanced students lived in one long house which was divided into small rooms, each occupied by one student and his family. Future plans called for the construction of several small single houses which were to be made of mud brick, a dirt floor and a grass roof. All advanced students were responsible for providing their own food.<sup>9</sup>

At the European and Native Bible Conference held in Shirati in June 1937, the missionaries named John

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<sup>8</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 11 (September 26, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>9</sup>John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 20 (September 14, 1937), Salunga Archives; John Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 30 (November 10, 1937), Salunga Archives; John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 31 (December 15, 1937), Salunga Archives.



Mosemann as Education Secretary for liaison with the Dar government regarding education matters. The mission purchased a subscription to the Government Gazette to keep informed on government decisions designed to upgrade the caliber of native education in Tanganyika. The government differentiated between small evangelistic centers, where a limited amount of secular education was disseminated, and larger schools where more standard teaching was carried on. In the latter, the government required all schools and teachers, black and white, to be registered with the government. The mission steadfastly maintained that its emphasis was on evangelism, and that it would therefore have to delay conforming to government standards until it could be seen how the government's posture affected, if at all, the mission's goal.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, all of the station schools continued to emphasize Bible instruction with students classified according to their religious training: unbelievers, children, Christians, catechumens, or those studying for baptism.<sup>11</sup>

In the mission's annual report for 1938, John Mosemann revealed that there were central schools at all

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<sup>10</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, July 12, 1937, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>11</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, February 28, 1938, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.



four stations and twelve outschools, and that the total enrollment approached three hundred. In any event, the mission was hard pressed to comply with EMBMC's policy which called for a minimum of institutional work, while at the same time upgrading instruction as required by the government, especially since the mission had a limited number of American teachers and very few native ones.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the outschools funneled students into the station schools, which provided students for the Bible school, leading to an expansion of the educational program. In addition, the program was hampered by students who were more interested in the material rather than the spiritual rewards of a teaching career. Also native teachers wanted financial support from the United States like their American counterparts.<sup>13</sup>

#### Dispensary Work

Medical work was also viewed as an important part of evangelization. In its initial budget for 1934-1935, the Dar group provided for dispensary work, and they looked to EMBMC to provide qualified medical personnel as early as possible.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Annual Report, March 1938 through February 1939, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

<sup>13</sup>John E. Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 41 (April 19, 1939), Salunga Archives.

<sup>14</sup>Dar meeting, April 3-5, 1934, Salunga Archives.

Since John Mosemann assisted in the construction work on the station, his wife, Ruth, assumed responsibility for operating the dispensary. Each patient was charged five cents, or its equivalent in food, for treatment and medicines. Once the food was appraised the missionaries took money from their living expenses and placed the money into a medical box.<sup>15</sup>

Although there was a government dispensary approximately six miles from Shirati which dispensed free medicines, many people believed that free medicines and treatment were not good.<sup>16</sup> Even though the mission dispensary was ill equipped to care for many illnesses, hundreds came each month to be treated for burns, lacerations, constipation, rheumatism, itch, pneumonia, hernia, worms, eye conditions, and ulcers. Given the work load, it was apparent that Ruth Mosemann was unable to operate the dispensary alone. In September 1934, John Mellinger, President of EMBMC, announced that Dr. Lillie Shenk and Elma Hershberger, a registered nurse, had been appointed to the field and would arrive the following July.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Orie O. Miller, August 23, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, June 30, 1934, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>16</sup>May Report, June 30, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File; John Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 3 (June 29, 1934), Salunga Archives.

<sup>17</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, July 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File. Approval of

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Meanwhile, Dr. Shenk enrolled in a ten-week course in the London School of Tropical Medicine, and Nurse Hershberger continued her studies at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia. The plan called for Hershberger to join Dr. Shenk in London and thence travel together to Tanganyika. In order to outfit the medical team, EMBMC gave the two permission to mention their needs for medical equipment in the Missionary Messenger and the Gospel Herald.<sup>18</sup> In December, the Executive Committee, EMBMC, set up a Medical and Surgical Equipment Fund. The American constituency was advised that there were only four doctors in the entire Musoma district.<sup>19</sup>

The anticipated arrival of the medical team resulted in a mission request for an increase in the medical fund. Ruth Mosemann also asked the home constituency to provide the necessary money for an adequate medical facility.

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the appointment of the medical team occurred on October 2, 1934, Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, October 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>18</sup>Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, Vine St. Mission, Lancaster, November 17, 1934, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>19</sup>Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, Reading Mission, Reading, December 12, 1934, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

Pneumonia continues to be a special care for the little ones are brought in for miles without a cloth or blanket. You may know that nursing is one of the great essentials for a pneumonia patient, but since we have no place to keep them during the night, it means the child must be carried to the village and return the next morning. . . . The mortality among the children up to one year of age in this tribe [Luo] is given at sixty per cent. . . . We realize . . . we do not know the many, many things a doctor will recognize at once and treat intelligently. Just now our dispensary is done very simply under a temporary shed. The medicines and other dispensing articles are carried out of our rooms on trays and set in pioneer convenience on the piles of lumber which vary every several days.<sup>20</sup>

Elam Stauffer also commented on the need for in-patient houses. "A great need was felt for some houses on the compound where such cases as pneumonia or badly hurt people could stay for a few days while getting treatment and also could be watched a bit closer."<sup>21</sup> The local chief informed Elam that he would build the in-patient houses at no cost to the mission. Elam agreed since the mission's goal was to make its work self-supporting.<sup>22</sup>

Upon arrival in Tanganyika, Dr. Shenk and Nurse Hershberger observed Dr. Maynard's work in Shinyanga and also visited the government hospital in Mwanza.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>20</sup>Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 6 (December 12, 1934), Salunga Archives.

<sup>21</sup>December Report, January 11, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, April 20, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

two women arrived in Shirati on July 27, 1935. News of the doctor's arrival resulted in an increase in the number of patients which necessitated enlarging the medical quarters.<sup>24</sup> The medical dwellings now included two rooms and three huts for in-patients. The dispensary opened at eight o'clock in the morning, but some patients arrived as early as six-thirty. This afforded the native assistant, Gomba, the opportunity to read Scriptures to them and comment on their meaning. On the thirteenth of August the medical staff began giving injections for venereal diseases. The government furnished some drugs free, in particular, smallpox vaccine. For the first few months, Ruth Mosemann served as the interpreter for the new medical staff.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of EMBMC's desire to keep its operations simple, the medical program had already begun to jeopardize that policy. The mission informed EMBMC of its plan to erect a hut for maternity patients and, as soon possible, a small hospital. In order to reduce the amount of foreign funds needed for the program, the mission started its own Hospital Fund.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>July Report, August 5, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.; Elma Hershberger and Lillie Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 10 (August 24, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>26</sup>August and half of the September Report, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File; Elma

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The government in Tanganyika was willing to provide grants-in-aid to assist in the expansion of the existing medical facilities and to pay the salary of a second doctor. District Officer Davey wanted the Mennonites to place a doctor in Bukiroba, South Mara. Davey stated that a nice income could be realized from the care of miners in that region. Since the mission intended to expand southward, Stauffer reminded EMBMC that it was too costly to transport a doctor and an automobile back and forth across Mara Bay. The mission, therefore, recommended that a doctor should be posted in South Mara, thereby servicing three Mennonite stations in that area. The mission, however, preferred to place the doctor at one of their other stations, since Bukiroba was only six miles from the government hospital in Musoma.<sup>27</sup>

EMBMC still wanted time to consider the ramifications of expanding the medical program. Since the mission's primary objective was evangelization, the home boards wanted to keep institutional organization to a minimum and avoid unnecessary overhead expenses. Orie

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Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 11 (September 26, 1935), Salunga Archives; Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, November 7, 1935, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>27</sup>December Report, January 28, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

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Miller instructed the mission to find out from other missions just what government subsidies entailed. EMBMC's Executive Committee considered such aid acceptable as long as it did not interfere with mission goals.<sup>28</sup>

There was no doubt that the medical program had grown rapidly. The first maternity cases were cared for in November 1935, the same month Dr. Shenk operated on her first patient; the first appendectomy operation was performed on April 21, 1936;<sup>29</sup> the leper colony, opened on Thanksgiving Day, 1936, even though the building to house the lepers had not been completed. The local chief in Shirati had agreed to build the huts at no cost to the mission. With no dwellings to treat lepers as in-patients, only two patients came regularly to receive injections.<sup>30</sup>

In spite of station growth throughout 1937 and 1938, there was very little medical work carried on

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<sup>28</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to the Mennonite Mission, February 10, 1936, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>29</sup>Elma Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 12 (November 12, 1935), Salunga Archives; Lillie S. Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 14 (January 22, 1936), Salunga Archives; Lillie S. Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 17 (May 11, 1936), Salunga Archives.

<sup>30</sup>Lillie S. Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 21 (October 20, 1936); No. 22 (December 1, 1936); No. 25 (April 7, 1937); No. 38 (October 22, 1938); No. 39 (December 5, 1938), Salunga Archives.

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outside Shirati until the arrival of Dr. Noah Mack in November 1938. Dispensary work had been carried on in Mugango for the first nine months of 1937, but it had to be discontinued because the workload on that station was too much for the Stauffers. A very limited amount of medical work was carried on at Bumangi by Alta Shenk. Dr. Noah Mack opened a dispensary in Bukiroba in November 1938, but had to move to Shirati in December when Dr. Shenk departed for the United States on furlough.<sup>31</sup> Once again there was only one doctor in the field.

#### Religious Program

The Mennonites believed that the mission's primary purpose was to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the truth of the power of God until salvation, and that believers should be baptized and taught to live according to the Word, and that their fellowship was in Christ and with the brotherhood.

Ayubu Job, Doudy, Shindano and Mabina, the four natives who accompanied the pioneers from Mwanza to Shirati, had been Christianized by the AIM. Every Sunday morning the missionaries held a short service in Swahili

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<sup>31</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, February 28, 1939, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

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for themselves and the four native Christians. Elam described a typical service:

We sing a few songs together, read a portion [Bible] and I call on one of them [native Christians] for prayer. Next we sing a song and I read a verse, parable or chapter and try to preach on that theme. After the closing prayer we sing another song.<sup>32</sup>

Attendance at Sunday services increased until there were more than one hundred adults present, and forty or more children. By mid-1935 Ruth Mosemann had become competent enough in Dholuo to start Sunday School classes for children. Assisted by two natives, Ruth taught two classes in which simple Gospel stories were told. Since the children could not read, they memorized a new Scripture verse each week.<sup>33</sup> After the Sunday morning service in Shirati, one of the missionaries took the automobile across Mara Bay on the ferry to Musoma, where worship was held in the native market.<sup>34</sup> In addition to Musoma, there were semi-weekly messages and daily worship. Until a church was built services were held outside. In September a little church of poles and thatch was erected.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Elam Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 3 (July 1, 1934), Salunga Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 9 (1935), Salunga Archives. The number of children's classes was increased to three in June, June Report, July 4, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

<sup>34</sup>Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 10 (August 24, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>35</sup>Elam Stauffer and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 5 (n.d.), Salunga Archives; John Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 4 (September 22, 1934), Salunga Archives.

Several of the local workmen began attending these services and soon they declared an interest in learning to read the Word. In December 1934, thirty Tanganyikans declared their belief in Jesus Christ and stated that they wanted to study for baptism and entry into the Mennonite Church. Accordingly, Elam started a believers class. The catechumens met every Saturday afternoon for one hour of instruction from the AIM catechism, with Zedekea interpreting Elam's messages. The catechism class did not grow so rapidly as might be expected because the missionaries were interested only in earnest seekers of Jesus Christ; therefore, those who sought only material gains were weeded out.<sup>36</sup>

Requests continued to come into Shirati for mission stations and outschools. One such petition came from a group living about fifteen miles northeast of Shirati in Mageta, where both the Church Mission Society (CMS) and the AIM had previously operated stations. Elam Stauffer journeyed to Mageta in April 1935, to interview the prospective proselytes. Although these people had not been part of a formal church for several years, Stauffer was pleasantly surprised to find a school with a native teacher and three native Christian

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<sup>36</sup>December Report, January 11, 1935; February Report, March 23, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

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assistants. Elam decided to contact both the CMS and AIM to see if they favored Mennonite occupation of the Mageta area.<sup>37</sup>

Between October 28 and November 1, 1935, Elam Stauffer discussed with Emil Sywulka AIM's decision to transfer its Mugango interests to the Mennonites. AIM decided that it could not provide adequate services for its outstations there, and since the Mennonites were expanding into South Mara, it was logical for AIM to make this offer. The Mennonites thus were given an opportunity to Witness to a population over 22,000. In their discussions both men agreed that they wanted to assure the Christians in Mugango that no harm would befall them as a result of the change. Until the official transfer occurred, it was agreed that the Mennonite mission would attempt to supply the Mugango outschools with materials and make visitations when possible, but responsibility for church matters rested with AIM. The actual site selected for the third Mennonite station was in the northern part of Mugango district, rather than in the tsetse fly-ridden south. Not only did the natives agree with the selection, but the same basic language, Kijita,

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<sup>37</sup>February Report, March 23, 1935; March-April Report, May 8, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File.

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was also spoken from Musoma to the southern Majita border.<sup>38</sup>

The Bishop Board of Lancaster Conference instructed the mission to go slowly and to permit the natives in Majita to decide if they wanted to join the Mennonite church. Henry E. Lutz explained the bishop board's position to Elam Stauffer:

There is soundness in having those A.I.M. converts and workers to decide for themselves whether they will come under your instruction and care or remain with the A.I.M. Though you could care for them better, because of being geographically close to them yet we will understand that you could not lead them, if they were not in heart with you.<sup>39</sup>

The mission agreed wholeheartedly with the bishop's position. Initially the Africans in Majita believed that there was some ulterior motive for the transfer on the part of the AIM, particularly on the part of Emil Sywulka. The Mennonites visited every school in Majita and carefully explained the meaning of the transfer and informed them that the final decision was their own. A station was finally opened in Mugango by the Stauffers on October 1, 1936.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>August-September Report, n.d.; September-October Report, November 7, 1935; December Report, January 28, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

<sup>39</sup>Letter, Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, April 7, 1936, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>40</sup>April-June Quarterly Report, July 14, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.



On September 15, 1935, baptismal services were held for eleven men and four women on the shores of Lake Victoria. This event inaugurated the African or mission church in Shirati, approximately sixteen months after the mission opened. After the baptismal service, five men and one woman were received into the church from other denominations, bringing the total membership of the new church to twenty-one. In the afternoon the first communion services for the native Christians were held in the grass chapel.<sup>41</sup>

Now that there was a native church it was appropriate to construct a permanent structure to replace the temporary hut built of poles and covered with a grass roof. Furthermore, ants and other insects had eaten into the poles making the chapel unsafe. The indigenous concept called for the building of the new church with local funds, not American. The native Christians, however, wanted a mud-brick church built with American funds. The mission informed the natives that no American funds would be made available because that would be contrary to the indigenous concept. The Africans reluctantly accepted the decision and erected a grass church which was built entirely with their funds. The new church

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<sup>41</sup> August-September Report, n.d., Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File. Between 1935 and 1960 we talk about the African church, but it is really the mission church because it is administered by the mission.

was occupied in October 1935, just in time to hold the first Christian wedding celebrated on the twenty-eighth of October.<sup>42</sup>

Doors continued to open for evangelization. On February 2, 1936, the government gave the Mennonites permission to conduct weekly services in the Musoma jail. Twenty-four natives entered a newly formed catechism class which was held on Saturday afternoons. On October 15 the government announced that any religious group within the district who desired could have weekly religious classes in the government school in Musoma. The Mennonites took advantage of the offer, and Elam Stauffer provided the instruction.<sup>43</sup>

The first local Native Conference was held in April 1936, so that the missionaries could discuss church-related issues with the local Christians. A second conference was convened on the fifth of May. At these conferences those present discussed how worldliness could be prevented from intruding into the church, the criteria for teacher selection and assignment, and the

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<sup>42</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, October 11, 1935, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File; Clinton and Maybell Ferster, Africa Circle Letter, No. 12 (November 14, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>43</sup>Secretary's Quarterly Report, April 7, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File; John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 21 (October 23, 1936), Salunga Archives.

requirements for admission into the Bukiroba Teachers' School. All discussions were missionary-led.<sup>44</sup>

Between June 29 and July 4, 1937, a Native and European Bible Conference was held in Shirati. The Lancaster Conference standards and their application to the African church was the center of discussion at the European segment.<sup>45</sup> In the native meeting, various church problems were discussed and five resolutions were adopted by the church membership. First, every Christian and believer (catechumen) was to tithe and give alms. The mission would collect the money which was to be used to pay native teachers and evangelists. In this way the church would be self-supporting and self-propagating. Second, tribal markings were prohibited. Third, prior to admission into the church the background of all candidates was to be investigated. Fourth, believers were to live with one mate, master the catechism and participate in church work before they were examined for baptism. Fifth, all fancy clothing and jewelry were prohibited.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Secretary's Quarterly Report, April 7, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Report File; Quarterly Report, April 1-June 30, July 14, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

<sup>45</sup>The writer considers this a violation of the indigenous concept because decisions regarding the future organization of the African church were being made by foreign missionaries, not by native Christians.

<sup>46</sup>Report of the Native and European Bible Conference, Shirati, July 28, 1937, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

The native church grew slowly because the mission wanted only believers who were earnest in their desire to become members of the church. The mission weeded out the so-called "rice Christian"--one who sought worldly rather than spiritual rewards. As a result, there were only nine baptisms in 1937 and one convert from the CMS; this brought the total church membership to ninety. One of the new members was the first person baptized in Bukiroba, thereby inaugurating the church there on October 7, 1937.<sup>47</sup>

The mission was convinced that the Christianization of Africa was the responsibility of Africans, not foreigners. Therefore, in 1937, the mission held quarterly meetings for outschool teachers in order to provide them with Bible instruction and to give the teachers advice on dealing with local church problems. In an effort to make its own work more effective, the mission introduced a system of language examinations for all missionaries. Until each examination was passed, a missionary had to devote definite periods daily to language study.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Report to the Bishop Board of Lancaster Conference, February 23, 1938, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>48</sup>Annual Report for 1937, February 28, 1938, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

By 1938 the African church had grown sufficiently to warrant its own bishop. At a special meeting of the missionaries in Musoma, Elam Stauffer and John Mosemann were nominated for the office. The lot was cast, and Elam Stauffer was ordained on September 6, 1938, at the annual mission conference.<sup>49</sup>

Another major step taken at the annual conference was the creation of a Native Council to assist in administering the church. The plan called for one elected member for each twelve members in the church. Thereafter, the Council, Bishop Stauffer, and the missionaries decided all matters affecting the welfare of the congregation. In the future, there would also be a native clergy and a native bishop. With the creation of the Native Council, the mission launched the third leg of its indigenous program, i.e., a church which was self-governing. Although the native Christians were now involved in church administration, the mission did not think they were ready to assume any appreciable role in church governance in the near future. Meanwhile, the missionaries would suggest, guide, and instruct the native leaders in their duties and responsibilities when

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<sup>49</sup>Letter, Henry F. Garber to the Executive Committee, EMBMC, September 6, 1938, Salunga Archives, Henry F. Garber File.

they took over the church from the mission.<sup>50</sup>

Another sign of the growing involvement of the natives in their own church was the appointment of six native teachers to outschools in their home areas. All six had completed the teacher training course in Bukiroba.<sup>51</sup>

By the end of the mission's first five years in Tanganyika, there were four main stations: Shirata (1934), Bukiroba (1935), Mugango (1936), and Bumangi (1937); and a fifth station was to be opened in Nyabasi in 1940. A total of nineteen workers had served in Tanganyika, and approximately \$50,000 had been expended. There were 160 natives under instruction in the catechumen and hearers' classes, and approximately 300 students enrolled in the outschools. The development of the African church had been slow, and the Mennonites believed that church-building was, by its very nature, a slow process. Once the church was worthy of Jesus Christ, then the scaffold (mission) should be removed. The Mennonites believed that a truly African church needed African leadership, and African leadership ("church

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<sup>50</sup>Report to the Joint Meetings of the Bishop Board and EMBMC by Henry Lutz and Henry Garber, November 9, 1938, Salunga Archives, Henry F. Garber File.

<sup>51</sup>Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 42 (June 20, 1939), Salunga Archives.

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pillars") had to be sought out and instructed so that they could take over the administration of the church.<sup>52</sup>

### Mission Expenses

Every Mennonite missionary sent to Tanganyika by EMBMC was called upon to make individual sacrifices to fulfill God's Great Commission. At the 1934 Dar meeting the group decided that each missionary would receive 150 shillings per month for living expenses. EMBMC provided round-trip transportation, living quarters, and basic furniture and household equipment. All dwellings and standard equipment became the property of the mission. EMBMC established a standard list of items needed by workers on the field; the list had been prepared by the pioneers.<sup>53</sup>

EMBMC exchanged American dollars in London for East African shillings, which were then transmitted to Tanganyika.<sup>54</sup> Since EMBMC had no foreign mission experience, the board made inquiries of various mission societies, including MBMC, while the mission contacted the experienced AIM people. As a result, EMBMC decided

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<sup>52</sup>Annual Report, March 1938-February 1939, March 13, 1939, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

<sup>53</sup>Dar meeting, April 3-5, 1934.

<sup>54</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, July 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.



that the guideline for the annual Tanganyika budget would be \$1000 per appointed worker. Since the money was to be expended for Christian outreach, every expenditure had to be a necessary part of evangelization, or it was to be avoided.<sup>55</sup>

Although EMBMC attempted to keep the Tanganyika budget within the proposed guidelines, each time a new station opened, construction costs made this impossible. Furthermore, expansion of the medical and educational programs prevented a realization of the proposed goal. But the \$1000 figure remained the guideline throughout the life of the mission, and several steps were taken in an attempt to comply with the guideline. The cost of items donated to a specific missionary's support fund was deducted from his personal allowance. Donors in the United States and Canada assumed all responsibility for freight and customs charges on all goods shipped to Tanganyika. Mission funds were not used for the special training of missionary appointees; a special appeal was made in such cases. Each missionary couple was to cultivate his own garden to decrease the amount of food

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<sup>55</sup>Minutes of the Executive Committee, EMBMC, Reading Mission, December 14, 1934, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, December 15, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Orie O. Miller, August 23, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

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purchased locally. Finally, for the sake of efficiency, the mission created a three-man Executive Committee to administer the mission between the semi-annual business meetings. This was the first change made in the field organization since the mission opened in April 1934.<sup>56</sup>

For the most part, church members in Lancaster Conference were eager to support the Tanganyika mission. Initially all donations were placed in the Africa General Fund, but many donors wanted to support a specific missionary, project, or to purchase needed equipment, so EMBMC set up special funds for those purposes. Thereafter, congregations, Sunday School classes, other groups and individuals were encouraged to contribute to one of the specific funds; contributions which were not earmarked for the latter were placed in the Africa General Fund. Among the specific programs were the missionary support fund, the medical and surgical equipment fund, and the auto purchase and expense fund.

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<sup>56</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to the Mission, June 27, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Letter, Orie O. Miller to the Mission, July 2, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, November 7, 1935, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Orie O. Miller, November 16, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Minutes of the Executive Committee, EMBMC, Strasburg, March 31-April 1, 1936, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

On February 16, 1937, John and Catharine Leatherman were blessed with the arrival of a daughter, Lois, and for the first time EMBMC had to consider the matter of child support. Orie Miller inquired of the General Board in Elkhart for the specific amounts which they provided for child support. EMBMC decided on an allowance of twenty shillings per month for missionary children under the age of six. No decision was made for children over that age.<sup>57</sup>

#### Village Visitations

According to Elam Stauffer, the purpose of village visitations was

An attempt from the very first to have the whole church be interested in the evangelization of their people. . . . We wanted them to get a vision of getting out and taking the Gospel to their people so that on Saturday there was no work on the mission and the members were supposed to come together and have prayer and then break up and go in visitation work in the villages.<sup>58</sup>

The first village visitations occurred in October 1934, when Elam accompanied Zedekeia Kisare to his village near Shirati. Elam was so spiritually moved

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<sup>57</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to John H. Mosemann, April 5, 1937, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File; Letter, Orie O. Miller to John H. Mosemann, October 1, 1937, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File. The amount of child support was raised to thirty shillings in 1939.

<sup>58</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 3, 1971.

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by this experience that he suggested to the other missionaries that Sunday afternoons be used for bringing the Word of God to nearby villages. To facilitate village visitations, John Mosemann recommended that EMBMC purchase an automobile for each station and a bicycle for each missionary.<sup>59</sup> There had been few village visitations during the first year of the mission because the missionaries had been occupied with station construction and language study. Another important factor was the mission's acknowledgment that indigenous work required African evangelists, who had to be trained before they could function in that capacity.<sup>60</sup> Thus, it was expected that this phase of the work would lag behind other programs.

After Ruth Mosemann was relieved of medical responsibilities in July 1935, she attempted to visit villages on Sunday afternoons, but this allowed her no time to rest, and so she went out only whenever she could.<sup>61</sup> Usually accompanied by an African who read a lesson and spoke briefly to the villagers, Nurse Elma

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<sup>59</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Henry F. Garber, November 8, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>60</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 10 (August 24, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>61</sup>August-September Report, n.d., Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.



Hershberger also tried to visit the villages and provide some medical aid to the villagers. After the service she passed out Sunday School cards and invited the gathering to attend Sunday services at the station.<sup>62</sup>

By 1936 a number of native Christians, male and female, were ready to become evangelists. These novice evangelists divided into groups of from three to six and walked to nearby villages, where they conducted a short service for an audience of between twenty-five and thirty people. On a typical Sunday afternoon an evangelist team might visit as many as eight villages.<sup>63</sup>

By 1937 weekly visitations were a regular event, but they were conducted on Saturday rather than Sunday. This work called for an ever-increasing number of native Christians in order to reach further afield, but until there was a large, well-instructed native group, the mission concentrated on establishing strong, central stations. The goal, nevertheless, was to build an indigenous church which was self-propagating, and for that reason a special class was set up to train native evangelists.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Elma Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 14 (January 24, 1936), Salunga Archives.

<sup>63</sup>Elma Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 16 (April 1, 1936), Salunga Archives.

<sup>64</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 28 (August 2, 1937), Salunga Archives; John and Ruth



Elam Stauffer summed up the attitude of the mission to village visitations for the purpose of evangelical outreach.

The vision was good and perhaps the attempt was good, so that there was some good fruit came out of it, I'm sure. I'm sure that the Gospel was taken into some villages and maybe some people came to the mission who would not otherwise have come. So that I think it was good at the time. The unfavorable comment is that a lot of those that went out were poorly equipped to go out, they were poorly qualified to go out, maybe too recent believers. . . . I wonder sometimes what they said and what they did . . . sending everybody like this, male and female, boys and girls . . . sometimes developed into unfortunate relationships . . . so that later on it was dropped . . . just sort of petered out. I don't think we ever ruled it out as a bad thing, but it didn't continue.<sup>65</sup>

#### Women and Girls' Work

Christian women were needed as marriage partners for Christian men, but it was very difficult to communicate with the female population because most of them did not speak Swahili, and for a long time there were very few language aids available. In 1935 the mission decided that it could reach the female by teaching sewing, traditionally men's work. Most African males balked at the idea of such education for females, and

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Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 29 (September 11, 1937), Salunga Archives; Annual Report, 1937, February 28, 1938, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

<sup>65</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 3, 1971.

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few females therefore attended the station school. Saddened by male recalcitrance and female timidity, the mission met the challenge by holding special classes for females on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Mennonite women were proud of their domestic abilities, and they assumed that this was the proper role for all Christian women. Ruth Mosemann gave the young women some domestic instruction, but most of the time was spent in Bible study. The mission anticipated a great demand once the program was underway, but the new program limped along and there were many years of ups and downs.<sup>66</sup>

The most ambitious undertaking, after approval by the native Christians, was the opening of a girls' home in Shirati. On May 12, 1936, six girls moved into temporary quarters, and the next day eight more arrived. Although the mission was anxious to provide what it considered to be a proper Christian environment for as many girls as possible, the mission did not hesitate to expel those who reverted to their tribal ways. At the end of one month only six girls remained in the program. Meanwhile the work on the permanent girls' home progressed slowly because the natives insisted that the cost of

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<sup>66</sup>Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 6 (December 14, 1935), Salunga Archives; August-September Report, n.d., Salunga Archives; September-October Report, November 7, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

construction should be borne by the mission. Once again the mission refused to give in and argued that an indig-enous church was one which supported its own activities. The mission did, however, solicit and accept donations and gifts from America. In fact, it was American generosity which enabled the mission to undertake the girls' home program.<sup>67</sup>

EMBMC's goal was to have a girls' home on every station, but male opposition and female indifference was difficult to overcome. In spite of these difficulties, the home in Shirati became self-governing in February 1939, and an African female assumed the responsibility from Ruth Mosemann for the home's governance.<sup>68</sup>

#### The First American Deputation Visit, 1938

When the pioneer group met in Dar es Salaam in April 1934, everyone felt that the mission organization should be kept as simple as possible because time and experience were needed before a permanent organization was established. As new stations opened, however, it

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<sup>67</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 17 (May 6, 1936); No. 18 (June 16, 1936); No. 21 (October 21, 1936), Salunga Archives; Quarterly Report, April 1-June 30, July 14, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; Letter, John Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, September 15, 1936, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>68</sup>John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 40 (February 20, 1939), Salunga Archives.

became more difficult for all of the missionaries to meet for the purpose of managing the total mission. As a result, a three-man Executive Committee assumed that responsibility. By May 1937, there were four stations, and it became necessary to consider a permanent organization. Furthermore, EMBMC desired an organization which would bring the African church into closer contact with the mother church in America. The home boards, therefore, decided to send an official deputation to Tanganyika.<sup>69</sup> The workers in the field were delighted because they had recommended to EMBMC that such a group should come to Tanganyika and experience the problems first-hand. According to John Mosemann,

there is a deep appreciation among all the field workers for the conviction that contact should be made with the field by representatives of the home constituency. Problems of the field will tax the best of spiritual insight and the deepest sympathy, and we are laboring with you in prayer that the Lord will definitely enable in the choosing and sending of these representatives.<sup>70</sup>

The mission recommended that the deputation should spend no less than one month in Tanganyika prior to the annual mission conference so that the deputies could become acquainted with mission operations and problems,

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<sup>69</sup>Letter, Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, March 18, 1937, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>70</sup>Second Quarter Report, July 26, 1937, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

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especially since this deputation was authorized to establish a permanent organization for the Tanganyika mission. A list of some of the major problems was sent to EMBMC so that the deputation would have enough time to become familiar with them prior to their visit.<sup>71</sup>

Bishop Henry Lutz was chosen to represent the Bishop Board, and Henry Garber, EMBMC. In addition to deciding upon a permanent mission organization, the deputies were to determine precisely what constituted adequate occupancy of the present Tanganyika field in terms of main stations, personnel and budget.<sup>72</sup> Henry Lutz and Henry and Ada Garber sailed for Tanganyika on April 21, 1938, and arrived in Shirati on the eighth of June.

While in Tanganyika, the deputation had ample time to travel and to observe several non-Mennonite mission operations. They visited an AIM station in Kenya which operated an industrial training program, and in Kisumu they visited an African-run AIM station. In Bunyere they observed the Church of God's home for girls, and industrial and liberal arts programs. The deputies

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<sup>71</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, September 6, 1937, and December 26, 1937, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>72</sup>Forty-third Quarterly Joint Meeting, East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, Lancaster, December 29, 1937, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

attended the AIM's annual conference in Shinyanga, and in Busia they observed the AIM's medical work. The AIM's Bible training school provided a valuable insight into that aspect of missionary work. They also visited the Bethel operations in Kigorama and Kamachuma, the Moravians in Tabora, and the Neukirchen facility in Kigoma.<sup>73</sup>

The deputation reiterated EMBMC's concern about keeping institutional activities to a minimum, but they learned that were it not for the medical missionary many areas would have had no medical attention at all. Furthermore, medical work paid for itself. Likewise, the Girls' Home in Shirati, which was necessary to provide Christian wives for Christian husbands, was also self-supporting. The weekday school also illustrated the need for institutional work, that is, without the schools, Africans would not have learned to read the Bible.<sup>74</sup>

At the mission's annual conference in September, the deputation agreed with the mission that five main stations provided adequate occupation of the Tanganyika field. They also accepted the mission's organizational

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<sup>73</sup>Deputation Report to the Joint Boards, November 9, 1938, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.



plan which called for a permanent executive committee of three men.<sup>75</sup>

#### Relations with Other Missions

For the most part, other Protestant missions were an important source of information, guidance and comradeship for the Mennonites in Tanganyika. In particular, the Sywulkas and the Maynards of AIM were invaluable friends. On many occasions, both EMBMC and the mission called upon their sister organizations in matters of budget, prospecting, construction of buildings, school programs, hospital and dispensary operations, girls' programs, missionary allowances, leaves and furloughs. Very wisely the Mennonites listened to and respected their counsel.

On innumerable occasions AIM workers showed their friendliness toward the Mennonites. It was Emil Sywulka of AIM who accompanied Elam Stauffer on his first prospecting trip. The Mennonite schools adopted the AIM catechism. In addition, Dr. Maynard instructed the pioneers in setting up a dispensary, and also assisted Dr. Shenk and Nurse Hershberger on their arrival in Africa. Mennonite missionaries were always welcomed at the AIM's annual conference. When the AIM turned its

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

field in Majita over to the Mennonites, it was Emil Sywulka who translated the materials into the Kijita language for the Mennonites.

For all that, relations with other missions were not always friendly, especially when a mission attempted to extend its field into an area claimed by another. One such incident occurred when the Mennonites attempted to expand into Kenya and were rebuffed by the CMS. The one group in particular with whom the Mennonites had a poor relationship was the Roman Catholics, regarded as "sheep stealers." Normally the Protestant missions agreed upon recognized spheres of occupation, but the Catholics considered the entire world their orbit. Time and time again the mission complained to the home board about the encroachments of Catholics into their field. John Mosemann's statement typified the Mennonite concern.

The work that was so promising at the Government School [Musoma] has been undermined to a large extent by Catholic lies, threats, and propaganda. This Catholic opposition constitutes a large problem at this particular station [Bukiroba].<sup>76</sup>

Prior to the end of World War II, most of the Catholic missionaries in Tanganyika came from Europe, but after the war many missionaries came from the United States, in particular from the Maryknoll Brothers. As a result,

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<sup>76</sup>Annual Report, 1937, February 28, 1938, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

the Mennonites felt some kinship with fellow Americans. Furthermore, Pope John was responsible for the improved relationship between Catholics and Protestants because of his ecumenical interests.<sup>77</sup>

#### Relations with the Colonial Government

For the most part, the mission's relationship with the colonial government was usually very good, and British officials were generally very friendly and cooperative. Since all of the Mennonite stations were situated within one district, the mission did not have to contend with unnecessary red tape. In fact, the local government in Musoma encouraged the Mennonites to expand their programs in medicine and education. The government was willing to provide missions with some financial aid, expertise and supplies because most of the medical and educational facilities were operated by the missions and thereby had relieved the government of a large financial and administrative burden.

On several occasions Dr. Shenk visited the government hospital in Musoma where she observed the treatment of various tropical diseases. From time to time, the medical officer in Musoma District was available for surgery or for consultation, and he rendered assistance when an epidemic of sleeping sickness struck in Shirati.

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<sup>77</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 8, 1971.

It was evident that the government wanted to accommodate the Mennonites. Until their arrival in Shirati, no government dentist had ever visited Musoma, but beginning in February 1935, the mission was informed that a dentist would make an annual trip to Musoma to treat the missionaries. Heretofore the nearest dentist was two hundred miles from Musoma.<sup>78</sup> In June 1935, Elizabeth Stauffer had a miscarriage and, at the same time, Elam was treated for stomach ulcers. The government hospital in Musoma charged both of them approximately ten dollars for ten days, and the doctor's services were free.<sup>79</sup> The government decision to build a road between Shirati and Utegi was a further gesture of friendliness. According to the Mosemanns,

There are two licensed motor cars in Shirati district. For some reason, the government is building a very nice road from our community to Utegi, thirty-four miles distant. There is no urgent need for this improvement, as far as the amount of traffic is concerned, so we confess there is an unseen power "in the midst" that is mighty.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 7 (February 8, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>79</sup>May Report, June 6, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

<sup>80</sup>July Report, August 5, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File; John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 11 (September 26, 1935), Salunga Archives.

The government also provided free plants and trees and free mail between mission stations. This service was a blessing since EMBMC considered such an expenditure a mission obligation.<sup>81</sup>

### Bishop Board-Mission Relations

Initially, the Bishop Board gave the mission a great amount of freedom to deal with religious issues because the board was inexperienced in foreign work. The board attempted to give counsel, not dictate policy.<sup>82</sup> During the early years of the mission's evolution, the bishops expressed their satisfaction with the reports from Tanganyika. They were especially pleased that the mission had adhered to Lancaster Conference discipline in such matters as communion and devotional converging for women.<sup>83</sup>

In October 1936, the Bishop Board informed the mission that they wanted to receive an annual report from the mission because the board felt that the field reports were too general and did not enlighten the

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<sup>81</sup>Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 12 (November 15, 1935), Salunga Archives; John and Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 12 (September 26, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>82</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

<sup>83</sup>Letter, Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, April 7, 1936, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

bishops in such matters as the loyalty and sentiment of the workers to the fellowship. Equally important was their concern regarding native adjustment to Christian life, and the growth of the African church. Lastly, they wanted duplicate copies of all the reports sent to EMBMC.<sup>84</sup>

In 1938, the mission referred three difficult problems to the Bishop Board. The most difficult involved polygamous marriage. As a temporary measure the mission accepted into church membership men who agreed to live with only one wife from the time they entered the believers class. Second, the mission stated that church members could marry only Christian women; the mission looked to the Bishop Board to spell out a permanent policy. The third problem concerned church finance. The mission's interpretation of the indigenous concept was that a church was indigenous only when it was self-supporting; the board agreed with that interpretation.<sup>85</sup>

#### Relations with the United States Government

The threat of an international war in the late 1930's caused EMBMC some difficulty with the American

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<sup>84</sup>Letter, Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, October 17, 1936, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>85</sup>Report to the Bishop Board, December 20, 1938, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

government. In 1936, J. Clyde Shenk, an outgoing missionary, was forced to sign an Oath of Allegiance in order to obtain his passport. This action violated the Mennonite pacifist position and their opposition to oath-swearing. In order to avoid difficulty, Shenk signed the oath, but upon arrival in Tanganyika he reported the incident to Elam Stauffer. The two missionaries were assured by the American Vice-Consul in Nairobi that they did not have to sign the oath since other forms were acceptable to the American government. The alternate forms generally stated that the signee did not have to defend the United States physically. Stauffer recommended to EMBMC that the board write to Washington, D.C., for a copy of one of the alternate forms.<sup>86</sup>

Orie Miller took the matter up with the court clerk in Lancaster who was very unsympathetic toward the Mennonite position. Orie wrote to the passport division in Washington, D.C., which confirmed that there were alternate forms, and the passport office advised Miller that they would so inform the court in Lancaster. When Miller called at the Lancaster court house, the clerk insisted that he had received no word from Washington. Miller went to Washington where the chief of the passport

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<sup>86</sup>Quarterly Report, April 1-June 30, July 14, 1936, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

division, Mr. Bell, showed Miller several alternate statements to the required oath. The two men agreed on the following statement which was to be signed by outgoing Mennonite missionaries:

Further, I do solemnly affirm that I will support the Constitution of the United States and will, as far as my conscience as a Christian will allow, defend it against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion.<sup>87</sup>

#### Expansion Plans and Worker Needs

The basic plans for the development and the expansion of the mission were laid in Dar in 1934. Orie Miller looked at a map of Musoma District and decided, based on the region's population, that five main stations would adequately service the district. Orie suggested the areas that he thought were best for the four remaining stations: Bukiroba, which was to the south of Shirati; in the north near Kisumu; inland from Shirati; and inland from Bukiroba. The Dar group agreed that four stations would be opened before the Stauffers went on furlough in 1938. EMBMC considered it important to occupy the various sites as soon as possible so as to lessen the danger of another mission occupying parts of

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<sup>87</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to John H. Mosemann, November 20, 1936, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.



the Musoma field. Because there was a need for a carpenter on the field, Clinton Ferster and his wife, Maybell, accompanied Lillie Shenk and Elma Hershberger in 1935. Since Ferster was responsible for the construction of buildings on the various stations, he and his wife were not given a permanent station assignment.<sup>88</sup>

In April 1935, Elam Stauffer journeyed to Mageta which was approximately fifteen miles north of Shirati. Several people in Mageta had been baptized by the CMS, but they lived too far from the nearest CMS station, which was in Kenya. Due to the poor condition of the roads between Mageta and Kenya, there had been no contact for several years between the Mageta Christians and the CMS. Therefore, Elam wrote to the CMS and asked them if they would mind if the Mennonites opened their second station there. CMS rebuffed the plan which caused the Mennonites to postpone their expansion northward.<sup>89</sup>

Elam Stauffer then conferred with Emil Sywulka about Orie Miller's suggested sites for prospecting.

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<sup>88</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 8, 1971; Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, April 20, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>89</sup>March-April Report, May 8, 1935, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File; Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, June 2, 1935, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

Sywulka, however, recommended that the Mennonites place their second station in Bukiroba and a third in Mugango, which was approximately twenty-seven miles south of Musoma. Sywulka stated that Mugango was densely populated and that the Mennonites could take over some of the AIM's outschools in the northern part of Mugango because the AIM's station was too far away in the southern area. Sywulka recommended placing the fourth station in Bumangi among the Zanaki. He explained that under normal circumstances it would not have been necessary to place a station in Bumangi because it was so close to Bukiroba, but in this case the Zanaki did not understand Kikuria. For the location of the fifth station, Sywulka suggested the Kuria section east of Shirati, possibly in Nyabasi or Bwiregi. Further, he urged Stauffer to choose his sites quickly even though they were not ready to occupy them and, also, to submit his applications to the government in order to deny the areas to other missions.<sup>90</sup>

When it came time to open the second station in Bukiroba, the Stauffers were selected because Elam had continued his study of Swahili, the lingua franca in Musoma District, while the Mosemanns spoke Dholuo. The

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<sup>90</sup>May Report, June 6, 1935, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

pioneer group also agreed that new missionaries should not open new stations, but should instead be assigned to an established station where they would have time to adjust to Africa. The Bukiroba station was not opened until December 4, 1935, because the mission felt that the new workers, Lillie Shenk, Elma Hershberger, Clinton and Maybell Ferster, needed time to adjust to their new home.<sup>91</sup>

In August 1935, Elam Stauffer and Clinton Ferster prospected in Mugango for the site of the third station. Their trip was unsuccessful because the government claimed that the selected site was too near the AIM's Majita field; the area was also in the tsetse belt. Failure and disappointment were short-lived because the AIM decided to turn its Majita field over to the Menno-nites.<sup>92</sup> On the heels of this good news, the Stauffers and the Fersters opened the second station in Bukiroba. The Mugango station was opened October 1, 1936. The mission accepted Sywulka's recommendations and decided that the fourth station would be in Zanaki country, and

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<sup>91</sup>October Report, November 3, 1934, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File; Letter, John H. Mosemann to Henry F. Garber, November 8, 1934, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>92</sup>August-September Report, 1935, n.d., Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

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the fifth station would be east of Shirati amongst the Kuria. Expansion to the north still remained closed.<sup>93</sup>

EMBMC now looked elsewhere for a new field to evangelize. Orie Miller visited the Reverend McLeish of World Dominion in London who suggested the northern part of Mozambique, an area comprising approximately one and a half million people who had not been contacted by either Catholics or Protestants.<sup>94</sup> The home boards decided that the deputation to be sent to Tanganyika in 1938 should consider new areas which needed the Christian Witness and make recommendations to the home boards. Orie Miller recommended that the deputation should explore the matter with World Dominion in London with an eye to expansion into either Ruanda-Urundi or Portuguese East Africa.<sup>95</sup> En route, the deputation had visited the Reverend McLeish and Kenneth Grubb of World Dominion in London.

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<sup>93</sup>Letter, John H. Mosemann to Orie O. Miller, October 27, 1936, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>94</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to John H. Mosemann, August 28, 1936, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

<sup>95</sup>Forty-third Quarterly Joint Meeting, East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, Lancaster, December 29, 1937, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orie O. Miller to John H. Mosemann, April 11, 1938, Salunga Archives, John H. Mosemann, Jr., File.

In its report to the home boards, the deputation considered the Tanganyika field to be exhausted, and recommended an ultimate mission complement of twenty-five workers, five of whom should be single females. In spite of this recommendation, the Tanganyika field was to be greatly expanded over the next twenty-two years. The deputation further reported that the Portuguese government did not favor foreign missions operating in its East African possession.<sup>96</sup>

Although the mission and the home boards were preoccupied in the 1930's with evangelism, ominous war clouds threatened Europe. Yet the mission's position was that the international situation should not be allowed to interfere with the Mennonite's vision of Christian Witness. Ruth Mosemann mentioned that Germany talked about a recovery of Tanganyika, but she was not very disturbed about it.

You may have noticed in recent current news that Germany wants this territory returned to her. The future is entirely His. A change in government would certainly affect our work a great deal, we should think. "He holds the key of all unknown and I am glad. If other hands should hold the key, or if He trusted it to me, I might be sad."<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Deputation Report, November 9, 1938, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>97</sup>Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 2 (June 20, 1934), Salunga Archives.

Again, Ruth Mosemann commented a few months later on the mandate issue and the possibility of war.

We would miss our German neighbors if they would move. They say they will soon. Tanganyika's future, as to mandate, is yet unknown and we shall not become too anxious. However, it may have a very definite relation to our work here, and the out-coming party.<sup>98</sup>

Dr. Lillie Shenk expressed the typical attitude of the Mennonite missionaries regarding the possibility of war.

News of world conditions are not very good just now, but we trust that another world war will not be indulged in. Without a daily paper, radio, or telephone, we work along here and do not get stirred up about a war as much as folks who hear and keep in touch daily.<sup>99</sup>

Catharine Leatherman related one specific way in which the conditions in Europe affected the Tanganyika mission.

It has been quite awhile since you heard from the American missionaries by way of this letter. The reason was that the air mail service to U.S.A. has been discontinued, due to conditions in Europe. . . . a few letters have reached here in just one month's time, coming by boat around the Cape of Good Hope. We are thankful for such a mail route. During the days of Livingstone and other African pioneers, mail came once or twice a year, if indeed that often.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>Ruth Mosemann, Africa Circle Letter, No. 7 (February 9, 1935), Salunga Archives.

<sup>99</sup>Lillie S. Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 14 (January 22, 1936), Salunga Archives.

<sup>100</sup>Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 44 (October 12, 1939), Salunga Archives.

Sea travel for the missionaries became extremely dangerous. Dr. Shenk related her experience in 1940.

After leaving Shirati, and before sailing from Mombasa, three enemy ships were removed from Capetown. Then while sailing along the East African Coast, another enemy ship was destroyed off the coast of South America. Then when on the way to Trinidad, another enemy ship was at Capetown. . . . when we landed in Boston, January 27th, we learned there were three enemy submarines at Trinidad.<sup>101</sup>

In August 1940, the mission cancelled all overseas furloughs.

As we have seen, EMBMC's stated policy regarding the mission in Tanganyika was twofold: (1) to build an indigenous church according to the "three-self" principle, and (2) to keep institutional work to a minimum. For their part, the missionaries attempted to comply with the mission board's policy. The mission required the Africans to pay for their schooling and medical treatment. The same attitude prevailed in the development of the African church. A system of tithes was introduced and the money was used to pay native teachers and evangelists, thereby ensuring that the church was both self-supporting and self-propagating. To ensure that the church was self-governing, the mission, from the outset, involved the natives in church affairs. The missionaries intended to guide and instruct the African

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<sup>101</sup>Lillie Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 15 (January 31, 1940), Salunga Archives.



leadership until they were ready to take over the administration of the church.

Events within Tanganyika, however, made it impossible for the mission to build an indigenous church according to the "three-self" principle, and to keep institutional organization to a minimum. Because many Africans wanted an education which prepared them for secular employment, the government required the upgrading of secular education in all schools in the colony. The mission would either have to comply with the demands of the Africans and the colonial government, or it would have to withdraw from education altogether. Withdrawal was unrealistic because the schools were needed for evangelization. The same predicament occurred in the medical program: the mission realized that it had a humanitarian obligation to provide more and better medical services for the Africans. Thus, both the educational and medical programs were in opposition to EMBMC's pronouncement that institutions had to be kept to a minimum, and as we shall see in Chapter Four, the African church was unable to assume financial responsibility for these programs.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A PERIOD OF SELF-APPRAISAL, 1940-1947

Between 1940 and 1947, the Tanganyika mission searched for ways to expand its evangelical outreach. In the pursuit of that objective, the mission realized that the growth of the African church was being deterred by the slowness in indigenizing the church's organization and its leadership. One event, more than any other, provided the direction and the stimulus for a more liberal mission stance and ensured that the African church would become more indigenous. That event was the East African Revival which swept over most of Tanganyika between 1942 and 1947.

#### The Native Church

The infant African church faced many problems. Foremost were polygamy, insufficient finances for the church and its schools, and the Christianization program for the female population. Of the three, according to the mission, the most difficult was polygamy. Some men refused to live monogamously, while others would have acquiesced, but because there were too few Christian women in Musoma District, they had to marry non-Christian

women in traditional ceremonies. Afterward, these men asked to be readmitted into the Christian church.<sup>1</sup> On several occasions Elam Stauffer asked the General Church Conference (African church) if they would accept into the church a male who had more than one wife. Stuauffer suggested that perhaps it was the Biblical position to accept a man and his wives as long as he accepted monogamy as God's standard, and agreed to work toward upholding that standard. The church elders, however, refused to consider the matter. A polygamous man could become a believer, but he could not be baptized. The church did, however, recognize marriages in which the male was already Christian. Wisely, the home boards refused to lay down marriage laws for the African church. They informed the mission that they were prepared to provide counsel and advice, but the marriage problem would have to be settled on the field.<sup>2</sup>

Another aspect of the marriage question was how to deal with the problem of a woman, married to a non-Christian, but who wanted to join the church. Since the native custom of bride wealth bound the man and woman

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<sup>1</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, February 9, 1940, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 47 (April 14, 1940), Salunga Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 23, 1971.

together legally, the African church decided to accept the female into the church, if she left her husband. A similar issue dealt with widows. According to custom, a widow was not released from her marriage contract as the dowry bound her to the deceased husband's family. The African church never resolved those two problems.<sup>3</sup>

At the annual mission conference in Bumangi in June 1940, several missionaries voiced their disappointment at what they considered to be poor results from the fruits of their labor. First, they did not believe that most of the catechumens understood the church requirements. Second, some church members had accepted positions in the civil service. Third, the missionaries had been unsuccessful in getting the mines to close on Sunday. As a result of the concern about these situations, the mission decided to take several steps to strengthen its overall program. It decided to lengthen catechism instruction from one year to eighteen months and prepare its own catechism, which all candidates would be required to study so that they would be well informed about the Mennonite concept of Christianity. Further, they decided that any individual who accepted

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<sup>3</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22 and August 10, 1971.

government service was to be informed that such employment was contrary to the Mennonite position on the separation of church and state. In addition, church members were threatened with excommunication if they continued to work in the mines on Sunday. The group also decided that it was premature to take a position on male circumcision or intertribal marriage until further study had been concluded. In an unrelated matter, the mission voted to allow non-Mennonite Christians to commune with them so long as they agreed to abide by Mennonite doctrines and discipline during their stay in the Mennonite field. There were several times when these Christians visited the Mennonite stations, or were working in the immediate vicinity.<sup>4</sup> The mission's decision was a radical departure from the posture of the Mennonite church in the United States which practiced "close" communion, or communion with Mennonites only.

After the annual conference, several additional steps were taken by the mission to reinvigorate their spiritual effort. Weekday Bible classes and Sunday services were conducted at twenty-nine preaching points throughout the district, including weekly meetings at

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<sup>4</sup>Report, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board informing them of the decisions made at the annual meeting in Bumangi, June 3-9, 1940, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File. The mission did not inform the Bishop Board about the violation of close communion until 1945.

the gold mines near Bumangi, and a catechism class in the town of Musoma. Every station and outschool sold books and pamphlets which presented the Mennonite witness. The mission introduced a new mimeographed bimonthly gazette in Swahili, Mjumbe wa Kristo (The Ambassador of Christ), which was distributed to outschool teachers.<sup>5</sup>

In order to get African Christians more involved in the church, separate mission and native conferences were held beginning in 1940. The first native conference was held in Bumangi on July 27 and 28. At that conference the African church elders argued that the indigenous church was too tightly controlled by the mission.<sup>6</sup> Although the mission agreed with the native leadership, their dilemma was in giving the Africans responsibility without granting it too quickly. The mission wanted to ensure that the church elders were fully cognizant of their position and responsibilities before it relinquished authority.

As a means of raising the caliber of elders, the mission changed the method for electing elders. Formerly,

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<sup>5</sup>Annual Report, March 1, 1940-December 27, 1940, December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>6</sup>Letter, John Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, August 9, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Quarterly Report, June 1-August 31, 1940, September 21, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

any church member could nominate a candidate for elder; hereafter, only church elders and missionaries could nominate the candidates, although the entire membership continued to vote for a specific candidate. The mission argued that the new method would prevent a popularity contest from ensuing, and the altered procedure was approved by the elders at their annual conference in August 1941.<sup>7</sup>

At the annual mission conference in Shirati in July 1941, the missionaries further discussed procedures to indigenize the African church. Machinery to set up the ordination of native pastors was of vital importance. Bishop Stauffer favored a license system which allowed a pastoral candidate to perform all of the functions of an ordained pastor during a probationary period. No decision was taken on the matter because the missionaries did not think that the time had arrived to make a decision; Stauffer was therefore instructed by the group to refer the matter to the Bishop Board for its consideration.<sup>8</sup> By postponing indefinitely a procedure for ordination, the mission was guilty of temporizing.

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<sup>7</sup>Report, African Mission Conference, Shirati, July 4-11, 1941, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Third Quarter Report, 1941, October 31, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

Another matter discussed at the conference was the circumcision of African males. Since the practice of circumcision was such an important part of the traditional culture, the missionaries considered the possibility that the mission doctors might perform the operation.<sup>9</sup> The mission wanted to be flexible in its approach to native culture so that Christianity could become more indigenous, but once again postponed a decision, and the matter was carried over to the native conference scheduled for August.

In the same spirit of liberalism, the mission also reconsidered its position regarding the admission into the church of men who had more than one wife. After much discussion, the mission reaffirmed its earlier position that such men could become believers but they were not eligible for baptism.<sup>10</sup>

Another marital issue discussed at the mission conference was the matter of a man who was either a Christian, or studying to become one, but married according to native customs. Since the government prohibited the church's recognition or participation in marriages in which both parties were not Christians, the mission and the church took the position that the male could not be

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.



reinstated into the church until his wife accepted Christianity; after her baptism, the church would perform a Christian marriage. In several cases, however, the women refused to become Christians, thereby blocking their husbands' reentry into the church. Although no definite decision was reached, the mission and the church considered a plan whereby the man would be reinstated, but would be denied the right to vote or to hold church office.<sup>11</sup>

Financial support for native teachers had become a thorny issue. Since outschools were both school and church centers, the question of teachers' salaries became a church problem. Africans were aware that American money was available for the mission, including station schools where missionaries taught, but not for the indigenous church or for African teachers. The mission constantly argued that since financial support for the latter was not upheld by the Scriptures, the church and its schools had to be self-supporting in order to become indigenous. Instead of subsidizing the church and the schools, the mission favored increasing school fees and using the money to pay the native teachers. Then church tithes could be used solely for church matters, especially evangelism. The mission agreed to

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

discuss the matter at the annual native conference to be held in August.<sup>12</sup>

The native conference met in Shirati on August 26, 1941, and the agenda included many items, but the church elders refused to discuss anything until the matter of financial assistance was resolved. Some elders accused the mission of discrimination. The situation was a critical one, but by the next day the elders had relented in their demands and were willing, after much discussion, to adopt a system of tithing within the church which would provide adequate funds for both the church and the outschools.<sup>13</sup>

Meanwhile, the African church had grown so large that Bishop Stauffer was unable to perform all the duties for Musoma District. The mission group decided that Stauffer should shepherd the Christians in North Mara, and a second bishop chosen for South Mara. On April 6, 1941, the missionaries gathered in Mugango to submit names of candidates for the bishop's office. John Leatherman, Ray Wenger, and Clyde Shenk were nominated. On the twenty-fourth of April the lot was cast, and Ray Wenger became the first bishop of South Mara.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Third Quarterly Report, 1941, October 31, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

<sup>14</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, May 1, 1941, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

The Mennonites were not very successful in their battle for souls in 1941. There were twenty-eight baptisms, while there were sixteen excommunications. Among the elements which must be considered responsible for the indifference to the Christian message were the world war, materialism, and the inability of the mission to accept the Christianization of the traditional culture. Instead of making its own decision on the Christianization of traditional culture, the mission referred the matter to the home boards who were unable to render any advice because they were totally ignorant of African culture.

When the question of Christianizing native elements was again considered at the annual mission and native conferences in July 1942, both groups unanimously agreed that customary practices were incompatible with the standards of a true Christian life. Thus male and female circumcision was not an acceptable practice, as well as the Luo practice of extracting the lower front teeth.<sup>15</sup>

Questions of Christianizing native elements were, however, overshadowed by a spiritual revival which spread over most of East Africa between 1942 and 1947, and had significant consequences in both the mission and the

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<sup>15</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, August 3, 1942, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

African church. The East African Revival originated in the kingdom of Ruanda in 1927 and later spread into Kenya, Tanganyika, the Congo and the Sudan so that by the mid-1950's more than seventy East African tribes and thirty Christian churches had become involved.<sup>16</sup> Many African Christians and foreign missionaries believed that materialism had crept into the churches and resulted in members who paid only lip service to Christianity. These critics wanted their churches to conform to those of early Christendom. Because the churches in East Africa were westernized, the result was a rigidism and a formalism which left no room for Africanism in Christianity. By appealing to the Holy Scriptures, the revivalists were determined to prove that Africanism, not westernism, was a more suitable foundation for building a Christian society.<sup>17</sup>

The East African Revival was a spontaneous movement of little bands of witnesses, principally lay, who moved about unannounced carrying the message of

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<sup>16</sup>David B. Barrett, Schism and Renewal in Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 12, 32. Max Warren, however, does not believe that it is possible to date the first manifestations of the movement because of its spontaneity. See Warren, Revival: An Enquiry (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), p. 38.

<sup>17</sup>Barrett, Schism and Renewal in Africa, pp. 32, 165, 166; N. Langford-Smith, "Revival in East Africa," The International Review of Missions, XLIII, No. 169 (January, 1954), 78-79.

reconciliation of man to God and man to man through Christ. The witnesses announced that sin was cutting man off from God and from each other, but the Holy Spirit would lead the fellowship back to a New Testament life and expression.<sup>18</sup> The principal features of the movement were: (1) the inclusion of singing and dancing because they were spontaneous African expressions of joy; (2) the practice of public confession of sin as a genuine expression of a person's being reborn in Christ; (3) a fundamental part of the public confession was the desire to testify that the Holy Spirit would lead in the victory over sin.<sup>19</sup> Thus the East African Revival was viewed by its participants as a reformation of the church through revival. It resulted in a Christian fellowship without class, station or race because it broke down the misunderstandings which existed between Christians of differing cultures and races.<sup>20</sup>

The first Mennonite mission station which was affected by the revival was Mugango in April 1942; from there the movement spread to Bumangi and gradually to the other stations. Revival forced most missionaries to experience a spiritual introspection which led them to

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<sup>18</sup>Langford Smith, "Revival in East Africa," 78-81.

<sup>19</sup>Warren, Revival: An Enquiry, pp. 65-71.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 109-111.

conclude that they had been remiss in their Christian obligations. In 1943, John Leatherman expressed the changed attitude when he said,

Acts of consecration and self-humiliation avail little so long as the old man Adam is allowed to live. The carnal life is accursed soil in which the fruits of Canaan will not grow. . . . As the Spirit made manifest to us the vileness of the self-life we found that it is capable of earnest religious zeal and can make loud boasts of orthodoxy and spirituality . . .<sup>21</sup>

This spiritual regeneration forced the missionaries to realize that there was no difference between themselves and the natives in the eyes of God. Again John Leatherman expressed that point when he said, "Too long have we missionaries lived in the pride of our national, racial, and religious traditions and regarded the black man with somewhat of a patronizing air."<sup>22</sup>

Revival led to public confessions of sin by both missionaries and native Christians. In their letters and official reports to the home boards, the missionaries spoke of building God's church, not the Mennonite church. They called for more spiritual emphasis within the church, rather than emphasis upon institutional work, i.e., medicine and education. The home boards were told that

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<sup>21</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, September 17, 1943, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>22</sup>John E. Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 87 (August 9, 1947), Salunga Archives.

it was impossible to measure spiritual progress by the number of baptisms, communions and schools. Both missionaries and native leaders resolved that they would spend more time in evangelical work rather than station duties. The emphasis was on "we" and better cooperation between missionaries and native Christians.

This surge of spiritual cleansing resulted in widespread disruption within the African church. Because of the deemphasis on institutional programs, Sunday School classes were discontinued, outschool work was greatly curtailed and the spiritual purification resulted in a temporary reduction in the total church membership. Nevertheless, the setbacks were considered necessary to ensure that those who remained in the church were spiritually stronger. Even so, by 1944, the emphasis on evangelical work resulted in increased church membership and larger enrollments in believers classes. Furthermore, the focus on evangelism provided an opportunity for native leaders, such as Zedekea, Ezekiel, Nathaniel, Paula Chai, David Osoya and Timothy, to carry the Word to many outlying areas.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Merle and Sara Eshleman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 68 (April 10, 1944); Catharine Leatherman, No. 68 (April 21, 1944); Clyde and Alta Shenk, No. 68 (n.d.), Salunga Archives; First Quarter Report, 1944, April 26, 1944, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; Noah and Muriel Mack, Africa Circle Letter, No. 70 (July, 1944); Ray Wenger, No. 71 (September 27, 1944), Salunga Archives; Second Quarter Report, 1944, July 20,

In 1943 and 1944 evangelical efforts were enhanced by the translation of the Bible into several vernaculars. The Gospels of Matthew and John were translated into Kizanaki for use in the Bumangi field, while Nathaniel, a native Christian, assisted in the translation of the Gospel of John into Kikuria for the Nyabasi field. Meanwhile, the mission purchased the New Testament in Kijita from the American Bible Society for their Mugango and Majita fields.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout 1945 African Christians were actively engaged in church work. Church elders suggested many songs that were then included in the printing of new hymn books and encouraged the mission to print more religious literature in local dialects. As early as 1943, Ray Wenger assigned the supervision of outschools in South Mara to church elders, and when Wenger died unexpectedly in 1945, that phase of the work continued without difficulty. In addition, groups of young Christians continued the Sunday visits to the villages.<sup>25</sup>

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1944, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Third Quarter Report, 1944, October 20, 1944, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Third Quarter Report, 1945, October 29, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>24</sup>W. Ray Wenger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 66 (November 4, 1943), Salunga Archives; First Quarter Report, 1944, April 26, 1944, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

<sup>25</sup>Miriam Wenger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 75 (May 10, 1945); Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, No. 75 (May 8, 1945), Salunga Archives; Third Quarter Report, 1945, October 29, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.



The expanding role of the elders in church affairs was evident at the annual native conference, convened in Nyabasi in August 1945. A new organization, the General Church Council, was created to govern the African church. The new group was comprised of all the elders and the members of the mission's legislative body.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Bishop Stauffer reported that the elders demanded better preparation of church candidates, and Mahlon Hess confirmed that the elders insisted that they should be trained to take over church governance from the mission.<sup>27</sup>

In 1945 the mission departed from its practice of establishing outschools. The outschool system was supposed to serve as a church center for evangelization, but the schools were more successful from an educational standpoint, and since it was not always clear what motivated people in an area to request an outschool, the mission decided to set up outreaching points in those areas until it could be clearly seen that there was a sincere interest in Christianity. If the outreaching

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<sup>26</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Conference, Bukiroba, August 19-24, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Muriel T. Mack, Africa Circle Letter, No. 77 (September 6, 1945), Salunga Archives.

<sup>27</sup>Report, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, November 27, 1945, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File; Mahlon Hess, private interview, August 13, 1971.

succeeded in bringing people to Christ, an outschool would then be opened.<sup>28</sup> In 1946 Simeon Hurst was able to report to EMBMC that there were more than 1300 people attending Sunday services throughout the mission field.<sup>29</sup>

Throughout 1946 strategy called for a continued emphasis on evangelical outreach and a dogged effort to find ways to make the work more attractive to non-Christians. This was partially achieved by Bible conferences which were held in Bukiroba, Shirati, Nyabasi, and Bukira, one of the Nyabasi outstations. As 1946 drew to a close, the African church, unfortunately, had little to show for all of the increased religious activity. There were only 313 church members compared to 267 the previous year. Of that number 41 were new members compared to 67 in 1945. There were also 205 enrolled in catechism classes. The familiar pattern of a period of religious zeal, kindled by the spirit of revival, was followed by a period of spiritual cooling off, and then by a resurgence of religious fervor once again ignited by a revival.<sup>30</sup> In spite of meager gains from their

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<sup>28</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, November 27, 1945, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>29</sup>Annual Report, 1945, February 7, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>30</sup>First Quarter Report, 1946, April 12, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Annual Report, 1946, February 1, 1947, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

evangelical strategy, the missionaries remained convinced that the most effective way to spread the Word was through increased evangelical trips rather than through institutional programs conducted at the mission stations.

### Educational Work

Between 1940 and 1942 the mission considered education the principal instrument for spiritual conversion. At the beginning of 1940 there were five station schools and nineteen outschools, attended by approximately 450 students. All schools were financed by the African church, with the exception of an occasional contribution by individual missionaries. African teachers taught standards I and II in the station schools, while standards III and IV were taught by the missionaries.<sup>31</sup>

Since the mission used church schools primarily for spiritual objectives, it was not surprising that some students complained that they were not getting as good an education as was offered in the government schools. Their argument that the curriculum lacked a good balance between secular and religious subjects led the mission

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<sup>31</sup>Annual Report, March 1, 1939-February 29, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File; Clyde and Alta Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 47 (April 2, 1940); Vivian Eby, No. 48 (June 15, 1940), Salunga Archives; Quarterly Report, March 1-May 31, 1940, June 24, 1940, and Quarterly Report, June 1-August 31, 1940, September 21, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Monthly Field Report File.

to appoint a committee composed of Phebe Yoder, Rhoda Wenger, Vivian Eby and Elam Stauffer to prepare a new syllabus for the school system. On the basis of the reports sent to EMBMC, it is not possible to determine if, in fact, the committee did deal with student criticisms. If anything, the reports indicated that the mission continued to concentrate on spiritual goals while many of the Africans clamored for more secular knowledge. For example, the amount of Bible instruction was increased by adding courses in Bible Geography, Bible Memory, reading classes in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, and daily classes in Bible instruction. The missionaries changed the three, three-month school terms to one of two terms lasting nine months and introduced standards I and II in Nyabasi in September 1941.<sup>32</sup> The mission did take under advisement an appeal from the out-school teachers for the introduction of standards V and VI.<sup>33</sup>

In 1943 Miriam Eshleman, daughter of Merle and Sara Eshleman, was six years old, and so, for the first

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<sup>32</sup>Second Quarter Report, 1941, July 20, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 54 (August 5, 1941); Rhoda Wenger, No. 54 (August 4, 1941); Muriel T. Mack, No. 55 (September 16, 1941), Salunga Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Annual Report, 1941, January 6, 1942, Salunga Archives, Africa Annual Field Report File.

time EMBMC had to consider an educational program for missionary children. There were many questions which had to be resolved. A site had to be selected for the school and African and government permission had to be obtained before the mission could build a school. Someone was needed to supervise the school which meant that an additional mission couple would be needed. Lastly, the school would have to be financed, and the mission recommended that each family with school-aged children should pay a nominal fee. Meanwhile, Catharine Leatherman was appointed to select books and to prepare a curriculum.<sup>34</sup>

EMBMC and the Bishop Board agreed that the missionary children's school would adopt the American elementary system, while food, lodging, instruction, textbooks and special medical care were to be the responsibility of the mission. Since school expenses were in addition to the regular child support allowances, the mission and the home boards agreed that child support allowances would have to be increased.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Merle and Sara Eshleman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 62 (January 5, 1943), Salunga Archives; Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orle O. Miller, September 17, 1943, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>35</sup>Sixty-seventh Quarterly Meeting, Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, Lancaster, January 4, 1944, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orle O. Miller to John E. Leatherman, January 5, 1944,

Meanwhile, the mission contacted the government to see if there were any government regulations which the school had to meet, and to see if the government would approve a site selected for the school which was adjacent to the Bumangi station. The government assured the mission that there were no specific regulations that the school had to meet, but, on the matter of the school plot, the government stated that no land was to be alienated for the duration of the war.

About a year after the war, the mission again asked the government to reconsider its action regarding the school. The District Commissioner in Musoma inspected the proposed site in Bumangi, conferred with all parties involved, and then forwarded the mission's application for a "Right of Occupancy" to Dar es Salaam. At the same time, EMBMC informed the mission that Grace Metzler was scheduled to arrive in September to teach in the new school. The first activities, however, only involved teaching younger pupils in temporary quarters in the Bible School on the Bukiroba station, the older children attended AIM's academy in Kijabe. The missionary children's school did not officially open until September 1947.<sup>36</sup>

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Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, July 10, 1944, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>36</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bumangi, August 4-9, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Merle and Sara Eshleman, Africa Circle

Meanwhile, the Africans and the government forced the mission to reevaluate its native education program. This came about as the demand for more secular education continued and the government announced in 1944 that it would provide mass education for all Tanganyikans. The mission then had to decide whether to expand its educational commitment to meet government requirements, or withdraw from education work entirely. The Mennonites realized that an expanded education program would place a severe financial burden on the indigenous church since the mission refused to finance the program. In addition, any plan to upgrade the quality of education meant that the mission would have to prepare teachers who were better qualified in secular subjects. Even if the mission wanted to expand and approve the school program, it did not have the qualified personnel because the war had deterred the arrival of replacements and additions, which meant that the missionaries remained in the field longer than expected and had to take extended local leaves because of deteriorating health.<sup>37</sup>

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Letter, No. 84 (February 14, 1947); Grace Metzler, No. 84 (n.d.); John and Catharine Leatherman, No. 88 (October 10, 1947); Grace Metzler, No. 88 (September 28, 1947), Salunga Archives.

<sup>37</sup>Second Quarter Report, 1943, July 21, 1943, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

In 1944 the mission did take several steps to expand its educational program. Standard III classes were introduced on the Nyabasi station and also in Mrangi, a Mugango outstation. In the meantime Orie Miller wrote to Emory Ross, Secretary of the Foreign Missions Conference, about the Laubach method for teaching illiterate adults to read.<sup>38</sup>

In order to comply with the government's new educational program the mission and the church were forced to admit all students into its schools regardless of religion. Nor could the schools prohibit the children from receiving religious instruction in their own faith. Inspection trips to the outschools made it apparent that many teachers were not qualified to teach secular subjects. The mission would not, therefore, be able to register its schools with the government unless the quality of its educational program was upgraded; thus, plans called for the introduction of standards V and VI in all station schools. Rhoda Wenger taught the first standard V class at Mugango when school opened in September 1945. Several church elders and native teachers enrolled.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Rhoda E. Wenger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 70 (July 29, 1944); Muriel T. Mack, No. 71 (September 18, 1944), Salunga Archives; Third Quarter Report, 1944, October 20, 1944, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Orie O. Miller to Emory Ross, November 16, 1944, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference File.

<sup>39</sup>Vivian N. Eby, Africa Circle Letter, No. 77 (August 31, 1945); Rhoda E. Wenger, No. 77 (September 15, 1945), Salunga Archives; Third Quarter Report, 1945, October 29, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.



Obviously the mission had decided to register its schools and teachers with the government,<sup>40</sup> though Elam Stauffer expressed the mission's dissatisfaction:

Education here seems to be something one cannot well do without in mission work and don't just know how to handle when one takes it up because of governmental control and attempts at dictation but always with the nice covering of "cooperation" or "helping missions."<sup>41</sup>

In August and again in October 1946 the mission's legislative body met to decide educational policy and finance. The group decided that there would be two kinds of registered schools. The first type, the village school, would offer standards I-IV, and the second, the district school, standards V and VI. Village schools would be located on each station and also at the out-stations of Ungruimi and Majita, while the district school would be placed at Bumangi. As registered schools, they would be subject to government inspection, but under no circumstances would the mission accept government grants-in-aid because the schools were established for evangelization, not secular education.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, August 19-21, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>41</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, August 17, 1946, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>42</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bumangi, August 4-9, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos Horst, November 5, 1946, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

While the mission and the African church grappled with the financial side of the educational problem, work went forward to prepare the station schools for government registration. In September 1946 the mission secured two certified African teachers from the CMS Training School in Katoke. The mission also intended to send three of its own native teachers to the Katoke school so that they could qualify for government certification, and it planned to open its own teacher training school in January 1949.<sup>43</sup>

When the annual mission conference convened in Bukiroba in July 1947, the major issue was the financing of the new educational program. Since the African church did not have the necessary funds, the money would have to come from the United States, or the mission would have to accept government aid. Orie Miller was very surprised when the mission decided to accept the possibility of grants-in-aid, a complete departure from its 1945 position. He was informed that the change in attitude resulted from the recommendation which the legislative body made to the mission on February 20, 1947: that an elementary education was essential for Christian growth,

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<sup>43</sup>Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 82 (n.d.), Salunga Archives; Annual Report, 1946, February 7, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Henry Garber, May 24, 1947, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

and that it was, therefore, the duty of the mission to provide this education. Since the government was a part of the indigenous environment, and the natives paid taxes to that government, the legislative body saw nothing wrong with accepting government money. Until government funds were received, however, the mission would support the educational program with money from EMBMC. Since outschools did not, and would not, qualify for government aid, the African church retained its obligation to finance these institutions. The mission, therefore, requested an additional \$1300 in its 1948 budget to cover the new educational expenses, and also decided to ask for short-term American workers who would instruct the Africans in bookkeeping, typing, mechanics, printing and farming.<sup>44</sup> And so the mission decided to operate registered station schools which received government funds because to do so was now considered consistent with the indigenous concept.

#### Medical Work

As with all mission-sponsored activities, medical work was to enhance evangelism and to be self-supporting. Although patient fees had been increased, they accounted for only 73 percent of the cost of the drugs, or 58 percent

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<sup>44</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, July 21-28, 1947, Salunga Archives.

of the total medical operating expenses.<sup>45</sup> Throughout 1942, the medical reports sent to EMBMC showed a steady increase in the number of patients treated, babies delivered, and major and minor operations. The statistics provide ample evidence that the mission needed to enlarge the Shirati hospital, but the war caused a building materials shortage. For example, small quantities of corrugate and cement were available only with a special government permit. Hence the mission's Executive Committee decided to erect a small, two-room building behind the existing hospital, and, instead of using corrugate, build a mud-brick structure with a grass roof. A special permit would then be needed only for the procurement of cement for the floors. For its part, EMBMC provided fifteen hundred shillings (\$375) for the cost of construction.<sup>46</sup>

In spite of these overtures, no consideration had ever been given to long-range medical planning. In 1944,

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<sup>45</sup>Annual Report, March 1-December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; First Quarter Report, 1941, April 17, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; Second Quarter Field Report, 1941, July 20, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

<sup>46</sup>Annual Report, March 1-December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Merle and Sara Eshleman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 61 (November 11, 1942); No. 65 (October 21, 1943), Salunga Archives; Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, East Chestnut Street Meeting-house, January 2, 1943, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

therefore, Dr. Merle Eshleman presented the mission with a plan to make the hospital in Shirati a complete health care center. Equally important was the need to provide a nurse's training program for the natives. To this end, the mission-sponsored schools would have to provide standards V and VI so that the natives could qualify for admission. The plan also recommended that African wages be increased so that the hospital employees would not have to grow their own food and subsidize their income with outside employment.<sup>47</sup>

As far as the other four stations were concerned, the Eshleman report recommended that the Nyabasi dispensary be improved to meet government requirements for a registered dispensary. One such stipulation was the attendance of a full-time nurse to be in charge. Eshleman went on to say that if there were two doctors in the field at the same time, one should be posted at Nyabasi. The plan also envisaged a registered dispensary at Mugangao by late 1947. As for outstations, the government encouraged the establishment of health centers in remote areas. Patients were to be examined at health

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<sup>47</sup>Merle W. Eshleman on the future program of the medical work as approved by the Medical Committee and the Legislative Body, Shirati, October 24-26, 1944, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

centers and then transferred to the hospital or a dispensary for treatment.<sup>48</sup>

Although the natives and government pressured the mission to expand and improve its medical facilities, the doctors in the field were most persuasive. When Dr. Noah Mack went on furlough in December 1945, he informed EMBMC of his disappointment with the apathy of most of the missionaries toward the medical ministry. As a result, the Bishop Board and EMBMC called a meeting in April 1946 to air his criticism. All of the furloughed missionaries attended, Noah Mack, John Leatherman, and Clyde Shenk; Dr. Mack accused the home boards of being indifferent to the medical ministry because they had not seen fit to provide the personnel and the equipment needed to operate a first-class medical program. Mack said that because the missionaries did not appreciate the medical ministry, it had low priority. As a result of that meeting, Orie Miller instructed the mission and the church elders to prepare a medical program for EMBMC approval within six months.<sup>49</sup>

Simeon Hurst, Secretary of the mission, expressed the mission's regrets for the misunderstandings with

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Simeon Hurst, April 12, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

Dr. Mack. Because of the mission's emphasis on evangelical outreach, Hurst admitted that the medical program had been unnecessarily restricted. The issue was further complicated by the fact that the church elders did not understand why American money was available for medical work but not for church and school support which caused many of the missionaries to apply a very narrow interpretation of indigenous building and meant a minimum of institutional work.<sup>50</sup>

Dr. Mack's argument in favor of a more intensive medical program was supported by Dr. Eshleman. He admitted that three doctors had been sent to Tanganyika without even knowing their specific roles. Further, Eshleman understood why the mission had not spelled out a medical policy when the mission first opened, but by now the organization had developed into five stations and several outstations. The doctors wanted to know just what was meant when they were told that the medical work could be developed, but that too much emphasis could not be placed on institutions; they wanted to avoid any misunderstanding between themselves and the other missionaries. Eshleman also informed EMBMC that several of the women missionaries were trained nurses but were performing

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<sup>50</sup>Letter, Simeon W. Hurst to Orie O. Miller, September 23, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

other duties. For example, Phebe Yoder and Edna Hurst, both nurses, were teaching school.<sup>51</sup>

In July 1947 the mission's Medical Committee submitted a budget of \$2000 for the following year. The request for expenses included a building to house x-ray equipment and another for the electric light generator, and expanded maternity and in-patient services in the hospital.<sup>52</sup> The budget request was approved by EMBMC, thereby committing the mission to an enlarged medical program, and to be expanded further, in spite of the fact that EMBMC's official policy still called for a minimum of institution work.

#### Girls' Work

When the girls' home opened in Shirati on May 12, 1936, the mission's goal was to have a home on each station. The Shirati home struggled against many adversities, tribal and male opposition, as well as female indifference. Girls were further ridiculed if they refused to participate in the traditional initiation ceremonies. The situation was further complicated by

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<sup>51</sup>Letter, Merle W. Eshleman to Orie O. Miller, September 23, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>52</sup>Medical Report to the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, July 21-28, 1947, Salunga Archives, Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba File.



the inability of the missionaries to speak the local vernaculars while most of the African female population did not speak Swahili. Although Elizabeth Stauffer did the best she could without a knowledge of the language, in 1940 the Shirati home was closed for a year, partially because of the language barriers. Another handicap was the inability to find an African Christian woman who could supervise the Shirati home. Yet the mission was not too alarmed because the outschool system provided some opportunity for the females to hear the Gospel and to receive some schooling.<sup>53</sup>

Meanwhile, the missionaries on the stations continued to establish programs which would attract the female population to the Church. In 1940 Alta Shenk and Rhoda Wenger visited the villages near Bumangi and encouraged the women and girls to attend the station services. Sewing classes were started in Bumangi, Miriam Wenger supervised a new girls' home which had opened on the Mugango station during the first quarter of 1940 and an African Christian widow, Rebecca Mtwemwa, assisted in supervising the nineteen girls. In August

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<sup>53</sup>Annual Report, March 1, 1939-December 27, 1940, December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 54 (July 21, 1941), Salunga Archives.

1940, Maybell Ferster and Muriel Mack initiated sewing classes in Nyabasi.<sup>54</sup>

The mission realized that it was impossible to coordinate a girls' program which was applicable for all stations; therefore, the staff on each station dealt with the situation as conditions warranted. The Shirati staff convened a native women's conference in July 1944 at one of the outstations which was approximately eight miles from the town. This was the first conference exclusively for women, and the first time that an African--even if male--acted as chairman.<sup>55</sup> In December of the same year the Shirati staff began holding monthly meetings on the station and at two outschools for women. In February 1946, a reading class was initiated for women in Bukiroba, while the Mugango staff started one in April 1946. In the same year, each station planned to have a boarding school for girls which would last for several weeks.

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<sup>54</sup>Clyde and Alta Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 46 (January 30, 1940), and No. 47 (April 2, 1940); Miriam Wenger, No. 47 (April 2, 1940); Phebe Yoder, No. 48 (July 15, 1940); Muriel Mack, No. 49 (September 5, 1940); Clinton and Maybell Ferster, No. 49 (September 5, 1940), Salunga Archives; Annual Report, March 1, 1939-February 29, 1940; Quarterly Report, June 1-August 31, 1940, September 21, 1940; Annual Report, March 1-December 27, 1940, December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File and Africa Annual Field Report File.

<sup>55</sup>Elma Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 70 (July 25, 1944), Salunga Archives.

The mission also planned to open a girls' home in Bukiroba and Bumangi.<sup>56</sup> Edith Showalter expressed the desire of every missionary to bring the Gospel to the women and girls: ". . . we hope to continue planting seed in the hearts of these girls. . . . The 'girl' problem we might call it, is one of our big problems."<sup>57</sup>

### Village Visitations

Between 1940 and 1942, the mission concentrated on station duties and village visits were enthusiastically undertaken when time permitted. If a missionary could not accompany a team, eight or more Africans went alone. An evangelical team never knew what kind of reception awaited it. Sometimes the evangelists were warmly received; on other occasions they were turned away. Audiences varied from one to twenty and occasionally the speakers were harassed by young men in the audience. Nevertheless, the evangelists always invited the

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<sup>56</sup>First Quarter Report, 1945, April 26, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, August 19-24, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; First Quarter Report, 1946, April 12, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bumangi, August 4-9, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Simeon Hurst to Orie O. Miller, September 3, 1946, Salunga Archives, Annual Missionary Conference File; Mary Hurst, Africa Circle Letter, No. 80 (n.d.); Mahlon and Mabel Hess, No. 81 (July 11, 1946), Salunga Archives.

<sup>57</sup>Edith Showalter, Africa Circle Letter, No. 83 (n.d.), Salunga Archives.

villagers to attend services at the station. Two Africans who distinguished themselves in evangelical work were Zedekea in Shirati and Nathaniel in Nyabasi.<sup>58</sup>

It was only with the East African Revival that the mission focused on evangelism rather than on the station programs. As a result, village visitations increased substantially between 1945 and 1947.

#### EMBMC-Mission Relations

Between 1940 and 1941, the major concerns which the mission expressed to EMBMC were those of personnel needs, missionary allowances, and the frequency of sending reports to the Eastern Board. Correspondence in 1942 centered on the war, food shortages in East Africa caused by drought and the war, and the need for a school for missionary children. And yet the most important issue discussed between 1942 and 1947 was the East African Revival. EMBMC and the Bishop Board were completely confused by the correspondence from the field. The mission had previously requested personnel wholly on the basis of station needs, not spiritual credentials, since the latter were the prerogative of EMBMC. Now, however, the

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<sup>58</sup>Elma Hershberger, Africa Circle Letter, No. 47 (March 31, 1940); Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, No. 61 (November 13, 1942); Alta B. Shenk, No. 61 (November 24, 1942), Salunga Archives; Second Quarter Report, July 21, 1943, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

mission specified the spiritual credentials which it considered paramount. In August 1943 the mission informed EMBMC that it needed workers who were of the "Cross-life." According to John Leatherman,

. . . the three couples requested by us . . . will be those whom the Lord knows will give themselves without any reserve to all the demands of the Cross-life . . . visible qualifications and church loyalty are not sufficient criteria for judging the worthiness of those who should be sent to the field, the clear voice of the Spirit . . . is paramount in ascertaining those who will give themselves . . .<sup>59</sup>

If that were not enough to raise eyebrows at home, Leatherman said that the missionaries questioned what they called "Mennonitism" and existing mission policies.

. . . our desire for converts, full churches, the feeling of superiority over converts and other missionaries, confidence in our heritage, the desire to be commended as faithful missionaries . . . all had to be counted loss in order that we might hope to know Him . . . We want the deliverance of the Cross to determine all our mission programs and policies . . .<sup>60</sup>

EMBMC was caught by surprise; the war had reduced the volume of mail and delayed the furloughs of those in the field so EMBMC had no one to whom it could turn for first-hand information. Because EMBMC did not understand

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<sup>59</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, September 17, 1943, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File. Max Warren explains the Cross-life as ". . . the reality of man's sin and his need of grace, the efficacy of Christ's atonement, and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to give continuing victory over sin and power for the life of service." See Warren, Revival: An Enquiry, p. 76.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

the religious zeal stimulated by the revival, Elam Stauffer attempted to present the revival in a positive light.

The emphasis was being related to the right person, Jesus Christ . . . it didn't change a man's basic beliefs, his doctrines. . . . Jesus Christ became real and the Holy Spirit's guidance became real and people realized that there's got to be more than just believing the right truths and doing the right things. It's relating to the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>61</sup>

EMBMC was not assuaged by Elam's explanation of the revival. The board refused to send any workers to Tanganyika until they were sure that the mission was loyal to Lancaster Conference. The mission realized that it had overstepped its jurisdiction and so John Leatherman, Secretary of the mission, wrote to Orrie Miller and confirmed the missionaries' loyalty to both EMBMC and the Mennonite church.

We regret deeply that our letters contained statements giving an emphasis which did not permit you to proceed with the work of sending reinforcements to the field. . . . we feel that those letters contained injudicious statements which imposed a restriction upon the work of finding and sending workers. It appears to us that most of the difficulty has centered about our statement that

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<sup>61</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971. Langford-Smith explained this kind of misunderstanding as "The expression and the terminology . . . have come as something startlingly and perhaps uncomfortably new, and it is not surprising that a good deal of resentment and opposition has arisen, sometimes spreading from misunderstanding, and sometimes from a very natural fear of the unorthodox. We have become hesitant in these days to speak of 'being saved,' or of 'cleansing through the blood of Jesus, . . .'" See Langford-Smith, "Revival in East Africa," 78.

furloughed and new missionaries shall be those who freely give themselves to all the demands of the Cross-life as they may become apparent on the foreign mission field. This is a statement which we see now ought not to have been made. In the light of the revival on the field we were led to re-emphasize that the clear voice of the Spirit be discerned in the finding of workers . . . who give evidence of Divine Call to the field and who you believe would qualify for such service, that they may be sent forth . . . We see that we were out of place in assuming to specify such qualifications for workers to our Board with the particular emphasis we did, and trust that you will bear with us in this matter.<sup>62</sup>

Yet much credit must be given to the revival because it caused the mission to challenge the home boards to provide an official expression of how the indigenous concept was to be implemented in Tanganyika. Orie Miller was present at the annual mission conference in August 1945 and was told that the mission found it very difficult to apply the organizational structure of the church in Lancaster Conference to the African church and call that indigenous building. Likewise, the mission accepted EMBMC's explanation that an indigenous church was one which carried on a minimum of institutional work, but it wanted to know what to do when both natives and government demanded that the mission provide more and better educational and medical facilities. In particular, Dr. Mack argued that he did not see how the medical program could become indigenous for several years.

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<sup>62</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, May 27, 1944, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

Furthermore, he recommended that some institutions should not be tied to the African church because they were not the direct concern of that church.<sup>63</sup> Before his departure, Orie Miller concluded that the time had arrived for the home boards to discern the future course of EMBMC's official policy.<sup>64</sup>

The home boards created an ad hoc committee which was to prepare an official expression on indigenous building. The members of the newly formed African Studies Committee, Orie Miller, Howard Charles, Isaac Baer, Clayton Keener, Clyde Shenk and Noah K. Mack, represented the Bishop Board, EMBMC, and the mission. Each member of the committee was provided with Roland Allen's books on indigenous church building, articles in World Dominion, a statement from the Mennonite Central Committee on its foreign mission policy, and the Reverend A. Stuart McNairn's 1939 address on indigenous building. Each member was instructed to prepare a list of essentials to be included in EMBMC's foreign policy statement.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, August 19-24, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Noah K. Mack to Orie O. Miller, December 14, 1945, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File.

<sup>64</sup>Memo of Understanding from discussion in Africa between Secretary O. O. Miller and the mission in 1945 conference at Bukiroba, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File.

<sup>65</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to the members of the African Studies Committee, September 18, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File; Letter, Orie O. Miller to



In his reply to Miller's inquiry about MCC's foreign mission policy, J. D. Garber, Secretary of the Elkhart Board, informed Orie that MCC had never applied the indigenous concept in its work in India and Argentina because the board found it desirable to use financial aid from the local governments as well as funds from the American constituency. MCC's position was that strong churches were fostered within a framework of economic security and social balance.<sup>66</sup>

In November 1946, EMBMC's African Studies Committee met and all present agreed that denominationalism was at the root of the mission's dilemma: how to spread the Gospel without the message expressing Mennonite beliefs. Not only had the East African Revival shown the missionaries that it was possible to spread the Word without it being clothed in denominationalism, but it also appeared that this approach had a greater impact on Africans. Clyde Shenk voiced the opinion of those missionaries who had been infected by the revival.

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Simeon Hurst, Mahlon Hess, John Leatherman and Elam Stauffer, September 19, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Meeting of the African Studies Committee, East Chestnut Street Meetinghouse, October 2, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File; Letter, Orie O. Miller to the members of the African Studies Committee, October 18, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File.

<sup>66</sup>Letter, J. D. Garber to Orie O. Miller, October 23, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File.

God has brought . . . his missionaries . . . to find the meaning of co-crucifixion [sic] and co-resurrection with Christ. . . . Jesus is second to none. The Scriptures demand this concept. Why should it not be pleasing to the brethren to regard the sent-ones as "ambassadors for Christ" and commend them to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build them up and to give them an inheritance among all them which are sanctified? Why should we be required to go to Africa to build a "Mennonite" church where the people have not been polluted [sic] with denominations so much as they are here? Growing out of the acceptance of the fact that the Body of Christ is one. How then can the missionaries regard the Church in Africa as "essentially the same" as it is in Lancaster Conference? Would this not hinder us from organizing other spiritual (more spiritual than we) people as our brethren and sisters in the Lord? The cross had freed us from this bondage. Shall we be bound again to a bondage that Christ has broken?<sup>67</sup>

As a furloughed missionary and a member of the African Studies Committee, Clyde Shenk expressed his approval and understanding of the indigenous concept of church building. To Shenk, this approach to church building was correct because it was the New Testament way. Furthermore, the concept called for an indigenous church to be self-supporting. He suggested that the African church should initiate a domestic industry program, the proceeds to be used to support the church and its school system. Shenk perceived the missionary's role as a provider of the faith, and when there was sufficient evidence of spiritual life within the new church,

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<sup>67</sup>Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orle O. Miller, December 6, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orle O. Miller File.

it should then be allowed to govern itself.<sup>68</sup>

Shenk's remarks reflected the thinking of a majority of the missionaries in Tanganyika, and although he conveyed that feeling to the African Studies Committee, it chose to ignore his comments. The committee concluded that the sending church, the Lancaster Mennonite church, and the African church must essentially be the same. Equally important, the committee urged EMBMC to continue to send workers to Tanganyika who were supported by the congregational organization, thereby preventing any schism within the whole body. Thus, the Lancaster church would share with the African church the responsibility for developing African spiritual leaders.<sup>69</sup>

On March 11, 1947, the Bishop Board and EMBMC accepted the African Studies Committee's mission policy statement as their official pronouncement on mission. In particular, the formal declaration meant that the two boards advocated: (1) sending workers to Tanganyika under denominational auspices; (2) unity of fellowship between the American and African brotherhoods; (3) the Mennonite position of the separation of church and state be applicable in all lands reached by the Gospel, since

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Meeting of the African Studies Committee, Orie O. Miller's House, November 5, 1946, Salunga Archives, Orie O. Miller File.

it was derived from Scripture; (4) the training of spiritual leaders become the joint concern of the entire brotherhood in the United States and Africa; and (5) church recognition of the ministry of doctors, nurses, teachers and ministers in foreign mission work.<sup>70</sup> The home boards, therefore, finally had accepted the educational and medical programs as an integral part of its mission's ministry, while at the same time reaffirming the Scriptural justification for building indigenous churches. It was, however, an indigenous principle which called for the establishment of a Mennonite church in Africa. In other words, denominational bias would continue to prevent the Mennonites from establishing a truly indigenous church in Tanganyika.

#### Bishop Board-Mission Relations

When Elam Stauffer went on furlough in 1938, he asked the Bishop Board to resolve several pressing matters, particularly the problem of the role of female missionaries in the foreign field. The mission wanted to use women to teach the Bible lessons in the station schools, relieving the overburdened station superintendents of that responsibility. Therefore, it seemed logical to Stauffer, the only bishop in the field, that

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<sup>70</sup>Joint Quarterly Meeting, March 11, 1947, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

the women, who were already instructing in the station schools, also teach the Bible lessons. Although this matter had been presented to the Bishop Board in February 1940, it was not until February 1941 that they agreed to permit the station faculty to teach the Bible lessons, but only if the station superintendent were unable to perform that duty. It seems that the Bishop Board had been reluctant to differentiate between the teaching of the Bible in the church, a man's responsibility, and the teaching of the Bible in the school system.<sup>71</sup>

Another thorny issue dealt with the female missionary's voting rights on the field. Women were permitted to vote on mission-oriented questions, but they were not allowed to vote on church-oriented questions. The Bishop Board continually refused to allow the women to voice their opinion on what were considered to be strictly church questions.<sup>72</sup>

Another pressing issue was the need to ordain a second bishop for the Tanganyika field. The duties had grown to the point where one bishop was unable to handle them, and in January 1941 Stauffer asked the Bishop Board

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<sup>71</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, February 9, 1940, and Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, February 26, 1941, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>72</sup>Letter, Henry E. Lutz to Elam Stauffer, February 26, 1941, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

for permission to conduct an ordination at the next mission conference.<sup>73</sup> Ray Wenger was selected to be the first bishop in South Mara.

Without a doubt, however, the most difficult issue centered on the East Africa Revival. Throughout 1942 and 1943, the letters received by the Bishop Board from Tanganyika emphasized the impact of the revival upon the missionary and his work. The bishops were extremely disturbed by missionary utterances which, to them, appeared to attack the Mennonite faith. In a letter to Bishop Amos Horst, Elam Stauffer questioned the validity of "Mennonitism" in the African church.

Am I wrong in feeling that the emphasis one sees constantly on "our church", "Mennonites," "our distinctive testimony," etc., falls under this label [carnality]. Is it carnality to cherish distinctiveness and divisions? If I am not wrong on the application of this passage [I Corinthians 3:3], then there is great carnality among us in leaders.<sup>74</sup>

The Bishop Board's reaction to the revival was to transmit a revised set of "Rules and Discipline," which called for missionary loyalty and obedience to the discipline and teachings of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Bishop Stauffer attempted to calm the fears of those at home who suspected the mission of wanting to destroy the

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<sup>73</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, January 23, 1941, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>74</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos Horst, March 10, 1944, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

Mennonite church. Stauffer argued that a new set of rules and regulations was not the way to ensure the success of Christianity in Africa. Likewise, an emphasis on denominationalism (Mennonite) would not guarantee a spiritual life. According to Elam,

. . . what is most needed in our church now is not revised Rules and Discipline but God's own revival that will bring not more religious zeal but LIFE. . . . This will never come by discipline . . . It may bring a kind of acquiesced obedience . . . It may even bring more uniformity on the surface. It may make a better denomination . . . but it will not bring spiritual life. . . . Activity itself, good organization, religious zeal, increased numbers, loyalty to the group etc., are certainly no criterion [sic] of spirituality themselves.<sup>75</sup>

Elam concluded that the mission had not been more successful in its evangelical work because too much emphasis had been placed on the wrong things, i.e., denominationalism rather than upon Christ Himself. After all, the missionaries could not build His church, only Christ could do that.

To many in the United States, Stauffer's criticism of "Mennonitism" smacked of heresy as he seemed to be advocating the abolition of the Mennonite faith. The alarmists failed to see that he was not attacking the Mennonite faith, but only those Mennonites who allowed their zeal for their own beliefs to overshadow Christ Himself. According to Stauffer,

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

When God gets a chance to revive in His own way it will not be in any one denomination, nor will it cause a Federation of Churches, nor do I believe it will make all one denomination but it will work havoc for those who cherish the differences and overlook the larger spiritual issues involved.<sup>76</sup>

Stauffer was anxious to prevent the spread of denominationalism because it overshadowed Christ's work, but the revival forced Christians to feel the depth of the Holy Spirit's working.

Stauffer's explanation of the true meaning of the revival failed to quiet the fears at home, so in August 1944 Elam again tried to assure the Bishop Board that the missionaries were not undermining the Mennonite faith.

It is true that at least some of us were making creed, church, theology . . . so large a thing and with so much emphasis that Christ could not be ALL and IN ALL in our hearts and lives. . . . We had to learn that He dare be second to NOTHING. This has not led us to despise the Church nor the God-given authority in the Church. Christ Himself, is the Head of the Church and the Mennonite Church is a part of that Church. . . . We have a great concern for the Church and want to be obedient to those in authority.<sup>77</sup>

In January 1947, Stauffer wrote to Amos Horst, Secretary of the Bishop Board, and asked why the Board had not seen fit to give specific replies to the mission's criticism of the Board's overemphasis of sectarianism in

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, August 17, 1944, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.



the African church. The Bishop Board either completely evaded the question, or simply explained that God blessed sectarianism. Stauffer appealed to the board that the unity of Christ should be emphasized, not the sectarian differences within Christianity.<sup>78</sup>

Most of the missionaries were not opposed to including Mennonite beliefs and discipline in the African church if Christ so directed, but they did object to the Bishop Board's insistence that all candidates for membership in the church had to accept the eighteen Articles of Faith of the Mennonite church before admission into church membership. Neither were the missionaries prepared to support all of the emphases and practices of the Mennonite church in the United States, nor were they ready to demand that the African church support them.<sup>79</sup>

The Mennonite practice of close communion caused a problem for the Tanganyika missionaries, further straining relations with the Bishop Board. Between 1934 and 1941, all of the missionaries adhered strictly to that practice but in 1941, the regulation was violated by Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer. As house guests of Dr. Jarvis, Sunday School director for the Plymouth Brethren

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<sup>78</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos Horst, January 29, 1947, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>79</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos Horst, November 5, 1946, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

in Dar es Salaam, the Stauffers accepted an invitation to commune with their host and his family. When the Stauffers informed their fellow workers of what they had done, they were surprised to learn that most of the missionaries desired to commune with non-Mennonites when led by the Holy Spirit. As bishop in the field, Elam Stauffer instructed the missionaries that, if anyone wanted to commune with non-Mennonites in the future, each individual should allow his conscience to direct him to the will of God. As a result, most of the missionaries violated the close communion practice at one time or another<sup>80</sup> but the Bishop Board did not learn about these infractions until 1945, when they were asked by the missionaries to provide an alternative. Although the missionaries were not in favor of abolishing close communion, they did want a clear conscience when communing with non-Mennonites.<sup>81</sup>

It was apparent that the revival caused many missionaries to examine themselves, their roles as missionaries and the role of the "sending" church. The missionaries desired to remain in the Mennonite church, but they did not see why they should have to create

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<sup>80</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to EMBMC and the Bishop Board, February 4, 1946, Salunga Archives, Eastern Board General Correspondence, 1945-1951 File.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

Mennonite churches in Africa, especially since the goal was that of establishing an indigenous church. They realized that in their counselling of Africans they would introduce and explain Christianity from a Mennonite point of view, but the revival had convinced them that it was the African Christians who had to discern if the Lord wanted a Mennonite church established. Only with the will and leading of the Lord, could a Mennonite church in Africa be an indigenous church. The Bishop Board did not, however, accept the mission's position and decided instead to create a watchdog, the Foreign Missions Council, to

serve as a medium of communication of correspondence as well as of doctrinal and administrative polity between the respective foreign mission's administrative body and the home conference. It shall be their duty to relay counsel and action by the home conference to the respective foreign mission's church administrative body and vice versa. . . . They shall keep informed on current issues on the field and keep the home boards informed.<sup>82</sup>

The Bishop Board also prepared a Foreign Missions Polity to give guidance to the conference and the mission board in matters of doctrinal administrative policy.

#### World War II and the Mission

The war seriously affected many European missionary societies operating in Africa and Asia. The Foreign

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<sup>82</sup>Foreign Missions Polity, Lancaster Mennonite Conference (1949), p. 9.

Missions Conference, headquartered in New York, served as a clearinghouse for devising, arranging and disseminating information for common action among Protestant mission societies. Committees on Africa, Asia, India, Latin America and the Philippines were created to deal with the protection of Christian life and property, the evacuation of missionary personnel, the collection of contributions for missions who were cut off from their European bases, and the establishment of transportation and communication routes. Dr. Emory Ross, chairman of the Africa Committee, forwarded contributions to the International Missionary Council in London, which then used commercial firms to transfer the donations to needy areas.<sup>83</sup> Although EMBMC was not a member of the Foreign Missions Conference, it did receive literature from the Conference on a regular basis.

There were some tense moments in 1940 when the British Consul General in New York informed EMBMC that its outgoing workers were required to have their missionary certificates countersigned by the Foreign Missions Conference. When the British Consul General was informed by the Foreign Missions Conference that a countersignature was only needed for missionaries going to British

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<sup>83</sup>Foreign Missions Conference, Emergency Bulletin Number 3, July 15, 1940, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935-1950 File.

India, the issue was temporarily dropped.<sup>84</sup> Then in 1942, the Consul General informed EMBMC that it was not on a list of missions recognized to work in British colonies. Nonrecognition posed a serious problem because EMBMC would not be allowed to acquire land in Tanganyika and its missionaries would be denied immigration privileges. The British official suggested that EMBMC go through the Foreign Missions Conference to gain admission to the list.<sup>85</sup> Emory Ross informed the British Passport Control Officer in New York that EMBMC was not a member of the Foreign Missions Conference, but he assured the British official that EMBMC's work in Tanganyika was very satisfactory.<sup>86</sup> The Passport Officer therefore recommended that the Foreign Missions Conference file an application for recognition of EMBMC's mission in Tanganyika with the International Missionary Council in London.<sup>87</sup> The question was not resolved until early in 1944, when the British government decided that American

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<sup>84</sup>Merle W. Eshleman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 62 (January 5, 1943), and No. 63 (n.d.); Salunga Archives.

<sup>85</sup>Letter, Orle O. Miller to Emory Ross, October 10, 1942, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935-1950 File.

<sup>86</sup>Letter, Emory Ross to British Passport Control Office, New York, October 16, 1942, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935-1950 File.

<sup>87</sup>I. H. P. McEwen to Emory Ross, October 18, 1942, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935-1950 File.

mission boards which were not members of the Foreign Missions Conference, could make application for recognition to the British Passport Control Office in New York.<sup>88</sup>

The war thus caused inconveniences, rather than hardships, for the Mennonite mission in Tanganyika. In August 1940, the mission unilaterally decided to cancel all overseas furloughs because of the danger of sea travel and the possibility that a furloughed worker could not be replaced.<sup>89</sup> As a result, no new missionaries were sent to Tanganyika in 1941, and it was not until 1943 that overseas furloughs were resumed. The missionaries traveled to Capetown and sailed aboard Argentine vessels to the United States via Buenos Aires, rather than the prewar route which was directly through the Mediterranean.<sup>90</sup>

As a further inconvenience, the British government in January 1941 initiated gasoline rationing in

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<sup>88</sup>Letter, Emory Ross to Orrie O. Miller, February 15, 1944, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935-1950 File.

<sup>89</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orrie O. Miller, August 9, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>90</sup>Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, Duke Street Bookstore, Lancaster, June 4, 1943, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orrie O. Miller to John E. Leatherman, June 16, 1943, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

Tanganyika, forcing the mission to drastically restrict the use of its station vehicles. Furthermore, the mission had to acquire an import license for all goods entering Tanganyika from other African states or from overseas. Mail took approximately two months to reach Tanganyika, while outgoing correspondence took up to three months to arrive in the United States. News of the war was about two weeks old by the time it reached the mission.<sup>91</sup>

The mission experienced additional kinds of problems provoked by the war. With the internment of the German missionaries of the Bethel mission at Kamachuma, the Mennonites were asked to assume responsibility for its operation. Since the Mennonite faith called for a strict separation of church and state, the request was forwarded to EMBMC for a decision. The home board rejected the British appeal because it did not want to

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<sup>91</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to John E. Leatherman, June 6, 1941, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, November 1, 1941, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; President's Annual Report to the Bishop Board, April 1, 1941, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Second Quarter Report, 1941, July 20, 1941, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; Twenty-eighth Annual Report of EMBMC to the Bishop Board, March 24, 1942, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Vivian N. Eby, Africa Circle Letter, No. 60 (September 17, 1942); Merle and Sara Eshleman, No. 62 (January 5, 1943), Salunga Archives.

get directly involved in work which received government funding.<sup>92</sup>

In addition, the government in Tanganyika conscripted Africans for service in the King's African Rifles. Although the government did not provide an alternative, an individual could, prior to induction, declare himself opposed to war and be excused from military service. The missionaries instructed their church members to make such a declaration, but none did so because many saw military service as an opportunity to learn a trade, as well as receive higher wages, clothes, and a blanket.<sup>93</sup>

When the Congress of the United States enacted the Selective Training Bill in 1940, all missionaries in the United States were required to register for Selective Service. Missionaries who were out of the country during the registration period did not have to return to register, but upon return were required to do so. Deferment was left to the discretion of local draft boards, but duly ordained ministers were exempt from military training and service.

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<sup>92</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, September 7, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File; Third Quarterly Report, June 1-August 31, 1940, September 21, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File; Annual Report, March 1-December 27, 1940, December 27, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>93</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.



Musoma Press

The mission needed a printing press to turn out Mennonite literature in volume and inexpensively. In 1945 Clinton Ferster was instructed to construct a printshop in Bukiroba. Fortunately, a teacher in one of the Shirati outschools, Daniel Opanga, had worked in a printshop in Nairobi twenty years earlier. While Ferster erected the building, Opanga enrolled in a refresher course at the AIM printshop in Luhumbo, Tanganyika. The new printing press arrived from the United States in May 1946.<sup>94</sup>

The general printing policy called for each job to pay for itself, and, as a rule, commercial printing was not accepted. In order to subsidize the operation, the mission established a tract fund in its budget, and American brethren were encouraged to contribute.<sup>95</sup>

Tanganyika Missions Council

Between 1934 and 1945, the mission had only observer status on the Tanganyika Missions Council. In 1945 the mission asked EMBMC for permission to become a member. Although approved by EMBMC, the Bishop Board

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<sup>94</sup>Dorothy Smoker, Africa Circle Letter, No. 74 (March 19, 1945), Salunga Archives, Annual Report, 1946, February 1, 1947, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>95</sup>Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, July 21-28, 1947, Salunga Archives.

rejected the request on the grounds that they were not well enough informed about membership and its implications to make a judgment. The mission was instructed to send the home boards a copy of the Council's charter and by-laws for further study and, in the meanwhile, the mission was to retain its observer status and continue to contribute to the Council's expenses.<sup>96</sup>

At its annual mission conference in 1946, the question of membership in the Tanganyika Missions Council was discussed. The mission concluded that the advantages of membership outweighed the advantages of observer status. The mission reasoned that since the Council did not have any legislative authority, it could not dictate policy to its member institutions. The mission forwarded a copy of the Council's constitution to EMBMC along with its recommendation that the mission be allowed to join the Council.<sup>97</sup> When an American deputation visited

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<sup>96</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, August 19-24, 1945, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Seventy-fifth Joint Quarterly Meeting, Chestnut Street Church, January 3, 1946, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orie O. Miller to Simeon Hurst, January 4, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>97</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bumangi, August 4-9, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File; Letter, Simeon Hurst to Orie O. Miller, September 3, 1946, Salunga Archives, Annual Missionary Conference, Africa Field File.

Tanganyika in July 1947, it assured the mission that it would convey the mission's request to the home boards.<sup>98</sup>

### Mission Expansion

Although the war deterred immediate growth, several new areas were being considered for expansion. The CMS had planned to occupy Kondoa District in the Central Province, but internal difficulties prevented their undertaking the work, and so they invited the Mennonites to consider the area for their expansion.<sup>99</sup>

On June 26, 1940, Elam Stauffer and John Leatherman set out to prospect in Kondoa. Upon their arrival they talked to Chief Suberi who resided in a small trading center called Berreku. Since the area had a strong Roman Catholic persuasion, the two men moved on to the town of Kolo where they talked to the paramount chief of the district. The chief told the prospectors that there was a Roman Catholic station at Haubi, a few hours walk from Kolo. The two men then journeyed to Kondoa, sixteen miles south of Kolo. The district officer, a Roman Catholic, assured the Mennonites that the district was well cared

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<sup>98</sup>Minutes of the Legislative Body, Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, July 21-28, 1947, Salunga Archives.

<sup>99</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, June 24, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Field Reports, 1934-1944 File; Quarterly Report, March 1-May 1, 1940, June 24, 1940, Salunga Archives, Africa Quarterly Field Report File.

for by Christian missions, although the 1934 census reported that there were 98,300 people in Kondoa District, and not one Protestant mission in the entire district.<sup>100</sup>

The Mennonite missionaries then traveled approximately one hundred miles south to Dodoma, the headquarters of CMS in the Central Province. Langford-Smith, CMS director, suggested that Stauffer and Leatherman return to Kolo and stake out several sites for stations and submit their applications for "Right of Occupancy" to the Provincial Commissioner. Although the commissioner was a Catholic, Langford-Smith assured the prospectors that he was a fair man. Langford-Smith believed that the Mennonite application would be approved if a dispensary were to be opened in the district.<sup>101</sup> Stauffer and Leatherman therefore returned and staked off a station plot, approximately one and a half miles from the town of Kolo. It was not until September that the Provincial Commissioner of the Central Province informed the Mennonites that the government had rejected, without explanation, their application for a "Right of Occupancy."<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, August 9, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

<sup>102</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, September 7, 1940, Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

Several other areas in Tanganyika were viewed with an eye to further expansion. In March 1942, Elam Stauffer and Merle Eshleman visited in the vicinity of Mori Bay, and in April, Noah Mack investigated the Buregi area, approximately eight miles from the Nyabasi station. Two years later, in February, the mission contacted the Luo who lived at the head of Speke Gulf and in March, John Leatherman and George Smoker prospected to the east of Bukiroba among the Wakabwa.<sup>103</sup> Meanwhile, EMBMC decided to open a mission in Ethiopia in 1947.<sup>104</sup> At the same time, the Shirati station continued to be interested in opening a station in Kenya. For several years African Christians in Shirati had provided a spiritual outreach in South Kavirando because the government did not allow foreign missionaries to enter from another British colony. Once again, in June 1946, the Mennonites applied for a "Right of Occupancy" for the Kolo station, and the government again rejected the application with no explanation,<sup>105</sup> so that by 1947 Elam Stauffer admitted that it was very

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<sup>103</sup>Merle and Sara Eshleman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 58 (March 27, 1942); Muriel Mack, No. 58 (March 2, 1942); Elam and Elizabeth Stauffer, No. 67 (February 16, 1944); George R. Smoker, No. 67 (March 17, 1944), Salunga Archives.

<sup>104</sup>Letter, Orrie O. Miller to Simeon Hurst, January 4, 1946, Salunga Archives, Simeon Hurst File.

<sup>105</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Henry Garber, May 24, 1947, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.



difficult to find a large, unoccupied field for mission expansion in East Africa.<sup>106</sup>

Between 1940 and 1947, the mission grappled with several problems. The home boards were challenged to provide an official expression for the implementation of the indigenous concept in Tanganyika. The mission wanted to know if an indigenous church was simply the result of transplanting the organization of the Lancaster Mennonite church to Africa. Moreover, the mission wanted to know how it was to keep institutional work to a minimum when both the government and the natives demanded that the educational program be expanded and upgraded. All groups, native, government, and the mission, demanded better and larger medical facilities. The mission found it was difficult to know when the administration of the African church should be transferred to the native leaders. The mission wanted to take a more liberal stance in its mission work, but it was unable to accept the Christianization of the traditional African culture.

Without a doubt, the most important event during the period was the East African Revival because it was responsible for the African church becoming more nearly indigenous. On the one hand, the General Church Council was created to administer the church, leading to the

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

appointment of church elders as administrators of the outschools; on the other hand, the revival led to the home boards questioning the loyalty of the missionaries. As a result the Bishop Board demanded strict obedience to the discipline and teachings of the Lancaster church from both the missionaries and the African Christians.

EMBMC continued to insist that its mission policy was to establish an indigenous church in Tanganyika, but it was now clear that that meant a Mennonite church, a miniature Lancaster Mennonite church. The decision by the mission to register its schools and teachers and to accept government aid forced an end to the goal of EMBMC that institutional work be kept to a minimum. The same was true when EMBMC approved the mission's medical budget for 1948, which called for a long-range medical plan and an enlarged medical program. Thus EMBMC maintained that it was committed to building an indigenous church in Tanganyika, but that meant a Mennonite church, but the limitation on institutional work was a dead issue.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### AN HONEST ATTEMPT AT INDIGENOUS BUILDING, 1948-1957

#### The African Church

The two major items discussed at the 1948 mission conference were church organization and the procedures for ordaining African pastors. Both Mahlon Hess and Noah Mack agreed that the African church's organization should be as simple as possible so it would not interfere with the efforts of Jesus Christ as He built His church. Although the home church recognized a three-office ministry--bishop, pastor, deacon--the mission favored a two-office ministry--bishop and deacon--for the African church. According to Elam, "The bishop and the pastor would be the same office; every pastor would be a bishop and would have bishop responsibility . . ."<sup>1</sup> Since Elam was to leave shortly for America on furlough, the mission group instructed him to convey their thinking to the home church.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.

<sup>2</sup>Notes on Mission Discussion of Church Problems, June 19, 1948, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

The second item of the agenda was the ordination procedures and qualifications for the office of African pastors. Within Lancaster Conference, pastors were selected by the use of the lot. The mission and native leaders, however, agreed with the idea that any church member who believed that he was led by God's will would orally present to the congregation the names of those whom he believed God had called to the pastorship. By having the names of candidates presented verbally, the ordained missionaries would have the opportunity to ask those presenting names how they knew the Holy Spirit had led them to make their nominations.<sup>3</sup> Concerning qualifications, the missionaries were concerned about the possibility that some of the pastoral candidates may have had more than one wife prior to their conversion to Christianity. Neither Mahlon Hess, nor Noah Mack, nor John Leatherman believed that a man should be held accountable for marriage arrangements which were made before he was aware of the Christian standard. Elam Stauffer agreed, adding that the man who had turned his back on polygamy had proven his worthiness for pastoral consideration. Finally, Phebe Yoder argued in favor of the candidacy of such men when she said that if such men were ineligible, then the grace of God was not sufficient for some sins.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

When Elam Stauffer returned from furlough in May 1949, the mission reopened the discussion on native ordinations. Realization of a spiritual coldness within the church prompted a decision to postpone the ordinations indefinitely. During 1949, there were only eleven baptisms, while there were seven excommunications. The missionaries attributed the lack of spiritual zeal to the lure of materialism as evidenced by the growing clamor for secular education. Despite the spiritual coldness throughout the African church, most of the church elders remained strong in their faith.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout 1949 and 1950 the mission battled against the appeal of materialism, especially the lure of higher wages being paid in the towns and the industrial areas. This trend was general through East Africa and explained, in part, the fact that there were only eight full-time students enrolled in the Bukiroba Bible School. Of these, two were women, and one attended on a part-time basis. Many people ridiculed these students because they were preparing for a low-paying job in one of the station schools or outschools.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Annual Report, 1949, February 6, 1950, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, August 5, 1949, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>6</sup>James and Ruth Shank, Africa Circle Letter, No. 103 (January 19, 1950); George and Dorothy Smoker, No. 103 (January 29, 1950), Salunga Archives.

When Bishop Amos Horst and Orie Miller visited Tanganyika in January 1950, Horst instructed Bishop Stauffer to begin informing African Christians about the qualifications and duties of the ordained and the implications involved in having indigenous pastors.<sup>7</sup> After this preliminary work and the decision to go forward with preparations for native ordinations, the mission then discussed with the deputation the procedure to be used in procuring pastors. Since the mission was strongly against the use of the lot in the African church, Horst recommended that the church wait until it was certain that the Lord had called only the ones that He wanted to serve Him. Meanwhile, native instruction would proceed.<sup>8</sup>

Stauffer's next step was to instruct the church members about the role and functions of a pastor. Throughout March and April 1950, Elam instructed in Shirati, Mugango and Majita; outlines of his messages were dittoed in Swahili and Dholuo. A second group of messages was delivered to the people in Shirati in

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<sup>7</sup>Letter, Amos S. Horst to the Bishop Board, January 24, 1950, Salunga Archives, Amos S. Horst File.

<sup>8</sup>Report of the Conference with Amos S. Horst and Orie O. Miller, Bukiroba, January 25-26, 1950, Salunga Archives, Amos S. Horst File.

April, and then in Mugango and Majita in May and the third in June.<sup>9</sup>

Having laid the groundwork, Stauffer and the church leaders agreed that they were ready to proceed with the ordinations in Mugango and Majita. On August 21, 1950, Elam Stauffer, Mahlon Hess and Clyde Shenk reviewed the previous instructions with the Christians who had gathered in Mugango. Additional sessions were held on the twenty-second and the twenty-third, and time was allotted for questions from the audience. Stauffer then announced that it was time to receive the names of candidates for ordination, but he cautioned the gathering that anyone who made a nomination had to be convinced that God had revealed the name to him. Further, if more than two names were presented, the selection process would be discontinued in favor of further prayer.<sup>10</sup>

Elam Stauffer, Clyde Shenk, Mahlon Hess, George Smoker and John Leatherman, the ordained missionaries, pitched a tent under a tree near the church and awaited the nomination of candidates. Approximately sixty-five church members, male and female, participated in the selection. Several members submitted two names because

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<sup>9</sup>Elam and Grace Stauffer, Africa Circle Letter, No. 104 (March 13, 1950); No. 105 (April 27, 1950); No. 106 (June 21, 1950), Salunga Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Elam Stauffer to the Bishop Board, August 26, 1950, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

they were certain there should be two pastors. A total of three names were submitted, with one candidate receiving only one vote. Informed that his candidate had received only one vote, the member agreed to withdraw his nomination. The two nominees, Ezekiel Muganda and Andrea Mabeba, were called aside by the missionaries and asked if they believed that they had been called to the pastorship. When both men acknowledged their calling, everyone reassembled in the church at which time Elam introduced the two new pastors to the congregation. The official ordination occurred on October 4, 1950, in Majita.<sup>11</sup> In October a similar procedure was followed in Shirati, and on December 10, 1950, Zedekea Kisare and Nashon Nyambok were ordained.<sup>12</sup>

On March 18, 1952, the newly ordained pastors, with the exception of Andrea, met with the ordained missionaries who reminded them of the mission's plan to establish an indigenous church according to the "three-self" principle. Although the African pastors acknowledged the propriety of the principle, they did not understand why the door had to be closed to any future financial assistance from the American church.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.; Elva B. Landis, Africa Circle Letter, No. 109 (December 7, 1950), Salunga Archives.

<sup>13</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, April 8, 1952, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

The other matter discussed at the pastors' meeting concerned the need to ordain a second bishop. Elam Stauffer recommended that the new pastors assume the duties of bishop in their churches rather than ordaining another bishop. The new pastors accepted the recommendation and by doing so the African church took the first step toward the establishment of a two-office ministry. Stauffer then forwarded that organizational plan to the Bishop Board for its confirmation,<sup>14</sup> but the home church refused to accept the radical proposal. In defense of the Board's decision, Bishop J. Paul Graybill visited the field in June 1952 to explain why the home church wanted the African church to adopt a conference system and a three-office ministry along the lines of the Lancaster Mennonite Church. He explained that with over seven hundred members, the African church needed a permanent organization, and a conference structure offered the best plan for such large numbers. He further reminded the missionaries that a conference system required a three-office ministry.<sup>15</sup>

It was clearly apparent to all of the ordained missionaries that the Bishop Board intended to create a

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Bishop J. Paul Graybill at the pastors meeting, Bukiroba, June 27, 1952, Salunga Archives, Graybill Africa Visit, 1952, File.

little Lancaster Conference in Tanganyika and to pass it off as an indigenous church. Bishop Graybill explained that minor questions would be decided in Tanganyika, but all major decisions would be made by the home church. This change meant, for one thing, that both missionary and African would share in referring matters to the home church. In other words, the African church remained subservient to the Lancaster church until the mother organization chose to allow the African church to become an independent conference.<sup>16</sup>

Since the African church was a part of Lancaster Conference, EMBMC believed that the mission was obliged to share its financial knowledge with the African leaders. The big question, however, was whether EMBMC was prepared to abandon its financial policy of nonassistance in order to share its funds with the African church which was unable to support its own leaders because of the rapid rise in the cost of living. Not only did the mission favor direct aid to the church, but the African leaders themselves also could not understand why American money was available for medicine and education, but not for the church, especially when church support should have been

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.; see also Foreign Missions Polity, Article VI, 10-11, regarding the subservient clause.



of paramount importance to the home boards.<sup>17</sup> With this pressure, EMBMC announced that it would provide financial assistance to the African church directly, rather than through the mission, when the church was mature enough to undertake such a relationship.<sup>18</sup>

In 1953 Elam Stauffer was home on furlough and had the opportunity to present the views of the mission regarding the African church organization to a joint meeting of the home boards. On the first of September he explained that the Holy Spirit, through the revival, had led the mission to favor the adoption of a simple church organization in Tanganyika so as to allow for the establishment of a truly indigenous structure. As a direct result of the revival, the African church had created a General Church Council to administer the church, and it favored a two-office ministry.<sup>19</sup>

Another meeting of the joint board, including furloughed missionaries, was convened on November tenth

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<sup>17</sup>Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Mission, April 11, 1953, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>18</sup>Executive Committee, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, June 9, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orle O. Miller to John Leatherman, December 1, 1953, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>19</sup>Joint Meeting, Ephrata Meeting House, September 1, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

for the purpose of resolving the question of organization for the African church. In spite of Stauffer's arguments, the home boards adopted the conference organizational plan.<sup>20</sup> Once again the mission and the African church were thwarted in their efforts to establish a church of their own making, one which was truly indigenous. The mission group was quite philosophical about the home boards' action, and Elam Stauffer reminisced about the whole affair.

I still remember John Leatherman writing to me on furlough and he said, Elam, we have fussed long enough about whether we have a two-office ministry or a three-office ministry. Neither of them is going to insure Revival. Revival is what we want . . . we stopped fussing about it and asked to have a three-office ministry on the field.<sup>21</sup>

In order to comply, the General Church Council first created an Executive Committee. The first members were Pastor Nashon and Isaya Obiero of North Mara and Pastor Ezekiel and Jona Itini of South Mara. The second action was to proceed with the ordination of deacons and the Council unanimously agreed to using the same plan as was employed for the selection of pastors. The Council members also agreed that a second bishop was needed, and it was decided that the new man would be chosen by the

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<sup>20</sup>Special Joint Meeting, Salunga Meeting House, November 10, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>21</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.

mission with the assistance of the African pastors.<sup>22</sup>

At its annual conference in July 1955, the mission chose Simeon Hurst as the new bishop for North Mara.<sup>23</sup>

The instruction of church members about the qualifications and duties of deacons was begun on June 24, 1955, in Kwikerege, Majita. Hereafter, deacons would assume the responsibilities previously performed by elders, who would then become assistants to the deacons. In order to avoid unnecessary delays, Stauffer conducted the search in South Mara, while Simeon Hurst did the same in North Mara.<sup>24</sup>

On August 25, 1955, voting for the office of deacon took place in Mrangi, Majita. The new deacons were Paulo Chai, Aristarko Mashauri, Hezekia Nyamuko and Daniel Mato. Since all of the new deacons were elders, the American and African pastors were convinced that all future deacons should be chosen from the ranks of the elders. Meanwhile, Paulo, formerly an elder in Mugango, became a deacon in the Mugango church; Aristoko, an

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<sup>22</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, December 8, 1954, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>23</sup>Report of the Annual Mission Conference, Nyabasi, July 21-22, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

elder in Kwikerege, remained there while Daniel and Hezekia enrolled in the Bukiroba Bible School.<sup>25</sup>

With the ordination of the first deacons, the two bishops proceeded to prepare for the same in Shirati, Bukiroba and Bumangi. On December third the Shirati church members elected Zefenia Kojia, Dishon Ngoga and Isaya Odongo and they were ordained on the eighteenth. Meanwhile, on January 15, 1956, the Bumangi church ordained its new pastor, Jona Itini, and its new deacon, Elisha Nyakitumo. The Bukiroba church had decided that it was not ready to ordain either a pastor or a deacon.<sup>26</sup> On November 2, 1956, the members of the Nyabasi church chose Nathaniel Robi as their pastor and Yusuf Wamburu deacon; both were ordained on December second.<sup>27</sup>

On December 7, 1955, the General Church Council met for the purpose of enlarging its Executive Committee, or Komitti Kuu, to ten members in order that it could

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<sup>25</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Simon Bucher, Secretary of the Foreign Missions Council, September 6, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>26</sup>Letter, Simeon Hurst to Simon Bucher, December 19, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Annual Mission Report, 1955, February 13, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>27</sup>Letter, Simeon W. Hurst to Simon Bucher, November 8, 1956, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

better handle its responsibilities. Hereafter, the Kuu consisted of two African pastors, two missionaries, five members from the standing committees (Bible School, marriage problems, pastors, annual conventions, and education), and the bishop who served as an ex-officio member. For the first time, in 1956, the Kuu participated in the preparation of the mission's budget.<sup>28</sup>

In June 1956, the home boards sent a deputation composed of Amos Horst, Orrie Miller and Paul Kraybill to Tanganyika to discuss with the African leadership the future course of the African church. This marked the first time that an American deputation had discussed church matters directly with the African leaders. The first meeting was held on the twenty-second, and, from the outset, the meeting proved to be a frank and open discussion of various problems. Speaking for EMBMC, Paul Kraybill, Assistant Overseas Secretary, explained the functions of EMBMC and its relationship to the mission. Bishop Horst then outlined the relationship between Lancaster Conference and EMBMC and he assured the African leaders that the home church had no intention of governing the African church but only wanted to

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<sup>28</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Simon Bucher, March 14, 1956, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

advise the African church as it evolved into a separate conference.<sup>29</sup>

The African leadership then posed several hard questions to the deputation. The leaders wanted to know if the missionaries would be included as members of the African conference. Bishop Horst said they would be included as long as they were in Tanganyika, but he reminded the Africans that there would be fewer missionaries in the future. The leaders also wanted to know if the proposed conference plan would be prepared in the United States or in Tanganyika. Horst replied that he did not know how the Lord would lead in that matter. The third question concerned control over missionary personnel. The churchmen wanted to know if they could request EMBMC to send a specific worker back to Tanganyika, and if they could send home an undesirable worker. The deputation suggested that the proper channel for that matter was the Executive Committee of the mission. The last issue, which was carefully aired, concerned the availability of mission funds for the church's educational program. The parents of school children did not understand why the local school council did not control the school's money instead of the mission's Education

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<sup>29</sup>Diary, Paul N. Kraybill, June 20, 1956, Salunga Archives, Deputation and Administration Trips, Europe and Africa, 1956 File.

Secretary, since the mission did not provide any money for the support of the schools.<sup>30</sup>

When the discussions continued on the twenty-ninth, the questioning returned to an explanation of just how funds from America were distributed among the mission's various programs. Kraybill concluded from the line of questioning that the church leaders wanted to make direct requests for money to EMBMC to support the African church.<sup>31</sup>

Another major concern of the church leaders was their desire to increase the amount of secular education available in the church schools. Orie Miller encouraged the leaders not to lose sight of EMBMC's aims in Tanganyika. He saw the possibility of the African church being smothered by too many American workers. According to Miller, if a greater emphasis were placed upon the educational program, church expansion would be neglected. Miller said that the educational program had to be kept in perspective with the mission's total personnel and budget.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., June 29, 1956.

<sup>32</sup>Orie O. Miller's comments in Tanganyika, July 1-3, 1956, Salunga Archives, Deputation and Administration Trips, Europe and Africa, 1956 File.

Isaya Obiero Odengo, a deacon, wanted to know how the African leaders were going to be prepared to administer the church. Orie remarked that the present discussions with the American deputation was one way. He further included as examples of preparation, the creation of the General Church Council and the Komitti Kuu and the pastor and deacon ordinations. Isaya remarked that he did not believe that the preparation of the African leadership had moved swiftly enough. On the contrary, Pastor Zedekea Kisare and Nyerere, an elder, believed that nothing was lost by progressing at a slower pace. In fact, Pastor Nashon Kawire chastized the African leaders for not assuming more responsibility instead of waiting until the missionaries did something.<sup>33</sup>

In July 1957, the Komitti Kuu approved the first draft of the organizational plan for the African church and sent copies to the local church councils for their consideration. A copy was sent to the Foreign Missions Council (FMC) for its approval. If all went as scheduled, the General Church Council intended to ratify the plan in November.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Diary; Paul N. Kraybill, July 3-6, 1956, Salunga Archives, Deputation and Administration Trips, Europe and Africa, 1956 File.

<sup>34</sup>Annual Mission Conference, Nyabasi, July 19-23, 1957, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



Amos Horst informed Elam Stauffer that the proposal should have come to FMC before it was circulated to the local councils in order to afford the FMC adequate time to study the proposal. Since it was not, Horst said that an official response could not be expected before January. FMC was especially concerned to learn if the new African church were to be a Mennonite church, or whether it was going to be nondenominational.<sup>35</sup>

Elam Stauffer assured Bishop Horst that the plan called for the establishment of a Mennonite church, and that the General Church Council had no intention of effecting a separate conference without first obtaining Bishop Board approval. Stauffer did, however, anticipate the creation of an African conference sometime in 1958.<sup>36</sup>

#### Village Visitations

Throughout 1948 all of the mission stations were actively engaged in evangelism. Between 1949 and 1951, however, the number of evangelical trips continued to decline because the total Mennonite mission field in Tanganyika was too large for the missionaries and the

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<sup>35</sup>Letter, Amos S. Horst to Elam Stauffer, October 26, 1957, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>36</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to FMC, November 21, 1957, Salunga Archives, Lancaster Conference Correspondence on Tanzania, 1957-1962 File.

few dedicated African Christians to make more than a little dent or an impression in most of North and South Mara. By 1951, therefore, village visitations ceased to be an important vehicle for spreading the Word. The missionaries had succumbed to the heavy burden imposed upon them by the various station duties.<sup>37</sup>

#### Girls' Work

Between 1948 and 1957 the struggle to win over the female population to Christianity continued. The mission and the African church worked very closely in this effort, and several programs were employed. There were girls' homes at Shirati and Mugango, and in 1949 one was opened in Nyabasi. Although there were no homes at Bukiroba and Bumangi, those stations did provide short-term programs. An all-out campaign to increase female enrollment in the station schools and the out-schools was also employed. Other innovations included using women's Gospel teams to conduct meetings for the women on the stations as well as the outschools. There were weekly prayer meetings, conferences which lasted several days and monthly Bible conferences. The women missionaries conducted both beginners and advanced reading classes. Women and girls were also taught sewing,

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<sup>37</sup>Annual Report, 1957, n.d., Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

knitting, hygiene, spinning and weaving. Clyde Shenk built seventeen spinning wheels and approximately two hundred spindles for use in the new programs. A blanket loom and a scarf loom were purchased.<sup>38</sup> By far the most ambitious undertaking was a domestic science course introduced in Mugango in 1952, taught by Miriam Wenger, with forty-two girls enrolled. The program was very successful, but in 1954 Miriam Wenger departed on furlough and the course had to be discontinued.

In all of this, the local churches were called upon to assume a larger role in the girls' programs. Supervision and discipline of the girls was the responsibility of the African matron, where there was a girls' home, and the female missionary assigned to the girls' program on each station. Major disciplinary problems were handled by the mission after consultation with the church elders.<sup>39</sup>

In spite of all the activities arranged for women and girls and all of the energy expended, the mission's 1957 report to EMBMC was not unlike those of the previous years. The home in Bukiroba operated with approximately

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<sup>38</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Shirati, June 14-20, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk, 1948-1952 File.

<sup>39</sup>Projected plans for the Education Work for 1948, n.d., Salunga Archives.

the same number of girls as it had for more than two years, while the home in Mugango operated with two less girls than it had in 1957. The Shirati home was closed in 1952 because of spiritual indifference, the home in Nyabasi suspended operations in 1953 because of inadequate housing and funds.

#### Mission-Government Relations

On January 7, 1948, the British government in Tanganyika informed the mission that EMBMC was not on its list of mission boards who were recognized to operate in Tanganyika. The mission assumed that this matter had been resolved in 1944 when the government decided that mission boards in North America who were not members of the Foreign Missions Conference could make application for recognition to the British Passport Control Office in New York. Once again, however, the Tanganyika government recommended that EMBMC should apply for recognition through the Foreign Missions Conference of North America.<sup>40</sup> EMBMC was shocked and perplexed by the colonial government's announcement. The board had not applied for membership in the Foreign Missions Conference because its

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<sup>40</sup>Letter, Chief Secretary of the Government, Dar es Salaam, to the Secretary of the Tanganyika mission, December 15, 1947, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America Correspondence, 1935-1950 File. There is no evidence that EMBMC had ever made an application to the Passport Control Office in New York.



parent body, the Mennonite Central Committee, was a member. Furthermore, there was no legal requirement which obligated an American mission board to be a member of the Foreign Missions Conference in order to be admitted into a British territory, or to obtain land and facilities in a British area. EMBMC concluded that the government wanted a well-known agency to vouch for it, such as the Foreign Missions Conference.

In order to comply, Orie Miller asked Emory Ross, Secretary of the Foreign Missions Conference, to write a letter of recommendation for EMBMC. Ross informed Miller that the conference provided recommendations only for its members and suggested that EMBMC should apply for membership and, if admitted, the conference would then supply a recommendation.<sup>41</sup> In further pursuit of a solution, Orie Miller informed the home boards that the advantages of membership in the Foreign Missions Conference far outweighed the disadvantages, and, since EMBMC expected to expand its operations into Ethiopia and Europe, he recommended that EMBMC join.<sup>42</sup> The formal

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<sup>41</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Emory Ross, January 7, 1948, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America Correspondence, 1935-1950 File; Letter, Emory Ross to Orie O. Miller, January 21, 1948, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America Correspondence, 1935-1950 File.

<sup>42</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Henry F. Garber, Howard G. Greider, Ira Buckwalter, Martin R. Hershey, John H. Mellinger, Henry E. Lutz and Amos Horst, February 7, 1948, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference Correspondence, 1935-1950 File.

application was submitted on April 23, 1948, and Orie Miller immediately asked the Foreign Missions Conference if it were now possible to receive the recommendation. He said that recognition was desperately needed so that the mission could obtain a "Right of Occupancy" for the missionary children's school plot. Moreover, the most recent outgoing missionaries had been admitted into Tanganyika only after bond had been posted.<sup>43</sup>

On January 1, 1949, EMBMC was formally admitted into the Foreign Missions Conference. Finally, on July 13, 1949, the Colonial Office in London informed the Tanganyika government that EMBMC had been placed on the list of approved mission boards. There was no apparent reason for the delay in granting the recognition, yet EMBMC did not receive notification of the approval until December.<sup>44</sup>

### African Education

Between 1948 and 1957 the mission attempted to pursue a policy of Africanization in its educational program. The program was now viewed as a church project rather than a mission one. The mission continued to

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<sup>43</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Wynn C. Fairfield, May 4, 1948, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Conference of North America Correspondence, 1935-1950 File.

<sup>44</sup>Letter, Talford Smith, Colonial Office, London, to EMBMC, December 13, 1949, Salunga Archives, Eastern Board General Correspondence, 1945-1951 File.

administer the program, but the African leadership participated more fully in its development. A joint Education Committee, consisting of five church elders and three missionaries, replaced the mission's Education Committee. Another major change was the decision to register the schools and to accept government assistance. The mission realized that it would be impossible to conduct a school program unless the schools were registered, and an elementary education was now considered essential for the growth of Christianity in Tanganyika.

Africanization of the educational program, however, required that the African church assume full economic responsibility, and since there were no funds for the program forthcoming from America, the mission applied for government aid in the name of the church. Until government aid was received, EMBMC agreed to provide money for the church's education program. The seven schools to be financed were the five station schools, the primary schools in Mrangi and Majita, and the district school in Bumangi. It was estimated that 2233 shillings (\$556) were needed for the village schools, and 2440 shillings (\$610) for the district school. The mission also decided to assist Africans who obtained an education in fields other than teaching, e.g., clerical, literature, and medical training. In return for the assistance, the



recipients agreed to work for the church for a specific period of time.<sup>45</sup>

One of the most difficult problems encountered in meeting requirements for government registration was finding enough African teachers who had government certificates. The mission had planned to open its own teacher training center in 1949, but the mission's Education Committee decided that it would cost too much to build a school. Therefore, it was decided that the Mennonite students would be enrolled in the CMS's Katoke Teacher Training Center. Those who attended were selected by the Joint Education Committee and received partial assistance from the mission. Each sponsored student agreed to teach in the church-school system for a period of five years, although this agreement was not legally binding. Samuel Ngoga, Mikael Aseto and Nathaniel Warrioba were the first students to be sponsored under this program.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Annual Mission Report, 1947, January 16, 1948, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 18-21, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Projected Plans for the Education Work, 1948, n.d., Salunga Archives, Projected Plans for the Education Work, 1948 File.

<sup>46</sup>Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 18-21, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

The district school in Bumangi, which taught standards V and VI, opened in January 1948, with twenty-five students, only nine of whom boarded. Vivian Eby, Alta Shenk and one certified African teacher ran the school. In the latter part of 1948, the district school and the village schools in Mugango and Mrangi were the first to be registered with the government.<sup>47</sup>

In 1949 the government radically increased the salaries of all government employees, including teachers. Previously, a teacher in a government school received seventy-five shillings per month, while teachers employed by the African church were paid thirty-five shillings. With the increase, the government teachers now received one hundred and ten shillings, retroactive to 1948. The African church was unable to provide any increase for its teachers until the mission qualified for government assistance. The first government money arrived in April 1950. Meanwhile, the government's action not only made it very difficult to employ new teachers, but all six African teachers who were presently employed by the African church also indicated that they would not renew

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<sup>47</sup> Alta B. Shenk, Africa Circle Letter, No. 91 (April 30, 1948), Salunga Archives. By the fall of 1955, all church-sponsored schools, including bush schools, had been registered.

their contracts if their salaries were not the same as the government teachers.<sup>48</sup>

The Mennonites were not the only ones who resented the government's action. Even though the government paid 90 percent of the salary of all certified teachers in Tanganyika, the Christian Council of Tanganyika asked the government to assume the other 10 percent. The council told the government that unless it acted most of the missions would have to curtail seriously their educational programs. The government was informed that even if the mission paid the 10 percent, it would mean an increase of 5000 shillings (\$1250) in the mission's annual budget.<sup>49</sup>

Although the village schools and the district school were administered by the African church, the mission continued to assist administratively as well as financially. Each village school was assigned to a local church for its supervision, while the entire church

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<sup>48</sup>Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orie O. Miller, June 23, 1949, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 20-23, 1949, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>49</sup>Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 20-23, 1949, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File. The government increased its amount of giving for teachers' salaries to 95 percent in 1950, and to 100 percent in January 1955. At the same time it also assumed the total cost of the construction of all new school buildings.

administered the district school because the students who attended it came from all of the local churches.<sup>50</sup>

By 1950 the mission acknowledged its responsibility to train young people for employment outside the church's sphere. The Protestant missions in Lake Province, the former Musoma District, explored the possibility of pooling their efforts in order that each mission might provide training in a specialized area, such as agriculture, carpentry, or nursing. In that way, no one mission would have to assume responsibility for a disproportionate part of the program.<sup>51</sup>

The government announced in 1951 that all students would hereafter receive eight years of education instead of six because it wanted young people to be better prepared for the labor market. To carry out its new plan, a primary and a middle school system were created to replace the former village and district plan. Standards I-IV were to be taught in the primary schools, standards V-VIII in the middle schools, and the secondary schools offered standards IX-XII.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orie O. Miller, June 5, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>51</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Shirati, June 14-20, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>52</sup>Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, June 6-7, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

The mission did not object to this modified plan as long as government funds were available. This does not mean that the church leaders and the missionaries were all that pleased about a school system which prepared young people for employment outside the church's sphere. Young people were constantly alerted to the opportunities in the service of the church, e.g., medicine, Bible School, bush school teaching and evangelism. A larger school system required extra buildings, additional land acquisitions and, most importantly, more certified teachers. Employing additional teachers was a serious problem, in light of the fact that all of the missions and government schools competed for the limited number of available certified African teachers. In addition, the Mennonites had to consider offering some kind of educational program for overage students who had been purged from the regular schools. When enrollment in a standard I class reached forty-five, all pupils over the age of twelve were denied admission.<sup>53</sup>

The mission and church leaders moved very slowly to transform its district school into a middle school because of the difficulty in finding certified African teachers, and because the government would not specify

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<sup>53</sup>Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 20-23, 1949, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Mission Conference Report, Bukiroba, June 6-7, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

how much money it would provide for the school. Meanwhile, preparations were made to comply with the government's program. Nathanael Tingayi was sent to the Ifunda Trade School to study how to teach carpentry, and Raphael Ntabinde went to Ukiriguru to study how to teach agriculture. Upon completion of their studies, the two men were to be added to the staff of the Bumangi middle school.<sup>54</sup>

The construction and maintenance costs of the new middle school at Bumangi were shared between the mission and the government; the African church remained responsible for financing the primary program as well as the bush schools and the adult program. In addition, the Joint Education Committee recommended, in February 1953, the construction of a second middle school for boys in Shirati, and one for girls in Mugango. The committee recommended that the mission build the physical plants and then apply for capital grants from the government to defray construction costs. Once the schools opened, the mission intended to apply for government grants-in-aid to cover teachers' salaries and building maintenance. The African church was not asked to make a financial contribution to either the cost of the construction or the

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<sup>54</sup>African Mission Conference Report, Bukiroba, June 17-20, 1952, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

maintenance of the middle schools, but they were obliged to provide assistance for needy students.<sup>55</sup>

Thus we see that EMBMC was prepared to provide financial assistance for a modern educational system in the short run, but it expected the government to assume the financial responsibility over the long run. The decision to accept government aid was reached only after careful deliberation by the mission and the African church. They were not pleased with the stipulation that they were obliged to accept students into their middle schools on the basis of their entrance examinations rather than their church affiliation. Furthermore, only 20 per-cent of the students who successfully completed standard IV were to be admitted into standard V. In addition, all new mission applications for alienation of land for school plots had to be on land that was not contiguous to the mission station.<sup>56</sup>

On the other hand, there were several factors which caused the mission to decide in favor of government assistance. First, the grants reduced the mission's education budget considerably. For example, without government grants, the total salaries for teachers in just

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<sup>55</sup>Education Committee recommendations sent to Orie O. Miller, February 10, 1953, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

one school would have amounted to \$1600 annually. Second, fees charged boarding students would have been increased by an additional thirty shillings per year, equivalent to the pay of an unskilled worker for one month. The alternative would have been a home board subsidy of \$515 per year per school. Third, since the government needed the missionary teachers, it was prepared to cater to most of the mission's whims. Lastly, the mission was free to refuse government aid whenever it wished without having to reimburse the government. The only requirement was that if a mission decided against continued government aid, the school buildings had to be used for that purpose in the future.<sup>57</sup>

With so much attention focused on elementary schools, the mission could not ignore secondary education planning. Although EMBMC wanted the mission to operate its own secondary school, Mahlon Hess, Education Secretary, informed Orle Miller, in March 1953, that it was impossible for the mission to have its own school in the immediate future because of the unavailability of government capital grants for its construction. At the same time, the government did not guarantee that mission students would be admitted to the government's secondary schools. Fortunately, the Church of Sweden Mission

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.



anticipated opening a secondary school in Bukoba in January 1954, and it guaranteed acceptance for four students from the Mennonite mission. EMBMC gave its approval to the arrangement.<sup>58</sup>

On July 23, 1953, the mission took another major step toward Africanization of the educational program. The mission made it clear that it would open new schools only where a local community was prepared to assume full responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the buildings. Once the school was opened it would be administered by a local school committee of seven members: two from the local church council, one of whom would be committee chairman; two teachers, of whom one would act as committee secretary; and three parents. The school had to be conducted as a Christian school and this was the responsibility of the Education Secretary, Mahlon Hess, who also had the final authority over all the local schools and the disbursement of all funds. Each local committee assisted in collecting student fees and making suggestions about the general administration of the school.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Executive Committee Minutes, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, March 6, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Mahlon Hess to Orie O. Miller, October 8, 1953, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Executive Committee Minutes, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, October 20, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>59</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Nyabasi, July 19-23, 1954, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official

In 1956 the Tanganyika government introduced a new five-year education plan scheduled to begin the following year. The earlier ten-year plan, introduced in 1948, emphasized the expansion of educational facilities to enable as many people as possible to obtain an education. Under the new five-year plan, the focus was on the consolidation of the existing programs to improve the quality of primary schools, to increase the number of middle schools and to place more of the financial responsibility upon the African population. The government's goal was a primary education for approximately 36 percent of all school-age children, and to provide a middle school education for approximately 26 percent.<sup>60</sup>

In order to comply with the government's new five-year plan, the mission's education committee proposed its own five-year plan. By adding a third teacher to each of the existing twenty-five primary schools, they expected to improve the quality of the teaching. The committee recommended the construction of a boys' middle

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Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. We shall see in Chapter Six that the African church leaders objected to the Education Secretary's control of the school purse strings. In August 1960 Mahlon Hess was replaced by an African as Education Secretary.

<sup>60</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Nyabasi, July 21-22, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Annual Mission Conference Report, Bukiroba, July 4-6, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

school for boarding students on each station, and three nonboarding boys' middle schools for the outstations. A girls' middle school was to be constructed in or near Bukiroba, but until it was completed, a school would be opened in temporary quarters in Bumangi in 1957. As for secondary education, the committee recommended that EMBMC should either support AIM's application for a school site near Musoma or prepare to sponsor its own school.<sup>61</sup>

Even though the scope of the education program continued to expand and required increasingly larger sums of money, the mission envisaged a decrease in the mission's education budget. For one thing, capital grants were available from the government for the complete cost of constructing new buildings, including quarters for the African and the American staff. Also, government grants-in-aid were available for ongoing expenses once the school opened. In addition, the income which the government gave to the mission for American staff grants could be used to reduce or to eliminate the mission's education budget.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Proposed Education Plan, 1957-1961, submitted to the Annual Business Meeting and the American Deputation, February 28, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>62</sup>Letter, Mahlon Hess to Orie O. Miller, February 28, 1956, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

Although the mission plan did anticipate a boys' middle school on each station and three in the outschool areas, the General Church Council of the African church vetoed the scheme because the colonial government decided to allow the Native Authority to administer all new schools constructed from 1957 onward. The Native Authority refused to guarantee that Christian students would be given priority in admission to the schools. In a number of places non-Christians were so vocal in their opposition to any kind of guarantee to Christians, that the colonial government instructed the native officials to show no favoritism.<sup>63</sup>

By the end of 1957 there were twenty-five primary schools which enrolled 3309 students, of whom 795 were girls. There were 265 boys enrolled in the Bumangi and Shirati boys' middle schools. The mission sponsored 27 girls who attended middle schools operated by other missions, and sponsored 25 boys and 4 girls in secondary or teacher training schools also operated by other missions. Its own girls' middle school was expected to open in January 1958 with Rhoda Wenger as the headmistress,

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<sup>63</sup>Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, July 4-6, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, James M. Shank to Orle O. Miller, December 3, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

Beldine Yusufu, the teacher, and Mariamu Timotheo, the school's matron.<sup>64</sup>

While the mission and EMBMC coped with the problem of providing primary and secondary education for Africans in Tanganyika, the General Education Council of the Mennonite General Conference, Elkhart, created a Collegiate Council for the purpose of selecting foreign students to attend Mennonite colleges in the United States. Each mission board was expected to appoint one missionary in each field to represent its board in the selection of the students who would attend Eastern Mennonite, Hesston, and Goshen Colleges. EMBMC appointed John Leatherman to represent it in Tanganyika.<sup>65</sup>

Although EMBMC agreed to participate in the college education program for foreign students, it suggested to its Tanganyika mission that the main reason for sending students to Eastern Mennonite College was to receive advanced Bible training to qualify to teach in the Bible School in Bukiroba. Students who desired

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<sup>64</sup>Annual Mission Conference, Nyabasi, July 19-23, 1957, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>65</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to John R. Mumaw, President of EMC, January 17, 1955, Salunga Archives, Colleges and Collegiate Council Foreign Students Correspondence, 1955-1956 File; Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to John Leatherman, April 7, 1955, Salunga Archives, Colleges and Collegiate Council Foreign Students Correspondence, 1955-1956 File.

professional or technical degrees were to be encouraged to undertake that training in Africa.<sup>66</sup>

#### Medical Program

In 1948 the American medical staff at the Shirati hospital included Dr. Noah Mack and Nurse Edith Showalter. The African staff consisted of seven male and seven female dressers and two sweepers. Fortunately, the African staff was adequately enough trained from 1940 onward to assume responsibility for outpatient care two days per week. Relieved of some of the outpatient care, Dr. Mack was able to provide additional medical instruction to the African staff.<sup>67</sup>

The medical reports clearly indicated that the hospital and the dispensaries provided invaluable medical attention for the inhabitants of both North and South Mara. Since there was little possibility that the American medical staff would be increased appreciably, there was a definite need to provide a training program for Africans. The mission had not prepared a standardized

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<sup>66</sup>Executive Committee Minutes, EMBMC, Salunga Archives, December 31, 1956, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>67</sup>Annual Report, 1947, January 16, 1948, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Annual Report, 1948, n.d., Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Edith Showalter, Africa Circle Letter, No. 90 (January 26, 1948), Salunga Archives.



curriculum for the African staff because of their inadequate academic preparation. Until the mission upgraded its education program, the medical trainee program continued in a haphazard fashion. In spite of these drawbacks, the American staff addressed itself to three goals: the creation of a training course for nurses, the greater utilization of the African staff in the treatment of outpatients, and the creation of a program for the treatment of lepers.

In March 1949, the government leprologist visited the mission's field in North Mara to investigate the incidence of leprosy. In four days he examined several thousand people and found approximately thirty cases of leprosy. It was the intention of the Shirati staff to treat a limited number of lepers in a separate medical facility built for that purpose. The mission anticipated receiving government grants to operate the colony, while it would be responsible for the construction of the buildings.<sup>68</sup>

At the same time, the best-trained African worker, Nathaniel, was in charge of the Nyabasi dispensary. He was aided by two dressers, one midwife and five assistants. The Mugango dispensary was operated by five workers:

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<sup>68</sup>Noah and Muriel Mack, Africa Circle Letter, No. 101 (October 21, 1949), Salunga Archives.



Zedekea and Rebecca Magafu, Elisha and his wife Nyangeta, and Magita. Phebe Yoder gave a hand when she could.<sup>69</sup>

As for the hospital in Shirati, it was impossible to have a first-rate institution as long as the construction of the needed units had to be included in the mission's regular budget. Therefore, in 1950, the mission requested that EMBMC raise \$12,000 for the construction of an enlarged hospital.<sup>70</sup>

Meanwhile the hospital opened several clinics to provide for the needs of the outpatients. There was a prenatal clinic twice a week, a baby clinic once a week, the care of women's diseases three times a week, and a clinic for the treatment of twelve lepers. Clinical work was supervised by James Nyakiema, Nathaniel Gomba and Yoshue Abuya. In 1952 the local chief gave the mission permission to acquire a plot of land along Lake Victoria for a leper colony, and the home boards gave their approval for this in 1953.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Annual Report, 1947, January 16, 1948, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Phebe Yoder, Africa Circle Letter, No. 97 (April 4, 1949), Salunga Archives.

<sup>70</sup>Noah K. Mack, Africa Circle Letter, No. 105 (May 5, 1950), Salunga Archives, Annual Mission Conference Report, Shirati, June 14-20, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>71</sup>Annual Report, 1950, January 18, 1951, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, John E. Leatherman to Orie O. Miller, December 16, 1952, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; the

Throughout 1950 and 1951, the medical staff appealed to EMBMC to raise the \$12,000 needed for hospital construction. The home boards did not oppose expanding the medical program, but EMBMC was first committed to the completion of the missionary children's school project and informed the mission that it would have to proceed with its expansion plans only as the funds became available. Although the government provided an annual medical grant of 25,200 shillings (\$6300), it refused to provide capital grants to any mission for the construction of hospitals. The problem of housing the patients became more acute and a critical need existed for a men's ward and a new operating room.<sup>72</sup>

Prompted by the gross inadequacies of buildings and equipment provided by the mission for medical work, Dr. Noah Mack informed EMBMC that he was terminating his services with the board at the end of his present term

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home boards gave their approval at a Joint Board Meeting, East Chestnut Street Meeting House, Lancaster, January 5, 1953, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>72</sup>Memo of understanding between Orie O. Miller, Amos S. Horst and the Tanganyika mission, January 26, 1950, Salunga Archives, Amos S. Horst File; Letter, Merle W. Eshleman to Orie O. Miller, October 23, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Letter, Merle W. Eshleman to Ira J. Buckwalter, February 9, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Executive Committee, EMBMC, February 28, 1951, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Orie O. Miller to J. Clyde Shenk, March 10, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Mission Conference, Bukiroba, June 6-7, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

in June 1952. Mack said that he saw no end to the poor conditions and was heartbroken that he was unable to give better treatment to inpatients. He concluded that EMBMC was not truly committed to the medical ministry in Tanganyika.<sup>73</sup> Mack's decision may have prompted the home board to act more swiftly because the surgical unit, one ward and the nurse's dwelling were in use by the end of 1953. All of the special projects included in the hospital's expansion, except for the leprosarium, were completed by June 1954.

In 1953 the medical program encountered several problems which taxed the strength and patience of the American staff. The mission was forced to increase the fees charged patients for treatment because it had to raise the wages of the African medical staff. Even with the increase, the Africans continued to grumble until 1957 when a new salary scale was approved. At the same time, more young men and women desired medical training and wanted the mission to give them financial assistance. Prior to January 1957, no African medical worker employed by the mission had any formal medical training. The first to complete his training was Malan, followed by Marshall in November 1957, and Valentina, who completed nursing

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<sup>73</sup>Letter, Noah K. Mack to Orie O. Miller, September 28, 1951, Salunga Archives, Executive Committee, EMBMC, Correspondence, 1950-1954 File.

and midwifery training in November. The mission wanted to open a nurses' training school in 1956, but the government refused on the grounds that the Shirati facilities were inadequate. Meanwhile, with the acceptance of government grants, more time had to be spent filling out reports. With all the problems, the one positive factor was the government's decision to give to Shirati a full hospital grant and a half grant to the Nyabasi dispensary.<sup>74</sup>

#### Expansion

In 1948 the mission considered Ikoma, Ungruimi, Suna, Sakwa and Mbulu, from which to choose a sixth station. After careful consideration, the mission decided that Ungruimi, east of Bumangi, could be cared for from that station; therefore, a Bumangi Christian was sent to live in Ungruimi. Much the same thinking was used with regards to Ikoma. Suna, Kenya, was not given a high priority as the site for the sixth station because the government did not allow foreign missionaries to enter

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<sup>74</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Bukiroba, June 17-20, 1952, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Report, 1953, n.d., Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Annual Mission Conference, July 19-23, 1957, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, James M. Listron, Chairman of the Tanganyika Nurses and Midwives Council, to Dr. J. Lester Eshleman, Shirati Hospital, November 9, 1956, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

from another British colony. The Sakwa area, north of Kisii, needed further investigation, and so, by careful elimination of the other sites, Mbulu became the choice for the new station.<sup>75</sup> On August 31, 1948, Clyde Shenk, Clinton Ferster, John Leatherman and Stefano, an African Christian, set out to prospect in Mbulu, approximately two hundred and fifty miles southeast of Musoma. The prospectors were assured by Axel Hofverberg, director of the Swedish Evangelical Mission in Dongobesh, that his organization had no intention of opening a station in the northern part of Mbulu. The local government officer saw nothing wrong with the two sites selected by the Mennonites, and he was certain that the local chief would not object either. Sketches of the two sites were left with the district officer and the prospectors departed.<sup>76</sup>

The government later informed the mission that it could not approve either of the two sites selected by the mission because the area was too heavily congested, and the land could not be alienated for a mission station. Dissatisfied with the explanation, Clyde Shenk and John Leatherman returned to Mbulu in November and discussed

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<sup>75</sup>Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting, Shirati, June 18-21, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>76</sup>Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orle O. Miller, October 29, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

the matter with several villagers who reported that the rejection was derived from the fear that the villagers would lose their water rights. The missionaries, therefore, selected a new site, nine miles north of Mbulu, and submitted an application for a "Right of Occupancy."<sup>77</sup>

In October 1949, John and Catharine Leatherman moved to Mbulu to await the "Right of Occupancy," looking forward to working among the estimated 125,000 Wambulu. The Mennonites' neighbors to the south were three Catholic stations, a Swedish Evangelical station, and several worship points of the Swedish Augustana Lutheran Mission.<sup>78</sup>

When, after nine months, the mission had heard nothing about their application, Elam Stauffer and John Leatherman journeyed to the capital and made an inquiry. They were informed that their application had been challenged by the Swedish Lutheran Mission which had asked the Mennonites to withdraw their application. When the Swedish group assured the Mennonites that they planned to

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<sup>77</sup>J. Clyde Shenk, a report of the second trip to Mbulu, December 9, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; President of EMBMC, Annual Report, 1949, Thirty-fifth Annual Meeting, Hess Meeting House, March 9-10, 1949, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>78</sup>John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 103 (January 31, 1950), Salunga Archives.

occupy the Mbulu area before the end of 1950, the Mennonites withdrew their application.<sup>79</sup>

With the withdrawal from Mbulu, the Mennonites looked to Suna, Kenya, twenty-seven miles north of Tarime. The District Commissioner in Kissi disapproved of the Mennonite initiative because the Pentecostal Assemblies of East Africa was interested in the area, and the commissioner did not think that the area was large enough for two mission stations. The Mennonites then asked Scott Dickson of the Christian Council of Kenya to assist them. Dickson learned that the Mennonites could operate in Suna if they were prepared to take over the government health center there, and to restrict their work to medicine. The Mennonites realized that they would have to build a new hospital in Suna, and since the Shirati hospital was in need of expansion, the mission decided to forget about Suna for the time being.<sup>80</sup>

Meanwhile, a "Right of Occupancy" was granted for an evangelical center in Tarime, and an application was filed for a church plot in the town of Musoma. The

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<sup>79</sup>Annual Mission Conference Report, Shirati, June 14-20, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; John and Catharine Leatherman, Africa Circle Letter, No. 106 (July 1, 1950), Salunga Archives; Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orie O. Miller, August 21, 1950, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

<sup>80</sup>Letter, J. Clyde Shenk to Orie O. Miller, June 18, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

failure to establish a sixth station in Mbulu or Suna forced the mission to reconsider Ungruimi. In 1952 EMBMC approved opening a station in Ungruimi, and on September 3, 1954, J. Clyde Shenk and his family moved there.<sup>81</sup>

### EMBMC-Mission Relations

Between 1948 and 1957, three important issues confronted EMBMC in its relationship with the Tanganyika mission. The first was the furor caused by Elam Stauffer over remarks he made while on furlough in 1948-1949. The second was the need to have better lines of communication between the mission and the home constituency so as to nullify the bad publicity which surrounded the East African Revival. A request to the mission from the British government to assist the administration in its struggle against the Mau Mau movement in Kenya was the third issue.

During his furlough, Elam Stauffer continued to question the need to transport the Mennonite faith to Tanganyika. Elam wanted the African church to decide for itself what kind of organization, doctrine and discipline it adopted. Rather than push Mennonitism on the African church, Elam insisted that the Lord must be allowed to

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid.; Annual Report, 1954, February 19, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



show the way. In his enthusiasm Elam gave the impression that he was anti-Lancaster Conference, and this resulted in the Examining Committee's refusal to nominate him for reappointment to the field. After considerable consultation between the home boards and between the boards and Elam, the Bishop Board concluded that it was not that Elam differed so much with the home church in terms of how to spread the Gospel, but that he had given exaggerated emphasis to the revival. Even after Elam was reappointed to the field there were still some within the home conference who continued to question his loyalty to the Mennonite Church.<sup>82</sup>

Between 1954 and 1957, EMBMC attempted to keep the home conference better informed of the work in Tanganyika so there would be no more misunderstandings. A series of booklets was prepared which described the foreign programs sponsored by EMBMC. The booklets were used in conjunction with an African Mission Study Kit, prepared by Paul N. Kraybill, in an attempt to provide missionary education at the congregation level. Each congregation was expected to support the foreign ventures by involving their Sunday School classes in mission

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<sup>82</sup>Letter, Amos S. Horst to Lancaster Conference, April 21, 1949, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Letter, Henry E. Lutz to "Whom It May Concern," March 3, 1949, Salunga Archives, Lancaster Conference General Correspondence File.



work.<sup>83</sup> To further its efforts at improving all relationships, a new Orientation Manual was prepared by EMBMC for use by all mission workers. The manual included information about procedures, travel, allowances, field service, furlough and reappointment.<sup>84</sup> The first orientation program for foreign missionaries was held in Salunga on August 17-18, 1956; twenty-three furloughed and nine newly appointed workers attended.<sup>85</sup>

Although the mission attempted to avoid entanglements with the British government because of the Mennonite position on the separation of church and state, EMBMC was contacted in November 1954 by S. A. Momseri, General Secretary to the Christian Council of Kenya, who invited the Mennonites to assist in the rehabilitation of Mau Mau detainees. Momseri encouraged EMBMC to send workers and he indicated that their cooperation might pave the way for the establishment of a Mennonite mission in Kenya after the emergency ended.<sup>86</sup> EMBMC's Executive

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<sup>83</sup>Executive Committee, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, April 15, 1954, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>84</sup>This manual was replaced in 1957 by the Information Manual for Foreign Missionaries and was prepared by Paul N. Kraybill, Assistant Overseas Secretary.

<sup>85</sup>Executive Committee, EMBMC, Salunga, September 6, 1956, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>86</sup>Letter, S. A. Momseri to Orie O. Miller, November 3, 1954, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

Committee agreed to send Elam Stauffer and John Leatherman to Kenya to investigate the situation.<sup>87</sup>

In January 1955, Stauffer and Leatherman went to Nairobi to learn more about the function of the Christian Council of Kenya in the rehabilitation of Mau Mau detainees. The Mennonites were told that the government conducted a screening process to separate the hard-core Mau Mau from those who were only sympathetic to the movement. The government welcomed both psychological and spiritual approaches to restore the latter group to what it called "good citizenship" status. Leatherman concluded from their briefing that neither the government nor the Christian Council of Kenya would want a group to assist which was interested only in spiritual ends. The church council selected the camps in the Embu section, north of Fort Hall on the approaches to Mt. Kenya, for the Mennonites to work in. Stauffer estimated a population of approximately 40,000 living in about 100 camps. He and Leatherman were told that the majority of detainees who would probably respond to rehabilitation were already Christians and would probably return to their own churches upon release. Leatherman informed the home board that churches and missions cooperating in this project would

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<sup>87</sup>Executive Committee, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

be regarded as government agents. He recognized that the outbreak resulted from the many grievances felt by the Africans toward the Europeans and their ways, and that it was doubtful, therefore, whether rehabilitation efforts would accomplish anything. With all this in mind, Leatherman recommended that EMBMC delay taking any action for six months in order to allow for the situation in Kenya to crystallize.<sup>88</sup>

#### Bishop Board-Mission Relations

The East African Revival's effect upon the missionaries, coupled with the Bishop Board's desire to spread the Gospel according to the Mennonite knowledge and understanding of the New Testament, resulted in the creation of the Foreign Missions Council (FMC) in 1947. The bishops wanted an agency to act as its watchdog to ensure that all missionaries adhered to the teachings of the Mennonite church and to the discipline of Lancaster Mennonite Conference. In addition, the new body was to

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<sup>88</sup>Report of Mau Mau Rehabilitation Investigation, John E. Leatherman, January 22, 1955, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. The Executive Committee of EMBMC accepted Leatherman's recommendation and no further action was forthcoming from the board, Executive Committee, EMBMC, Intercourse Office, March 7, 1955, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. The mission decided that it did not have anyone to send to Kenya so the matter was dropped, Annual Mission Conference, Nyabasi, July 21-22, 1955, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

serve as a liaison between the African and American churches. In other words, FMC was to be a medium of doctrinal and administrative policy between the foreign missions and Lancaster Conference. Heretofore, the Bishop Board relied upon the Secretary of EMBMC, the Secretary of the mission, and occasional deputation visits to provide that information. FMC consisted of three bishops from the conference, and each elected by the Bishop Board for a three-year term.

When Bishops Amos Horst and J. Paul Graybill were in Tanganyika in 1947, they told the missionaries that the Bishop Board was going to adopt a Foreign Missions Polity to direct the activities of the newly created FMC. The missionaries responded that they strongly disagreed with the Bishop Board's insistence on pursuing denominationalism in the foreign mission because it confused the Africans, thereby hindering the work of the Holy Spirit. Although the missionaries preferred an interdenominational approach, they assured the bishops that they did not want to leave the Mennonite church. Equally important, the missionaries viewed the Bishop Board's decision to install FMC as the final authority over the African church as a direct violation of the indigenous church building principle.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Observations of Bishops Horst and Graybill from their Tanganyika trip, June 28-October 13, 1947, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

In spite of the strong protestations of the missionaries, the Bishop Board and EMBMC met in a special meeting on August 30, 1949, and the two boards unanimously agreed to vote on the polity on October twenty-fourth.<sup>90</sup> The polity presented Lancaster Conference's official position on doctrinal and administration matters as they pertained to foreign missions and churches.

On September fourteenth, Bishop Graybill sent a copy of the proposed polity to the missionaries who were instructed to vote on the adoption or rejection of the polity. Several missionaries complained that while it had taken the home boards two years to formulate the polity, the missionaries were only given a few days to express their opinions. The missionaries in the field overwhelmingly rejected adoption of the polity in its present form. They were extremely upset that the suggestions which they gave to Bishops Horst and Graybill had been completely ignored. Several of the missionaries criticized the implication that was contained in the Foreword and Articles I and II that the Mennonite church was the best Christian church, and that Lancaster Conference Mennonite Church was the best of the Mennonite churches. Appalled at this denominational emphasis, the missionaries

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<sup>90</sup>Special Meeting of the Joint Boards, East Chestnut Street Meeting House, Lancaster, August 30, 1949, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

complained that the polity put too much emphasis on the principles, objectives and discipline of the Lancaster church. In addition, they recommended that membership on FMC should include members from EMBMC, making the body more representative of the conference.<sup>91</sup>

On October 24, 1949, the Bishop Board convened a meeting of the membership of the conference for the purpose of ratifying the Foreign Missions Polity. Each article was read separately and fully explained to the audience of approximately one hundred and sixty-two. At the completion of the reading, a vote was taken, and the body unanimously voted to accept the polity as presented.<sup>92</sup> This was the very same document which the missionaries had overwhelmingly rejected.

On December 27, 1949, Amos Horst went to Tanganyika to discuss the new polity with the missionaries. The missionaries again reiterated their rejection of it in its present form but agreed to try and work within its framework. Although they had made an agreement to abide by the polity, the missionaries continued to work

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<sup>91</sup>Letter, J. Paul Graybill to Elam Stauffer, September 14, 1949, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. The comments by the individual missionaries rejecting the Foreign Missions Polity are also found in the Foreign Missions Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>92</sup>Bishop Board Minutes, October 24, 1949, Salunga Archives.



with the African church leaders to establish a church which they thought was most suitable for the Tanganyika environment. According to Elam Stauffer,

. . . a lot of the polity didn't quite meet with the convictions of the missionaries and so while it was passed at home, it didn't seem to help or disrupt the work on the field a great deal. One of our mission board members wisely said, it is written, put it in your files and go on working. . . . we didn't mean to be rebellious, but when you come up against a problem, you found your way through it as you felt the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit led. . . . It would be interesting to pick it [polity] up and read it now.<sup>93</sup>

Although Lancaster Conference adopted the Foreign Missions Polity, the missionaries continued to object to the fact that the African church was to be a subsidiary of Lancaster Conference. Bishop Stauffer spoke out against the subsidiary clause and he asked the Bishop Board to drop it from the proposed African church organization.

Ever since the beginning of the work we have steadily told our African leaders that we are not there to tell them what to do, nor how to do it. . . . From the first we have held a fraternal relationship with them, not a paternal one. To organize that church now with the understanding that there is not full liberty on all matters is to be putting things in reverse and is not giving the African church her God-given privilege. Surely any church that has been asked and taught to be self-supporting financially, should have the privilege of organizing themselves, with the counsel of those sent to them. I am confident that we have held the confidence of our African

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<sup>93</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.

leaders better and they have received our counsel the better because we have not taken a paternal attitude but a fraternal one.<sup>94</sup>

The Bishop Board, however, was adamant in its determination to carry on foreign mission work as a Mennonite endeavor. As a result, EMBMC had no choice but to adopt a new constitution of September 15, 1952, which supported the Bishop Board's position. Article III, Section 3, stated that

All nominees shall wholeheartedly assent to the teachings of Christ as taught and held forth by the Mennonite Church, and shall also give assent to the principles and objectives of the discipline of the Lancaster Conference, and consent to work in harmony with the same.<sup>95</sup>

#### Mara Hills School

The missionary children's school opened in temporary quarters in Bukiroba in September 1947. Meanwhile, the mission worked on the blueprint for the school buildings to be built in Bumangi. The original plan called for a small school which would accommodate the children of the missionaries and which would require an annual budget of approximately \$5500. When the mission sent its request to EMBMC in 1948, Orie Miller was shocked

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<sup>94</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, December 7, 1952, Salunga Archives, Elam Stauffer File.

<sup>95</sup>EMBMC Constitution, Article III, Section 3, adopted September 15, 1952. EMBMC had no choice because it is an agent of the Bishop Board.

to learn that the mission had decided to build a school which would accommodate thirty-two children, including a non-Mennonite enrollment of between 25 and 30 percent. Furthermore, it was going to cost \$17,500 just to build the school. Since EMBMC had not expected a radical departure from the original proposal, Orie Miller informed the mission that the board would need construction, personnel, equipment, and operation costs before making a decision.<sup>96</sup>

Amos Horst and Orie Miller met with the missionaries in Bukiroba in January 1950, and they discussed the proposed school. The group agreed that the school would be located in Nyabasi, rather than Bumangi, because the AIM had announced that it was going to open its own missionary children's school in Nasa which was only eighty miles from Bumangi. Furthermore, Nyabasi was closer to the medical facilities in Shirati. The group agreed on a plan which called for an expenditure of between \$25,000 and \$30,000 for the physical plant and the equipment. The school's capacity was to be thirty-five, in anticipation that the Mennonite mission in Ethiopia might use the facilities. Miller expected to introduce the new school plan at EMBMC's March meeting so that the school

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<sup>96</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to J. Clyde Shenk, October 29, 1948, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File.

could open in September 1951.<sup>97</sup> The permanent facility, called the Mara Hills School, opened in Nyabasi in September 1952. The new teacher was Ruth Bauman who greeted seven Mennonite and eight non-Mennonite children.<sup>98</sup>

### Publications

Between 1948 and 1957 the mission published a voluminous amount of inexpensive or free religious literature. By 1953, the successful Mjumbe wa Kristo enjoyed a monthly circulation of over 2800, and it was being read in more than twelve Protestant missions. Other major projects included catechism and baptismal instruction books, a number of vernacular Bible translations, Bible lesson manuals, teachers' manuals, report cards, hospital forms, diplomas, letterhead stationery and envelopes, Sunday School lessons, and labor tickets for the African employees of the mission. In 1949 the mission opened a central bookstore in Bukiroba and created a Gospel Literature Fund which allowed for contributions to provide for the printing of inexpensive or free religious literature. In addition to religious literature,

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<sup>97</sup>Report of the conference with Amos S. Horst and Orie O. Miller, Bukiroba, January 25-26, 1950, Salunga Archives, Amos S. Horst File.

<sup>98</sup>Annual Report, 1952, n.d., Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

the bookstore also sold school supplies to the students who attended the various church schools.<sup>99</sup>

On the whole, the period between 1948 and 1957 saw the mission make an honest attempt to build an indigenous church in Tanganyika. The mission successfully Africanized many aspects of the total church program. For example, in 1950 the first indigenous pastors were ordained, and this event was followed by the ordination of indigenous deacons in 1955. In 1953 the mission and the church created a General Church Council to administer the African church. A majority of members in both the council and its executive committee were Africans. Furthermore, the African church assumed complete economic and administrative responsibility for the education program. Another milestone in Africanization occurred in 1956 when the Komitti Kuu participated for the first time in the preparation of an organizational plan for the African church.

Nevertheless, the mission and the African church were thwarted in their efforts to create a church completely free from outside interference. Instead of a

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<sup>99</sup>Annual Conference Report, Bukiroba, June 6-7, 1951, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Conference Report, Bukiroba, June 17-20, 1952, Salunga Archives, J. Clyde Shenk File; Annual Conference Report, Bukiroba, July 28-31, 1953, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

two-office ministry, the African church succumbed to the Bishop Board's insistence on a three-office ministry. Equally important was the failure to prevent the African church from becoming a subsidiary of Lancaster Conference. Lastly, the home boards were successful in transplanting their Mennonite faith to the African church in spite of the resistance of the missionaries, who were not opposed to the adoption of the Mennonite model if that were God's will. Unfortunately, the African Christians were not permitted to determine the will of God.

## CHAPTER SIX

### PARTNERS IN OBEDIENCE: A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN MISSION, 1958-1961

#### Partners in Obedience

On July 10, 1958, Orie Miller met with the Executive Committee of the mission and informed them of EMBMC's decision to integrate the mission and the African church. The "three-self" policy of indigenous church building was being replaced by the new policy of "partners in obedience." This meant that the mission's programs and properties would be turned over to the African church after a transition period. Upon completion of the transition, the mission would be dissolved. Orie informed the missionaries that there were two kinds of partnership programs. In the first, the native church became completely independent from the sending church and the missionaries were not members of the new national church and, in fact, they had very little association with it. The second plan, which was already employed by the Mennonite Central Committee mission in India, resulted in the integration of the mission and the church in which the missionaries were members of the national church and

worked for that church. At the same time, the missionaries continued to meet separately in order to deal with matters concerning the education of their children and interests of a purely inspirational nature. Miller said that the Tanganyika mission should adopt the second plan, and instead of referring to the plan as one of partnership, he chose to call it an "integration" program because he saw that once the process of integration had been completed, the new national church and the sending church could truly participate in a partner relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Miller then outlined for the mission the direction which it must follow to achieve integration of the mission and the African church. The plan called for a two-year transition period during which the mission would work closely with the Komitti Kuu or the Executive Committee of the African church. Miller wanted the missionaries to cooperate with the Kuu in the preparation of a statement of faith and practices, or polity, and an organizational structure for the African church. He anticipated that it would take about six months to complete the two documents. In the new relationship, the Kuu would assist in the preparation of the annual mission budget, and they

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<sup>1</sup>Conversation of the Executive Committee of the Mennonite Mission of East Africa with Brother Orie O. Miller, Mugango, July 10, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



would have complete freedom to determine how those funds were dispersed.<sup>2</sup>

Because Elam Stauffer was one of the founders of the mission in Tanganyika, he was well qualified to express the sentiments of the veteran missionaries about the new program. He said that the older missionaries were deeply committed to the "three-self" plan and were therefore shocked to learn about the change in mission policy. Until Orie Miller introduced the new program to them, they were totally ignorant of the partnership concept. Furthermore, the missionaries were hurt because they had not been consulted in the decision-making, nor had they been asked to vote on the new program. In addition, Orie had announced EMBMC's decision at a joint meeting of the mission's Executive Committee and the Komitti Kuu. Stauffer said that it was impossible for the missionaries to speak unfavorably about the new plan in front of the Africans. The missionaries thought that Miller should have informed them of the board's decision before he made a public statement.<sup>3</sup>

When asked why he thought EMBMC adopted the integration plan, Elam offered several possible reasons.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, July 21 and August 10, 1971.

First, it had become extremely difficult for the mission to apply the "three-self" concept consistently, especially after the mission's decision in the post-war period to expand the institutional programs with government money. Second, Elam was convinced that the newer missionaries had been ignorant of the "three-self" concept prior to their arrival in the field. As a result, they had no real conviction for the concept one way or the other. Third, whether the veteran missionaries wanted to admit it or not, the "three-self" program had spawned paternalism. Lastly, Elam believed that EMBMC, especially Orie Miller, was aware of the changes which were occurring in the missions throughout the world as a result of the winds of nationalism which were spreading over Asia and Africa, including Tanganyika. Stauffer said that the missionaries were not that well informed. Elam did, however, believe that the missionaries recovered from their initial shock more easily than might have been expected because the whole idea that all would eventually be taken over by the African church and that the mission would disappear was not new to the missionaries.<sup>4</sup>

Shemaya Magati, an African teacher and a church leader in 1958, claimed the missionaries responded positively because they feared a property expropriation once

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<sup>4</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, August 10, 1971.

Tanganyika became independent, and, to preclude this disaster, they decided to Africanize as soon as possible. As for the policy change itself, Shemaya considered it to be a good move for the African leadership, but what worried the African Christians was how the missionaries would react to the change.<sup>5</sup>

In January 1959, an American deputation arrived in Tanganyika to discuss the transition period, the organization of the proposed African Mennonite Church, and the expected relationship between the mission and the new church after the new church was created. On the sixteenth, the first step taken toward integration was the decision to make the Komitti Kuu the sole executive committee for both the African church and the mission. Hereafter, all church and mission business went to the Kuu instead of to the mission's Executive Committee. The Kuu was instructed to keep two sets of minutes, one for the Tanganyika Mennonite Church (TMC) and one to be sent to EMBMC. Everyone agreed that the creation of TMC should proceed slowly so that the African brethren would have time to understand the partnership agreement.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Shemaya Magati, private interview, August 3, 1971.

<sup>6</sup>Orie O. Miller, Deputation Report to EMBMC, January 17, 1959, Salunga Archives.

Donald Lauver, the representative of the Foreign Missions Council, reported to the Bishop Board that he was greatly impressed at the depth of understanding and carefulness with which the Kuu studied the issues. Since the African leaders were very conscious of their responsibilities, Lauver recommended that the Bishop Board should begin to communicate directly with TMC on matters of home church guidance and counsel. Lauver foresaw the need for the African leadership to teach a balanced program of doctrine and practice which would be applicable to the African culture, and at the same time acceptable to the Mennonite church.<sup>7</sup>

The second step in the integration process was the appointment of Africans as station superintendents, replacing missionaries. Since Stauffer was scheduled to go on furlough in 1959, the Mugango station and district was the first to be managed by an African churchman.<sup>8</sup>

The third step in the transition was the participation of the African churchmen in the preparation of the mission's annual budget. Ira Buckwalter, the Treasurer of EMBMC, provided the financial information about EMBMC's operations in the United States and

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<sup>7</sup>Donald E. Lauver, Deputation Report to the Bishop Board, January 15-March 4, 1959, Salunga Archives.

<sup>8</sup>Orie O. Miller, Deputation Report to EMBMC, January 18, 1959, Salunga Archives.

overseas. This was the first time that the African leaders knew exactly how much EMBMC had expended on the Tanganyika mission since its beginning in 1933.<sup>9</sup>

For the first time American personnel would be requested and assigned by TMC, and budget requests and the administration of the funds would be the sole responsibility of TMC. For its part, EMBMC would provide as much financial and personnel assistance as it could in light of its total foreign mission commitment. During the transition period, the mission and TMC would prepare a church constitution and a plan for the completion of integration. There also had to be a definite understanding as to the status of the American missionaries as members of TMC. A decision had to be made whether to continue or not such programs as education and medicine, which were subsidized by the government.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to their departure, the American deputation, the Komitti Kuu, and the missionaries agreed that the mission organization would be replaced by a mission board appointee who would have power of attorney to handle board and mission interests in Tanganyika after

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<sup>9</sup>Ira J. Buckwalter, Deputation Record, January 15-March 4, 1959, Salunga Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to Orie O. Miller, Ira J. Buckwalter and Donald Lauver, January 9, 1959, Salunga Archives, Deputation and Administration Trips, Europe and Africa, 1959 File.

the transfer of the mission programs to TMC, which was scheduled for October 1, 1960.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after the deputation's visit, EMBMC learned that the mission had proceeded to integrate all of its committees even though EMBMC had expected that the only committee to be integrated during the transition period was the Komitti Kuu. Paul Kraybill, the Overseas Secretary, could not understand why the mission's committees were integrated before a plan of integration had been adopted. As a result, EMBMC created an ad hoc committee to decide if it were advisable to integrate mission committees during the transition period. The committee consisted of Donald Lauver, Paul Kraybill and Elam Stauffer, who was home on furlough.<sup>12</sup>

The ad hoc committee concluded that the transition period was supposed to give the African leaders time to gain experience and training in church administration before the mission and church were integrated. Although the Komitti Kuu was the sole executive committee, the

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<sup>11</sup>Orie O. Miller, Tanganyika Mission Visit Notes, Conclusions and Recommendations, February 9-12, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>12</sup>Meetings of the Executive Committee of EMBMC, FMC, and Elam Stauffer, October 12, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. Paul N. Kraybill became the Overseas Secretary in 1959 while Orie Miller assumed the new position of Associate Executive Secretary.

mission and the church still existed side by side as two separate organizations; therefore, it was unwise to integrate all of the mission's committees during the transition period. More importantly, the ad hoc committee was opposed to the take-over of any mission institutions or committees which gave the management of the total program to TMC without there being any American control whatsoever. Paul Kraybill saw the possibility that the mission might want to control its own allowances, the education of its children, and the Musoma Bookshop. Furthermore, the proposed TMC constitution said nothing about the relationship between EMBMC and TMC, especially in regard to requests for budget and personnel. Kraybill, therefore, questioned if the missionaries were being realistic in giving the African leaders the impression that there would be no mission after total integration was realized in 1961. Kraybill said that if there were a delay in the completion of TMC's constitution, or if the mission had to continue until all property had been transferred to TMC, the African leaders might think that the home boards were insincere about integrating the mission and the church. Kraybill concluded that those in the field were moving ahead with integration without consulting the home boards.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to Orie O. Miller, October 31, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.





Paul Kraybill presented the ad hoc committee's recommendations to the home boards. First, only the Komitti Kuu was to be integrated. Until new church committees were created to replace the mission committees, Africans should not be made members of mission committees. Second, TMC was to take over the mission programs gradually, but it was not supposed to take over the mission because to do so would result in a church which would be an adaptation of the mission. Third, once TMC took over all property and responsibility for evangelism, the home church would provide personnel and money to assist it in its new responsibilities. Lastly, the transition period should continue as outlined until a church constitution was adopted.<sup>14</sup>

As Secretary of the mission, George Smoker stated that the missionaries found it very difficult to explain the new concept to the African Christians because even the missionaries were not sure what it meant. Except for the brief explanation provided by Miller, the only other information that the missionaries had were two articles in Christian Today, both of which were critical of the partnership approach. Because of the tremendous nationalist movement underway in Tanganyika, and the

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<sup>14</sup>Paul N. Kraybill report to the Executive Committee of EMBMC and FMC, November 2, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

pressure from EMBMC, the mission felt compelled to proceed quickly with integration. Then the Kraybill letter, dated October 22, 1959, indicated that the mission had moved too rapidly with integration. At the same time there were many African Christians who did not feel that the mission was moving fast enough toward integration. The African members of the Komitti Kuu were under considerable pressure from the younger church members to make more demands, and they were told that they bowed too willingly to the wishes of the mission. Because of those pressures, Smoker said that some of the older church leaders considered resigning and allowing younger men to take over.<sup>15</sup>

Paul Kraybill assured George Smoker that the home boards did not want to dictate how the mission should proceed with the integration. According to Kraybill, the Africans should be free to organize the new church committee and they should not be smothered by the mission during this period. He also indicated that the home boards realized that they had not communicated their convictions to the African church. Again, he reiterated the American church's desire to be a partner of TMC once the new church was established. The American partner

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<sup>15</sup>Letter, George Smoker to Paul N. Kraybill, December 11, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

would provide personnel and funds, but TMC would run the programs and decide how the money was to be dispersed. Also, the home boards reversed their earlier position and agreed to integrated committees during the transition period.<sup>16</sup>

The transition period caused the mission many headaches. One of the more difficult problems concerned the ownership of the Musoma Bookshop. In January 1960 at the General Church Council meeting in Morembe, the church leaders wanted to know why the proposed Musoma Bookshop was going to be operated by the mission, not the African church. Elam Stauffer explained that the bookstore was going to be operated by the Mennonite Publishing Company, an American organization which printed and distributed Christian literature on a nonprofit basis. Elam further stated that the mission intended to close the Bukiroba store when the Musoma one opened. After a lengthy discussion, the council agreed that the church needed its own bookstore to provide revenue for TMC, but no decision was reached and the matter was tabled.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to George Smoker, December 14, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>17</sup>General Church Council meeting, Morembe School, January 11-15, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

Another important matter discussed at the council meeting was why the budget for TMC, which was prepared by the Komitti Kuu, had not been approved by the General Church Council of TMC. Elam explained that until integration was completed the Kuu had two tasks to perform: first, to do the work assigned to it by TMC, and, second, to do the work assigned to it by the mission. What really concerned the council members was their desire to see more money budgeted for church use. The Africans were told that all of the money was for church use, but some of it was diverted to the mission programs which were benefiting the development and growth of the African church. Some of the African leaders, therefore, suggested that all of the money earmarked for the church should be put into one fund and then each program would receive money from the central fund.<sup>18</sup> The matter was taken under consideration.

The Komitti Kuu was subject to a considerable amount of criticism during the transition period. Many of the church leaders in the villages were not satisfied to allow the Kuu to have the final voice in the adoption of the church's constitution. In fact, some believed the Kuu had too much power in church decisions. Elam Stauffer believed that much of the criticism of the Kuu was due to

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

the fact that there were missionaries on that committee and because the older church leaders who supported the missionaries were, in turn, criticized by the younger men who were active in the nationalist movement. According to Elam, most of the church members, with the exception of the older ones, were greatly engrossed in the political issues and had become extremely sensitive to the cultural differences between themselves and the American missionaries. Both the political parties and the labor unions heightened this awareness by agitating against the mission. In spite of the delicate situation the Mennonites found themselves in, Elam believed that it was good that the Africans were aware of and interested in the future of their country, and he was convinced that some of their enthusiasm could be channeled into Christian endeavors.<sup>19</sup>

The mission also attempted to alert the Bishop Board to a potential problem which might arise if the board insisted that TMC had to be subsidiary to Lancaster Conference. Don Jacobs reminded the board that TMC would become independent in matters of faith, practice and administration as of October 1, 1960, but he believed that it would be unrealistic for the African church to remain a subsidiary of Lancaster Conference until the

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<sup>19</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, March 9, 1960, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

home church decided otherwise. Jacobs argued that TMC wanted a fraternal, not a subsidiary relationship with Lancaster Conference.<sup>20</sup> Elam Stauffer concurred with Jacobs' assessment and said that any attempt to tell TMC what to do would raise suspicion and tension. According to Stauffer, the question was not whether TMC was ready for integration, but whether the American partners were ready for it. Elam said that it was not easy for the missionaries to learn new ways of working especially since they would be employed by the African church.<sup>21</sup>

On August 23, 1960, the American deputation, Paul Kraybill, Donald Lauver and Amos Horst, met with the Komitti Kuu to discuss the adoption of TMC's constitution. Between the twenty-fourth and the twenty-sixth, the deputation conferred with the General Church Council. The council and the deputation discussed only those parts of the constitution which were not clear to the Africans. To the question of whether the Articles of Faith were the same for all Mennonites, the Africans were assured that they were. The council also wanted to know why it was

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<sup>20</sup>Letter, Don Jacobs to Amos S. Horst, March 14, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>21</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill, Donald Lauver and Amos S. Horst, June 10, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. These three men had been chosen to represent the home boards at the independence ceremonies scheduled for October 1, 1960.

necessary for Christians to reject government employment. Stauffer explained that this was the position taken in the United States, but he said the African church would have to make that decision for itself, especially in light of the imminent change in the government. The council then wanted to know why conference delegates were going to be selected from the conference as a whole rather than from the ranks of the elders as was previously the case. The deputation said that it was very important to get all of the membership involved in the church so as to take advantage of the talents of a larger group. The same response was given to the question of pastor and deacon selection. The questions answered, a vote was taken and the council ratified the constitution. Amos Horst declared that TMC had become an autonomous conference like all of the other Mennonite conferences.<sup>22</sup>

Donald Lauver, FMC's delegate, conveyed his feelings to the home boards at that glorious moment when he said,

Our eyes suddenly became misty as I realized that I was witnessing something very outstanding, and I so undeserving. I felt very much humbled. Today I saw the fruits of 27 years of labor in sacrificial service by our missionary brethren and sisters, one of our brethren (Ray Wenger) whom the Lord took home while in service, thousands of contributions in

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<sup>22</sup>Minutes of the General Church Conference, Shirati, August 24-26, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

sacrificial giving from the home church, and countless prayers that ascend to the throne of God in behalf of the church. . . . We now stand by with a hand ready to help in any way the Lord may make possible.<sup>23</sup>

As for the future, Paul Kraybill explained to the church leaders what integration meant.

You have now become free as a conference . . . There is a church in America, and there is a church in Africa. We want to be partners . . . The church in America wants to help you. Does the church here want this help? These missionaries have been here, but now what shall we do with them? It is for you to say if you want them or not. If they return to America on furlough, you will need to ask for them if you want them. The placement of missionaries for the work you want them to do is your responsibility.<sup>24</sup>

Kraybill went on to say that it would be necessary for TMC to become incorporated before the mission could legally transfer its property to TMC, the final step in the integration process. Kraybill cautioned the church leaders that it might take as long as one year for the incorporation to be completed. He further indicated that there would be some property which the mission could not transfer to TMC. According to Kraybill, if the missionaries were to remain in Tanganyika, they would have a school (Mara Hills) for their own children which

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<sup>23</sup>Donald Lauver, Diary, August 20-September 1, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. Lauver omitted the name of Elizabeth Stauffer who also died in service.

<sup>24</sup>Minutes of the General Church Conference, Shirati, August 24-26, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



would be conducted according to American scholastic requirements. African children were welcome to attend the school as long as they met the same requirements for admission as mission children. He explained that the Musoma Bookshop would not be turned over to TMC because it was owned by stockholders in the United States and since the Alliance Secondary School was sponsored by several Protestant missions, its transfer to TMC depended on working out an agreement with the other missions. Kraybill then spoke about American personnel and financial assistance for TMC.

The missionaries will belong to the church and be members of it. Their assignments will be made by the executive committee [TMC]. . . . As to money . . . We do not have much of this. In our committees at home we are much pressed to find enough money for the work we are doing. . . . We only get what the Lord gives. . . . we cannot force anyone to give. . . . We will expect that each year you will inform us of what you feel your needs are. You should also bring in money from your churches. . . . We will only send a certain amount, for we cannot send what we do not have. It will be up to the church [TMC] to say how this money is to be used. We do not want to tell you what to do with it. . . . we are concerned that you use part of this money for evangelism, and that your people also give for this. . . . It would be well for the church to support its own pastors and use more budget money for evangelism.<sup>25</sup>

Although the first of October had been the date selected for TMC's autonomy, the event actually took place on the twenty-fifth of August. On September 27, 1960, the home boards approved the constitution and

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

by-laws of the Tanganyika Mennonite Church.<sup>26</sup> The final step in the integration of the mission and the church was the recognition of TMC as an independent conference on December 6, 1961, just three days before the nation became independent. The mission was not terminated until 1964, when the last of its property was transferred to TMC.

EMBMC's Decision to Adopt "Partners in  
Obedience"--External Factors

The term "partners in obedience" was coined at the Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council in Whitby, Ontario, in July 1947. The meeting was called for the purpose of getting Protestant missions to reexamine their fundamental missionary principles and policies and its program was divided into three parts. The first, entitled "World in Ferment," dealt with the effects of World War II on the environment, the material and spiritual equipment, and the prospects of the Christian church. The second, "World Redemption," reexamined the Christian faith. The third segment, "Partners in Obedience," was concerned with the task of the Christian church in proclaiming the Word and in the fulfillment of the Great

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<sup>26</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to Elam Stauffer and John Leatherman, October 13, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

Commission. One hundred and twelve delegates from forty nations assembled on July 5, 1947, at Ontario Ladies College.

In one of the keynote addresses, Henry P. Van Dusen stated that the younger national churches had to begin to manage their own affairs, make their own policies and bear their own distinctive witness in the world. According to Van Dusen, as soon as the new churches were firmly rooted in Christ, the leadership should pass from the missionaries to the local Christian leaders. In the concepts of partnership, the missionary then became a member of the new church and was subject to its direction and discipline. Since the sending church was economically stronger, there was nothing wrong with its giving money to the new church, but the receiving church had the final responsibility for the expenditure of those funds. The older church had the responsibility to identify with the leaders of the younger church and to understand the problems of the younger church from within as a partner. To accomplish this end, there had to be close contact between the two churches. Leaders in the young church were to be placed in positions of responsibility. They should also be afforded the opportunity to send deputations to the older church. Unlike the earlier concept of indigenous building, self-supporting institutions were not the immediate goal of "partners in obedience."



Instead, it was more important to assure that the institutions were Christian and did not become secularized since there was a close relationship between the institutions and the church which they served.<sup>27</sup>

The Research Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions released a report on August 31, 1950, which recommended that missions should merge with the national churches as soon as possible. Other recommendations included: the preparation of native leaders to assume responsibility for administering the churches and their programs as quickly as possible, national church control of all finances, missionary cooperation with and subservience to native leaders, and the avoidance of missionary paternalism. National churches would be considered those who had subsumed all mission programs.<sup>28</sup>

Between July 6 and July 20, 1952, an International Missionary Conference was held in Willingen, Germany, to study the "three-self" definition of indigenous church building. The theme of the conference was "The Missionary

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<sup>27</sup>Henry P. Van Dusen, "The Partnership," in Renewal and Advance, ed. by C. W. Ranson (London: Edinburg House Press, 1948), pp. 174-183.

<sup>28</sup>"Lessons to Be Learned from the Experiences of Christian Missions in China." A study made under the auspices of the Research Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions, Harold S. Matthews, Compiler, August 31, 1951, Salunga Archives, Division of Foreign Missions, Reports and Pamphlets, NCCCA, 1951 File.



Obligation of the Church." Orie O. Miller represented EMBMC.

All of the speakers suggested that the evolution of mature national churches meant that there would be no further need of foreign missions in those countries. American mission boards had to realize that they were dealing with national churches, not foreign missions. Hereafter, evangelism would be done in and through the national churches. Thus, the foreign missionaries would have to fulfill their vocations as the servants of national churches. The nationals declared that, instead of speaking about the mission, one should speak about the mission of the church.<sup>29</sup>

Orie Miller attended a convention of the Division of Foreign Missions in Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, in November 1953, which dealt with ways to strengthen the national churches against the threats of communism,

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<sup>29</sup>R. Pierce Beaver, "A Report on the Missionary Obligations of the Church," February 22, 1952, Salunga Archives, Papers from the International Missionary Council, Willingen, Germany, 1952; Reverend R. K. Orchard, "Notes on the Church and Its Social-Political Environment," Willingen Conference, 1952, Salunga Archives, International Missionary Council, Willingen, Germany, July 5-21, 1952 File; Reverend Dr. Rajah B. Manikam, "Younger Churches," Willingen Notes, No. 3, Salunga Archives, International Missionary Council, Willingen, Germany, July 5-21, 1952 File; Mr. L. Bruce Greaves, "The Church and Its Missionary Task," Willingen, Salunga Archives, International Missionary Council, Willingen, July 5-21, 1952 File.

nationalism, racialism, materialism and social tensions. The group concluded that national churches had to be administered by nationals who also must assume administrative responsibility for the mission programs as well. Furthermore, foreign missionaries had to be willing to identify with the local church.<sup>30</sup>

#### A Church Organization for TMC

As early as June 1948, the mission had discussed various kinds of church organizations, but it was not committed to any specific structure for the African church. Instead, the missionaries wanted one which was truly indigenous, but the home church expected the African church to adopt a conference system similar to that used in the Lancaster Conference Mennonite Church.

On January 11, 1958, Elam Stauffer sent Amos Horst, Secretary of FMC, an English translation of the proposed organization for the African church. The church was to be administered by the General Church Council, and the Church was further subdivided into District and Local Councils. Instead of abolishing the office of elder as suggested by the home church, the missionaries and the African churchmen decided to retain the office because it

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<sup>30</sup>Orie O. Miller Diary, the Buck Hill Falls Convention of the Division of Foreign Missions, Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, November 8-11, 1953, Salunga Archives, Division of Foreign Missions Correspondence, 1950-1962 File.



was firmly rooted in the present mission church. The plan did, however, endorse the Mennonite practice of the three-office ministry.<sup>31</sup>

When Orie Miller met with the missionaries in Mugango in July 1958, he informed them that their plan was unacceptable to the home boards. Orie said that the home boards expected to be involved in the preparation of the organizational plan because its structure had to conform to the faith and practices of the Mennonite church. He criticized their proposal because the organizational scheme looked more Anglican than Mennonite.<sup>32</sup>

The next step was for the Komitti Kuu to appoint a subcommittee to draft a statement of faith and practices, or polity, for TMC. The committee consisted of all of the African pastors and Elam Stauffer, Simeon Hurst and George Smoker. Amos Horst recommended that TMC adopt the Garden City (1921) statement of faith, as

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<sup>31</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Amos S. Horst, January 11, 1958, Salunga Archives, Foreign Missions Council Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. It was not until 1960 that the official name of the church became the Tanganyika Mennonite Church (TMC), but for the purpose of clarity in the narrative I have employed the term throughout this chapter.

<sup>32</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer and Simeon Hurst, January 31, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Conversation of the Executive Committee of the mission in Tanganyika with Orie O. Miller, Mugango, July 10, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



approved by the Mennonite General Conference. He also urged the abolition of the eldership and the changing of the name of the General Church Council to the General Church Conference. In spite of Horst's recommendations as an official of the Bishop Board, the subcommittee accepted the eighteen Articles of Faith of the Dortrecht Confession (1632) with some alterations to make it viable for TMC. On November 3, 1958, the Komitti Kuu officially adopted the Dortrecht Confession of Faith.<sup>33</sup>

In January 1959, an American deputation went to Tanganyika to discuss the statement of faith and organizational plan for TMC with the mission and the Africa church. If the deputation were satisfied with the documents, they would be presented at the annual meeting of EMBMC for approval. Orie Miller, Donald Lauver, and Ira Buckwalter were also there to participate in the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tanganyika mission.<sup>34</sup>

On January twenty-sixth, the Komitti Kuu and the American deputation accepted the proposed constitution

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<sup>33</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to FMC, November 3, 1958, Salunga Archives, Lancaster Conference Correspondence on Tanzania, 1957-1962 File; Letter, Amos S. Horst to Elam Stauffer and Simeon Hurst, October 26, 1958, Lancaster Conference Correspondence on Tanzania, 1957-1962 File.

<sup>34</sup>Letter, Orie O. Miller to Elam Stauffer, October 2, 1958, Salunga Archives, Deputation and Administrative Trips, Europe and Africa, 1959 File.

for TMC, and copies of it were distributed to the local church councils for their approval. One copy was given to the deputation for the home church's approval. Since there was the possibility that the African church might adopt the Garden City Confession instead of the Dortrecht Confession, the first part of the constitution was withheld for further study.<sup>35</sup>

On September 2, 1959, FMC recommended several changes to the proposed constitution. First, it suggested that the administrative body should be called the General Church Conference rather than the General Church Council. Second, the native pastors should be chosen from all of the qualified brethren within the church instead of choosing them solely from the ranks of the elders and the deacons. Third, the clause which stated that pastors and deacons had to be elders of the District Council should be eliminated, thereby placing the onus on the entire church membership. For the same reason, they recommended striking the line which said that the ordained were the only ones who could discern the will of God regarding the names of candidates for ordination.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Deputation Record, January 15-March 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Memo, Paul N. Kraybill to the Executive Committee, EMBMC and FMC, November 2, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>36</sup>Proposed Tanganyika Constitution with changes suggested by the Foreign Missions Council, September 2, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

On the fifth of October, George Smoker sent EMBMC a copy of the statement of faith, Part One of the constitution. He explained that it was essentially the Dortrecht Confession with a few items added from the Garden City Confession to cover items not included in the older Dortrecht statement.<sup>37</sup>

The home boards had expected the missionaries and the African leaders to go along with their desire to have TMC adopt the Garden City Confession. Paul Kraybill explained to George Smoker the decision taken in the field had been reached without first consulting the home boards. Furthermore, since the Mennonite Central Committee was working on a new confession of faith for the Mennonite church in the United States, Kraybill anticipated that the FMC would probably counsel the mission to use the Garden City Confession for the present.<sup>38</sup>

In spite of Kraybill's suggestions, George Smoker explained that the African leaders were not impressed with the Garden City Confession, but by adding a few items from it to the Dortrecht Confession the result was a statement of faith which truly expressed the faith of TMC. Smoker

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<sup>37</sup>Letter, George Smoker to Paul N. Kraybill, October 5, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>38</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to George Smoker, October 22, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

also reminded Kraybill that the home boards had told the African leaders that they were entirely free to write whatever kind of confession they desired. As a result, Smoker believed that there was reason for thanksgiving that the African leaders had decided to embrace the Dortrecht statement.<sup>39</sup>

In November 1959, FMC recommended some additional changes to the proposed constitution which would ensure conformity with the Mennonite position on close communion, nonconformity, and pacifism. FMC wanted the African Mennonites to practice close communion. They also wanted them to take a strong stand on nonconformity with things of this world, and sought the inclusion of a new section dealing with love and nonresistance since none of the Africans had applied for conscientious objector status during the war.<sup>40</sup>

On July 5, 1960, the home boards met in a joint session to discuss the wording in the proposed constitution. There were some at home who were still not ready to allow TMC to make its own decisions, but after a rather stormy session, the group agreed to allow the

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<sup>39</sup>Letter, George Smoker to Paul N. Kraybill, December 11, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>40</sup>Letter, Amos Horst to EMBMC and the Lancaster Conference Bishop Board, November 6, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

American deputation to work out the final wording with the Komitti Kuu in August rather than have the home boards write the constitution for TMC. According to Paul Kraybill, that decision marked one of the high points in the history of Lancaster Conference's overseas mission strategy and church development because it was at this point that the home church came to grips with the basic issue of whether or not they were going to tolerate a new overseas conference which had the authority to make its own decisions. From that point on, Kraybill said that for all intents and purposes the subsidiary clause in the FMC Polity was a dead issue. Of course, there were those who retained the conviction that TMC was a subsidiary until the Conference decided otherwise, but both EMBMC and the Tanganyika mission ignored the clause and treated TMC as an independent conference.<sup>41</sup>

On August twenty-fourth the General Church Conference met with the American deputation to discuss the constitution and the Articles of Faith for TMC. Several African leaders questioned the soundness of the statement of faith because it prohibited Christians from participating in government, especially since Tanganyika was on the verge of gaining its independence. They argued that their involvement in the various levels of government

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<sup>41</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, private interview, August 12, 1971.

would assure that a Christian viewpoint would receive consideration by the new governments. Elam Stauffer explained that Mennonites in the United States remained aloof of government service, but he believed that the African church should decide that matter for itself. Stauffer recommended the creation of a subcommittee to study the problem. The subcommittee was supposed to determine what kinds of employment would not conflict with the Mennonite position on the separation of church and state. It was then moved to vote on the adoption of the Articles of Faith, and without dissent the motion carried.<sup>42</sup>

More than a decade later Elam Stauffer commented on the African Mennonites' desire to participate in their government. Elam explained that it was easy for the missionary to say that he was against participation in government because he was not engaged in a struggle for political independence as the Tanganyikans were. In addition, political leaders in Tanganyika, especially those of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), pressured all adults to join the party and support the independence movement. Some of the church leaders purchased party membership but most did not. Frequently,

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<sup>42</sup>Minutes of the General Church Conference, Shirati, August 24-26, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



friends of the church leaders purchased membership cards for them so that they would not be persecuted. Elam said that those who asked if it were right to join the movement were told that they had to decide that for themselves. To do otherwise would have given the appearance that the mission favored the perpetuation of colonialism. The missionaries continued to advocate the peace principle, but they did encourage the African Christians to participate fully and freely in government positions not related to the military and to elect candidates that would represent the Christian viewpoint. As a result, some of the African Mennonites took positions in government service, especially in medical, educational and social service programs. Thus, the missionary was forced to face political implications regarding church and state which he would not have had to face at home.<sup>43</sup> Mahlon Hess agreed that nationalism affected the African church, particularly since some of the church members had to justify the presence of the American missionaries to their more nationalistically minded neighbors. Hess stated that some of the missionaries were afraid of nationalism, but slowly they learned to recognize its legitimate aspects and became less fearful.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

<sup>44</sup>Mahlon Hess, private interview, August 13, 1971.



Having adopted the Statement of Faith, the General Church Council and the American deputation carefully discussed each part of the constitution. Much time was spent on how delegates were to be selected to the church conference, the specific number of standing committees, pastor and deacon selection, the number of votes necessary for ordination, and the relationship that would exist between Lancaster Conference and TMC after TMC became a separate conference. At this point a motion was made to ratify the constitution; the motion passed. On September 27, 1960, the home boards approved the constitution and by-laws of TMC.

Once adopted, the constitution was supposed to be sent to the Tanganyikan government so that TMC could become incorporated and then legally take over the property owned by the mission. The constitution was not sent immediately because it became apparent that there were several deficiencies in the document, mostly due to the haste with which the constitution had been drafted. Shemaya Magati, a member of the Komitti Kuu and a school teacher, had attended a Youth Work Planning Conference in Singida, Tanganyika, and he brought back a copy of the constitution of the Lutheran church which had recently been adopted in Singida. After looking at that constitution, the General Church Council decided to amend its constitution before submitting it to the government. A

subcommittee consisting of Zedekea Kisare, Shemaya and Elam Stauffer was charged with making the necessary changes. The most important addition was the creation of a Finance Committee which would handle TMC's funds. The subcommittee also created nominating and offerings committees. The requirement that teachers serve on the Education Committee, and references in the constitution to catechumen cards and the baptism of the wives of polygamists were deleted. The changes were made in anticipation that the government might want them.<sup>45</sup>

The revised constitution was circulated among the district councils, and it was ratified at a special conference convened in Bukiroba on January 27, 1961. The constitution was then sent to the Dar es Salaam government.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Tanganyika Mennonite Church Conference, Mugango, November 22-23, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to FMC, December 4, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill, June 29, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Shemaya Magati, private interview, August 3, 1971.

<sup>46</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Paul N. Kraybill, January 30, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill, May 30, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



The Church in General

The mission realized that the only way to ensure the Bukiroba Bible School's survival was to Africanize the school. In July 1958, Don Jacobs presented the mission's long-range plan for the school. First, an integrated Board of Governors, created on June 6, 1958, would be responsible for hiring teachers, curriculum planning, and the school's budget. The board would have seven members, four African, one of whom served as chairman, and three missionaries, one of whom served as the school's principal. Second, the new board would report to the General Church Council, not the mission. Third, a two-year Bible College would be opened to teach such elementary seminary subjects as theology, doctrine, philosophy, church history since the Reformation, and English. Most of the twelve students enrolled annually would be selected from the ranks of the church leaders and church workers who had graduated from the Bible School; others would have to pass an entrance examination. Fourth, upon graduation from the college, the graduates would teach in the regular Bible School, which would continue its regular three-year program. Fifth, the college expected to open after Don Jacobs returned from overseas furlough in 1959. Sixth, the college staff would include Don Jacobs, two other missionaries and Pastor Zedekea who would serve as the College Chaplain. Seventh, EMBMC would provide an



annual subsidy between \$1000 and \$1500 for a period of from three to four years. Lastly, student fees and assistance from local churches would provide 25 percent of the operating costs while the remainder would come from the mission's annual budget.<sup>47</sup>

In keeping with its stated objectives of Africanizing its programs, the mission's Sunday School Committee was integrated and hereafter reported to the General Church Council.<sup>48</sup>

In November 1960, Pastor Hezekia was chosen to direct a youth fellowship program. All who were thirteen or over and unmarried were eligible to enroll. The pastor also directed the Sunday School program.<sup>49</sup>

Another program which was very important to the growth of the African church, but sorely neglected, was expansion and evangelism. It was apparent that the missionaries were too involved with station responsibilities

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<sup>47</sup>Bukiroba Bible School Planning, Nyabasi, July 21-25, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. This plan was approved by the home boards at a joint session in Salunga on March 23, 1959. The Bible College did not open until 1962 with Don Jacobs serving as principal, Dorothy Smoker dean, Zedekea Kisare college chaplain, and George Smoker, John Leatherman, Catharine Leatherman and Phebe Yoder involved in instruction.

<sup>48</sup>Report of the Sunday School Committee, Annual Mission Conference, Nyabasi, July 21-25, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>49</sup>TMC Conference, Mugango, November 22-25, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



to give adequate attention to that aspect of church building. From the outset, native Christians had been used in that work, but as the indigenous leaders became more involved in church administration, they too had little time for evangelism. As a result, the General Church Council created a Committee for Evangelism and Outreach which was to function as a mission board for TMC. The committee was expected to search out new places to carry the Gospel and to place qualified Christians in the new areas as they became available. The local church councils were to assume their financial support.<sup>50</sup>

#### Ordination of an African Bishop

Ordination of an African bishop was another concern of the mission in its Africanization of TMC. At a TMC conference convened in Mugango in November 1960, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the procedure to be used in the selection of an African bishop. Many doubted the wisdom of allowing the church to nominate candidates for the office because of strong tribal sentiments within the church which loomed large during the selection of native pastors. Some, therefore, favored the selection being made by the General Church Conference, but that

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<sup>50</sup>Tanganyika's Year of Jubilee, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

suggestion was also unacceptable because of the politicking which took place during the selection of committee members. Elam Stauffer counselled for a postponement. Elam described the two elements within TMC as one being the mature, careful, spiritually discerning element; the other as the young, ambitious element which wanted power and was influenced by tribal loyalties and personal interests.<sup>51</sup>

The ordained men of TMC met on July 6, 1961, to resume discussion of the procedure to be followed in the ordination of a native bishop. Everyone agreed that there had to be representation from the total church in the selection of a bishop. Heretofore, it had been anticipated that the thirty-nine delegates of the General Church Conference would select the bishop. The number of electors was now raised to 120, and the local pastors were supposed to select the additional electors. The entire slate of electors was supposed to meet in Bukiroba in November to discern whom God had revealed as bishop. The procedure adopted for the selection was basically the same as that employed for the pastor and deacon ordinations.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to FMC, December 4, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>52</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Donald Lauver, October 24, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File. "The church selected

Unprecedented rainfall caused the postponement of the November meeting, and, when the weather conditions did not improve, the Komitti Kuu indefinitely postponed the selection of an African bishop.<sup>53</sup> It was not until January 15, 1967, that Zedekea M. Kisare was installed as the first African bishop of TMC.

#### An African Deputation Visits the United States

When the General Church Conference of TMC met in January 1960, the group agreed that some African churchmen should visit the American church. The matter was taken up with the American deputation in August, and it was agreed that such a deputation could come to the United States for a visit of approximately three months. All expenses incurred were to be absorbed by Lancaster Conference. Since funds were limited, Paul Kraybill's suggestion that the delegation be limited to two churchmen was accepted by TMC.<sup>54</sup>

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120 delegates because the Book of Acts records that 120 people were in the upper room at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit first baptized the church," David W. Shenk, Menno-nite Safari, p. 129.

<sup>53</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill and Donald Lauver, November 21, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill and Donald Lauver, December 20, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>54</sup>General Church Conference, Morembe School, January 11-15, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Minutes of the General Church Conference, Shirati, August 24-26, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

A special conference was convened in Bukiroba on January 27, 1961, for the purpose of choosing the two church deputies. Pastor Zedekea Kisare and one of the teachers, Thomas Magire, were elected. Both the ordained missionaries and the African pastors had earlier recommended that the two deputies should be ordained men. But the African Mennonite Teachers Association, led by Nyerere, were successful in electing a teacher.<sup>55</sup> Sufficient pressure was exerted by several of the church leaders, and Thomas Magire withdrew in favor of a second ordained deputy. On March seventeenth Pastor Ezekiel was elected.<sup>56</sup>

The African deputation arrived in New York on July 15, 1961. Because of the heavy schedule of visits and the humid weather, several scheduled visits were cancelled, and a goodly number of additional requests were refused. During the visit, Simeon Hurst, James Shank and

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<sup>55</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to Paul N. Kraybill, January 30, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to FMC, February 2, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>56</sup>Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill, February 16, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, Elam Stauffer to Paul N. Kraybill, February 18, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, John E. Leatherman to Paul N. Kraybill, March 30, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

Levi Hurst served as translators for the visitors. Included in their itinerary was a visit to a black congregation in South Carolina which was supervised by an American black, James Harris. Kraybill suggested that a scheduled trip to Philadelphia and the zoo could be cancelled in order to give the visitors a brief rest, but Zedekea insisted on visiting the zoo when he was told that he would be able to see elephants. In downtown Philadelphia the two Africans were thrilled at seeing the big department stores, the tall buildings, escalators and the traffic.<sup>57</sup>

In Salunga on the seventh of August, the African deputation met with the Executive Committee of EMBMC and FMC. The agenda had been prepared by the African visitors. The two men expressed the concern of their constituency that the Mara Hills School, the Musoma Bookshop and the Musoma Alliance Secondary School had not been included in the integration plan. The deputation was assured that the Mara Hills School property would be transferred to TMC, but negotiations for the transfer of the secondary school had not been completed. As for the bookstore, they were told that it was impossible for it to be turned over to the church because of the arrangement

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<sup>57</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to John E. Leatherman and Elam Stauffer, August 1, 1961, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Deputation to America, 1961 File.

with the Mennonite Publishing Company. The delegation then had the opportunity to view first-hand how Lancaster Conference carried on its self-supporting ministry. Lastly, the Africans expressed a desire to send church members to America to learn trades as well as church leaders to learn about church administration.<sup>58</sup>

The two groups met again on the eleventh of September, at which time the two Africans expressed their desire that the partnership between Lancaster Conference and TMC continue. Zedekea urged the American church to send more workers, especially teachers for the Bukiroba Bible School. No action was taken on the various matters discussed, but the deputation was assured that they would be discussed again when an American deputation visited Tanganyika.<sup>59</sup>

The deputation returned to Tanganyika on the thirteenth of September, Zedekea told the people of North Mara about his visit, and Ezekiel did the same in South Mara.

#### African Education

Between 1958 and 1961, the two key issues in the educational program were how to accomplish partnership,

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<sup>58</sup>Joint Meeting of the Executive Committee of EMBMC and FMC with the Tanganyika Deputation, August 7, 1961, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., September 11, 1961, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

and how to proceed with sending African students to study in the United States.

In order to comply with the decision to turn the mission's educational program over to TMC, the mission's education committee was integrated. Hereafter, the committee consisted of the mission's educational personnel, the African school supervisor, one African teacher and three African church leaders. This action was considered inadequate by the Africans, so on January 11, 1960, the General Church Conference selected Phinehas Nyangoro as the new Assistant Education Secretary and Josia Mugando as his assistant. In November Phinehas would replace Mahlon Hess as the Education Secretary and Josia would become the Assistant Education Secretary.<sup>60</sup> But when the conference met on August twenty-fourth, the decision was made to Africanize the offices immediately.

The other important issue was the college education program for foreign students. By the end of 1956, EMBMC had agreed to sponsor students from its foreign

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<sup>60</sup>Tanganyika Annual Report, 1958, February 16, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; Letter, George Smoker to Paul N. Kraybill, September 15, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File; General Church Conference, Morembe School, January 11-15, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Minutes of the General Church Conference, Shirati, August 24-26, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

fields at Eastern Mennonite College (EMC) in Harrisonburg, Virginia. In September 1960, Paul Kraybill presented a Student Aid Plan to EMBMC which would bring Tanganyikans to EMC in September 1961. TMC would select the students on a basis of their experience in the church and their future commitment to work for TMC. In lieu of church experience, church loyalty and dependability were acceptable. A candidate had to have a secondary education, or satisfactory scores on the entrance examinations. Tuition, fees and living expenses were to be covered by grants from EMBMC and from the wages which the student earned while in school. The cost of the student's transportation was the responsibility of the student and/or his church.<sup>61</sup>

The first students from Tanganyika who qualified under the Student Aid Plan were Harun Maitarya and Julius Matinjo.

#### Medical Program

The most difficult issue faced by the American medical staff between 1958 and 1961 was the employment agreement (Mapatano ya Kazi) for African workers. The agreement had been adopted by the mission in 1957 in order to eliminate the arguments with the native workers

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<sup>61</sup>Report, Paul N. Kraybill to EMBMC, September 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



over wages paid by the mission, and to define the conditions of employment. Although no worker was required to sign the agreement, it served as the guideline for employer-employee relations.

In 1959 a serious rift occurred as a result of the wage scale. One male nurse and a local labor union leader tried to drive a wedge between the medical department and the African church. After the nurse was dismissed, the American deputation met with the Shirati hospital staff to see what could be done to settle the problem. The group decided that Dr. Harold Housman and Elder Johan would present both sides of the issue to the Komitti Kuu which was empowered to resolve the difficulties. At the same time, a decision was made to integrate the Medical Committee. Meanwhile, the Kuu created an advisory committee to thrash out the issues with the two sides and to report its recommendations to the Kuu at its March meeting.<sup>62</sup>

When the General Church Conference convened in January 1960, the report from the integrated Medical Committee indicated that the advisory committee had been able to eliminate much of the bitterness over the work agreement. Hereafter, the workers would not be

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<sup>62</sup>Deputation Record, January 15-March 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



compelled to sign the agreement as a condition of employment.<sup>63</sup>

The mission also realized that there was a great need to open a nursing school in order to prepare Africans for a larger role in the administration of the medical program. The government rejected the mission's plan in 1956, however, because all of the necessary buildings had not been constructed. In addition, Orie Miller maintained that an enlarged medical program would be out of proportion to the rest of the mission's programs.<sup>64</sup>

Since the nurses program was sorely needed, the mission was prepared to operate the school without asking EMBMC for additional staff, even though it would mean serious curtailment of services at the Mugango and Kisaka dispensaries. Orie Miller, therefore, informed the mission that EMBMC would provide \$15,109 for construction and equipment.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Report of the Hospital Committee to the General Church Conference, Morembe School, January 11-15, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book. It was stated in the report that some parts of the agreement were deleted, but nothing specific was cited.

<sup>64</sup>Letter, Simeon W. Hurst to Orie O. Miller, February 24, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>65</sup>Conversation of the Executive Committee of the Mennonite Mission of East Africa with Brother Orie O. Miller, Mugango, July 10, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.



In November 1958, the Director of Medical Services in Dar es Salaam, I. L. Rastable, told the mission that the number of available native nurses was approaching what he called a reasonable level, and the government therefore saw no need for the mission to construct a nursing school.<sup>66</sup>

In spite of Rastable's assessment of the situation, Paul Kraybill said that EMBMC agreed with the mission that there was a definite need for a nursing school in Shirati, and the mission should therefore proceed as planned.<sup>67</sup> The nursing school officially opened on January 7, 1960, with eight male and five female students.<sup>68</sup>

#### EMBMC-Mission Relations

After twenty-five years in Tanganyika very little had been accomplished in preparing African Christians to assume responsibility for the administration of the African church. In part that failure was due to EMBMC's

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<sup>66</sup>Letter, I. R. Rastable to Simeon W. Hurst, November 10, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>67</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to Simeon W. Hurst, December 22, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>68</sup>Letter, Alta Weaver to Ira J. Buckwalter, February 24, 1960, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

"three-self" theory of indigenous church building. It was also due to the fact that the older missionaries were of a generation which was suspicious of formal education as an intrusion upon the security and cohesiveness of the group and a threat to its distinctive principles, particularly the separation of church and state. The traditional Mennonite concept of the church was a group of disciples who shared equally the privileges of church membership, and whose leaders were selected from the group for nonprofessional, nonsalaried service. Preparing African Christians for administrative roles, therefore, violated the belief in a nonprofessional ministry. Thus, one could hardly expect the missionaries, who were not theological specialists, to do something which they were not equipped to do. As a result, the home boards needed to take a hard look at their recruiting policy and mission field strategy.

It was apparent that Lancaster Conference's approach to foreign mission work was proving ill-suited for the new Africa of the 1950's. The Eastern Board firmly believed in the Mennonite church's posture on the separation of church and state, and EMBMC therefore had a very simple goal for its mission work: to witness, to serve as a channel for the Holy Spirit, and to assist in the building of a Christian church. But the missionary now faced a new set of problems such as the emergence of

a national church, an extensive and thoroughgoing social revolution, the revival of ancient religions, the rise of nationalism, and the decline of western supremacy. Equally important was an awareness that the missionary needed to have an understanding and an appreciation of the foreign culture and its value system. Christianity would have to be presented in terms of the receiving culture. What this meant was that the Christian message remained unchanged, but the methods employed by the missionaries would have to change to be relevant to the new Africa.

There was a clear need to provide prospective missionaries with some kind of training before they were sent to a foreign field. According to Paul Kraybill, the missionary had to understand the tasks of the mission in light of the ultimate goal which was church building. The missionary had to be able to present the Christian truth without confusing it with a particular culture, yet it had to be meaningful to any culture. At the same time, the missionary had to be willing to serve as a partner, not as a master, in the national church.<sup>69</sup>

In October 1959, Paul Kraybill presented to EMBMC a review of overseas missionary personnel policies and procedures. Kraybill recommended that the board's policy

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<sup>69</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, "Pertinent Considerations Regarding Missionary Preparation," March 21, 1958, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

of recruiting nontheological specialists as missionaries should be continued. With the approach of nationalism and the growing complexities of social and economic structures he said the mission had to recruit better educated people. Kraybill, therefore, wanted the board to strengthen and increase its contacts with young people, particularly students, in order that early in their career thinking they would be challenged with a call to missionary service. He urged that such contacts should begin in the high schools. He likewise recommended that the board should have extended contacts with the school officials at EMC. Because EMBMC was criticized for sending inexperienced missionaries to foreign fields, Kraybill said that it was time for EMBMC to undertake an internship program for young people. He suggested that they be given a ministerial permit and be assigned to work under an experienced pastor in one of the local congregations.<sup>70</sup>

On September 20, 1960, EMBMC's Executive Committee recommended to the Bishop Board that they create an internship program, directed by the chairmen of EMBMC and FMC. An intern would serve a minimum of one year,

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<sup>70</sup>Paul Kraybill "A Review of Overseas Missionary Personnel Policies and Procedures," October 12, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.





and he was expected to support himself during the training period. EMBMC did, however, stand ready to give financial assistance if needed. On the twenty-seventh of September, the home boards officially approved the program.<sup>71</sup>

As Secretary of EMBMC, Paul Kraybill realized that the board needed better educated workers, but he was not sure just how much training they should have. EMBMC wanted to retain the concepts of discipleship, the simple life, and the nonprofessional approach to Christian service in the Mennonite church. Yet there was an awareness that the missionaries had to have skills useful to developing nations. Kraybill saw the need to find a harmonious balance between the two, so he encouraged EMC to maintain a good missionary emphasis in its total undergraduate program. At the same time, he said that they should develop a new graduate program which departed from the traditional theological disciplines, but still prepared graduates for a mission career.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Executive Committee Meeting, EMBMC, Salunga, September 20, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Joint Meeting, September 27, 1960, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>72</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, "Preparation for Missionary Service," Missionary Training Study Program, Salunga, December 14, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

EMC was anxious to participate in EMBMC's plan to better equip the missionary for foreign service. New courses in international studies and anthropology were introduced. EMC also prepared a new five-year program which combined courses in the methods of Bible study with general courses. In addition, EMC collaborated with EMBMC in the preparation of a seminar on missions which was to be offered in the summer of 1962.<sup>73</sup>

EMBMC wanted to understand the problems faced by missionaries in alien cultures so that they could prepare missionary candidates for the emotional adjustments they would have to make. Paul Kraybill worked out a plan with the psychologist and the administrator of Philhaven whereby the psychologist prepared a questionnaire for all furloughed and newly appointed workers. The psychologist then reviewed their responses and pointed out to the board those cases where further counseling was needed. At the mission's annual orientation program for missionaries, the psychiatrist and the psychologist from Philhaven participated.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Joint meeting of representatives of EMC and EMBMC, Salunga, May 4, 1961, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>74</sup>Executive Committee meeting, EMBMC, Salunga, February 17, 1961, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book; Paul N. Kraybill, private interview, August 12, 1971. Philhaven is a Mennonite-sponsored home in Lancaster County.

At the same time that EMBMC was trying to improve its mission program, it came under heavy criticism because of its program. One of the most critical attacks came from Dr. Fred Brenneman, missionary-doctor in Tanganyika between 1956 and 1958. Brenneman accused those missionaries who had participated in the East African Revival of being disloyal to the home church because they did not adhere to the discipline and teachings of the Mennonite church. Since they did not do so, the result was that the African Christians were not being taught to appreciate the faith of the Mennonite church. Brenneman maintained that this laxity was due to the missionaries' desire to accommodate African culture. He also accused the mission and the African Christian community of condoning contraception and the surgical sterilization of females.<sup>75</sup>

The home boards contacted Drs. Lester Eshleman and Merle Eshleman to find out if any sterilizations had been performed. The two sterilizations referred to in Brenneman's indictment had been performed by Lester, but only after the two doctors agreed that they were necessary

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<sup>75</sup>Letter, Fred and Millie Brenneman to the Executive Committee of EMBMC, FMC, the Examination Committee, the Executive Committee of the Tanganyika mission, and the missionaries on the field and on furlough, November 18, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

for health reasons. Both doctors stated emphatically that they did not condone the careless use of surgical or nonsurgical methods for the prevention of conception.<sup>76</sup>

Dr. Noah Mack agreed that, in those cases, further pregnancies would have endangered health of the individuals. Mack stated that the present circumstances required Christian physicians to give guidance in the area of planned parenthood, and he said that he found no place in the Scriptures where intelligent planning of families was prohibited. Mack believed that Christian couples should be instructed in contraceptive techniques, and then as two mature Christians they should determine the Lord's will for them in that matter.<sup>77</sup>

The home boards told Dr. Brenneman that they were under the impression that the missionaries were trying to relate themselves to the faith and practices of the Mennonite church. As for the sterilization matter, the attitude of the home boards was that the practice was not widespread. Consequently, the entire mission could not be held responsible for the actions of some individuals; instead of discussing the matters in public, the

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<sup>76</sup>Letter, J. Lester Eshleman and Merle W. Eshleman to FMC, July 20, 1959, Salunga Archives, Lancaster Conference Correspondence on Tanzania, 1957-1962 File.

<sup>77</sup>Letter, Noah K. Mack to Paul N. Kraybill, August 28, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

difficulties should be resolved when individual missionaries returned on furlough. Since the Brennemens were scheduled to return to the United States in the spring of 1959, the home boards wanted to discuss these matters with them personally.<sup>78</sup>

Dr. Brenneman was upset by the home boards' letter because it made his criticism look like a crank letter from a novice. He said that although he and his wife had been in Tanganyika for only two years, the scope of their experience was wide. He suggested that it might be a good idea for the Examining Committee to have each prospective candidate respond to certain questions to find out what the candidate's real convictions and commitments were.<sup>79</sup>

The Executive Committee of EMBMC, FMC and Elam Stauffer met with the Brennemens in September 1959. After the discussion, the two committees presented a statement of their findings. First, the revival meetings were attended by Mennonites as well as non-Mennonites, which accounted for the international flavor of the

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<sup>78</sup>Letter, Amos S. Horst, Raymond Charles and Paul Kraybill to Fred Brenneman, December 5, 1958, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

<sup>79</sup>Letter, Fred S. Brenneman to the Executive Committee, EMBMC, January 13, 1959, Salunga Archives, Tanganyika Official Correspondence, 1953-1962 File.

meetings, but were not an attempt to replace the church or to discuss doctrine. Second, the revival did help to improve the understanding and relationships between Africans and missionaries at a time when anti-white feelings were common. Third, the revival movement was also detrimental because it created factions within the mission. Fourth, participation in communion with non-Mennonites had gone farther than it should, but the new TMC constitution outlined an acceptable procedure for that matter. Fifth, the home boards were convinced that TMC had a clear testimony regarding the separation of church and state. Sixth, the home boards supported the opinion of the three doctors regarding the sterilizations. Lastly, the home boards appealed to the missionaries to give more attention to the teaching of Mennonite doctrine, to avoid the excesses of the revival movement, and to promote and encourage greater loyalty to Lancaster Conference and its interpretations of the Scriptures.<sup>80</sup>

EMBMC's troubles were not over; the ministerial board of the Lebanon District of Lancaster Conference accused EMBMC of allowing its missionaries to exaggerate cultural differences, which was leading to the loss of the distinctive witness of the Mennonite church. EMBMC

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<sup>80</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill to EMBMC and the Bishop Board, November 2, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

was also accused of allowing the missionaries to be too concerned with world cultures instead of turning to the Bible and to Mennonite practices for their model.

The Lebanon group feared that interdenominational collaboration would make it impossible for Lancaster Conference to maintain its true heritage. The interdenominational charge was levelled because of EMBMC's alleged membership in the World Council of Churches, the Tanganyika Interdenominational Fellowship and EMBMC's anticipated membership in the Good Shepherd Academy in Tanganyika. The Lebanon District also questioned the reappointment of missionaries who were not known to be in agreement with the Word as understood by the Mennonite church.<sup>81</sup>

Paul Kraybill and Amos Horst drafted an official reply to the Lebanon District. The group was told that EMBMC did not belong to the World Council of Churches or to the National Council of Churches, but that it did belong to the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches because that organization provided a mission board with official recognition which was required by some foreign governments. Furthermore, the Division of Foreign Missions could not and did not interfere with

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<sup>81</sup>Letter, Paul H. Ebersole, Secretary of the Lebanon County Official Board, to Paul N. Kraybill, July 30, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.



the doctrinal beliefs or practices of any of its member agencies. As to the concern about interdenominational fellowship, Horst and Kraybill assured Ebersole that the home boards intended to express a similar concern to the Tanganyika mission. In addition, relationships with non-Mennonites were being carefully spelled out in the new TMC constitution. The Lebanon group was further assured that it was not a practice to appoint any missionary who did not wholeheartedly assent to the teachings of Christ as interpreted by the Mennonite church, or who could not agree to the principles and objectives of the discipline of Lancaster Conference and consent to work in harmony with it.<sup>82</sup>

The unfavorable publicity which surrounded the Brenneman controversy and the inquiries of the Lebanon District caused EMBMC to develop a propaganda campaign to rekindle the spirit of mission in the Lancaster Conference constituency. Mission study courses were introduced in the conference, including the preparation of an African course which revised the present Africa Study Kit. A Missions Week was scheduled for December, and each church member was asked to contribute ten dollars. In November a special issue of the Newsletter outlined the

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<sup>82</sup>Letter, Paul N. Kraybill and Amos S. Horst to Paul H. Ebersole, November 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

board's programs and financial policies. Every family was encouraged to subscribe to the Missionary Messenger, the official organ of EMBMC.

#### Bishop Board-Mission Relations

In 1959, the Bishop Board was alarmed that EMBMC and, in particular, the missionaries had lost confidence in FMC. Too many of the missionaries were convinced that the standards of Lancaster Conference were not applicable to TMC. Therefore, a meeting was held in Salunga on August fourth to deal with the issue. Don Jacobs presented a paper on cross-culturation, Elam Stauffer discussed some of the problems faced by missionaries in Tanganyika, and Daniel Sensenig and Norman Hockman related some of the difficulties in working in Ethiopia and Honduras respectively.

As a trained sociologist, Don Jacobs analyzed the roles of the sending church, the missionary and the new church in giving expression to the Gospel in the culture of the new-born church. Jacobs argued that the new church had to be permitted to decide for itself the cultural implications of the Gospel because its people were the ones who were living the Gospel and spreading it among its own people. Jacobs believed that the indigenous Christian, rather than the missionary, was best equipped to sort out what was Gospel from what was culture.

Jacobs said that it was impossible to lay down a human blueprint to direct church building because only the Holy Spirit could do that. As for the sending church, Jacobs said that it should be ready to provide counsel, financial assistance and personnel to the new church. In the final analysis the important criterion for an indigenous church was not who controlled the finances, but that the church was responsible to God alone for all of its decisions.<sup>83</sup>

When the missionaries had finished their presentations, David N. Thomas, Secretary of the Bishop Board, offered some observations from his vantage point. Thomas called for a serious and careful examination of the so-called changing world. He said that the major concern was whether the change led God-ward or world-ward, and he wanted to know if the change was influenced by Bible study and prayer, or by the practices of others. He also wanted to know if the change would make the Christian more useful to the church. Thomas concluded by saying that he realized that it was difficult to maintain Scriptural principles in times of change, but he warned

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<sup>83</sup>Don Jacobs, "The Gospel in Different Cultures," presented at a special meeting of EMBMC and the Bishop Board, Salunga, August 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

that it was more difficult to regain those principles if they were ever lost.<sup>84</sup>

Donald Lauver, the Secretary of FMC, addressed himself to the application of Scriptural principles in foreign fields. Lauver questioned if the sending church had equipped its missionaries well enough with Bible teaching and the essence of Mennonite principles. He made five recommendations. All Mennonites should carefully study the Word. Every Mennonite should value the experiences of his heritage and tradition. The Bible should be taught as understood by the Mennonite faith. The study of Mennonite history should be encouraged. Each Mennonite had to acknowledge his responsibility to be involved in evangelism before God and the church.<sup>85</sup>

Bishop J. Paul Graybill, chairman of the Examining Committee remarked that his committee was interested in the influence which the missionaries had upon the home church, especially the young people. He believed that all missionaries should have the appropriate doctrinal viewpoints and attitude toward the Mennonite church, and

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<sup>84</sup>David N. Thomas, "Maintaining Scriptural Principles in Times of Change," presented at a special meeting of EMBMC and the Bishop Board, Salunga, August 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>85</sup>Donald Lauver response, August 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

they should concur with the discipline and doctrine of Lancaster Conference.<sup>86</sup>

Paul Kraybill analyzed the problem which existed between the Bishop Board and the missionaries. The difficulty, according to Kraybill, was that the missionary realized that certain practices were Scriptural while others were cultural, and both had different expressions in different cultural contexts. Kraybill said that the missionaries sensed that the principles of the Scriptures could be expressed in more than one cultural form. Meanwhile, FMC felt that it was losing its influence and that it was being ignored because it clung to an older idea that Lancaster Conference's expressions were not cultural but Scriptural. According to Kraybill, the divergence of opinion led many missionaries to ignore FMC and its statements. He further said that if it were not for the personality of a few members of FMC who were concerned enough to resolve the issue, FMC would have lost its influence completely.<sup>87</sup>

During the period of integration, 1958-1961, the home boards, the mission and the African leadership participated in the establishment of an indigenous church in

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<sup>86</sup>J. Paul Graybill response, August 4, 1959, Salunga Archives, Secretary's Official Minute Book.

<sup>87</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, private interview, August 12, 1971.

Tanganyika. To its credit, EMBMC realized that its field strategy needed to be relevant to the Africa of the 1950's. Yet the mission board was reluctant to relinquish all authority for the mission's programs to the African church. Since EMBMC provided most of the funds for those programs, the board concluded that it had the right to see that the funds were wisely dispersed. For its part, the Bishop Board steadfastly clung to the principle that because Lancaster Conference was the "sending" church, an indigenous national church had to conform to the faith and practices of the "sending" church. Fortunately there were enough members on the Bishop Board and EMBMC who understood that an indigenous church must be allowed to make its own decisions. Although the African church became a Mennonite church, the events also illustrate that the native leaders were actively involved in the drafting of the church constitution and the statement of faith, as well as the preparation of the mission's annual budget and its dispersal. The church leaders assumed responsibility for the administration of all of the mission's programs. Thus, TMC was truly an indigenous church since it was making its own decisions, but it was not until the period of integration that a policy of indigenous church building became a reality.

## CONCLUSION

### Part One: Policies

#### What Is an Indigenous Church?

EMBMC's adoption of the "three-self" concept of indigenous church building was relevant in the building of TMC only insofar as EMBMC insisted that the African church had to be self-supporting. There was nothing wrong with encouraging the African church to be self-supporting but it was wrong to think that a church could not be indigenous if it were not self-supporting. As a result, the self-support concept delayed the independence of TMC.

An indigenous church is one which lives according to the spirit and customs of the New Testament; it is a church which must be built on faith alone. Jesus Christ must build His church according to His pattern under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, an indigenous church is responsible to God for its decisions, not to any "sending" church. In order for a church to be indigenous it must be so from the outset, thereby becoming rooted in a traditional society, but not really part of the soil. Organizational matters must be left to the new

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converts, who cooperate with the Holy Spirit to determine the needs, the formal structure, and the operation of a truly indigenous church. Only the indigenous community is capable of deciding what is Gospel and what is culture.

For his part, the foreign missionary must cooperate with the new Christians in building an indigenous church; it is a partnership between the new church and the "sending" church. This is not to say that the infant Christian community cannot adopt the Mennonite faith, but the decision must come from the new church, not the "sending" church. If the new Christians decide the Mennonite faith is relevant to their conversion, then the adoption of the Mennonite faith becomes indigenous. Thus it is possible for the indigenous faith to be introduced from outside the community.

Lastly, an indigenous church is self-propagating because the Great Commission requires a church to inform others of its knowledge and understanding of Christianity.

#### The Indigenous Period of Mission, 1934-1958

According to both EMBMC and its workers, the mission was only the scaffolding for the indigenous church. The mission envisaged its responsibility as one of seeking out and instructing the future leaders ("church pillars") who would one day take over the administration of TMC.

Unfortunately, the home boards did not spell out in detail what they meant by indigenous building. As late as 1956, Paul Kraybill acknowledged that the mission's program in Tanganyika lacked direction and purpose. Each missionary, therefore, was left to pursue his phase of the mission's program according to his own understanding of the policy. The home boards had an obligation to issue a definitive explanation but did not. Although this was the case, the mission perceived that its goal was the establishment of a Christian church, and never allowed official policy to interfere with that goal.

The mission was hard pressed to comply with EMBMC's mandate that there was to be a minimum of institutional work, especially when it was faced with expanding educational and medical facilities. The situation was further complicated because there were too few missionaries and even fewer trained Africans. Eventually the mission realized that it was un-Christianlike to limit the amount of its institutional work.

Between 1934 and 1958, the mission attempted to indigenize its programs because Africanization was a cornerstone of mission effort. In October 1934, the mission opened a primary school to prepare Africans for employment in the future bush schools. On September 15, 1935, the mission-church was formally established with the baptism of fifteen Africans. That event was followed

by the convening of the first local Native Church Conference in April 1936. The village visitations were another way of involving African Christians and believers in spreading the Gospel to their own people. To assist in the administration of the church, a Native Church Council was created in 1938 in order to prepare the church for self-governance. Unfortunately, the Africans were given very little responsibility for the administration. For the first time, in 1940, separate mission and native conferences were held. In this way the mission expected to involve more natives in the church. But credit must also be given to the native elders who convinced the missionaries that they were too paternalistic. In spite of this overture, however, it was not until 1950 that the first native pastors were ordained. As early as 1943 Ray Wenger assigned natives to the supervision of out-schools and outstations in South Mara, and, with Wenger's unexpected death in 1945, the spiritual vacuum was filled to a considerable extent by the African leadership. In 1945 the General Church Council was created to administer the African church, with some African members on that council. A Joint Education Committee was set up in 1948. In December 1954, the integrated Komitti Kuu became the executive committee of the General Church Council. Then in 1957 missionaries and

natives were responsible for drafting the constitution and by-laws of TMC.

Although the mission indigenized its own programs, the philosophy of the "sending" church was an impediment to the indigenization of the African church. Under the auspices of Lancaster Conference, the missionaries were instructed to present a distinctive Mennonite witness, but that obligation conflicted with their perception of building an indigenous church. This paradox became more apparent to the missionaries as a result of the East African Revival. On the one hand, the missionaries wanted to deal with church issues in an African, not an American, context. Unconsciously, most of the missionaries were being acculturated.

The home boards, the Bishop Board in particular, believed that the "sending" church and the African church should be one. To this end, the Bishop Board tolerated no spiritual rebellion. This point is best illustrated by the creation of the Foreign Missions Council and the adoption of the Foreign Missions Polity. What seems to have been an intolerable attitude on the part of the Bishop Board is understandable, however, in light of the Mennonite vision that a church had to fulfill the Great Commission mandate.

Thus, we see that the missionaries worked to build a church which was truly indigenous while the home

boards wanted to build an indigenous church which was distinctively Mennonite.

Mission opposition to the position of the "sending" church resulted in the Bishop Board's insistence in 1952 that the African church had to have an organization plan similar to that of Lancaster Conference. In fact, it was not until 1960 that the "subsidiary" clause in the Foreign Missions Polity was finally ignored by the mission, in spite of the fact that many in Lancaster Conference refused to accept otherwise.

#### "Partners in Obedience," 1958-1961

If the "three-self" concept delayed the development of an indigenous church in Tanganyika, it can safely be said that the period of "partners in obedience" provided for indigenous involvement in the preparation of TMC. Thus, "partners" allowed TMC to become self-governing, and truly an indigenous church.

Between 1934 and 1958, the mission spawned paternalism which, in turn, caused the missionaries to retain the administrative reins of the African church too long. The adoption of the concept of "partners in obedience" led to the abolition of a separate mission and church. Hereafter, the missionaries became servants of TMC which now ran the various institutional programs. TMC had to take over the mission's programs to ensure

the end of the mission. Of course we cannot overlook the importance of the events which occurred in Tanganyika immediately after the war because those events caused the mission to alter its program radically.

## Part Two: Events in Tanganyika

### The East African Revival

As a result of the East African Revival, the development of TMC became a cooperative effort between mission and church leaders because the emphasis was on "us." African and American were brethren in Christ and that was all that was important. Prior to the revival, the missionary had not been critical enough of himself, and he openly asked the African to forgive his previous motives and attitudes. Revival was the true beginning of the spiritual indigenusness.

Unfortunately, the revival created a new kind of Christian community which incorporated very few of the traditional cultural ways. Yet much of this exclusion was decided upon by the Africans themselves. According to Paul Miller, many of those who considered themselves "saved" completely rejected their traditional culture as un-Christianlike. Thus, revival did not allow for the Christianization of the entire traditional life style, but only a small part of it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Paul M. Miller, Equipping for Ministry in East Africa (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1969), p. 43.

Revival caused the missionary to respond to the evangelical call, but it resulted as well in a serious disruption of station duties and responsibilities. It was no less a Christian duty to introduce western science and education as examples of Christian caring for those less fortunate.

It is also true that the revival caused many missionaries to question the soundness of transplanting their Mennonite faith and practices in Tanganyika, especially the practices and discipline of Lancaster Conference. Revival forced the missionaries to realize that mission emphasis should be upon spiritual issues, not the rightness of a particular faith or set of beliefs. The mission was only saying to the home boards that there seemed to be an overemphasis upon denominationalism which detracted from Jesus Christ Himself. The conflict was over the relevancy of Lancaster Conference discipline statements for TMC, not church doctrine.

Those who were involved in the Tanganyika mission usually expressed the positive effects of the revival. Paul Kraybill said that the revival was a breath of fresh air, freeing the missionaries from Mennonite legalism and giving them a new spirit of freedom, fellowship and a sharing expression. The missionary opened his eyes to the non-Mennonite Christians around him, and

revival thus became a tempering influence in Church-mission relations and intermission relations.<sup>2</sup>

### Education

In spite of EMBMC's policy that there was to be a minimum of institutional work, the mission was obliged to prepare the native Christians not only for their place in the African church, but also for a place in the new Tanganyika, and the educational program enabled the mission to widen its contacts with the scattered native communities. In addition to this, the independence movement made it impossible for the Mennonite mission not to get involved. On top of this, the natives clamored for more and better education, and when the government committed itself to a universal education plan, the mission either had to expand its educational program or abandon it altogether. Credit must also be given to the mission for realizing that a quality education was the only way to show God's love for the African people. Nevertheless, the most glaring deficiency in the mission's educational program was probably the slowness in preparing Africans to take over the administration of the program.

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<sup>2</sup>Paul N. Kraybill, private interview, August 12, 1971.



## Medicine

Credit must be given to the medical missionaries for questioning the home boards' decision to keep the medical program small. Yet they cannot be entirely absolved of any paternal guilt or feeling of superiority toward the natives. We are not arguing the fact that the African had to be better educated before he could begin medical training; it is rather a question of attitude or impressions which some American doctors and nurses conveyed to the natives.

Part Three: The Tanganyika Experience  
and Lancaster Conference

There is no doubt that the Tanganyika experience had a positive effect on Lancaster Conference because it increased the spiritual life of its members by giving them an opportunity to become personally involved in evangelism. This was because the Lancaster church had accepted the challenge of the Great Commission. In order to become the church of Christ, the Lancaster church became a witness to Christ through church extension, and each Christian had the responsibility to be a disciple.

The mission in Tanganyika served as an experiment as well as a prototype for further overseas work. For one thing, the church at home was now aware of the many problems confronted in overseas expansion, especially the

need to adjust to foreign cultures. Yet Elam Stauffer said that the idea that the home constituency could learn from others was not easy for the leaders of Lancaster Conference to accept.<sup>3</sup>

The Tanganyika experience also helped the home church to understand its Mennonite faith better; it was forced to differentiate between Scripture and culture.<sup>4</sup> According to John Leatherman, the ecumenical nature of the Tanganyika experience showed the missionaries and the home church that fellowship knew no denominational restrictions as fellowship was with God and not some outward organizational connection.<sup>5</sup> Thus, contacts with Christian and non-Christian neighbors in Tanganyika caused the missionaries and the home boards to study their own faith more carefully. In effect, Mennonite isolationism was dealt a severe blow because of its experience in Tanganyika.

Elam Stauffer pointed out the real significance for Lancaster Conference.

I wish . . . that in America we could have . . . a . . . stronger emphasis on the one body in Christ Jesus with less emphasis upon our differences and divisions. . . . This is why a lot of us

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<sup>3</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, June 22, 1971.

<sup>4</sup>Mahlon Hess, private interview, August 13, 1971.

<sup>5</sup>Letter, John E. Leatherman to the Bishop Board, n.d., Salunga Archives, John E. Leatherman File.

[missionaries] felt so happy in Africa. . . . We could emphasize and recognize that there is one body, one church, and while we are differing in some of our practices and some of our emphases we have this one goal: that Jesus Christ is the head and He has only one body. He doesn't have a lot of different bodies.<sup>6</sup>

#### Part Four: EMBMC Yesterday, 1934-1961

In light of the skeletal force employed by EMBMC between 1934 and 1958, EMBMC was unable to move faster than it did in the development and progress of its Tanganyika mission. Yet once EMBMC became aware of events in a newly emerging Africa in the post-war period, the board should have expanded its home operations in 1945 or 1946 rather than in 1953. After 1945 it was no longer a question of whether to expand the mission or not, because that decision had been made for EMBMC and the mission by the events which engulfed Tanganyika.

To the credit of EMBMC it must be said that the choice of the Stauffers and the Mosemanns to open the mission in Tanganyika was a good one because their rural backgrounds provided them with skills which enabled them to adjust relatively easily to the physical environment of Tanganyika. On the other hand, they were ill-prepared to adjust psychologically to the African culture because the pioneers came from a rural, parochial environment which did not prepare them for any kind of social

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<sup>6</sup>Elam Stauffer, private interview, May 28, 1971.

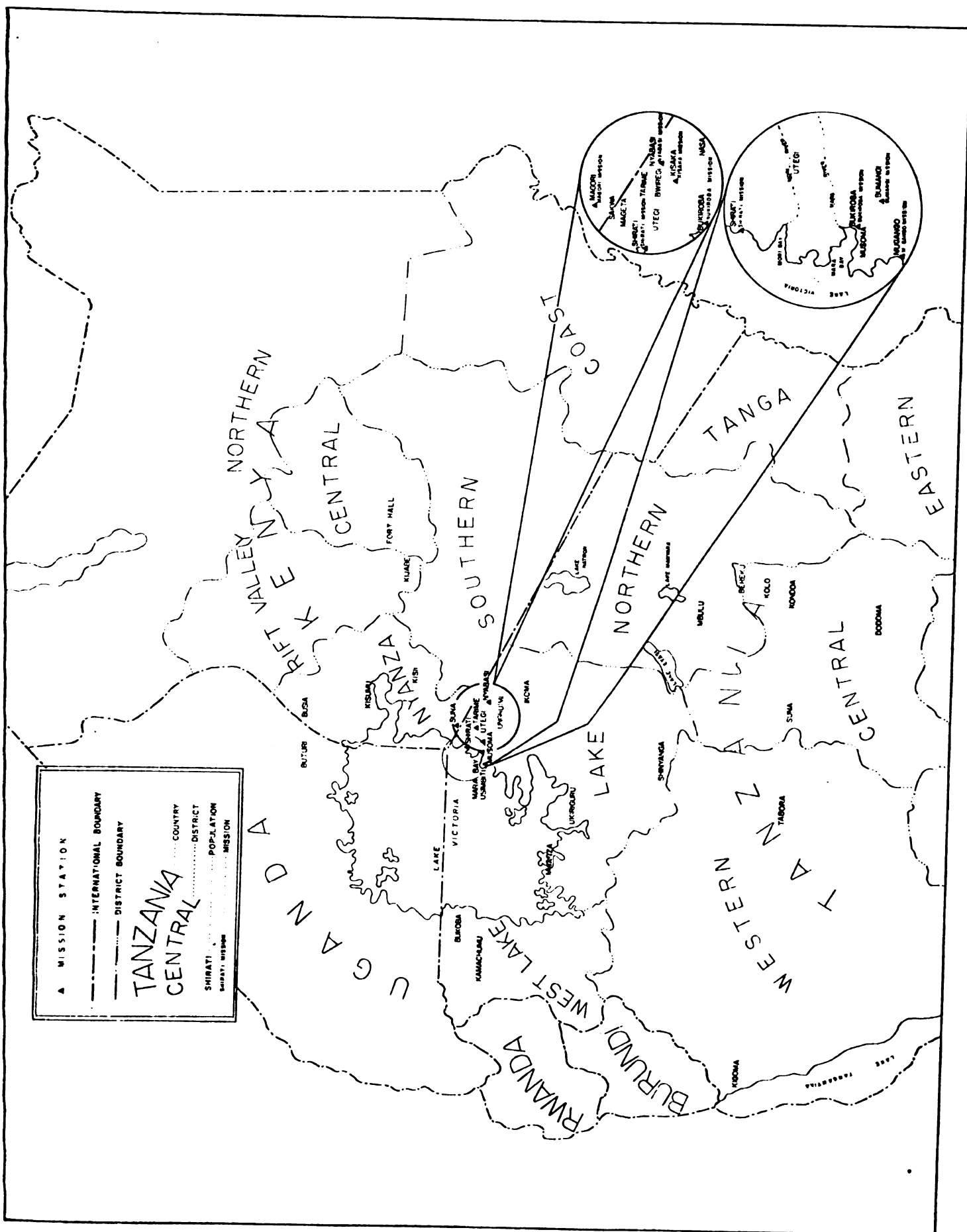
adjustment. No matter whom EMBMC would have sent in 1934 the results would have been the same. The early missionaries therefore ignored practically all of the indigenous culture as either unworthy or unadaptable to a Christian culture. That early failure was due to a flaw in the Mennonites. As a group they were slow to interact with non-Mennonites, and, for the most part, they have continued to be reluctant to do so. Therefore, as the Mennonite missionaries became acculturated, they prepared the home boards and the home constituency for acculturation, which in turn has made other foreign endeavors easier.

Faith is walking to the edge of all the light you have, and taking one more step.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Unknown.

## APPENDIX



## Location Map

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