

WORLD MISSION PRAYER LEAGUE  
628 ANDRUS BLDG.  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

February 1947

My dear fellow workers,

Many requests have come to us both from our missionaries and friends for some sort of monthly news circular or report of what is happening in the Mission. Many things cannot be reported in WORLD VISION but should somehow be made known to "ourselves" and our praying friends so that we can be in closer touch all through the ranks and unite in prayer about them. To try to meet this need in a small way we hope to set together the most important matters each month and circulate them "Just Among Ourselves". This will be the first letter. We hope that you will keep us supplied with fresh up-to-date information about yourselves and your work and that you will feel free to make any suggestions which will help to strengthen our fellowship in the furtherance of the Gospel.

By far the most momentous happening this year has been the change which our brother and leader John Carlsen has made. You know of course that he had been led to accept a call from the Evangelical Lutheran Church to be one of their evangelists. He began his new work on January 1st. He feels that this new call will give him far greater latitude for the work of evangelism and revival which lie close to his heart. He believes too that in this new capacity he will be able to serve the interests of the Mission in a way which has not been possible heretofore and in places which have not been open to us. We rejoice with him in his new work and pray God's richest blessings upon him and his ministry.

God has thus called aside into other service our two founders and leaders. Brother Weinhardt went to be with the Lord last fall and now brother Carlsen has left for a large ministry in evangelism. We thank God for these men. They struck out in faith in a day when other men clung timidly to the shore line, and they pioneered the way before us. ~~We have entered into their labors and are reaping where they have sowed.~~ Their courageous example and their fresh, unshackled vision have challenged us all. "Remember your leaders, those who spoke the Word of God to you; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith." Heb. 13:7

I am sure we have all felt that these changes have thrust us in a fresh way upon God. The Bolivia field has had to get along as well as possible without the guiding hand of steady leadership. And they have done magnificently well. They have pulled together and have patiently waited for God's way. It has been a great joy to hear of souls who have been saved at various places and of good progress in spreading the Gospel.

We have been looking earnestly to God to give us a man to take Rev. Weinhardt's place. Now it seems that God has given us the man. Rev. Arthur Gustafson (Augustana Synod) has made application to the Mission to go to Bolivia. He is a pastor at Newman Grove, Nebraska and has been a strong friend of the Mission from the beginning. The Mission Council has accepted him and his family and has appointed him to be the provisional leader of the field in Bolivia until the work on the field is unified under direct leadership and the field conference can elect its own leader. Just now he is making out his application for passport. This is quite a venture and undertaking for the Gustafsons with their large family of six children, and I know that we will all want to engage in much earnest prayer on their behalf. There will be the usual problems of gathering equipment, obtaining funds and passage for travelling, and a place to live upon arrival. But we know that God is able to see them through, and we are looking for the way to open before them.

The question was raised at a recent Council meeting as to how the Council and the Executive Committee could be relieved of having to meet so often to go over many detailed affairs. Most of the men on the Council have their hands more than full with their own callings. The pastors are on all kinds of committees and boards and too often the main business of the "Word of God and prayer" in their ministry is cut short.

Feb 1947

(2)

And so the suggestion was made that in place of calling the executive committee together so often a smaller committee composed of lay men could be formed to assist the General Director in caring for the details of the work and in making decisions. This suggestion was well received and a committee of three was appointed, Mr. Harry N. Anderson, Mr. Walter Klein, and Mr. Olof Tvedt. These are three lay men from the Council and they will assist the General Director in the same way that the Executive Committee has done this before.

At the annual meeting of the Mission last fall, Rev. Conrad struck a key note for the coming year by reading the well known passage in Isaiah, "Lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." It has been a feeling with us that we have been in grave danger of running ahead of the Lord in many of the plans which we have entertained. At the last Council meeting this was especially emphasized. There is a need for strengthening our stakes, consolidating our gains. Before we know it we may be out beyond our depth and be unable to swim. And so it was felt that we should take a firm hold of those things which the Lord has clearly given us to do and make strong our stakes. With this in mind the Council set itself to review our work and then make such adjustments as seemed to be necessary.

You have heard that Rev. M. H. Sand returned from Colombia with a vision to instigate an emigration movement of Christians to Latin America. He felt that the regular work of missions could be greatly supplemented by the help of non-professional Christian missionaries who would come in and settle on farms or in business places and make their own living in this way. We believe that this is a good vision and that there are many of our Christian people who would like to launch out in this way just as their fathers did a century ago. But it seems outside the scope of our commission as a Mission to sponsor such a movement. And so it was decided to release Rev. Sand from all connection with the Mission so that he could freely move around in the Church and among other missions to further the idea of such Christian emigration. As a Mission we will seek to keep alive the idea of non-professional missionary service in our meetings, but we shall leave it altogether to individuals themselves to work out the actual doing of it. This then brings to a close the activities of the Mission in Colombia. Virginia Antonson has joined the new field of the E.L.C. in Colombia and Adeline Tennes will carry on her school as a private project.

For a long while we have felt the need of having a handbook of principles and practices to cover the general work of our Mission. We lack that unifying factor and have felt keenly the lack of it when facing certain problems which arise. In a faith mission like ours it appears increasingly necessary and important that we adopt certain general policies of operation. Without any question one of the strong points of the China Inland Mission, for example, has been their careful and faithful adherence to the lines of their calling as clearly set down for all to see. You will be interested to know that a rough sketch has been drawn up for such a handbook and that the Council now has it under consideration. I suppose that after the Council has had an opportunity to work it over, it will then be sent to the fields for their consideration. It is still too rough to be sent out to all of you, but when it has been knocked around here first and cleaned of its rough edges then you will all get a copy to study and can make suggestions for its improvement.

We have been thinking of ways by which new candidates can be thoroughly taught in the vision, the work, and the policies of the Mission before they leave for the field. Experience has been showing the great importance of this. We have felt the need for a Mission Candidates Course in which such instruction can be given. No exact plans have been made yet but we are thinking of having such a course twice a year for six weeks. During this time all the candidates or prospective candidates will live at the Mission Home where the course will be given and will have much time for prayer, open forum, fellowship, and instruction. Perhaps in some cases more time will be needed. If so, a longer course can be arranged. This will have to be learned by experience.

Feb 1947  
(3)

For one thing we would like to be able to give a very thorough study of each of our fields to those who come. Some may not have their call clear and a close study of the fields may help them to see where it is that the Lord is calling them. In preparing this part of the course you folks on the field can be of big help. We will need all the information we can get. May I ask you to think and pray about this? Photographs of the town you live in, the house you live in, of some of the natives, and local scenes will be of immense value. A general sketch of the whole field,—stations occupied, stations unoccupied, possible new stations, etc. will be helpful. Tell just what you are doing. What property is owned by the mission, what is rented? What are the rents? What do you see to be the nature of the mission's commission in your field? What do you believe to be God's objective for you and the Mission on your field for the coming year? For the next five years? What are your chief obstacles? What new workers are needed? How many new workers can be fruitfully employed on your field? What kind of work would they be doing if they were to come to your field? These are just a few questions to lead your thinking.

We will look forward to getting whatever material you can send that will help us to give prospective candidates a gripping and clear vision of your field and work. Make it real and practical. We are looking for the Lord of the Harvest to send forth laborers into the work, and material like this will help to give them some direction.

This has been a recital of home affairs mostly. As we hear from you we will be able to reflect better the happenings of the fields in this circular. Our warmest love and fellowship goes out to each one in our widely scattered League. May the Lord be your strength and shield in everything.

Yours for Christ's Kingdom,

*Paul J. Lindell*

Paul J. Lindell, Director

PJL:DC