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The Beginnings of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana*: COURAGE TO GROW

Introduction

This is the story of people who were able to break through the hold of the past and open new horizons for the Latin American people. It is about a group of Latin American evangelical theologians active in theological production in and for Latin America during the 1970s. This theological development from Latin America became a turning point for the history of the church in the continent, and its influence has extended beyond its borders to affect evangelicals throughout the world. This is a story waiting to be told.

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A deathly shadow hovered over Latin America in the 1970s. An earthquake hit Peru in May 1970, killing about 67,000 people and leaving some 600,000 homeless. Two days before Christmas in 1972, Managua, Nicaragua was destroyed by an earthquake leaving 10,000 people dead and 300,000 homeless. Guatemala suffered a devastating hurricane in 1974 and a violent earthquake in February 1976 that claimed more than 25,000 lives and left 100,000 injured and one million people homeless. In the Dominican Republic the already wretched economy was further damaged by two hurricanes in 1979 that left more than 200,000 people homeless and caused more than $1 billion in damages.

This is the story of people who were able to break through the hold of the past and open new horizons for the Latin American people.

Politically, the 1970s was a decade of militarism and unrest. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay were ruled by repressive military-supported regimes at some time during the decade.[1] In 1977 the Argentine Commission for Human Rights in Geneva blamed the military regime in Argentina for 2,300 political murders, some 10,000 political arrests, and 20,000 to 30,000 disappearances. In Chile, no one is sure how many thousands were arrested, executed, tortured, or exiled, or how many languished in prison or simply "disappeared." Several thousand died during the ci-

[1] See Joseph Comblin, *The Church and the National Security State* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979); Joseph Comblin and Alberto Methol Ferré, *Dos Ensayos Sobre Seguridad Nacional* (Santiago de Chile: Arzobispado de Santiago Vicaría de la Solidaridad, 1979); Franz J. Hinkelammert, *Democracia y Totalitarismo* (San José, Costa Rica: DEI, 1987).

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vil wars in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua in the late 1970s. For example, it is estimated that in Nicaragua alone up to 50,000 died in the war to defeat Somoza.[2] Guerrilla activity plagued Colombia, Nicaragua, Peru, El Salvador, and Uruguay. Either by natural disasters, rulers, civil wars, or revolutions, Latin America became a continent of despair and grief.

Economically, Latin America entered the 1970s with many uncertainties and the experience of failed plans. The Central American Common Market, founded in 1961 by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, was rendered ineffective by such internal and regional conflicts as the war between El Salvador and Honduras. The Andean Common Market (1969) initially appeared to be very effective but had a short life because of noncooperation, legal entanglements, and the defection of Chile after the 1973 *coup d'état*. It was also clear by the early 1970s that not even the nearly $10 billion that the United States provided for projects connected with the Alliance for Progress brought any significant changes to the region's already wretched economies.

To this picture we could add the massive migrations to the cities, the wide economic chasm between the haves and the have-nots, the multi-billion dollar external debts, and the rising malnutrition and diseases among the poor. Orlando Costas summarized the situation of the continent in the early 1970s as dominated by "oppression and repression,

[2] Data compiled from Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, Catholic Church, *Iglesia y América Latina: Cifras* (Bogotá: CELAM, 1978); *World Update; Latin America, 1973* (New York: Friendship Press, 1973).

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imperialism and colonialism, starvation and poverty, power and powerlessness, frustration and despair."[3] The facts presented above define the general historical, political and social background for any study of the 1970s in Latin America. Latin Americans in this period yearned for peace, education, health care, decent jobs, and a better future for the next generations. But above all else, as we will explore in later chapters, they wanted autonomy. They had a strong desire to be the forgers of their own destiny.

"Evangelical" in the Latin American context has developed in the midst of confrontation and dialogue with Catholicism as well as interdialogue among several strands of Protestantism represented by the missionary enterprise. To be an "*evangélico*" in Latin America has meant to be a small minority, suspected and many times persecuted. *Evangélico* has meant usually a non-Catholic Latin American.

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Doctrinally, Latin American evangelicals have seen themselves as heirs of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.[4] In this sense Escobar defined "evangelical" as "fidelity to the Protestant doctrinal heritage."[5] Escobar listed the following

[3] Orlando Costas, "Evangelism and the Gospel of Salvation," *International Review of Mission,* 63, no. 249 (1974):25.

[4] Emilio Antonio Núñez, "Herederos de la Reforma," in *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80. Un Congreso Auspiciado Por la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (Lima: CLADE-II, 1979).

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characteristics as "evangelical": evangelistic passion, personal piety, puritan ethics, and the social dimension of the gospel. Latin American evangelicals emphasize personal conversion, assiduous reading of the Bible, separatist ethics, and active evangelism. As Escobar put it, "to be evangelical means doctrinal firmness, evangelistic passion, personal piety, a different lifestyle from the rest of the world, and also social conscience."[6] Salvadorean theologian Emilio Antonio Núñez characterized "evangelical theology" in Latin America as "Theocentric, Bibliocentric, Christocentric, and Pneumatological."[7]

The meaning of "evangelical" for Latin America comes from a different historical paradigm than the one in which the term is defined in the United States. The evangelical church in Latin America has not experienced first-hand the discussions with "social gospel," "liberal theologies," and other theological novelties like the church in the United States has. Therefore, US evangelical readers need to be aware that there are important contextual differences with their Latin American brethren, not in the basic doctrines but in the practical expression of the evangelical faith in Latin America.[8]

If there is one "fact" that people in the United States know about theology in Latin America it is that in the 1970s liberation theologies stirred up academic circles. The books

[5] Escobar, "¿Qué Significa Ser Evangélico Hoy?" in *Iglesia y Misión* 1, (March-June, 1982):16.
[6] Ibid., 18.
[7] Emilio Antonio Núñez, "Towards an Evangelical Latin American Theology," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 7 (1983):125-30.
[8] Two analyses of the situation are Pablo Deiros, *Protestantismo en América Latina: Ayer, Hoy y Mañana* (Nashville: Editorial Caribe, 1997); José Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, trans. Eugene L. Stockwell (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

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of liberation theologians were translated immediately into several languages while the authors went around the world presenting their findings.[9] However, the literature of those years fails to point out that simultaneously with liberation theologies there was a group of evangelical Latin American theologians also producing theology from Latin America. With few exceptions, historiography has either ignored or misrepresented them. As an example of omission, John H. Sinclair, in the two editions of his monumental bibliographical guide to Latin American studies, did not include any evangelical theologians or their works.[10]

A notable exception among evangelicals was the British scholar J. Andrew Kirk who characterized this group of Latin Americans as the "*avant garde* of the Evangelical churches." For Kirk,

> [Latin American evangelical theologians] had begun to search for a genuinely Latin American expression of the Christian faith (contextualisation). This undertaking springs from a basic conviction that the churches of which they are members to a large degree understand and propagate a gospel incrusted with foreign cultural elements. The concern for contextualisation shows a

[9] See Thomas J. Davis, ed., *Liberation Theology: A Bibliography Selected from the ATLA Religion Database* (Chicago: American Theologian Library Association, 1985); Ronald G. Musto, *Liberation Theologies: A Research Guide* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1991). For French and German sources see the bibliography at Eduardo Ibarra, *Christianisme en Amerique Latine. Bibliographie Internationale 1973-1974 Établie Par Ordineteur* (Strausbourg: Cerdic Publications, 1977); Hans Schöpfer, *Theologie der Gesellschaft: Interdiziplinäre Grundlagenbibliographie zur Einführung in der Befreiungs–und Polittheologische Problematik: 1960-1975* (Bern and Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1977).

[10] John H. Sinclair, *Protestantism in Latin America: A Bibliographical Guide*, 2nd ed. (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1976). The first edition was published in 1967.

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> growing theological maturity and independence, for all evangelistic and ecclesiastical formulae are submitted to the rigorous tests of their cultural identification and their biblical authenticity.[11]

Beatriz Melano Couch, Argentine theologian sympathetic with liberation theology, called this group of evangelical theologians "radical evangelicals" and warned in 1978 that to "ignore their contribution or simply dismiss them would be a lack of vision." Melano described this group as a kind of bridge between the conservative and the most radically engaged Protestants. Melano evaluated this evangelical theology as an alternative "more strictly related to the classical evangelical biblical theology, aimed at forming a critique of both capitalist and Marxist ideologies in the search for a missiology that would be relevant to Latin America's problems."[12]

However, despite Melano's warning it was not until years later that this group of evangelical theologians started to appear in the literature. In the mid 1980s, the Swiss historian Jean-Pierrre Bastian described them as "a biblical-conservative reformist sector of intellectuals" that intends to "develop a Latin American theological thought."[13] In 1990 David Stoll referred to this group as "distinctively Latin

[11] J. Andrew Kirk, "Theology under Re-Appraisal: A Latin American View," in *Today's Church and Today's World with a Special Focus on the Ministry of Bishops* (London: CIO Publishing, 1978), 147.

[12] Beatriz Melano Couch, "New Visions of the Church in Latin America: A Protestant View," in *The Emergent Gospel: Theology from the Underside of History. Papers from the Ecumenical Dialogue of Third World Theologians, Dar Es Salaam, August 5-12, 1976*, ed. Sergio Torres and Virginia Fabella (New York: Orbis Books, 1978), 213-14.

[13] Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina* (Mexico: Casa Unida de Publicaciones, 1986), 225, 231.

American as well as distinctively evangelical" theologians who "wanted to pursue social issues without abandoning evangelism, deal with oppressive structures without endorsing violence, and bring left-and right-wing Protestants back together again."[14]

Besides the exceptions mentioned above, evangelical scholarship in the United States has maintained a relative silence about the theological production by evangelicals in Hispanic Latin America in the 1970s. This study, then, is intended to partially fill that vacuum and to demonstrate that Latin American theology is much more than the liberationist version.

Latin American theology is much more than the liberationist version.

The significance of the 1970s as a turning point in the evangelical theology in Hispanic Latin America comes from the analysis of the events between two evangelical congresses, CLADE I and CLADE II.[15] CLADE I was held in Bogotá, Colombia, November 21-30, 1969. This congress was organized, sponsored, subsidized, and monitored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) as part of the follow-up program of the World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966.[16] CLADE II was held in Huampaní, Lima, Peru, from October 31 to November 8, 1979. This congress was planned, organized and carried out

[14] David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 131.

[15] CLADE: *Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización* (Latin American Congress of Evangelism).

[16] See Carl F. H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham, eds., *One Race, One Gospel, One Task. World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966. Official Reference Volumes: Papers and Reports*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967).

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completely by Latin Americans with significantly less foreign financial support.

This study starts with the mutual perceptions between Latin Americans and US Americans as the background for dialogue including theological interchange. The concentration turns then to several theological gatherings which sketch a history of the dealings between Latin American and US evangelical theologians. These congresses and theological meetings presented various factors that fostered the development of a Latin American theological production in the 1970s. The conclusion summarizes those factors that were found as crucial in this process of theological maturity in Latin America.

Chapter 1: Mutual Perceptions

The author well remembers Colombia's independence day of 1969, when, together with whole families from the neighborhood, crammed in a tiny living room, everyone watched on a black-and-white television the first step of a man on the moon. There were several expressions of admiration and awe toward the United States, the country that had brought the moon to our homes. Little did the author understand the situation. He was not aware of the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Cuban revolution, the failure of the Alliance for Progress, and many other historical events. It was not until high school that he started to hear that the relationship between the United States and Latin America was difficult, to say the least. Even though the reasons for the constant anti-Yankee sentiments and slogans were not evident, it was clear that there was unfriendliness between the "Eagle" and the Latin American countries.

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This chapter explores the mutual perceptions of US Americans and Latin Americans and how these perceptions have shaped the relationship between them. The contention is that historical and political dealings are the backdrop for religious exchange, including theological dialogue. The question to answer here is what were the underlying assumptions that influenced each sides' perceptions of the other. In spite of generalizations and isolated cases, these perceptions represent the state of the relationship between both sides in the 1960s and 1970s.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The United States' Perception of Latin America

Even though the "countries of Latin America (Brazil excepted) share with the United States the experience of being the oldest continuous republics of the contemporary world,"[17] the relationship between the United States and Latin America has been characterized by "resentment, mistrust, disrespect, and hostility."[18] Others describe it as a "crisis of the inter-American system,"[19] a "logjam,"[20] a

[17] Jonathan Hartlyn and Arturo Valenzuela, "Democracy in Latin America since 1930," in *Latin America since 1930: Economy, Society and Politics. Part 2: Politics and Society*, ed. Leslie Bethell, The Cambridge History of Latin America (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 159.

[18] Lawrence E. Harrison, *The Pan-American Dream. Do Latin America's Cultural Values Discourage True Partnership with the United States and Canada?* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 18.

[19] Edmund Gaspar, *United States-Latin America: A Special Relationship?* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978), 1.

[20] Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1998), 356.

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"failure,"[21] a "polarization of the Western Hemisphere,"[22] and "a chronically unpeaceful and disruptive centrifugal atmosphere in the Western Hemisphere community."[23]

There have been several explanations. Many analysts start pointing to the different colonial contexts—Anglo versus Iberian and, consequently, Protestant versus Catholic.[24] For some authors this difference has been underscored by the claim of Anglo-Saxon superiority.

> The historical origins of this bias lie in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when England, arguing its cause in a long-lived and bitter international rivalry with Spain, denounced Spaniards as naturally cruel, bigoted, and retarded socially, intellectually, and morally.... Spanish America inherited the bad reputation from their peninsular forefathers, and the widespread political instability and lack of social and economic progress that characterized large areas of Latin America in the nineteenth century seemed to confirm the reputation.[25]

Belief in Latin American inferiority "is the essential core of United States policy toward Latin America because it

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[21] Frank K. Flinn, "Liberation Theology and the Political Order in Latin America," in *Spirit Matters: The Worldwide Impact of Religion on Contemporary Politics*, ed. Richard L. Rubenstein (New York: Paragon House, 1987), 331.

[22] Gaspar, *United States-Latin America*, 4.

[23] Robert N. Burr, *Our Troubled Hemisphere: Perspectives on United States-Latin American Relations* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1967), 51.

[24] Harrison, *The Pan-American Dream*, 11; Howard J. Wiarda, *Finding Our Way? Toward Maturity in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1987), 182.

[25] Burr, *Our Troubled Hemisphere*, 49. See also the section "Spain and the United States" in Angel del Río, *The Clash and Attraction of Two Cultures: The Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon Worlds in America*, trans. James F. Shearer (Baton Rouge: Lousiana State UP, 1965), 3-76.

determines the precise steps the United States takes to protect its interests in the region."[26] For people in the United States, Latin America is "chaotic and devoid of all system … unstable, backward, less-developed, incompetent, and 'unsuccessful' historically."[27]

Another explanation is the lack of knowledge about Latin America and Latin American institutions in the United States. Most people of the United States do not know anything about the "individual national goals of Latin American nations, their special foreign policy objectives, their unique social conflicts and economic problems, their individual history, culture and leadership."[28]

Belief in Latin American inferiority "is the essential core of United States policy toward Latin America…"

Eugene Nida qualifies the view of Latin Americans by North Americans as "strangely contradictory: so passionate and yet so melancholic, so dedicated to the joys of life but so cynical about the chances for happiness; so much in love with life but so preoccupied with symbols of death; so colorful (in dress, fiesta, and politics) but so depressed in slums, poverty and revolution."[29] John Howard Orme, a seminary professor in Central America writes:

> Many people think of the Latin American as a fat little man with a big mustache asleep under his *sombrero*. Tourists visit the countries south of the border often because of the picturesque scenery and the quaint life as

[26] Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, xv.
[27] Wiarda, *Finding Our Way?*, 13.
[28] Burr, *Our Troubled Hemisphere*, 51.
[29] Eugene A. Nida, *Understanding Latin Americans with Special Reference to Religious Values and Movements* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1974), 4.

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> pictured in many books and magazines. They arrive eager to see and to photograph that little man asleep under his *sombrero*.
>
> To help erase this absurd misconception, a recently-released film on missions in Mexico is entitled, "The Little Man Who Isn't There." The stereotype of the little man under his big *sombrero* should be rejected for many reasons. For one thing, the little man is no longer asleep, and in many places, he is not even there.[30]

Long-held stereotypes, however, are not abandoned overnight. Change will come, therefore, when the people of the United States consider Latin Americans their equals. Yet, as Burr concludes,

> The failure of the people of the United States to attach any genuine value to most Latin American countries as nation-states tends ipso facto to nullify the concept of *community*. Present United States attitudes thus serve to encourage an *un*peaceful or at least highly restless *non*community toward whose blurred and undifferentiated components the United States cannot possibly develop an effective and realistic policy.[31]

Therefore, the predominant environment for the perception of Latin America and Latin Americans by the people of the United States has been ignorance and prejudice.

Another explanation for the difficult relationship between the northern neighbor and Latin America can be found in

[30] John Howard Orme, "The Doctrine of Social Concern in Latin American Theology: A Critical Appraisal of the Evangelical Position" (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975), 6.

[31] Burr, *Our Troubled Hemisphere*, 51. Italics in the original.

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political literature: the assumption that whatever is good for the United States also has to be good for other countries. Or said in a different way, the US people shake their heads asking why can Latin America not be like them? Since Latin America does not comply with the "American way of life," US Americans "perceive only the ills thereof, overlooking the good qualities."[32]

In summary, the perception history of Latin America and Latin Americans in the United States is the result of three core underlying issues: first, the concept of Anglo-Saxon superiority and consequently of Latin American inferiority; second, the lack of knowledge about Latin America and its people; and, third, the policy of expansionism and colonialism that has led the United States to an ambiguous and contradictory role in the political life of the Latin American nations.

Perception of the US in Latin America has had two sides sometimes expressed as "love-hate," "clash-attraction," or "admiration-fear."

Latin America's Perception of the United States

Perception of the US in Latin America has had two sides well expressed by Carlos Rangel as "Love-Hate,"[33] or, by Angel del Río, as "Clash-Attraction."[34] This could also be "admiration-fear," as the Mexican philosopher and historian Leopoldo Zea understands it. Zea proposes that the relation between both Americas has been characterized by distrust.[35]

[32] Gaspar, *United States-Latin America*, 13.
[33] Carlos Rangel, *The Latin Americans: Their Love-Hate Relationship with the United States*, trans. Ivan Kats (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977).
[34] del Río, *Clash and Attraction*.
[35] Leopoldo Zea, *América Como Consciencia* (México: UNAM, 1972), 85, 92.
[36] Nida, *Understanding Latin Americans*, 4.

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Eugene Nida writes that to "the average Latin American most North Americans seem to be predictably materialistic, banal, and 'flat'—as tasteless as a meal served in an automat."[36] The continuous military interventions by the US in Latin American countries have produced a "deep, bitter and almost omnipresent" resentment toward the United States.[37] The idea of being colonized by the United States is ubiquitous in Latin America. The feeling of being a colony translates in that "while the Latin American governments are bitterly antagonistic toward each other on a great number of issues, they display a surprising unity whenever a confrontation with the United States arises."[38] For William Taylor the cause is that US American diplomacy has not been guided by good-will ambassadors. "While the Latin Americans continued their love-hate relationship with the American way of life, the Northern world power was building up a debt of mistrust and antipathy that would be hard to pay off in the future."[39]

US Americans carried with them the dynamic ideology of "manifest destiny" wherever they went to evangelize.

For Latin Americans the United States is most often regarded as the source of their ills and problems. This

[37] John A. Crow, *The Epic of Latin America*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 694. See also Gaspar, *United States-Latin America*, 3; Seymour B. Liebman, *Exploring the Latin American Mind* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1976), 151.

[38] Gaspar, *United States-Latin America*, 4.

[39] Emilio Antonio Núñez and William David Taylor, *Crisis in Latin America* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 83. See also William David Taylor, "The Latin American World: A Personal Perspective," in *Evangelical Literature in the Latin World Consultation*, ed. Peter Savage (Pinebrook Conference Center, Stroudsburg, PA: David C. Cook Foundation and Partnership in Mission, 1975).

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perception has led the Latin American countries to suspect US advice and to look to Western Europe for advice and models to emulate.[40]

Mutual Perceptions in the Theological Dialogue

Ruben Lores, former president of the Latin America Biblical Seminary in San José, Costa Rica, presented the thesis that "the churches that directly or indirectly owe their origin to foreign missionary societies have received a body of attitudes, ethical stances, critical postures, economic ideas and sectional loyalties that are more substantially related to the ideology of 'manifest destiny' than to the Gospel of Christ." For Lores, "manifest destiny" combines politics and theology in a "dynamic ideology," which US Americans carried with them wherever they went to evangelize.[41] Consequently, the message "was being compromised by the conscious or unconscious legitimation of the political ambitions and exploitations of the colonial powers." Lores appealed to North Americans to be aware of the "ambiguities of their calling" since the "pervasive ideology of 'manifest destiny' had made them more the ambassadors of Anglo-Saxon Christianity and the American way of life than of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." For Lores, this has meant a "betrayal of the Lordship of Christ and of his Gospel."[42]

This intermixture of theology and politics was also expressed by the Argentine theologian and Methodist pastor José Míguez Bonino:

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[40] Wiarda, *Finding Our Way?*, 81.

[41] Lores defines ideology as a system of conceptual formulations, more or less coherent, which is intrinsically related to and becomes a program of action in a given historical situation. Ruben Lores, "Manifest Destiny and the Missionary Enterprise," *Study Encounter* 11, no. 1 (1975):1.

[42] Ibid., 8, 15.

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José Míguez Bonino

> Missions and missionaries came to Latin America as—conscious or unconscious—expressions and agents of a world view in which Protestant faith was integrated with a political philosophy (democracy in its American version), an economic system (free enterprise capitalism), a geopolitical/historical project (the United States as champion and center of a "new world" of progress and freedom), and an ideology (the liberal creed of progress, education, and science).[43]

Both Míguez and Lores start with the assumption that there is a close relationship between Latin American Protestantism and its counterpart in the United States. Míguez considers the close tie between both sides "basically harmful" since "Protestantism has helped to create a benevolent and idealized image of the colonial powers—mainly of the United States—which disguised the fact of their domination." The harm is due to the image Latin Americans perceived of the United States and consequently of Protestantism itself. This is the image of "a strong tradition of imperialistic domination, arbitrary interventions in the life of Latin American countries, abuse of economic power, [and] support of the most reactionary and inhuman forces in Latin American countries."[44] Puerto Rican missiologist Orlando Costas used similar terms even though he does not restrict his analysis to the United States but applies it to the whole Anglo-Saxon world.

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[43] José Míguez Bonino, "How Does United States Presence Help, Hinder or Compromise Christian Mission in Latin America?" *Review and Expositor* 74, no. 2 (1977):176. For a Catholic approach see Joseph Gremillion, *The Church and Culture since Vatican II: The Experience of North and Latin America* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1985).

[44] Míguez Bonino, "United States Presence," 178.

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Orlando Costas

> Evangelical Protestantism [in Latin America] represents a transplanted historical phenomenon which continues to maintain its links with (and theological dependence on) the Evangelical Movement of the Anglo-Saxon world, predominantly in its North American variant, through formal and informal institutions. This reality, however, does not abrogate the fact that traditional Evangelical characteristics have become such a fundamental part of the theology of a segment of Latin American Protestants that it is hard to deny it without also denying its existence. In other words, Evangelical Protestantism in Latin America is a sociological fact that cannot be denied. And since its historical roots and contemporary links are to be found in the Anglo-Saxon world, the theology of Latin American Evangelicalism must be seen in the light of its Anglo-Saxon progenitor and counterpart.[45]

The picture that emerges from these Latin American theologians and authors perhaps appears exaggerated especially to US American Christians. However, these are moderate positions. Costas and Míguez, for example, express gratitude to those who took the gospel to Latin America. Many others are far too biased to give a balanced perspective. The majority tendency is to blame the United States and its policies for all the maladies in the region. They do not recognize that probably some of those problems are of the making of the Latin Americans themselves.[46]

[45] Costas, *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology in Mainline Protestantism, 1969-1974* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1976), 41, note.
[46] This is the argument in Rangel, *The Latin Americans*, 56.

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In summary, the mutual perceptions between the Latin American nations and the United States have caused tensions in their relationship. Latin America distrusts the policies and intentions of the United States because of the history of unilateral military and economic interventions. The United States looks at its southern neighbors with superiority because of its own strong economy and war power. It deals with Latin America with suspicion and curiosity. These same perceptions are found in the theological dialogue in the 1970s when the "Cold War" mentality was the background for international relationships.

Chapter 2: The Two Congresses of 1969

Evangelical Christianity was rooted and growing steadily in the 1960s in Latin America. But it was experiencing strong growth pains. The movement was atomized into many dissident groups. A common theme in the literature of the period points to a strong polarization among Latin American evangelicals. Yet commentators did not agree about the causes of such fragmentation. Some used the terms "left" and "right" as if they had a unique universal meaning. Others used a more specific language of political polarization: a reformist or progressive group on one side and a group of conservative supporters of the *status quo* on the other.[47]

The sixties and seventies were intense Cold War years when not only the big powers from the West and the East felt its ripples. Communism and socialism became in the evangelical world the "unpardonable sins," the Antichrist, obnoxious diseases of apocalyptic proportions. Evangelicals in both North and South America developed strategic schemes to keep them out of the region and to exorcize

[47] Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo*, 216.

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them wherever even the faintest suspicion of their ugly presence was encountered. Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba (1959) gave a boost to this paranoia. The evangelical world became entrenched in a deadly fight for the souls of the Latin American churches. On one side were the "evangelicals," on the other, the "liberals."

World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin 1966

However, these simplistic categorizations did not do justice to the complex situation in Latin America. The terms helped those who used them to identify their supposed friends and foes. These blunt generalizations also confirmed the lack of knowledge US Americans had of the situations south of their border. Yet the fragmentation was real. The complexity of the theological and ecclesiastical landscape defied any easy classification.

Tercera Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana–CELA III

The origins of CELA go back to the Missionary Conference of Edinburgh, June 14-23, 1910, at which Latin America was not represented.[48] Consequently, Robert Speer (Presbyterian Missions U.S.A.), together with other missionaries, founded in March 12-13, 1913, the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA),[49] the sponsor organization for the Evangelical Conferences until 1961.

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[48] "[R]eflecting current opposition in certain quarters to Protestant missions in Roman Catholic countries." L. S. Albright, *The International Missionary Council: Its History, Functions, and Relationships* (New York and London: International Missionary Council, 1946), 8.

[49] CCLA, *Latin American Ferment: Addresses Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, at New York City, October 19-20, 1944* (New York: The Committee, 1949).

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CELA I was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 18-30, 1949.[50] Twelve years later (1961) CELA II met in Lima, Peru.[51] In the period between the first two CELA conferences, Protestantism in Latin America began to bifurcate. "On one hand an 'ecumenical Protestantism' close in its theology and ethos to the European ecumenism … On the other hand a more conservative Protestantism, linked to the new missionary forces and fueled by a strong evangelistic zeal—'evangelical Protestantism.' The 'ecumenical Protestantism' dominated theologically CELA II."[52] Ecumenical Protestantism was represented by ISAL.

Between the first two CELA conferences, Protestantism in Latin America began to bifurcate into "ecumenical Protestantism" and "evangelical Protestantism".

Three weeks before CELA II met, the First Latin American Consultation on Church and Society was held in Huampaní, outside of Lima, Peru (July 23-27). Out of it emerged the group *Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina* (ISAL).[53] ISAL came about as a response to the

[50] CELA-I, *El Cristianismo Evangélico en América Latina. Informes y Resoluciones de la Primera Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana, 18 al 30 de Julio de 1949, Buenos Aires, Argentina* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1949). See also "Protestants Confer in Latin America," *The Christian Century*, 3 August 1949.

[51] CELA-II, *Cristo la Esperanza para América Latina: Ponencias-Informes-Comentarios de la Segunda Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana, 20 de Julio a 6 de Agosto de 1961, Lima, Perú* (Buenos Aires: Confederación Evangélica del Río de la Plata, 1962).

[52] Escobar, *La fe evangélica y las teologías de la liberación* (El Paso: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 1987), 56.

[53] See ISAL, *Encuentro y Desafío: La Acción Cristiana Evangélica Latinoamericana Ante la Cambiante Situación Social, Política y Económica* (Montevideo: ISAL, 1961).

study the World Council of Churches (WCC) launched in 1957 to "find out and clarify what Christian responsibility is in the face of the rapid social, political, and economic changes taking place in Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[54]

In 1963 ISAL started to publish a journal, *Cristianismo y Sociedad*. The journal served as a platform where the "intellectuals of ISAL developed a Christian thought and articulated it to the social sciences in order to define Christian commitment."[55] A review of *Cristianismo y Sociedad* reveals the progressive radicalization of ISAL toward a Protestant theology that supported a violent revolution as the solution to Latin American's problems. For Luis Odell, ISAL's general secretary, social revolution is "the revolution of the church."[56]

ISAL also had an aggressive publishing program. Besides the journal already mentioned, from the time of its inception to the Piriápolis consultation in 1970, it printed six books[57] and a periodical letter, *Carta Latinoamericana*, with commentaries and news of ISAL's different activities. The coup d'état in Chile in 1973 marked the end of this movement[58] although its influence was paradigmatic for subsequent movements. Some liberation theologians were

[54] Luis L. Odell, "Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina," *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 1, no. 1 (1963):65. In another of its publications, ISAL traces its origins to the *Primer Congreso Latinoamericano de Juventud Evangélica*, February 1941, Lima, Peru. ISAL, "Un Intento de 'Encarnación,'" *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 5, no. 14 (1967):114.

[55] Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo*, 228.

[56] Luis L. Odell, *América Hoy: Acción de Dios y Responsabilidad del Hombre* (Montevideo: ISAL, 1966), 16.

[57] See ISAL, "Un Intento de 'Encarnación,'" 117.

[58] Núñez, *Liberation Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 76. For a more comprehensive account of ISAL's dispersion and reorganization, see Costas, *Theology of the Crossroads*, 210-222.

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inspired by ISAL's proposals and analyses.[59] From its beginning, ISAL provoked a serious evaluation and reevaluation of the understanding of the role of the church in the specific Latin American context.[60] Its program challenged those who were concerned about the difficult economic and social conditions in the continent but could not support ISAL's hermeneutics.[61]

For C. René Padilla, ISAL "represents, without any doubt, the first significant effort of theological reflection" in Latin America.[62] Pedro Arana, a Presbyterian theologian and pastor and a graduate of the Free College of Scotland, also recognized that ISAL deserves the merit of "having thought and worked on an important aspect of the Christian witness," that is, evangelical responsibilities toward society. "We should recognize that ISAL has awakened in many Christians a restlessness and responsibility for a social action and service in our continent."[63] However, both Padilla and Arana were critical of ISAL's conclusions even though both recognized the validity of its questions. The result of ISAL's deliberations, according to Padilla, was "a secularized Gospel the dominant notes of which coincide with notes of Marxist tone."[64] For Arana, in ISAL "everything is reduced to the

[59] See Escobar, *La fe evangélica*, ch. 4; Alan Neely, "Protestant Antecedents of the Latin American Theology of Liberation" (PhD diss., American University, 1977).

[60] For example, Julio de Santa Ana, *Protestantismo, Cultura y Sociedad: Problemas y Perspectivas de la Fe Evangélica en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1970).

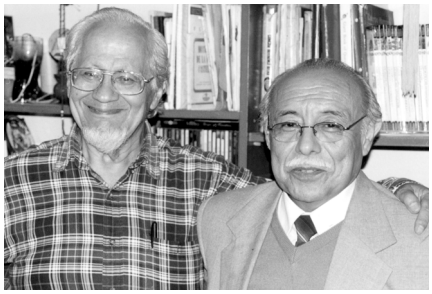
[61] See, for example, Pedro Arana Quiroz, *Providencia y Revolución* (out of print but available electronically, http://www.ministros.org/Estudios/vida_cristiana/quiroz/index_quiroz.htm).

[62] René Padilla, "La teología en Latinoamérica", *Boletín teológico* 2 (julio 1972):210.

[63] Arana Quiroz, *Providencia y Revolución*, 14.

[64] Núñez, *Liberation Theology*, 80.

horizontal dimension, everything is dissolved in a naturalism; consequently, the biblical witness is abandoned, a witness which speaks of a carnal person and a spiritual person, of common grace and efficacious grace, of a man in Adam and a man in Christ."[65]



C. René Padilla and Pedro Arana

CELA I and CELA II did not trigger the evangelical radar in North America. In contrast with the preceding conferences, however, the planning of CELA III did not go undetected.[66] Several alarm systems went off, followed by the immediate mobilization of all possible strategic means.[67] North Americans drew lines in a conflict that looked and felt foreign to Latin Americans. Two world powers were using Latin America as the theater where their followers competed. One was in North America: evangelicalism as represented by the Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Associates (EFMA), International Fellowship of Mission Associates (IFMA), and BGEA. The second was based in Europe: Geneva-style ecumenism.

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[65] Arana Quiroz, *Providencia y Revolución*, 70. For another evaluation of ISAL and its theology, see Orme, "The Doctrine of Social Concern", 46-62.

[66] For example, the occasional publication of the Evangelical Committee on Latin America (ECLA), *Pulse*, carried news about CELA III in almost every single issue since June 1967, as well as news on the WCC, ISAL, and UNELAM.

[67] For a sample of the articles related to CELA III, see Samuel Escobar, "Divided Protestantism Struggles with Latin America Problems," *World Vision Magazine*, November 1969; Carl McIntire, "Mensaje de la III Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana Promueve Destrucción del Cristianismo," *Christian Beacon (Special Spanish Edition)*, August 21, 1969; Paul S. Rees, "Far 'South of the Border,'" *World Vision Magazine*, October 1969; W. Dayton Roberts, "Latin American Protestants: Which Way Will They Go?" *Christianity Today*, October 10,1969; Wagner, "Who Killed the Congress?"

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For Puerto Rican Efraín Santiago, the reason that the church in Latin America was experiencing "one of the most tragic moments of its existence," was an intentional plan of the World Council of Churches "to infiltrate the churches with all kinds of social and political penetrations. In all cases, this is done by men and leaders with Communist tendencies."[68] Santiago did not mention how military regimes or natural disasters, extreme poverty or unemployment might have constituted larger tragedies. Could his silence have been a demonstration of no awareness of the social, political, economical, and other pauperizing situations in Latin America or was it due to other factors?

US Americans labeled CELA III as a "liberal" conference. Latin Americans found its orientation close to their evangelical identity.

CELA III was perceived differently by US Americans and Latin Americans. The former saw it as a threat, as a statement of hostility from the WCC. The latter found themselves represented in many ways by the emphases and themes it touched upon. For US Americans, CELA III produced concern and a readiness for battle. Latin Americans were prone to welcome some of its conclusions and proposed goals. US Americans labeled CELA III as a "liberal" conference. For example, Clyde W. Taylor (head of the EFMA for many years, later the president of CLADE I) identified CELA III as "the third Congress on Evangelism that the liberals plan."[69] Latin Americans found its orientation close to their evangelical identity. At least

[68] Letter from Efraín Santiago to Billy Graham, dated August 9, 1968.
[69] Letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Vergil Gerber, dated July 2, 1968. Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.

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on the surface, for Latin Americans, CELA III represented a local attempt to answer the relevant questions they had in their minds, questions that did not correspond to the US Americans' concerns. As Samuel Escobar said, "With René Padilla we had to agree that the versions of some North American conservatives about the ecumenical world were simplistic and sometimes intended for evil."[70] Even when there was disagreement with the conclusions of CELA III, Latin Americans saw their own problems, situations, and interests addressed and discussed at the conference. They saw their own people in charge. For Latin Americans, political differences did not matter too much. What mattered for them was that Latin Americans were in charge. US Americans, either because their Cold War mode of thinking or because of fear of the Social Gospel, found very little redeemable in CELA III.

Primer Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización—CLADE I

In an indirect way CELA III influenced CLADE I. CLADE's committee became even more cautious about whom to invite, either as speakers or participants, and whom not to invite. "We are not going to invite a few selected ones that we know are cooperating with the Communist forces, are extremely liberal in theology, or would in any other way be a complete detriment to the cause of evangelism were they to attend the Congress."[71]

[70] Samuel Escobar, "Heredero de la Reforma Radical" in René Padilla, *Hacia una teologia evangelica latinoamericana* (Miami: Caribe, 1984), 63.
[71] Letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Billy Graham, dated July 1, 1968. Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.

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The list of "undesirables," that is "either unsociable, trouble makers or associated or beneficiaries of World Council of Churches,"[72] was large, and consequently the correspondence on this matter, abundant. Everything was done to be sure none of these persons were present at CLADE I. The instructions on this regard were clear and specific. A case that shows how the machinery worked relates to the Methodist bishop Mortimer Arias. His name was originally part of the Bolivian delegation to Bogotá. However, it captured the immediate attention of the organizers. The Arias case was presented also to Clyde W. Taylor by C. Peter Wagner, who thought that "if he is not invited, it might cause an unhealthy reaction among some of the others who are invited, but I also would suggest, Clyde, that he not be given the leadership of any of the panels or discussion groups."[73] What were Arias's disqualifying points? He was "ecumenical."[74] For Taylor "this man is not our friend. In fact he is quite the opposite...he is not even an Evangelical."[75] In the end, Arias was unable to attend CLADE I, very much to Wagner's relief. For him this was "good news," a "very obvious answer to prayer since we really had no other resources except to ask God to put some obstacle in the way."[76] Obviously for Wagner, God was on the side of CLADE's committee.

[72] Letter from Harold E. Stacey (chairman for the Argentine Committee of CLADE I) to Clyde W. Taylor, dated July 7, 1969 (Confidential), Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.
[73] Letter from C. Peter Wagner to Clyde W. Taylor, dated April 15, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.
[74] Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 4, Folder 1
[75] Letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Efraín Santiago, dated May 20, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.
[76] Letter from C. Peter Wagner to Clyde W. Taylor, dated June 10, 1969, Ibid.

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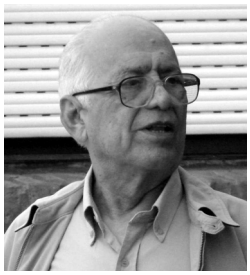
Emilio Antonio Núñez

Regarding the speakers chosen, two examples suffice: the speech on Catholicism and the one on evangelism and the Holy Spirit. For the first, the most obvious choice would have been Míguez Bonino. All the reports on CELA III, either friendly ones or reserved ones, agreed that Míguez's presentation on the topic was "superb."[77] It was a speech "which alone would have made the whole Conference worthwhile."[78] Yet, the executive committee decided on another person, Dr. Emilio Antonio Núñez.[79] The choice was impelled by information that Míguez was under "the influence of European theologians such as Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann."[80] This is not to say that Núñez was not fit for the task.

For the speech on evangelism and the Holy Spirit, CLADE's committee selected a non-Pentecostal, Miguel A. Morales.[81] It was not that they did not know any Pentecostals who would qualify. Several times the name of Rev. Juan Carlos Ortiz, from Argentina, was presented as the best possible speaker. "His fresh approach to his ministry is very

[77] This speech is found in José Míguez Bonino, "Nuestra Deuda para con la Comunidad Católica Romana," *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 8, no. 22 (1970).
[78] Hayward, *Third Latin American Evangelical Conference*, 4. Available at Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 3.
[79] Emilio Antonio Núñez, "Posición de la Iglesia Frente al 'Aggiornamento'," in *Acción en Cristo para un Continente en Crisis: Recopilación de Las Ponencias, Conferencias y Estudios Bíblicos del Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización, Bogotá, Colombia, Noviembre de 1969* (San José, Costa Rica: Caribe, 1969),
[80] Letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Efraín Santiago, dated April 3, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 4.
[81] Miguel A. Morales, "El Espíritu Santo en la Evangelización," in *Acción en Cristo Para un Continente en Crisis*.

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unique and God is using it. It is this type of preaching that we in the Evangelism Congress should be exposed to. I would like to hear an exposition of 'The Holy Spirit and Evangelism' given by a Pentecostal man like this rather than by a 'safe' fundamentalist."[82] More than one reaction was heard on the committee's choices of "safe speakers." For example, W. Dayton Roberts of LAM wrote,

> When at least two-thirds of the evangelicals in Latin America are of Pentecostal persuasion, how do you justify having a non-Pentecostal give the paper on Evangelization and the Holy Spirit? Obviously we are here opting for the "safe" approach. Again, the Right-wing syndrome shows in the selection of a speaker on the Church and Aggiornamento. I personally feel that all of us need a jolt in this area, and Dr. Míguez Bonino's paper at CELA III was eminently evangelical and objective—a veritable treasury of insights…. But despite Dr. MB's stature as possibly the No. 1 evangelical theologian in Latin America, he has been invited to Bogota only as an observer. I understand—presumably because of his ecumenical connections. To me this is muted dialogue—playing it safe—not trusting the Holy Spirit—being afraid of our brethren in Christ—insisting that we be of one mind *before* we get together rather than *in* the getting together.
>
> I want to be stimulated, alerted, shocked—if necessary—and challenged to throw myself into the Task. And to me this is much less likely to happen if we continue saying things to ourselves in the same old way and with the same old voices.[83]

[82] Memo from Jonás Gonzáles to C. Peter Wagner, dated July 31, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 4, Folder 3.

[83] Letter from W. Dayton Roberts to Vergil Gerber, dated October 28, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.

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Dayton Roberts

CLADE I was a "Made in America"[84] congress on Latin American soil that happened to be attended mostly by Latin Americans. Everything in the preparation, program, invitations, logistics, and finances was directed and managed from the United States.[85] There was a template from previous congresses the BGEA had sponsored in Canada (1967), Singapore (1968), and Nigeria (1968). Efraín Santiago, a respected public figure in Puerto Rico, proved to be a strong administrator for CLADE I. An ex-secretary of state of Puerto Rico, Carlos Lastra, became co-president of CLADE I. Santiago expressed his criteria for the participants: "I do not think we should invite any persons who have to do or have any position with the World Council of Churches or any person that is related with the Ecumenical Movement, especially those that have been playing the game with the Catholic church."[86]

Even though the executive committee had a Latin American majority, business was done the "American way." This is not to say there was something inherently wrong with such an approach. But that was the image CLADE I projected. The Congress was a US American Congress. It was "a meeting designed in the United States."[87] The committee knew it, although some of them had a hard time acknowledging it.[88] They were well aware of the indelible North American ethos of the Congress.

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[84]"Evangelism in Latin America," *Christianity Today*, 19 December 1969, 22.
[85]To see the correspondence before and after CLADE I see, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324."
[86]Ibid., Box 2, Folder 4.
[87]C. René Padilla, in an interview by the author, Wheaton, IL, March 7-8, 2003.
[88]See for example, Carlos Lastra, "Letter to the Editor," *Christianity Today*, January 16, 1970.

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C. René Padilla was invited to CLADE I but without any speaking responsibilities. For Padilla the foreign stamp of the Congress was clear.

> What surprised me the most was how the intention was to bring a pre-made package to Latin America so that Latin America would have an evangelistic strategy but without any real and effective participation of Latin American people … typical of the way in which work was done sometimes in the conservative sector.[89]

Padilla was not only talking about the Congress itself but also about the proposed thirty-year master plan that Carlos Lastra, co-president of CLADE I, presented the last night of the Congress. The plan was to "evangelize, to proclaim the word of the gospel, to convert the Latin American people to the gospel, to make disciples of the huge multitudes."[90] In his plan, Lastra also included the realization of sub-regional congresses, and he proposed that CLADE II should be held in six years.[91] Lastra's plan, however positive and inspiring, was soon forgotten. None of the subsequent congresses took place, except the one in the United Sates[92] (October 27-November 1, 1970, in San Antonio, Texas), and nobody assumed the responsibility for the second con-

[89] Padilla, interview

[90] Carlos Lastra, "Plan Para América Latina," in *Acción en Cristo Para un Continente en Crisis*, 72.

[91] Congresses for the Hispanic-American community in the United States in 1970; Mexico and Central America in 1971; the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) in 1972; Brazil in 1973; the Caribbean in 1974; the Bolivar republics (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela) in 1975; and CLADE II, possibly in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1976. C. Peter Wagner, "The Latin American Congress on Evangelism (Special Report to Theological News, WEF)," *Pulse* 5, no. 1 (1970):6

[92] See ECLA, "Ismael Amaya Evaluates CLADE/USA," *Pulse* 5, no. 6 (1970). Also, "Beware Revolution, CLADE Speaker Warns," *Christianity Today*, December 18 ,1970.

tinental convocation. The problem with this plan was that it "came from above. It did not come from the bases. It was an imposed plan without any consultation with the evangelical people of Latin America."[93] It was a "one-man, thirty-year plan."[94] The short life of Lastra's plan could be as well attributed to the fact that many of the countries had just finished or were in the midst of the intense program of EAF and found themselves, therefore, exhausted and penniless. Whatever the reasons, the fact is that Lastra's plan did not take root in Latin America as the organizers of CLADE I had envisioned.

The final declaration of CLADE I[95] did not include anything particularly Latin American. It could have been adopted by almost any country, anywhere. The exception was probably the comments on the "aggiornamento" in the Catholic Church and its effects on evangelism as understood by CLADE I. This lack of specificity did not, however, undermine the importance of the declaration. It encouraged a needed self-evaluation of the theology as well as the methodology of evangelism. "Our theology of evangelism determines our evangelistic action or the lack of it. We should evaluate the current methods of evangelization in light of the amazing growth of some denominations."[96]

The declaration had a timid paragraph dedicated to the social responsibilities of the church in a continent with "underdevelopment, injustice, hunger, violence and

[93] Padilla, interview.
[94] Letter from W. Dayton Roberts to Vergil Gerber, dated October 28, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 6.
[95] CLADE-I, *Acción en Cristo para un Continente en Crisis*, 134-135. An English version is found in ECLA, "The Evangelical Declaration of Bogota (Official Translation)," *Pulse* 5, no. 1 (1970).
[96] CLADE-I, *Acción en Cristo*, 134.

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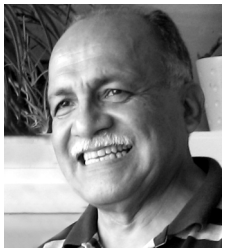
despair."[97] This reference to a socio-political reality, though short and general, was mostly due to the impressive reception to Samuel Escobar's speech on "The Social Responsibility of the Church,"[98] and to Escobar's subsequent participation in the redaction committee. Escobar's presentation "produced what was probably the strongest impact on the 900 delegates."[99] It was like a "bomb to those who have not given a thought to the task of reflecting upon the social implications of the Gospel and who preach only a gospel of individual salvation."[100] Even Escobar was "surprised at the massive reception" to his work.[101] To a North American delegate it was "one of the finest papers on the subject I have listened to or read anywhere."[102] C. Peter Wagner even recommended a worldwide circulation of Escobar's paper.[103]

It is disturbing to see that after CELA III and CLADE I most of the US American constituency of missionaries and missions personnel were still oblivious to the need for a clear emphasis on the social, political, and economic conditions in the region. They were so suspicious of CELA

[97] Ibid., 135.
[98] Ibid., 32-39. For a condensed English version, see Samuel Escobar, "The Social Responsibility of the Church," *Latin America Evangelist*, March-April 1970. The text was edited and published in English by the title "The Social Impact of the Gospel," as a chapter of Brian Griffiths, ed., *Is Revolution Change?* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972).
[99] "CLADE Surpasses Expectation," *Pulse* 4, no. 6 (1969):2.
[100] Emilio Antonio Núñez, "Testigo de un Nuevo Amanecer," in *Hacia Una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*, 107.
[101] Mariano Avila Arteaga, "Towards a Latin American Contextual Hermeneutics: The Contextual Hermeneutics of the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana." (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1996), 27.
[102] Letter from Vergil Gerber to Samuel Escobar, dated December 4, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.
[103] Wagner, "The Latin American Congress on Evangelism (Special Report to Theological News, WEF)," 3.


Samuel Escobar

III and its effects that not even an obvious evangelical presentation on the topic with its overwhelming response from Latin Americans caused any nascent awaReness of such need. If nothing else, the standing ovation to Escobar's presentation should have sparked a little interest to know how those conditions would affect any evangelistic effort. It was clear that the issues of politics and social involvement were the questions Latin American evangelicals were asking. But CLADE I and its organizers had another agenda, an agenda that was not open for changes. The subject was explicitly presented to them during the preparation for CLADE I.

> Should it be possible to recommend some issues to the different speakers in the program to touch upon, even if the references are quite incidental? But at least I feel that they should be touched upon—subjects like "The Structures of the Church and the Structures of Society," "Revolution and/or Violence," "Social Action," "Demographic Control," "Economic Development," "Sociological and Political Evolution."
>
> We all agree that these subjects may have nothing to do with the evangelization of our area; however, I am convinced that evangelism must be carried out in the contemporary context. And I wonder if the congress is not in danger of just saying over and over again the things that we have always said and which we know are safe to say and because it is unwilling to run the risk of saying something slightly different, and may very well get trapped into the position of gaining no new insight into its own mission and purpose.[104]

[104]Memo from Jonás Gonzáles to C. Peter Wagner, dated July 31, 1969, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 324," Box 2, Folder 3.

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The supposed general agreement is debatable, and the comment that those things were not related to evangelism is questionable, yet the boldness to suggest the topic is commendable. But it fell on deaf ears. As we have seen, this request was not alone in failing to get a hearing.

The FTL: the first fellowship of evangelical theologians in Latin America to exercise a continental impact and become a forum for indigenous theological production in the region.

Whatever permanent results CLADE I might have achieved, the only one that lasted beyond the closing night did not figure in Lastra's plan, nor was it envisioned in the tight agenda of the Congress. It was more like a by-product: the formation of the FTL, the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (Latin American Theological Fellowship. From its inception the *Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana* was known in English as the Latin American Theological Fraternity. As of 2006 the official title in English was changed to Latin American Theological Fellowship to better capture the spirit of the organization). Our next chapter will focus on the FTL and its importance. Here it is sufficient to mention that the FTL became the first fellowship of evangelical theologians in Latin America that would exercise a continental impact and would become a forum for indigenous theological production in the region. "CLADE I had helped a new generation of Latin American evangelicals to find each other, affirm their identity and agenda and commit themselves to their continent."[105]

[105]Valdir Steuernagel "The Theology of Mission in Its Relation to Social Responsibility Within the Lausanne Movement," (Chicago, 1988), 128.

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Summary

To summarize, there were two almost opposite views or perceptions of CLADE I. US Americans saw in it "the" answer for the evangelism of Latin America. They understood it as a counterattack to the efforts of the WCC in the region. For the majority of Latin Americans it was not *their* Congress. It was "Yankee." Perhaps with the exception of Escobar's speech, Latin Americans saw in the Congress just the repetition of what missionaries had been saying for a long time. For US Americans CLADE I was the normal follow up of a predetermined plan for the evangelization of the world. They were following the decision of the World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin '66. They were right on schedule. For Latin Americans it was just one more thing to do in the middle of the busy plans that EAF and CLADE—both foreign initiatives—had for them. They were not consulted, asked, or invited to dialogue about the relevance, timing, and program of such a gathering, nor the need for it. US Americans decided the biggest need in Latin America was to have more converted evangelicals. The US Americans were, from the standpoint of Latin Americans, way off the mark. Latin Americans were critical of this US American agenda because it did not at all touch on the oppressive social, political, and economic conditions in their countries. Themes like rural migration to the cities; unfair international trade; military and governmental repressions; political and intellectual persecution; lack of access to education, health, and decent shelter, among others, were intentionally absent from the program.

The locals went to CLADE I looking for clear directives on how to be faithful to the gospel and at the same time how to apply that gospel to the hard situations they were facing day after day. Many, undoubtedly, left unsatisfied with the answers given there. As Dayton Roberts puts it,

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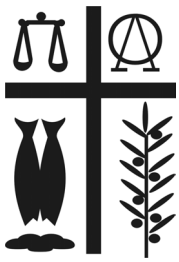
"They remained disillusioned by its social myopia and its theological shallowness."[106]



Chapter 3: The *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana*: FTL

A year after CLADE I, a meeting took place in Carachipampa, a rural community outside of Cochabamba, in the arable middle valleys of Bolivia. This meeting had wider repercussions and influence for evangelical theology in Latin America than the Congress on Evangelism in Bogota. This chapter presents the accounts of the founding of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (FTL).

Introduction

CLADE I stirred the theological ferment that was brewing in Latin America. Quite unintentionally, C. Peter Wagner's book on Latin American theology,[107] distributed at no cost to all the delegates in Bogota, stoked the agitation. Wagner described three distinct groups of Christians in Latin America: "the conservative evangelical Protestants, the conservative Catholics of the Establishment, and the radical left-wing group made of both Protestants and Catholics." The main argument of the book was that the last group, characterized by "secular theology and revolutionary politics,"[108] was outnumbering the evangelicals in theological production and scholarship. Wagner included brief presentations of several

[106]W. Dayton Roberts, "El Movimiento de Cooperación Evangélica: De San José 1948 a Bogotá 1969," *Pastoralia* 1, no. 2 (1978):47.

[107]C. Peter Wagner, *Teología Latinoamericana ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?* (Miami: Vida, 1969). The English version is C. Peter Wagner, *Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical? The Struggle for the Faith in a Young Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970).

[108]Wagner, *Latin American Theology*, 9.

Latin American writers from what he called the "radical left." However, when the time came to introduce the evangelical position, Wagner did not find "an evangelical leader who has entered into the dialogue of the day and said something significant about the relationship of the church to the contemporary world."[109] Consequently his presentation of the evangelical voice was short and sketchy. Wagner presented an apology for "Church Growth"[110] as the solution for Latin America.

The source of information for Wagner was John H. Sinclair's bibliographical guide to Latin America.[111] Since Sinclair did not include any theological work written by a Latin American evangelical, Wagner concluded that those writings "are virtually nonexistent."[112] Wagner should have done his homework more thoroughly. Sinclair's criteria in selecting the works he listed were "too Anglo-Saxon."[113] It was fair to say that there were few published theological books, but there were innumerable journal and magazine articles Wagner could have used.[114] Those articles constituted the platform from which Latin Americans presented their ideas to the public. To attribute lack of theology to the

[109]Ibid., 83.

[110]For a definition and presentation of Church Growth see Melvin L. Hodges, "Mission and Church Growth," in *The Church's Worldwide Mission: An Analysis of the Current State of Evangelical Missions, and a Strategy for Future Activity*, ed. Harold Lindsell (Waco, TX: World Books, 1966); Donald Anderson McGavran, ed., *Church Growth and Christian Mission* (New York and London: Harper and Row, 1965).

[111]Sinclair, *Protestantism in Latin America*.

[112]Wagner, *Latin American Theology*, 83.

[113]Samuel Escobar, "Protestantism in Latin America: A Bibliographical Guide—Review," *Pensamiento Cristiano* 15, no. 60 (1968).

[114]Widely known journals would have given Wagner a more comprehensive idea of what evangelicals had written: *Cuadernos Teológicos*, founded in 1950; *Pensamiento Cristiano*, 1953; and *Certeza*, 1959, among others. John Howard Orme also includes sermons as sources: Orme, "The Doctrine of Social Concern," 2.

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scarcity of books revealed a mediocre knowledge of Latin America.

Several reactions greeted Wagner's book. "While some people were exultant about the book and gathered around Wagner, others were uneasy and convinced that a response had to be given."[115] Escobar said the book caused "indignation in one sector and enthusiasm in another."[116] Orlando Costas felt "offended by the purpose, the content, and the methodology of the book."[117]

Padilla[118] commended Wagner for helping the evangelical community in Latin America to be on guard in front of "what could be considered the most significant 'ideologization' of the Christian faith ever produced in its midst." However, "it is difficult to accept the explanation for the superficiality manifested throughout the whole study." The book was not only superficial but misleading. Wagner was selective in what he used, and he left important information out. For example, Padilla noted "the grouping of José Míguez Bonino and Justo Gonzalez with the 'radical left' without considering the former's appeal for a theology of the 'Church and the World' that is faithful to the totality of the biblical witness, and the latter's warning against the dangers of 'ebionism.'"[119]

Padilla argued that Church Growth led to a "*numerolatry*" and to replace "making *disciples* by cheap evangelism."[120]

[115]Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission", 127.
[116]Samuel Escobar, "Del CLADE I al CLADE II: Evangélicos en Busca de Una Evangelización Contextual," *Pastoralia* 2, no. 3 (1979):25.
[117]Orlando Costas, "Teólogo en la Encrucijada," in *Hacia Una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*, 26.
[118]C. René Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?" *Pensamiento Cristiano* 17, no. 66 (1970). A reviewed English version appeared in C. René Padilla, "A Steep Climb Ahead for Theology in Latin America," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (1971).
[119]Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana," 134.
[120]Ibid., 135. Italics in the original.

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While Wagner saw in Church Growth the answer to the supposed poor Latin American theological production, for Padilla it was the culprit. It was precisely the insistence on the mission of the church as "numerical growth" that gave the impression that training theologians was not important. Padilla observed, "Such a concept of the mission does not come out of the biblical teaching. Rather it reflected a 'success' philosophy and a mind-set conditioned by a marketing culture." A disclaimer Padilla made was that for him Church Growth was different from the growth of the church, "the spontaneous expansion of the Christian community by God's power." For Padilla, the theory that Wagner presented for Latin Americans to adopt was "a new version of the ancient Constantinism."[121]

Padilla identified three results of Wagner's book. First, it brought out "the theological poverty and its incidence in the concept of mission we have as the church of Christ in Latin America." Second, Wagner had shown "the long way" to reach "integration between the gospel and a life involved in Christian discipleship." Third, the book had caused a return to the Bible and freedom from "the subtle idolatry—ecclesiasticism," that is, when the church takes the place that belongs only to Christ.[122]

Padilla was not a lonely voice in his critique. Mortimer Arias, a Methodist from Bolivia, recognized Wagner's achievement in producing "the first volume of its kind." Arias concluded that Wagner's criticism of the radical left shows the author's "own dualistic concept of the world."[123]

[121]Ibid., 136.
[122]Ibid., 139.
[123]Mortimer Arias, "Polemics and Restatement," *Christian Century*, June 2, 1971, 698-700.

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This dualism was, first, between the people who belong to God and the rest of the world, and second, between preaching the gospel (*kerygma*) and social action (*diaconia*), a dualism Arias did not support.

To the four reasons Wagner presented to explain the pitiful state of evangelical scholarly alternatives,[124] Arias added that "theological creativity needs theological freedom."

According to Arias, a Latin American theology can be "both-and"—"Radical and Evangelical."

> Can the fundamentalist mentality of some conservative evangelical circles provide that kind of freedom? When faith has already been defined once and for all, what alternative had the evangelical thinker other than the 'anti-Catholic' (antiecumenical, antisecular, antiradical, or any other anti-) polemics or restatements of the traditional evangelical corpus of "systematic theology" of which Wagner complains? Indeed what after all is Wagner's attempt but polemics and restatement? How, then, can anyone speak of a "Latin American theology"? I wonder if such a thing is desired or even dreamed of at the missionary headquarters against which this book is at least partially aimed.[125]

According to Arias, a Latin American theology can be "both-and"—"Radical and Evangelical." Latin Americans may be conservative in theology but they are not social conservatives. The "radical left" theologians were "trying

[124]The Bible-school orientation of many of the pioneers among the evangelical missionaries; the spirit of separatism in many of the early evangelical workers; a clear anti-intellectualism on the part of some; and an overriding sense of evangelistic imperative. Wagner, *Latin American Theology*, 81-83.
[125]Arias, "Polemics and Restatement," 699.

to develop a theology relevant for political action, even for 'revolution.' They want to act in the world—as Christians—out of the faith. This is the most Latin American element in their thinking—and it is their merit and their danger." The danger was not, as Wagner said, syncretism but theological reductionism. The main contribution of Wagner's book, for Arias, was not to [help] pastors as the book states, but to "help the 'radical left' to see itself from outside. Its people will not agree with Wagner, but they can learn from the confrontation with him."[126]

For Samuel Escobar, Wagner "simplified the ecclesiastical Latin American situation, intending to provoke a sharper polarization between 'ecumenicals' and 'conservatives,' outlining a theological 'evangelical position' that was embarrassingly poor and inadequate by comparison." Wagner, Escobar continued, twisted the facts by "using a criterion of ecclesiastical North American politics," and consequently "doing a selective and simplistic reading of the authors he studied." Escobar proposed that Wagner "polarized the evangelicals against the ecumenical organizations in Geneva." Wagner's analysis followed mainly a criterion "of institutional rivalry instead of serious theological basis."[127]

It is possible to sense in Padilla's, Arias's, and Escobar's reactions to Wagner's book a common feeling of frustration with the imposition of a foreign model for the evangelization of Latin America. However, the three authors did not disqualify Wagner's proposal just for being a foreign one. They avoided such reductionism in their analysis. Their criticisms had to do more with the ideological and

[126]Ibid.
[127]Samuel Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana: Breve Ensayo Histórico," *Boletín Teológico* 59/60 (1995):15-16.

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theological underpinnings of such a reading of the Latin American state of affairs. They did not disagree with Wagner's conclusion that Latin American evangelical theology needed a clear voice in the dialogue with *Iglesia y Sociedad* (ISAL). What they found unjust was Wagner's superficial reading of the efforts already made by some people, and they rejected his proposed solution.

Therefore, at CLADE I a growing conviction emerged that an immediate action was necessary on the part of the Latin Americans to address the challenges Wagner posed. Two strategies developed during CLADE I.[128] The first was to publish a book in response to Wagner that would do justice to the Latin American theological situation and to present "a more scholarly answer to ISAL."[129] The second was to hold a meeting of theologians that "on one hand would face up [to] the problems presented by ISAL without adopting their theological premises, and on the other hand would attempt not to fall into the 'closed' mentality of the ultrafundamentalists (their words)."[130] This was the embryonic stage for the FTL. It took one year for it to be born.

The Formation of the FTL

Participants of CLADE I knew they needed to pursue a common goal in order to present answers and alternatives

[128]These two strategies are found in a confidential memorandum by Peter Savage to Clyde W. Taylor, Vergil Gerber, C. P. Wagner, R. Sturtz, and E. L. Frizen, dated March 28, 1970, available at Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

[129]Letter from Peter Savage to Michael G. Smith (The National Liberty Foundation), dated June 24, 1970, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

[130]Peter Savage confidential memorandum, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

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that would encourage a Latin American evangelical theology. Like Escobar said, they were "tired of the evangelical centers of power in North America telling us how to think, who to read, and what it meant to be evangelical," and therefore, "we decided it was time to start reflecting the faith as grownups and on our own."[131] Escobar's words reflected graphically the process of maturation Latin Americans were experiencing.

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The gestation period for the FTL was not struggle-free. Several problems threatened its healthy formation, problems like exclusion of certain people, leadership tensions, and financial control. But underlying those problems was the basic difference between what North Americans and Latin Americans understood as priorities. Escobar expressed that difference saying that,

> There was a desire for unity and mutual help to hear with clarity the voice of the Holy Spirit for his people in Latin America. We did not feel represented by the theology made in North America and imposed through the seminaries and Bible institutes of the conservative evangelicals, whose programs and literature were a servile and repetitive translation forged in a situation completely alien to ours. We did not feel represented either by the elitist theology of the ecumenical Protestants, generally cast in European

[131]Escobar, "Heredero de la Reforma Radical," 64.

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> molds and distant of the evangelistic spirit and the fundamental convictions of the majority of evangelical churches of our American continent.[132]

The two groups that met during CLADE I[133] felt the need for creating a common forum for theological reflection but they had different agendas. This difference almost killed the initial momentum. Only after "intense negotiations" by Peter Savage an agreement was reached. Both Escobar and Padilla give Savage the credit for making the FTL possible.[134] The obstacles seemed unabated in number, insurmountable. Finally, after many trips across length and breadth of the continent, earnest conversations, and continuous correspondence, thirty men were invited to the meeting in Cochabamba, December 12-18, 1970. Escobar recalled,

> The innumerable hurdles that were necessary to surpass in that stage to get to the creation of the FTL were a faithful reflection of the ecclesiastical politics in Latin America. On one side, concessions had to be done and on the other side intransigence had to be pushed back. Any effort to associate a wide gamut of evangelicals demands an incredible capacity for negotiation.[135]

Already in CLADE I, some people wanted to leave C. René Padilla out of the FTL. According to Peter Savage, Escobar

[132]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 17.

[133]According to Escobar the first group included Plutarco Bonilla, Rubén Lores, Osvaldo Motessi, Orlando Costas, René Padilla, and José Camacho. The second group included Emilio Antonio Núñez, Héctor Espinoza, Ismael Amaya, Pedro Savage, Ricardo Sturz, and Peter Wagner. Ibid., 16. See also Savage, confidential memorandum at Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

[134]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 17; Padilla, "Interview by Author."

[135]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 17.

knew of this exclusion and consequently felt that it meant the whole process was "starting off on the wrong footing without him [Padilla]."[136] When asked about this, Padilla believed the main reason was the critique of the "missionary establishment" in his writings. However, since the organizers wanted Samuel Escobar at the meeting, and Escobar conditioned his participation by having Padilla there also, "they were forced to invite me. And they not only invited me, but they gave me the opportunity to present one of the main papers. And not only that, but they named me to the board of directors."[137] This episode was symptomatic. It was going to be much harder than it looked to break old molds brought by missionaries. Unity was only a longed ideal.

CLADE I had stirred the theological ferment that was brewing in Latin America.

A similar situation was the case of the "Costas group" from the *Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano* (SBL) of San Jose, Costa Rica. During the process of preparations for Cochabamba, one of the institutions that was contacted for funds was the National Liberty Foundation of Valley Forge Inc. (NLF). Its president, Michael G. Smith, suggested the inclusion in the yet-to-be FTL of several professors from the SBL. Savage answered in a four-page letter, trying to explain carefully why the participation of those professors from the SBL was not for the best interest of the development of a Latin American evangelical theology.[138] A group of those

[136]Savage, Confidential memorandum, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.
[137]Padilla, "Interview by Author."
[138]Letter from Peter Savage to Michael G. Smith, dated June 24, 1970, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

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already invited and participating in the FTL would have withdrawn in protest if the "Costas group" was in Cochabamba. In the end, none of the professors from the SBL were invited to Cochabamba. For Costas this amounted to a "lamentable absence," since it they were "an evangelical sector that at the time was a focus of evangelical reflection and which perhaps would have contributed with especial tones to the expression of the reached consensus."[139] Negotiations did not yield any reconciliation.

Costas attributed his exclusion to forces outside of Latin America that were imposed in order to "impede the presence of those of us who, according to them, represented a contestant voice in the midst of the evangelical movement."[140] This was the same impression of Juan Stam, who in that year was a professor at the SBL. For Stam the exclusion of the SBL from the FTL was due to "conditions imposed by those giving the money."[141]

Money was a big hurdle. Savage had to find supporters for such novelty of Latin Americans doing theology. His main job was to convince people and institutions of the "validity of an effort of this nature, and that they should not pretend to use their donations as means of intervention and imposition of any theological or extra-theological criteria."[142] The pressure of imposed conditions was real. For example, Clyde W. Taylor wrote,

> As you know, there is a considerable inclination toward Barthianism or neo-orthodoxy among some of our

[139]Escobar, "Del CLADE I al CLADE II," 28.
[140]Costas, "Teólogo en la Encrucijada," 25.
[141]Juan Stam, "Interview by Author," (San José, Costa Rica: 9 August, 2002).
[142]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 17.

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> evangelicals in Latin America. I really don't know where René Padilla and [Plutarco] Bonilla stand on this. Do you know where Samuel Escobar stands? Míguez Bonino is neo-orthodox. I think this is why we feel quite safe in having you and Pete Wagner involved in this movement to be sure that we did not allow those who would compromise the authority of Scripture in their whole theological concept. Frankly, I am not interested in helping to raise funds to get a group of theologians together who are going to condone neo-orthodoxy. I feel that that has two strikes against it: one, it's passe; and the other, it is not biblical. The latter of course is far more important.[143]

The point of consensus, the hub around which men from such diverse traditions built their theological fellowship, was the Bible.

Old customs of controlling are carried through. Even before the FTL started, the pressure for compliance to a North American theological agenda was attached to the funds. On one side there was the intention to let things be done the Latin American way. In spite of this laudable intention, supporters were suspicious of leaving the control and the operation completely in Latin American hands. There was not enough trust yet.

After these and other hurdles were cleared, when the time came, twenty-five arrived in Cochabamba for the meeting.[144] A dream started to come true. Twelve nationalities and nine denominations were represented by seminary professors,

[143]Letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Peter Savage, dated February 18, 1970, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 7, Folder 7.

[144]For a complete list of names and biographical information of all the participants see, Peter Savage, *Fraternidad de Teólogos Latinoamericanos* (Cochabamba: FTL, 1971).

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pastors, lay leaders, educators, evangelists, journal and magazine editors, writers, and others.

The point of consensus, the hub around which men from such diverse traditions built their theological fellowship, was the Bible. This center of discussion came out clearly in the book that contains the main papers presented.[145] Savage introduced the book as the testimony to "the first steps" of a Latin American evangelical theology. The desire of those involved in such theological production was "to listen to God's voice within the framework of the Ibero-American reality."[146]

At the inaugural address, Savage interpreted the occasion not as a break with the past and with the Anglo-Saxon theology and literature, but rather as the time for a "contribution born out of the profound reflection in the midst of our Latin lands." To guide the meeting, Savage defined three principles: "the ultimate authority of the Word of God as it is found in the Scriptures," the "right and duty of every Christian to interpret the Bible," and "an adequate hermeneutics of the Scriptures."[147]

However, as Padilla remembered,

> A main problem came when Peter Wagner had a document already prepared with a declaration made in Frankfurt about missionary work and what the third world had to do. He presented it translated and printed in paper with the name of the FTL, even before there was any FTL, as if it were the product of the FTL. He wanted to impose that document for us to sign. He wanted the FTL to adopt that declaration as its own. I

[145]Peter Savage, ed., *El Debate Contemporáneo Sobre la Biblia* (Barcelona: Ediciones Evangélicas Europeas, 1972).
[146]Savage, *El Debate Contemporáneo*, 9.
[147]Ibid., 13.

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> said it was a bad start. I was opposed to that. I said absolutely no. What does a declaration made in Germany have to do with this meeting? Here we are going to write our own declaration.[148]

From the beginning the FTL had to face the question of what Latin American evangelical theology would look like. What were the questions the FTL should ask? Where to find the agenda for a Latin American theology? What to do with external pressures? How to engage in a relevant theological dialogue when the pressure was toward polarization? Even after all the screening and compromising before Cochabamba, it was obvious that among the original participants there were serious differences.

For a Latin American theological production to be viable, they needed to evaluate critically the rich Anglo-Saxon heritage in order to keep whatever was permanent and to get rid of whatever was accessory.

Samuel Escobar proposed that for a Latin American theological production to be viable, Latin Americans needed to evaluate critically the rich Anglo-Saxon heritage in order to keep whatever was permanent and to get rid of whatever was accessory. He challenged his colleagues to "leave the ghetto and understand the current Latin American atmosphere with the questions it poses to our faith, its currents of thought, its challenges to the believer today." For this, Escobar defined seven immediate tasks for a theological renovation: revaluation of those redeemable

[148]Padilla, interview. For the Frankfurt Declaration see Alfred C. Krass, *Evangelizing Neopagan North America. The Word That Frees* (Scottdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1982), 179-186.

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Hispanic elements of the culture, a rediscovery of the Reformation, an atmosphere of maturity and freedom, fight against any blocks that respond to denominational or missionary interests, give a pastoral dimension to the theological production, understand the revolution, and recovery of hope.[149]

After the differences of opinion and disputes, the participants decided nonetheless to go ahead and form a *Fraternidad de Teólogos Latinoamericanos*. For Escobar, "it was evident that there was a fundamental basis of common convictions, a deep desire for communion, stimulation, and fellowship, as well as a need for organized cooperation in order to promote theological reflection and its pastoral application."[150] All of that camaraderie was much needed as a safeguard against the storm that came immediately after Cochabamba. And here again, C. Peter Wagner was in the very eye of the storm.

Wagner wrote an article for *Christianity Today*[151] on the meeting in Cochabamba. After a general description of the participants with their denominational affiliation and a historical review to set the meeting in context of other conclaves, Wagner, from the twelve papers presented, chose to comment on Padilla's. Wagner's chronicle of the event almost blew the newborn FTL out of existence. Among other things, Wagner said,

> In his position paper on authority, Padilla argued that insistence on an inerrant Bible means asking for

[149]Samuel Escobar, "El Contenido Bíblico y el Ropaje Anglosajón en la Teología Latinoamericana," in *El Debate Contemporáneo Sobre la Biblia*, ed. Peter Savage (Barcelona: Ediciones Evangélicas Europeas, 1972), 31-36.

[150]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 20.

[151]Wagner, "High Theology in the Andes," *Christianity Today*, 15 January 1971, 28-29.

> something unavailable–since no present edition or version is free from difficulties of transmission and/or translation. The result, said Padilla, is the danger of ending up with no Bible and no authority. Exaggerated insistence on inerrancy, he added, in effect saws off the limb that supports evangelical theology. Significantly, the word "inerrant" doesn't appear in the final declaration.[152]

Absent in Wagner's article are the decisions for the immediate future of the FTL, other aspects of the final declaration, and comments on the critical attitude of the participants against Church Growth. After the article was printed, Wagner had some explaining to do. The impression he left for his readers was that the only thing debated at Cochabamba was inerrancy, an impression far off the mark. And also, how was he going to explain the fact that his signature was on the final declaration? What was his actual position? Wagner should have been more careful with his choice of words. He should have been aware that "inerrancy" was a loaded word in the United States. It had a history of heated debates and theological warfare.[153] In fact, the mention of inerrancy retrieved in the memory of North Americans decades of conflict between different Christian factions. Inerrancy carried in itself a meaning for the North American readers of *Christianity Today*, a meaning through which they interpreted whatever happened in Cochabamba. By choosing that word, Wagner led them to a wrong

[152]Ibid., 29.

[153]See, for example Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976); J. I. Packer, *Beyond the Battle for the Bible* (Westchester, Ill.: Cornerstone Books, 1980); Ronald Youngblood, ed., *Evangelicals and Inerrancy: Selections from the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society (1954-1979)* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984).

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conclusion. At Cochabamba there were no North American theologians with North American categories discussing the topic; they were Latin Americans with another linguistic and theological history. While in North America the issue of inerrancy was a matter of life and death, in Latin America it was unheard of, it had been never an issue, it was not even a question.

Writing to another person and trying to clear up the confusion he created, Wagner explained that for him those like Padilla who hold a different position "have chosen an option which does not necessarily remove them from the category of being called evangelicals."[154]

> I heartily defend René's position as being a valid evangelical option while at the same time disagreeing with his unwillingness to apply the phrase "inerrant" to the Scriptures. This same tension was reflected when I sat my theological examination for admission to the faculty of Fuller Seminary. Some faculty members would agree with Padilla whereas others would agree with Kirk. All, however, are mutually esteemed as evangelicals here.[155]

However, the damage was done. After the article was printed, there was no way to stop the strong winds caused by immediate reactions from all corners of the theological spectrum, winds that the FTL had to withstand courageously. For example, the president of a well-known Christian college in the United States wrote,

[154]Letter from C. Peter Wagner to Clyde W. Taylor dated January 22, 1971, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1.
[155]Letter from C. Peter Wagner to C. Stacey Woods, dated April 21, 1971, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1.

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> The only thing high about "High Theology in the Andes" (January 15) is the location of the meeting. I believe you report some of the saddest news of 1970. When the reputed cream of evangelical theologians from a continent we have been led to believe is almost the private domain of conservative theology meets for the first time and capitulates to the "Inter-Varsity bloc" with its errant scripture, it is indeed sad news. Announcing that these theologians will "make theology ... for the Latin American church," and speaking of a "relevant theology-in-formation for our continent," one can almost hear the cries of "*gringo* theological imperialism" if anyone this side of the Rio Grande questions the theology put forth at Cochabamba. Nevertheless, this decision to get rid of the offending word "inerrant" clearly puts the signers on the far side of the continental divide in theology, where the only direction is down, increasing numbers of errors admitted and theology gradually deteriorating.[156]

Padilla's reaction came loud and clear. He wrote an extensive letter to the editors of the magazine where he explains why Wagner's article was misleading.

> 1) There was no such thing as an "Inter-Varsity block" at the Cochabamba theological conference, December 1970. Several of those who supported my position have nothing to do with the student movement I represent and at least one who is on the staff of this movement in Latin America lined up with those who opposed my view. Furthermore, those of us who attended the

[156]Letter from J. Robertson McQuilkin (President, Columbia Bible College, Columbia, South Carolina) to The Editors, *Christianity Today*, dated January 15, 1971, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1. Most of this letter appeared in J. Robertson McQuilkin, "High Theology Low," *Christianity Today*, 12 March 1971.

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conference did so on a personal basis, not as representatives of any particular organization or church.

2) The question of an inerrant Bible occupies but a fraction of my paper on the authority of Scripture (one and a half out of twenty-nine pages, to be exact). I find it difficult to understand why Wagner regards that point as representative of the whole paper and why he fails to make clear that my real objection was not to inerrancy *as such*, but to separating the Bible from the history of salvation, the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, in order to make inerrancy *the* basic issue on which the whole structure of bibliology should rest.

3) While supporting different opinions on the practical importance of insisting on the inerrancy of the Bible's original documents, Professor Andrew Kirk and I were in full agreement with regard to most of the issues raised during the conference, notably the question of the propositional or verbal aspect of revelation. Significantly, the article makes no mention of the united voice that Professor Kirk and I, with most of those attending the conference, raised against the exegetical acrobatics Peter Wagner engaged in for the purpose of providing a basis for his church growth theories.

With reference to Dr. J. Robertson McQuilkin's comments in his letter of January 15, may I say that my position coincides unreservedly with the statement on Holy Scripture formulated by the Westminster Divines in "The Confession of Faith" of 1647.[157]

Wagner considered the position that supports inerrancy a higher position than the one that "spread doubts about

[157]Letter from C. René Padilla to Harold Lindsell, dated February 9, 1971, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1.

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inerrancy." However, he wanted to say in the article (although he failed to do so) that there is room within evangelicalism for both views. For Wagner the wideness of views the FTL showed in Cochabamba was absent in most of the seminaries in the United States and in Latin America. He ended his letter thusly:

> If we had kept silent about what happened in Cochabamba, we would have not received that criticism, which is directed to all the members of the FTL since all of us signed the document. But, should we be ostriches? Are we not willing to take risks and to be open to being misunderstood and denounced if we consider we are pursuing a noble end? We believe we are, whatever comes our way. This mentality should characterize our relationships to those outside and our colleagues within the Fraternidad.[158]

Even though later, in another book, Wagner seemed to recognize the influence that the criticisms of Padilla, Escobar, and Arias had on his change of mind, his critical attitude continued.[159] As Escobar said, after Wagner returned to the United States, he "adopted an attitude of permanent hostility toward the FTL."[160]

Surprisingly, the FTL was able to continue after such a rocky start. For Escobar there were three elements that helped the FTL survive its first major crisis: a firm definition of the common evangelical foundation, intentional search for pertinence, and resistance of any polarization by extra-

[158]"*Carta Abierta a René Padilla*," Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1.
[159]C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), xii.
[160]Escobar, "La Fundación de la Fraternidad," 21.

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theological factors.[161] There was in the FTL a common rejection of any foreign paternalism.

Three elements helped the FTL survive its first major crisis: a firm definition of the common evangelical foundation, intentional search for pertinence, and resistance of any polarization by extra-theological factors.

The dust and debris from Wagner's article had definitely left a negative impression on financial supporters. Savage had to deal with pressures from US America regarding some members of the FTL. He wrote to Clyde W. Taylor,

> Following our discussion about Cecilio Arrastia and Alfonso Lloreda, I would be grateful if you can give me articles or statements from several close colleagues that I could use to block his [sic: their?] invitation into the Fraternity. As was mentioned, I am in difficult ground if I turn him [them?] down with limited proof. The third man you questioned was John Stam—What do you suggest we do here?[162]

Were the US Americans truly ready to leave the control in Latin American hands? If judged by the correspondence, we have to answer negatively. This came out clearly during the preparations for the consultation on the Kingdom of God, which was held in Lima, Peru, December 11-17, 1972.[163] The issue in question was a name that caused uneasiness and suspicion in the EFMA-IFMA circles: José Míguez

[161]Ibid.
[162]Letter from Peter Savage to Clyde W. Taylor, dated March 21, 1971, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 1.
[163]The papers of this consultation appeared in Padilla, *El Reino de Dios y América Latina* (El Paso: Casa Bautista, 1975).

Bonino. The executive committee of the FTL decided to invite him to present a paper in Lima. The supporters threatened to withdraw the finances if Míguez were invited.[164] The power struggle was on.

The intermediary between the executive committee and the supporters was Peter Savage, who stood, in his own words, "in the unenviable position of not being able to directly control 'the happenings' of each regional gathering and yet must receive the knocks for it. In spite of this through correspondence I am trying to maintain the Fraternity on an even keel."[165] And that was quite a job! It was like trying to stop an eagle in midair. Escobar, Padilla, Núñez, Arana, and the others were not easy to cage. They were like birds who enjoy flying freely. What they proposed was openness to invite "many key non-conservative scholars to our gathering so as to hear firsthand their thinking." They were not naive. They knew, personally, the theological pressures from the left. They all were present at CELA III, and some of them had already written on the topic. However, as Padilla remembered, after Savage told the executive committee about the conditions for financial support, they met and decided that "you are not going to tell us who to invite and who not to invite. This is the FTL [emphasis on the L]. If you want to help us, we are thankful for that. We need the money, but we do not accept any conditions attached. We maintain the invitation to Míguez Bonino."[166] In his diplomatic role, Savage asked the supporters, "Do

[164]See the letter from Clyde W. Taylor to Peter Savage, dated January 6, 1972, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 2.
[165]Letter from Peter Savage to Clyde W. Taylor, dated January 27, 1972, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 2.
[166]Padilla, interview.

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you feel that we would do untold damage if we had one or two of these men present?"[167]

In the end, Míguez Bonino was unable to participate due to health reasons, but his paper was read at the meeting. Also, the money was given. Savage's arguments seemed to have convinced the supporters. This case is significant since it shows the maturing process the new FTL was going through. The executive committee was ready to cut the umbilical cord and have a life on its own. Savage saw this attitude of the executive committee as "a growing son to a father, we would plea for a degree of liberty so that full maturity can be attained in the coming days."[168] However, as Escobar explained, it was not "a free anti-Americanism nor a teenager's rebellion."[169]

Samuel Escobar, the first president of the FTL, understood the pluralism within the FTL as a "creative tension," evident in the first two continental meetings in Cochabamba (1970) and Lima (1972). He said that in Cochabamba "it was clear that we can put ourselves under the authority of the Word of God … even though we were not one hundred percent in agreement over a particular theory of inspiration." Escobar said that in Lima (1972), while studying the theme of the Kingdom of God, the members of the FTL accepted the plurality of approaches to the eschatological dimension of the gospel. He said that they "were willing to walk together in spite of the different degrees in emphasis on the 'here and now' of the Kingdom." Therefore, Escobar concluded, the FTL was learning how to live with a "certain measure of creative tension."[170]

[167] Letter from Peter Savage to Clyde W. Taylor, dated January 27, 1972, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 2.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Escobar, "Heredero de la Reforma Radical," 64.
[170] Ibid.

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Openness to inclusiveness was practiced immediately after the first meeting in Cochabamba. For example, after all the dust of the discussion about the SBL in Costa Rica settled, Savage and Padilla had a personal visit with the professors there. Some professors were negative, like Osvaldo Mottesi, who said, "Look, I have a recommendation for the FTL: euthanasia!"[171] But some others, like Orlando Costas, joined the FTL and were present at the consultation on the Kingdom of God in Lima in 1972. Since then, several professors of the SBL have been active members of the FTL.

The FTL was learning how to live with a "certain measure of creative tension."

Summary

What, then, can be said about these first stages in the process of maturity and definition of the FTL to this point? Before the consultation on the Kingdom of God in Lima (1972), the FTL already had a heavy schedule of meetings. There were four regional consultations about the "Church" in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Mexico in 1971. In April of 1972, Saphir Athyal, president of a seminary in Yeotmal, India, visited the groups of the FTL in six countries. A consultation on "Social Ethics" was held in Lima, Peru, in July the same year.[172] Were there any tangible results of such activities?

In his evaluation of the first year of activities, Savage recognized the good job of the members but also pointed them to some areas that needed attention. First, he

[171]Stam, interview.
[172]For the papers of this consultation, see Padilla, *Fe Cristiana y Latinoamérica Hoy* (Buenos Aires: Certeza, 1974).

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mentioned that most of the papers presented so far were the "repetition of the same clichés and slogans from the past without examining with real precision what God wants to say to our context." Savage challenged the members to "put our feet on the ground and walk our culture's paths, our predicament, our agonies!" His call was for pertinence, for relevance. Second, he invited those presenting papers to work hard on them, especially to research thoroughly. Savage wanted excellence. Finally, he mentioned that many people could not expend the time needed for reflection because they were "shackled" by several administrative tasks. He exhorted mission boards and churches to "take away those heavy chains that not only destroy the person but also weaken the church itself."[173] He was interested in fostering a commitment to theological reflection.

Despite such needed corrections, Peter Savage believed two areas were especially affected by the different consultations: "the methodology as well as the thinking of each of the key theologians in Latin America."[174] Savage recognized that some members of the FTL had a difficult time redefining their theological positions since they "have 'received' their theology from their denominations and schools and some have been nurtured on vague generalisations which cannot stand in the light of serious exegesis and have experienced traumatic experiences as they rethought their doctrine." For another group, Savage explained, the experience in the FTL meant a return to the Scripture from ISAL-type theologies. All these personal experiences fit precisely into what Savage envisioned for

[173]*Noticiero de la Fraternidad*, 6, January 1972.

[174]Letter from Peter Savage to Clyde W. Taylor, dated April 3, 1972, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 358," Box 8, Folder 2.

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the FTL before its inception, a "cross-fertilization of minds" that would help many, in combination with a "disciplined structured pedagogical experience in the Word of God," to take seriously the authority of the Bible.

Savage also mentioned some of the key emphases in the theology of the FTL. First, as seen in Cochabamba, the authority of the Bible was foundational, a point that differentiated the theological production of the FTL from that of the liberation theologies. Second, there was the Latin American element. The FTL was doing theology with the intention of being relevant and addressing those questions that were asked by other theologies in the Latin American context. They called into question the methodology, the basic presuppositions, and the theological outcomes of ISAL. They entered into a critical dialogue with the liberation theologies that had started to appear. They dialogued frankly and boldly, without abandoning their evangelical convictions. All of these experiences gave the FTL elements for growing in maturity and theological independence.

The authority of the Bible was foundational, a point that differentiated the theological production of the FTL from that of the liberation theologies.

The third element Savage mentioned was the relation of the FTL to the evangelical church at large in Latin America. Even though the FTL did not pretend to speak in name of the church,[175] the people involved understood their theological task as part of the mission of the church for the continent. Despite the fact that they were keenly aware of

[175]See *Estatutos de la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana*, Article 2, c.

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the shortcomings of the evangelical church, they identified themselves unreservedly with it. The commitment to the church was expanded and analyzed in the four gatherings in 1971. The Brazilian meeting dealt with issues like the origin and nature of the church, the authority of the church, and the church after Vatican II. In Argentina the themes were the relationship between the Kingdom of God and the church, the church in the New Testament, church and society, and church and missions.[176] In the meeting in Lima the speakers presented papers on worship and communion in the church, the ministry of the church, the charismatic movement and the church, and the church and revolution. The Mexican gathering discussed the work of the Holy Spirit in the church, the church and regeneration, the Latin American expression of the church and the church and ethics.[177]

Even though the FTL did not pretend to speak in name of the church, the people involved understood their theological task as part of the mission of the church for the continent.

It was clear through the intense study and discussion that the FTL sought from the beginning a clear participation within and with the evangelical church in Latin America. For the FTL, the church is the visible manifestation of the

[176]"Consulta Regional en Sao Paulo," *Noticiero de la Fraternidad*, no. 3 (1971); "La Asociación Teológica Evangélica—Buenos Aires," *Noticiero de la Fraternidad*, no. 3 (1971).

[177]"Consulta Regional de la Zona Andina–Lima," *Noticiero de la Fraternidad*, no. 4 (1971); "Consulta Regional de México," *Noticiero de la Fraternidad*, no. 4 (1971).

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kingdom of God until the final consummation.[178] The FTL was also aware that its theological production should serve the purpose of informing the church better of its mission. They had seen the example of ISAL, which ended up stranded from the church and thereby lost relevance. For example, Pedro Arana wrote that theology "is a servant of the mission of God, the mission with which he has charged his church. It is a mission that has to do with the holistic salvation of his people, and through them with the integral welfare of the world."[179] Along the same line, C. René Padilla included the church as the recipient of the theological production of the FTL. According to Padilla,

> After the second consultation in Lima it is possible to affirm with solid evidence that definitely in Latin America is appearing slowly an evangelical theology, *evangelical* in the best sense of the word: a theology that wants to be forged in a defined historical context, molded by the Word of God, and put to service in the mission of the church.[180]

Related to the church, the fourth element Savage mentioned was the commitment of the FTL to a social transformation through the incarnation of the gospel by the believers. As stated by Escobar in CLADE I, the relationship of the proclamation of gospel with social responsibility was

[178]For a presentation of the ecclesiology of the FTL, see chapter 5 of Dieumeme E. Noelliste, "The Church and human emancipation: A critical comparison of liberation theology and the Latin American theological fraternity" (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1987), 166-210. Also, chapter 9 of Orme, "The Doctrine of Social Concern," 179-207.

[179]Samuel Escobar and others, "A Latin American Critique of Latin American Theology," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 7 (1983).

[180]C. René Padilla, "La Segunda Consulta de la FTL en Lima," *Boletín Teológico*, no. 4 (1973):4.

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a tight one.[181] Both were considered to be legitimate sides of the gospel. The people of the FTL rejected any separation of them or any dualism that would determine a priority of one over the other. Therefore, they were critical of definitions of evangelism that did not include the social implications of the gospel. They were also critical of those who saw the gospel only in terms of social involvement without regard to spiritual matters.

The people who had been part of the FTL from its beginnings testify that participating in the *Fraternidad* has been a formative, transforming experience. Those personal notes provide for us another window into how the FTL was yielding fruit. For example, Emilio Antonio Núñez, the oldest person at the initial meeting in Cochabamba 1970, evaluated his time in the FTL as a "fruitful dialogue that has lasted many years."[182] He said,

> The FTL has been one of the greatest stimuli I have had to continually force myself to reduce my deficit in the field of knowledge, especially in relation to theology in Latin America. Above all, it has strengthened my conviction that when it comes to the study of the Word of God and its application to the individual and to society, each point of entry is nothing more than another point of departure toward wider horizons.
>
> The FTL has truly been for me a school of theological reflection in the Latin American context. Far from causing me to abandon my evangelical convictions, it has strengthened them through the comings and goings of

[181]Escobar, "The Social Responsibility of the Church"; idem, "Social Concern and World Evangelism," in *Christ the Liberator–Urbana 70*, ed. John Stott and others (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1971); idem, "The Social Impact of the Gospel."

[182]Núñez, "Testigo de un Nuevo Amanecer," 107.

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> brotherly dialogue. I have had in the FTL the opportunity to continue learning to listen, especially to those brethren who do not think like me in everything. I am in the process of learning to express the truth in love, respecting other's opinions, and recognizing the valuable contribution they can make to the difficult task of finding, as Latin Americans, our own path to express our faith, based on the Word of God, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit.[183]

The FTL made its entrance into the world scene at the International Congress of World Evangelization (ICOWE) in Lausanne, Switzerland, July 16-25, 1974. This Latin American contribution to the global evangelical dialogue is the theme of the next chapter. Here, suffice to say that the three-year-old FTL showed at Lausanne that those first efforts of theological production were going steadily in the direction toward a mature independence. Peter Savage's activism was yielding good fruit. Latin Americans could then engage in a one-on-one theological dialogue on an equal footing with the rest of the world.

Chapter 4: Latin American Theologians in International Forums

The International Congress on World Evangelization (ICOWE), held at Lausanne, Switzerland, July 16-25, 1974, remains as a significant milestone in the history of evangelicalism. Its constituency went across racial, national, educational, and political boundaries. Its speakers came from the four corners of the world. Its effects were like tidal waves that soon reached the six continents with a strategic

[183]Ibid., 108. For the testimony of Orlando Costas, Rolando Gutiérrez-Cortéz, Pablo Alberto Deiros, among others, see Padilla, *Hacia Una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*.

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program, a clear message, a renewed vision, and a call for unity.

ICOWE was also another forum for dialogue between Latin American theologians and their US American interlocutors. Only this time the dialogue assumed universal dimensions. This chapter examines the Latin American contribution at Lausanne and its aftermath. Mexican-American missiologist Charles Van Engen viewed the context for Lausanne '74 as a world turned upside down. Van Engen explained that, for US America,

> The hippies and the "flower children" had been questioning the most basic American values. The mainline denominations experienced an unprecedented exodus of members. The world that had seemed expansive in 1966 had become a global village in danger of overpopulation and pollution. The Vietnam War seriously questioned the United States' ability to save the world. The Civil Rights movement ground to a halt after Martin Luther King was assassinated.[184]

The International Congress on World Evangelization (ICOWE), held at Lausanne, Switzerland, July 16-25, 1974, was a significant milestone in the history of evangelicalism.

[184]Charles E. Van Engen, "A Broadening Vision: Forty Years of Evangelical Theology of Mission, 1946-1986," in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 217.

Participants arrive for ICOWE at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne, Switzerland
Courtesy of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

Particularly for evangelicalism, Van Engen understood Lausanne as a time for redefinition and reaffirmation of evangelical theology. This process happened, Van Engen explained, in the midst of an "evangelical renaissance" and new missionary zeal. Van Engen also underscored that at Lausanne, "North American evangelicals were suddenly encountering hundreds of able evangelical leaders in the Third World churches."[185] Among these leaders were several Latin Americans, whose contributions to Lausanne require more consideration than this discussion can provide. Consequently, we will focus our attention on the contribution of two theologians, C. René Padilla and Samuel Escobar, as representatives of the maturing Latin American evangelical theology in dialogue with the rest of the world. We will argue that the impact of Padilla's and Escobar's participation at ICOWE not only went beyond the borders of an inter-American conversation but also reached global dimensions; it represented a step forward in the process of maturity and independence of the evangelical theological production in Latin America.

The International Congress on World Evangelization (ICOWE)

ICOWE demanded intense preparation due to the nature of its program. The plenary speakers had to submit their papers a year in advance. The papers were mailed to all the registered participants. They were expected to read them

[185]Ibid., 218.

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carefully and send their responses or questions to the central office in Lausanne. Then, after the speakers received the comments from all over the world, they were asked to react to them at the session instead of reading the original paper.

Latin Americans were involved in every part of the program: Manuel Bonilla, Orlando Costas, Robinson Cavalcanti, Pablo Perez, Juan Carlos Ortiz, Luis Santiago Botero, Emilio Antonio Núñez, and Jorge Leon among others. However, the contribution from Latin America that "really set the Congress alight,"[186] was that of René Padilla's and Samuel Escobar's plenary papers. Rev. John A. Coleman, from Australia, noted that the papers presented by Padilla and Escobar "have probably been subject to more comment than all the other papers put together."[187]

From the beginning Samuel Escobar served with ICOWE as a member of the planning, organizing, and program advisory committees.[188] He participated in all the planning meetings that took place before the Congress. The program director was Paul E. Little, assistant to the president of InterVarsity in the United States. Plenary speakers were chosen by a subcommittee Little formed. This subcommittee recommended several names for each paper. Such recommendations were distributed to several advisors around the globe who consequently expressed their support or suggested other names. If the first person recommended

[186]Athol Gill, "Christian Social Responsibility," in *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, ed. C. René Padilla (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 91.

[187]John A. Coleman, "Aftermath of Lausanne! Evangelism in a Changing World," *New Life*, August 28, 1974.

[188]For the correspondence to and from Escobar regarding his participation, see Billy Graham Center Archives, "Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE); 1974-," "Collection 46," Box 30, Folder 35.

would not accept, the invitation would have gone to the next person on the list. In Padilla's and Escobar's case, they were both the first recommendation.

Padilla was recommended for the biblical foundation paper "Evangelism and the World." The purpose of the paper was,

> To show the difference between the world and the church in the sense in which we are called out of the world and yet into the world, in what sense this is our Father's world, and in what sense it lies in the wicked one and belongs to Satan. It would show that the devil is at work everywhere in the world. It would discuss the whole idea of worldly Christianity as spoken of so popularly in ecumenical circles.[189]

Escobar was recommended for the strategic issue paper "Evangelism and Man's Search for Freedom, Justice and Fulfillment." Its purpose was "to show the relation of the gospel to these areas and spell out a Christian's responsibility to society." The content of this paper "will discuss how we respond to the theology of revolution and how a Christian is to function in the structures of society."[190]

These initial descriptions of the papers hardly seem to prepare the stage for any controversy. However, Escobar and Padilla were instrumental in causing a "significant shift in Christian thinking,"[191] a "coming of age for evangelicals,"[192] and a "major breakthrough for evangelicals on questions of

[189]Billy Graham Center Archives, "International Congress on World Evangelization," "Collection 53," Box 3, Folder 5.
[190]Ibid.
[191]*New Life*, August 8, 1974.
[192]Gerald Davis, "A Coming of Age for Evangelicals," *Church Scene (National Anglican Newspaper)*, August 1, 1974.

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social ethics and openness in facing these issues."[193] As another participant commented, the results of Escobar's and Padilla's speeches "were much more deeply felt than many Western evangelical Christian leaders here could have expected."[194]

In the opening session of the congress, Billy Graham set the tone for the event. Graham expected the congress to reaffirm that "our witness must be both word and deed.... Perhaps we will not find all the answers, but we reaffirm the fact that our words and our deeds must both reflect the Gospel."[195] Graham hoped that the congress would accomplish four goals: (1) to frame a biblical declaration on evangelism; (2) to challenge the church to complete the task of world evangelization; (3) to state what the relationship is between evangelism and social responsibility; and (4) to develop a global fellowship among evangelicals of all persuasions.[196]

The following day, John Stott recognized that "the traditions of the evangelical elders sometimes owe more to culture than to Scripture," a theme that Padilla expanded the following day. Stott continued by including social responsibility as part of the mission of the church:

> Is it not in a servant role that we can find the right synthesis of evangelism and social action? For both should be authentic expressions of the service we are sent into the world to give. How then, someone may ask, are we to reconcile this concept of mission as service

[193]Bruce Kaye, "Lausanne: An Assessment," *CWN Series*, August 16, 1974.
[194]Alan Nichols, "Plain Speaking on Social Issues..." *New Life*, 8 August 1974.
[195]Billy Graham, "Why Lausanne," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne, Switzerland*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 29.
[196]Ibid., 34.

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> with the Great Commission of the risen Lord? The Great Commission neither explains, nor exhausts, nor supersedes the Great Commandment…. True, the Gospel lacks credibility if we who preach it are interested only in souls, and have no concern about the welfare of people's bodies, situations, and community.[197]

For Stott, evangelism "may and must be defined only in terms of the *message*," in contrast to defining it in terms of its *results* and its *methods*. "To evangelize is not *so* to preach that something happens. Of course the objective is that something will happen, namely that people will respond and believe. Nevertheless, biblically speaking, to evangelize is to proclaim the Gospel, whether anything happens or not."[198]

However, clouds of disagreement appeared soon after Stott's presentation, stemming from Donald A. McGavran from Pasadena. His definition of evangelism was contrary to Stott's. Participants at the Congress must have felt somewhat confused. In the first full day of sessions two opposite agendas were presented. These two distinct trends were also noticeable in how the speakers understood the relationship between social action and evangelism. While for Stott both were part of his definition of "mission," for McGavran,

> Of course, Christians engage in social action. Social structures, when evil, must be changed. Christians have always done this, are doing it, and always will. Ethical improvements, both personal and social, are the fruit of salvation…. Biblically well-instructed Christians are the world's greatest reformers….

[197]John R. W. Stott, "The Biblical Basis of Evangelism," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 65.
[198]Ibid., 69.

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> But first, my friends, you must have some Christians and some churches!! Evangelism is persuading men to accept Christ and his gift of forgiveness, new power, and new righteousness. Evangelism is not proclaiming the desirability of a liquorless world and persuading people to vote for prohibition. Evangelism is not proclaiming the desirability of sharing the wealth and persuading people to take political action to achieve it.
>
> Evangelism is something else. Evangelism is proclaiming Jesus Christ as God and only Savior and persuading men to become his disciples and responsible members of his church. That is the first and basic task. Calling people to repent and to become disciples of the Son of Righteousness is the most important political act that anyone can perform. Until politicized Christians realize that, our policies will be terribly inadequate. Once that is done, once the new Christians feed on the Divine Word, ethical improvement follows…. They can be, ought to be, and are being led into and indeed pushed into as much righteousness, and beneficial social change as possible.[199]

Thus, for McGavran, social action by Christians was secondary after evangelism (as he defined it). It was a desirable result and the consequence of evangelism, but it should not have been included as an intentional part of the mission of the church in the world.

The next day, Padilla gave the only major address at the Congress. It was regarded by one journalist as "the best theological presentation of the congress."[200] According to one participant, Padilla's "response from the podium was

[199]Donald McGavran, "The Dimensions of World Evangelization," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 109-110.
[200]Kaye, "Lausanne."

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vibrant, prophetic, and life-giving."[201] Padilla swung the pendulum back to Stott's position, though, in a more radical way. Ignoring and misunderstanding the "wider dimensions of the Gospel," he wrote, "leads inevitably to a misunderstanding of the mission of the church."

> The result is an evangelism that regards the individual as a self-contained unit—a Robinson Crusoe to whom God's call is addressed as on an island—whose salvation takes place exclusively in terms of a relationship to God. It is not seen that the individual does not exist in isolation, and consequently that it is not possible to speak of salvation with no reference to the world of which he is part.[202]

For his starting point, Padilla used what he called the "paradox of Christian discipleship—to be *in* the world, but not to be *of* the world."[203] His paper attempted to explain what such a paradox had to do with evangelism. Padilla divided his paper into three sections. First, he explored the usage of the term "world" in the New Testament. Second, he explained "in what sense evangelism deals with a separation from the world, inasmuch as the disciples of Christ are not *of* the world." Third, he developed the implications for evangelism given the fact that believers are *in* the world.

The debate got heated and captured the attention of everyone with Padilla's description of cultural Christianity. He defined "cultural Christianity" as "the identification of

[201]Alfred C. Krass, "The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant (Book Review)," *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 1, no. 1 (1977):23.
[202]C. René Padilla, "Evangelism and the World," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 116.
[203]Ibid. From John 17.11. Italics in the original.

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Christianity with a culture or a cultural expression." For Padilla, a dominant contemporary form of cultural Christianity was the "American Way of Life." For Padilla, the influence of such a form of "cultural Christianity" caused the gospel in the majority of the countries of the world to be equated with the "American Way of Life." This kind of Christianity makes a merchandise out of the gospel in order to participate in the religious open market. Therefore, "accepting Christ is the means to reach the ideal of the 'good life,' at no cost. The cross has lost its offense, since it simply points to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us, but it is not a call to discipleship."[204]

For Padilla, "The first condition for genuine evangelism is the crucifixion of the evangelist. Without it the Gospel becomes empty talk and evangelism becomes proselytism." At the end of his paper, Padilla called the church to take seriously the mission given to her, "the building of a new humanity… a mission that can be performed only through sacrifice."[205]

Padilla's paper and presentation provoked several reactions, especially his definition of "cultural Christianity" and his identification of it with the "[US] American Way of Life." A British journalist commented that even though Padilla was asked to present in Spanish, forcing the great majority of participants to use simultaneous translation, and therefore reducing the impact, "it still brought him the longest round of applause accorded to any speaker up to that time, even though several people thought Cliff Barrows brought the clapping to an end prematurely—no doubt an innocent enough action, but one which some construed to

[204]Ibid., 125, 126.
[205]Ibid., 132.

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have deep political overtones!"[206] After his presentation, Padilla "became, to the press, the *enfant terrible* of the Congress."[207]

For some people, Padilla's paper was an overstatement; for others it was an understatement. For some, his criticism of US American Christianity did not go far enough, while for others it was "such a caricature as to create static that cannot but block the transmission of many insights which people attending the conference will need."[208] US Americans shunned him; people from the Third World countries hugged and congratulated him.[209] Some even attributed Padilla's critical appraisal of US American Christianity to supposed conflicts with his US American wife![210] Padilla lost a few dear US American friends. They did not talk to him again.[211]

When the time came for Samuel Escobar's presentation, the theme of evangelism and social action was being ardently discussed.[212] The paper distributed before the congress was quite explicit on the topic. Escobar's speech was expected to be "the *coup de grace* on the social involvement issue, building on the foundation carefully laid by Stott, Padilla and Michael Green."[213] For Escobar, evangelicals had shared two main attitudes. The first was a commitment to Western ideals, or "to make Christianity the official ideology of the West." The second was an attitude of indifference that says

[206]John Capon, "Let the Earth Hear Whose Voice?" *Crusade*, September 1974, 26.
[207]Krass, "The New Face of Evangelicalism," 23.
[208]Padilla, "Evangelism and the World," 136.
[209]Padilla, interview.
[210]Billy Graham Center Archives, "Interviews with Carlos René Padilla," "Collection 361," T3.
[211]Padilla, interview.
[212]Nichols, "Plain Speaking on Social Issues."
[213]Capon, "Let the Earth Hear Whose Voice?" 29.

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that since the "Gospel is a spiritual message it has nothing to say about social problems." The implication in this second attitude was that "the social behavior of the convert is not vitally and visibly affected by the message."[214]

For Escobar, the danger was to separate the message of the gospel from its ethical demands.

For Escobar, the danger was to separate the message of the gospel from its ethical demands. It constituted a betrayal of the very identity of the message, since "spirituality without discipleship in the daily social, economic, and political aspects of life is religiosity and not Christianity." He challenged the Congress to "get rid of the false notion that concern for the social implications of the Gospel and the social dimensions of witnessing comes from false doctrine or lack of evangelical conviction."[215] At the end of his paper, Escobar became even more explicit. He directed his plea specifically to Christians in the affluent West. Including himself, he said that if "as evangelicals we rejected the liberal adaptation of the Gospel to the rationalism of the nineteenth century, we should also reject the adaptation of the Gospel to the social conformism or conservatism of the middle class citizen in the powerful West."[216]

Escobar's paper elicited more than 1,000 responses.[217] Escobar acknowledged that evangelicals were involved in several ways in order to meet the basic needs of the people and named ten cases where missionaries or nationals were

[214]Escobar, "Evangelism and Man's Search," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 303.
[215]Ibid., 310, 311.
[216]Ibid., 317.
[217]Davis, "A Coming of Age for Evangelicals."

in the service of the Kingdom. However, Escobar mentioned that some of those people "have been criticized and told that they should abandon their efforts for the pursuit only of numerical growth of congregations."[218] The last comment was probably directed to the proponents of the Church Growth school.

The biblical model of evangelism, said Escobar, consisted of the new community created by Jesus, a community that "has a revolutionary effect in changing a society." Escobar mentioned as examples what Paul, in the New Testament, and John Wesley, in England, did against slavery. However, Escobar was careful about leaving no doubts about his evangelical convictions. Escobar recognized that "simple liberation from human masters is not the freedom of which the Gospel speaks." Yet, he added, "The heart which has been made free with the freedom of Christ cannot be indifferent to the human longings for deliverance from economic, political or social oppression."[219]

Social gospel had a bad theology, but at the same time, those with the right theology did not apply it to social issues.

Some responses called Escobar's attention to "the danger that if we concentrate on working out the social implications of the Gospel, we will forget evangelism, and that history proves that fact." He explicitly disagreed with such a statement. For him, the social gospel had a bad theology, but at the same time, those with the right theology did not apply it to social issues.[220]

[218]Escobar, "Evangelism and Man's Search," 320.
[219]Ibid.
[220]Ibid., 324, 326.

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On Sunday afternoon, the day before Escobar spoke at the plenary session, an unprogrammed meeting took place to discuss the issue of radical discipleship.[221] The idea for such an impromptu gathering came out of the discussion on the Lausanne covenant. Samuel Escobar was a member of the drafting committee.[222] There was strong pressure from the more conservative camps to leave the radical paragraphs out of the covenant. Therefore, Athol Gill from Australia, John H. Yoder, Samuel Escobar, René Padilla, and others decided to convoke an open meeting to discuss the topic.[223] It turned out to be such an important theme that more than 500 people gave up their free time to participate. Even though there were short presentations by the conveners, most of the time was spent in open discussions with the audience.

Athol Gill proposed the idea that Lausanne should have been a forum to repent from the lack of compassion and from pride, and overall to repent from preaching a mutilated gospel.[224] This idea of repentance started to resonate, and soon those present began to talk about writing some sort of a declaration to present its main conclusions to the organizers of the congress. The document *A Response to Lausanne* was distributed to all the participants of the congress.[225] It was an intense and polemical document that made many

[221]Tapes available at Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 53," T180, 181, 182, 183, and 184.
[222]The other members were John Stott, James D. Douglas, Leighton Ford, and Hudson Armerding.
[223]Samuel Escobar, in an interview by the author, Wheaton, IL, September 29, 2003.
[224]Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 53," T184.
[225]"Theology Implications of Radical Discipleship," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*.

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evangelicals "uneasy and even angry."[226] However, Padilla interprets the willingness of almost five hundred participants to sign the *Response* as "the strongest statement on the basis of holistic mission ever formulated by an evangelical conference up to this date."[227] John Stott announced in a plenary session that the *Response* was in no way a competing covenant and that he personally had read it and would gladly sign it. With Stott's *carte blanche* the *Response* was attached to the final covenant.

Stott was not the only main figure to approve the *Response to Lausanne*. The congress executive chairman, Bishop Jack Dain, evaluated the whole initiative of the radical discipleship gathering in positive terms. For Dain, the significance was "the presence in the congress of a substantial minority mainly of younger men and women who sincerely desire a more radical type of Christian discipleship." Dain described the meeting as a "healthy development" and "a sign of maturity."[228]

The radical discipleship group helped the congress move especially in two areas. First, there was a significant change in its goals. According to the pre-congress brochure, the main purpose of the ICOWE was "to launch a new thrust to complete the evangelization of the world in our century." Padilla commented that for those going to Lausanne "with this type of expectation, the Congress was obviously a

[226]Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission", 164.
[227]C. René Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility from Wheaton '66 to Wheaton '83," in *How Evangelicals Endorsed Social Responsibility (Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics 1974-83 (ii)-a Commentary)*, ed. C. René Padilla and Chris Sugden (Nottingham: Grove Books, 1985), 29.
[228]Interview by Bruce Kaye, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 32, Folder 32.

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disappointment."[229] As a British newspaper noted, this "goal was abandoned early in the congress. Canon Michael Green and Dr René Padilla were two of the critics of a strategic program."[230]

The second area where the congress moved significantly was in the redaction of the section on social responsibility in the Lausanne Covenant. The first draft included one sentence on the topic in section 7: "Christian Social Responsibility: We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men and that we should therefore be concerned for justice throughout human society."[231] In the final covenant this became section 5, and it was totally rewritten and expanded:

> We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both

[229]Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 29.
[230]"Young Radicals Make Lausanne '74 a Milestone for Evangelicals," *Church Scene*, August 15, 1974.
[231]Available at Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 32, Folder 38.

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> are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.[232]

For James A. Scherer, a Lutheran observer, Article 5 of the covenant was indicative of a new direction in evangelicalism. "This paragraph introduces the language of *justice* and *reconciliation* in human society and *liberation* from oppression into the heretofore detached and individualistic rhetoric of evangelicalism. It is here that the evangelical movement reaches a turning point."[233] According to Padilla, section 5 of the covenant implied that social involvement had "finally been granted full citizenship in evangelical missiology."[234]

Latin Americans, particularly Padilla and Escobar, were instrumental in both changes. They were at the forefront of the discussions and made their ideas heard. The results were expressed by Singaporean Chua Wee Hian:

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[232]Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 4-5.
[233]James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church, and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987), 173. Italics in the original.
[234]Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 29.

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> Pax Americana has reached its zenith and is now in a state of rapid decline. The bubbles of triumphalism of North American "success Christianity" have been pricked and deflated at Lausanne. We hope that there will be genuine repentance. I personally think there will be a new and better understanding between us and our American brethren in the post-Vietnam and post-Watergate era.[235]

However, there were those participants who presented a different view. For example, commenting on Escobar's paper and presentation, Australian journalist Gerald Davis wrote that they "were not received in all quarters with enthusiastic applause." For Davis it was "clear that Mr. Escobar has articulated a view warmly applauded by most of the third world's evangelicals, and large numbers in Australia, NZ, South Africa, and some other places." But Davis noticed a different attitude, too. For him, "distress noises from North America in particular, and much of Europe to some degree, make it clear the world's evangelicals at the moment are not agreed on involvement in social issues."[236]

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[235]Letter from Chua Wee Hian to C. René Padilla, dated May 13, 1975, Padilla's personal archives, Buenos Aires.

[236]Davis, "A Coming of Age for Evangelicals." In fact, the discussion on the relationship between evangelism and social involvement went on after Lausanne, so much so that a consultation on the subject was needed and finally held in 1982 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), *Grand Rapids Report: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment*, Lausanne Occasional Papers no. 21 (Wheaton: LCWE and WEF, 1982). For a brief summary of the conclusions of this consultation, see John R. Reid, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," in *The Future of World Evangelization: The Lausanne Movement*, ed. Edward R. Dayton and Samuel Wilson (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1984). For a Latin American perspective, see Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission", 199-222.

Regarding the discussion on the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility, in his memoirs, Carl Henry remembered that in Lausanne "discordant voices were struck." For Henry the differences were reflected in those, like Donald McGavran, who stressed "the primacy of evangelism in terms of personal regeneration," and the "champions of 'radical discipleship' like Samuel Escobar and René Padilla [who] underscored repentance from social sins and the need to call for a changed socio-political order." Henry evaluated as confusing the insistence of the Latin Americans that the church must be in the forefront of socio-economic change, because it "left unsure, however, whether the prospect of present political liberation is an integral facet of the gospel. Nor did they clarify how the life and example of Jesus actually rather than symbolically undergirds such a view."[237]

Henry recognized that ICOWE linked evangelism and social concern more tightly than Berlin '66. However, for him, the final draft of the Lausanne Covenant was "still too imprecise to foster significant ecumenical dialogue and too bland to be biblically adequate." Henry also had an opinion about the "radical discipleship" gathering:

> The "response to Lausanne" signed by the self-proclaimed champions of "radical discipleship" had the merit of identifying the evangel as the "good news of liberation, of restoration, of wholeness, and of salvation that is personal, social, global and cosmic." Had they not insisted on doing their own thing, had they been a little more social, the "radical disciples" would have found the

[237]Carl F. H. Henry, *Confessions of a Theologian: An Autobiography* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), 349.

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> subsection on "Evangelization and Personal and Society Ethics" contending for much the same emphasis.[238]

Henry's comments are difficult to understand in light of the paper he presented at Lausanne where he said that "Christians are duty-bound to exemplify and to promote social justice."[239] Regarding the reaction of US Americans to the criticisms of cultural-Christianity, Henry commented,

> Some Americans at Lausanne remarked that it will be time enough to listen to such complaints about evangelical cultural entrapment when Latin Americans put their own house in order. But that response is disappointingly evasive. American evangelicals must learn the importance of social and political criticism at home, even if the reminder emanates from outsiders who seem most ferocious when leveling criticism at situations other than their own.[240]

Henry's assessment provides us a small window into the heart of the debate at Lausanne and the difficulty of the topic. It was not that the Latin Americans were not explicit enough, or that the participants of the "radical discipleship" ad-hoc committee presented an unclear challenge to the congress. It was rather that, as Bishop Dain evaluated, the congress was not ready yet for such a move. The reasons for this reticence for action were more historical than theological. As Stott explained, evangelicals in the twentieth century tended to separate evangelism from social concern

[238]Carl F. H. Henry, "The Gospel and Society," *Christianity Today*, September 13, 1974, 1365.

[239]Carl F. H. Henry, "Christian Personal and Social Ethics in Relation to Racism, Poverty, War, and Other Problems," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 1164.

[240]Henry, "The Gospel and Society," 1364.

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"partly because of our reaction against the 'social gospel' of liberal optimism."[241]

As seen in Carl Henry's comments, differences in the perception of Lausanne during the congress were not solved by the final covenant, nor by the formation of a continuation committee, LCWE. After the curtains of ICOWE closed, those different perceptions of Lausanne continued. For example, for Harold Lindsell, editor of *Christianity Today*, Lausanne defined the mission of the church as "the evangelization of the world." For Lindsell, even though social action was debated again and again at ICOWE, it "was not put on the same plane with the proclamation of the Gospel, nor was it given standing as a substitute for the Gospel."[242]

The congress was not ready yet for such a move…

Lindsell showed caution while commenting specifically on Escobar and Padilla. For Lindsell, Escobar "stressed the relation between evangelism and social evils and said that the Christian calling compels Christ's followers to become involved in the fight for social change, in the overturning of the status quo." Lindsell's summary of Escobar's ideas might have led the readers to false conclusions. Escobar was careful in avoiding any kind of endorsement of violence and revolutionary *coup d'état*. Furthermore, for Lindsell, Escobar had an incomplete list of social evils: "Absent from Escobar's catalogue of social evils were some solidly entrenched ones that cause untold physical and spiritual debasement: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and pornography."

[241]John Stott, *The Lausanne Covenant: An Exposition and Commentary* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 25.
[242]Harold Lindsell, "Lausanne '74: An Appraisal," *Christianity Today*, September 13, 1974, 1328.

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Regarding Padilla, Lindsell mentioned that *Time* magazine quoted him "to emphasize the point that Lausanne took social action seriously but not in the way that the ecumenical movement does." Lindsell concluded, therefore, that Lausanne's stance on social action did not mean a detraction from "the priority of gospel proclamation."[243]

C. Peter Wagner also evaluated ICOWE.[244] Wagner used a military analogy to explain what he saw at the congress. For him, three torpedoes were fired in order to "destroy the central evangelistic nature of the congress." The first torpedo Wagner described was "*an attempt to confuse evangelism with social action*."[245] Wagner explained,

> Not only did the Lausanne program build on what I consider a disproportionate emphasis on social aspects of the Christian mission for a congress "on World Evangelization," but many influential media reports even exaggerated this, thereby diluting the evangelistic component. It seemed that to some of the reporters it must have been to hear evangelicals expressing social concern, and in many cases social issues, rather than evangelism, made the headlines.[246]

Wagner described the second torpedo as "*an attempt to confuse evangelism with Christian cooperation*." This torpedo, Wagner said, was fired by those who "are inclined to postulate a cause-and-effect relation between cooperation and evangelism." Wagner, as in the first torpedo, blamed the press for this because "setting Lausanne as a worldwide

[243]Ibid., 1329.
[244]C. Peter Wagner, "Lausanne Twelve Months Later," *Christianity Today*, July 4, 1975.
[245]Ibid. Italics in the original.
[246]Ibid., 962.

competitor to the World Council of Churches became a favorite angle of some journalists."[247]

According to Wagner, the third torpedo fired against evangelization at Lausanne was "*an attempt to confuse evangelism with Christian nurture*." Here Wagner identified more precisely where the torpedo came from: Padilla, the only Third World speaker mentioned by *Time* magazine—"Those whose primary ministry places them with university students and better educated people, reinforced this emphasis."[248] What became clear in Wagner's reference to "torpedoes" was his evident discomfort with the direction the congress went.

Wagner was relieved that none of the three torpedoes hit. For him the Lausanne Covenant left things clear. In reaction to the first torpedo, "Lausanne avoided the danger of ascribing soteriological significance to political involvement." Regarding the second torpedo, "evangelism and cooperation were not unduly confused." In response to the last one, the Covenant "did not go to assert that Christian nurture or growth in discipleship, when rigidly achieved, will invariably promote more effective evangelism, and that as a result the quantity of Christians and Christian churches will increase worldwide."[249]

Absent in Henry's, Lindsell's, and Wagner's evaluation was the spirit of repentance that other participants felt as characteristic of the Congress. They did not mention either that the Lausanne Covenant with its explicit link of evangelism and social concern was signed by the great majority of participants. One can only assume that they

[247]Ibid. Italics in the original.
[248]Ibid. Italics in the original.
[249]Ibid.

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also signed the Covenant, since they continued their involvement in the continuation committee immediately after Lausanne. If this assumption is true, their reception and interpretation of the Covenant provides us with an example of a US American reception of Lausanne '74. They illustrated in their perception of Lausanne '74 the attitude of triumphalism and pragmatism alluded to by Padilla, Escobar, and other speakers.[250]

In contrast, Jack Dain and Billy Graham's evaluation of ICOWE maintained a balance between the different aspects of the gathering. They wrote,

> To those who were there, Lausanne '74 was an unforgettable experience. God called us to repentance for our failures and lack of vision. He encouraged us through a heightened awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit in fruitful evangelization all over the world. He sobered us and called us to prayer as we considered the hard places of the world and the many yet unreached with the Gospel. He enabled us to hear and appreciate points of view other than our own—even those with which we disagreed. Our vision was expanded, our hearts were melted together in love, our minds were stimulated to face issues squarely in the light of his Word, and our wills were moved to enter into a solemn covenant to be instruments in the hand of our Sovereign Lord so that

[250]Two years after Lausanne, C. Peter Wagner explicitly recognized that, "We are unashamedly recommending a fiercely pragmatic approach to evangelism. We ought to see clearly that the end *does* justify the means. What else possibly could justify the means? If the method I am using accomplishes the goal I am aiming at, it is for that reason a good method. If, on the other hand, my method is not accomplishing the goal, how can I be justified in continuing to use it?" (Italics in the original). C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1976), 136-137. Such pragmatism was precisely what the Latin Americans were calling attention to.

> the Congress theme, "Let the Earth Hear His Voice," might become a reality.[251]

Latin Americans' perceptions of Lausanne differed substantially from the US Americans'. Padilla, for example, interpreted Lausanne and the Lausanne Covenant as a "death blow to the superficial equation of Christian mission with the multiplication of Christians and churches." For Padilla, the Lausanne Congress eliminated three key dichotomies to clarify the meaning and nature of the Christian mission: the dichotomy between evangelism and social involvement, between evangelism and Christian discipleship, and between evangelism and church renewal. Regarding the Lausanne Covenant, Padilla's opinion is that,

The Lausanne Covenant was a "death blow to the superficial equation of Christian mission with the multiplication of Christians and churches."

> It leaves no foothold for that evangelism according to which the end justifies the means. And it goes beyond that to the expression of a firm commitment on the part of those who live in affluent circumstances to the duty 'to develop a simple life-style in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism' (section 9). The assumption is clearly made, that evangelism is of one piece with church renewal, that the *kerygma* is inseparable from the *koinonia*.[252]

The note of repentance that permeated the congress and the Covenant was perceived by Padilla as "a breath of fresh

[251]Foreword to Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, v.
[252]Padilla, *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, 12.

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air coming from people who have oftentimes been too prone to parade their feats in the evangelization of the world." Consequently, for Padilla, following Lausanne,

> every sign of triumphalism among evangelicals may be legitimately interpreted as an attempt to cling to the past…. However disappointing to those who expected the Congress to be a big display of the numerical power of evangelicals or a great world gathering aimed exclusively at the multiplication of Christians and churches, the Lausanne meeting turned out to be an updating of the evangelical agenda, made possible by a renunciation of fierce pragmatism and a return to biblical theology. Evangelism remained intact, but was no longer understood as ecclesiocentric activism, but rather as God's means of placing the totality of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ.[253]

Thus, for Padilla a "new face of Evangelicalism" emerged from Lausanne. Brazilian missiologist Valdir Steuernagel evaluated ICOWE in similar terms. Steuernagel found the difference between Padilla and Wagner in that Padilla's argument faithfully reflected "the content of the Congress as well as of the Covenant," while Wagner's position "should be interpreted in the light of the post-Lausanne struggle as expressed within the Continuation Committee."[254]

Steuernagel identified in Lausanne three evangelical approximations to the issue of social responsibility:

> Lausanne's attention to *social concern* reflected the effort of North American evangelicalism to reread the Bible in the light of its own growth and public reemergence. This

[253]Ibid., 14.
[254]Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission", 166.

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> evangelicalism, typified by Billy Graham, had already become widely recognized and accepted. Lausanne's attention to *sociopolitical involvement* reflected the British vein of evangelicalism, which, unlike its North American counterpart, has consistently kept its rich heritage of social and political involvement. John Stott is a good example of his tradition. But Lausanne went even further to raise issues of *social justice* and to express concern about "every kind of oppression." This primarily reflected the contribution of a third-world evangelicalism that was reading the Bible in contexts of dependency, poverty, injustice, and oppression. This evangelicalism, in its search for a missionary obedience, was prepared to reevaluate the evangelicalism imported from the North and to face the challenge of becoming contextual. This was a kingdom-oriented evangelicalism, with the Latin American Theological Fraternity being a good example.[255]

Escobar, evaluating Lausanne three years later, gave insights for understanding the precariousness of the consensus at Lausanne. On one side there were new voices at the congress "revealing a theological and biblical ferment in many ways unexpected." On the other side was "classical evangelicalism." For Escobar, someone who was actively involved in the organization of ICOWE, "there was no real dialogue. Everybody talked past each other." For Escobar, in the end the new voices lost the battle "through the organizational effort afterwards." Yet Escobar saw signs of hope even though the ideas presented at Lausanne by the Latin Americans were not being "incorporated in the practice

[255]Steuernagel, "Social Concern and Evangelization: The Journey of the Lausanne Movement," International Bulletin of Missionary Research, 15 (1991):53.

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of the main missionary and ecclesiastical bodies who impose their program on the evangelical world, and some openly fight against them." For him, "This ferment continues flowing, and in the measurement in which it corresponds to biblical truth, there is hope to believe that it will renovate whatever is in need of renewal."[256]

The hegemony of US American funds and mission strategies was broken at Lausanne.

Argentine writer and pastor Arnoldo Canclini evaluated ICOWE from the dual perspective of a convener and participant. Canclini predicted that the Holy Spirit was going to bring about a "revolution in the Christian world" because of Lausanne. That there were at Lausanne different positions was clear, according to Canclini. However, it was clear to him that at ICOWE there was a sincere "desire not to limit evangelization and mission work to analysis of numbers, theologically shallow preconceptions, or statistical tables."[257]

Canclini noticed that the hegemony of US American funds and mission strategies was broken at Lausanne. The patterns for Christian work "should not be any longer exclusively North American and perhaps they will not become North American again."[258] Regarding social action, Canclini perceived that what happened at Lausanne was "simply the reflection of the tension that exists in theological and ecclesiastical circles. Today's world asks for social action. It is impossible to avoid the dilemma of taking a position on this."[259]

[256]Escobar, *Los Primeros Seis Años*, 1.
[257]Arnoldo Canclini, "¿Qué Hay Más Allá del Congreso de Lausana?" *Pensamiento Cristiano* 21, no. 83 (1974):303, 308.
[258]Ibid., 309.
[259]Ibid., 310.

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Canclini's evaluation leads us to another situation at Lausanne. Latin Americans were not united there. The fragmentation we noticed in previous chapters became evident at Lausanne. Escobar recognized that in Lausanne, "some of us were accused by some Latin American brethren of not being representative, of presenting a message that was not the main concern of Latin American evangelicals. Personally, it made me think because we always need to consider that such accusation is well grounded."[260] However, this recognition of division among Latin American evangelicals did not mean Escobar agreed with how the situation was portrayed by the journalists of *Christianity Today*. In a letter to ICOWE's executive chairman, bishop Jack Dain, Escobar made his position clear:

> I have been dismayed by the misinterpretations that certain press has given. I am especially sorry for the totally biased report that *Christianity Today* carried, in open contrast with the quality and fairness of *Time*, several Anglican papers and most of all in my opinion, *The Reform Journal*.
>
> I am afraid that press coverage is symptomatic. It shows in my opinion that segments of Evangelicalism particularly in the U.S.A. were not happy with the way God let the Congress go [and] are unable to dialogue with Evangelicals from a different perspective…. It would be a pity if the impact of the Congress is manipulated by the more closed and triumphalistic sectors of Evangelicalism.
>
> This fear grows as I think of the Continuation Committee. From my Latin American perspective it is clear to me that while the Congress heard a challenging

[260]Escobar, *Los Primeros Seis Años*.

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> variety of voices, there were political groups at work in the election procedures, in order to silence some trends and voices. The reference to rebuttals or rejection from our Latin American brethren in *Christianity Today* expresses a view that was being openly pushed by some American brethren in the Billy Graham team, which even before the Congress were probably hostile to the positions that Padilla or myself expressed. True, not all Latin American brethren agree with us. We know that. But the use of disagreement in order to push some people and some organizations to the front has been taken too far and I feel I must say this—especially for the sake of procedures at the selection of names for a Continuation Committee.[261]

Wagner's "three torpedoes" upset Escobar. In another letter to Dain, Escobar interpreted Wagner's evaluation of Lausanne as part of a "concerted effort on the part of the conservative elements that are in charge of *Christianity Today* to change the meaning and the directions of Lausanne."[262] For Escobar, those conservative sectors did not achieve that, "because in the memory of people and in the way in which [the Congress] impressed them, I am sure that a good thing of Lausanne was that it was not an American jamboree, but rather a world forum of evangelicalism. And this is what our friends from Pasadena cannot accept."[263] In a personal interview with Anthony Smith, Escobar explained,

> After Lausanne I really decided to go back and work more on my own model and be less linked to the world

[261]Letter from Samuel Escobar to A. Jack Dain, October 10, 1974, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 30, Folder 35.
[262]Letter from Samuel Escobar to A. Jack Dain, July 29, 1975, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 30, Folder 35.
[263]Ibid.

> of evangelical politics at a high level. I had had enough of it. I think there is…a power-game there. Yes, and it has gone on and on. The Pasadena group were very, very disappointed at Lausanne. They expected it to be their launching platform…. It was René Padilla and myself who really created…with our papers and the response to them, a counter-effect to the idea that "we have now the right technology for doing things."[264]

Padilla expressed his concerns to improve the theological dialogue between US Americans and Latin Americans. Padilla evaluated the "wide range of national and cultural backgrounds" represented at ICOWE as an asset, because "clearly the congress was not dominated by representatives of one particular school, with which all the participants were expected to agree." Rather, and probably talking about his own participation, all the speakers "had full freedom to express their views." A positive result of Lausanne, according to Padilla, was that the issue of cultural Christianity was being debated in many parts of the world by evangelicals who were "increasingly aware of the need to deliver Christianity from its cultural accretions and to dispel every sign of confusion between Christianity and [North] American 'power.'"[265]

Padilla asked a question that in a way summarized his quest: "Are evangelicals in the United States really willing to listen to their Third World brethren who are critical of [US] American culture-Christianity?" Padilla had two reasons why US American evangelicals should listen to evangelicals

[264]Anthony Christopher Smith, The Essentials of Missiology from the Evangelical Perspective of the "Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana" (PhD diss, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983), 42.
[265]Padilla, "Christianity American-Style," *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1975, 61-62.

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from other countries. The first was that in order to understand those who disagree, it is imperative to listen to them:

> Appealing to *ad hominen* arguments or pretending that the criticisms are necessarily inspired by ill will against [US] Americans is simply a way of hiding one's head in the sand. The view that the modern missionary movement has been all too bound up with "[US] American imperialism" is far more widespread than most [North] American evangelicals would like to admit. The important point, however, is not *how many* people hold that view but whether it is supported by the facts.
>
> It is high time for [US] American evangelicals, especially those who are leaders in the churches and in missionary societies, to face the criticisms that are being leveled outside the United States against their "successful" techniques for evangelism and church planting.[266]

Padilla's second reason was that "no one had a monopoly on truth." Those who disagreed with the "growing number of Christians" who believed that "for too long missionary work has been squeezed into a [US] American mold" had two options, according to Padilla. They could either reject as "anti-American" all criticisms, or they could make an "honest evaluation of their position in the light of Scripture to see whether in fact it need to be purged from the defects that others claim to have found in it." Padilla invited his US American readers to realize that,

> Foreign critics are in a position to tell us something about those things in our lives that reflect our culture rather

[266]Ibid. Italics in the original.

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than our commitment to Christ. God's purpose for his people all over the world is that they attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. It remains to be seen how much the Lausanne congress had helped evangelicals everywhere, toward that end.[267]

"Foreign critics are in a position to tell us something about those things in our lives that reflect our culture rather than our commitment to Christ."

Other International Forums

At the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization's (LCWE's) meeting in Berlin in September 1976, a Lausanne Theology and Education Group (LTEG) was formed "to promote theological reflection on issues related to world evangelization and, in particular, to explore the implications of the Lausanne Covenant."[268] The first topic for discussion was the controversial "Homogeneous Unit Principle" (HUP) developed by Fuller Seminary's School of World Mission. The HUP, an important part of the Church Growth school, had stirred criticisms from several fronts, including Padilla and Costas from Latin America.[269] However, as John Stott explained, the discussion on the HUP "somewhat resembled the lobbing of hand grenades across no-man's-land from the trenches on either side."[270] In June 1977, five proponents of HUP

[267]Ibid., 62.
[268]John R. W. Stott, "Ten Years Later: The Lausanne Covenant," in *The Future of World Evangelization: The Lausanne Movement*, ed. Edward R. Dayton and Samuel Wilson (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1984), 67.
[269]For critics outside Latin America, see Bruce W. Fong, *Racial Equality in the Church: A Critique of the Homogeneous Unit Principle in Light of a Practical Theology Perspective* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996).
[270]LCWE, *Pasadena Consultation on the Homogeneous Unit Principle*, Lausanne Occasional Papers, vol. 1 (Wheaton: LCWE, 1978).

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from Fuller and five critics met in Pasadena, California, for a colloquium that "was set up as a common exploration rather than as a confrontation, and as a result we grew in mutual understanding and respect."[271]

There was also a consultation on the gospel and culture, held January 6-13, 1978, in Willowbank, Sommerset Bridge, Bermuda. "It brought 33 theologians, anthropologists, linguists, missionaries and pastors together from all six continents."[272] The Latin American contingency was prominent at Willowbank. Peter Savage acted as general coordinator; René Padilla presented a theological paper on hermeneutics and culture; and Orlando Costas presented his personal testimony as a case study to understand Christian conversion as a complex experience.[273]

The LTEG in association with the theological commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) co-sponsored a two-year study on the topic of simple lifestyle. This process culminated in another consultation, on March 17-21, 1980, in London, England, with "85 evangelical leaders from 27 countries."[274] René Padilla also presented a paper at this

[271]Ibid. The participants were Harvie M. Conn (Westminster), Arthur F. Glasser (Fuller), Victor E. W. Hayward (at one time Research Secretary, International Missionary Council), Charles H. Kraft (Fuller), Donald A. McGavran (Fuller), C. René Padilla (Ediciones Certeza), Robert L. Ramseyer (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries), C. Peter Wagner (Fuller), Ralph D. Winter (United States Center for World Mission), and John H. Yoder (University of Notre Dame). John Stott acted as moderator.

[272]LCWE, *The Willowbank Report—Gospel and Culture*, Lausanne Occasional Papers, no. 2 (Wheaton: LCWE, 1978). See also Robert T. Coote, ed., and John R. Stott, *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).

[273]LCWE, *The Willowbank Report*.

[274]LCWE, *An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Life-Style. Exposition and Commentary by Alan Nichols*, Lausanne Occasional Papers, no. 20 (Wheaton: LCWE, 1980).

consultation: "New Testament Perspectives on Simple Life-Style."[275]

The LTEG and WEF also sponsored the consultation on evangelism and social responsibility, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 19-25, 1982.[276] Padilla participated as a respondent to Arthur Johnson's paper, "The Kingdom in Relation to the Church and the World." Also present was Emilio A. Núñez who acted as a respondent to Peter Kuzmic. John Stott evaluated these international consultations as a valuable means to "listen not only to each other's arguments but to the cherished convictions which lie behind the arguments." For Stott, such listening helped everyone to "develop towards one another a new understanding, respect and love. This is not to say that we agree about everything, but that our agreements are far greater than our residual differences."[277]

"This is not to say that we agree about everything, but that our agreements are far greater than our residual differences."

There were also other international forums in which Latin American theologians participated. For example, the David C. Cook Foundation and Partnership in Mission, a service

[275]Padilla's paper and the other papers presented are available at Ronald J. Sider, ed., *Lifestyle in the Eighties: An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle*, Contemporary Issues in Social Ethics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982). For understanding the relationship of the FTL to the theological commission of WEF, see Anthony Christopher Smith, "Essentials of Missiology from the Evangelical Perspective of the 'Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana'," 334-343.

[276]LCWE, *Grand Rapids Report*. See also C. René Padilla, "La Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana y la Responsabilidad Social de la Iglesia," *Boletín Teológico* 59/60 (1995):102-104.

[277]LCWE, *Grand Rapids Report*.

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agency of the National Liberty Foundation—the organization Peter Savage represented in Latin America—cosponsored the "Evangelical Literature in the Latin World Consultation," at Pinebrook Conference Center, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, June 23-27, 1975. Savage himself was the coordinator.[278] Escobar acted as director and presented a paper on "Fostering Indigenous Authorship." Also, Padilla presented the paper "Contextualization and the Gospel."

Padilla, reminiscing on his participation in this consultation, considered his paper as "one of the cutting-edge reflections in evangelical circles on that theme. It was something that concerned me much." In his paper, Padilla explained that for him, the "revelational 'givens' of the Gospel have been uncritically mixed with the cultural and sectarian baggage of the West." The consultation centered on discussing questions like, "Does evangelical literature produced in North America fail to show adequate appreciation for this cultural dynamic? To what extent has inappropriate literature been imposed on Latin America? Is the literature enterprise an authentic Christian vocation? Or is it a 'secular' pursuit?"[279]

At the Pinebrook consultation, Escobar and Padilla pleaded for freedom to write and publish. For Escobar, the first necessary condition for indigenous authors to flourish was "freedom and acceptance of risk in the atmosphere of the church."[280] When asked about this, Padilla explained the

[278]"Pinebrook Consultation on Latin America, June 1975," *RES News Exchange* 12, no. 8 (1975):1099. See also "Evangelical Literature in the Latin World Consultation. June 23-27, 1975," ed. Peter Savage (Pinebrook Conference Center, Stroudsburg, PA: David C. Cook Foundation and Partnership in Mission, 1975).

[279]Padilla, interview.

[280]"Pinebrook Consultation," 1098.

current situation as resulting from conditions imposed by the publishing houses. In Padilla's words, "unless one wrote according to the norms of the evangelical orthodoxy in the United States it was impossible to publish."[281] The consultation ended with a commitment of publishers, mission executives, and distributors to intentionally promote Latin American authorship and publishing.

For too long "unless one wrote according to the norms of the evangelical orthodoxy in the United States it was impossible to publish."

There was also a Latin American representation at the consultation on "Church and Nationhood," cosponsored by the theological commission of WEF and the WCC, September 14-18, 1976, in St. Chrischona, near Basel, Switzerland. The FTL was represented by Pablo Pérez, Peter Savage, Samuel Escobar, and Andrew Kirk. The consultation produced "The Basel Letter to the Churches."[282] Pablo Pérez presented the paper, "The Third World of Emerging Nationalism—Latin America." A commentator said that this meeting was an opportunity for a "fertile dialogue, in the common framework of the evangelical theological heritage: respect for the Word of God, conviction about the need for a new birth, and a strong evangelistic and missionary vocation."[283]

Summary

ICOWE was a recognition of the assiduous work of the FTL. When the time came to select the speakers and

[281]Padilla, interview.
[282]Lionel Holmes, ed., *Church and Nationhood: A Collection of Papers Originally Presented at a Consultation in Basel, September 1976* (New Delhi: Theological Commission, World Evangelical Fellowship, 1978).
[283]"Carta de Basilea Sobre Iglesia y Estado," *Certeza* 17, no. 65 (1977):26.

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workshop leaders for Lausanne, there was already a roll of names from which to choose. ICOWE was also the appropriate time for Latin Americans to contribute from their perspective to the global discussion on evangelism and mission. Even though there were at Lausanne several voices and positions, the Latin American participation was particularly influential in breaking the hegemony of US American agendas. It was clear at Lausanne that the Latin American evangelical theology was in a process of maturation and independence. Latin Americans were evaluating and criticizing, positively and negatively, the theological dependence upon US American and European theologies. Padilla and Escobar gave ICOWE an indelible, high-quality, evangelical, and prophetic call to order.

Even though neither Padilla nor Escobar were nominated for the LCWE, it is important to notice that they continued their contributions within the Lausanne movement from the LTEG. As we explained, both Latin Americans disagreed with the path the LCWE was taking regarding the issues of evangelization and social responsibility. However, their dissidence should not be interpreted as lack of interest in evangelism. After Lausanne, both continued their involvement in evangelism of university students and professionals. They were not opposing evangelism *per se*, rather a narrow definition of evangelism that left social participation as optional or dispensable.

It is important to notice that the themes for the consultations the LTEG organized were central themes in Padilla's and Escobar's plenary papers and presentations at ICOWE.[284] Themes like gospel and culture, Christian lifestyle, the Church Growth movement, and social action

[284]Personal conversation with Dr. Padilla.

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became contested topics that needed to be expanded and fine-tuned. We could say, without exaggeration, that the Latin Americans gave the Lausanne movement an agenda for the following decade after Lausanne '74. Such an agenda found support in other parts of the world and was endorsed by the LTEG's choice of themes for their consultations. Latin Americans did not go to Lausanne just for the sake of controversy, but to enter in an honest and open dialogue with the rest of the world and especially with the US American evangelicals.

They were not opposing evangelism per se*, rather a narrow definition of evangelism that left social participation as optional or dispensable.*

It was not an easy dialogue. There were many misunderstandings on both sides. But there were also areas of understanding and growth in mutual trust. Not all questions were answered. Nor were all issues resolved. The important improvement was that the dialogue continued, that there was an open door of conversation. Although significant differences remained, Latin Americans were now dialoguing as equal partners. They left behind the days when their main role in the conversation was as listener and learner. At least that was how they perceived the dialogue. This change, as we saw, was not easy for the US American interlocutors. It was much harder for them to abandon their habitual role of speaking as superior. Both sides had to make quite a few adjustments to break traditional ways of approaching each other. In the end, both sides became richer having gained in understanding the others' points of view.

Lausanne also broadened the platform for Latin American evangelical theology. This theology became a conversation

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partner with other continents. This new environment for theological dialogue provided for Latin Americans new forums of participation. The usual two-way dialogue with US America was expanded to a multi-way conversation with the rest of the world. Latin Americans, for example, were instrumental in the organization of the Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World, in Bangkok, Thailand, March 22-25, 1982.[285] This conference represented the culmination of a process that started at Lausanne where Latin Americans came into contact with theologians from other parts of the world who were dealing with similar issues and who were struggling to make relevant theology in their own contexts. After Lausanne, the FTL became a productive partner in a worldwide theological network where US Americans were not the only interlocutors.

Besides the participation of Latin Americans in the midst of the Lausanne Movement, the FTL continued to pursue a heavy program in Latin America. In 1976, Leon Morris traveled across Latin America speaking to pastors about hermeneutics and New Testament issues. There was a consultation on "God's People" in Itaicí, Brazil, in March 1977 followed by the Third General Assembly of the FTL. John Stott visited the region between June and July of the same year. Also, in 1979 Michael Green spoke on evangelization in the early church to pastors in Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru. Between these activities there were several other sub-regional consultations

[285]For the papers of the Bangkok conference, see Samuel Vinay and Christopher Sudgen, eds., *Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World: Evangelical Christologies from the Contexts of Poverty, Powerlessness and Religious Pluralism* (Bangalore, India: Partnership in Mission Asia: Asia Trading Corporation, 1983).

on different themes.[286] All of these activities served as preamble to a more significant advance toward a mature Latin American evangelical theology—the organization of the *Segundo Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización* (CLADE II), October 31 to November 8, 1979, in Huampaní, Lima, Peru. CLADE II is treated in the next chapter. Here, however, we want to call attention to the fact that the FTL had come to an active role, independent of US American influence, in defining and leading the evangelical theology in Latin America. The time of indigenous congresses and theological initiatives had come to Latin America.

Chapter 5: CLADE II—Huampaní, Peru, November 1979

With the victory of the *Sandinistas* in Nicaragua and the instauration of a Marxist regime in Grenada, both in 1979, the inter-American relationship was in dire straits. Washington feared another Cuba in its backyard and its subsequent actions—support to the *Contras* and the invasion of Grenada in 1982—only deepened the chasm with Latin American. Nicaragua and Grenada became tokens of the enormous abyss of perceptions between US and Latin America. Latin Americans saw in the fall of Somoza the end of several decades of oppression and systematic looting of the country by a small oligarchy, and consequently this victory brought hope for better times and empowering of the people of Latin America.[287] For Washing-

[286]For a more complete list see "Cronología de Actividades de la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana." *Boletín Teológico* 27, no. 59-60 (1995):26-33.
[287]See Jesús Cambre Mariño, *América Central Durante la Época Reagan* (Barcelona: Institut Catòlic d'Estudis Socials, 1989).

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ton, Latin America and the Caribbean were on the brink of becoming part of the "evil empire," and therefore it felt the urge to stop the "red danger" of communism.[288]

In 1979 evangelicals in Latin America were facing urgent and unavoidable questions: How does one explain the gospel to a generation of war orphans? Does the Bible have anything to say to the military juntas*, dictators, and other repressive regimes?*

In 1979 evangelicals in Latin America were facing urgent and unavoidable questions that demanded answers rooted in the Bible and that had practical applications. How does one explain the gospel to a generation of war orphans? Does the Bible have anything to say to the military *juntas*, dictators, and other repressive regimes? Is the gospel only about a mansion in heaven, or does it have something to do with earthly life for a Latin America in tears? When the time came for the FTL to convene the *Segundo Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización*—CLADE II—it had as backdrop at least three things. First, there had been at least 200,000 political deaths and 100,000 disappearances on the continent during the 1970s. Second, the number of people living in poverty was

[288]See United States Congress. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, *Impact of Cuban-Soviet Ties in the Western Hemisphere, Spring 1979: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-Sixth Congress, First Session, April 25 and 26, 1979.* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979); Cyrus R. Vance and United States Dept. of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *Inter-American Challenges for the 1980's*, Current Policy—Dept. of State, no. 105. (Washington D.C.: Dept. of State Bureau of Public Affairs, 1979); Anita C. Walter, "Vital Interests vs. International Law: The Role of the United States in Latin America with Nicaragua as a Case Study" (B.A. thesis, Bucknell University, 1986).

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increasing. And third, there was a growing migration of people to the cities with the consequent social complications and new social realities. The region was quite different from what it had been ten years before. Social and political conditions had worsened, and there was little hope of reversing the trend. Samuel Escobar observed:

> We are in a continent where there is more poverty, more unemployment, more youth with less perspective for the future, less political stability, bigger and more open manifestations of violence and violations of human rights, an unstoppable massive urbanization and a tremendous religious confusion. However, it is clear that the facets of this crisis are different in each country or region.[289]

CLADE II, in contrast to CLADE I, was completely convened, prepared, administered, and designed by Latin Americans. "This is a significant difference from CLADE I and enhanced its Latin American concerns and sensitivities."[290] CLADE II marked the end of the first decade of intensive theological labor. According to C. René Padilla, Orlando Costas had originally presented the idea of organizing CLADE II to the executive committee of the FTL in 1976. After all, "The only thing left of CLADE I was the FTL," Costas said. Peter Savage started to raise funds immediately, to invite people, and to spread the news. Padilla evaluated the fact that CLADE II happened as a "miracle" since they were only "four lonely cats" convening a conference.[291]

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[289]CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80. Un Congreso Auspiciado Por la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (Lima: 1979), xi.

[290]Arno W. Enns, *Report on CLADE II (Latin American Congress on Evangelism)* (Huampaní, Peru, 1979), 1.

[291]Padilla, interview.

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266 people from 21 countries and 39 evangelical denominations attended CLADE II.[292] There were only 12 US Americans registered as participants, "plus a small number of observers and press representatives."[293] The executive committee of the FTL defined five objectives for CLADE II:

1. To stimulate the mobilization of Protestant Christians throughout the continent for an authentic and efficacious evangelization.
2. To consider the challenges and opportunities that Latin America presents to the church's evangelizing mission on the eve of a new decade.
3. To bring awaRenéss to the numerous spiritual and human resources that are available to Latin American Protestants for the fulfillment of their evangelizing mission.
4. To work out a relevant strategy and contextual evangelistic models for a profound and efficacious communication of the Gospel in Latin America in the 1980s.
5. To strengthen the ties of Protestant evangelistic leaders and thus stimulate a greater cooperation in the communication of the Gospel in the various regions of the continent.[294]

These five objectives for CLADE II echoed the Lausanne Covenant. The first objective related to the Covenant's

[292]For a breakdown by countries and denominations see Partnership in Mission (PIM), *CLADE II Reports* (Abington, PA: Partnership in Mission, 1979).
[293]W. Dayton Roberts, "Latin America News Front," *Latin America Evangelist*, January-February, 1980.
[294]*FTL, "Proposal for the Celebration of the Second Latin American Congress on Evangelization* (CLADE II)" (Buenos Aires, Argentina: 1978), 3.

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fourth article in which evangelism is defined as "the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God."[295] Objectives two and three were in themselves a response to the challenge laid out in article nine which called "churches and para-church agencies to pray earnestly for the salvation of the unreached and to launch new efforts to achieve world evangelization." The "contextual evangelistic models" of objective four were a practical application of what article ten said about "the rise of churches deeply rooted in Christ and closely related to their culture." The fourth objective for CLADE II was also a response to what the Lausanne Covenant said in article eight, that the "churches should therefore be asking God and themselves what they should be doing both to reach their own area and to send missionaries to other parts of the world. A reevaluation of our missionary responsibility and role should be continuous." The fifth objective followed the guidelines of articles seven and eight that encouraged churches to seek unity, cooperation, and partnership in the evangelistic mission.

This relationship of CLADE II and Lausanne '74 was intentional. Organizers of CLADE II understood the gathering to be in line with ICOWE. This relationship came out clearly in the motto chosen for CLADE II: *"That Latin America May Hear God's Voice*."[296] A prerequisite for all the participants was to agree with the spirit and the letter of the Lausanne Covenant. Escobar explained that the explicit intention of CLADE II was to take "an inventory of what was being done in evangelism, to reflect on the Gospel message, and to think

[295]Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 4.
[296]Lausanne's theme was "Let the Earth Hear His Voice."

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on the future of the evangelistic task, taking seriously the reality of the Latin American context."[297]

The organizers chose Reformation Day as the date to launch CLADE II, with an evening public gathering at a Christian and Missionary Alliance church in Lima. Emilio Antonio Núñez delivered the message, "Heirs of the Reformation." Núñez expounded four tenets of the Protestant Reformation—*Sola Gratia, Solus Christos, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura*—and applied them to Latin America. In the end, Núñez called the participants to let the Bible "norm our thoughts and feelings in the congress we start today, and in the difficult but glorious task we have ahead in our Latin America."[298]

CLADE II's program had three parts. The first was a descriptive one. It included reports of evangelism to indigenous minorities, urban centers, children, prisoners, students, marginalized youth groups, families, refugees, and others. There were also regional reports from the Southern Cone,[299] Brazil, the Andean countries,[300] the Caribbean and Venezuela, Mexico, and Hispanics in the United States.[301] Samuel Escobar concluded that this description of evangelism in Latin America demonstrated that the 1970s in Latin America were years "of real development and steady advance in almost all the countries."[302]

The second part of the program aimed to reflect on major issues related to evangelism characteristic of each

[297]CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, xi.
[298]CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, 163-170.
[299]Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.
[300]Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.
[301]These reports are available at CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, 1-144.
[302]Ibid., xiii.

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geographical region, followed by a theological reflection on four theological themes. Each theme was expounded by two different people to ensure wide representation.[303] The information given to all the participants of CLADE II explained that the goal was to promote dialogue and not just to have experts present papers to a passive audience. After the two speakers presented in fifteen minutes the main tenets of their papers, a half hour of questions from the participants followed. In this open time attendees could clarify concepts or comment on the papers. Then, forty-three small groups discussed the papers and wrote a brief summary of different reactions.[304] In that way the participants were able to reflect on the themes and elaborate their own conclusions.

The last two full days of the congress were dedicated to collaborating on "concrete plans for evangelistic action in the 1980s."

The third part of the congress intended to formulate "concrete plans for evangelistic action in the 1980s."[305] These plans were written down in an extensive document with strategic projections for several areas of ministry.[306] The last two full days of the congress were dedicated to this section;

[303]"Christ and Anti-Christ in Proclamation," C. René Padilla and Valdir R. Steuernagel; "Sin and Salvation in Contemporary Latin America," Russell Shedd and Orlando E. Costas; "Word and Spirit in the Evangelistic Community," J. Norberto Saracco and Rolando Gutiérrez Cortés; "Hope and Hopelessness in the Continental Crisis," Samuel Escobar and Mortimer Arias. These presentations are available at CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, 145-335.

[304]These summaries are available at ibid., 337-340.

[305]FTL, "Proposal for the Celebration of the Second Latin American Congress on Evangelization (CLADE II)," 4.

[306]*Documento de Proyecciones y Estrategias*, CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, 341-356.

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it took place in small working groups formed by regions and special interests. The strategic plan was accompanied by the theological agenda of the FTL for the 1980s, which included such themes as Word and Spirit in discipleship, the authority of the Scriptures in view of the increasing interest in the Bible by Roman Catholics, social ethics, christology, and ecclessiology. Escobar explained that these themes "came out of [the FTL's] mission and not of the academic whim of the latest university celebrity."[307]

Part of the program was also devoted to a public rally with about 10,000 evangelicals from local churches, after which the delegates participated in the Sunday services in many of the evangelical churches in Lima. There was also a panel on the challenges of the eighties to evangelism with Luis Palau, Samuel Libert, Alberto Mottesi, and Orlando Costas. Arno Enns perceived "the potential for sharp confrontation in hallway conversations prior to the session." However, as Enns explained, there was a "fraternal atmosphere."[308]

Two unplanned sessions provided participants the opportunity to listen to the Cuban and Nicaraguan delegates about their experiences as evangelical Christians in their countries. The Cuban representation "assured their CLADE

[307]Escobar, "Espíritu y Mensaje del CLADE II," *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, xvii.
[308]Enns, *Report on CLADE II*, 2.

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colleagues that Christians in Cuba experience freedom to worship, instruct their youth, and even evangelize, both in their homes and their churches."[309] During the Nicaraguan report the audience hushed. As Faith Sand, who was present at CLADE II, reported, "No one will forget the evening when the Nicaraguan delegation shared the agonies and the victories of their recent bloody struggles. They felt they had no other option and yet the tragedy remains that everyone lost someone precious to the monstrous revolution."[310] The majority of the delegates "acknowledged with sorrow that they had been naive about their fellow believers' sufferings and the extent of the dictatorship's brutality."[311] CLADE II sent the eight Nicaraguan delegates with a monetary offering as a token of love and solidarity.[312]

The program in itself already represented a step towards maturity and independence from foreign influence. CLADE II showed a variety of approaches to deal with a particular theme. The predominant atmosphere was one of dialogue, of sincere listening with the intention of learning from the other. There were no experts teaching their wisdom to an unlearned majority. The idea was to evaluate and plan for the future together. Organizers did not have a premeditated agenda for the participants to approve. The first part of the program was an intentional effort to make a realistic evaluation of the situation in the continent. As Escobar explained, these regional reports showed how the "capacity of evangelicals to understand their context and be able to

[309]PIM, *CLADE II Reports*, 3.
[310]Faith Annette Sand, "Huampaní, Peru, Oct-Nov, 1979," *Missiology* 8, no. 3 (1980):341.
[311]PIM, *CLADE II Reports*, 3.
[312]For a short report on the Nicaraguan participation see "Nicaragua: The Shaking and Shifting of the Church," *Christianity Today*, December 7, 1979.

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live and evangelize better had grown and had become sharper during the decade."[313] These reports were prepared and presented by Latin Americans following their own criteria and without the statistical approach of which US Americans were so fond. They did not have charts with percentages and numbers, nor did they have numerical evaluations. Latin Americans looked at the state of the church in the continent through experiential criteria.

The invitation was open for anyone who wanted to participate, if he or she agreed with the Lausanne Covenant and were involved in any type of evangelism.

The second part of the program was a new approach for a congress of this kind. To have different perspectives, sometimes in conflict with each other, was not part of the way things were done before; it was in contrast, for example, with CLADE I, where the program was knit so tightly and with one string. A flexible program with working groups and open to unplanned meetings was definitely showing more Latin American characteristics than any other congress before. Latin American inclusiveness already noted was obvious in CLADE II, a trait so difficult for foreigners to understand. The organizers did not have a problem inviting people of such opposite positions like Luis Palau and Mortimer Arias. The intention, as they explained, was not to open a battle field but to listen and dialogue in order to enrich the evangelistic experience. Such a program would have been unthinkable only a few years before under foreign leadership.

The way the convocation to CLADE II took place was also in sharp contrast with CLADE I. As we noticed, organizers of CLADE I carefully screened the lists of delegates

[313]Escobar, "Espíritu y Mensaje del CLADE II," xiii.

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to avoid the participation of certain people. In the case of CLADE II the invitation was open for anyone who wanted to participate, if he or she agreed with the Lausanne Covenant and were involved in any type of evangelism.

Understandably so, this kind of a program caused some adjustment pains for a few people. Enns noted:

> Because the program was organized and planned by the leadership of the Latin American Theological Fraternity which is accustomed to serious and controversial theological interchange, the CLADE II program was a bit too heavy or concentrated, and also somewhat too controversial for the average participant. This led to some tension, much of which may have been creative and productive, but which on the other hand may have contributed to a rather noticeable tendency to polarize the Evangelical Community of Latin America. Other pressures for polarization proceeded from sectors interested in preserving traditional or specialized group interest. This tendency was largely offset by the position and direct intervention of the key leadership of the congress.[314]

Another area where CLADE II signified a clear movement toward autochthonous leadership was in the finances of the congress. In sharp contrast with CLADE I approximately forty percent of the cost of CLADE II was paid by Latin American contributions.[315] Also, the sources of foreign support were more European—German, English, and Dutch—than North American.[316] Regarding the fund-raising process, Faith Sand commented that "CLADE II organizers

[314]Enns, *Report on CLADE II*, 2.
[315]Ibid.
[316]Padilla and Escobar, when interviewed independently, agreed on this point.

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were paranoid about accepting any First World money that had power strings attached."[317] For example, Escobar remembered that the BGEA agreed to support CLADE II with $5,000, but in the end, after the BGEA realized that "Arias, Costas and others" were playing important roles at the congress, the money was not given.[318] CLADE II signified an important move from traditional sources of financial aid, signaling substantial changes of power structures.

In contrast to CLADE I, where the strategic plan was presented by the executive committee as a package to be approved, at CLADE II the plan was elaborated by the participants themselves in the small working groups. The plan came from their own interests and from their own understanding of their particular reality. The report prepared by Partnership in Mission (PIM) commented about the document's strategic projections:

> There appeared to be a general inclination to rely more consistently and vigorously on local church outreach and family-oriented evangelism (Bible study and prayer groups, etc.) and less on the "big temple" approach, where membership swells into the thousands, and less on the mass crusades which CLADE I had advocated ten years ago.[319]

The plan was presented to the churches, not as the final word, but as a suggested proposal to be evaluated and implemented. The plan left much room for the delegates and the receptive churches to modify, add, and cut according to whatever they found applicable in their specific location. However, this did not mean the plan was vague

[317]Sand, "Huampaní, Peru, Oct-Nov, 1979," 340.
[318]Escobar, interview.
[319]PIM, *CLADE II Reports*, 3.

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and undefined. On the contrary, it contained clear directives with objectives and recommendations for each area. There were practical steps taken at CLADE II on many issues. For example, on ethnic groups, the participants decided to name a committee to plan for the first theological congress of native Latin American leaders some time in 1981 in Ecuador. Moisés Colop assumed the responsibility to start publishing a news bulletin on evangelism among native ethnic groups.[320] The group representing the Andean countries also named a committee to take practical steps forward. The group decided to create a center for documentation and information about evangelism and other related issues in their region.[321] Both initiatives—from the ethnic groups and Andean countries—merged in 1981 to form CEMAA, the *Centro Evangélico de Misiología Andino-Amazónica*, under the leadership of Peruvian anthropologist Tito Paredes.[322]

Alfredo Torres, a Colombian delegate to CLADE II, noted this move toward indigenous initiative:

> If Western manipulation did exist at the conference, it wasn't perceived. Rather, we saw at Huampaní a real possibility for the unity of the Latin American people which seems to happen naturally when we get together. Often when the [US] Americans come in they bring their denominations with them and then start making divisions among us.[323]

US Americans were both encouraged by and suspicious of CLADE II and its organizers. When the convocation for

[320]CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, 347.
[321]Ibid., 349.
[322]See www.cemaa.org.
[323]Sand, "Huampaní, Peru, Oct-Nov, 1979," 343.

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the congress was distributed, Peter Wagner, who we remember from previous chapters had become increasingly hostile toward the FTL, wrote a letter to Leighton Ford about CLADE II:

> Those who are organizing it are not those who are known to be especially concerned with evangelism as we in the LCWE are looking at it. Rather they tend to accentuate socio-political issues and rationalize their activities as a kind of evangelism. I do not believe they are in synch with the other congresses on evangelism which we are supporting in other regions of the world. Their agenda is quite different. As you mention types such as Nilson Fanini, Luis Palau, Bruno Frigioli and Francisco Anabalon represent a different camp in Latin America.
>
> I also discussed it a week ago with Orlando Costas, one of the organizers. He argues that the Theological Fellowship was the only evangelical structure that emerged from CLADE I in Bogota and this is correct. It is not reason enough, however, in my opinion, to provide credentials to convene a CLADE II since evangelism as such has not been a central concern of the Fraternity through the years. I feel they are going to use the good reputation of "CLADE" to develop a forum for emphasizing their socio-political ideas. I would predict that this will turn off the grassroots Pentecostals just like Padilla and Escobar's addresses did in Lausanne.
>
> Having said this, I do not believe the LCWE should ever boycott it. But I do believe we should keep a low profile, remain at a cautious distance, and watch carefully how the program develops.[324]

[324]Letter from C. Peter Wagner to Leighton Ford, dated January 31, 1979, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 2, Folder 15.

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This letter takes us back to ICOWE and the narrower and wider definitions of evangelism. It is also illuminating regarding the path LCWE took on the issue, as Wagner understood it. Wagner's letter is correct in the fact that Latin Americans were definitely not following a US American agenda in CLADE II. The congress had a clear Latin American ethos that did not follow completely what the Church Growth movement and the LCWE were doing in other regions of the world. However, as Steuernagel pointed out, the agenda of CLADE II was "consistently evangelical."[325]

By the end of the 1970s no one remembered CLADE I except those at the FTL. If they were not authorized to convene CLADE II, who was?

Even though Wagner recognized that the FTL was the only permanent result of CLADE I, he became adamant regarding their credentials as the organizers of CLADE II. It is not clear what the "good reputation of CLADE" meant. By the end of the 1970s no one remembered CLADE I except those at the FTL. If they were not authorized to convene CLADE II, who was? The LCWE? This letter is significant in clarifying the difficulties Latin Americans went through to achieve independence from foreign agendas. It also shows the difficulties experienced by those who were accustomed to holding the power in their hands as they watched their constituency taking their own steps. Wagner's missive also helps us to see the polarization Enns mentioned above.

As noted before, the conveners of CLADE II understood the congress as remaining under the umbrella of the Lausanne movement. Peter Savage, as international

[325]Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission," 225.

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coordinator of the FTL, sent a letter to David Howard, who at that time was with WEF, noting the following:

> I am sure you agree that you and that other members of the LCWE Executive Committee will insure that people around will see CLADE II vitally linked with the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.
>
> In fact, I should stress that we are insisting that all those who attend CLADE II should be in agreement with the spirit of the Lausanne covenant, and participate in materials based upon the course prepared by the strategy committee of the LCWE.[326]

This link between CLADE II and the Lausanne movement was a given for the FTL members. However, some US Americans did not see it that way. In a personal note to David Howard regarding Howard's invitation from Savage to CLADE II, Leighton Ford wrote the following:

> Dave: I would be happy for you to attend CLADE II if your schedule permits. I have certain questions about Peter's desire to insure that people will see them vitally linked with LCWE. As you know, CLADE II is not really representative of the Lausanne constituency, even in S. America.[327]

Ford's words clearly show two different perceptions of the Lausanne movement and two different perceptions of CLADE II. For the Latin Americans in the FTL, the Lausanne Covenant's definition of mission included evangelism as well as social action. They went ahead and developed the program for CLADE II with that understanding. Therefore,

[326]Letter from Peter Savage to David Howard, October 1, 1979, Billy Graham Center Archives, "Collection 46," Box 2, Folder 15.
[327]Ibid.

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it would be hard to understand Ford's caution if we fail to realize that both sides were using similar language but with different meanings. Evangelism was understood by the Latin Americans as part of the mission of the church. For US Americans, evangelism alone *was* the church's mission. Ford and Wagner clearly saw the difference. The Latin Americans in charge of CLADE II were not following the banner the LCWE hoisted after ICOWE.

Steuernagel summarized the different perceptions of Lausanne and CLADE II by US and Latin Americans: "CLADE II, by following the theological agenda of the FTL, did not satisfy the North American evangelical establishment."[328] Furthermore, the FTL's emphasis was from the beginning "an authentic Latin American church, facing the task of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in the environment of the suffering, tragic and culturally rich Latin American situation."[329]

The two different perceptions of CLADE II also became clear in William Conard's report.[330] Conard was a Plymouth Brethren missionary based in Mexico and a freelance reporter for several US American publications including *Christianity Today* and *Eternity*. Conard reported as one who was present in Huampaní. Regarding the evaluative part of the first two days of the congress, Conard mentioned Dayton Robert's view that the "cultural 'context' might overshadow the biblical 'text.'" Conard said that some participants at CLADE II even complained "about the lack of biblical emphasis."

Conard accused the organizers of CLADE II of concealing from participants the real agenda of the congress. According

[328]Steuernagel, "The Theology of Mission."
[329]Ibid., 226.
[330]Bill Conard, "Latins Pronounce Two Gospel Approaches," *Eternity* 31, no. 2 (1980).

to him, the congress was not about evangelism but about a dialogue with liberation theologies. He said that "many at the congress did not realize this and were surprised to learn of it." For Conard, "government policies seemed to receive disproportionate emphasis for a congress on evangelization, and even more so when observing that in most Latin nations evangelicals represent less than 10 percent of the population." To close his report, Conard quoted an "important denominational leader," who said that "I hope that in two or three years we can have a conference that really centers in evangelism."

There was no way the Latin Americans could negate those hard experiences and talk about a sterilized evangelism uncontaminated with the "germs" of politics.

Conard should have noticed that the organizers of CLADE II had a strong evangelistic commitment but to an evangelism that goes beyond the individual and influences society in general. However, he quoted a Cuban seminary professor who commented:

> I notice two currents here regarding evangelization: some view evangelization as the creation of political awareness, while others see it as winning souls. We have had to think seriously about this in my country and have decided that not only must we save people from the world, but we must send them back into our society with a biblical message.

The Cuban professor understood that it was not an either/or evangelism; it was a both/and evangelism. The social, political, and economic context demanded an evangelism that included both sides. It was difficult for the US Americans

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to understand the interest of their Latin American brethren in politics and social conditions. The Latin Americans had relatives and members of their churches jailed, tortured, and killed by repressive governments. They had to deal with a growing number of widows and orphans because of the political climate. They saw over half of their congregations migrate to other continents as political and economic refugees. There was no way they could negate those hard experiences and talk about a sterilized evangelism uncontaminated with the "germs" of politics.

Faith Sand noticed the either/or approach to evangelism by some at CLADE II. She particularly identified Luis Palau who went to Huampaní to present a paper but did not stay to interact with the other participants. Palau "perceived as a threat" the contextualization of the gospel. According to Sand, Palau's report of CLADE II "borders on the jingoistic as he assails the conferees for stressing the 'temporal, more than the spiritual ministry of the church.'"[331] Sand responded:

> But the question seems to be, why is "temporal" used pejoratively? Temporal means "of or relating to earthly life" and one cannot but remember the disciples' concentration on the "eternal" questions like who have the best power seats when the kingdom was established while Christ was caught up in the "temporal" matters like putting mud on the eye of a blind man so that he could say, "All I know is that before I was blind, now I see!" There is no need for the Palau set to convolute the gospel in order to justify their programs of sweeping into a town, giving the message, saving the souls and going on to the next without getting involved in the

[331]Sand, "Huampaní, Peru, Oct-Nov, 1979," 341.

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> context. Surely God loves diversity enough to allow Palau's to do their thing while the Dom Hélder Câmara's and the Mother Teresa's pursue their ministry among the lepers, the poor and the dying.[332]

According to Padilla, there was at CLADE II a small number of people who would have agreed with Conard. However, "over ninety percent of the people either knew what CLADE was about, because the themes were announced beforehand, or during the congress they grasped the vision of what we were trying to do and subsequently changed their minds and their concept of ministry."[333] The organizers were aware of the criticisms. Padilla, for example, wrote that "CLADE II is likely to be criticized for its emphasis on the need for contextualized evangelization in the 1980s."[334] In the same tone, Escobar observed:

> We must take into account that there have been foreign commentators who looking at CLADE I saw in our timid efforts to contextualize the gospel a dangerous departure from the "simple gospel." For them Lima will probably be a terrible apostasy. But we who live the gospel in these lands believe that the Spirit is pushing us in this direction, to take more seriously our witness, to stop reducing the gospel, dressing it with foreign clothes, to put an end to the artificial separation between evangelization and theology, to move from a busy ecclesiastical traffic on to a more serious way of being the Lord's church in Latin America.[335]

[332]Ibid., 342.
[333]Padilla, interview.
[334]C. René Padilla, "Being God's Church in Latin America: CLADE II Affirms Evangelical Convictions in the Context of Violence, Exploitation, and Corruption," *Christianity Today*, March 21, 1980, 410.
[335]Ibid.

Escobar and the other organizers of CLADE II showed boldness and commitment to what they understood their calling to be. They acted with maturity and independence. Even though they were keenly aware of the risks, the difficulties, and the possibilities, they decided to go ahead in spite of what others might have said. During the last press conference in Huampaní, Escobar said, "We need to recognize that there are in CLADE II different or conflicting positions within a common biblical framework; there have been different ways to interpret the [Latin American] reality." Savage added to Escobar's remarks that many people told him during the congress that the understanding of the gospel they had received was static and consequently impeded them from listening to others. Also, Savage said, "We should not forget that all the participants of CLADE II represent different regional situations and therefore bring different ways of perceiving reality."[336]

However, the Latin Americans in charge of CLADE II considered the diversity of opinions and approaches to evangelism an asset instead of a liability. As we have noticed, those at the FTL were used to working with "creative tensions." For Escobar, "It is a symptom of Christian maturity to accept a plurality of thought, even among those who have in common the same evangelical foundation."[337] Latin Americans were more prone to underscore those areas where there was agreement.[338]

The consensus reached in Huampaní found its expression in the final document of the congress: *Carta de CLADE II*.[339] In this letter to the evangelical people in Latin America, the 266 participants reaffirmed their adhesion to the *Declara-*

[336]CLADE-II, *Boletín de Prensa, 7 de Noviembre, 1979* (Huampaní, Peru, 1979).
[337]Ibid.
[338]CLADE-II, *América Latina y la Evangelización en los Años 80*, viii.

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ción de Bogotá of CLADE I and to the Lausanne Covenant. They also expressed their thanksgiving for the evangelical heritage and the efforts of those—either foreigners or nationals—who took the gospel to Latin America. Roberts commenting on the letter from CLADE II said that it "was careful to avoid any overt swing to the left."[340] Genet evaluated the letter as "theologically conservative and socially centrist."[341] Conard, in contrast with his negative evaluation of CLADE II, saw the letter as "conservative evangelical" since it "attested to the supreme authority of the Bible and looked forward to singular blessings in coming decades which will result in the salvation and formation of a great community of faith."[342] For Padilla, the letter indicated al least two things. First, "CLADE II was more than a mere reaffirmation of basic evangelical convictions, however: it was an effort to understand the meaning of such convictions *within a particular historical context*." Second, while the letter included a direct recognition of "the fantastic numerical growth of evangelical (and especially Pentecostal) churches in Latin America," it also pointed to "the need for a more holistic approach to the mission of the church, in which faith is regarded as inseparable from obedience and the call to conversion is seen as a call to radical discipleship."[343]

The consensus reached in Huampaní found its expression in the "theologically conservative and socially centrist" final document of the congress: Carta de CLADE II.

[339]See Appendix 4.
[340]Roberts, "Latin America News Front," 18.
[341]Harry Genet, "Latin Evangelicals Chart their own Course," *Christianity Today*, December 7, 1979, 1639.
[342]Conard, "Latins Pronounce Two Gospel Approaches," 18.
[343]Padilla, "Being God's Church," 410. Italics in the original.

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Summary

In summary, CLADE II, a congress on evangelization completely organized by Latin Americans, marked the end of an intense decade of theological production of the FTL in Hispanic Latin America. As with previous gatherings, CLADE II was perceived differently by US Americans and Latin Americans. The latter saw the congress following the guidelines and the spirit of the Lausanne Covenant and therefore as under the umbrella of the Lausanne movement. US Americans disagreed; they saw CLADE II as not representing LCWE in Latin America.

Also following their interpretation of the Lausanne Covenant, the organizers of CLADE II understood evangelism and social involvement as essential parts of the mission of the church, an emphasis reflected in the program of the congress. Their context led them to see a direct application of the gospel to socio-political issues. US Americans saw this mixture of gospel and social action as a danger to the purity of the gospel. They felt uncomfortable with how things were developing. Soon it became an issue of control, a power struggle. One side was reluctant to give it up; the other side was determined to have more of it. The dialogue between US and Latin Americans that was taking place within the Lausanne movement, as we saw in chapter 4, was not reflected in CLADE II. Latin Americans did their thing while most US Americans remained at bay. The locals felt empowered by the experience of being in charge; most foreigners did not like the feeling of being left out.

Conclusion

CLADE IV (Quito, September 2-8, 2000) gathered more than 1200 evangelical leaders from Latin America to discern their Christian mission for the twenty-first century. This

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congress, as its two precedent ones, was planned, convened, organized, and carried out by the FTL. Several of the theologians we have met in this study acted as main speakers, workshop moderators, and leaders of the congress. In many ways the gathering validated the work and ministry the FTL had over the years. The gospel was still their focus. They continued the commitment to the centrality and authority of the Scriptures. They had been passing the torch to new generations of leaders who continued fostering the process of maturation and independence in evangelical theological production from Latin America, a process that began in the 1970s.

A number of factors have emerged in our account. There was a general tendency in important sectors towards "Latinamericanization." This was a process that started earlier than the 1970s but in that decade became more evident since practical steps were taken to achieve it. Evangelicals in Latin America participated actively in this process of self-assertion. They understood their work of maturation and independence as part of this general mood and accompanied their countrymen in the journey of an indigenous theological production.

The general move towards independence in Latin America was also furthered by political factors such as the United States' policies and several military interventions in the region. The extreme political turmoil most Latin American countries were undergoing also fueled such a tendency. The scars in the bodies and hearts of Latin Americans required more than financial "Band-Aids." Social and political conditions in the continent demanded, overall, a theological explanation. The church's task was to make the Bible speak to the generation of the 1970s in a way that was faithful to the gospel and relevant to the times. The group of

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theologians with whom we have become familiar in this study assumed that challenge as their calling. They confronted, head on, the confusion caused by dissonant religious voices and presented the evangelical church with a message and strategies that encouraged Christians to be salt and light in a suffering Latin America.

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Despite the cross-communication with the US Americans, the difficult but continuous dialogue spurred Latin American evangelicals to group together and join efforts in their theological production. This theology was produced in the midst of intensive ministry and debate on several fronts. These theologians traveled across the continent and abroad. They organized conferences, congresses, and meetings of many kinds to discuss ardently, passionately, and deeply the different issues the situations demanded. They were not satisfied with pat answers. They believed the gospel message was at stake and they were not going to let it be kidnapped by anyone. They kept up-to-date about the different theological and religious happenings and tendencies and presented a direct response to those they understood as a threat. In rejecting the Anglo-Saxon clothing of the traditions they received, they tried to weed out the basic tenets of the gospel from its cultural entrapments. In doing so, their commitment to the authority of the Scripture and their submission to the work of the Holy Spirit grew and became stronger.

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US Americans had mixed feelings about these developments all along. On the one hand, they were encouraged that Latin Americans were coming of age. Yet, the US Americans we have studied became increasingly uncomfortable with what they saw. How might we understand their reactions? The studies and research of Robert C. Holub helps us in this matter. Holub explained:

> Throughout the eighties I set out to investigate various aspects of the transformations and difficulties of border crossings in numerous essays and reviews… What I found, in the most general terms, is that what matters most in the appropriation of a theory from a foreign country is how it fits into an already established constellation in the importing country. Traditions and the possibility of assimilating something alien to a familiar frame of reference were the most important determinants of whether a given theoretical direction would be absorbed or rejected, whether it would be welcomed as an enrichment of the native heritage or rejected, ignored, or ridiculed as an unwanted intruder on foreign soil.[344]

Holub concluded that "when a theory is imported into another country, it often assumes a different status than it had in its native land…. One of the ways to make a foreign theory appear more acceptable in a strange theoretical environment is to assimilate it to a familiar tradition."[345]

Holub's conclusions give us a way to assess the reaction of US Americans toward the Latin American evangelical theological production in the 1970s. US Americans needed

[344]Holub, *Crossing Borders: Reception Theory, Poststructuralism, Deconstruction*, ix.
[345]Ibid., 84.

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a familiar category or frame of reference in order to understand and assimilate what their Latin American brethren were saying. As suggested in this study, the "Cold War" provided such frame of reference. US Americans, whose views have been presented in this study, understood the boldness and courage of the Latin American theologians as open rebellion, as a stratagem of Communism to conquer their souls. US Americans were not used to being challenged by their mission fields. Also, since most of what US Americans were hearing sounded like theological battles of the past—Social Gospel, liberal theologies, higher criticism, etc.—they could not break away from those experiences and listen unbiased. According to Holub's findings, this was a natural response.

Evangelicalism in the United States became a group dedicated to preserving the purity of evangelical doctrine. Therefore, when Latin Americans started to think theologically within a different historical context and without the US American doctrinal development, US Americans felt their history being played again, and they reacted as they had in earlier theological disputes. US Americans' response was not intended to cause harm but to protect their understanding of the gospel and to warn Latin Americans of perceived dangers.

US American opposition served as a catalyst, as an incentive for Latin Americans to present an unified, though not always cohesive, position. Latin Americans were willing to assume the consequences of their actions. They cut financial strings, institutional demands, and abandoned foreign strategies and foreign theological agendas. They did not cut themselves off, though, from the fellowship of the church. They remained faithful to their evangelical convictions without wavering. And they continue so until

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this day. Their lives and ministries have shown that US American fears that they would slide down a slippery slope towards liberalism were unfounded. Latin American evangelicals understood their process of maturation and independence as a responsible answer to counteract the influence of the mixture of the gospel message with the "US American way of life" in their churches.

The FTL gave the evangelical church in Latin America a clear possibility to become united. However, unity did not happen.

The FTL gave the evangelical church in Latin America a clear possibility to become united. However, unity did not happen. The church in Latin America became even more polarized in the 1970s. The traditional lines became more like trenches to keep others out. This fragmentation will need further study to understand how in the midst of such turmoil the theological production in Latin America was able to develop and mature. The formation of CLAI[346] and CONELA[347] in 1982 as opposing expressions of Latin American evangelicalism deserves an in-depth study to unlock the emergence of such a gulf between brethren.

The research and study we have presented here support and demonstrate the thesis that the 1970s marked an important turning point for Latin American evangelicals in which they developed a theology faithful to the Scriptures and pertinent to the questions and conditions in Latin American countries.

A number of questions could not be addressed in our study and warrant further research and analysis. For

[346]*Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias.*
[347]*Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana.*

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example, the reasons for a halt in the dialogue between US America and Latin America in the 1980s are not clear.[348] What factors—either cultural, political, economic, theological, etc.—brought the theological dialogue to an end? Nonetheless, the theological production from Latin America has not stopped. Rather, it has continued with more Latin Americans involved and more works printed.[349] If, as this study has shown, what evangelical Latin Americans were doing theologically between 1969 and 1979 was mostly unknown in US America, it is even more the case now. In the 1970s, as we have seen, open avenues of dialogue existed. However, by the end of the decade the dialogue was waning. This could explain why the final document of CLADE II[350] was never translated into English. Perhaps it signals the beginnings of a break, an ending of dealings between Latin Americans and US Americans. What happened to keep dialogue from happening? CLADE III (1992) and IV (2000) received minimal attention in the United States. Other gatherings organized by the FTL in the last three decades have passed unnoticed. It would be highly desirable to see a fraternal dialogue resume in which both sides make the effort to listen carefully. Such effort would bring glory to God and healing to the church. It would cau-

[348]An exception was the conference entitled "Context and Hermeneutics in the Americas" in 1983 with thirty-five scholars from the United States and Latin America. See Mark Branson and C. René Padilla, eds., *Conflict and Context: Hermeneutics in the Americas. A Report on the Context and Hermeneutics in the Americas Conference Sponsored by Theological Students Fellowship and the Latin American Theological Fraternity, Tlayacapan, Mexico, November 24-29, 1983* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

[349]For example Editorial Kairós in Buenos Aires, Argentina, published over 20 titles in 2002 alone.

[350]See appendix 4.

se growth in understanding, unity, and brotherly love. It would benefit the theological academic world in both US and Latin America.

Perhaps the question should be broadened to find if there were any dialogue between theologians in the United States and the rest of the world. We can conclude here that an inter-American theological dialogue took place in the initial stages of theological development in Latin America in the 1970s. It was not an easy interchange, but the fact that it existed proved that such a dialogue is possible. By the time of CLADE II (1979), both sides were widening the distance between them and soon they stopped talking altogether. The members of the FTL found more empathic ears for their theological enterprises in Europe and other Third World forums. They found their financial support outside of the United States, and the need for a continuous relationship ceased.

We have observed that one of the reasons the Hispanic theological production from Latin America has remained unknown in the United States is the lack of a translation program. Only a handful of the theological works produced in Spanish by Latin Americans has been translated into English. This void in the academic field in the United States is another question waiting for an answer. Are finances the reason? Are marketing strategies responsible? Or perhaps the question should be: Does a genuine interest on the part of US Americans in the scholarly evangelical sector of Latin America exist? In the 1970s Latin Americans showed that they were able to tackle theological questions at the same level as US Americans. Perhaps Latin Americans were not sufficiently convincing to attract serious attention in the United States. Or perhaps evangelicals in the United States,

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following the general cultural tendencies in their country, see little of value coming from Latin America. As this study has shown, historical, cultural, ideological, and public opinion factors are, many times, a heavier influence on us than biblical and theological understanding in choosing our allies or foes. If the reasons are cultural, a mere translation program would not do. US Americans need a changed attitude and a disposition to learn from Latin Americans, and vice versa. Learning requires more than just speaking the language or reading some articles. It demands personal involvement, incarnational empathy, and sacrificial listening. Only then might both sides together promote a richer understanding of the Kingdom. The challenge for the next generations of theologians, both in Latin America and US America, is to become more global and less provincial. The author prays that this study will serve to open doors to new avenues of dialogue and joint efforts between US American theologians and their Latin American colleagues.

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Appendix 1:
The Evangelical Declaration of Bogota[351]

First Latin American Evangelical Congress (CLADE I)
Bogota, Colombia, November 21-29, 1969

Those of us united here, believers in Jesus Christ, members of the several denominational communities which work on our continent among Latin American people, have met together in this First Latin American Congress on Evangelism, in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit Himself has led us to this encounter with the purpose of examining anew our evangelistic mission in the light of Biblical teaching and the present Latin American situation.

Our presence in this Congress has exhibited our unity in Christ, the spiritual and not the organizational nature of which, is rooted in our common evangelical heritage, based on the truths of the Bible, the authority of which as the Word of God and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, we affirm categorically.

Consequently, this declaration which we present to the Latin American evangelical people, is an expression of a consensus in which there is agreement on the fundamentals; but there is also room for diversity which comes from the abundant grace of God through which gifts are given to His people: diversity within unity.

This declaration also attempts to reflect the self examination which the Lord Jesus Christ has caused us to undergo during these days, making us feel the urgency both of the multiple crises which afflict our people, and the imperative nature of His command to evangelize. Together we have recognized the necessity of living

[351]ECLA, "The Evangelical Declaration of Bogota (Official Translation)," *Pulse* 5, no. 1 (1970).

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the Christian life to the full and proclaiming the total Gospel to the Latin American man in the context of his many needs.

We share what the Lord has shown us with a sense of urgency, but with no intention of legislating for the life of the Latin American churches. Instead, we invite the Latin American people to read and study these declarations which express the convictions which the Lord has brought home to us during the Congress.

THUS, WE DECLARE:

1. The evangelical presence in Latin America is the fruit of the action of God through an immense flow of Christian love, missionary vision, sacrificial spirit, work, effort, time, and money invested here by the foreign missions which have been laboring for more than a century, including the work of the Bible Societies. This glance at our history cannot do less than awaken within us a spirit of gratitude for the work of the pioneers. At the same time, looking toward the future, we are conscious of new responsibilities, new tasks, and new structures which form a true challenge to Latin American believers and to the indigenous leadership in all dimensions of the ministry.
2. The commission to preach the Gospel to every creature is an imperative clearly expressed in the Word of God. Evangelism is not something optional: it lies at the very essence of the Church: it is her supreme task. The dynamic, which undergirds the evangelistic task, is the action of the Holy Spirit. It is He who gives gifts to the Church, who prepares the evangelist, who testifies of Christ to the hearer, who illuminates, who convicts of sin, righteousness, judgment, and eternal damnation: who changes the sinner into a new creature, and who makes him part of the Church and a co-laborer with God in evangelism. Where this initiative of the Spirit is not recognized, evangelism is reduced to a mere human endeavor.

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3. Our theology of evangelism determines our evangelistic efforts, or the lack of them. The simplicity of the Gospel is never in conflict with the theological dimensions. The essence of the Gospel is the self revelation of God in Jesus Christ. We reaffirm the historicity of Christ according to Scripture: His incarnation, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. We reaffirm the unique quality of His mediatory work, as a result of which the sinner finds pardon for his sins and justification by faith alone, without repeating that sacrifice. We also reaffirm that Christ is the Lord and head of the Church, and that the final manifestation of His Lordship over the world will be made evident in His second coming, the hope of the redeemed. This is the good news which, when proclaimed and accepted, radically transforms man.
4. Latin America's fields are white and ready for harvest. Large segments of the population show receptivity to the Gospel, but such an hour of opportunity demands an adequate strategy. We need to reevaluate our present evangelistic methods in the light of amazingly rapid growth in some denominations. Such an evaluation, together with a careful consideration of the life of the New Testament Church, will show first of all the need for the total mobilization of the Church for the evangelistic task. To be true to the Bible, we must recognize that such mobilization must be the work of the Holy Spirit, who will use intelligent and creative methods which the Church, beginning with the local congregation, develops.
5. In our day we have been witnesses of the startling progress of mass media which, through a combination of efficiency and lack of ethics on the part of those who control them, have created a chaos of voices which confuse the Latin American man. In the midst of this confusion, the clear, distinct, simple and powerful message of Christ should find

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its way to the listeners. Christ's messenger is under the pressing obligation to understand and employ modern means of communication in order to capture the interest of the Latin American man, dialogue with him, and communicate the Gospel intelligently and meaningfully to his present condition.

6. The process of evangelization must occur in concrete human situations. Social structures have their influence on the Church and on those who receive the Gospel. If this fact is not recognized, the Gospel is betrayed and the Christian life is impoverished. The time has come for us evangelicals to take seriously our social responsibility. In order to do this, we must build on a biblical foundation which implies evangelical doctrine and the example of Jesus Christ carried to its logical implications, Christ's example become incarnated in the critical Latin American situation of underdevelopment, injustice, hunger, violence, and despair. Men cannot build the Kingdom of God on earth, but evangelical action will contribute toward the creation of a better world as a foreshadowing of that Kingdom whose coming we pray for daily.
7. The population explosion presents us with the challenge of a youthful generation growing in geometric proportions just at the moment when the church is experiencing an exodus of its young people and a ministerial crisis within the new generation. The forward march of the church needs to come to terms with a strategy which will realistically diagnose the crisis of youth and reconcile it with the demands of Christ. The message of Christ needs to be announced in a way which will capture youthful imagination and energy, channeling them toward the conquest of Latin America for Christ. The enthusiasm, vigor, goodwill, and adventure that characterize today's youth could bring about the deep transformation that our people long for.

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8. The evangelistic task does not end with proclamation and conversion. New converts need a shepherding ministry which will ground them in doctrine, teach them how to live the Christian life in their own setting, and help them to express their faithfulness to Christ in the social-cultural context in which *God* has placed them. All planning for evangelistic efforts should offer the theological bases and the practical means for a good follow-up program.
9. In a continent where the majority are nominal Catholics, we cannot shut our eyes to the ferment of renewal within the Church of Rome. The "aggiornamento" faces us up both with risk and opportunity: changes in liturgy, ecclesiology, politics, and strategy still leave untouched the dogmas which separate evangelicals from Rome. Nevertheless, our trust in the Word of God, the distribution and reading of which continue to accelerate within Catholicism, cause us to hope for fruit of renewal, and they present us with an opportunity for dialogue on a personal level. This needs to be an intelligent dialogue, and it demands from our churches a deeper and more consistent teaching of our own evangelical heritage, so as to avoid the risks of a false and misunderstood ecumenism.
10. In a spirit of thankfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ for the way He has permitted the growth of the Gospel in our lands, we confess at the same time our failure to obey His commands in this critical hour. But we affirm our faith in the resources of His grace, which will equip His own to fulfill the tasks He has given them, and our faith in the help and power of the Holy Spirit which was promised to the Church "until the end of the age." To our Lord and Savior, to whom we give the glory both now and forever, we commit ourselves. Amen.

Accepted by Vote of the Congress, Bogota, November 29, 1969

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Appendix 2:
Evangelical Declaration of Cochabamba[352]

We have met here to reflect together on the revelation of God, that free and sovereign God who "in many and various ways spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days has spoken to us by a Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). We believe that special revelation is the first and indispensable condition for knowing God and understanding the significance of human life and history. While God has made Himself partially known through nature and through the law written in the hearts of men, He has revealed Himself in the clearest and most definite way through Jesus Christ, to whom the Bible testifies. It is primarily upon this fact that we base our theological reflection and attempt to understand our mission as the people of God in Latin America.

We recognize our debt to the missionaries who brought us the Gospel. At the same time we believe that a theological reflection relevant to our own peoples must take into account the dramatic reality of the Latin American scene, and make an effort to identify and remove the foreign trappings in which the message has been wrapped.

God reveals Himself through a historical process which began with the creation described in Genesis and will end with the consummation of all things described in Revelation. He reveals Himself in special historic events which have been interpreted through the voice of God communicating through the apostles and prophets. The Bible derives its authority from its relationship to God's revelation which finds its highest fulfillment in Jesus Christ. It is the Scripture, the words of which, inspired by God,

[352]"Evangelical Declaration of Cochabamba." *Latin America Pulse* 6, no. 1 (1970):4

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communicate the Word of God, and infallibly fulfill the purpose for which they were given: "that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is a book written by men, and as such it bears an indelible human imprint, but at the same time it is a divine book, written under the control of the Holy Spirit. To deny the fact of inspiration is, in the final analysis, equivalent to denying the special revelation of God.

The Bible cannot be separated from the history of salvation, as a part of which it came into being through the action of the Holy Spirit. The only absolute authority is that which is found in God Himself. A definition of the meaning and scope of biblical authority is possible only when the Bible is placed in the total context of God's revelation in history and of His saving purposes. The Bible is also inseparable from Jesus Christ and the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. God exercises His authority through the written word and through the Spirit. And this authority is normative for all that which is related to Christian faith and practice.

The acknowledgment of biblical authority may be considered one of the most widespread characteristics of the evangelical movement in Latin America. This is to be expected within a movement the great majority of which is theologically conservative. Nevertheless, we must admit that the way most evangelicals in Latin America use the Bible does not always coincide with the high view of the Scriptures they profess. The Bible is highly respected, but the voice of the Lord who speaks through it is not always obeyed, and this disobedience is rationalized in many ways. We need a hermeneutic which does justice to the biblical text in every case. Preaching is often void of biblical substance. The evangelical pulpit is in a state of crisis. We find among ourselves a depressing ignorance of the Bible and of the application of its message to today's needs. The biblical message is indisputably pertinent to Latin Americans, but its proclamation does not play the part it should among us. We are living in a

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difficult moment for the evangelical church of our continent. This demands a new evaluation of our situation. The need of the hour is to turn to the Word of God in submission to the Holy Spirit. It involves returning to the Bible and to the "Lord who reigns through it." It is to call into question our "evangelical traditions" in light of written revelation. It means placing every activity of the church under the judgment of the Word of the living God. It is to obey the clear demands of the Word of God in announcing the message of Jesus Christ to all, calling all people to be His disciples, and, within the complex social, political, and economic scene in Latin America, to become a community which expresses the spirit of justice, kindness, and service which is implied in the Gospel.

We rejoice at the movement for the distribution and study of the Bible in Roman Catholic circles. We realize that this movement is like an alarm bell which rings to awaken us from the slumber into which many of us evangelicals have fallen with a closed Bible in our hands. It shows us that a new biblical movement is needed in the evangelical church in Latin America.

Today's ideologies, which increasingly challenge us, can also be a prod in God's hands to make us listen to His voice. Now is the time to search the Scriptures to rediscover the true Christian hope, that dynamic which makes us "rejoice in hope."

It is time to recognize how much biblical teaching we have left aside because of our own human traditions and because of those human visions of a new world which feed the Utopias of our time. Thus, we who know the Truth, we who have the only true Hope, we who have been the object of the supreme Love, will be able to present to our Latin America the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ with a brilliance which will outshine all false gospels.

We give thanks to God for His objective revelation given "once for all" which we have in the Bible. We give thanks to God for His Spirit who illumines and applies the written Word.

Cochabamba, December 18, 1970

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Appendix 3:
Letter to Lausanne—Implications of Radical Discipleship[353]

A number of issues have thrust themselves upon us from papers delivered in this Congress and, from the subsequent wrestling with them under the authority of God's Word, a number of us have felt the compulsion of his Spirit to share this response.

We affirm that…

The *evangel* is God's Good News in Jesus Christ; it is Good News of the reign he proclaimed and embodies; of God's mission of love to restore the world to wholeness through the Cross of Christ and him alone; of his victory over the demonic powers of destruction and death; of his Lordship over the entire universe; it is Good News of a new creation of a new humanity, a new birth through him by his life-giving Spirit; of the gifts of the messianic reign contained in Jesus and mediated through him by his Spirit; of the charismatic community empowered to embody his reign of shalom here and now before the whole creation and make his Good News seen and known. It is Good News of liberation, of restoration, of wholeness, and of salvation that is personal, social, global, and cosmic. Jesus is Lord! Alleluia! Let the earth hear his voice!

The *communication of the evangel* in its fullness to every person worldwide is a mandate of the Lord Jesus to his community. There is no biblical dichotomy between the Word spoken and the Word made visible in the lives of God's people. Men will look as they listen, and what they see must be at one with what they hear. The Christian community must chatter, discuss, and proclaim the

[353]Douglas, J. D., ed. *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne, Switzerland (Official Reference Volume: Papers and Responses)* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975).

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Gospel; it must express the Gospel in its life as the new society, in its sacrificial service of others as a genuine expression of God's love, in its prophetic exposing and opposing of all demonic forces that deny the Lordship of Christ and keep men less than fully human, in its pursuit of real justice for all men, in its responsible and caring trusteeship of God's creation and its resources.

There are times when our communication may be by attitude and action only, and times when the spoken Word will stand alone; but we must repudiate as demonic the attempt to drive a wedge between evangelism and social action.

The response demanded by the evangel is that men and women repent of their sin and every other lordship than that of Jesus Christ, and commit themselves to him to serve him in the world. Men are not already reconciled to God and simply awaiting the realization of it. Nor can biblical authority be found for the false hope of universalism; the reality of the eternal destruction of evil and all who cling to it must be solemnly affirmed, however humbly agnostic the Bible requires us to be about its nature.

Salvation is by God's grace on the sole ground of Christ's death and resurrection and is received by obedient faith. Repentance is demanded; men must experience a change of understanding, attitude, and orientation. But the new birth is not merely a subjective experience of forgiveness. It is a placement within the messianic community, God's new order which exists as a sign of God's reign to be consummated at the end of the age.

Methods in evangelization must center in Jesus Christ who took our humanity, our frailty, our death and gave himself in suffering servant-hood for others. He sends his community into the world, as the Father sent him, to identify and agonize with men, to renounce status and demonic power, and to give itself in selfless service of others for God. Those who proclaim the Cross must be continually marked by the Cross. With unashamed commitment to Jesus Christ we must engage in the mutual listening of dialo-

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gue, the reward of which is understanding. We need to meet men on their own ground and be particularly attentive to the powerless. We must use the language, thought-forms, and imagery appropriate to differing cultures. As Christians, we must live in such unity and love that men may believe. We must allow God to make visible in the new humanity the quality of life that reflects Christ and demonstrates his reign. We must respect cultural integrity while being free from all that denies or distorts the Lordship of Christ. God's Spirit overcomes all barriers of race, color, and culture.

Strategy for world evangelization in our generation is with God, from whom we eagerly anticipate the renewal of his community, equipping us with love and power so that the whole Christian community may make known the whole Gospel to the whole man throughout the whole world. We believe God to be calling us into greater unity and partnership throughout the earth to fulfill the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We confess that…

- We have been failing in our obedience to the Lordship of Christ and have been refusing to submit to his Word and be led by his Spirit.
- We have failed to incarnate the Gospel and to come to men as servants for Christ's sake.
- Our testimony has often been marred by triumphalism and arrogance, by lack of faith in God, and by diminished love for his people.
- We have often been in bondage to a particular culture and sought to spread it in the name of Jesus.
- We have not been aware of when we have debased and distorted the Gospel by acceptance of a contrary value system.
- We have been partisan in our condemnation of totalitarianism and violence and have failed to condemn societal and institutionalized sin, especially that of racism.

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- We have sometimes so identified ourselves with particular political systems that the Gospel has been compromised and the prophetic voice muted.
- We have frequently denied the rights and neglected the cries of the underprivileged and those struggling for freedom and justice.
- We have often separated Jesus Christ the Savior from Jesus Christ the Lord.
- We have sometimes distorted the biblical understanding of man as a total being and have courted an unbiblical dualism.
- We have insulated new Christians from life in the world and given simplistic responses to complex problems.
- We have sometimes manipulated our message, used pressure techniques, and been unduly preoccupied with statistics.
- We have allowed eagerness for qualitative growth to render us silent about the whole counsel of God. We have been usurping God's Holy Spirit of love and power.

We rejoice…

- In our membership by his Spirit in the Body of Christ and in the joy and love he has given us in each other.
- In the openness and honesty with which we have met each other and have experienced mutual acceptance and forgiveness.
- In the possibilities for men to read his Word in their own languages through indigenous translations.
- In the stimulation of mind and challenge to action that has come to us from his Word as we have placed the needs of our generation under its judgment and light.
- In the prophetic voices of our brothers and sisters in this Congress, with whom we go forth in humility and hope.

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- In the certainty that the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our God and of his Christ. He shall reign forever. Alleluia!

We resolve…

To submit ourselves afresh to the Word of God and to the leading of his Spirit, to pray and work together for the c of his community as the expression of his reign, to participate in God's mission to his world in our generation, showing forth Jesus as Lord and Savior, and calling on all men everywhere to repent, to submit to his Lordship, to know his salvation, to identify in him with the oppressed and work for the liberation of all men and women in his name.

LET THE EARTH HEAR HIS VOICE!

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Appendix 4:
Carta de CLADE II al pueblo evangélico de América Latina[354]

Amados hermanos en Cristo:

Que la gracia y la paz del trino Dios sea con cada uno.

A diez años de haberse celebrado en Bogotá, Colombia, el 1er Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización, nos hemos reunido en Huampaní, Perú, del 31 de octubre al 8 de noviembre del presente año, 266 participantes que venimos de diferentes sectores del pueblo evangélico latinoamericano. Nuestro propósito ha sido considerar juntos la tarea evangelizadora que somos llamados a cumplir en las próximas décadas, en nuestro contexto histórico.

Hemos querido deliberar sobre nuestra misión sometiéndonos a la autoridad suprema de las Sagradas Escrituras, a la dirección soberana del Espíritu Santo y al señorío de Jesucristo, en una atmósfera de amor fraternal. En esta actitud reafirmamos nuestra adhesión a la *Declaración* del 1er Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización y al *Pacto* del Congreso Mundial de Evangelización celebrado en Lausana, Suiza, en julio de 1974.

Estamos profundamente agradecidos a Dios por nuestra herencia evangélica y por los esfuerzos realizados de parte de los pioneros, tanto nacionales como extranjeros. Hemos decidido renovar nuestro compromiso de lealtad al Evangelio y de fidelidad a la tarea de evangelizar en el contexto del pueblo latinoamericano. Al mismo tiempo sentimos que debemos responder al desafío misionero que, a nivel mundial, representan los millones de personas que no conocen a Jesucristo como Señor y Salvador.

[354]CLADE-II. *América Latina y la Evangelización en Los Años 80. Un Congreso Auspiciado Por la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana*. (Lima: FTL, 1979).

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Hemos oído la Palabra de Dios quien nos habla y quien también escucha el clamor de los que sufren. Hemos alzado los ojos hacia nuestro continente y contemplado el drama y la tragedia que viven nuestros pueblos en esta hora de inquietud espiritual, confusión religiosa, corrupción moral y convulsiones sociales y políticas. Hemos oído el clamor de los que tienen hambre y sed de justicia, de los que se hallan desprovistos de lo que es básico para su subsistencia, de los grupos étnicos marginados, de las familias destruidas, de las mujeres despojadas del uso de sus derechos, de los jóvenes entregados al vicio o empujados a la violencia, de los niños que sufren hambre, abandono, ignorancia y explotación. Por otra parte, hemos visto que muchos latinoamericanos están estregándose a la idolatría del materialismo, sometiendo los valores del espíritu a los que impone la sociedad de consumo, según la cual el ser humano vale no por lo que es en sí mismo, sino por la abundancia de los bienes que posee. Hay también los que en su deseo legítimo de reivindicar el derecho a la vida y la libertad o a fin de mantener el estado de cosas vigentes, siguen ideologías que ofrecen un análisis parcial de la realidad latinoamericana y conducen a formas diversas de totalitarismo y a la violación de los derechos humanos. Existen asimismo vastos sectores esclavizados por los poderes satánicos que se manifiestan en formas variadas de ocultismo y religiosidad.

Este cuadro sombrío que ofrece la realidad latinoamericana lo vemos, a la luz de la Palabra de Dios, como expresión del pecado que afecta radicalmente la relación del hombre con Dios, con su prójimo y con la creación. Percibimos en todo lo que se opone al señorío de Jesucristo la acción del Anticristo que ya está en el mundo.

Alabamos al Señor, sin embargo, porque en medio de esta situación el Espíritu de Dios ha estado manifestándose poderosamente. Nos alienta el testimonio que hemos compartido en CLADE

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II de la obra maravillosa que Dios viene llevando a cabo en nuestros respectivos países. Millares se han entregado a Jesucristo como Señor encontrando liberación en Él, e incorporándose a iglesias locales. Muchas iglesias han sido renovadas en su vida y misión. El pueblo de Dios avanza en su comprensión de lo que significa el discipulado radical en un mundo de cambios constantes y súbitos.

Todo esto es fruto del Evangelio que es mensaje de salvación y esperanza en Jesucristo a quien están sometidas todas las cosas. Alentados por esta esperanza hemos decidido intensificar nuestra acción evangelizadora. Queremos además dedicarnos con mayor ahínco al estudio de la Palabra para escuchar con humildad y espíritu de obediencia, lo que Él tenga que decir en esta hora crítica de nuestra historia.

Confesamos que como Pueblo de Dios no siempre hemos atendido las demandas del Evangelio que predicamos, como lo demuestra nuestra falta de unidad y nuestra indiferencia frente a las necesidades materiales y espirituales de nuestro prójimo.

Reconocemos que no hemos hecho todo lo que con la ayuda del Señor hubiéramos podido realizar en beneficio de nuestro pueblo. Pero nos proponemos depender del poder transformador del Espíritu Santo para el fiel cumplimiento de la tarea que nos queda por delante. Creemos que en la próxima década el Señor puede bendecir de manera singular a nuestros pueblos, salvar integralmente a muchísimas personas, consolidar o restaurar nuestras familias y levantar una gran comunidad de fe que sea un anticipo, en palabra y hecho, de lo que será el Reino en su manifestación final.

Como un aporte para la acción que nos corresponde presentamos el "Documento de Estrategia" elaborado por todos los participantes de este Congreso. Recomendamos su uso de acuerdo a cada situación.

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En el amor de Cristo instamos a nuestros hermanos en la fe a hacerse eco de estos anhelos y juntar filas para dedicarnos a la misión de Dios alentados por la esperanza en el Señor resucitado y triunfante, cuyo advenimiento aguardamos.

Anhelamos que Dios cumpla su propósito en el mundo, en su Iglesia y en nuestras vidas y que los pueblos latinoamericanos escuchen la voz de Dios, a su gracia nos encomendamos todos y les hacemos llegar un fraternal saludo.

2º Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización (CLADE II)

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