

number of places creating unfavourable situations for the relationships required for the achievement of our objectives.

The Reports of the President to the previous Assemblies of the ECMY have been taken as basic policies for our relationships to foreign organizations so far. It is about 2 ½ years since the last Assembly at Yirgalem where the President defined our policy as regards missionary personnel.

It should be understood that the ECMY has been able to maintain her integrity and credibility before those with whom we are working in this country, as well as before international organizations of all sorts. The ECMY should redefine her policy in a clear manner as regards expatriate personnel and ecumenical relationships. To make statements out of courtesy is a disservice to the cause of the Gospel we are committed to serve. To find justifications for expatriate personnel to work in Ethiopia is against Christian integrity, if we are convinced that there is no actual need for their services in the ECMY. The ECMY as a mature church is able to make clear policy decisions guiding her activities and regulating her relationships with ecumenical organizations and Cooperating Agencies which send us expatriate personnel.

### **5. Moratorium**

Moratorium has become a burning issue in ecumenical circles, attracting attention from all Christian denominations, calling for negative and positive reactions from churches and ecumenical bodies, depending in some cases on the specific economic situation out of which one speaks.

In my opinion moratorium is in the first place a theological issue, and one's specific economic situation should not be allowed to overrule theological conviction. Understanding that the position of my church was quite clear as regards the relationship with

missionary personnel as well as other personnel connected with evangelistic outreach, and based on my own theological reflections, I have spoken against moratorium whenever opportunity offered. In Adelaide, Australia, at the Commission Meeting of the LWF Church Cooperation, I made it clear that moratorium lacks theological basis in the Biblical sense. Contending that moratorium lacks theological basis, I have so far neglected spending time on digging deep into the subject, since I considered it a luxury for the churches who have more personnel than they needed for the essential work of their churches. In short, moratorium is defined as withdrawal of resources and expatriate personnel, for a certain period of time, from the former mission fields, in order to give the churches in the Third World time to find their identity as they make efforts to depend on their own personnel and finances, thereby attaining self-reliance.

Self-reliance is the final goal of any church; however, for the sake of self-reliance moratorium should not be applied to the primary task of the church, which is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I contend that proclaiming Christ to his world is the responsibility of every Christian and every church, regardless of the varying situations in which we find ourselves.

The Church of Jesus Christ is one, and we all belong to her. Our Lord is the Head of the Church; all who believe are members of the Body. The resources available to any particular church are to be used by all other churches wherever there is a need – we are all stewards. In my opinion we are responsible for the use of resources in whatever form they are available, whether personnel or finances. To argue that the availability of resources from overseas reduces the responsibility of the national churches in the Third World is misunderstanding the nature of the Church and the responsibility that belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ entails.

**6. Planning an Alternative to Moratorium**

The ECMY has been and is operating on a planned five-year basis. The first five-year plan started in 1971 and will end in 1975. In outlining the first period, 1971-1975, the object was to get a clear picture of the situation within our congregations. Now this has been done. The second period, 1976-1980, will be launched in January of next year. The intention was that during the course of the first period a realistic plan should be set forth for the second period to enable the ECMY to increase her local resources so that grants from abroad should not be increased. The third period, 1981-1985, should see a gradual decrease of grants from overseas. The fourth period, 1986-1990, should be the last period for any financial grants from abroad. This planned way towards self-reliance is an alternative to moratorium which is a withdrawal for a certain period of time.

Christian responsibility demands that we should march towards self-reliance in a planned manner, while at the same time maintaining Christian integrity and avoiding unnecessary contradictions. The spirit of hypocrisy should not be allowed to operate in the Church of God; to talk about moratorium while applying for grants from abroad is dissimulation.

A paper will be presented on moratorium to the Executive Committee Meeting in September of this year.

**7. Labour Union**

The formation of a labour union under the ECMY has been discussed at the various meetings of the Executive Committee of the ECMY. At its 34th Meeting the Executive Committee decided not to recognize a labour union under the church. Being on official duty in Australia, I was not able to participate in the discussion. In the Pastoral Letter circulated to our congregations it was hinted that the church was not a profit-making company. Because of the