

Geneva. Jan. 10, 1983

(EATWOT conference proceeds as planned: theme, purpose, program and process same as background documents)

The Dialogue between 41 theologians from 15 countries of the First World and 36 theologians from 20 countries of the Third World marks the history of theology, since it is the first formally organised one on inter-continental and ecumenical level.

The Dialogue started with telling personal stories of oppression and the struggle against racism, sexism and classism. These inputs were put under social and theological analysis and meant to induce new theological conclusions.

A five-page theological reformulation is foreseen at the end of the meeting. The final statement will be publicised ~~with the~~ intention to stimulate further dialogue with the oppressed, other theologians and the heads of churches.

The President of EATWOT, Emilio de Carvalho, Bishop of the United Methodist Church in Angola, in his opening statement *speech* said: "We are here to begin a new era in theological reflection and action, a new theological existence." This new way of doing theology consists in "becoming immersed in solidarity with the struggles for justice, social change and liberation, and involving oneself in grass-root movements for the change of mentalities and institutions."

Feminist Theology as an reaction against sexist oppression was discussed with full length. Women Theologians who compose more than one third of the participants, spoke out in accusation of the male dominant social system, which worships power, and blamed the masculine theology for supporting it. The Secretary of EATWOT, Virginia Fabella, M.M. ~~from the~~ did not like the term 'Feminist Theology'. "I prefer to say, I am a woman doing theology in a woman's perspective."

The theological dialogue between First and Third Worlds caught fire after talks were given by two German theologians: J.B. Metz and D; Soelle. A heated debate followed, with a final confirmation that the Third World ^{is} the place and source of a relevant and vivid new theology.

the European-centered era of Christianity is ended and

Present at the Dialogue are not only professional theologians but also Christians with theological background, and are mainly involved in movements for social change and trying to evolve new ways of doing theology out of their own experience of struggle. They are people involved in feminist movements, ~~fee-seeie~~ anti-nuclear organisations, work with migrant workers, solidarity groups serving Third World causes.

An European Ecumenical symposium named "The future of Europe: a challenge to Theology" was organised in Woudshoten (Zeist, the Netherlands) December 1981, in view of this Dialogue.

Eleven Asian Theologians from India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Indonesia and Korea participated the meeting. K.C. Abraham from India was appointed Chairman of the steering committee, D.C. Amalorpavadass from India and M.J. Manazan from the Philippines were members of the drafting committee.

EATWOT was formed in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in 1976 to foster the growth of theologians relevant to the lives, religions and cultures of the Third World people and to their struggles for full humanity. EATWOT serves to confirm the "change in the geographical location of theology" said the vice-president of EATWOT, Sergio Torres, a Catholic priest from Chile.

The Asia coordinator of EATWOT, Fr. Tissa Balasuriya O.M.I. is planning to organise a meeting for the Asian theologians next year, in order to reflect on the result of this Dialogue. "The Theology of the west will not remain the same after this history-making Dialogue." said one of the participants from Belgium.

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