

## MISSIONARY REACTIONS TO DELEGATION VISITS

January 1971

James E. Bertsche

In the meager light of a kerosene lamp one evening at Mukedi near the end of the January Congo tour, the Elkhart delegation was sitting scattered about the small living room of a missionary home. The departure date was already near and discussion revolved about the joint report that was to be presented to the CIM Board at the April meeting. As one by one the delegation members agreed upon the particular aspects of the report for which they would be responsible, someone wondered out loud who would send in a report on the delegation! Out of this largely facetious suggestion there finally came a serious request for an expression of missionary opinion and reaction to the visit of delegations in general and the January delegation in particular.

Let it please be remembered that this reaction is submitted to the Board as the result of a specific request by the delegation itself. Please also understand that the following comments do not constitute criticism but only suggestions to be taken into consideration, for whatever they may be worth, as other visits are planned.

### HOW MANY PEOPLE?

For this trip, a larger delegation was obviously in order given the expectation here on the field to hammer out an agreement on the spot. Generally speaking, however, a smaller group would be advantageous for several reasons. The smaller the group, the simpler the travelling and entertainment arrangements. The smaller the group, the less formidable the impact upon the "visited" and the greater the likelihood of frank expression of need and opinion. Finally, the smaller the group, the less expense involved which does not escape the attention of our colleagues--both here and in America.

### A BIT OF HOMEWORK?

In the pressure of the American routine, it is easy indeed to allow the departure date to "sneak up" without having done a bit of preparatory spade work. But given the expense and responsibilities involved, it would seem only reasonable that each member of a proposed delegation make the effort necessary to avoid jumping into the trip "cold." A bit of homework can pay rich dividends in terms of personal benefit



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derived and intelligent interpretation of what is seen and encountered. A few areas of interest that might bear some investigation prior to blast off are:

- current Congo political scene
- CIM geography and history
- relative location of stations and placement of missionary personnel
- names and roles of a few of the key church leaders
- a general idea of current issues and concerns within the mission/church community

Inquiring if Charlesville is north or south of Kamayala or if Missionary "X" is still in Congo or retired is not the most happy "entree" to a heart-to-heart talk with your missionary host and hostess of the evening.

#### FIRST BACKGROUND--THEN SOLUTIONS

We are grateful for the typically careful approach of our CIM delegations to discussions concerning field principles, problems, and program. But we do occasionally have someone who chooses to engage in the tricky business of furnishing answers before knowing what the questions are.

It is very true that on the swiftly moving Congo scene every effort must be made to adapt to the change about us. We must be ready to abandon outdated concepts and procedures. We must strive to lead rather than to be merely swept along and finally to be cast into a side eddy.

But it is always well for the visitor to remember that the procedures of work he finds have not been the arbitrary fabrication of a missionary. Principles have been forged, wisely or unwisely, in the heat of inter-cultural and spiritual encounter. There may well be changes which are over due and the missionary welcomes the visitor who has the wisdom and the time to attempt to assess with him the "why" of the present. Having done this the missionary welcomes him to probe together with him the best "what" of the future.

For the 18-day excursion ticket expert who knows only what should be, however, the missionary has scant appreciation and even less time.

#### SHIFTING PSYCHOLOGICAL GEARS

On all flight schedules circulated by Congo's domestic air line there is the clearly stated warning: THIS SCHEDULE IS



SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. At least Air Congo is honest and the traveller is put on his guard! But our visitors continue to come to us, nonetheless, with a pocket full of schedules furnished by MTS which "prove" that there is ample time for the Congo visit plus a loop through the Mountains of the Moon and maybe even three days in Israel.

The transition from the "clickety-click" routine of American activity to the "perhaps today but probably tomorrow" tempo of Congo life takes some doing. Some succeed better than others but it is greatly worth a serious effort on the part of all.

The most frequent mistake made by our visitors is simply the failure to allow adequate time for the proposed trip. If the visit cannot be open ended, its stops should at least be realistically spaced so as to allow for the unexpected disruption of plans and schedules which, in Congo, are expected, at least after a bit of experience!

Otherwise, finger nails pile up in little windrows on missionary carpets; calendars take a beating; wheels spin; efficiency drops as blood pressure rises; some areas and its personnel go unvisited and evaluations of what is seen risk being colored by the emotional stress of the day.

#### WALKING IN MISSIONARY SHOES

A visit from a board delegation is a major event in the life and schedule of your missionary personnel. It is talked about long in advance. As the day approaches there is fixing, scrubbing, and planning as every department on every station hopes to be able to show to the board members what it has been doing with its share of the year's budget funds.

But about the tenth stop, the delegation tends to get a little glassy eyed. All Congolese begin to look alike; all names sound the same; all reports begin to have the same vaguely familiar ring; the sun is hot; the sand fly bites are itching unmercifully; the innards are tending toward the bilious side and the desire to sack out grows irresistably. And sure enough someone pops in and says there is just time to go up and have a look at the station maternity! Another maternity? We've already seen three. Surely this one can't be that much different!

But this one is different. The other ones were at stations M, N, and O, but this is station P. Those working at the other places were missionaries A, B, and C, but on this station it is missionary D. And after months of anticipation and preparation every one is over there all dressed up, smiling with reception speech in hand...waiting.



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And there are the informal chit-chat times--perhaps the last ten minutes before a meal--or standing about waiting for a guide or a pilot--or just before breaking up for the day. Frequently, and very understandably, the conversation swings to "my kids", "this month in my home church," "the 87 hours and 23 minutes until my plane will take off from Kinshasa for New York", "what we're going to do the first weekend after I'm back home." Perfectly natural and justifiable.

But it is quite likely that within earshot of this animated conversation there is a missionary father or mother for whom long-term separation from children and family has become an unavoidable way of life. Or, there may be new recruits on the field, listening in, who are in their first year or first months of adjustment and for whom memories of home are still poignantly fresh. All the dedication in the world notwithstanding, the listening missionary carries with him twinges of loneliness and nostalgia for the rest of the day.

#### BORDERING ON THE FASTIDIOUS

Hygienic and dietary precautions are all very much in order and to be recommended for the newcomer to a tropical life. However, too great an accent placed upon African microbes can contribute a small barrier to meaningful fellowship. The nervous dissection of a strange serving of food does not escape the observing, though averted, eye of your Congo host or hostess.

Cleanliness may stand in close proximity to Godliness in the land of laundromats and 3-hour dry cleaning service, but in Congo the two, of necessity, stand a bit further removed the one from the other. The occasional necessity for wearing a shirt with a gray ring in the collar does not constitute a crisis in the tropics. And meetings are usually not rescheduled for the lack of a razor's edge crease in the speaker's trousers.

But having made the above observations, let us hasten to add that for us, your missionaries, they constitute only secondary concerns. They in no manner alter the deep respect we hold for our CIM board and the great appreciation we have for the effort and expenses periodically expended to send to us representatives from the CIM constituency at home.

Your commitment through the years to a work begun in the Kasai in 1912 has been sure. Your readiness to examine objectively new developments and to launch out in new directions have been a constant inspiration to us. Your confidence in us and your businesslike raising of budget funds across the years have annually reassured us.



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Above all else, we are indebted to you for an unwavering undergirding of prayer which we have so often sensed and for which we thank you yet once again.

We want particularly to express our gratitude to the delegation which came to us in January. The Charlesville meeting was a historic one in every sense of the word. It was also one which demanded a high degree of sensitivity and a certain spirit of daring to move ahead into a new era, a new relationship with our church and a new concept of CIM's place and function here in Congo, the details of which the delegation members themselves will present to you.

We welcome any or all of them back at any time--and even with short finger nails.

- GC - 5 delegates  
- EMB - Canadian Mennon  
- EMC - Mennon Weekly Review

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Congo Inland Mission Board is responding tangibly to an invitation from the Eglise Mennonite au Congo for a board delegation visit.

On January 2 a delegation leaves for Congo. The trip is scheduled for approximately four weeks. The six delegates are Milo Nussbaum, Morton, Illinois, pastor of the Grace Mennonite Church and president of the board; Elmer Neufeld, Bluffton, Ohio, professor at Bluffton College and vice-president of the board; Heinz Janzen, Newton, Kansas, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church and secretary of the board; George Loewen, Steinbach, Manitoba, businessman and lay leader in the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church and treasurer of the board; Howard Habegger, Berne, Indiana, former missionary to Colombia and executive secretary elect of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Commission on Overseas Mission; and Reuben Short, Elkhart, Indiana, executive secretary of Congo Inland Mission.

A similar delegation visit was made in 1967 at which time autonomy for the Congo church was outlined and inaugurated.

This will be an additional history-making step toward refinement of developing brotherhood relationships. A six-day conference is scheduled with Congolese church representatives to be held at the historical Charlesville



center. Charlesville was the first mission center founded in 1912. It was the place where integration was negotiated when a 1960 CIM board delegation was sent to Congo.

It is conceived that CIM will continue to provide personnel and material aid to the Congo church. Differences in opportunity and economy demand this. But it is understood that the church is to be free from expatriate controls and free to act by itself as a community of believers. Mutual respect should prevail and differences warmly tolerated.

To strengthen intercontinental brotherhood relations, a three-member team of Congolese church leaders plan to visit the American brotherhood in the summer of 1971.

Congo Inland Mission was incorporated in 1912 and will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary in 1972 with special meetings and with the publication of a history being written by Melvin Loewen, former missionary and Rector of the Free University of Kisangani in Congo, and now on the staff of the International World Bank with special assignment of Africa.

Photo, left to right: George Loewen, Howard Habegger, Milo Nussbaum, Reuben Short, Heinz Janzen. (Elmer Neufeld not pictured.)



SCHEDULE FOR THE  
# MISSION BOARD DELEGATION  
January 4 to January 8, 1971

- Jan. 4 Holiday in the Congo (Martyrs' Day)  
8:00 A.M. Visit to Mobutu's Farm - Henry Dirks  
12:00 Dinner with the Sprungers  
2:00 P.M. Visit to Mobutu's Park and O.A.U. Park  
Supper at the Rempels
- Jan. 5, ~~###~~ Tuesday  
8:00 Dialogue with C. & M.A. - Leco Conf. Room  
10:00 Dialogue with Amer. Baptists - C.I.M. Hostel  
Dinner with Bullers ~~and Dirks~~  
3:00 P.M. Meeting with E.C.C. (formerly CPC) *Mbanga*  
Supper with Dirks
- Jan. 6, Wednesday  
8:00 A.M. Visit to Leco - Rempel tour conductor  
10:30 A.M. Dialogue with British Baptists - Leco Conf. room.  
Dinner with Harms and family at Hostel - *P.L.O.S.*  
4:00 P.M. Dialogue with Washburn - (Presbyterians)  
Supper will inform later *Y.M.H. Hostel*  
7:30 P.M. C.I.M. Group at the Dirks.
- Jan. 7, Thursday  
8:00 A.M. Visit to E T E K -  
Dinner ~~#####~~ at ~~U.M.H.~~ *Hostel*  
P.M. open unless we can schedule with AMBM  
~~Supper with Dirks and Bullers~~ *mbanga* **(DAU)**
- Jan. 8, Friday  
7:30 A.M. leave for Airport on way to Tshikapa

12:00 - Henry 601



(Translation of statement signed at Charlesville  
by nine missionary members of the EMC  
general council )

A SOLEMN DECLARATION CONCERNING THE DISSOLUTION OF  
THE CONGO INLAND MISSION AS AN AUTONOMOUS ASSOCIATION  
- - - - - IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO - - - - -

We, the undersigned, missionaries of the non-profit  
organisation, the Congo Inland Mission, and members of the general  
Council convened at Charlesville from the 11th to the 14th of  
January, 1971, solemnly declare:

- Since the first missionaries of the CIM arrived  
in Congo in 1912;
  - Since our fellow missionaries have consecrated  
themselves body and soul ever since to the creation of a Church  
in this country;
  - Since the moment has arrived when Congolese Christians  
must be honest with themselves and must assume their own responsibilities;
- 1) We present our sincerest thanks to all our fellow  
missionaries of the past who have contributed from near and far  
to the creation of the Mennonite Community of the Church of Christ  
in Congo. We also thank all the churches overseas who have sent  
these missionaries;
  - 2) We solemnly declare our agreement with the convention  
of fusion written and signed by the Congolese and missionary members  
of the general council of the EMC this day at Charlesville;
  - 3) We request that the legal representative of the Congo  
Inland Mission immediately pursue the formalities for the dissolution  
of the CIM as provided for in its own statutes;
  - 4) We ask the Christians of our churches overseas to continue  
to help and to support our young church in Congo by the continued  
sending of missionaries and material aid;
  - 5) We hope nothing more than to continue to work together  
with our Congolese brethren in love and in mutual confidence for the  
edification of the Eglise Mennonite au Congo.

Written and declared January 14, 1971  
EMC Charlesville

Signed by Elmer Dick, Anna V. Liechty, Earl Roth,  
Ben Eidse, Herman Buller, James Bertsche,  
Ralph Ewert, Don Unruh and Wilmer Sprunger



## PROVISIONAL GUIDELINES FOR NEGOTIATION

### CIM Delegation and EMC Administration

January 1971

#### INTRODUCTION

Present world ills have manifested themselves in various forms in the past. The species of ills become modified with time. We cannot change yesterday, but neither can we escape it. Neither can we alter the universal absolutes of God. Today is today--product of the past.

The behavior of man indicates that he is indeed less than God. He is the object of God's love. His allegiance is simultaneously sought by an anti-god entity (devil) manifested in many forms. Caught between two polarized supernatural powers, man struggles in a maze of knowns and unknowns. The facts and forces that affect his behavior make him a dilemma to himself and his environment of things and beings. The tendency is to think that if everyone behaved like I do, all would be well. *They* have many reasons to trust me but I have few to trust *you*. This is not to discount the obvious existing abnormalities of the human weakness.

We must and can, by open exposure to God, find a basic mutual understanding and common ground where brotherhood can be exercised without manipulation of each other, *but* in a *such as extremes* context of justice and truth. Abnormalities *require* *special* attention and wise responses *from* *criminal acts & tendencies,*

Following are some *more wholesome personalities,* suggested basic guidelines for EMC-CIM affairs subject to further refinement, deletions, and additions. We need some principles and policies of long range not subject to capricious change and around which the mechanics of detail can be built.

#### I. RELATIONSHIPS

A. EMC-CIM be committed to mutually maintain an open stance to a continuing relationship regardless of events or circumstances. We aim not for an end, but for development and continuity in understanding, respect, and mutual brotherhood.

1. Open to brotherhood relationships and concerns as they occur.
2. Open to personnel interchange as may be helpful.



3. Open to mutual consideration of material needs.
  4. Forms of power will always exist, but use of such will require careful scrutiny in a spirit of mutual love to avoid use of it to control the less powerful.
- B. EMC-CIM agree to unilateral responsibility for indigenous affairs.
1. EMC function in Congo with total responsibility for EMC affairs.
  2. CIM be responsible for all interests of the CIM constituency as such pertains to the EMC.
  3. Channels to the respective Congo-American constituencies will be the recognized respective administrations.
- C. EMC-CIM agree to maintain a central office in their respective countries.
1. For EMC to coordinate and implement the work of the EMC.
  2. For CIM to provide a channel for witness and service in Congo supported by inter-Mennonite concern.
  3. Each office to function independently of the other but as liaison to the respective constituencies and responsible to them.

## II. PURPOSE AND GOALS OF EMC-CIM

### A. Purpose

1. To promote growth of the planted Church of Christ in Congo.
2. To purify that church ethically, morally, and spiritually.
3. To provide opportunities, ways, and means for literacy enlightenment, and enrichment.
4. To respond to human needs of that church as well as the total community according to opportunity and capacity. (Respond in ways that help rather than destroy.)



## B. Goals

1. To sustain, strengthen, and extend the Christian brotherhood. (Mennonite, inter-Mennonite, and inter-Christian)
2. To foster indigenous responsibility, self-reliance with dependence on God, with mutual aid as might be helpful.
3. To develop, extend, and sustain a dynamic, spirit-filled church of Jesus Christ in Congo and America,

## III. RECONCILIATION AND FELLOWSHIP

- A. EMC-CIM as an EMC entity pursue reconciliation and peace within the EMC of all tribes, regions, and separate brotherhoods striving for unity of believers in Christ.
- B. EMC-CIM as an EMC entity examine the prevailing attitude of tribal and inter-tribal tensions and with a spirit of forgiveness and regret, relentlessly pursue the reconciliation with AEMSK that evades us. (This will obviously be a work of the Spirit if achieved. Afterward the mechanics of relationships can be formulated.)
- C. EMC-CIM as an EMC entity reject division of EMC but foster regional organization for efficiency and effectiveness.

## IV. PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL AID EXCHANGE

### A. Personnel

1. CIM will seek to supplement (not take the place of Congolese personnel) as may be requested by EMC and match available qualified personnel with specified need.



2. It be assumed that such personnel be mainly advisors, technicians, special knowledge and skills, teachers, and emergency aids.
  3. Acceptable housing would be required prior to personnel assignment.
- B. Material Aid (principal categories)
1. Capital investments.
  2. Capital improvements.
  3. Education for self-help.
  4. Loans capable of amortization
  5. Emergencies, relief, specials.
  6. Support of American personnel assigned.
- C. Personnel and material aid benefits are negotiable entities.
- D. Operational subsidies to be phased out by plan.

## V. DETAILED MECHANICS

- A. That the proposal made by the ad hoc Commission on Fusion between Church and Mission held at Kalonda September 24-27, 1970, serve as a base for negotiation of details subject to study and revision in areas where the current CIM stance is affected.
- B. That we strive for an authority that requires minimum use of constitution and by-laws; an authority of the Spirit guided by the constitution and by-laws for mutual function.
- C. That mechanics of function always recognize the above preceding guidelines.



## Relationships in Zaire

The assignment given me is to evaluate the Zaire experience in terms of relationships. These evaluations regarding relationships will include--

- I. Relationships between AIMM and CMZA after four years of Fusion.
- II. Relationships between CMZA Administrators, Regional Leaders, and Local Churches, and Pastors.
- III. Relationships between CMZA-CEMSK and the State.
- IV. Relationships between CMZA and CEMSK.
- V. Relationships between AIMM missionaries and CMZA.

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### I. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AIMM AND CMZA AFTER FOUR YEARS OF FUSION.

There was one overwhelming impression which was felt by the delegation -- the CMZA's genuine desire to work with the AIMM in a spirit of cooperation, brotherliness and understanding. While sometimes correspondence and communication seems difficult between Elkhart and Tshikapa and misunderstandings develop, there was at all times a concern to work together at our common task and problems in a spirit of Christ and in the best interest of both AIMM and CMZA.

Much time was spent with Kabangy. The many informal and casual conversations with Kabangy may have been as important as the formal meetings in Tshikapa. Kabangy is demonstrating a maturing understanding of mission-church relationships and the necessity of open communication and candid discussion in a spirit of Christian love. There are CMZA pastors who still express their feelings about AIMM in terms of a "father to son" relationships, but Kabangy and several of the key persons on the Administrative Council are beginning to understand the new "brother to brother" relationships.

The Convention between AIMM and CMZA (Fusion) is a statement which is very important and meaningful to the church leaders. They want rather precise understandings of our working agreements and relationships. They are basically satisfied with the Convention with the exception of working through a few articles. There was rather intense feeling on their part concerning AIMM's interpretation of Article #19 related to AIMM's financial



responsibilities to CMZA. (Refer to Report on Revision of Convention). With this possible exception the CMZA seemed satisfied that AIMM was living up to their part of the fusion.

The CMZA is taking a very fine attitude toward the appointment of James Bertsche as the new Executive Secretary of AIMM. Kabangy sent to all regional leaders, pastors and evangelists an excellent letter and statement informing them of this change in leadership in Elkhart. Their many years of working with Jim Bertsche gives a solid foundation for continued good relationships especially between Elkhart and Tshikapa.

While delegation visits have both disadvantages and advantages, there is no substitute for this type of periodic visit in cementing relationships between AIMM and CMZA. (The same can also be said for AIMM and CEM). It is the feeling of the delegation that our new Executive Secretary should be encouraged to make annual visits to Zaire during the next several years. A delegation visit should be planned for at least every third or fourth year. Personal and face-to-face contact and communication with each other is more important since fusion.

## II. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CMZA ADMINISTRATORS -- REGIONAL LEADERS, LOCAL CHURCHES, AND PASTORS.

Relationships between Tshikapa and the CMZA churches have both positive and negative aspects. Probably the joint trips made by Kabangy and Levi Keidel to the various regions and churches are the most positive ways of establishing and maintaining good relationships. These trips create a feeling that the central administration is interested in and concerned with the "grass roots" people. More of these pastoral type visits by CMZA administrators should be encouraged.

Some tensions and misunderstandings do exist between CMZA Administration and the local church leadership. There is of course the practical problem of poor communication. Travel is difficult except for the MAF plane. Mail service is slow. Some local pastors rarely see or have the opportunity to talk with CMZA Administrators. When there is poor communication, rumors spread and mistrust is inevitable.

There is one area in which relationships are strained. This is the perennial problem of finances. Questions are raised by local pastors -- "What is done with the money sent to Tshikapa?" "We don't see much of the money which AIMM sends to support the CMZA at the local church level." "What kind of salaries are received by the central administrators?" (There is an immense disparity between the average salary of a pastor and, for example Kabangy. Kabangy receives about 180 zaires a month whereas an average pastor receives about 10 zaires per month.)



The CMZA must be more open and accountable with the pastors and the laity at the grass roots level. Financial reports are too general and complicated for most people to understand. There is not enough reporting on finances. While it appears that Kabangy has good interpersonal relationships with pastors and regional leaders there was expressed to the delegation again and again the basic dissatisfaction with the amount and kind of financial reporting.

The Chef d'Post at Mutena frankly said, "We don't really know what's going on." Their representative on the administrative council lives in the Mbujimai district and has not visited them for almost two years. There is a strong feeling that there should be more representation on the administrative council so there is greater participation in decision-making. The practical problem is the distance and expense of travel.

Personal visits by Kabangy and perhaps Bukungu (CMZA treasurer) should be planned each year to the various regions and villages. Time must be spent in explaining and interpreting the CMZA organization, program, budget and a more open and understandable reporting on finances.

### III. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CMZA-CEMSK AND THE STATE.

One cannot travel in Zaire without observing the signs and symbols of authentication. The most obvious "fusion" of the church and state witnessed by the delegation was at the graduation exercises of CEMSK's Bible Institute.

For nearly thirty minutes young CEM Christians drummed, danced, sang and shouted Mobutu slogans. The words of Mobutu were repeated, hundreds of times. MPR political slogans were chanted with great enthusiasm. Immediately following this display of emulating Mobutu, the group sang Christian hymns, read Scriptures and prayed.

Some of this occurs daily at CMZA schools. The raising of the Zairian flag (the official flag of Zaire is now the MPR party symbol) at schools is a political and pseudo-religious exercise which creates conflict on conscience for many of our church leaders. We questioned Kabangy about this matter. He made the following remark: "Christians do not like to sing these songs and shout slogans. It is an imposition and a demand on the church it does not appreciate." Some said that Kabangy has cautioned CMZA school principals and teachers to keep the political fanfare to a basic minimum.

Some of the CMZA leaders and pastors wear a cross in one lapel and a MPR symbol in the other. Apparently they do not feel a contradiction in displaying these two symbols side by side. In Kinshasa when the Zairian flag is raised near an avenue or road, cars must immediately stop in respect. Drivers have been arrested



for not stopping. Pictures of Mobutu are everywhere--in homes, schools, shops, etc. There are no pictures of Mobutu inside the sanctuary of Mennonite churches to my knowledge.

The best insight the delegation received on the church-state issue was from Mr. Biya, ECZ regional director in Mbuji-Mayi. He stated in no uncertain terms his distaste for the close alliance between Bokolele and Mobutu. "The Roman Catholic Cardinal has prophetic courage to speak against Mobutu which Bokolele and the Protestant Church does not have." Mr. Biya is a man of deep faith who spoke to us in a very candid way about the affairs of the church and state. He is the first high-ranking Protestant church leader we met who seemed fearless to speak his heart and mind on these matters of the church and state.

#### IV. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CMZA AND CEMSK

All of us know the history of the 1960 revolution and something of the tragic results of the split between the CMZA and the Kazadi (CEM) group. For nearly fourteen years the formal separation between the two groups has continued. In 1970 when the AIMM delegation visited Zaire, Elmer Neufeld and Reuben Short met with leaders of both groups. Several years later Reuben Short called the leaders of the CMZA and CEMSK together at Lake Munkamba. These were contacts between the two sister Mennonite churches primarily for fellowship. It was the hope and prayer of AIMM that these initial steps would lead to a re-establishment of relationships between CMZA and CEMSK.

On June 10 when the delegation met in Tshikapa, Kazadi, Ntumba (CEM Legal Representative) the CEM treasurer were present. The delegation had a private meeting with Kazadi and it only took a few minutes for him to lay before us his thoughts. Kazadi desired that the AIMM and CMZA would officially recognize CEM and relationships between the three groups could be normalized. He presented two options for accomplishing this goal: (1) to include the CEM in the present AIMM-CMZA Convention (Fusion Agreement) or (2) to write a new Convention between the three participating groups.

After a great deal of discussion it was proposed that AIMM draft a simple statement which would recognize the CEMSK as a legitimate independent Mennonite Church in Zaire. This statement was drafted and accepted by an ad hoc committee to be presented to the entire body. The following morning the AIMM draft was proposed and after "many words" rejected. A new idea surfaced which met with some acceptance. It was felt that perhaps there could be a convention (Fusion) between the two groups in Mbuji-Mayi--CMZA and CEM of Mbuji-Mayi. A recess was called and the two Mbuji-Mayi groups drafted a new statement which recognized each church as independent and expressed the hope that there could be eventual fusion.



Again a great deal of animated discussion ensued. Kazadi was asked whether there could be a fusion of the two bodies to which he responded, "we cannot tell what may happen in the future, only God knows if these two groups can become one."

The next morning, June 11 the entire group met (AIMM, CMZA, CEMSK) to hear the second proposal. There was some pressure of time since AIR ZAIRE was to arrive in Tshikapa to take Kazadi and his two representatives back to Mbuji mayi. The counter proposal was rejected. There was a keen sense of disappointment which could be seen on Kazadi's face. Now he must return to Mbuji mayi without an agreement. But, the AIR ZAIRE flight was cancelled which meant the CEM representatives were caught in Tshikapa.

The AIMM Delegation encouraged the CMZA leaders to draft a third statement. This was done and tested with the entire group. Kazadi was not in agreement with the statement. At this point it seemed apparent that we had come to an impasse. Little hope was left that the AIMM, CMZA, and CEM could break through the situation especially due to the other pressing agenda items we had not yet begun to discuss with the CMZA leaders. They felt enough time had been spent with the CEM people and that we should get on with the urgent business between AIMM and CMZA.

Very late on the night of June 11 and into the early hours of the morning on June 12, Kabangy, Kazadi and the CMZA and CEM representatives from Mbuji mayi met for a time of prayer and further discussion. Together they drew up a fourth statement which was a compromise between the 2nd and 3rd statements that had been rejected. At 9:00 PM on June 12 the statement was presented and approved by all parties! At 9:45 a statement entitled "A Convention of the Normalization of Relationships Between the AIMM-CMZA-CEMSK" was signed by all present! It was a dramatic moment and we felt as if the Spirit had broken through in a marvelous way! The document was written in French and is translated in English. (See appendix #4) Following the signing of the new agreement there was a time of celebration, handshakes, picture-taking, words & expressions of Christian brotherliness. After fourteen years two brothers had been reconciled.

#### V. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AIMM MISSIONARIES AND CMZA

Mission-Church relationships can no longer be viewed from a structural or organizational point of view since the fusion of 1970. This relationship is rather focused in the day-to-day interpersonal and working relationships between missionaries and Zairois. When one takes an overall look I feel the delegation felt good about the basic relationships between our missionaries



and the church leadership--pastors, evangelists, school teachers, etc. There is still a working through of a new set of relationships and changing roles which were created by fusion.

There is evidence that some missionaries (a small minority) still clash with Zairois over differences in programming and priorities. There is also the simple human problem of authority--who in the final analysis makes the decisions. Other points of tension are (1) payment of missionary salaries through the central treasurer, (2) a few missionaries who express strong ideas about a particular program to which the CMZA leadership finally acquiesces, and (3) the problem of placement and assignment of missionaries.

These difficulties are not without solutions, however, they are best left in the hands of a person like Earl Roth, who has excellent rapport with the church leadership.

With a few exceptions the delegation was pleased with the present AIMM missionaries who are serving faithfully and adapting to a new situation. When the delegation met in Kinshasa with Bokekeale, he briefly outlined three requirements for missionaries in Zaire today.

First, missionaries must know and be personally committed to Jesus Christ and feel a sense of calling to Zaire.

Second, missionaries do not bring Christ and the Holy Spirit with them to Zaire. Christ and the Holy Spirit are already present in this country. They must bring with them some professional, vocational, and technical skills.

Third, missionaries must realize they are not coming to the Belgian Congo--they are in the Republic of Zaire. This is not the old Congo, but the new Zaire!

Do AIMM missionaries meet these requirements? There is no question that AIMM missionaries are deeply committed to Jesus Christ and have a strong sense of calling. It is also my observation that most of our missionary family understand their roles as servants of the church and have adjusted to the new realities in which they must serve in Zaire.

Submitted by:

Howard J. Habegger  
Member of Delegation (GC)  
July 1974



REPORT ON THE REVISION OF THE AIMM-CMZA CONVENTION  
(FUSION)

On June 11 at the CMZA Headquarters in Tshikapa the AIMM delegation and the CMZA leaders discussed the fusion agreements. They called our attention to Articles 9,10,11,18 and 19 plus the addition of a new section Article #23. Here is a brief resumé of the joint agreements on these articles.

ARTICLE #9

The CMZA requested an official contract or letter (legal document) to officially transfer all properties, land, furniture, et cetera to CMZA. Earl Roth had prepared a complete listing of all movable and immovable properties to meet their request. This lengthy and detailed document was signed by the delegation and the CMZA leadership in Tshikapa on June 11, 1974.

ARTICLE #10

It was the third paragraph of Article #10 to which they wanted some decision made regarding the Kinshasa House (Mel Loewen House). Action #3 was agreed upon by the delegation and the CMZA.

ARTICLE #11

The CMZA requested that AIMM sign a new contract with MAF for plane service. The delegation agreed to do so. We expressed our concern about U.S. Three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) they owe to MAF. We Asked them to pay up this debt immediately. MAF can refuse to fly if payment is not received.

ARTICLE #18

The CMZA asked if the words, "if possible" could be added to the last sentence which reads: "The annual financial report must be audited by a certified accountant before expedition." The delegation flatly refused to add the words, "if possible." They do encounter problems employing certified accountants to audit their books. An audit is also quite expensive.

ARTICLE #19

Reuben Short had received some static that AIMM had not been abiding by the fusion agreements. It was specifically Article #19 to which they were referring. The problem is partially one of the translation from English to French but also an honest difference in



Report on Revision of the AIMM-CMZA  
Convention-2

interpretation. CMZA's interpretation of the final sentence was this -- the CMZA church has growing financial responsibilities, therefore AIMM should take this into account and give increasing financial aid. AIMM interpretation of the same sentence is this -- AIMM will continue to give the CMZA financial assistance but believes that the church has a growing responsibility to increase their financial base. The delegation explained AIMM's understanding of the Article which seemed to be accepted by the CMZA leaders. A revision of this article is as follows -- "The AIMM will, within the limits of its possibilities give financial aid to the CMZA. It will take into consideration the increasing burden of the CMZA inherent in its future growth, and the degree of financial participation of CMZA in that growth. (Approved June 12, 1974)

ARTICLE #23

\*Article #23 is entitled: "Leadership Training and Scholarship Assistance." This was agreed upon as the principles and guidelines which would be followed. The delegation also insisted that the priority should be for leadership training in pastoral formation and evangelization.

UPDATE TERMS IN THE CONVENTION

Several terms will be updated in the Convention, i.e. Zaire instead of Congo, AIMM instead of CIM, Mennonite Community in Zaire (CMZA) instead of Mennonite Church of Congo, et cetera.



STATEMENT OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONSHIPS  
(Translation)

*"Forgetting those things which are behind....."*

*(Philippians 3:13,14)*

THE TEXT OF YOUR DECLARATION

Taking into consideration the fact that the government and the Church of Christ of Zaire recognizes the legal charter of the Evangelical Mennonite Community (C.E.M.)

And also taking into consideration the meeting at Munkamba which permitted the regularization of fraternal relations between the C.E.M. and the C.M.Z.A.

We, members of the AIMM and C.M.Z.A. , recognize the C.E.M. as an autonomous sister-church which the AIMM may help as it sees fit.

We hope that the C.E.M. and the C.M.Z.A. may continue to cooperate in the area of evangelization just as is the case today.

This statement of agreement does not change a previous agreement that the CMZA has already signed with the AIMM,

Given our desire to reinforce the traditional bonds which unite the Mennonites of the Eastern Kasai,

We Decide:

(1) That requests for aid from the AIMM be established annually by an ad hoc committee composed by:

- a representative of the AIMM
- a representative of the CEM/Mbujimayi
- a representative of the CMZA/Mbujimayi
- the general secretary of the CMZA/Tshikapa



The five members of the AIMM Delegation considered many aspects of the work of the CMZa in Zaire. We spent many hours palavering many issues. However in order to report accurately to the AIMM Board, each delegation member was assigned to observe and report on one specific area. In this report I will review and make assessment of the FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE CMZA. In this report I will dwell on three major topics:

- I. CMZa Finances
- II. CMZa Development Projects
- III. Hostel Agreement(s)

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#### I. CMZa Finances

##### KINSHASA HOUSE (LOEWEN HOUSE)

There were some questions asked concerning the rent money for this house and how it was handled. I reported that the complete financial statement on the Kinshasa house had been sent periodically to the General Secretary, Rev. Kabangy Djeke Shapasa. The questions ranged from, "We do not know what is happening to this money," to "Where is this money being held? In a bank or what?" After some discussion on this matter, an action was taken (Action #3).

One, AIMM agreed to the request of the CMZa that the Kinshasa property held in the name of Melvin J. Lodwen be transferred to CMZa. Two, that the necessary steps be taken as soon as possible to make the legal transfer from "Melvin Loewen" to CMZa. Three, that this transfer be made on the condition that the money received from the rent or sale of this property be used exclusively for church leadership training according to Article #22 of the AIMM/CMZA (January 1971) Convention.

##### PROPERTIES HELD BY AIMM

For some time there has been some questions as to whether AIMM had actually turned over all properties to the CMZa. As far as AIMM was concerned, this had already been done, but CMZa still thought that there was something left to be done. In view of this matter, Earl Roth went through the tedious task of making a complete list of all buildings, all furniture and equipment and presented that list to the Administrative Committee at Tshikapa and this list was given to the CMZa with a statement signed by the members of the delegation, that all properties whatever they were, previously held by AIMM or CIM were now the properties of CMZA. This was accepted with much satisfaction.



DEBIT BALANCES IN CMZa ACCOUNTS

I have been watching with increasing concern the financial statements that have come to me from the CMZa Treasurer. The concern we have was over the increasing debit balances showing on the statement. We discussed this matter at length with the CMZa Administrative Committee and finally came up with the following figures.

The debit balances on the April Statement of the CMZa amounted to forty-six thousand dollars (\$46,000.00) of which they stated that thirty-thousand dollars (\$30,000.00) was money that would be coming back to them through subsidies from the Zaire Government and other sources. The remaining sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000) were monies which they had no way of recuperating. They did ask the delegation whether the AIMM Board would consent to help them with this sixteen thousand dollar (\$16,000) debt.

The delegation did not give consent to this request.

CHURCH ROOFS

As a delegation, we discussed about how to help the local churches more. We deliberated this point and decided we will supply church roofs. Action #5 reads as follows concerning church roofs:

Action #5 AIMM Assistance of Zaire Church Roofs

The AIMM is in agreement to again pay for some church roofs as it has in the past, within the framework of the following guidelines:

1. THAT AIMM help with a maximum of four (4) church roofs per year.
2. THAT assistance be given only after the submission of a verified estimate and not to exceed \$1,000.00 (US) per project.
3. THAT AIMM provide assistance for not more than one roof per region per year, so that all of the regions (including Kinshasa) be given equal opportunity of this type of financial help.
4. THAT this plan begin in 1974 and remain in effect for three (3) years at which time it is to be reviewed.

MISSIONARY DRAWING ACCOUNT

The AIMM/CMZa Charlesville Agreement of January 1971 called for all monies to be handled by CMZa. This agreement has been followed as far as AIMM is concerned but has created some problems in the area of missionaries being able to draw cash in Zaire. The problem



stems from the fact that there are so many accounts within the CMZa accounting that are overdrawn, and funds belonging to the Missionary Drawing Account have been used to cover these overdrafts.

There were many reasons given as to why this money was not readily available but the fact remains that it is because of overspending in some areas.

We left this part of the meeting with the following understanding

- (1) That we would now observe until the end of 1974 as to whether the Missionary Drawing Account would improve and become satisfactory in its operation.
- (2) If it would not improve by the end of 1974, we would suggest that the Missionary Drawing Account be taken out of the existing CMZa Accounts and a new account be opened exclusively for Missionary Drawing Account under the name of CMZa and administered by the CMZa Treasurer, thus the money which is sent from AIMM-Elkhart would always be available for missionary drawing.
- (3) If the above would not work then I would suggest that a special account be opened in Zaire in the name of AIMM and/or a missionary and that this account would be administered by a missionary himself.

I believe that we have confidence in the CMZA and that we want to try our best to make the first option work. If this option does not work and we have to resort to option #2, I do not believe we are saying that we do not have confidence in the CMZa leadership because they are still holding the account under CMZa direction, but it may help them to help it in tact. The last option would only be resorted to in the event that the other two would not work.

## II. CMZa Development Projects

By "Development Projects," the CMZa means that they would have some business enterprises which would help the church financially. This way of raising finances for the church is contrary to our thinking. We had long discussion concerning this and tried to show them in many ways that the church ought not to have business enterprises which would supply the church with the money they need, but rather the people who belong to the church are to give so that the church's needs may be met.

There is a sawmill project which they are already involved in and which I believe we cannot influence them to discard. We did



tell them that they will perhaps have to try this project and see if it would be profitable for the church. Looking at this project from a business point-of-view, I cannot see that it can be profitable. They did ask us to ask MEDA to help get the sawmill set up and operating. They also talked about a cattle project.

### III. Hostel Agreements

Several years ago there was a request made to us by the Mennonite Brethren as to the possibility of merging the Mennonite Brethren and AIMM children's hostel in Kinshasa. At that time the AIMM missionaries vetoed this idea --- basically because there were too many children in the hostel at that time. The question was re-opened this last May (1974) by the Mennonite Brethren. The AIMM Delegation discussed the concern with the missionaries. The missionaries were in full agreement that we cooperate by mutual arrangement. A statement of understanding was formulated which is recorded as recommendation #1 in the official recommendations of the AIMM Delegation as follows:

*That we favour inviting the Mennonite Brethren to participate in the Kinshasa Hostel under the following guidelines:*

1. *Administrative responsibility remain under AIMM auspices.*
2. *The Mennonite Brethren place one member on the Hostel Board as a full voting member.*
3. *That the fees paid per child in Zaire for the AIMM children and M.B. children be equal and that the Hillsboro office of the Mennonite Brethren will pay an additional amount to AIMM-Elkhart in consideration for the investment which AIMM has in the physical plant and in the missionary personnel.*

The agreement with the Mennonite Brethren-Hillsboro office is to be worked out between Elkhart and Hillsboro.

The matter of a new vehicle for the Kinshasa Hostel was under consideration. To purchase a new vehicle would cost approximately seven thousand dollars (\$7,000). Because of the high cost, we recommended (Recommendation #7) that John Franz be authorized to rebuild complete the 1969 Volkswagon Hostel vehicle, up to a maximum cost of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00).

These financial points (as were others) were discussed as brother-to-brother and I feel much was accomplished in a positive way. I was personally encouraged with what they are doing and wish to pass this feeling on to you.

Submitted by:

Art B. Janz

July 1974