

MINUTES

of the Second General Committee Meeting of the International Conference of Christian Medical Students held in the University of Oslo on July 19, 1969.

<u>Present:</u>	Chairman: Allister Vale (Secretary of the Executive Committee)
Canada (2 votes)	Nancy Houser Ted Robinson
Denmark (2 votes)	Else Kappelgaard
Finland (2 votes)	Tapio Pitkänen
*Ghana (2 votes)	Theophilus C. Ankrah
Gt. Britain (3 votes)	Malcolm Hillier Tom Penistan Richard Scorer
Netherlands (2 votes)	Renate Gerritzen Henriette Kamann
*Norway (2 votes)	Else Wiik Larsen Otto Christian Røe
*South Africa (3 votes)	Daneel Heyns Nomsa Mabuya Aggrey Madikiza
Sweden (Observers)	Goran Appelgren Lennart Nilsson-Mettinger
U.S.A. (3 votes)	Richard Bagge

* Elected at this Committee Meeting.

Also present (without capacity to vote) were members of the Norwegian Organizing Committee.

Apologies for absence were received from Australia.

The Constituent nations of the International Conference are therefore: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Ghana, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, U.S.A.

1. The Chairman opened the meeting with prayer.
2. The Minutes of the First General Committee meeting, which were available before the Conference were taken as read and approved.
3. Matters Arising
 - (i) It was pointed out that the provisional Constitution adopted at Oxford would have to be ratified again at this Committee Meeting.
Allister Vale suggested that in the light of experience it might be better to amend the Constitution as follows:-
Article 4(d) - for 'meet' in line one read 'communicate'.

While it was desirable for the Executive Committee to meet

in person, this might be impossible at least for some members. Written communications between the Executive Committee and the Norwegian Conference Committee had demonstrated that it was quite possible for business to be conducted quite successfully in this way.

This proposal was seconded and carried unanimously. No further amendments were proposed.

The adoption of the 1966 Oxford Constitution with the above amendment included was proposed. This was seconded and carried unanimously.

- (ii) Conference Report. The Conference Report (Oxford 1966) had been published by the Christian Medical Fellowship of Great Britain as 'Christians in Medical Training'. It had been circulated to all those attending the First Conference and to all member countries. Some delegates complained that they had not received their copies. The Chairman said that communication with member countries and individuals was a constant problem - especially as medical students changed addresses so often. He asked for all member countries to agree upon an address to which communications might be sent for distribution.

4. Report from the Secretary

Allister Vale reported that shortly after the last General Committee Meeting, Norway had given reasons (now no longer applicable) for resignation from the Conference. This had therefore resulted in the resignation also of Finn Wisloff and Per Ogreid from the Executive Committee. In addition the election of Dewey Blocksma (U.S.A.) was not ratified by the appropriate national committee. This had left the Committee denuded of three members and thereby placed heavy responsibilities on the remaining members. The Secretary of the Executive Committee had in fact assumed responsibility for liaison with the Norwegian Committee on behalf of the Executive.

The Secretary said that all the relevant matters had been or were to be raised under specific headings on the agenda.

5. Membership

Application for admission to membership of the Conference was made by Norway, South Africa and Ghana.

The Norwegian Delegation stated that their reasons for withdrawal from the Conference were now no longer valid. They themselves had now adopted a basis of faith which was in full agreement with the Conference doctrinal basis and were therefore desirous of admittance to membership. This proposal was seconded and carried unanimously. South Africa and Ghana were both represented at the Conference for the first time. Their request for membership was seconded after its proposal by the Chairman and carried unanimously.

6. Report from the Norwegian Chairman

Else Wiik Larsen made the following points:

- (i) Only a few students (about 20) had registered for the Conference by March 1st, but Professor Iversen (Secretary, International Congress Committee) had encouraged the Committee to plan separate arrangements for the Students. There were 100 students at the Conference of whom 20 had not registered prior to the commencement of the Conference.
- (ii) Ten students from Communist and underdeveloped countries had been invited (Cost of fees etc. having been covered by a Norwegian Government agency and the Conference) but only one had actually arrived. Two had taken the opportunity to claim political asylum in West Germany, while others were not given visas.
- (iii) The clinical research course, attended by 25 students, had proved to be very useful in that it enabled participants to know each other by the time the Conference proper began; it provided opportunities for seeing how other countries ran their Medical programmes; it gave opportunities for sight-seeing not available during the Conference.
- (iv) The Conference was held during the Norwegian students vacation when most students work and this therefore reduced the number of Scandinavian participants.
- (v) The Norwegian Committee was most grateful for the advice and encouragement of the Executive committee throughout the planning stages of the Conference.

7. Assessment of the Oslo Conference

The following points were discussed in relation to this Conference.

- (i) Date of Conference. What is the most suitable date for the Conference? No uniformly agreeable time was suggested but it did appear that the beginning or end of the Long Vacation were probably the best times.
- (ii) Lectures. It was agreed by all that the programme had been too full. There was little time for discussion with other participants which was often one of the most useful features of a Conference of this kind.

However, most delegates did think that the greater emphasis on clinical problems as compared with Oxford was more useful. It was suggested that it would have been more profitable if 2 or 3 speakers had given short papers for 15 minutes on various aspects of a problem than a single lecturer for a longer period. All three lectures would then have been available for discussion (all agreed this was vital) thereby avoiding some of the problems that had arisen when one or two speakers gave highly individualistic views and then side-tracked the objections from the floor. (Dr. B. Harnik of Switzerland

suggested, for example, that the sanctity of life was not a concept Christians should accept or believe). It was suggested that more care should be exercised in the choice of speakers. If lecturers such as the above were invited then someone holding the opposing view should be allowed an opportunity to give their reasons for supporting a different point of view.

The importance of inviting those who had a good grasp of English was stressed. (Some of the English-speaking participants even had difficulty in understanding one or two lecturers.) It was thought far more important to invite those speakers who could present a good paper than to attempt to ensure all the participating nations were equally represented.

(iii) Summaries

The usefulness of summaries (not available at the Conference) both during the Conference and as a basis for further thought afterwards was stressed.

(iv) Cost

Those travelling from the continents and distant parts of Europe particularly stressed the need for the Conference to be part of a wider programme in order to justify the high cost of travel to the Conference (E.g. the British party undertook a tour of the fjords after the Conference).

(v) Congress

All felt that the association with the Congress had again been profitable - not only because of the consequent saving in expenses but more importantly because of the ready availability of speakers and those who could give experienced advice. Many regretted however that such little use of the many gifted physicians present had been made in the lectures and discussion sessions.

8. Next Conference

It was agreed that arrangements should be made for the next Conference to be held in conjunction with the Congress of Christian Physicians if a suitable time and location were arranged. The Chairman reported that the Congress Committee had not as yet taken a final decision on the whereabouts of the next Congress, but it was likely to be in the U.S.A. or Canada.

The Executive Committee would invite the appropriate nation to form an organising sub-committee when Congress arrangements had been finalized.

9. New Executive Committee. There was much discussion on the composition of the Committee. The U.S.A. and Canadian delegates felt it important that they should have two or three members on the Executive Committee, as the Conference was likely to be in the Americas. Allister Vale said however that this suggestion arose from a misunderstanding of the purposes of the Executive Committee. This Committee should be composed of as wide a representation as possible both to represent and to project the interests of all participating nations. It should not reflect one particular viewpoint - particularly that of the organizing nation. It was a well known fact that if the Chairman or Secretary of a General Committee was also the Chairman of a Sub-Committee then it was not uncommon for the decisions of the sub-committee to be ratified without much discussion. An independent Executive Committee was required which could guide the organizing committee, because of its experience and international composition.

The General Committee agreed with this latter suggestion. The following Committee were proposed, seconded and adopted -

Chairman:	Norway
V.Chairman:	U.S.A.
Secretary:	Canada
Treasurer:	Gt. Britain
Members:	South Africa Ghana A.N. Other (This delegate would be elected from Finland, Denmark, Australia, in that order)

The Norwegian nomination was Otto Christian Røe

The U.S.A. nomination was Richard Bagge

The Canadian nomination was Nancy Houser

Great Britain, South Africa and Ghana would inform the Executive Committee of their nominations by December 1st 1969. If nominations are not forthcoming the Executive Committee would have the power to seek nominations from Finland, Denmark or Australia or failing this, from any other member country.

10. Any Other Business

- (i) Committee Meeting The Chairman said that he particularly regretted that even after representations no definite time had been allocated during the Conference for a Second Committee meeting. This had resulted, as all members were aware, in the meeting having to be held in three parts and its curtailment before full discussion had taken place.

All agreed that a 3 - 4 hour period should be made available at future Conferences particularly towards the end of the programme to allow for adequate analysis of the Conference.

- (ii) Vice Presidents. Mr. C.G. Scorer and Professor Iverson were to be invited to act as Vice-Presidents of the Conference.