

beginning of an entrenchment for the coming years. It was now realized that entrenchment was not enough...an active campaign was needed to maintain evangelical interest.

As this problem surged into the public limelight, a number of conferences were held to look for some common interest action. J. Elwyn Wright conducted a number in the 1939-'41 bracket to experimentally suggest some sort of evangelical alliance. His work would eventually produced the National Association of Evangelicals. But a number of separatist bodies felt the platforms suggested by Wright were too broad and called for a federation that would have more strict adherence to the principles mentioned earlier in this course. It was felt that a stronger structure would give a better contrast to the FCC and so early in 1941 the American council was developed through the collective action of the Bible Presbyterian and Bible Protestant churches.

At the onset the ACC had rather broad support beyond the small denominations that convened it and so would be joined by the GARBC and the IFCA and about twenty other small but separatist groups. It would maximize at about 1½ million members before internal disturbances would severely handicap its activities. Among those who sponsored it in the earlier days (beyond its immediate officers) were W. Houghton of Moody Bible Institute, W.W.Ayre of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City, Vernon Grounds, G. Mundell, J.O.Buswell, etc. A considerable number of fundamentalist leaders of several denominational headings was involved.

b. Organization:

A constitution was adopted in 1941 with a broadly based doctrinal statement reaffirming the fundamentals. A structure was devised that promised no interference with local churches and denominations and not attempt to "bring them together" into one ecclesiastical structure.

Aims --among others...

- challenge legal enactments that infringed on religious freedom
- warn Christians of the apostasy of the modern day
- give a united testimony to the Gospel and Christian love
- provide a base and setting for fellowship of those who were set for the defense of the faith.

Membership character

- Original membership had three categories: 1) groups (denominations) of churches that were in agreement with the doctrinal commitment and were not in league or association with the FCC, etc.; 2) individual churches separate from the FCC; and 3) individual Christians who wished to indicate the ACC represented them in public matters rather than the FCC..most of these being fundamentalists in FCC churches.