

I work it is hard to understand a man like Mott. His energies were boundless and, as I have said, he would witness an evangelical commitment but the bulk of his life work (after the first world war) was to a theological pluralism that would seem to be exactly the opposite of what Christian faith would call for. Well, consistency is hard to come by in this age.

(b) Nathan Soderblum (1866-1931)

Bishop Soderblum was of the Swedish Lutheran state church and the European counterpart to Mott although he lacked Mott's personal evangelical commitment...he was a confessionalist, however, but with this ecumenical touch. He argued for a union in service for the church more than a building of unity in body and his ideas were powerful in the European community. Archbishop after 1914 he laid the groundwork for the European conferences on church unity although he did not live to see them fulfilled.

Other names have prominence in the study, of course, but these two men were by far the most powerful individual voices in the growth of the WCC.

(3) Some major preliminary moves:

(a) The World Missionary Conference

With the great world interest that developed in the first part of this century came a strong interest in missions by all parties. It was sparked, to some extent, by the extraordinary faith mission work of the 19th century and the feeling that if the Gospel should be preached in all the world the kingdom of the Lord would come more quickly. There were strong evangelical voices in this move although there were liberal ones as well...the latter concerned with church prominence and influence, I think, more than the conversion of the lost. The World missions group met at

Edinburg, 1910 and the eventual result was the formation of the International Missionary Council at Jerusalem in 1921. Further meetings were at Jerusalem in 1928 and Tanbara in 1938. Speer's book on RETHINKING MISSIONS appeared in 1932 and within the International Missionary Council developed the general dictum that the god of the intuition was the true God. Not all participants were or are equally happy with this formula but its presence is indicative of how far the body swayed from the Biblical truths. The International Missionary Council has become the official missions arm of the World Council of Churches.

There is, incidentally, a continuing deemphasis on missions as we think of them in the WCC and an impetus for social revolution and liberation theology in its place.