4. Questions of criteria

What are the criteria for the truth of the religions - especially of Christianity: for instance, that Jesus Christ is the Lord; by their fruits you shall know them; the "fruits" of the Spirit; whoever loves is in the truth; etc.? Is it possible to set up criteria at all? What is the relationship between Christ and the Church? What is the function of the Church?

5. What about the concepts: dialogue - witness (of life) - proclamation - mission?

The subsequent reports of the groups in the plenum concentrated on the questions of revelation, Jesus Christ, and the criteria of the truth of a religion. A general feature of all reports was the distinctive character of the Christian religion and the statement that "no way can bypass Christ." The concluding discussion was devoted almost exclusively to the significance of Jesus Christ.

Norman E. Thomas

DOCUMENTATION, ARCHIVES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY (DAB)
PROGRESS REPORT

1. The Need for Cooperation in Mission Bibliographies

The 1990s have been characterized as the "Information Age." We live in the midst of an information revolution which provides new opportunities and challenges for those in mission studies.

On the one hand, an explosion of knowledge is taking place. Consider the fact that seven centers interested in mission studies are each surveying more than 500 periodicals in preparing their mission bibliographies, and one (ISEDET in Buenos Aires) is covering more than 1,500 journals in Spanish and Portuguese!

At present each center is working more or less independently of every other center. Some record data on cards, others in computer data bases. Often the same book or journal article is entered separately in centers and libraries, an immense duplication of effort. Each center has its own key words (descriptors) for classification or indexing.

On the other hand, new developments in technology make it possible for such data to be shared, not only by large centers in the First World, but also with small documentation centers and libraries in every country.
2. The Objectives of the IAMS-DAB Project

The aim of the IAMS-DAB project has been to coordinate the documentation and research work done on mission studies throughout the world. It plans to develop a common cataloguing standard, and a common set of subject headings (thesaurus), all tailored to an affordable and simple computer system for a small library. A further aim has been to extend the documentation work to areas within the Two-Thirds World that do not currently have projects, using the standard package that IAMS will provide. All data produced would then be exchangeable.

DAB workshops in Paris (1987) and Rome (1988) set the parameters of this project. Since Rome two sub-groups worked separately on issues of format and thesaurus. From July 10-13, 1990, they met together for a DAB workshop on Mission Bibliographies at the Basel Mission in Basel, Switzerland. Together they produced an agreed IAMS-DAB computer format, and a common thesaurus of descriptors (key words) for computer searches and indexing. This is the report of that meeting.

Computers are useful in the exchange of bibliographic data if centers use common formats for data input, and a common thesaurus for indexing. Exchange is easiest when centers have compatible computer hardware and operating systems.

A major DAB priority has been to develop computer programs with the needs of the small centers in mind, particularly those of the Two-Thirds World. A second priority has been to link the large centers producing mission bibliographies. A third has been to develop a format compatible with that used by most libraries. A fourth has been to produce "user-friendly" software that requires a minimum of computer knowledge or local adaptation for their use. A fifth has been to provide these materials in four languages: English, French, German, and Spanish. Finally, the goal is to facilitate the sharing of bibliographic data among centers so that each can give and each can receive.

3. Products and Services in the IAMS-DAB Plan

Since 1987 DAB has been in the product design and testing phase. If funding can be secured, the project will develop from 1990 to 1993 in four phases. Our hope is to be able to offer at minimal cost to IAMS members (and to others at a higher cost) the following products:

DAB 1

This is to be a suite of computer programs for use with small data bases. It will be designed for use with IBM or IBM-compatible computers, using MS DOS or PC DOS operating systems. The customized software will be based on