

## Advisory Committee on Education

"Since 1959 there has been an Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) composed of the presidents of the Synod's educational institutions and of the chairmen of their respective governing boards. (Bylaws, Section 8.09). ACE is instructed by the Bylaws to 'counsel together concerning the welfare of the Synod's educational institutions with a view toward coordinating policies, curricula, and administration.'" Although in the intervening years, it has grown in importance and responsibility, under the Bylaws it is still considered an advisory committee with no inherent power or authority. A number of matters referred to ACE by conventions assumes that ACE is an operating board.

"The Survey Commission's consultant notes that "the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod carries on a worker-training program of considerable size and importance. It sponsors and supports several educational institutions for college level students and a seminary. Education constitutes one of the two larger allocations of the Synod funds each biennium. There is need for an agency with the scope and authority to guide and forward the Synod's Educational program and its educational institutions."

"The Administration Survey Commission, therefore, recommends that ACE be changed from an advisory committee to an operating agency with the title Commission on Higher Education, or words to that effect. It further recommends that the Commission be given responsibility for the following: a) for long-range planning and policy; b) for seeing that the educational programs of the institutions, individually and collectively, make the maximum contribution to the Synod's objectives; c) for planning and recommending the physical facilities' needs; and d) for administering the Synod's educational system as a whole. In so doing it should guide, supervise, and coordinate with the boards of control without depriving them of essential autonomy in administering the affairs of their respective institutions (Bylaws, Section 8.03).

"In order to provide professional administration of the affairs of the Commission on Higher Education, including planning, organization, direction, control, and coordination, in pursuit of the Synod's educational objectives, the Survey Commission finally recommends that the convention authorize the Commission on Higher Education to call forthwith an executive secretary and, within the framework of his basic function as described above, establish his responsibilities and authority.

"With a gross operating budget in excess of \$2.5 million annually, with capital need requests of \$7.3 million over the next six years, and with faculty requests for the next six years amounting to over \$350,000, it is vital that this kind of operation be given full-time assistance in planning, coordination, budgeting, and control." (Book of Reports and Memorials, 1969, p. 119)

At this point permit me to mention again that there was no request from the Advisory Committee on Education for an executive secretary.

The 1969 Synod convention reacted in the following manner to the proposal of the Administration Survey Commission.

"WHEREAS, Worker-training requires one of the larger allocations of the Synod's budget each biennium, and

WHEREAS, The work of the Advisory Committee on Education has grown in importance and responsibility, and

WHEREAS, A number of matters referred to the Advisory Committee on Education has assumed that the Advisory Committee on Education is an operating board; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, a) That the Advisory Committee on Education be changed from an advisory committee to an operating agency with the title, "Commission on Higher Education," and be it further

RESOLVED, b) That it be given the responsibility for the following: 1) long-range planning and policy; 2) seeing that the educational programs of the institutions, individually and collectively, make the maximum contribution to the Synod's objectives; 3) recommending and planning additional physical facilities; and 4) administering the Synod's worker-training system as a whole, and be it further

RESOLVED, c) That it guide, supervise, and consult with the Boards of Control without depriving them of essential autonomy in administering the affairs of their respective institutions guaranteed by the constitution. (Bylaws, Section 8.03), and be it further

RESOLVED, d) That it institute procedures to grant a representative of the area high schools membership on the Commission on Higher Education, and be it further

RESOLVED, e) That the Commission on Higher Education be authorized to call an Executive Secretary, and be it further

RESOLVED, f) That it establish his responsibility and authority within the framework of the Commission's functions described above (Resolve b), and be it further

RESOLVED, g) That a chairman for the Commission be elected by the Synod for a two-year term, with his nomination carried out in the same manner as that of the chairman of the Board for Home Missions, and the chairman of the Board for World Missions, and be it further

RESOLVED, h) That the first chairman be elected at this convention from a slate of candidates presented by the Advisory Committee on Education, and be it finally

RESOLVED, i) That the necessary constitutional change be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Matters for action." (Proceedings, 1969, p. 166)

In treating this section I do not mean to imply that the Commission on Higher Education did not welcome the services of an executive secretary. My only point is that the commission did not openly solicit or request this office.

## I. SPECIAL MINISTRIES BOARD

The last department of the Synod to receive an executive office who bears the title of executive secretary is the Special Ministries Board. The seeds for this position can again be found in the report of the Administration Survey Commission to the 1969 convention. The pertinent section of that report reads:

### Department of Specialized Ministries

"In 1963 Pres. Naumann in his report to the convention called attention to the need for a specialized ministry department. "We must take the initiative," he reported, "and make it possible for our pastors called into this work (of specialized ministries) to consult with one another, to study their type of ministry, to establish definite policies and set forth clearly the Scriptural principles underlying this work." . . . The Commission is therefore recommending the creation of a department of specialized ministries within the Division of

Home Missions . . . The Commission also recommends that the board for specialized ministries be authorized to call a full-time director. Since the General Board for Home Missions will be the primary budgetary agency, the director should report on his day to day operations to the General Board's executive secretary who shall be for that reason an advisory member of the board for specialized ministries. For the same reason the director and chairman of the specialized ministries board shall be advisory members of the General Board."

(Book of Reports and Memorials, 1969, p. 119)

It might be noted that the survey commission was not suggesting an executive secretary but a full-time director. In essence the wording is immaterial. He was to be a full-time executive officer.

The 1969 convention felt that the establishment of such a position was premature. The motion prevailed:

"WHEREAS The Administration Survey Commission also recommends that the Board for Specialized Ministries be authorized to call a full-time director; and  
 WHEREAS This Department of Specialized Ministries has not yet been organized, nor have the duties of the full-time director been clearly defined; therefore, be it Resolved, That the Department of Specialized Ministries bring its own recommendation in this matter to the next Synod convention." (Proceedings, 1969, p. 168)

The Department of Specialized Ministries brought its recommendation to the 1971 convention in the form of a memorial over the signature of the chairman, Pastor Ernst Lehninger. It read:

WHEREAS the Synod has established a Special Ministries Board; and  
 WHEREAS this Board is charged with directing a broad scope of activity (e.g. Military Services, Special Education Services, Student Services, Mission for the Blind, etc.); and  
 WHEREAS the direction of these activities was formerly the responsibility of several boards and committees; and  
 WHEREAS the services directed by the Special Ministries Board are either relatively new (Missions for the Blind), expanding rapidly (Student Services), receiving broader acceptance (Military Services), or will require extensive attention in the future (Special Education Services); and  
 WHEREAS considerable organization and detailed administration is necessary if the Board for Special Ministries is to carry out its assignment effectively; and  
 WHEREAS this can no longer be done without the services of a full-time administrator; therefore be it Resolved, That the Synod authorize the Special Ministries Board to call a full-time Executive Secretary." (Book of Reports and Memorials, 1971, p. 174)

Synod action was favorable. It felt the establishment of this position was justified and passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Synod has established a Special Ministries Board; and  
 WHEREAS the scope of the services directed by the Special Ministries Board has become too great to be carried out by men on a part-time basis, both because of the scope and the nature of the work (Military Services, Special Education Services, Student Services, Mission for the Blind, etc.); and  
 WHEREAS this board has given ample evidence of the need for a full-time Executive Secretary to implement its program; therefore be it Resolved, That we authorize the Special Ministries Board to call a full-time Executive Secretary of Special Ministries. (Proceedings, 1971, p. 92)

## J. THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

Again one may question whether the position of editor-in-chief of The Northwestern Lutheran belongs in this paper. Obviously the editor is not an executive secretary. At the same time he holds an executive position of tremendous responsibility. Furthermore he is a full-time worker and holds his position by virtue of a divine call.

Agitation for a full-time editor began officially in 1967 in a report from The Committee on Circulation of Periodicals. This committee urged the Synod to create such a position.

"We urge the Synod to place the editing of THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN under the direction of a full-time editor. This should not be construed as a criticism of our present editor. He is doing as much as could be expected of any man who has to work only part time on such an important job, and we are grateful to him for the work he has been doing. However, when we consider the importance of an audience reached by more than 34,000 copies every two weeks, and the much wider potential that lies before our NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN, we believe full-time editing to be a necessity. We as a committee are distressed that such a tremendous potential tool and weapon as THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN should be edited on a part-time basis. As it seems to us, if there is one position in our church that calls for our very greatest effort, it is that which has the potential of reaching every family in our church twice each month -- and that is THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN and its editing. We urge you to direct the calling of such a man." (Proceedings, 1967, p. 401)

The 1967 convention was not convinced. It did not feel the need for a full-time editor was justified at this time. The floor committee, with Pastor George Rothe as its chairman, brought in the following resolution:

"WHEREAS There seems to be no need at this time for a full-time editor of THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN, and

WHEREAS There may be a need in the future for such a man; therefore, be it

Resolved, a) That we continue to publish THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN under the supervision of a part-time editor, and be it further

Resolved, b) That the Conference of Presidents study the advisability of calling a full-time editor and report its findings to the 1969 convention."

(Proceedings, 1967, p. 410)

At that point the matter remained rather dormant for six years. What study the Conference of Presidents gave to this matter is not known. Their report in 1969 makes no reference to a full-time editor for The Northwestern Lutheran. Nor could any reference be found in that year's Book of Reports and Memorials or Proceedings to the effect that any committee had been appointed to study the question.

The turning point came at the last convention of the Synod in 1973. In his presidential report Oscar J. Naumann stated:

"A careful estimate of the time spent by Managing Editor Harold Wicke on each issue of THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN revealed that about 3½ days are required to do this work. Since, however, his primary call is that of literary editor-in-chief for Northwestern Publishing House and since this work could progress more rapidly if he received help on THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN, Rev. Siegfried Fenske has been appointed to the NWL staff as layout man. Rev. Fenske possesses both

skill and long experience in this work and his assistance in this area will free Rev. Wicke for one more day's work every two weeks for his primary work as literary editor.

"Both Editor Wicke and the Board of Directors of Northwestern Publishing House have advised that the Synod should seriously consider calling a full-time editor for THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN. Such a full-time editor could then also serve as chairman of the new Commission on Periodicals.

"Constantly meeting deadlines in both of his assignments week after week, day by day, is a great strain on any man, even, as one member of the Board put it, for Pastor Wicke, the man who invented the word "system."

"I am asking Committee 8: Publications to study this matter and to bring in an appropriate recommendation." (Proceedings, 1973, p. 25)

Committee No. 8 came in with an affirmative response which was adopted by the convention.

WHEREAS a considerable amount of time is spent by the Managing Editor on each issue of The Northwestern Lutheran; and

WHEREAS the present Managing Editor's call is that of Literary Editor-in-Chief for the Northwestern Publishing House; and

WHEREAS the calling of a full-time managing editor for The Northwestern Lutheran would allow the Literary Editor-in-Chief to pursue his important work on a full-time basis; and

WHEREAS such a full-time managing editor could then also serve as chairman of the new Commission on Periodicals and engage in other related work as designated by the Conference of Presidents; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod at this convention authorize the Conference of Presidents to call a full-time managing editor for The Northwestern Lutheran as soon as this position can be funded." (Proceedings, 1973, p. 148)

#### K. COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM

Have we reached the end of establishing full-time executive positions - at least temporarily? Most likely not. Reference was made earlier to the strong plea of the Board for Parish Education to have a fourth executive officer - a Secretary of Publications. Another request has come from the Commission on Evangelism in the form of a plea for a "Coordinator of Evangelism."

This request made its appearance two years ago. In the 1973 Book of Reports and Memorials the Commission on Evangelism stated:

"It is the conviction of the Executive Committee that evangelism has come of age in our Synod. It is our desire and responsibility to assist pastors as they face the formidable challenge and joyous privilege of equipping the saints for the vital task of Christian witnessing, so that our Christian people are ready always to give the answer about the hope that is in them (I Peter 3:15). Because it is increasingly more apparent that part-time men cannot plan, prepare and publish as much evangelism material as is being requested and is needed, and cannot give sufficient assistance to congregations in their evangelism efforts, a full-time Synod Evangelist is needed." (Book of Reports and Memorials, 1973, p. 57)

The 1973 convention felt that the matter deserved further attention and referred it back to the Commission on Evangelism with the following resolution:

"WHEREAS the Executive Committee of the Commission on Evangelism feels there is a need for a full-time called servant for the work of Evangelism; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Commission on Evangelism study the need for a full-time called servant for the work of Evangelism and bring its recommendation to the districts at their 1974 conventions." (Proceedings, 1973, p. 66)

The Commission on Evangelism responded in the Report To The Ten Districts in 1974. It stated:

"Our response to that Synod resolution is added to this report in the form of a memorial which we intend to send to the 1975 Synod convention. We await and welcome the reactions of the respective district conventions to our recommendation that a full-time Coordinator of Evangelism be called."

The memorial now follows:

"WHEREAS 1) "The Great Commission and privilege of the Church is to 'make disciples of all nations'" (1957 WELS Convention Proceedings), and

WHEREAS 2) "The continuing purpose of the WELS, as a gathering of Christians, is to serve all people in God's world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of the Holy Scriptures" (Purpose, Objectives, and Policies of the WELS); and

WHEREAS 3) The first objective of our Synod is "to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all people" (ibid.); and

WHEREAS 4) The first policy of our Synod is "to promote personal Christian witnessing to the Gospel by each member of the Synod," (ibid.); and

WHEREAS 5) Our laity represents a vast reservoir for person-to-person evangelism; and

WHEREAS 6) St. Paul states that believers are to be equipped for service to build up the church (cf. Eph. 4:11,12); and

WHEREAS 7) Objective No. 4 of our Synod is "to assist in counseling and equipping all members of the Synod for ever greater service to the Lord, and to each other, and to the world"; and

WHEREAS 8) The Synod's Commission on Evangelism is charged "to plan, prepare, and publish evangelism materials consistent with the doctrine and practice of the Synod," and also is to "assist the congregations of the Synod in establishing and maintaining active evangelism programs" (The Constitution of the WELS, Section 6.03, p. 21); and

WHEREAS 9) The District Commissions on Evangelism are charged to "cooperate with the Synod's Commission in planning, preparing, and publishing evangelism materials consistent with the "doctrine, and practice of the Synod," and are to "aid the congregations of the districts in establishing and maintaining active evangelism programs," (the Constitution of the WELS, Section 6.04, p. 21f.); and

WHEREAS 10) It is increasingly more apparent that part-time men cannot plan, prepare, and publish as much evangelism material as is being requested and is needed, and cannot give sufficient aid to congregations in their evangelism efforts; and

WHEREAS 11) Congregations need more assistance in establishing and maintaining active lay evangelism programs than part-time men are able to supply; and

WHEREAS 12) The evangelism materials currently available within our Synod need to be supplemented (for example, with illustrations, alternate presentations, additional approaches, tracts, follow-up books, audio-visual aids, suggestions for using the media, home study guides, etc.) and

WHEREAS 13) A permanent address is needed for receiving evangelism suggestions and questions and for the production and distribution of materials; and

WHEREAS 14) More coordination is needed for increased production of materials and for their efficient and orderly distribution; and

WHEREAS 15) The efforts of the Commission on Evangelism to provide personal evangelism experiences for worker-training students should be improved and expanded; and

WHEREAS 16) A full-time Coordinator of Evangelism will meet the aforementioned needs most effectively; therefore be it

RESOLVED, A) That the Commission on Evangelism be authorized to call a full-time Coordinator of Evangelism; and be it further

RESOLVED, B) That the Coordinator of Evangelism both maintain an office to plan, prepare, and publish evangelism materials and be in contact with congregations of our Synod to assist them in establishing and maintaining active lay evangelism programs; and be it finally

RESOLVED, C) That the Committee on Constitutional Matters make provision for this office in the Bylaws." (Report To The Ten Districts, 1974, p. 56)

Last summer reaction to this memorial in our district was very intense. The response of the floor committee dealing with this subject resulted in considerable debate. The original resolution proposed by the floor committee was referred back for extensive rewording. That along with addition alterations on the convention floor resulted in a very lengthy resolution.

The first nine "Whereases" of our district's resolution parallel those found in the Commission on Evangelism's memorial. But then it went on:

"WHEREAS we recognize that to produce the material needed and requested is a burden for a few part-time men to supply; and

WHEREAS the Commission on Higher Education recognizes that there exists on the faculties of our synodical schools an extensive reservoir and diversity of spiritual gifts which can be of vast benefit to the church at large; and

WHEREAS the Commission on Higher Education is recommending that leave-of-absence may be employed for using the untapped gifts of faculty members of the various schools for an extended period of time, possibly a semester or even an academic year; and

WHEREAS within the constituency of Synod there exists a like reservoir and diversity of spiritual gifts in addition to the faculties of our synodical schools which can be of vast benefit to the church at large; and

WHEREAS a full-time coordinator as recommended by the Synod's Commission on Evangelism could lose contact with personal evangelism, thereby lessening his effectiveness and causing him to become less responsive to the constituency of the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, a) That we reject the recommendation of the Synod's Commission on Evangelism to have a permanent full-time evangelism coordinator; and be it further

Resolved, b) That we encourage the Synod's Commission on Evangelism to use for limited terms qualified personnel in our Synod to produce printed materials that are scripturally sound, edited, reviewed by the Synod's Commission on Evangelism, and tested by experience." (Dakota-Montana District Proceedings, 1974, p. 30)

The Dakota-Montana District was not alone in its opposition to the position of a Coordinator of Evangelism. To this writer's knowledge only one district went on record in favor of the memorial - the newly-born South Atlantic District. The minutes of the Pacific Northwest District convention record no action of any sort other than one individual's opinion that the matter should receive serious study before adoption. The Minnesota District, Northern Wisconsin District, and Western

Wisconsin District opposed the recommendation. In the conventions of the Michigan District and the Southeastern Wisconsin District floor committees introduced resolutions favoring the memorial. However, in both instances the resolutions were defeated. No reports are available from the Nebraska and Arizona-California Districts. At this point the prospect of a full-time executive officer for the Commission on Evangelism does not appear promising, at least in the immediate future.

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One area into which this paper has not entered is the proliferation of positions in the fiscal office. Properly speaking, an observation such as this does not belong in this paper because men holding these offices are hired or appointed, not called. It is worthy of mention, however, that until the early sixties the Wisconsin Synod had no fiscal office such as we know it today. Apart from the chairman of the Board of Trustees and secretarial help, its only fiscal officer was the Synod treasurer, and he was not a full-time employee.

At the present time we have full-time men serving as treasurer and comptroller, assistant to the treasurer, fiscal executive, deferred giving counselor, loan supervisor and car lease manager. Without question these men fill very important positions. The services they perform are valuable.

At the same time they are men who for the most part exercise tremendous influence over the operation of the Synod. And generally speaking their positions came into existence without specific synodical authorization. They are hired; not called. In citing this, the intent is not to make these men or their positions suspect. However, two things might be noted. One is that as a result of bountiful growth granted by our gracious Lord, the operation of the Synod cannot be handled as it was fifteen or twenty years ago. The other is the peculiarity that those who are repeatedly citing dangers in the Wisconsin Synod, particularly as this concerns executive officers, so infrequently include the fiscal office.

## II. VOICES OF CONCERN RELATING TO THE ROLE OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES

It is no secret that the calling of full-time executive officers to fill various positions in the administration of the Synod's work has drawn heavy fire from some quarters. At times these voices of concern have reached the floor of the Synod.

In 1963 the Conference of Presidents addressed a memorial to the Synod in convention requesting that the title of executive chairman be changed to that of executive secretary. The memorial read:

"In recent years our Board for World Mission has been served by an executive chairman on a full-time basis, and during the past two years we also had a full-time executive chairman of the Board of Trustees. If the Synod should find it advisable to continue these two offices on a full-time basis, it is the opinion of the Conference of Presidents that such full-time offices should be occupied by so-called executive secretaries who would be called to their work by the respective boards or commissions whom they are to serve and to whom they would first of all be responsible. Such a call should be a permanent call under all normal circumstances.



"As far as calling procedure is concerned, the Conference of Presidents would recommend a procedure similar to that now followed by the boards of our educational institutions. This procedure would seem preferable to having the Synod elect and call such men for two-year terms." (Proceedings, 1963, p. 227)

Opposition to this change came from several quarters. One such quarter was the Eastern Delegate Conference of the Dakota-Montana District. This conference submitted a memorial to the 1963 Synod Convention which stated:

"WHEREAS, We see the tendency toward centralization of authority in having full-time chairmen (executive secretaries), which is hazardous in the life of the Church, and

WHEREAS, The Church's basic consideration has to do with the inner spiritual life of its members which alone is nourished by Word and Sacrament, and

WHEREAS, The creation of this office would remove a pastor to a large extent from the basic work of the ministry and thereby tend to distract his perspective of the primary work of the Church, compelling him to concentrate almost entirely on administrative duties; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod continue with the provisions of the past for part-time chairmen of the Board for Home Missions and the Board for World Missions." (Proceedings, 1963, p. 229)

All of this prompted the Synod to realize that study should be given to the matter of full-time executive secretaries in general. The 1963 convention passed the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, The requests for full-time executive secretaries have come to the Synod in increasing number, and

WHEREAS, Further requests for full-time executive secretaries are anticipated, and

WHEREAS, Certain dangers may accompany the creation of an excessive number of full-time executive secretaries; and

WHEREAS, In our judgment, the Synod is not ready to adopt a blanket policy regarding full-time executive secretaries; and

WHEREAS, Each case, including those already established, requires careful further study; therefore be it

Resolved, a) That the Conference of Presidents establish a commission to study the whole matter of full-time executive secretaries, and be it further

Resolved, b) That this commission report its findings and bring recommendations to the 1965 Synod Convention, and be it finally

Resolved, c) That the office of full-time executive secretary of Home Missions, of World Missions, and of the Board of Trustees be considered temporary until that time." (Proceedings, 1963, p. 233)

A committee was appointed to study the matter of full-time executive secretaries. Members of the committee were Pastors Carl Bolle, Cyril Spaude, and Karl Gurgel. Pastor Bolle served as chairman. The report is extremely lengthy, but in view of its importance it is being reproduced in its entirety.

"The office of a full-time executive is not a new one in our midst. Precedent has been set with the establishment of the full-time Executive Secretary of the Board of Education, the Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board of Education, and the full-time President of the Synod. The Synod justified the creation of these offices on the grounds that the expansion of its program through the Lord's blessings has so increased the workload of these offices that they could no longer efficiently be filled on a part-time basis.

"In recent years memorials requesting the creation of additional full-time executive positions have been brought before the Synod on the same grounds of an increasing workload. At the same time, however, other memorials have been submitted urging such additional full-time offices not be established. The latter memorials expressed the fears of some that these full-time offices would take too many trained workers out of the field, remove the executive official from contact with the parish ministry, and tend toward the centralization of power with its possible accompanying dangers.

"The Synod in its 1963 Convention was cognizant of both of these views and reflected its thinking in the resolution it adopted. It established the offices of a full-time Executive Secretary of Home Missions, of World Missions, and of the Board of Trustees, but only on a temporary basis, pending final action at the 1965 Convention. (1963 Proceedings, pages 232, 233, Resolutions 1-4.)

"There is good warrant to consider carefully both the advantages and disadvantages in establishing additional full-time executive positions. As stewards entrusted with the management of the Lord's work, we must diligently seek to carry out this responsibility as faithfully and efficiently as possible and be ready to delegate responsibilities on a full-time basis wherever and whenever the need is justified. The time may come when our Lord so prospers the work of our Synod that no one man will be able to carry out the workload of his elective or appointive office on a part-time basis, and that full-time men will have to be called. Rather than look upon such a situation with a purely negative attitude, we ought to regard it with joy and humble thanks that the Lord has seen fit to bless our work so abundantly, and see in it His urging to expand our program on a more efficient basis.

"But at the same time, we must not close our ears to the voice of church history which bears testimony to the dangers that accompany the centralization and concentration of power in the office of one man. The Constitution must make provision for proper safeguards and lines of responsibility. Furthermore, we dare not create full-time executive positions without due regard for the manpower situation that obtains. Practical wisdom alone dictates the caution. Certainly we would not want the Gospel to suffer from a lack of workers in the field.

"Your committee, therefore, concurs in the thinking of the Synod at its last convention, that while there may be need for creating certain full-time executive secretary positions, we should not be unaware of the danger involved in the creation of an excessive number of these positions.

"Your committee, therefore, recommends the following:

Resolution No. 1

"WHEREAS, The Synod in its 1963 Convention established the offices of full-time Executive Secretary of Home Missions, of World Missions, and of the Board of Trustees on a temporary basis until the 1965 Convention, and

WHEREAS, The need for full-time men in these offices is urgent, being demonstrated by their performance in office on a temporary basis; therefore be it Resolved, That the Synod in its 1965 Convention establish the full-time office of Executive Secretary of Home Missions, of World Missions, and of the Board of Trustees as permanent.

Resolution No. 2

"WHEREAS, The nature and scope of responsibilities in the office of the Executive Secretary of Home Missions and of World Missions require the pastoral

experience and knowledge of theologically trained men; therefore be it

Resolved, That the men called to the office of Executive Secretary of Home Missions and of World Missions be pastors.

### Resolution No. 3

"WHEREAS, We must be concerned with saving pastoral manpower wherever possible; and

WHEREAS, The nature and scope of responsibilities in the office of the Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees do not necessarily require the pastoral experience and knowledge of a theologically trained man; and

WHEREAS, A technically trained layman would be qualified for this office; therefore be it

Resolved, a) That the man holding the office of Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees be a consecrated and competent layman, and be it further

Resolved, b) That this man would not hold office by Divine Call, but be engaged by the Board of Trustees as is done in the instance of the Treasurer and the Fiscal Executive, and be it finally

Resolved, c) That because of the talents the Lord has given the incumbent, a) and b) of this Resolution be held in abeyance as long as the Lord determines the incumbent hold his office, and that during such time he hold office by Divine Call.

### Resolution No. 4

"WHEREAS, The need for establishing the offices of a full-time Executive Secretary of Home Missions, of World Missions, and of the Board of Trustees is clear, and

WHEREAS, The need for additional full-time executive secretaries has not yet been demonstrated, and

WHEREAS, We must beware of creating an excessive number of full-time executive officers; therefore, be it

Resolved, a) That any future request for such an office be carefully considered on its own merit at the time of the request, and be it further

Resolved, b) That the creation of a new full-time office must clearly be justified by its need, and be it further

Resolved, c) That in the interest of conserving pastoral manpower, qualified laymen be considered to fill such offices, wherever possible, and be it further

Resolved, d) That all executive secretaries be held responsible to their respective boards, and be it finally

Resolved, e) That the necessary provisions for the responsibilities of the executive secretaries to their respective boards be embodied in the Constitution."

(Proceedings, 1965, p. 301)

This report was presented to the 1965 convention. Delegates adopted all but one of the resolutions, using almost identical wording. The lone exception was that dealing with the office of executive secretary for the Board of Trustees. There the delegates acted as follows:

"WHEREAS, The nature and scope of responsibilities in the office of Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees also require the pastoral experience and knowledge of a theologically trained man, and

WHEREAS, We recognize that there could be a consecrated and competent layman qualified for many aspects of this office, and

WHEREAS, The Executive Secretary is constantly working with pastors, congregations, boards, and committees of the Synod, and

WHEREAS, This office is most important in carrying out the work of the Lord's Kingdom through our Synod and its Board of Trustees; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the men called to the office of Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees be a theologically trained man." (Proceedings, 1965, p. 314)

Ten years later at the last convention of the Synod another storm was brewing. Various memorials appeared before the Synod dealing with the accountability of the executive secretaries.

One such memorial came from the Minnesota District. It read:

"WHEREAS the Executive Secretaries now carry out many of the functions and duties once held by the Board Chairmen, and

WHEREAS these Board Chairmen were directly accountable to the Synod by virtue of their elections, and

WHEREAS this MEMORIAL reveals the desire for review and greater accountability on the part of the Executive Secretaries; therefore be it

Resolved, That we memorialize the 1973 Synod Convention to explore some way to make the Executive Secretaries more directly accountable to the Synod."  
(Book of Reports and Memorials, 1973, p. 146.)

Apparently some pastors in the Minnesota District felt that this wording was too mild. A more strongly worded memorial came from eight pastors in this district on stationery from Salem Ev. Lutheran Church of Loretto, Minnesota (Edward Lindemann). It was worded:

"WHEREAS the Constitution and By-Laws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod provides that the president, vice-presidents, and secretary of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod shall stand for election each time the Synod meets in regular session (every two years). (Section 2.06 and 2.01) and

WHEREAS The Constitution and By-Laws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod also provide that its full time executives (executive secretaries) shall be called for life or until they should accept another Call. (Sections 13.02 and 8.05) and

WHEREAS it would appear that the above elections and Calls are discriminatory namely, on the one hand, the president and his office are reviewed every two years through election by the Synod, and, on the other hand, an executive secretary and his office are not reviewed through election by the Synod; and

WHEREAS it seems desirable from the point of view of equality, accountability, and fairness to all parties and offices involved to elect each executive to a limited Call, and to have all executives and their offices reviewed periodically by the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, a) That all full time executives (executive secretaries) shall be elected and called to six year terms by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in regular session; and be it further

Resolved, b) That the nominating committee shall propose a slate of three candidates for each full time executive's office according to Section 2.09 of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; and be it further

Resolved, c) That in the case of vacancies, the responsible governing board shall elect and call a full time executive (executive secretary) from a list of nominees submitted by the Synod. The term of office of such a full-time executive (executive secretary) shall expire at the next regular session of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, d) That this resolution shall be put into effect as the Lord God Himself creates vacancies; and be it finally

Resolved, e) That the necessary changes and additions be made in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

(Book of Reports and Memorials, 1973, p. 163)

Another memorial came from the Nebraska District. It was almost identical in wording with that of the eight Minnesota pastors and will therefore not be reproduced. One can draw no other conclusion than that there had to be some collaboration between the authors of the Nebraska resolution and that coming from the eight pastors in the Minnesota District.

In response to these memorials the 1973 convention passed the following resolutions:

1) Re: Accountability of Full-Time Executive Secretaries

"WHEREAS Memorials 73-4, 73-28, and 73-41 have requested greater accountability to the Synod on the part of executive secretaries; and

WHEREAS executive secretaries by virtue of their calls, are accountable to their governing boards which are elected by the Synod; and

WHEREAS executive secretaries are to carry out only that which their respective boards authorize; and

WHEREAS an executive secretary should have occasional opportunity to reevaluate his calling; therefore be it

Resolved, a) That we retain the present calling procedure for executive secretaries; and be it further

Resolved, b) That district presidents be urged to continue placing executive secretaries on call lists of congregations or offices that may require their particular abilities; and be it finally

Resolved, c) That members of the Synod be advised to direct to the respective governing boards whatever comments they feel necessary concerning the work of the executive secretaries.

2) Re: Elections and Calls of Full-Time Executives

"WHEREAS the accountability of the executive secretaries is not specifically defined in the Constitution and Bylaws; therefore be it

Resolved, That the standing Committee on Constitutional Matters be directed to incorporate in the Bylaws a direct statement of accountability of full-time executive secretaries to their governing boards." (Proceedings, 1973, p. 101)

The Conference of Presidents decided that some form of accountability should be established for the office of the Stewardship Counselor. A resolution was adopted with the full concurrence of the Stewardship Counselor. This action was reported in a letter by President Naumann last September. It reads:

"Earlier this year a committee of all full-time called executives was asked by the Conference of Presidents to study the question of tenure for full-time called executives. This was done in response to occasional memorials, letters, and oral suggestions concerning this matter.

"This committee gave its report to the Conference of Presidents. After studying the report in sub-committee and in plenary session, the COP adopted the following resolution

"WHEREAS The Report to the Conference of Presidents re Executive Secretaries' Calls has been received and the contents noted; and

WHEREAS The Stewardship Counselor has submitted a report: Review by the Conference of Presidents of the Stewardship Counselor's Position; and

WHEREAS The report of the Stewardship Counselor could be implemented without reference to the convention; and

WHEREAS The procedure recommended could be of benefit both to the called person and the calling board; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Conference of Presidents receive the report of the executive secretaries with thanks; and be it further

Resolved, That the review procedure outlined by the Stewardship Counselor be adopted; and be it finally

Resolved, That we recommend to each board served by an executive secretary that it adopt, the executive secretary concurring, a similar review procedure."

The review procedure as outlined by the Stewardship Counselor and adopted by the Conference of Presidents reads as follows:

1. A review of the stewardship counselor's performance and of his capability of continuing to serve effectively in his position shall be made every four years by a review committee of the COP.
2. After age 65, this review shall be conducted annually.
3. The review committee shall consist of the first vice-president of the Synod, two other members of the COP, to be appointed by the chairman at least 90 days prior to the time of review, and the chairman of the Stewardship Board.
4. Prior to meeting with the stewardship counselor, the review committee shall seek the counsel of the President of the Synod, of the counselor's pastor, of the other members of the COP, and of the Stewardship Board.
5. After conferring with the above named, the review committee shall meet personally with the stewardship counselor for a frank appraisal of the past, present, and future of his position.

The General Board for Home Missions agreed to establish a similar review procedure for its executive secretary. The guidelines which this board established are as follows:

1. A review of the GBHM executive secretary's position shall be undertaken every second year.
2. After age 65 this review shall occur annually, giving consideration to his capability to serve effectively in this position.
3. The review committee shall consist of the chairman of the GBHM and two pastoral and two lay members of the GBHM.
4. Prior to meeting with the executive secretary the review committee may seek the counsel of the those people deemed necessary by the committee for a proper review of the executive secretary's position and capability.
5. The review committee shall meet personally with the executive secretary for a frank appraisal of the past, present, and future of his position.
6. The review committee shall be a standing committee of the GBHM, and shall report to that body after every review meeting.
7. The possible areas of review to assist the committee in its review include:
 

a) health	g) communications
b) family situation	h) flexibility
c) finances	i) accessibility
d) vacation needs	j) public relations
e) attitude toward work	k) effectiveness in meetings, in office work and in the field
f) working relationships	
8. The above guidelines shall be reviewed periodically for current relevance.

Thus two administrative units have established procedures to give periodic review to the service of its executive secretary. On the other hand, two other units have decided against setting up such a procedure. They are the Board for World Missions and the Commission on Higher Education.

The reason for the decision made by the Board for World Missions is not known to this writer. In the case of the Commission on Higher Education, its position centers chiefly about the sanctity of the divine call. Executive secretaries have calls just as valid before God and man as do pastors, professors, and school presidents. The CHE feels that if such detailed accountability is expected of executive secretaries, then the same should be required of school administrators and any other person called to a full-time position in the Synod. The individuals espousing this position most firmly were the presidents of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther Academy, both recognized quite widely in our circles as gifted theologians. It was pointed out that even in the case of our synodical president, members of the Synod have shown great respect for the sanctity of his call. There have been few presidents of the Wisconsin Synod. I question whether anyone present in this assembly has ever witnessed a Wisconsin Synod president come even remotely close to being voted out of office. In fact, I wonder whether this has ever happened in the history of the Wisconsin Synod.

That is where the matter stands at present. Obviously this will not end debate, discussion and disagreement concerning the role, functions, tenure, and accountability of executive secretaries. The pot will continue to boil.

### III. PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND EVALUATIONS

Undoubtedly this portion of the paper will generate the most interest, the most discussion, and the most disagreement. How does this writer view these positions of executive officers? Will he smile upon them with benign approval or denounce them with sharp rebuke? Permit me to base my observations and evaluation on four questions.

1. Has the Wisconsin Synod established the positions of executive officers in a hasty or irresponsible way?

My immediate answer to that would be a resounding "No." Hopefully the many pages devoted to the first two sections of this paper illustrated that the Synod has not moved hastily. In most instances the establishment of an executive office was not granted on the occasion of its first request. In some instances over a decade ensued after the initial request was made before the position became a reality. In this writer's opinion the Synod has acted cautiously and responsibly. It has first sought complete assurance that a legitimate need for the position existed before it granted its approval.

Further evidence of the Synod's caution can be seen from the many committees involved in studying either collectively or individually the positions of executive officers. Nor were these committees "loaded" with men who undertook their studies with preconceived or adamant positions on the matter. Verification for this can be seen in the fact that on occasion these committees brought in recommendations that at the time an executive position was not justified.

It was also interesting to note that on occasion conventions of the Synod rejected either totally or in part recommendations from special committees. The Synod in convention does not function as a rubber stamp. This writer could not agree with any suggestion that any executive office was railroaded into existence.

There was also an orderly progression in the establishment of these offices. Consider the following dates:

1936 - Board for Parish Education  
 1958 - Literary Editor-in-Chief  
 1959 - Full-time Synod President  
 1961 - Board of Trustees  
 1963 - Board for Home Missions  
 1963 - Board for World Missions  
 1967 - Stewardship Counselor  
 1969 - Commission on Higher Education  
 1971 - Special Ministries Board  
 1973 - Full-Time Editor for The Northwestern Lutheran  
 1977 - Commission on Evangelism

Executive officers have not descended upon the Wisconsin Synod like the sudden wave of an avalanche.

2. Are executive officers necessary for an orderly administrative operation in the Wisconsin Synod?

My answer to this is a firm "Yes." God in His bountiful goodness has granted a most gracious growth to our Synod in the past several decades. In a sense this is a mixed blessing, although we receive it with hearts of thanksgiving. It is mixed because the larger an organization or a body becomes, the greater becomes the need for extensive and sometimes complicated administrative procedures. This should not appear strange. The same holds true in the case of a congregation. A congregation of 50 souls does not require much organization. But when the congregation numbers over 2,000 souls the work of the pastor changes considerably. Now he needs laymen from the congregation; he needs boards and committees to assist him in the congregation's program.

An example of this appears in Scripture. When the congregation at Jerusalem experienced dramatic growth, the disciples could no longer attend to the needs of the flock. The Grecian widows were being neglected. The disciples responded, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude" (Acts 6: 2-5).

Good stewardship on the part of God's people demands that His work be done as efficiently and effectively as possible. Inefficiency is no more excusable in the work of the church than in any business operation. It is even less excusable. Unfortunately inefficiency and lack of organization has sadly hampered the work of the Wisconsin Synod as it has gone about the Lord's business.

This writer recalls his assignment as a seminary graduate to begin a mission congregation in Eugene, Oregon. He was told that three or four families were requesting services. One family was definitely anxious to have the Wisconsin Synod begin services in this city. In the case of the second family, only the wife had been a member in a Spokane congregation where her husband had refused to join. The third family lived 125 miles distant. If a fourth family was there, it was never found. No exploratory work had been done. Only one member of the mission board had even been in the city previously. The <sup>day</sup> after his installation the graduate was driven to Eugene and told to begin work - no direction, no counsel, no location, no meeting place, no advice, not even a house or an apartment in which he and his wife were to live. Thank God that money and manpower are not being wasted today in establishing mission congregations in this way.



During the years of my pastorate in Milwaukee I was appointed to serve on the Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission, specifically as chairman of the Student Services Committee. There was always the agony of frustration and disappointment in not being able to do justice to this work because of the press of congregational responsibilities. It often prompted me to wonder how pastors holding much more responsible synodical or district positions could faithfully carry out the duties of these offices to which they were elected and not slight the responsibilities associated with their primary call as a parish pastor. For me it is unthinkable that in view of size of our church<sup>body</sup> any individual could assume a position where he was called upon to oversee the work of the Synod as a whole, or the work of home missions, or world missions, or our worker training program and at the same time faithfully carry out the responsibilities of a parish pastor.

The work of our Synod has grown tremendously. And for this we thank God. He is using our Synod as a precious tool in spreading the truth of the Gospel to a fallen world. But this growth has not come about with men sitting on their hands. It has not come about with elected officials letting the wind blow where it listeth and waiting to see what might develop. With God's guidance and God's blessing it has come about because men in administrative positions have devoted long hours in setting up orderly procedures to carry out God's work with as much efficiency as they were able to effect. The work of the Wisconsin Synod is no minor operation. As detestable as the word may sound, it needs "machinery," it needs organization, good organization to carry out its work in an orderly fashion.

Earlier in this paper it was stated that the Commission on Higher Education did not openly or publicly request an executive secretary. This does not mean that the commission was not grateful that this position was created. Until the time this office was established, the CHE was headed by the president of Dr. Martin Luther College. To function as the president of Synod's largest college and to serve as chairman of the Commission on Higher Education involves more work than any person can humanly undertake. The absence of a full-time executive was most keenly felt in respect to the CHE's representation on the Coordinating Council. Other divisions were represented on this council by full-time executives who could come to meetings well supplied with facts, figures, and data to support their programs. This is not said in criticism. If programs or ventures of the Synod are worthy of consideration, there should be supporting evidence to justify their merits. However, no full-time executive officer existed in the worker training division, and as a result programs sought by the Commission on Higher Education were often lacking in supportive data. The commission welcomed gratefully the arrival of its executive secretary.

This writer is ready to state in unequivocal terms that the executive secretary of the Commission on Higher Education has been a most profitable servant for this body. The programs of the institutions are much better coordinated. Budgets are no longer treated in haphazard fashion, a situation which prevailed previously because time never permitted close scrutiny. They are now studied in an orderly and efficient manner. The same holds true of faculty workloads. The executive secretary regularly makes a careful calculation of faculty assignments at the schools. Agenda items for CHE meetings regularly number in the forties and fifties. Some of these call for extensive research work which is carried out by the executive secretary. He functions as a valuable resource person. At times he is able to work in an expeditious way to support badly needed projects. The administration of Michigan Lutheran Seminary is ready to credit the executive secretary with preventing the erection of its new dormitories from considerable delay or even coming to a standstill. When the bids exceeded architectural estimates by about \$500,000 the executive secretary with the concurrence of CHE members was able to keep the

program alive. If the position of executive secretary for the Commission on Higher Education were to be eliminated, the worker training program in our Synod would suffer appreciable harm.

This writer has had no close personal experience with other divisions of the Synod or their executive officers in recent years. However, he knows that the chairman of our District Mission Board has similar thoughts about the executive secretary in his division. It is extremely advantageous, if not even necessary, for one person to have his finger on the pulse of the Synod's outreach in our country. Many refinements in mission board policies, particularly as they concern the purchase of land, the construction of chapels or parsonages, and the Church Extension Fund have occurred in past years. Much of this has greatly facilitated the birth and growth of mission congregations. It is a vital ingredient in the almost unbelievable rate at which our Synod has been establishing mission congregations in the past several years. This writer has serious misgivings and doubts as to whether this growth would have occurred, had there not been an executive secretary for home missions.

There is another factor that concerns the necessity of executive officers. There is today a steady cry for Christ-centered printed materials. No longer can we turn to Concordia Publishing House and find orthodox materials to assist us in our work. Over ten years ago the Board for Parish Education embarked upon the production of a new Sunday school course. The work of many writers was solicited. This writer was one of them. It proved to be an agonizing, painful, wearisome experience. Congregational duties had to be neglected. Writing was sporadic and repeatedly interrupted. Some writers were not qualified for the task. There was a lack of consistency in style and approach. These are just a few of the reasons why it took years for this new course to finally become available for purchase.

The Board for Parish Education is still besieged by requests for materials. The same holds true for the Special Ministries Board. People want materials for instructing the retarded child in the simple truths of God's Word. But who can produce them? Efforts to grant pastors or teachers leave-of-absence to do this writing have proved to be very unsuccessful in the past. When is the last time you heard of a pastor, teacher, or professor given a six-month leave of absence to author a publication. I don't have time to write a book. Do you?

Granted, this problem may not fit precisely in the category of executive officers. But it is a problem, and we had better face it. If we are not going to call executives for the work of writing, what alternative are we going to suggest? Are we going to free men from the responsibilities of their primary call for selected periods of time to author needed materials? Or are we going to limp along with productions on a piecemeal basis? Or are we just going to sit and complain that nobody ever does anything? There is a cry, a very vocal cry for Christ-centered materials. And the cry is being placed at the feet of some of our executive officers.

Are executive officers necessary? The boards or the commissions which they serve firmly believe so. Within the past two years the executive secretary of the Commission on Higher Education has received three calls. On each occasion he was strongly urged by the commission to remain in his present position. Several years ago the stewardship counselor received a call to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. A call to the Synod's seminary carries with it resolute confidence in the individual's gifts and abilities. Yet the Conference of Presidents urged him to remain in his present position. I am confident that the same would hold true of any other executive officer who is a full-time called servant of the Synod.

### 3. Are there dangers in having full-time executive officers?

Dangers are most assuredly present. Nor should they be treated lightly. The danger most frequently voiced is that executive officers will be invested with too much authority or power. What now follows is not meant to gloss over this danger or push it into the realm of insignificance. What is needed is a level-headed approach toward this danger.

To begin with, there is no aspect of the church's work concerning which it cannot be said that there are no dangers present. As soon as something new is proposed or contemplated, there are always some who almost immediately respond, "Brethren, I see a danger here." But where does one not see dangers? There are dangers associated with our stewardship and evangelism programs. There are dangers in taking men away from the parish ministry and having them teach in our seminary, colleges, and academies. There are dangers in sending missionaries to foreign shores. There are dangers in having unmarried teachers. And there are dangers in having executive secretaries. But the mere presence of danger cannot deter us from going about the Lord's Kingdom work. The presence of danger calls for constant vigilance. It underscores the admonition of our Lord to watch and to pray.

The danger most frequently cited in connection with executive secretaries is that they will appropriate to themselves too much power. In response to this let us remember that these men have no more power than what is entrusted to them by the Synod. If they become authoritarian in their work, then the boards or commissions are not maintaining proper vigilance. Executive secretaries state in all honesty that they feel a greater sense of accountability in their present calling than in any previous position which they held.

Executive secretaries do not lead blind followers. Not too long ago the role of Northwestern Lutheran Academy came under careful scrutiny. Considerable debate centered about the propriety of permitting this school to expand while still accepting general education students. The executive secretary of the CHE stated in all candor his reservations about our policies in existence at that time. Yet in all fairness one must state that he has in open and private forums lent strong support to our academy and to its program. Even though at times we may have differing viewpoints, we regard him as a valuable friend to our school. Never has he sought to impose his will upon us. There is no strong centralization of power in the executive secretary of the Commission on Higher Education.

Two years ago the Synod was offered a very extensive and detailed redistricting plan for our home mission fields, devised primarily by the executive secretary of the General Board for Home Missions. The hours he spent on devising this plan must have been tremendous. Yet even though he also had the support of most district chairmen and district boards, the plan was rejected by the Synod. I find it impossible to believe that these men are functioning as autocrats.

Admittedly, these will be men of influence. Their fingers are on the pulse of large areas of work. In line with their duties and responsibilities they acquire a vast reservoir of knowledge, on the basis of which they can make persuasive presentations. However, the same also holds true in other areas of church work. Even though a pastor is a shepherd, even though he leads, even though as a minister he serves, his position is one of influence and (if you will excuse the expression) one of power. Although generalizations are usually dangerous, it can be said that in many instances it is a case of "what the pastor wants the pastor gets." A congregation is often a reflection of the pastor. The pastor's strengths become the congregation's strengths, and his weaknesses become the congregation's weaknesses.

So it is with a school president. Some have referred to this writer as a dictator in terms far from affectionate. There have been accusations ranging all the way from overemphasizing athletics to forcing men off the faculty. Although I consider these accusations as unfair and untruthful, I would be the first to admit that my position is one which carries with it influence and power. The NLA Board of Control does not rubber stamp all of the things which I suggest or propose. But the direction this school takes is bound to be a reflection, at least in part, of the way I feel it should go.

The same holds true of the district president. He does not stand by and permit the district to go in whatever manner it pleases. He provides leadership for the district and rightly so. He attends almost all meetings of every district committee or board, offering valuable counsel and advice. This counsel is welcome and beneficial. True, at times it is not followed. He is not a dictator. However, the work of a district cannot help but bear the indelible mark of a district president because of the influence and power associated with his office.

Executive secretaries are Christians. They are sincere, and they are dedicated. They are actively and vitally concerned about the welfare and extension of God's church here on earth.

It is my personal conviction that these men are not seekers after power. That their positions carry with them intrinsic power I would not deny. Nor would I deny that they are capable of exercising great influence. Yet I do not believe that this is done for personal gratification or aggrandizement. In past years it has been proposed by some that the terms of executive secretaries should come up for election periodically, similar to that of the Synod president. I know of no executive secretary who is opposed to this. Those with whom I have talked would welcome it.

If one is looking for a power structure, this writer feels that a far greater danger exists with the Coordinating Council. Finally, power rests with those who control the purse strings. For many years this power rested with the Board of Trustees. And this board frequently came under attack. Repeatedly they were accused of autocracy, of ruining or undermining programs simply because they could not in good conscience release for such programs money which was not there.

Today that burden falls upon the Coordinating Council. This group is charged with coming to every Synod convention with a balanced budget. When pre-budget subscriptions do not measure up to anticipated expenditures, these men are faced with extremely difficult decisions. This very condition exists at the present time. Some wild ideas have been suggested. Apparently the closing of Northwestern Lutheran Academy was mentioned by several individuals on several occasions. But these were not the executive secretaries. In truth, this writer has the distinct feeling that the executive secretaries serve as a stabilizing influence on this Coordinating Council, restraining this group from pushing the panic button as soon as financial problems appear in grotesque form.

Another danger sometimes mentioned is that these men are drawn away from the parish ministry and as a result lose empathy for problems and conditions as they exist in the local congregation. This was a concern frequently mentioned when the question of a full-time president of the Synod was under discussion.

Once again, I agree wholeheartedly that a danger exists here. At the same time let us not overlook the fact that this situation also exists elsewhere. Men at our synodical institutions are withdrawn from the parish ministry. This also

includes Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The plain truth is that our future pastors are being trained at the seminary by men who are no longer serving in the parish ministry. And many have been away for many years. Obviously it can be no other way, unless we want all faculty members at our schools to be teaching on a part-time basis.

Individuals in executive or teaching positions do not lose complete contact with the parish ministry. They do supply preaching, fill vacancies, and at times serve as assistant pastors. The executive secretary for the Commission on Higher Education has several times served as a vacancy pastor. At the present time he is an assistant pastor in a Milwaukee congregation, preaching once a month, assisting with Holy Communion, and serving in emergencies when the regular pastor is not available.

At times executive secretaries are placed into positions they do not covet. It was mentioned some time ago that a sub-committee of the Conference of Presidents has been working on a possible reorganization or restructuring of the Assignment Committee's procedures. One member of this sub-committee suggested that this study be turned over to the executive secretaries because these are "intelligent men." The suggestion was not accepted. The point, however, is that here a district president was suggesting an assignment, an extremely important one, which the executive secretaries had not sought. My fear is not that executive secretaries will assume great power because they contrive to acquire it. My fear would be that power will be invested in their hands because others have placed it there.

Does then the presence of executive secretaries pose a threat in the possible establishment of a synodical hierarchy? My answer to that would be that the threat will exist only to the extent that the Synod and its duly elected officials permit it to exist. To repeat once more, the executive officers will have no more authority or power than that which is invested in them as long as the Synod maintains unceasing vigilance in guarding against any abuse of said authority and power.

4. Do executive officers threaten the confessional integrity of the Wisconsin Synod?

There are some who fear that the establishment of executive officers places us in a pattern identical to that of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and which subsequently led to the erosion of Missouri's confession position. There is the fear that we will follow the Missouri Synod's path of deterioration.

In all honesty, this is a fear which cannot be treated lightly or in a superficial manner. The warning of Scripture, "These things are written for your learning," would surely include a close examination of pitfalls into which other church bodies have fallen. At the same time let us recognize that not everything which the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has done in its history is negative. In looking at the history of the LC-MS we would do well to follow the example it has set in its early emphasis upon sound doctrine, its continuing emphasis on Christian education, its enthusiastic program of establishing congregations throughout our country, and its extensive outreach in foreign mission work. For too long a time we in idleness left many of these things to our former big sister. It was only her confessional demise which made us conscious of the fact that we had been tarrying too long. Thus it would be a travesty of logic to conclude: the Missouri Synod had executive secretaries; the Missouri Synod went down the path of liberalism; therefore the Wisconsin Synod should not have executive secretaries.

Was Missouri's confessional decline brought about because of its executive officers? This may have contributed to the tragedy, but it is this writer's opinion that it was not the sole nor even the primary cause. The decline began when unscriptural statements publicly asserted were withdrawn but not rejected. It was further abetted when professors with unsound confessional positions were called to teach in that church body's school and seminaries. The decline became a steamroller when almost every board and committee was dominated by men with liberal convictions.

It is my firm belief that if the Wisconsin Synod ever plunges into heterodoxy (God forbid!), the cause will not be found in the establishment of executive officers. It will come about only if proper control over the men teaching at our schools, particularly the seminary, and men serving on important boards and committees is not maintained.

It should be noted that at times executive officers are called upon to serve as spokesmen for our Synod. At such times one can test their confessional orthodoxy. In such instances they often provide a valuable service to our Synod. Last fall the Stewardship Counselor was asked to describe the confessional position of the Wisconsin Synod to the Greater Milwaukee Ministerial Association. Pastor Schaefer is not a member of this group. He was given the opportunity to testify to the truth. At this point permit me to quote from an editorial by James M. Johnston, religious news writer for the Milwaukee Sentinel.

"Schaefer's presentation was forthright, unapologetic, and without the slightest concern about how 'old fashioned' his doctrine might be. He was speaking for what he deemed to be 'the Word of God,' and that was that. In this year of political speeches by the thousands, there was something refreshing about solidly honest doctrinal talk. . . . Schaefer's talk left many of his liberal Protestant hearers goggling in amazement. It is well that they should hear him, for much of the religious community in Milwaukee and Wisconsin is beyond understanding until they understand the Wisconsin Synod."

It is often said that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." It could be said with equal veracity that, "Eternal vigilance is the price of confessional integrity."

The sentiments expressed in this paper are not intended to convey the impression that this is all which can be said about executive officers. Perhaps others have had experiences or have heard of instances which would render the evaluations and judgments of this paper invalid. It was possible for me to write only on the basis of my personal experiences and observations and what the Synod has said in its official documents.

To quote the words with which the well-known radio commentator Alex Dreier used to close his newscasts, "This is one man's opinion."